Nonresponse Bias for the Relationships Between Activities in the American Time Use Survey October 2006 John Dixon, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Room 1950, 2 Massachusetts Ave, NE, Washington, DC 20212-0001 Dixon. John@bls.gov

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Abstract

The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) is the first continuous, Federally-funded survey designed to measure how people spend their time. The AT US sample is drawn from households completing their final month of in terviews for the Current Population Survey (CPS). Because the CPS rec ords c ontain a wealth o f dem ographic i nformation a bout respondents, this design enables us to look directly at nonresponse without h aving to r elv o n techniques such as dat a matching or t he use of rel uctant respondents t o m odel no nrespondents. O ur paper focuses on nonresponse rates and nonresponse bias. First, we describe nonresponse rates by demographic characteristics, and t hen we use logistic analysis to examine correlates of nonresponse, i ncluding demographic an di nterviewer c haracteristics. A propensity sco re m odel is u tilized to ex amine differences in tim e-use patterns and to a ssess the extent of nonresponse bias.

Introduction

The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) is the first continuous, Federally-funded survey designed to measure p eople's d aily acti vities, in cluding where they spe nd t heir time, what they spe nd t heir time doing, and with whom they spend their time. The ATUS is a one-ti me telephone in terview with three main components: (1) q uestions up dating the designated per son's (DP)¹ em ployment st atus, industry a nd occupation, andd ea rnings i nformation from the CPS, (2) a 24 -hour time diary, and (3) additional in formation on secondary childcare, paid work, volunteering, and travel away from home. The ATUS sample is drawn from house holds that have completed the entire CPS in terview rotation of eight interviews over a 16-month period. O nce a C PS household is selected, one household member is randomly sel ected to p articipate in the ATUS interview. Substitution or proxy resp onse is no t allowed. The selected DP m ust be 15 years old or older an d m ay or m ay no t have been the C PS reference person. Each DP is also required to report on a pre-assigned reporting day of the week—such as Tuesday, reporting about Monday. The specific day of the week a ssigned to each DP does not change. and t here is n o su bstitution of th is day. The interviewing period for a case is up to eight weeks on the assigned day to secure an ATUS interview.

Design

The ATUS is a com puter assisted telephone survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Production began in January 200 3. In 2004, ap proximately 3 ,000 participants were selected each m onth, and t he average ATUS response rate was 57 percent.²

Key esti mates o f i nterest are the e time-u se patterns of t he general population. All activities are classified into a three-tie red, hie rarchical syste m, with 17 major, or first-tier, categories, each having two add itional sub-levels of detail. The 17 first-tier categories include: personal care; hous ehold activities; caring for and helping household members; caring for and helping non-household members; work and work-related activ ities; ed ucation; co nsumer purchases; professi onal a nd pers onal car services; household se rvices; g overnment servi ces and ci vic obligations; eating and drink ing; socializing, relaxing, and leisure; sports, exercise, and recreation; religious activities; volunteering; telephone calls; and travel.

Analysis

The differe nce between responde nts and nonrespondents on key estimates of interest is usually unknown. Therefore, nonresponse bias typically must be exam ined using indirect measures that assume certain types of re spondents can serve as accurate proxies for nonrespondents. In this study, the call history variables were used to substitute responders who were reluctant for refusers, and those who were difficult t o c ontact f or non-contacts. T his pa per focuses on nonresponse rates and nonresponse bias in the rel ationship between time use cat egories. First, we inve stigate the diffe rences in m eans for the different time cat egories for those who responded, those who serve as nonresponders, and the overall survey estim ates. T he sa mple was we ighted for probability of selection and to make the nonresponse groups comparable in size to those found in the 2004

Many of the time use c ategories have different distributions. So cializing has inflated zero s and a skewed distribution. Sleeping is symetric. One way of modeling the distributions is with semiparametric regression. For the purposes of this paper, line ar links will be used for ease of in terpretation. Log

¹ A designated person is the household member selected for ATUS.

² The response rates was calculated using the AAPOR Response Rate #2.

links f or t he zeros an d poi sson di stribution assumption for the continuous p art worked well for many of the measures, but other links were optimal for others.

Because the c ategories must add up to the total time, the d ata is compositional. More of one category would be expected to relate to less of other categories. Aitchison suggested transforms to adjust for these artifacts, but the transformations didn't make a difference in the tests, so the untransformed data will be presented here for ease of interpretation.

Linear m odels we re used to e xamine the relationships bet ween t he di fferent t ime-use categories and nonresponse, where nonresponse was considered a moderating variable. The models adjusted for a complex sampling design using Taylor linearization.

Results

The results for bias estimates of refusa 1 and noncontact a re pr esented in figures 2 and 3. The comparisons bet ween response and nonresponse indicates the potential for bias. If the nonresponse rate in creased this comparison would be the estimated potential bias with extreme nonresponse assuming the reluctant responders were similar to the refusers. The comparison of the response group with the survey group indicates the estimated bias for this survey. None of the differences between response and survey were statistically significant.

Many of the differences bet ween res ponse and refusal were s ignificant. Eat ing, f ood p reparation, child care, household tasks, travel, and work all had lower reported times by refusers. Sleep was the only estimate that was significantly higher for refusers, although so cializing was close. Activities (sports, religious, volunteer, etc.) and personal care were also in the higher direction.

Noncontact bias was statistically sig nificant only bet ween the response and nonresponse groups for food and barely significant for household tasks. None of the differences between the response and survey comparisons we resignificant. The largest difference was for Socializing, but it also had a high variance. Non-household adult and child care showed some potential patterns of bias in probability of reporting, possibly due to the rarity of reporting and the differences in time use which is also likely to be related to the probability of refusing.

As an example of a model for potential bias "Personal care" was the dependent variable, independent variabes were; an indicator of refusal, an indicator for reporting personal care (the zeros), and "sleep" were used as predictors (Figure 4). Those who were like refusers spent less time on personal care (-4.68, non-significantly). More sleep was

associated with less personal care (-0.038, which is typical of compostional data). Reported personal care is just an indicator for the zeros, it is the interaction with other variables which is of interest. The sleep*refusal interaction is the measure of potential bias in the relationship between personal care and sleep (0.0095, non-significant). The Sleep(report*refusal) effect is the measure for the potential bias in the probability of reporting personal care (-0.02, significant).

Similar to the comparisons of means seen before, the comparisons in these and subsequent models are indicators of potential bias, the comparisons contrasting the survey with the respondent group found no differences.

A graphical comparison of bias estimates can be seen in Figures 5 and 6. "Household Child care" was the dependent variable. "Non-household adult care" was the only probability of reporting that was significant for potential bias. Refusers were less likely than responders to report child care if they were spending time caring for a non-household adult. Household Adult care and work were the only significant bias coefficients, where refusers reported more time spent on work and adult care relative to child care than responders.

The only other independent variable which showed potential for child care bias was "household adult care", where refusers reported more time spent on adult care relative to child care than responders. Tables showing all the coefficients for the probablities of reporting and the inter-relationships are available in the full paper from the author.

Refusal bias in probability of use.

None of the estimates of bias comparing the total survey estimates with the likely respondents were significantly significant. The estimates comparing the likely respondents with those most like the non-respondents produced some potential bias (if nonresponse rates became much higher, or if the differences are larger than estimated by the call history refusal).

The probability of using the "Buys professional services" category had potential biases with "Household tasks" (.116) and "Non-household child care" (.85). "Eating" had potential bias with "Socializing" (-.05). "Food preparation" had potential biases with "Non-household child care" (.21) and "Socializing" (-.03). "Household adult care" had potential biases with "Buys" (.23) and "Non-household child care" (.29). "Household child care" had potential biase with "Non-household adult care" (-.37). "Non-household adult care" had potential biases with "Food" (-.28), "Household adult care" (.99), "Household tasks" (-.16), "Activities" (-

.10), and "Work" (-27.8). "Non-household child care" had potential biases with "Household adult care" (1.53), "Non-household adult care" (1.31), "Activities" (-.09), "Personal activities" (-.51), "Socializing" (-.11), and "Travel" (-.19). "Sleep" had potential bias with "Eating" (8.15), although not reporting sleep was so rare it shouldn't be considered a reliable indicator. "Socializing" had potential biases with "Buys" (1.72), "Food" (2.38), and "Non-household child care" (-.95). "Traveling" had potential biases with "Buys" (1.75), "Socializing" (-.04), and "Activities" (.23). "Work" had potential bias with "Traveling" (.002).

Refusal bias estimates for interrelationships.

"Food" had potential bias with "Non-household child care" (-.15), "Socializing" (.02), and "Work" (8.52). "Household child care" had potential bias with "Household adult care" (.07). "Non-household adult care" had potential bias with "Personal activities" (.04). "Socializing" had potential biases with "Buys" (-2.0), "Food" (-2.5), and "Non-household child care" (.48). "Traveling" had potential biases with "Buys" (-1.76) and "Activities" (-.21). "Work" had potential biases with "Socializing" (.0003) and "Activities" (.0003).

Noncontact

Noncontact bias in the probability of responding showed potantial bias for "Activity" and "Eating" (.37), "Non-household adult care" (-.31), "Sleep" (.05). "Buys" showed potental bias with "Activity" (-.05). "Eating" had potential bias with "Household tasks" (-.12), "Non-household child care" (-1.05), and "Work" (-5.27). "Household child care" had potential bias with "Non-household child care" (1.62). "Household tasks" had potential bias with "Activities" (0.08). "Non-household adult care" had potential bias with "Household adult care" (3.10). "Personal activities" had potential bias with "Activities" (-.04). Sleep had so few non-reports that the potential biases won't be reported here. "Socialize" had potential bias with "Household tasks" (-.41), "Sleep" (-.06), and "Work" (-16.7). "Travel" had potential biases with "Buys" (.26), "Eating" (.22), "Household adult care" (1.62), and "Non-household child care" (.45). "Work" had potential biases with "Sleep" (-.000056) and "Activities" (-.0009).

Noncontact Bias in the relationship between measures indicates how noncontacted persons might differ in their tradeoffs between time use categories. There was no statistically significant bias between the total survey estimates and easy to contact respondents. The potential for bias was tested comparing the easy to contact respondents with the hard to contact respondents. "Activities" had potential bias with "Work" (-26.3). "Buys" had

potential biases with "Activities" (.02) and "Household tasks" (.02). "Eating" had potential biases with "Household child care" (.15), "Household tasks" (.12), "Non-household child care" (1.05) and "Work" (8.06). "Food preparation" had potential biases with "Buys" (.05), "Activities" (.026), "Household tasks" (.035), "Sleep" (.02), "Socializing" (.017), "Travelling" (.08), and "Work" (7.82). "Household adult care" had potential bias with "Household child care" (.006). "Household child care" had potential bias with "Food" (-.104). "Household tasks" had potential bias with "Activities" (.06). "Personal activities" had potential bias with "Activities" (.04). "Sleep" had potental biases with "Eating" (10.1), "Household tasks" (6.04), "Personal activities" (-.17), "Activities" (-9.6), "Socializing" (-1.04), and "Travel" (1.86). "Socializing" had potential biases with "Household tasks" (.50) and "Work" (35.42). "Travel" had potential biases with "Buys" (-.27), "Eating" (-.21), "Household adult care" (-1.77), "Non-household child care" (-.42), and "Work" (-14.1). "Work" had potential biases with "Buys professional services" (-.0009), "Food" (-.001), "Sleep" (-.0002), and "Socializing" (-.0002).

Discussion

There were no nonresponse biases in the time use estimates, probablity of use of time categories, or the relationship between the categories. The potential biases found were small for the most part. The potential biases were usually in opposite directions for refusal and noncontact, which should mitigate the overall effect.

Some estimates for "sleep" reporting were too rare to provide good models for the probability of use, but the estimates of the interrelationships with other categories would be uneffected. The current models didn't attempt to determine whether the effects might be due to differences in the characteristics of non-respondents or might be a part of the measurement process. For example; child care and adult care rarely occure together, but it is unclear whether the potential biases detected are due to the differences in the ages of those doing the care, or if the different care processes relate to nonresponse in different ways.

Surrogate nonresponse is always a leap of faith. Without a "gold standard" some respondents must be used to represent the nonrespondents. The current study used call history variables, but other studies have used propensity models (O'Neill and Dixon, 2005). Examining the differences in estimates of bias would be helpful in assessing the usefulness of the different surrogates.

Even though the models seemed robust (in examining residual plots), more link functions need to be explored to better match the distributions.

The current study examined bivariate relationships between time use estimates moderated by nonresponse indicators. Multivariate methods (such as seamingly unrelated regressions or structural equation models) may help describe the bias in relationships more clearly.

Sensitivity analysis of nonresponse estimation would be useful to investigate how the estimates of bias might be affected by different methods.

Some groups may be of special interest; families with children, the elderly, and workers for example. Adding those interactions to all the models would be simple, but there are very many potential groups which might be of interest.

References:

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- O'Neill, G. and Dixon, J., Nonresponse Bias in the American Time Use Survey, A paper presented at the Joint Statistical Meetings, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 2005.

Figure 1:Response rates for ATUS 2004

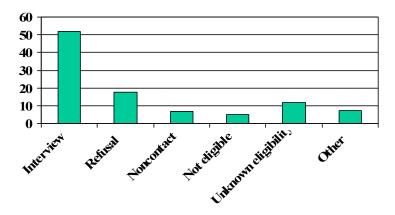


Figure 2: Refusal and Survey Estimates

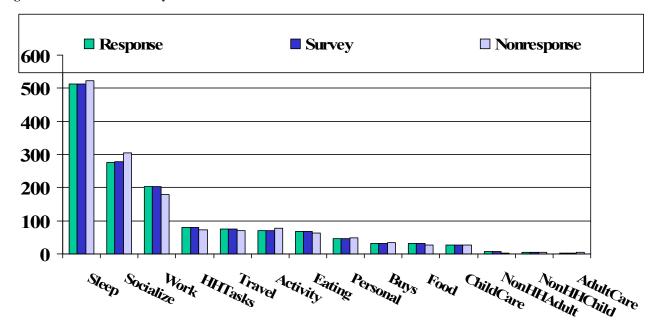


Figure 3: Noncontact and Survey Estimates

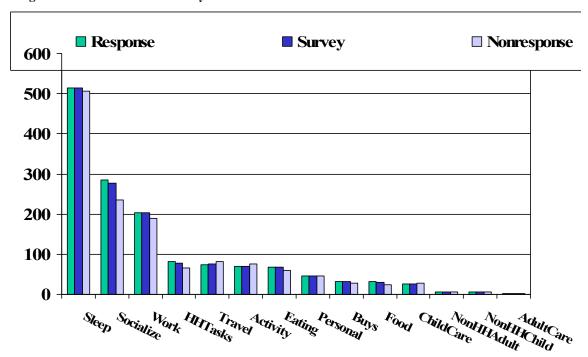
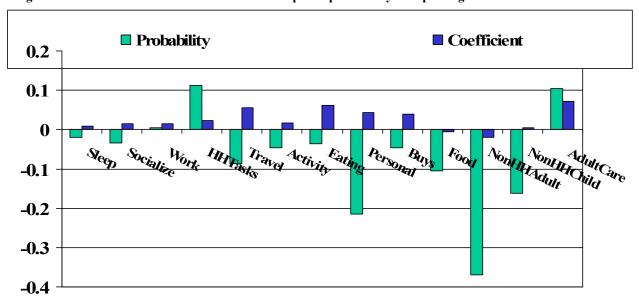


Figure 4: Bias model for the relationship between "Personal Care" and "Sleep"

Parameter Estimate		Error	t_Value	Pr> t
Intercept	21.23809949	2.01515262 10.54		.0001
Refusal	-4.68227437	4.68527894	-1.00	0.3176
Sleep -	0.03820906	0.00378105	-10.11	.0001
Reported Personal Care	0.22242033	0.00240151	92.62	.0001
Sleep*Refusal 0	.00954210	0.00857006	1.11	0.2655
Sleep(report*refusal) -	0.02047057	0.00620712	-3.30	0.0010

Figure 5: Refusal Bias and Childcare Relationships for probability of reporting





-0.07194

0.19862

Trav

Work

-0.12068

-0.14999

-0.08498

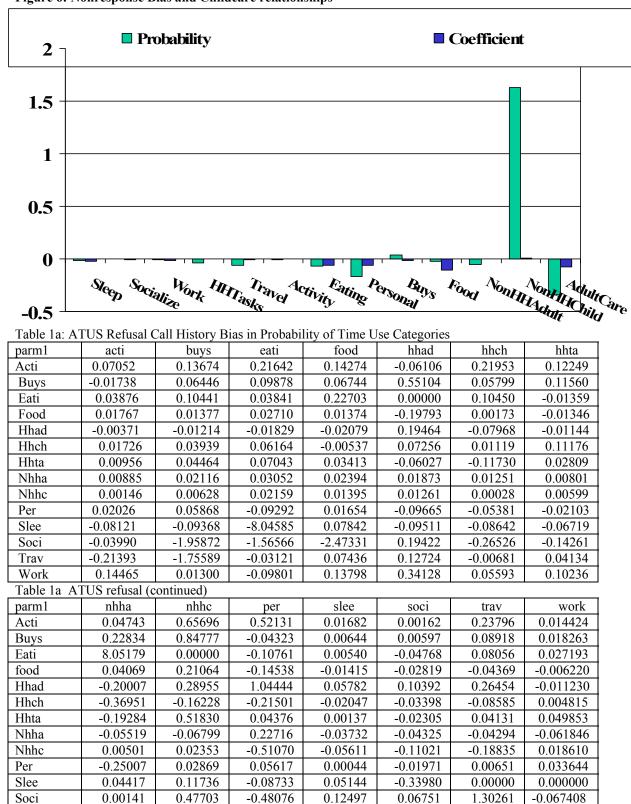
-0.19023

0.03347

0.15623

0.02988

0.13259



-0.048532

0.024086

0.03052

0.34772

Table 1b: ATUS Refusal Call History Bias in Relationship Between Time Use Categories

parm1	acti	buys	eati	food	hhad	hhch	hhta
acti	0.07052	-0.06469	-0.05886	-0.03658	-0.15477	-0.13402	-0.01627
buys	-0.01738	0.06446	-0.01032	-0.03279	0.06136	-0.01737	0.01328
eati	0.03876	0.10441	0.03841	-0.20217	-0.01460	-0.06288	0.01471
food	0.01767	0.01377	0.02710	0.01374	0.05686	-0.00321	0.00587
hhad	-0.00371	-0.01214	-0.01829	-0.02079	0.19464	-0.01639	-0.01029
hhch	0.01726	0.03939	0.06164	-0.00537	0.07256	0.01119	0.02213
hhta	0.00956	0.04464	0.07043	0.03413	-0.06027	-0.11730	0.02809
nhha	0.00885	0.02116	0.03052	0.02394	0.01873	0.01251	0.00801
nhhc	0.00146	0.00628	0.02159	0.01395	0.01261	0.00028	0.00599
per	0.02026	0.05868	-0.09292	0.01654	-0.09665	-0.05381	-0.02103
slee	-0.08121	-0.09368	-8.04585	0.07842	-0.09511	-0.08642	-0.06719
soci	-0.03990	-1.95872	-1.56566	-2.47331	0.19422	-0.26526	-0.14261
trav	-0.21393	-1.75589	-0.03121	0.07436	0.12724	-0.00681	0.04134
work	0.14465	0.01300	-0.09801	0.13798	0.34128	0.05593	0.10236

Table 1b (continued)

parm1	nhha	nhhc	per	slee	soci	trav	work
acti	-0.02324	-0.08939	0.11158	-0.03590	0.02174	0.09009	-0.012108
buys	0.00597	-0.01705	-0.03825	-0.00903	0.00596	0.04932	-0.000022
eati	-8.07367	-0.03586	0.08751	0.00874	0.04301	-0.08728	-0.011568
food	0.04101	-0.14800	-0.04728	0.01412	0.02185	0.04684	0.011345
hhad	-0.00706	-0.01236	0.00077	-0.01685	-0.00577	-0.00623	-0.007418
hhch	-0.01922	0.00418	0.04437	0.00954	0.01517	0.05480	0.015377
hhta	0.03840	0.13735	0.04362	-0.01307	0.03436	0.21137	0.016502
nhha	-0.05519	0.00941	0.04060	0.01039	0.01068	0.02610	0.007256
nhhc	0.00501	0.02353	0.00331	0.00584	-0.00140	0.00616	0.003224
per	-0.25007	0.02869	0.05617	-0.01451	0.00688	0.07046	-0.016123
slee	0.04417	0.11736	-0.08733	0.05144	0.34034	0.01226	-0.032505
soci	0.00141	0.47703	-0.48076	0.12497	0.06751	-1.50269	-0.006249
trav	-0.07194	-0.12068	-0.08498	0.03347	0.02988	0.03052	0.044441
work	0.19862	-0.14999	-0.19023	0.15623	0.13259	0.34772	0.024086

Table 2a: ATUS Noncontact Bias in Probability of Time Use Categories

parm1	acti	buys	eati	food	hhad	hhch	hhta
Acti	0.21401	-0.00726	0.37346	0.13704	0.8020	-0.04495	-0.02977
Buys	-0.05580	0.08030	-0.01546	0.13051	0.2902	0.02605	0.00016
Eati	-0.02523	-0.12419	0.09712	-0.01736	0.0469	-0.13335	-0.12224
Food	-0.05010	0.00105	-0.01651	0.00548	0.3317	-0.06224	-0.01267
Hhad	-0.03967	-0.11371	0.03206	0.02636	0.0880	0.50082	-0.09205
Hhch	-0.00783	0.03878	-0.06445	-0.02722	-0.3420	0.21893	-0.03604
Hhta	-0.07948	0.05410	-0.04677	0.23416	-0.0180	-0.02070	0.05381
Nhha	-0.08369	-0.05144	-0.02557	0.03132	3.0992	0.03529	0.25722
Nhhc	-0.00365	0.03287	0.22975	-0.20759	14.5862	-0.06233	-0.00211
Per	-0.04187	0.00765	-0.00787	0.05833	-0.1053	-0.00871	0.01295
Slee	9.62084		-9.96156	•	•		-6.08207
Soci	-0.04619	-0.39627	0.04631	1.06951	0.2183	-0.06274	-0.40970
Trav	-0.04212	0.25852	0.22060	-0.01630	1.6240	-0.05940	-0.01833
Work	-0.27433	-0.00452	0.35375	1.12726	1.6778	-0.03043	-0.07416

Table 2a: ATUS noncontact bias (continued)

parm1	nhha	nhhc	per	slee	soci	trav	work
acti	-0.31617	0.29260	0.24960	0.05087	0.24960	0.13207	0.00965
buys	-0.12255	-0.07489	-0.00615	-0.01061	0.00319	-0.06753	-0.00455
eati	-0.03809	-1.05278	-0.14129	-0.00572	-0.00929	0.02532	-0.01897
food	-0.06264	-0.11214	-0.04257	-0.01272	0.00060	-0.00239	-0.00602
hhad	-0.07721	-0.22238	-0.28754	0.00523	-0.01202	0.04744	-0.01262
hhch	-0.05501	1.62510	-0.16351	-0.01159	0.00175	-0.05935	-0.00704
hhta	-0.00359	-0.12794	0.12010	-0.01512	0.02096	-0.05777	0.00681
nhha	0.14169	0.12598	-0.05087	-0.00471	0.01449	0.02907	0.00556
nhhc	1.06197	0.21781	0.16677	0.00550	0.04302	0.11144	-0.03946
per	-0.00670	0.10979	0.16307	-0.00912	0.01480	-0.03168	-0.01431
slee			0.02224	0.15161	1.02873	-1.77488	-0.13321
soci	0.67037	-0.32498	0.57352	-0.06515	0.05978	0.22882	0.00983
trav		0.47055	-0.08318	0.00423	0.01389	0.21754	-0.01143
work	-0.41215	-0.27440	-0.57718	0.05019	0.06767	-0.22594	0.3433

Table 2b. ATUS Noncontact Bias in Relationship Between Time Use Categories

parm1	acti	buys	eati	food	hhad	hhch	hhta
acti	0.21401	-0.06560	-0.0272	-0.24204	0.12124	-0.04497	-0.01903
buys	0.01849	0.08030	0.0071	0.00199	0.04764	0.03405	0.02425
eati	0.03402	0.14727	0.0971	0.00808	-0.05193	0.14510	0.11641
food	0.02567	0.05355	0.0673	0.00548	0.05001	0.04092	0.03462
hhad	0.00218	-0.00041	0.0023	-0.00318	0.08795	0.00642	-0.00008
hhch	0.00284	-0.01272	-0.0590	-0.10413	-0.07207	0.21893	-0.00209
hhta	0.05630	0.11877	0.0623	-0.09769	0.16577	0.10122	0.05381
nhha	0.00143	-0.00020	-0.0064	-0.01353	0.00995	0.00234	0.00871
nhhc	0.00143	-0.00232	-0.0069	-0.02296	0.00562	-0.00136	-0.00303
per	0.04202	0.05243	0.0456	-0.02012	0.06868	-0.00018	-0.00941
slee	-9.56756	0.05861	10.0769	0.15980	0.08944	-0.04067	6.04416
soci	0.11500	0.53670	-0.0076	-0.98679	0.13690	0.27939	0.50464
trav	0.02303	-0.27104	-0.2140	-0.08923	-1.77499	0.02052	0.01643
work	-0.13538	-0.49664	-0.8151	-0.62052	0.02319	-0.20762	-0.18022

Table 2b(continued). ATUS Noncontact Bias in Relationship Between Time Use Categories

radio 20(continuou). Titos i tonodiaet Bias in itelationship Between Time ese eategories							
parm1	nhha	nhhc	per	slee	soci	trav	work
acti	-0.01744	0.02827	-0.10108	-0.00198	-0.10108	0.03208	-0.04232
buys	0.00794	0.02728	0.01315	0.00419	0.00958	0.03434	0.00252
eati	0.04086	1.05215	0.17269	0.02465	0.01539	-0.00607	0.02031
food	0.03123	0.00251	0.02564	0.02051	0.01746	0.08064	0.01785
hhad	0.00241	0.00248	-0.00886	0.00437	-0.00038	0.00666	-0.00060
hhch	0.00284	0.00440	-0.05706	-0.02074	-0.00480	-0.00669	-0.01381
hhta	0.05995	0.15843	0.03722	0.00589	0.03385	0.14563	0.02028
nhha	0.14169	0.00348	-0.00254	-0.00697	0.00032	0.01039	-0.00072
nhhc	0.00048	0.21781	0.00798	0.00231	-0.00185	0.01144	-0.00443
per	0.04905	-0.07587	0.16307	-0.01115	0.00127	0.02633	0.01170
slee	-0.07450	0.16167	-0.17424	0.15161	-1.03925	1.86563	0.15344
soci	-0.61388	0.31844	-0.28312	0.03990	0.05978	0.04719	0.04888
trav	-0.04283	-0.41963	-0.05563	-0.00902	-0.01438	0.21754	-0.01915
work	-0.20154	-0.11188	-0.65629	-0.04518	-0.14578	-0.26451	0.34338