



What people do, what people say they do”: Bridging the divide with REA

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- ▶ **Rapid Ethnographic Assessment - Multiple methods**
- ▶ **3 sites in Haryana, India – remote rural, rural and semi urban ; Agricultural is the main occupation**
- ▶ **39 respondents from 21 households – household selection based on main occupation, (caste), age, women with young children/care work – mostly women**
- ▶ **Trained investigators, local team of three .**
- ▶ **Time use recall - Semi-structured interviews, time schedule formats, shadowing and observation**
- ▶ **Discussion with respondents on tasks that have ‘missed’ or underreported or overestimated.**

- ▶ Differentiation between productive and other work?
Housework often intersects with other work
- ▶ Schedule and timing of house work - seasonal, presence of school/college going children/young children, occupation, female members economic status, household size, other member's availability
- ▶ Seasonal -agricultural and other seasonal work- heating water, collection of fuel wood
- ▶ Schedule, time and Intensity of work vary - Primary economic activity - Agriculture/cattle rearing; wage work, day starts accordingly
- ▶ Multiplicity of tasks - morning usually involves overlaps. For example, many women puts tea and water for bathing, begin preparatory work for breakfast, along side sweeping, moping and cleaning utensils.

- ▶ Difficulty in defining ‘main’ work based on the level of labor intensity or time consumed- over estimation of cleaning work, cattle work, water collection - those that demand physical labour
- ▶ Even as cooking is labor-intensive and more time-consuming, it did not dominate the narrative of their work or their daily routines.
- ▶ Underreporting some aspects - cleaning of kitchen after every meal - classification of task- cooking or cleaning
- ▶ Small meals and in-between work such as heating food not reflected
- ▶ The food is usually served in shifts - sometimes children or elderly especially men first and then spouse, elderly women - roti's (local bread) always made fresh
- ▶ Classification - overlaps- Cooking - serving
- ▶ Heating water not reported - where does it fall? cooking or care work

- ▶ Even when care is mainstreamed, methodologically, it remains difficult to capture
- ▶ Even though a lot of time is spent looking after children by women, it was not seen as 'work' and often done alongside other tasks.
- ▶ Huge underreporting of care work - Activities such as bathing and sometimes feeding account for periods of exclusive attention or activities that gets reported.
- ▶ Child care work diffused with other work
- ▶ How does childcare then fit in the framework of time or the notion of work itself?
- ▶ Family hierarchy found important in the understanding of housework/ care work - in-laws or the seniors in the family need to be looked after in various ways, such as serving meals, tea and water at various intervals, and some times medical care.
- ▶ Putting water in the bathroom, giving towels and clothes to men and elderly members - not counted and reflected in care work

- ▶ Distinction between ‘main’ tasks and background work. Some of these background tasks included serving food, making beds, childcare etc.
- ▶ Besides care, cleaning and organizing tasks was mostly omitted in the recollection of work.
- ▶ When asked why making beds and folding quilts etc., are not reported one response was, “Have you have gone crazy? Is this work, who even remembers these tasks? And who needs to know about all these tasks?”.
- ▶ Generational difference - Younger women tend to report more than elder women
- ▶ Even on cattle work, “I don’t count these tasks as work and never have I thought that I have a lot of work burden”- free from other routine work - seen as work done during their free time.
- ▶ Understanding of Free time : Many tasks usually done in the afternoon, or what is called the ‘free time’, when the momentum of the morning routine is not there - ironing, stitching.