

## **INTRODUCTION :**

The use of free time is different for different people and age groups. Much research has already been done with the result more and more closer to the practical life. The results can vary with geographic location, culture and nationality. Still, there are so much in common. A generalised study can bring out familiar results but it may vary in case of a particular person or location. Around the world, families take many different forms and serve different functions. The modes of entertainment include a long list and with the advancement of technology, this list is now endless.

## **FREE TIME :**

Weekly hours began to decrease in the 1970's, whereas the amount of leisure time began to increase steadily. A variation can be observed among the various age groups and genders. For example, women spend most of their free time at home, while men spend most of their free time away from home on recreational activities. Both men and women spend some of their free time working at their jobs.

There has been an increase in household expenditures related, directly or indirectly, to free time. Household expenditures in consumption categories directly or indirectly related to free time are increased.

In terms of coverage of activities, time use data can be broadly divided into two categories :

1. Exhaustive : in this category, all the activities that engage a person in a particular block of time are recorded. It can be a 12 hour slot, a 24 hour day or even a week.
2. Selective : in this category, only the time is recorded for a specified period or activity. This is most widely used for research purpose.

Various activities are recorded during a time-use survey. This include the entire range of activities that a person may spend time on during a day. It includes :

- Work : in a public or private sector. As an employer or employee.
- Eating
- Entertainment sources : television, computer, music system
- Driving
- Smoking / drinking
- Household or family responsibilities

Apart from this list, there are several other acts including “doing nothing”. Many people spend their time doing nothing or say busy without work.

An activity can be of two types :

1. Single activity : if only one activity is carried out over a particular period of time, it is known as a single activity.
2. Simultaneous activity : if an activity is carried out in parallel with one or more activities over an interval of time. Such activities are known as Simultaneous activities.

For example, a man driving a car while listening to the music is known as simultaneous activity.

The IOWA Family Interaction Rating Scale (IFRS ; Melby, R. D. Conger et. al. , 1998) is a “macro level or a global observational coding system designed to measure behavioural and emotional characteristics of the individuals, the nature of behavioural exchanges from one family member to another and between family members, and attributes regarding overall family processes. This system has been used extensively to score interaction in young-adult dyads. Recently, it is adapted for scoring behaviours of parents and young children (2-8 years of age) engaged in activity-based interactions”. This system was designed for use in longitudinal studies, across diverse age groups (like, early adolescents, young adults, middle-aged adults). An attempt was made to device scales containing consistent standards of measurement for multiple-types of relationships. Like, parent-child, husband-wife, siblings, friends and many more.

## **The Family :**

Let us consider a family for our study. Mr. Fernandez is a retired teacher, aged 67 years. His son, Edwin is a 38 years old executive in a multinational software company. Edwin's wife, Maria is a primary school teacher, aged 36 years. There are two kids in the family, 12 year old boy John and a 9 year old daughter Jessica. This family is staying in a metropolitan in the United States Of America. Every member in the family has an entirely different list of interests and priorities for their free time. We can obtain different results by studying each of them, their minds, thoughts and schedule.

## **The Senior Member Of The Family :**

Mr. Fernandez regularly go for a morning walk followed by a light exercise session with his friends. Nothing can be better then a morning walk with your friends feeling the fresh breeze of the early morning, says Mr. Fernandez. He believes that his exercise session gives him all the energy for his all day workouts. Everyday he spends around an hour on these activities. His morning walk usually starts at 6 in the morning. He is fond of his joggers park and community.

Mr. Fernandez is an active member of his jogger park community and laughter club. He regularly participates in the events like social service. Community service and plantation is his favourite past time. Apart from all these activities, his Sunday starts with the weekly prayer in the church. He feels that spirituality is an important part of a human life. One can really feel a spiritual attachment with regular prayers and visits to the sacred place. His daily schedule includes the newspaper and news channels. Sometimes he listens to music, preferably old. Taking rest for a couple of hours after his lunch is a part of his daily routine.

Most of the members of his community follows almost the same schedule. It is a standard life style followed by most the people of this age group across the world. These people gets their intimate happiness and energy in such acts which also ensures regular socialising.

## **The Working Man Of The Family :**

Like most of the professionals, Edwin is busy with his work most of the time. His weekdays are overloaded with work and doesn't allow him to spare any time for himself, family or friends. He gets up at 8 in the morning and immediately requires a newspaper and a tea. He likes to watch the news while taking his breakfast. Although his office hours are officially till 6 in the evening. But it always gets late. Finally, get back home and spends some time with his family, watching television. To achieve the success beyond all limits, one has to break all the rules, says Edwin. This is a common scenario with most of the young executives. Sometimes it seems that they don't have any choice of entertainment. But Edwin proves this wrong on his weekends. He spend a good time in the squash court on weekends. He play golf quite often with his friends most of the time during a weekend.. He suggests that Golf is the best venue for all your social and professional meetings. He never forgets to spend some time with his family. He loves to help his wife in the kitchen or playing with his kids or having a discussion with his father. His family eagerly waits for the weekends. During weekends, his evenings are full of parties and club functions. Edwin never forget miss a long drive with his wife after such parties.

During paid vacations, Edwin always try to make it with his family members. His family loves a new place every time. But Mr. Fernandez avoids all trips may be just because of his jogger's park.

Its really difficult to spare time in the corporate sector. Still, people like Edwin manage it so nicely with their smartness and determination. They have their own choice about entertainment. After their hectic office life, these people requires most of the mental piece and family can play a major role in this.

## **The Woman Of The Family :**

Life for women is full of hard work across every part on this globe. It gets worse for working women like Maria. She gets up with the sun and immediately gets busy preparing breakfast and lunch packs for the family members. Now its her turn to get ready for her work. Family comes first, says Maria with a sweet smile and a feeling of satisfaction. She gets free from her work much before her husband. But still a lot more left. She takes care of each and every family member and family requirement. Her list includes all the shopping, daily needs and goods. She never forgets to spend some time talking to her father-in-law or teaching her children. She can be strict when her kids violate the time limit for playing or watching television. In her personal life, Maria is fond of music and movies. She always try to get some time for her favourite past-times. She never misses her favourite television shows. Sometimes, she likes gossiping with her friends and society women. She is also fond of magazines, mostly fashion, movies and lifestyle. According to Maria, this keeps her calm and happy. But she rarely think to follow the latest trends. A reason behind it can be her profession of a primary school teacher. So she loves to present herself in the expected decorum. The best part of her week is the weekend with husband. She likes the long drives and loves to party late nights with her husband. This is a very

important requirement for a happy married life, resulting in better understanding and bonding of love among the two. Sometimes people forgets these small things with the increasing work load.

## **Kids :**

Kids can make us learn a lot. Especially during their entertainment hours, they forgets everything except fun. Their list starts with games, computer, television and friends. John is crazy about play station games and loves to watch wrestling. He is a bright student and a very creative boy. This is a learning stage, so we should make sure that the kids get a proper direction for growth and learning atmosphere. Television and internet can bring the wrong messages to him. But it doesn't means that we should neglect the endless advantages of these sources. Just a proper watch can avoid all the harmful effects. Bicycle, skate board, basketball and soccer are the other major source of entertainment for kids like john.

Jessica spends most of the time with her dolls and soft toys. She loves to watch cartoon movies and her favourite characters are tom and jerry. She doesn't want to go anywhere. But, likes to play with the new members of her age.

This can be observed very easily among every part of the world. Technology has enabled 'fun while learn', producing super kids. They can operate a computer at the age of 6. They are having all the information about cars and sports. They just need an atmosphere full of knowledge and opportunities for healthy mind and soul.

## Conclusion:

There are different ideas about using the free time for different age groups. Someone can like early morning walks. While, the other just hate to wake up early in the morning. The senior members can enjoy their community and sacred places while for kids, they are always busy with games, computer and television. Women always trying to manage the balance with their work and family. Whereas, the men are always busy with their office life. Everyone is having an entirely different life and approach. But they all are happy with it. It's really necessary to understand and respect other's thought. The thing you don't prefer can be liked by the other members of the family. Everyone is having his own priorities and tasks. For men, their work and office comes first. They are always busy with their own work and office life. But it doesn't means that they don't need any entertainment. It mainly depends on the availability of time. Nowadays, women have started managing excellently among work and family. Their entertainment mainly includes shopping, gossiping, coking and reading. They always try to catch their favourite television shows. They love to spend time with their family.

The senior members of the family prefers a social life following their fundamental duties and path of spirituality. From nature to god, they enjoy everything. It gives them eternal energy and peace. At this stage of life, these are the main requirements. Their entertainment does not include fast music, parties and television shows.

Kids can teach us the best aspects of entertainment. At this stage, they just want to have fun throughout the day. With all the new gadgets and technical equipments, they started liking the virtual world as their major source of entertainment.

Source of entertainment plays an important role in our life. They reduce the stress level and enable the mind to relax by bringing cheerful thought. We should take care about the proper source of entertainment. The harmful effects of virtual games on children is the latest threat. A proper source of entertainment is required to enhance the creativity, ensuring a soothing effect to the mind. Nature, music and books can be the best choice for this purpose. Value education and spiritual knowledge cant be entertaining for all age groups. There is a variation in the sources of entertainment for various members of a family. It mainly depends on the age and work load. But the basic aim is same, to bring the cheerful thoughts.



The way to manage free time can explain a lot about a person and his nature. A slight difference can be observed at different places but most of the things remain similar for a particular age group.

## **Bibliography**

United Nations April 2005 guide to producing statistics on time use:measuring paid and unpaid work