Time use among young NEETs: a developing country perspective

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Introduction

- NEET:
  - Not in Education, Employment or Training
  - Used since 1990s to describe young people who have left education but not found employment
  - Vulnerable and socially-excluded group
  - Term is widely used in Europe and East Asia, less so in South Africa (SA)
- We investigate how young NEETs in SA allocate their time
- Study is mainly descriptive:
  - Create typologies of NEETs
  - Compare and explore their time use

Literature

- NEET status is associated with both economic and social problems:
  - Social exclusion and failure to meet social expectations
    - Depression, substance abuse, behavioural and other mental problems, early parenthood (Benjet et al., 2012; Chen, 2011; Marshall, 2012)
  - Sustained unemployment
    - Future occupational scarring (Ralston et al., 2016; Robson and Team, 2008)
- Most studies focus on determinants or consequences of NEET status

Research questions

1. What do young people do with their days, if they are not involved in work or study?

2. Do certain types of NEETs contribute to the social or economic wellbeing of their households or communities in other currently-unmeasured ways, despite not being employed?

South African context

- SA is a middle income developing country
  - But very high levels of inequality
- High unemployment rate (~25% among all adults)
  - Especially high among youth
- NEET prevalence is high and rising:
  - 30% of age 18-24 were NEET in 1995
  - Rising to 45% in 2011 (Spaull, 2013)
- Increase in completion of secondary schooling, but
  - Limited access to higher education
  - Poor study-to-work transition rates
- No existing studies that explore time use of NEETs in SA

Hypotheses

1. Female NEETs are more likely than male NEETs to spend considerable time on unpaid housework and care work.

    - gendered social roles and cultural expectations

2. NEET individuals spend some of their time trying to become non-NEETs.

    - negative social and economic consequences of NEET status

Data

- We use data from the 2010 SA Time Use Survey (TUS)
  - This is most recent SA TUS (first survey in 2000)
  - Data collected by Stats SA
- Sample size of approximately 22 000 households
  - Up to 2 household members completed time use diary (N = 39 018)
  - Activities collected for each 30 minute time slot of the preceding 24-hour day
  - Collects data on multiple activities, but not who else is present or SWB
- TUS also includes a module that collects demographic information for all household members
- Weights used to correct for non-response, sample design

Classification of activities in SA TUS

SNA production	Work in establishments	waged employment, domestic work, and looking for work
	Primary production	subsistence farming, and collecting fuel and water
	Other production not for establishments	home-based production, informal street trading, informal services
Non-SNA production	Household maintenance	housework and shopping
	Care of persons in the household	looking after children, the sick, elderly and disabled
	Community service to non-household members	caring for non-household members, cooking for collective occasions, and volunteering
Non-productive	Learning	attendance at school, doing homework, and attending work-related courses
	Social and cultural	socialising, cultural and religious activities, sports
	Mass media use	watching television, listening to the radio and visiting the library
	Personal care	sleeping, eating and drinking, washing and dressing, and receiving medical care

- Youth are classified into NEET and non-NEET:
  - We use 18-30 age range (following OECD guidelines)
  - Classified as NEET if:
    1. Not employed using standard labour market status classification questions, AND
    2. Do not record any time spent in learning
- Observations excluded:
  - All weekend days
  - Atypical days due to being on leave from work, or because it was a school or university holiday
- Analysis sample:
  - 8 398 individuals: 3 965 NEET and 4 433 non-NEET
  - When weighted, 48.5% of this age group are NEET

Descriptive statistics

		NEET	Not NEET
Economic status	Employed	0.000	0.684***
	Searching unemployed	0.381	0.038***
	Non-searching unemployed	0.177	0.026***
	Economically inactive	0.442	0.253***
Highest education	Secondary completed	0.292	0.329***
	Tertiary	0.042	0.120***
Demographics	Age	23.538	23.969***
	African/Black	0.893	0.769***
	Coloured	0.063	0.092***
	Indian/Asian	0.011	0.038***
	White	0.032	0.101***
Location	Urban formal	0.484	0.626***
Household structure	Number of young children	0.936	0.607***
	Number of older children	1.075	0.696***
	Number of employed adults	0.285	0.386***
	Number of pension aged women	0.183	0.122***
	Sample	3 965	4 433
	Population	4 609 826	4 893 614

Mean time use per activity (minutes), by NEET status

	NEET	Not NEET
Work in establishments	18.9	321.2***
Primary production	22.1	6.9***
Other production	3.2	15.0***
Household maintenance	232.8	103.0***
Care for persons	38.5	11.7***
Community service	5.8	2.8**
Learning activities	0	117.5***
Social/cultural activities	155.1	82.0***
Mass media	171.4	105.6***
Personal care	792.3	674.3***
Sample	3 965	4 433
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Time in SNA production by NEETs (minutes), by gender
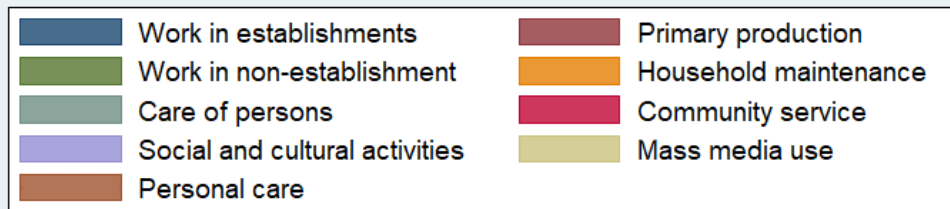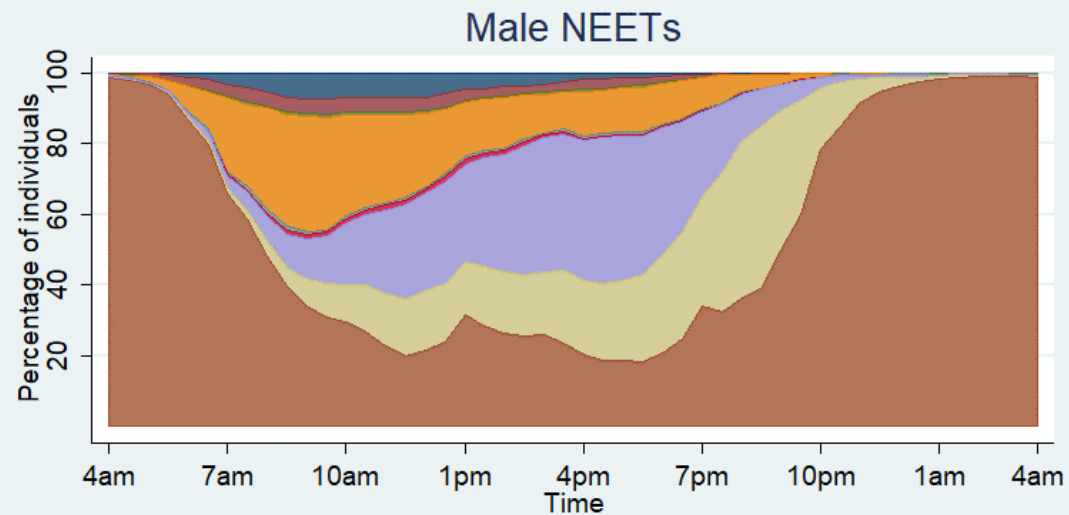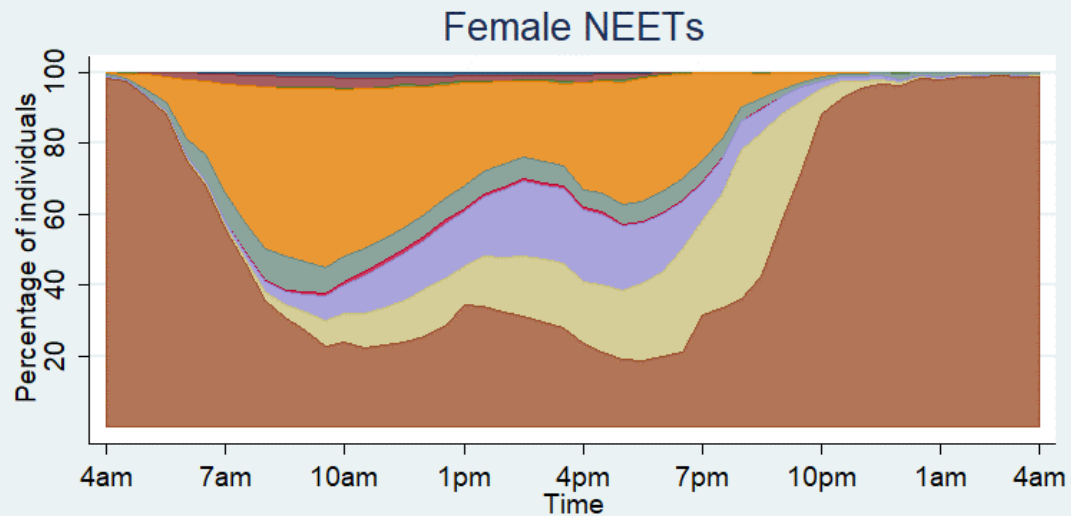
	Female NEET	Male NEET
Work in establishments:		
Seeking employment and related activities	4.6	18.6***
Travel to/from work and seeking employment	3.0	8.2***
Primary production:		
Crop farming and market/kitchen gardening	4.3	10.2**
Collecting water	5.7	3.4**
Tending animals and fish farming	1.9	6.8**
Other production:		
Food processing and preservation	0.6	0.5
Building and extensions of dwelling	0.3	1.4
Sample	2 384	1 581
Population	2 689 156	1 920 670

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NEETs

Non-NEETs

Legend:
- Work in establishments
- Work in non-establishment
- Care of persons
- Learning
- Mass media use
- Primary production
- Household maintenance
- Community service
- Social and cultural activities
- Personal care

Activity distribution plots, by NEET status

Female NEETs

Male NEETs

Legend:
- Work in establishments
- Primary production
- Work in non-establishment
- Household maintenance
- Care of persons
- Community service
- Social and cultural activities
- Mass media use
- Personal care

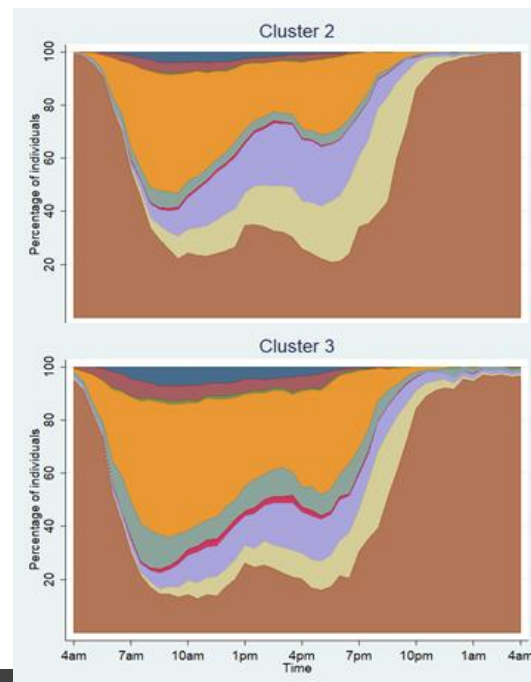*Activity distribution plots for NEETs only, by gender*

Analysis methodology

- We create a typology of NEETs, using sequencing and cluster analysis
  - Create a sequence of activities for each NEET individual
  - Use agglomerative hierarchical clustering to group sequences that are similar to each other into clusters
- Optimal number of clusters with our dataset is three
- Within clusters:
  - Examine time use
  - Describe individuals' characteristics
- The methodology closely follows Grapsa and Posel's (2016) study of time use of the elderly in SA
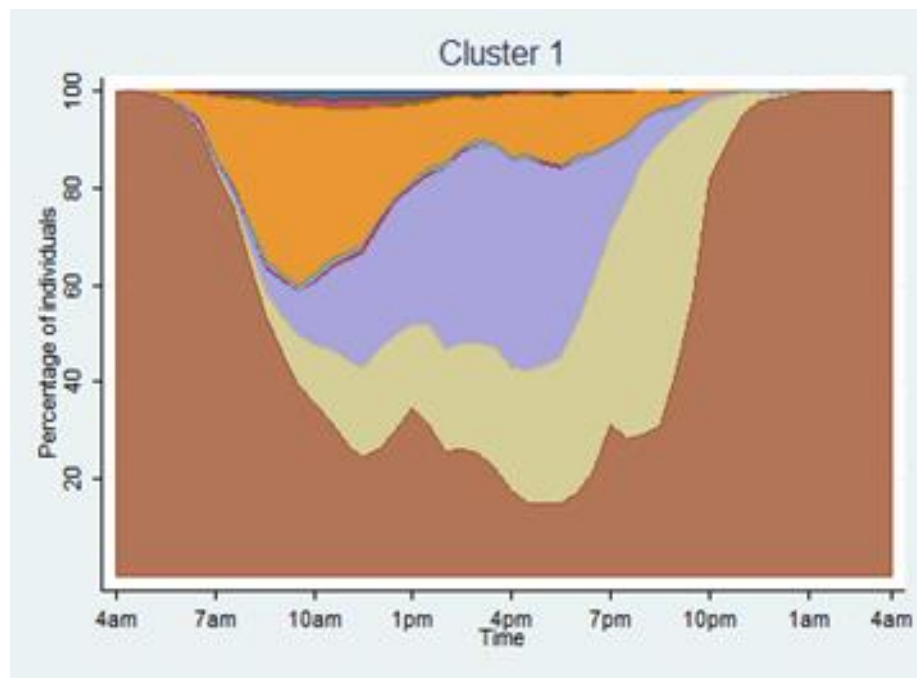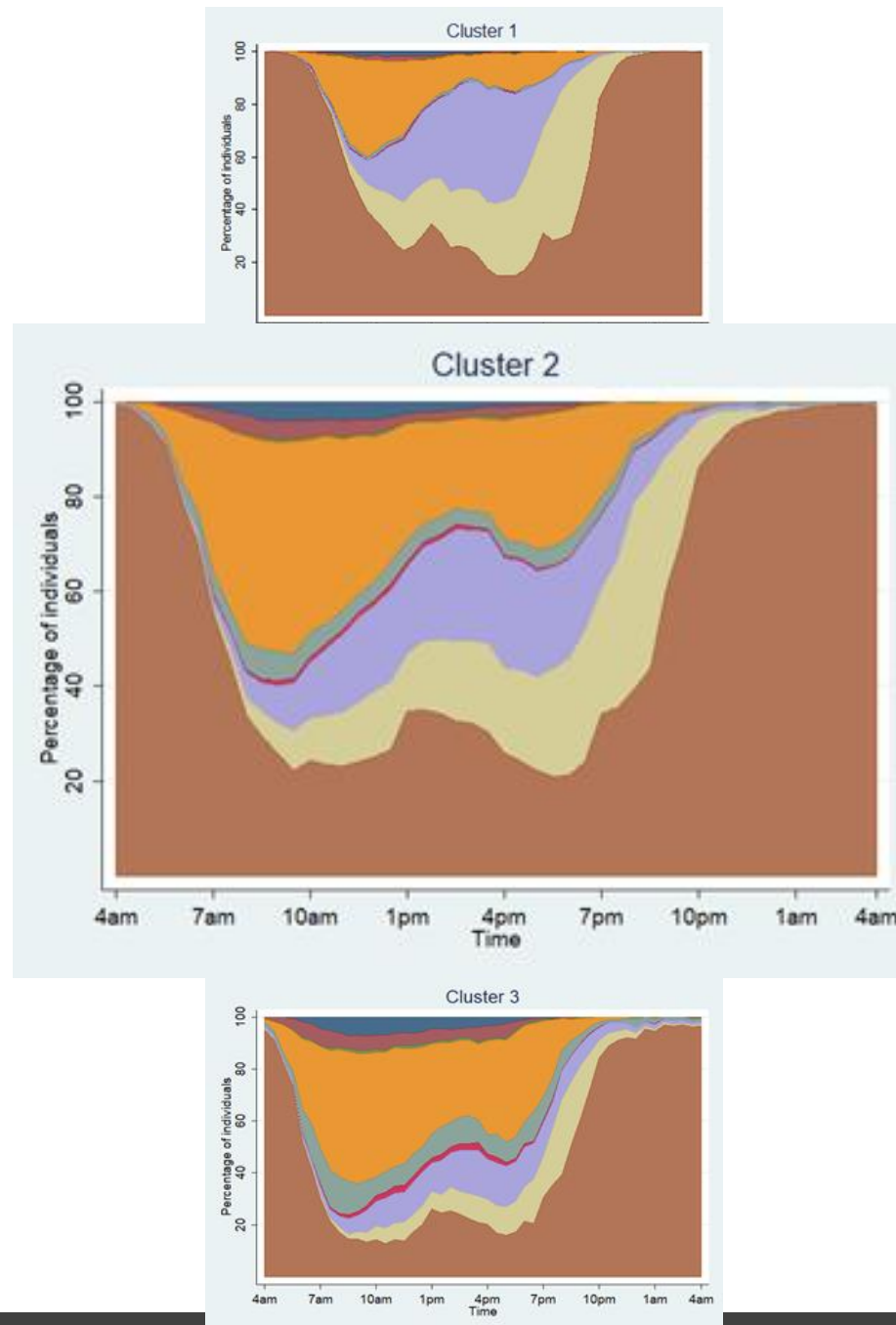
Cluster 1

- 'Unproductive' NEETs
- Contribute little to their households
- Personal care dominates (14 hrs)
- Spend their days using mass media and socialising (7 hrs)

Legend:
- Work in establishments
- Primary production
- Work in non-establishment
- Household maintenance
- Care of persons
- Community service
- Social and cultural activities
- Mass media use
- Personal care

Cluster 2

- 'Household helper' NEETs
- Spend 2.5 hours less on personal care and leisure than Cluster 1
- Spend some time maintaining the household and caring for others

Work in establishments
Primary production
Work in non-establishment
Household maintenance
Care of persons
Community service
Social and cultural activities
Mass media use
Personal care

Cluster 3

- 'Hard working' NEETs
- Devote most of their days to wellbeing of their households (7 hrs, incl. 92 min on carework)
- Also the most involved in work-related activities (90 mins)
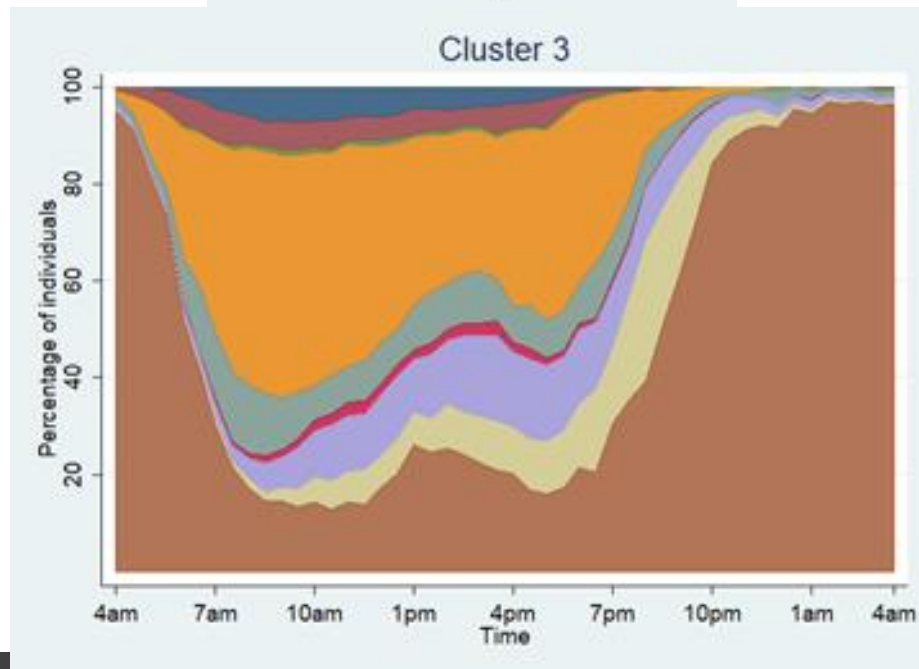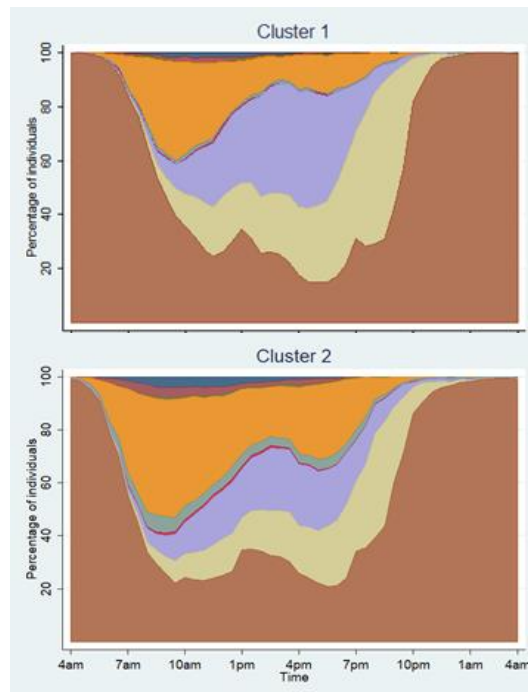
- Cluster 1 activities:
  – Mostly involved in personal care and leisure

- Cluster 3 activities:
  – contribute directly to household wellbeing (e.g. care work),

    or

  – might help them to transition out of NEET status (job search)

- Who are the NEET individuals in these clusters?

Characteristics of NEETs, by cluster membership

		Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3
Demographics	Male	0.611	0.356***	0.236***
	Age	22.966	23.654***	24.262***
	African/Black	0.854	0.900*	0.949***
	Coloured	0.086	0.057**	0.039***
	Indian/Asian	0.017	0.011	0.001**
	White	0.043	0.032	0.011*
Educ	Less than complete secondary	0.637	0.670**	0.709***
	Secondary completed	0.322	0.287	0.249**
	Tertiary	0.041	0.043	0.042
Household	Urban formal	0.573	0.459***	0.393***
	Asset quintile 1	0.157	0.273***	0.351***
	Asset quintile 5	0.182	0.131*	0.085***
	Number of young children	0.599	1.016***	1.324***
	Number of not employed adults	2.052	1.829*	1.741*
	Employs domestic help	0.047	0.018*	0.005***
	Sample	1237	2040	688
	Population	1 468 044	2 356 450	785 332

- Behavioural differences in time use between clusters:
  - Strongly associated with the diversity in the demographic characteristics of both the NEETs themselves and their households.
- NEETs in cluster 1 ('unproductive'):
  - Younger, most likely to be male
  - Live in relatively wealthier households containing fewer young children
  - NEET status may be a luxury
- NEETs in cluster 3 ('hard workers')
  - More young children and fewer adults, so take on more care work and home production
  - Live in poorer households: also searching for work
- Multinomial regression analysis: confirms that gender, number of children, and household wealth are key correlates of cluster membership

Discussion

- Very substantial gender differences in time allocation:
  - Previously shown among all adults in SA (Budlender, 2010; Grapsa and Posel, 2016)
  - Shown here for the 18 to 30 age group
  - Suggests that traditional gender roles are persistent
- Leisure:
  - Dominant among most economically advantaged and male NEETs
- Household duties and unpaid care work:
  - Dominant among most disadvantaged and female NEETs
  - NEET status of these individuals may be a necessity for wellbeing of their households

- Relevance for future employment prospects:
  - Male NEETs:
    - Significantly more likely than female NEETs to be actively searching for a job, and
    - Spend more time on job search activities
  - Female NEETs:
    - Presence of young children act particularly as a constraint for job search
- As a result, women are more likely to persist in NEET status:
  - Face negative long term individual consequences
  - But, provide unpaid labour that supports the household
- Better measures of the value of unpaid work would help to value the economic contributions that such individuals make.
- Further research: explore trends in NEET time use, over period of growing NEET prevalence.