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WHO ESCAPES? THE RELATION OF  
CHURCH-GOING AND OTHER BACKGROUND  
FACTORS TO THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
PERFORMANCE OF BLACK MALE YOUTHS  
FROM INNER-CITY POVERTY TRACTS

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ABSTRACT

Using data from the NBER survey of Inner City youth and the National longitudinal survey of young men this paper examines the effect of church-going and other aspects of the background of youth on their allocation of time, socially deviant behavior, and labor force behavior.

1) Church-going is associated with substantial differences in the behavior of youths, and thus in their chances to 'escape' from inner city poverty. It affects allocation of time, school-going, work activity, and the frequency of socially deviant activity.

2) The diverse background factors examined in this study have different effects on various outcomes. Their differential effects suggest true causal impacts, with for example, the proportion of a youth's family working having positive effects on his labor market activity but not on other activities.

3) In addition to church going, the background factors that most influence 'who escapes' are whether other members of the family work and whether the family is on welfare.

4) The allocation of time and activities by youth is significantly influenced by market opportunities (or perceptions thereof). Those youths who believe it is easy to find a job are more likely to engage in socially productive activities than others. Youths who see many opportunities to make money illegally are less likely to engage in socially productive activities than other youths.

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## Who Escapes?

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The 1970s was a period of severe economic plight for inner-city black youth that went beyond the worst nightmares of even pessimistic social analysts. Rates of unemployment of young black men rose to unprecedented levels; labor participation rates fell; and as a consequence the ratio of employment to population plummeted to extraordinary low levels. In 1980, even before the major recession of the early 1980s, the unemployment rate stood at 39% for 16-19 year old black men and at 24% for 20-24 year old black men compared to 16% and 11% for 16-19 year old and 20-24 year old white men, respectively. Civilian labor participant rates were 32%, 56% and 79% for black men aged 16-17, 18-19 and 20-24 compared to 54%, 74% and 87% for white men in the same age brackets.<sup>1</sup> Over the same period, crime rates rose among black youths, and problems of drug addiction and alcoholism worsened.

Many observers in both the academic community and in the black community expressed serious concern about the potential loss of a large portion of an entire generation of inner city youths to the labor force and normal society.<sup>2</sup>

While the number of youths who lacked jobs was unprecedented, a significant number still managed to surmount the socio-economic problems facing them to advance in the society. Some did well in high school and went on to college. Some obtained work and held down regular well-paying jobs in the mainstream economy. Some escaped the often pathological environment of inner city slums.

What are the characteristics of these youths? How important are personal and family factors in their surmounting the burden of being raised in the worst slums in the country? What determines 'who escapes'?

This paper examines these questions with data from the 1979-80 National Bureau of Economic Research-Mathematica survey of inner-city black youth,

(NBER) and from the 1979-81 National Longitudinal Survey of Young Men, (NLS). The NBER Survey had the advantage of gathering information on youths' allocation of time in a day and on socially deviant behavior (crime, drug use) in addition to standard school and work questions. The NLS data permits comparison of young blacks and whites not possible with the NBER Survey.

The primary finding of the study is that even in relatively homogenous inner city poverty areas there is enough diversity in the measured backgrounds of youths for certain aspects of youths' background to provide remarkably good predictions about 'who escapes'. There is also some indication that at least part of the background-achievement relation among young black men represents a 'true' causal link rather than a sorting of youths by background and achievement.

More specifically, ensuing empirical analysis shows:

1) The principal variable on which the paper focuses, church-going, is associated with substantial differences in the behavior of youths, and thus in their chances to "escape" from inner city poverty. It affects allocation of time, school-going, work activity, and the frequency of socially deviant activity. While it is difficult to determine the causal links by which church-going affects behavior--in particular, whether church-going is simply an indication that youths are "good kids" or whether it truly alters behavior--the pattern of statistical results suggests that at least some part of the church-going effect is the result of an actual causal impact. At the least, the effect of church-going is not due to general "good attitudes" by church-going youth nor to those youths having better market opportunities than others.

2) The diverse background factors examined in this study do not have

comparable effects on various outcomes. Some significantly influence certain outcomes, and not others, which rejects the notion that all the background factors measure is a single unobserved family-person heterogeneity factor. Indeed, the differential effects of the background factors suggest true causal impacts, with for example, the proportion of a youth's family working having positive effects on his labor market activity but not on other activities.

3) In addition to church-going, the background factors that most influence 'who escapes' are whether other members of the family work and whether the family is on welfare. By contrast, youths from homes in which both parents were present at age 14 do only marginally better than those from homes in which only one parent is present at that age, implying that by itself, the female headed home is not a major deterrent to socioeconomic success. In addition, having some males in the household who are not employed appears to have negative effects on some outcomes.

4) Youths' allocation of time and other activities are significantly influenced by market opportunities (or perceptions thereof), with those who believe it is easy to find a job if they had to find one more likely to engage in socially productive activities than others, and youths who see many opportunities to make illegal money less likely to engage in socially productive activities than other youths.

The paper is divided into four sections. Section one describes the outcome and background variables on which the analysis focuses, in particular the unique NBER Survey data on the allocation of time by inner city black youths. Section two presents the results of least squares regressions linking the outcome variables to various measures of the background of youths.

Section three probes the possible routes by which church-going influences behavior, in particular whether church-going operates through (or stands for) religious (other) attitudes and general market factors. Section four discusses the possible causal significance of the estimated links -- that is, whether the estimates reflect the "true" impact of the independent variables or whether they reflect sorting or selectivity of youths by background and outcome.

## I. Outcome and Background Variables

The first step in evaluating the socioeconomic success of inner city black and other youth is to develop a set of outcome variables relevant to their position in life. Commonly used variables, such as school-work activities questions on the Current Population Survey, while useful, are far from adequate in judging youth. Classifications like "out-of-the-labor-force" or "unemployed" provide little information on the activities of youth: they tell us what youths are not doing with their time, rather than what they are doing. Even when youths report themselves employed at a given wage, the information is potentially less valuable than comparable information for adults. This is because of the high mobility and change in status early in the work life.

Accordingly, this paper will treat several nonconventional measures of what youths do (two measures of their allocation of time, and several measures of deviant activity), as well as standard outcome variables.

### Time allocation

Since in principle the allocation of a youth's time provides the most complete measure of his behavior, particular attention will be given to the daily activity and monthly time line questions in the NBER Survey. In the daily activity module of the questionnaire, youths were asked what their main and other activities were in a 24-hour weekday.<sup>3</sup> Responses to this question provide us with our best picture of what out-of-school not employed youth are doing with themselves. In the monthly time line the principal activity of youths in each month over the past year was organized on a monthly basis.<sup>4</sup> Responses to this question provide us with our best picture of the changing activities of youth over time.

Figure 1 summarizes the responses to the two time allocation questions for

all youths, for out-of-school youths (at the time of the survey) and for not-employed out-of-school youth. Taking the average allocation of months first, panel A shows the division of main activities among employment, school, looking for work, and other activities. For the sample as a whole just one-third of the months are spent at work, just about a third in school or in training programs, and nearly a third in other activities, primarily looking for work. For the out of school youths, only 42% of months are spent at work and 9% at school/training, leaving half of their time in other activities. Most disturbing of all, those not employed and out of school at the time of the survey spent just over 20% of their months in the previous year at work and 35% in the fruitless search for work.

The daily diary questions asked youths their main activity during and, also, as noted, other activities they did at the same time. There are several ways in which one might analyse dual use of time. For descriptive purposes, we have simply recorded allocation of time across main activities (panel B) and the allocation of time across main and supplementary activities (panel C) in the figure. Both sets of figures show that, on a daily basis, proportionately less time is spent on earning or learning or on searching for a job than is indicated in the monthly time line. This is because these activities, while being the major activity in a month, do not take up all of the youths' time. For the out of school not employed youths, no more than 2 hours a day can be classified as likely to be socially productive. The major activity is "hanging out/talking with friends" and "watching TV/movies." While from one perspective these are consumption activities, the youth are not the idle rich. They are in the part of their life cycle where investments



in human capital, either in school or on the job, are traditionally made for long term economic advancement.

Other outcome measures

Table 1 records the mean values of some standard measures of socioeconomic outcomes such as unemployment and wages, and of selected measures of deviant behavior, notably criminal activity, drug, and excessive alcohol usage, in the NBER Survey and, where available, for black and white youths in the NLS Survey as well.

The data on labor force status show, as one might expect, that the NBER youths are in a markedly worse position in the job market than all black youths and all white youths. 38% of the NBER sample were employed in the survey week; and just 48% of the out-of-school group were employed. Consistent with studies based on Current Population Survey data (Freeman and Medoff), the NBER data show that the low percentage of youths working is due as much to low labor participation as to high unemployment. By contrast the wage figures for 1979-1980 show their wages differ only modestly from the wages paid other youths in 1980, with much of the observed difference due to the difference in periods covered (late 1979-early 1980 in the NBER vs late 1980 in the NLS).

Perhaps the most surprising statistics in the table relate to socially deviant behavior. While the youths in the NBER show considerable illegal activity, drug-taking, and drinking, both blacks and white youths in the NLS show as much or more such activity.<sup>5</sup> Some of this is explicable (whites have more to spend on drugs) but other differences are hard to understand and may reflect self-reporting biases for reasons that are difficult to understand. Some studies of self-reporting of socially deviant activities show an

underestimate by black youths, (Hindelang), which might explain the results in the NBER, but not the high proportions of crime reported in the NLS.

Finally, the evidence on income and work over the year shows some differences and similarities among the groups. For all youths, annual incomes are relatively similar, and NLS incomes are close to the weekly consumption expenditures reported in the NBER survey ( $\$4025 \approx 83 \times 52$ ). For all youths out of school and not employed the main difference is between blacks and whites in the NLS, while the NBER sample has comparable earnings to the NLS whites. For all youths out of school the lack of employment among blacks in both the NBER and NLS surveys produces lower incomes compared to that for white youths.

In judging the earnings and consumption figures, it is important to remember that the vast majority of the black youths in the NBER sample are living with their parent(s), so that housing and at least some food and clothing are presumably paid for by the parent. From this perspective, the incomes and spending are of a magnitude comparable to that of college students (ignoring tuition charges). The problem is less one of low income for persons in the relevant age group as one of lack of productive allocation of time, as indicated in figure 1.

#### Measures of background

Most studies of the impact of background factors on socio-economic achievement focus on the education or occupation of the individual's parents and on whether they are brought up in a one-parent (female-headed) or two parent family. Some look at family income. Some look at related measures of the position of the family: whether the family is on welfare or resides in a public housing project.<sup>6</sup> The NBER survey supplements these standard

variables with information on two other aspects of background which may be important for inner-city youth from low poverty backgrounds: whether or not other members of the family are engaged in fruitful activity, notably working;<sup>7</sup> and whether or not the youth is involved with potentially supportive social institutions, in particular, organized religion in the form of the church. Church-going differs from the usual family measures of background because it reflects the individual's relation to a broader institution.<sup>8</sup>

For this reason, and because of the importance of the black church in the black community,<sup>9</sup> I pay particular attention to the impact of church-going on the achievement of black youths in this study.

Table 2 records the mean level of the various background variables of interest in the NBER and NLS samples. By virtually all of the measures, the ordering of the groups of youths is the same: the inner city black youths have the most disadvantaged background, the black youths in the NLS are at a somewhat lesser disadvantage, while the whites in the NLS have the most advantaged background. For example, just 43% of the youths in the inner city sample report living with both parents at age 14 compared to 58% of black youths in the NLS and 84% of white youth in the NLS. Nearly a third of the NBER group reside in public housing projects compared to 10% of all black youths and just 17% of all white youths in the NLS. Church-going shows a similar pattern, with proportionately more inner city youths never attending and fewer attending once a week or more than other youths. In short, there is no doubt that by measures of background, the inner city youths in the NBER are the most disadvantaged, far more so than the average black youth.

The next question is: do the background variables, particularly church-going, affect the outcomes described earlier?

## II. Impact of Background

To determine whether or not background factors are important determinants of which young inner city blacks 'escape' from the potential pathologies of the inner city slums, I estimated least squares regressions linking the outcome variables to the background variables. Such regressions do not, it is important to recognize, tell us whether background factors 'cause' outcomes or whether good (bad) background and good (bad) outcomes go together for other reasons -- such as a sorting of heterogeneous persons/families. It does not imply that changes in a background variable will cause changes in an outcome. To draw such an implication requires a structural model of causality and treatment of possible sorting and other noncausal interpretations of the data. Least squares regressions are, however, essential to any such more sophisticated probe of the data.

Because none of the background variables are categorical, the way in which one measures the responses can affect results (see Grether). If one gives the variable a numeric scale (6=highest response, 1=lowest, and so on), monotonic transformations can, under some circumstances, alter regression results significantly. If one enters the variable as a set of dummies taking value 1 if the response is in the category and 0 otherwise, one can get a confusing number of coefficients. What I have done is to transform the categorical variables into Z-scores, on the assumption that they reflect an underlying normal distribution.<sup>10</sup> This is done for the church-going variable in this section and for church-going and several other variables in section 3.

### Time allocation

Table 3 summarizes the results of regressions linking the percentage of daily time and percentage of months spent on "socially productive" as

opposed to "socially nonproductive" activities. In the hours calculations "productive time" includes the following activities: working, searching for work, travelling to work, school-going, housework, and reading; "nonproductive time" includes: "hanging out, playing games, watching TV/movies, going to parties, listening to music, getting high." In the month calculations, productive time includes: months spent on a job, training, or in school; nonproductive time includes: months spent in jail, unemployed, and so forth.

The calculations reveal powerful and statistically significant impacts for two of the background variables on youths' allocation of time. On the positive side, church-going invariably raises the amount of time a youth spends on productive activity while on the negative side, coming from a welfare home invariably reduces the amount of time spent on productive activity. The other background variables have more mixed impacts on the time allocation of youths, with the proportion of males in the household generally having a negative impact on time allocation while the proportion of the household working has in several cases a positive effect, due (as we shall see) in large measure to its impact on work activity.

Differences in time allocation between productive and nonproductive activities reflect specific outcomes, such as committing illegal acts, going to school, working, and so forth. By examining the effect of church-going and of other variables on specific outcomes, we can get a better picture of the routes by which the variables operate and some insights into their possible causal significance. Accordingly, I estimated the relation between the various background variables and socially deviant activities, school-going, and for out of school youths, labor market activity.

Table presents the estimated coefficients, standard errors, and percentage impacts of church-going on the various outcomes. What stands

out in the table is that church-going has a powerful negative impact on socially deviant activity and a positive impact on school-going, but only a modest positive impact on employment or time worked and relatively little impact on wage rates or annual income. The pattern of results is sufficiently comparable across the NBER and NLS samples to give us considerable confidence in the result. It suggests that the major effect of church-going is influencing or reinforcing the youths decision to allot his time to activities with a future payoff and less in improving his immediate labor market position. By increasing the time youths spend in school, church-going ultimately will raise earnings and employment; it does not have that strong an effect on the employment/earnings of current out-of-school youths.

Table 5 summarizes the estimated effects of other background variables in terms of + or - signs for whether the variable has/does not have a reasonably significant impact ( $t > 1.5$ ) on the outcome measure. The pattern of signs reveals some interesting relationships. First, and most important, note that the various background factors have differential effects on different variables. Some, like being a gang member have a strong effect on deviant activity and may indeed be regarded as part-and-parcel of that activity while others, notably proportion of adults working in the household, have rather mixed effects, increasing deviant activity while also improving the labor market position of the youths. Even the variable with the most consistent pattern, coming from a welfare home, does not affect the wage rate. What this suggests is that the results do not reflect a single background factor ("good" versus "bad" family backgrounds) but rather that the various background factors operate in distinct and sensible ways. For instance, a family with a high proportion of adults working is likely to provide less

supervision of youth, permitting the increased socially deviant activity obtained but at the same time is likely to provide the labor market contacts which help the youth in the job market (see Rees and Gray).

in sum, the evidence shows that church-going and other background factors have generally substantial and plausible effects on outcomes but that these effects are not uniform across outcome variables. Instead they are concentrated on some outcomes, giving plausibility to more complex and causal analyses of the determinants of "who escapes".

### III. What Are the Routes of Impact?

Finding strong linkages between background variables and who escapes is just the first step in analyzing the impact of background on socio-economic outcomes. An important issue, which will help us interpret the findings, relates to the routes by which the background factors affect behavior. Do they operate by influencing attitudes, as social psychologists suggest, or do they operate by altering market opportunities, through contacts, references, and the like? In this section I examine these questions using a simple intervening variable path model. I introduce into the regressions of tables 3 and 4 two types of intervening variables: (1) variables measuring attitudes or motivation (which can be interpreted as reflecting the utility function of economics); and (2) variables measuring labor market opportunities. Then I examine the change in coefficients on church-going and the other background factors. If these new variables are significant intervening variables, the coefficients on church-going and other factors will decline. Alternatively, however, it could be argued that declines in the coefficients imply that the previous regressions give spurious results: the attitude/market variables were omitted factors which belonged in the equation in the first place. At the least, putting in a variety of attitude and market variables into the equation provides a further test of our conclusion that church-going and some of the other background factors have, indeed, important connections to outcome.

To measure attitudes I have taken eight questions from the NBER survey.<sup>11</sup> The most important question used is "how strong a role does religion play in your life?", as it represents a related but alternative variable to church-going. To the extent that church-going either operates through religious



attitudes or is itself dependent on it, religious attitudes should enter significantly and greatly reduce the impact of church-going. To the extent that church-going reflects other forces, such as community connections, reinforcement of modes of behavior, church-going should remain an important factor.

Measuring market opportunities is difficult because, exclusive of the city of residence (already in the calculations), the only information available relates to the individual's views of the market and it is necessary to assume that these views reflect the actual market rather than some mix of attitudes and reality. The two most important questions which I use here are: "How often do you have a chance to make money illegally?" which I have coded 1 if the person answered a few times a day/a few times a week and 0 otherwise; and "What do you think your chances of getting a job at this time?" which I have coded as a Z-score variable. In addition, I included three other measures of the market in the calculations.<sup>12</sup>

The effect of introducing the vectors of intervening attitude and market variables on the estimated impact of church-going is examined in Table 6, which records coefficients of church-going with and without the intervening variables in the regressions and the coefficients on religious attitudes and on the two major market variables. The regressions include all the other variables used in tables 3 and 4 and the full set of attitude and market variables listed in the table note.

There are three notable findings. First is the general continued effect of church-going on outcomes in the presence of the additional variables. Except for illegal activities and months employed, both of which were reduced largely by the introduction of the market variables, the inclusion

of additional variables barely affected the coefficients on church-going. Similarly, the effect of other background variables was also almost always not reduced by the addition of the attitude and market variables, suggesting that the various sets of factors operate essentially orthogonally. Second, note the general insignificance of the religious attitudes in the equations (a result consistent with Datcher-Loury and Loury). It is the act of church-going, not religious attitudes, which affects behavior. This suggests that it is the role of church as a social institution which underlies our statistical findings. Third, our market variables have extremely significant and powerful effects on outcomes. Youths who have many chances to make money illegally spend fewer hours/months on socially productive activities, engage in more socially deviant activities and work less while, by contrast, youths who think jobs are easy to find spend more hours on productive activities, notably working.

The continued impact of church-going and the other background variables, despite addition of 'intervening variables' is in some ways encouraging and in other ways discouraging. It is encouraging because it means the relationships persist despite changes in specification. It is discouraging because it means we have not been able to pin down the routes by which the factors affect behavior.

IV. Conclusion

"Those regressions impress me. Now I know what to do to improve the economic position of inner city black youth. Force them to go to church. Kick their families off welfare. Get jobs for their family members." -- Simple Activist

"These regressions tell us nothing about what to do. All they show is that there are good families and good kids and bad families and bad kids in the inner city. The good ones go to church. The bad ones live on welfare. The good ones will be good no matter what; the bad ones will be bad no matter what. Put a bad kid in church and he'll just disrupt everything. There's nothing in the analysis that says what to do." -- Simple Do-Nothingist

The next question is to what extent, if at all, the estimated effects of background variables reflect true causal impacts as opposed to a sorting of individuals and their families by unobservable "good" and "bad" characteristics. To resolve the issue requires a genuine experiment in which one changes the relevant background variable and observes ensuing behavior. For instance, one could provide money to black churches to expand their membership and see whether the youths attracted to the churches altered their behavior. In the absence of such experiments, it is difficult to make more than tentative inferences about causality. Even longitudinal data, which is widely used to control for fixed unobservables, may not suffice because of the possible endogeneity of changes: a family which on its own accord leaves welfare, a youth who on his own accord stops going to church, is likely to behave differently than the randomly selected experimental family/person in the ideal experiment. Difficult though the causal issue may be, it is incumbent to address it, if only to highlight the shortcomings of causal inferences from survey data of the type used here.

In this section I probe, albeit tentatively, some aspects of the relation

among church-going and the other variables to see if it is possible "to wrest some intelligence from less than ideal information and to cope with intrinsically refractory problems of conceptualization and model specification" (Duncan and Featherman, p. 230).

One potential alternative to the section 2 and 3 analyses of church-going is to look at it as a dependent variable, causally determined by other background factors. If church-going is highly dependent on other factors in a manner similar to outcome variables, one might prefer to view it as endogenous rather than exogenous. If there were plausible instrumental variables in the data set (which I do not believe there are) one might further seek to instrument church-going on those factors.

Table 7 presents the results of some calculations which relate church-going to various explanatory factors in the data sets. While there are some definite links between church-going and other factors, the pattern of coefficients on the independent variables is different from that found in regressions of other "outcomes" on those variables; having both parents at age 14, for example, greatly raises church-going, while it had no significant effect on outcomes; living in a public housing project reduces church-going in contrast to its generally negligible effect on outcomes. In the NBER survey, religious attitudes, which affected virtually no outcomes, is, of course, closely related to church-going. While these patterns of effects are not definitive, they do illustrate once more that background factors have drastically different effects on different outcomes, including church-going viewed as an outcome.

All told, while we cannot reject the possibility that the effects of church-going are noncausal, the patterns of regression coefficients are

clearly inconsistent with relatively simple single factor "omitted heterogeneity" explanations of its impact. At the least, more complex factor models are needed, and here as elsewhere reliance on increasing numbers of omitted factors to explain results calls into question the noncausal explanation.

Even if one rejects the causal interpretation of the relation found in this paper, however, it is important to recognize that our analysis has identified an important set of variables that separate successful from unsuccessful young persons in the inner city. There are a significant number of inner city youth, readily identifiable, who succeed in "escaping" the pathology of inner city slum life.

Footnotes

1. These data are from the Employment and Training Report of the President, 1981, table A-5.
2. Citations to be provided.
3. For the specifics, see Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. Young Black Men Employment Study, Princeton, N.J., Oct. 9, 1979.
4. See Mathematica, op. cit.
5. In fact, the situation in the NLS is even more stark than in the question we used. If one takes all the reported acts of crime by NLS youths, one gets rates of upwards of 50%.
6. See Socioeconomic Background and Achievement. (New York: Seminar Press, 1972).
7. This variable has been found to be important in whether youths work in a study by Albert Rees and Wayne Gray.
8. Church-going has not been studied in previous work. To my knowledge, the closest literature to this is the work by O. Duncan and D. Featherman on the effect of religion on achievement. See O.D. Duncan and D. Featherman in O. Duncan and A. Goldberger, Structural Models in Social Science (New York).
9. There is an extensive literature on the black church in America, beginning with the early work of Franklin Frazier.
10. In this technique we give the different regressions numeric values (approximately equal to their standard deviation in a normal with 0 mean and unit standard deviation).
11. These questions are:
  - Is this true, somewhat true, not at all?
  - a) "Knowing the right people is the key to finding a job."
  - b) "If you work hard and get a good education you'll get ahead in America."

- c) "Having a good education is very important, somewhat important, not at all important to you in your life right now."
- d) "Working at a job is very important, somewhat important, not at all important to you in your life right now."

Would you say... depends a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all on your having a job.

- e) "Your being respected by other people?"
- f) "Your being able to afford the things you want?"
- g) "How strong a role does religion play in your life?"

12. These are based on the questions:

- a) "Say that for some reason you had to get (a job/another job) right now. Keeping in mind your past experiences, your education and your training... what do you think your chances of getting that kind of job (best job you think you can get) at this time?"
- b) "Suppose you were really desperate for money. How easy would you say it would be for you to find a job working at any job at the minimum wage?"
- c) "If a friend comes to you and says he desperately needs to make some money, what would you tell him to do?" Dummy variable which equals 0 if respondent suggests an illegal job or giving up and 1 if he suggests a legal job.
- d) "How often do you have a chance to make money illegally?" 2 Dummy variables for (1) a few times a week/a few times a day; (2) less than a few times a week/no chance at all.
- e) "How much do you think you could make on the street doing something illegal compared to a straight job you could get? Dummy variable = 1 if more on street or about same on each; 0 if more on job.

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Table 1: The Standard Socio-Economic  
Measures of Youth Activity

<u>Activities</u>	<u>All youths</u>			<u>Out of School</u>			<u>Out of School Not Employed</u>		
	NBER	NLS blacks	NLS whites	NBER	NLS blacks	NLS whites	NBER	NLS blacks	NLS whites
<u>Labor force/ school status</u>									
1. Percentage in school	.451	.186	.155	--	--	--	--	--	--
2. Percentage in labor force	.669	.735	.797	.804	.903	.942	.627	.749	.763
3. Percentage of labor force unemployed	.430	.320	.196	.410	.320	.196	--	--	--
4. Percentage of total employed	.382	.500	.640	.479	.614	.758	--	--	--
5. Wage rate	\$3.97	\$4.22	\$4.45	\$4.26	\$4.29	\$4.53	\$4.14	\$3.94	\$4.04
<u>Social Deviance</u>									
6. Involved in any crimes in the past 12 months (NBER) <sup>a</sup>	12%	27%	21%	16%	29%	23%	18%	32%	32%
7. Drugs	21%	14%	21%	26%	16%	23%	27%	15%	25%
8. Drink alcohol everyday or almost everyday (NBER) <sup>b</sup>	16%	11%	28%	20%	12%	31%	22%	11%	30%
<u>Annual Activity</u>									
9. Weeks worked <sup>c</sup>	21	26	34	26	29	37	13	15	22
10. Annual Income	\$4025	\$3014	\$4973	\$5374	\$3591	\$5657	\$3409	\$1265	\$2521
11. Weekly Consumption Expenditures	\$85	--	--	\$110	--	--	\$86	--	--

Source: The samples

Table 1 (continued)

Sample size varied, depending on the activity and subsample picked.

Sample sizes ranged between (a) All Youths, NBER: 1161 to 2358

NLS Blacks: 872-1332

NLS Whites: 2410-3629

(b) Out of School, NBER: 928-1295

NLS Blacks: 824-1084

NLS Whites: 2262-3067

(c) Out of School, Not Employed

NBER: 362-681

NLS Blacks: 210-331

NLS Whites: 427-596

(a) NLS figures use survey question, "amount of total income in past year from illegal activities."

(b) NLS figures were available for only those less than age 18. Also, the figure includes those who drank at least once/week rather than at least once a day for the NBER survey.

(c) NBER figures were calculated by taking the months worked multiplied by 4.

Table 2: The Proportions of Youths with Various  
Background Characteristics in NBER and NLS Samples

	NBER inner city	NLS Black      White	
Both Parents at 14	.43	.58	.84
With Men in household	.28	.51	.69
With Household Members Working/in school	.41	.56	.71
Family on Welfare	.45	--	--
Family in Public Housing Project	.32	.10	.01
Attendance at Church			
not at all	.40	.19	.24
several times/year	.27	.23	.29
once a month	.09	.11	.09
2-3 times/month	.09	.17	.10
once/week	.11	.21	.20
more than once a week	.05	.09	.08
Part of Church group	.18	--	--

Source: Sample size differs depending on number answering questions.

NBER survey, sample size range = 2170 to 2358

NLS survey, sample size range = 3213 to 3629 (whites)  
= 1174 to 1332 (blacks)

Table 3: Determinants of Time Allocation

For Inner-City Black Youths

Regression Coefficients and T-Statistics

Variable	All youths		Out of School		Out of School, not employed	
	Productive Hrs All Hrs	Productive Mos All Mos	Productive Hrs All Hrs	Productive Mos All Mos	Productive Hrs	Productive Mos
Intercept	.56 (.42)	.25 (.66)	-.19 (.45)	-.13 (.52)	-.09 (.19)	.32 (.30)
Both Parents at Age 14	-.00 (.16)	.02(1.50)	.01 (.45)	-.04(1.84)	-.01 (.54)	.06(2.66)
Prop. of Males in HH	-.02 (.73)	-.04(1.44)	-.07(1.92)	-.06(1.47)	-.03 (.69)	-.04 (.81)
Age	-.02(5.96)	-.05(15.39)	.01(3.38)	-.06(1.72)	.01(2.67)	-.02(3.92)
Married/(1=yes)	.12(3.53)	.13(3.51)	.07(2.00)	.11(2.53)	.02 (.39)	.02 (.39)
Boston/(1=yes)	-.02(1.31)	.01 (.47)	-.04(2.10)	.01 (.85)	.01 (.29)	.07(2.79)
Chicago/(1=yes)	.08(5.18)	.12(7.13)	.03(1.37)	.13(5.00)	-.04(1.27)	.17(5.11)
Number of persons in Household	-.002(.68)	.005(1.68)	-.003(.72)	.006(1.43)	-.01(2.92)	-.004 (.89)
Public Housing(1=yes)	-.01 (.99)	-.03(2.29)	-.02(1.09)	-.04(1.96)	.02 (.77)	-.00 (.11)
Prop. of HH Work	.02 (.60)	.08(2.85)	.02 (.47)	.13(3.25)	-.09(2.27)	.03 (.66)
Household on Welfare (1=yes)	-.07(4.09)	-.06(4.14)	-.11(5.51)	-.11(4.64)	-.05(2.33)	-.04(1.49)
Part of gang(1=yes)	-.07(1.64)	-.03 (.69)	-.10(1.49)	-.04 (.56)	-.03 (.37)	.05 (.54)
Church-Going(Z-score)	.04(5.21)	.04(4.80)	.03(2.74)	.04(3.33)	.01(1.25)	.03(2.47)
Years of School Completed	.02(4.35)	.06(11.06)	.03(4.24)	.06(8.06)	.01(1.83)	.04(4.32)
	N = 2119 R <sup>2</sup> = .09	N = 2047 R <sup>2</sup> = .19	N = 1145 R <sup>2</sup> = .12	N = 1166 R <sup>2</sup> = .17	N = 609 R <sup>2</sup> = .06	N = 620 R <sup>2</sup> = .13

Table 3 (continued)

Note: Productive Hrs defined as work, search for job, work travel, in school, study/do homework, watch children/keep house, read books/magazines/ etc.

Productive Mos defined as regular work, casual work, training, school

Hours include secondary activity hours

Table 4: Effect of Church-going  
on Outcomes

<u>All youths</u>	<u>NBER</u>		<u>NLS Blacks</u>		<u>NLS Whites</u>	
	coeffi- cient (t)	% impact	coeffi- cient (t)	% impact	coeffi- cient (t)	% impact
Illegal Activities <sup>a</sup>	-.024 (3.10)	-20%	-.029 (1.98)	-10%	-.039 (5.10)	-19%
Drug Use	-.050 (5.21)	-23%	-.038 (3.54)	-27%	-.07 (9.84)	-33%
Alcohol Use <sup>b</sup>	-.022 (1.90)	-15%	-.035 (2.18)	-31%	-.046 (3.55)	-17%
School	.042 (4.41)	9%	-.002 (.17)	-1%	.019 (3.00)	12%
Grades in School	.117 (3.52)	--	--	--	--	--
Consumption	-5.73 (1.85)	-7%	--	--	--	--
<u>Out of School</u>						
Employment	.028 (1.75)	6%	.025 (1.62)	4%	.023 (2.89)	3%
Wage	.098 (.80)	2%	.04 (.96)	1%	-.131 (1.23)	-3%
Months Worked/ Weeks worked	.26 (1.49)	4%	.50 (.79)	2%	1.23 (3.73)	3%
Annual Income	164 (1.20)	4%	-57 (.41)	-2%	63 (.68)	1%

Table 4 (continued)

Source: Samples range between:

NBER: 836 - 2358

NLS Black: 773 - 1332

NLS White: 2191 - 3428

- (a) For NLS, survey question used was "amount of total income in past year for illegal activities."
- (b) For NLS, figures were available for only those less than age 18. Also, the figure includes those who drank at least once a week rather than at least once a day for the NBER survey.

Sample Size for NLS black: 501

white: 1231



Table .5: Effect of Background Factors  
in Regressions for Diverse Outcomes

NBER

	Illegal Activity	Drugs	Alcohol	School Grade	School	Employ- ment	Wage	Months/ Weeks Working
1. Proportion of Adults Working			+	+	+	+	+	+
2. Welfare Home	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
3. Public Housing					-	-	-	-
4. Proportion of Males in Household	-		-					
5. Gang Member	+	+	+					
6. Parents at age 14	+	-	+					
7. Household size	-							
8. Church-going	-	-	-	+	+	+		+
NLS Blacks								
1. Proportion of Adults Working	+	+	+		-	+		+
2. Public Housing			-					
3. Proportion of Males in Household						-		-
4. Parents at age 14						+		
5. Household size	+				-	-		+
6. Church-going								
NLS Whites								
1. Proportion of Adults Working		+	+		-			+
2. Public Housing	+		-					
3. Proportion of Males in Household					+	-		-
4. Parents at age 14								-
5. Household size		-				-		
6. Church-going	-	-	-			+		

Code: † means variable had  $t \geq 1.5$

Table 6: Effect of Adding Attitude and Market

Outcome	Variables on Church-going in NBER		Coefficients and t-statistics on Religious Attitude (Z-score)	Coefficients and t-statistics on Market: Can Find Job Easily (Z-score)	Coefficients and t-statistics on Market: Chance to Make Money Illegally (1=few times day or week)
	Coefficients and t-statistics on Church-Going Before	Coefficients and t-statistics on Church-Going After			
productive/all hours	.04 (5.21)	.04 (4.45)	-.01 (.93)	.04 (5.19)	-.06 (4.61)
productive/all months	.04 (4.80)	.03 (3.71)	-.00 (.26)	.06 (7.79)	-.06 (4.45)
committed illegal act (1)	-.024 (3.10)	-.016 (1.88)	-.00 (.16)	.00 (.60)	.12 (8.34)
takes drugs (yes=1)	-.050 (5.21)	-.045 (4.25)	-.00 (.41)	.00 (.09)	.11 (6.09)
alcohol	-.022 (1.90)	-.025 (2.06)	.01 (1.23)	.02 (2.21)	.06 (2.92)
school-going	.042 (4.41)	.041 (3.95)	-.02 (1.53)	.01 (1.16)	-.07 (3.91)
employment	.030 (1.75)	.030 (1.77)	-.02 (1.41)	.08 (5.34)	-.10 (3.39)
months employed	.26 (1.49)	.08 (.41)	.09 (.57)	.88 (5.72)	-.41 (1.30)

Note: Regressions include all other variables contained in table 3 and seven other attitude and three other market variables, as listed in footnotes 11 and 12.

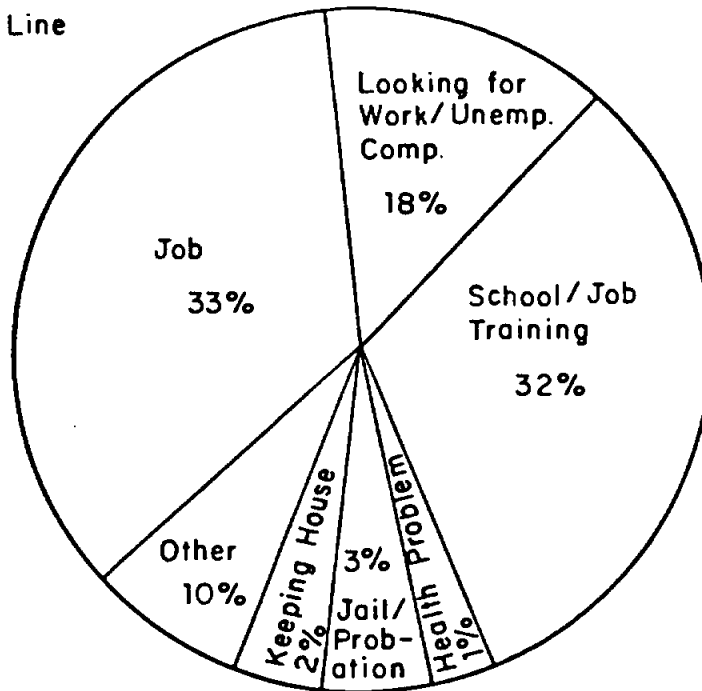
Table 7: Estimates of the Effect of Background  
and other Factors on Church-going

	NBER		NLS Black	NLS White
	(1)	(2)		
intercept	1.06	1.11	1.45	.41
both parents at age 14	.21(5.09)	.17(4.54)	.19(3.65)	.16(3.63)
percent male in household	.02 (.19)	-.02 (.24)	-.24(1.76)	.14(2.10)
percent adults working	-.01 (.12)	-.01 (.08)	.14(1.37)	-.08 (.91)
age	-.08(8.88)	-.07(7.90)	-.11(8.04)	-.11(11.86)
marital status	.26(2.45)	.25(2.50)	.17(1.08)	.09(1.36)
household size	-.01(1.19)	-.01 (.85)	-.04(3.39)	.06(5.39)
public housing	-.19(4.36)	-.19(4.65)	-.21(2.55)	-.28(2.07)
welfare	-.09(2.13)	-.07(1.81)		
gang	-.06 (.47)	-.05 (.45)		
education completed	.05(3.15)	.03(1.56)	.06(3.71)	.11(10.47)
Boston	.07(1.41)	.09(1.97)		
Chicago	.02 (.39)	.06(1.30)		
South			.26(4.93)	.18(5.03)
Urban			.04 (.58)	-.04(1.16)
Attitude Variables		.38(19.84)		
Religious				
Other Attitude		✓		
Market Variables		✓		
R <sup>2</sup>	.07	.23	.09	.08

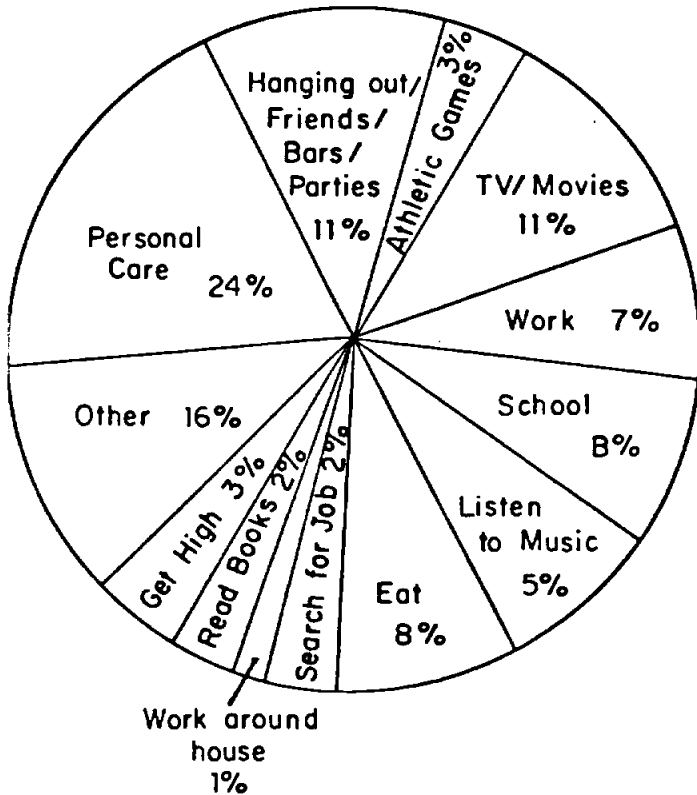
Figure 31. What inner-city male youths do in an Average Month on a typical day

A: All Inner-City Male Youths

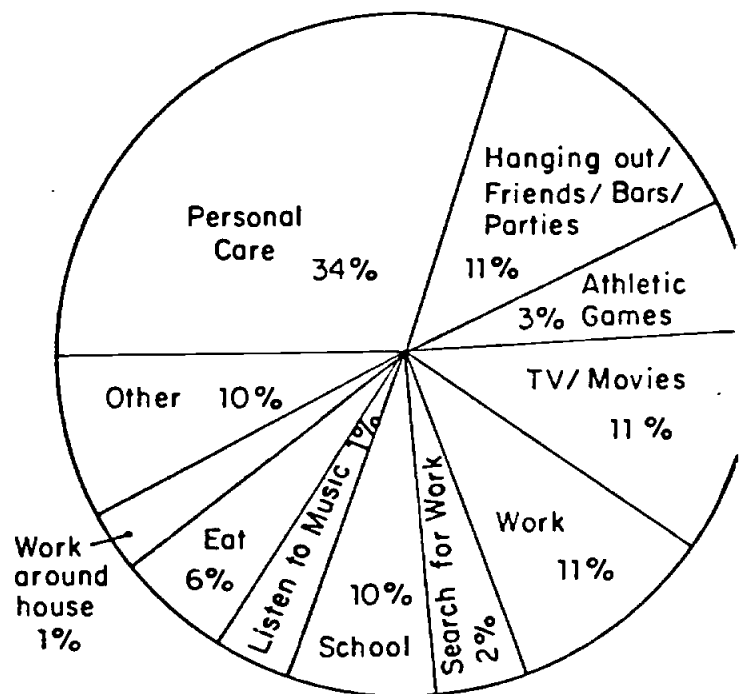
I. Monthly Time Line  
N = 2350



II. Daily Time Budget  
(including other activities)  
N = 2349



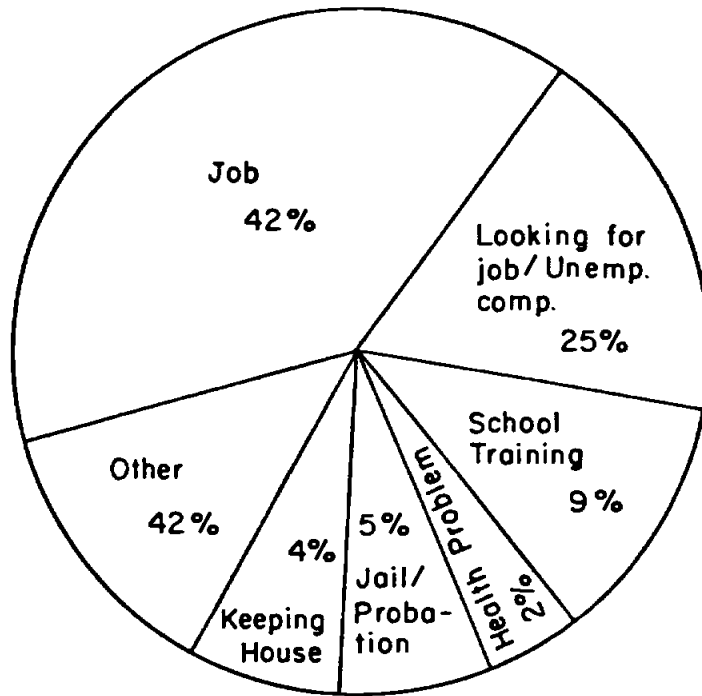
III. Daily Time Budget  
(only main activities)  
N = 2349



B: Out of School Male Youths

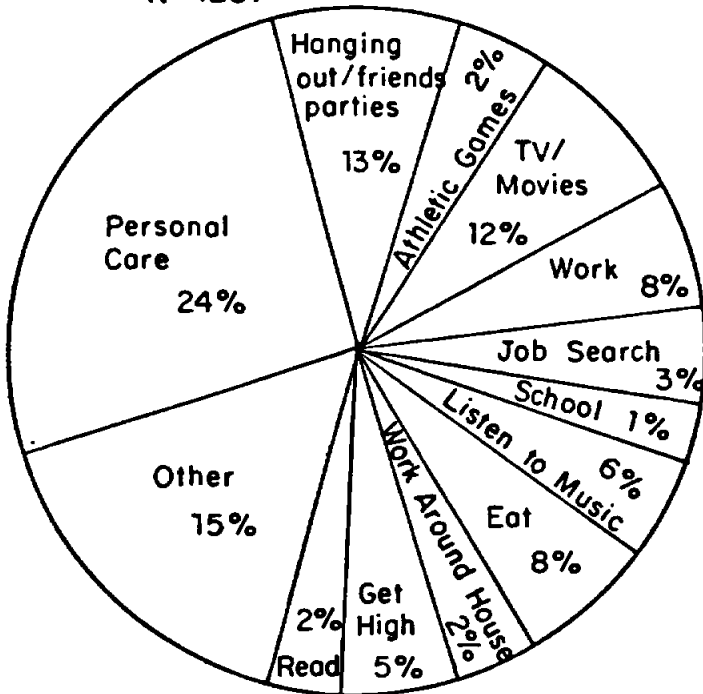
I. Monthly Time Line

N = 1288



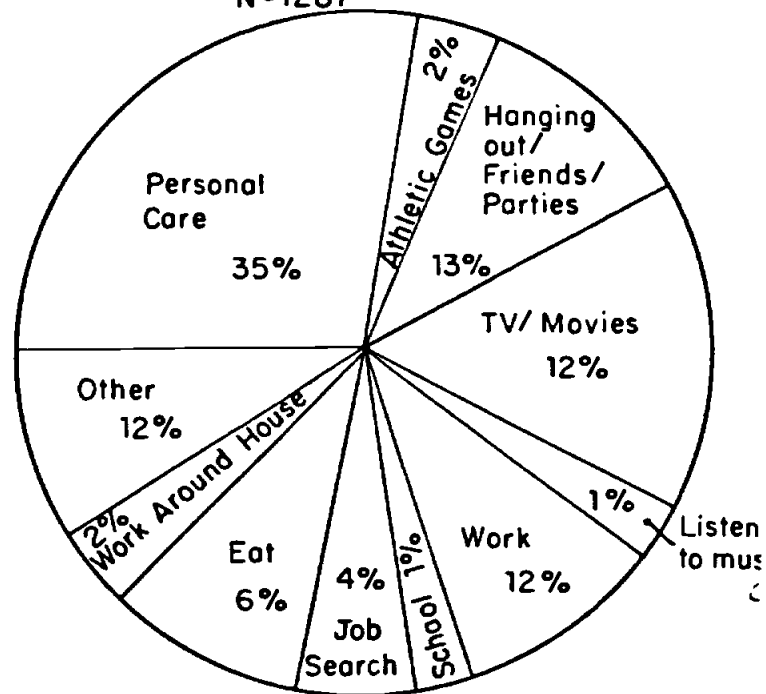
II. Daily Time Budget (including other activities)

N = 1287



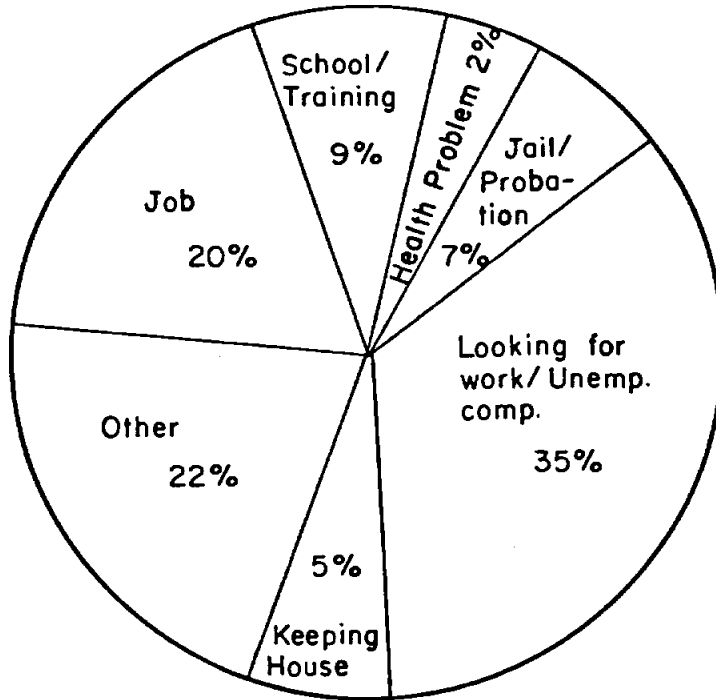
III. Daily Time Budget (only main activities)

N = 1287

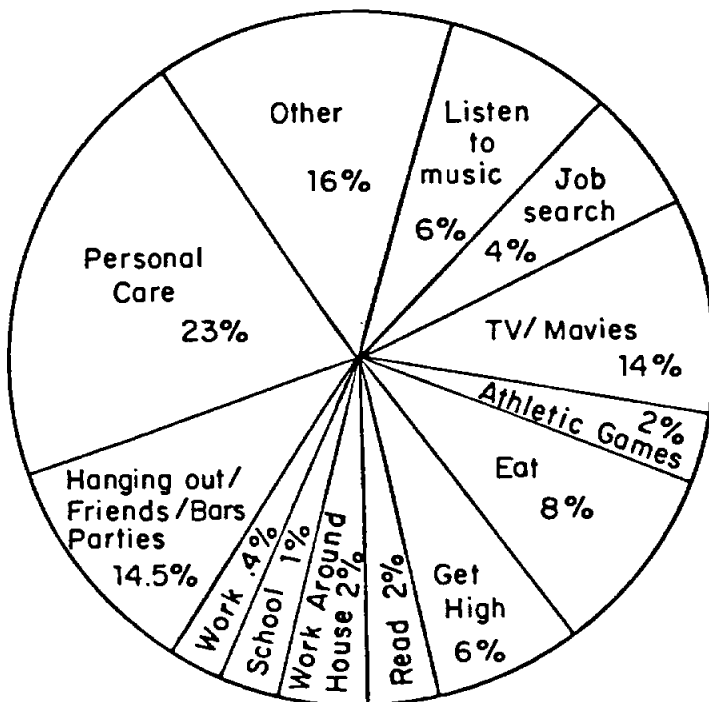


C: Out of School and Not Employed Male Youths

I. Monthly Time Line  
N = 681



II. Daily Time Budget  
(including other activities)  
N = 675



III. Daily Time Budget  
(only main activities)  
N = 675

