**TIME USE AMONG VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS IN BRAZIL:**
**a case study for the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, 2024**


## ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the daily time allocation among Venezuelan migrants in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte (MRBH), with a focus on the intersectionalities of gender and age. The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining time-use diaries—analyzed through social sequencing—with semi-structured interviews. The sequence analysis identified three distinct temporal profiles: (1) linear and productive routines, associated with formally employed men; (2) hybrid routines, characterized by the overlap of paid, domestic, and religious activities, predominant among young women; and (3) routines marked by caregiving and education, associated with women outside the formal labor market. The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed statistically significant differences between groups concerning the time dedicated to employment and leisure. Interviews further supported the quantitative findings, revealing the overload experienced by women with children, the absence of support networks, and challenges in balancing caregiving, work, and self-care. The results highlight time as a critical lens for analyzing structural inequalities in the migratory experience, pointing to the need for public policies sensitive to the multiple dimensions of the life cycle and gender inequalities.



**Keywords:** Forced migration; Venezuelan migration flow; Time-use; Gender; Intersectionalities.


## INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the use of time has progressively been incorporated into analyses of social inequalities, proving to be a powerful tool for understanding how norms, structures, and social relations shape daily life. In contexts of forced migration, this approach becomes particularly relevant by shedding light on the effects of displacement on the organization of daily routines, especially concerning the sexual division of labor and the overlap of reproductive and productive activities (Bianchi et al., 2000; Jesus, 2018).

The literature has shown that gender inequalities intensify in migration processes, affecting how male and female migrants integrate into the labor market, access support networks, and allocate their time across different spheres of life (Kofman, 2000; Parreñas, 2005; Bastia et al., 2022). When combined with the marker of age—particularly at the extremes of the life cycle—these inequalities produce even more asymmetric temporal arrangements, directly impacting the well-being and coping strategies of migrant individuals.

In this context, the intersectional approach has emerged as an analytical tool to understand how multiple social markers—such as gender, race, class, nationality, and age—intersect, producing complex and unequal migratory experiences (Anthias & Yuval-Davis,

1992; Bastia, 2014; Amelina & Lutz, 2019). However, studies investigating the daily lives of forced migrants with methodologies capable of capturing these inequalities in a situated, micro-level manner remain limited.

This paper aims to contribute to this field of study by investigating how forced Venezuelan migrants residing in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte (MRBH) organize their daily time, using an intersectional approach that considers gender and age as structuring axes of the migratory experience. The primary objective is to understand how these inequalities shape daily practices post-forced displacement and how individuals experience, negotiate, or challenge the social norms that regulate the distribution of time.

The research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining time-use diary data with semi-structured interviews. By integrating the analysis of time with an intersectional perspective, this study proposes an approach sensitive to the multiple layers of oppression, exclusion, and agency that permeate the everyday lives of forced migrants. Rather than merely describing unequal patterns, the goal is to understand how time—both as a limited resource, a structural imposition, and a subjective experience—constitutes a central dimension of contemporary migratory experiences.

## 1 FORCED VENEZUELAN MIGRATION TO BRAZIL: Context, Policies, and Inequalities

In the field of migration studies, the distinction between voluntary and forced migration has been widely debated. While, in traditional terms, voluntary migration is associated with economic motivations and forced migration with displacements caused by persecution, conflict, and human rights violations (IOM, 2019), this dichotomy has increasingly been problematized. Authors such as Moreira (2017) argue that many migration processes simultaneously involve elements of desire and coercion, making the boundaries between different forms of mobility diffuse and unstable. In the present study, the term "forced migration" is adopted to characterize the flow of Venezuelans to Brazil, due to the absence of minimum conditions of dignity in their country of origin, marked by severe shortages of food, medicine, and essential services, in addition to systematic political repression (Durães & Souza Junior, 2018).

Since the early 2000s, Venezuela—once considered one of the most promising economies in Latin America—has been experiencing an accelerated socioeconomic collapse, intensified from 2014 by the fall in international oil prices. As a consequence, hyperinflation, increased poverty, and widespread deterioration of living conditions were observed (Sanjurjo,

2023). According to UNHCR and the R4V Platform, by December 2024, more than 7.9 million Venezuelans had left the country, with approximately 6.7 million in refugee situations, mainly in South and Central American countries. Colombia leads regional reception, with about 2.8 million migrants, followed by Peru and Brazil— the latter hosting more than 626,000 Venezuelans (Jarochinski-Silva & Baeninger, 2021).

The intensification of the Venezuelan migration flow from 2016 prompted the formulation of institutional responses in Brazil, notably the creation of Operation Welcome in 2018 by the federal government. Coordinated by the Civil House and operationalized by the Armed Forces in partnership with international agencies and civil society organizations, the operation is structured around three main axes: border management in Pacaraima (RR), emergency sheltering, and the interiorization program to other regions of the country. To date, more than 134,000 Venezuelans have been interiorized, 89% of whom are in family groups, with a slight male predominance (53%) and strong concentrations in the North and South regions (R4V, 2022).

Although public reception policies have contributed to some level of integration for migrants, the challenges to full integration remain significant. Issues such as access to work, housing, documentation, diploma recognition, and language barriers contribute to a scenario of precariousness and exclusion. These difficulties were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Research conducted by UNHCR (2021a), UN Women, and UNFPA under the MOVERSE program (Moulin, 2022) reveals the worsening of food insecurity, precarious housing, digital exclusion, limited access to healthcare services, and an increase in violence incidents—including gender-based violence. The data further indicate that migrant women were disproportionately impacted, especially concerning sexual and reproductive health and the precarization of working conditions (UNHCR, 2021a; Moulin, 2022).

These elements emphasize the importance of an intersectional approach in analyzing migratory experiences. As Anthias (2012) highlights, social markers such as gender, class, ethnicity, nationality, and age do not operate in isolation but are dynamically articulated to shape social positions and inequalities in access to rights, protection, and resources. Applying this perspective to the study of forced migration allows for an understanding that different individuals experience specific vulnerabilities, determined by the overlap of multiple forms of oppression. The condition of being a woman, migrant, Black, young, or with low education, for example, can entail distinct experiences of social and institutional exclusion, which only become fully visible through an analysis that goes beyond the fragmentation of social categories (Anthias, 2012).

## 2 GENDER PERSPECTIVE IN MIGRATION STUDIES AND ITS INTERSECTIONALITIES

The incorporation of gender as an analytical category in migration studies has profoundly transformed the understanding of human mobility processes. Since the foundational contributions of authors such as Morokvasic (1984) and Hondagneu-Sotelo (2000), researchers have demonstrated that migration not only reproduces gender inequalities but also reconfigures them. By shifting the focus of analysis beyond male migrants, studies began questioning power asymmetries, patriarchal norms, and the socially assigned roles of women in the contexts of origin, transit, and destination (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2003; Pessar & Mahler, 2001).

The notion of the "feminization of migration," popularized by Castles and Miller (1993), initially referred to the quantitative increase of female migrants. However, later analyses emphasized the need to go beyond the numbers and explore the social meanings attributed to this mobility. Female presence is often associated with precarious occupational niches, heavily marked by gender norms, such as domestic work, caregiving, and sex work (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2007; Romero, 2002). Thus, understanding the integration of female migrants into the labor market requires considering both structural factors and the symbolic systems that shape opportunities and social representations.

The specialized literature has focused on four main axes: (1) the effects of migration on gender relations and the status of women; (2) the differentiated integration of women and men into the labor market; (3) transformations in family structures and caregiving dynamics; and (4) the potential of migration to expand female participation in the public and political spheres (Giorguli & Angoa, 2016). These axes have been explored from both the perspective of origin and destination countries, considering the impacts of migration on individual and family life cycles.

Recently, Anastasiadou et al. (2023) conducted a systematic review of the literature addressing sex- and gender-based differences in the migration process. This review is particularly useful for the purposes of this work, as it was carried out considering various stages of the migration process (pre-migration, peri-migration, post-migration, and the optional return stage) from a gender perspective. These stages were suggested by Boyd and Grieco (2003) for a more comprehensive analysis of the entire migration process.

In the pre-migration stage, differences in motivations, expectations, and preparations for migration stand out. Women tend to react differently to adverse conditions in their country of

origin and face more barriers in preparing, due to inequalities in access to financial resources, support networks, and family or cultural restrictions (Chort, 2014; Curran & Rivero-Fuentes, 2003). Moreover, social norms such as the obligation to care for dependents or the need for permission from male family members limit their mobility (Smith & Floro, 2020; Litchfield & Reilly, 2009).

During the migration period, women face higher risks of violence and exploitation. They also have less access to safe transportation, support networks, and financial resources, which leads to longer and more insecure trajectories. Additionally, they encounter specific legal and institutional barriers, such as the requirement for male permission to obtain documents, and discriminatory treatment at borders (Anastasiadou et al., 2023).

In the post-migration stage, where most of the research is concentrated, migrant women face greater difficulties in entering the formal labor market, being directed toward informal and undervalued sectors such as caregiving and domestic services (Lopez, 2012; Ryazantsev et al., 2019). Despite this, they send more remittances proportionally to their earnings, motivated by cultural obligations and family expectations (Khamkhom & Jampaklay, 2020). Women also face more barriers in accessing healthcare and education, particularly in reproductive services and psychological support. Social networks are generally smaller and less robust than those of men, hindering their integration. Furthermore, they suffer from intersectional discrimination based on gender and origin, which makes the process of rebuilding identity and belonging more challenging (Anastasiadou et al., 2023; Alfarhan & Al-Busaidi, 2020).

Finally, in the return stage, men and women have distinct motivations: men tend to return for economic reasons, while women are influenced by family factors such as caring for relatives, marriage, or family reconciliation. However, reintegration is often more difficult for women, who may suffer stigmatization, especially if they migrated alone or left children behind in their country of origin (Nawyn, 2010). Reintegration often requires specific psychological and social support (Anastasiadou et al., 2023).

In summary, the literature highlights that migratory experiences are deeply shaped by gender norms, which influence every stage of the process, from the decision to migrate to eventual reintegration, impacting women's autonomy, the risks they face, access to opportunities, and their identity. These analyses reveal that understanding the gender impacts at each stage of the migration process is crucial for developing policies and practices that recognize and respect the complex interactions between gender and migration. The individual and family life cycle plays a crucial role in women's migratory trajectories, as migration is often a non-linear process in which strategic management of resources, assets, and risks is key.

Marriage and motherhood are significant factors affecting women's migration decisions and mobility, with different stages of the family life cycle having varying and weighted impacts on women's lives as they assume multiple roles at different stages of life (Peres & Baeninger, 2012).

Given this complexity, intersectionality emerges as a fundamental theoretical approach to understand how different systems of oppression—such as gender, class, race, ethnicity, generation, legal status, and territoriality—intersect to produce unique and unequal migratory experiences (Bastia, 2014; Anthias, 1998; Valentine, 2007). Unlike perspectives that treat these categories as independent variables, the intersectional approach recognizes that they are simultaneously structuring and structured, shaping both the identities and the social positions occupied by migrants (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992; Amelina & Lutz, 2019).

Intersectionality, in this sense, should be conceived not only as the overlap of identities but as a social process that operates through classifications and practices that produce and reproduce hierarchies (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992; Anthias, 1998a, 2001). These classifications are historically situated and operate both through the assignment of characteristics to social groups and through the unequal allocation of resources and opportunities (Amelina & Lutz, 2019). In the migration field, this process is evidenced by spatial distinctions between “legal migrants” and “illegal migrants,” “refugees” and “economic migrants,” often associated with racial and class-based stigmas.

Spatial inequalities are also central to understanding the migratory experience. As Silvey (2006) argues, framing migration issues as “local” or “global,” “national” or “transnational,” directly influences the recognition of the rights and violences faced by migrants. That is, when a connection is made between space-related classifications and hierarchizing categories such as “poverty,” in specific social contexts (such as personal interactions, social networks, families, organizations, and institutions), these new classifications can be transformed into spatialized hierarchies. Consequently, a natural invisibilization of these subjects occurs through their subordinated position within spatial and gender hierarchies (Amelina & Lutz, 2019).

Spatialized inequalities manifest in unequal opportunities, such as limited access to education or the labor market due to the immobilization of people from particular social categories. Therefore, transnational inequalities can be seen as a type of spatialized inequality resulting from hierarchical attributions related to cross-border practices in multiple locations. A practical example of these inequality patterns is migration regulation in Europe, which favors

the free movement of certain individuals, such as European Union (EU) citizens, while restricting the movement of others, such as non-EU citizens (Amelina & Lutz, 2019).

Thus, categorization processes transform space-related distinctions (and consequently, migration) into unequal opportunities. The intersectional approach allows for the de-essentialization of space, enabling its analysis as a real or potential dimension of inequality, not only separately but also in terms of how it interacts with other dimensions of social inequality. In this way, it becomes possible to gain insights into the complex interaction between spatial dimensions and other categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, etc. (Amelina & Lutz, 2019).

Since the 2000s, the use of intersectionality in migration studies has significantly expanded, allowing for theoretical and methodological refinement of the concept by applying it beyond dual or multiple oppressions. Kynsilehto (2011) and McIlwaine & Bermudez (2011) demonstrate how intersectionality can be mobilized not only to identify disadvantages but also to examine privileges and intra-group differences. This approach broadens the understanding of social categories as cultural and historical constructions with fluidity and highlights the persistence of hierarchies even within privileged groups (Bastia et al., 2022).

However, as Bastia et al. (2022) point out, early intersectional studies on migration did not always adopt a feminist or anti-racist framework—which is intrinsic to this approach. Many of these studies examined variables such as ethnicity and religion without considering the structuring role of gender in social relations. It was primarily within the European context, through investigations focused on migrant women in precarious sectors—such as domestic work, caregiving, and sex work—that intersectionality became consolidated as a critical tool for analyzing complex inequalities (Anthias et al., 2013). These studies reveal how women from Eastern Europe and peripheral EU countries are often placed in informal and vulnerable occupations, marked by power asymmetries, racialization, and economic exploitation (Dumont & Isoppo, 2005).

Recent literature on migration has significantly expanded the scope of intersectional analyses, revealing how different social markers combine to structure inequalities in migratory processes. Beyond gender issues, researchers have highlighted the devaluation of the professional qualifications of young migrants, especially racialized men. Nowicka (2014) demonstrates that, even when their educational or professional credentials are formally recognized, they do not guarantee upward social mobility. This is because labor markets in destination countries operate through racialized and ethnic hierarchies, relegating certain migrant profiles to less prestigious and more precarious occupations.

In the case of male migrants with low education, Palenga-Möllenbeck (2013) observes that, even when they have practical experience and technical skills, they are often directed to low-paid and highly informal sectors. This labor marginalization is articulated with socially constructed racialized masculinities, as Scheibelhofer (2016) argues, hindering the integration of these individuals into certain occupational niches considered "female," "skilled," or socially valued. Masculinity, when associated with racialization and class, becomes an obstacle to social mobility and symbolic recognition.

The literature on female migrants, on the other hand, still focuses largely on the trajectories of low-educated workers, which has contributed to the invisibilization of the experiences of highly qualified women. Kofman (2000a) already pointed to the phenomenon of overqualification: female migrants with higher education have their competencies disregarded due to the combination of gender, nationality, class, and, often, racialization. Amelina and Lutz (2019) reinforce this analysis by showing how these factors structure institutional processes of dequalification, where these women's technical skills are systematically undervalued in destination countries.

Gender inequality in the migrant labor market is not static over time. Stypinska and Gordo (2018), in a study conducted in Germany, show that the wage gap between male and female migrants widens with age, highlighting how the life cycle acts as a vector for social differentiation. Although gender inequalities among migrants are not always more intense than among nationals in some cases, Kuhlemann (2022) warns against the risk of homogenizing the category "migrant." Studies that do not consider intersections with ethnicity, religion, or nationality obscure fundamental differences in how individuals experience their labor and social integration.

Other studies offer broader analyses of how structural inequalities affect qualified female migrants. Riaño (2011), investigating the case of Switzerland, demonstrates that the intersection of gender, class, nationality, and migration status directly influences labor market integration and professional mobility. Burman (2003), in a critical analysis of European public services, highlights how "cultural specialization" policies—often implemented with the intention of inclusion—end up reinforcing stereotypes and limiting access for ethnic minority women, especially in situations of gender-based violence. Gillespie et al. (2022), in turn, emphasize that the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing inequalities in Italy, worsening the effects of sexism, racism, and xenophobia on migrant and refugee women. Still, the authors highlight the critical role of family and community networks as devices for resistance and resilience.

The adoption of qualitative methodologies based on life histories has proven effective in capturing the articulation between different social markers in migratory trajectories. Ludvig (2006) and Prins (2006) highlight how gender, ethnicity, and class intertwine in the production of everyday inequalities, allowing for a more nuanced and situated understanding of female migrant experiences.

In Global South contexts, Bastia (2011) applies an intersectional and multiscalar approach to examine the urban migration of Bolivian women. Her study reveals how migration can promote changes in gender dynamics by increasing women's economic autonomy and redistributing domestic responsibilities. However, these changes are often transient and subordinated to family projects of social mobility. The author cautions against a simplistic reading of "migratory empowerment," showing that, upon returning, many women and their partners seek to reconstruct family arrangements that are closer to traditional patterns. Thus, Bastia (2011) emphasizes the importance of understanding intersectionality as a dynamic process that structures social positions, rather than fixing identities or gender roles in a static manner (Anthias, 1998).

When it comes to forced migration, analytical challenges intensify. These flows involve experiences of multiple vulnerabilities, requiring a more refined approach. Intersectional literature on forced migration is still in its early stages but is growing. Khayatt (1994) and Taha (2019) show how the label "refugee" functions as a marker of disadvantage, similar to other hierarchized social categories such as "Black woman" or "illegal immigrant." Ratkovic (2013), studying four Yugoslav refugee teachers in Canada, shows how race, class, professional identity, ethnicity, age, and gender interact to hinder their social and professional reintegration, revealing the silencing of their competencies in the face of the imposed identity of "refugee."

In different contexts, the intersection between gender and class also shapes how refugee women construct their identity and face challenges. In Egypt, Ayoub (2017) identified that middle-class Syrian women maintained greater emotional resilience, anchored in family identities (mothers, wives), while women in greater socioeconomic vulnerability internalized the stigma of refuge, seeing themselves as "helpless refugees." A similar study by Vervliet et al. (2013), with unaccompanied refugee mothers in Belgium, reinforces the importance of the intersectional approach by demonstrating how motherhood, migration status, age, and gender generate overlapping oppressions that challenge public policy formulation.

Intersectionality is also fundamental for understanding the effects of structural racism and xenophobia in Global North countries. Koirala and Eshghavi (2017) demonstrate how Iranian refugees in the United States face discrimination intertwined with ethnicity, religion,

and legal status, complicating their economic and social integration. Lee and Brotman (2013), investigating LGBTQ+ refugees in Canada, criticize the dominant Western model of sexual identity recognition, which demands "proof" of sexual orientation from asylum seekers in accordance with hegemonic cultural norms. The authors propose an anti-oppressive approach that acknowledges the cultural and subjective complexity of these identities (Lee & Brotman, 2018).

Other studies have further expanded the scope of intersectionality by considering disability as a neglected dimension in migration literature. Pisani and Grech (2017) highlight the invisibility of disabled people in forced migration studies, warning that the combination of disability, gender, legal status, age, and class creates multiple and compounded barriers, especially for women and girls. Pittaway & Pittaway (2004), in turn, argue that the international protection system rarely acknowledges the multiple oppressions faced by refugee women, such as racism, xenophobia, gender-based violence, and religious discrimination. For the authors, it is essential that protection policies recognize the diverse identities of these women—ethnicity, religion, class, sexual orientation—and reject homogeneous and reductive views of the "ideal refugee."

Kyriakides et al. (2018) add to this discussion by arguing that the label "refugee" tends to produce a passive and victimized image, obscuring the agency of migrant subjects. Institutional discourse, by emphasizing vulnerability and dependency, often overlooks active survival and adaptation strategies. This impacts both public perception and the design of public policies, which end up treating refugees as threats or as "others" to be assimilated. To break this paradigm, the authors propose a subject-centered approach that values their histories, knowledge, and capacities for action (Kyriakides et al., 2018).

Finally, Ludwig (2016) proposes an important conceptual distinction between the legal status of a refugee and the social label attributed to these individuals. While the former may offer legal protection, the latter can be a source of stigmatization, directly affecting self-esteem, belonging, and social reintegration. Ludwig notes that some individuals embrace the "refugee" identity as a symbol of resistance and solidarity, while others reject the label due to its association with pain and discrimination. This ambiguity shows that intersectionality must also consider the symbolic and emotional dimensions of the migratory experience.

All these studies highlight the urgency of adopting an intersectional perspective to analyze the experiences of forced migrants in general. The demand for further debates around the labels associated with the status of migrants and refugees, as well as their impacts on individuals' identities, becomes evident. In this sense, the intersectional approach emerges as

an essential theoretical lens for understanding forced migration, recognizing the complex interactions between different forms of identity and oppression.

Despite the clear benefits, it is necessary to acknowledge the challenges and limitations in applying intersectionality to forced migration studies. Among these challenges is the difficulty of empirically operationalizing the multiple and complex interactions between diverse identities, as well as the risk of oversimplification or neglecting certain dimensions at the expense of others. A key point, however, is the need to develop a politicized and decolonial intersectional approach capable of challenging Eurocentric conceptions, absolute binaries, and the geographic and cultural hierarchy of the Global North (Taha, 2019; Hynie et al., 2014). To achieve this, it is essential to give voice to migrants and refugees by adopting participatory, intercultural, and ethically committed methodologies (Yacob-Haliso, 2016). This research, by adopting time-use as an analytical and participatory tool, aims to contribute to this critical agenda, centered on the active listening of migrant subjects in their daily lives.

## 3 THE USE OF TIME AS AN ANALYTICAL TOOL IN RESEARCH ON MIGRATION, GENDER, AND INEQUALITY

The study of time allocation emerged in the early 20th century, initially from an economic perspective, with the aim of understanding patterns of time use and their impacts on productivity and lifestyles (Robbins, 1930). By the 1930s, authors such as Reid (1934) highlighted the invisibility of unpaid labor, particularly domestic work performed by women, contributing to the consolidation of this agenda in development studies and public policy (Boserup, 1970). In subsequent decades, theories such as the New Household Economics (Gronau, 1977) expanded the focus of analysis to include productive domestic activities, and later studies emphasized child care as a specific dimension of unpaid production (Ribar, 1995).

Three main theoretical perspectives have guided contemporary analyses of time allocation: the time availability perspective, which emphasizes the impact of family demands and individuals' temporal resources (Coverman, 1985); the relative resources perspective, which considers that time division arises from bargaining power within the family (Brines, 1994); and the gender perspective, which argues that social norms and values operate independently of economic factors to maintain the sexual division of labor (Ilahi, 2000; Bianchi et al., 2000).

Sociological studies show that time is strongly shaped by cultural and institutional norms, with gender being a central variable in the distribution of daily activities (Van Der Lippe

et al., 2011). Globally, women continue to dedicate more hours to unpaid labor and caregiving, while men remain predominantly engaged in paid work (Ribar, 2012). Although progress has been observed in terms of gender convergence, these changes are slow and often partial. For example, women's leisure time tends to be sacrificed in situations of overload from multiple shifts (Ribar, 2012; Jesus, 2018).

Moreover, marital status influences time allocation differently by gender: married women spend more time on domestic work, whereas marriage may reduce or have little effect on men's time spent on such tasks (Robles, 2010). The presence of children increases the time devoted to domestic and caregiving work, especially for women (Kimmel & Connelly, 2007). Education, in turn, is negatively correlated with domestic work and positively with paid work and child care in women's cases, while for men, higher education is linked to greater participation in domestic labor (Brines, 1994; Kalenkoski et al., 2005).

Wage variations also affect men and women differently: for women, wage increases raise paid work, whereas for men, there is greater dedication to leisure and personal care. Higher female wages tend to increase male domestic work, but high male wages are associated with a reduction in female paid work (Ilahi & Grimard, 2000). Regarding child care, higher male wages increase the time their partners dedicate to caregiving, but female wages have no significant impact on their partners (Newman & Gertler, 1994).

Contextual and institutional differences are relevant when analyzing the division of domestic labor. For example, studies in Australia show that women who are the primary breadwinners dedicate more time to domestic work, but this phenomenon is less pronounced in the United States, reflecting cultural and institutional variations (Bittman et al., 2003). Factors such as ethnicity and infrastructure (especially in rural areas and in developing countries) also impact time allocation, particularly for women, who accumulate more domestic work due to the lack of basic services (Agenor & Canuto, 2015).

In addition, labor market characteristics such as taxes, wages, working hours, and flexible schedules influence time allocation decisions (Duernecker & Herrendorf, 2018). Family composition also has an impact: families with young children and both partners working full-time experience a greater total work burden for women (Sayer et al., 2009). The reduction in the average number of people per household also significantly affects the division of domestic tasks (Jesus, 2018).

A meta-analysis of 66 studies conducted between 1961 and 2011 in 19 countries revealed a global trend toward gender equality in domestic labor allocation, although with considerable variations in pace and magnitude across countries (Altintas & Sullivan, 2016).

Institutional factors, such as welfare policies, parental leave, and childcare availability, directly influence time allocation. In Nordic countries, policies that alleviate informal caregiving burdens have promoted greater gender equality (Campaña et al., 2023).

In the Brazilian context, data from PNAD (2001; 2015) and the IBGE's "Gender Statistics" (2021) show patterns similar to global trends, with women dedicating, on average, nearly twice as many hours per week to domestic and caregiving activities compared to men. These inequalities are even more pronounced in the North and Northeast regions, and among Black and low-income women. The unequal division of reproductive labor directly affects women's access to the formal labor market, often resulting in part-time, informal, or interrupted employment (IBGE, 2021).

Women's integration into formal labor, when it occurs, does not eliminate the overload. Data from 2019 show that, even among those with higher education—whose proportion exceeds that of men—the average income remains lower than men's, revealing the persistence of structural inequalities. The phenomenon of the "double shift" intensifies when considering Black and mixed-race women, who are concentrated in the most precarious sectors, such as domestic work, cleaning, and caregiving (IBGE, 2021).

Time allocation analysis has proven especially useful for understanding these inequalities, as it captures the exchanges and tensions between productive and reproductive activities. Understanding how individuals organize their 24 daily hours reveals not only the limits imposed by social structures but also everyday strategies of resistance, negotiation, and adaptation to adverse conditions (Jesus, Wajnman & Turra, 2021). In migration contexts, this approach becomes even more powerful, as mobility intersects and redefines family relationships, support networks, gender roles, and opportunities for social integration.

In migration studies, the literature on time use remains limited, especially in relation to forced migrants. Most studies focus on economic migrants, aiming to assess their integration through labor supply, accumulation of human capital, and involvement in the formal market (Ribar, 2012; Kuhlemann, 2022). Economic models, such as the family investment model (Long, 1980), explain that initially, one spouse (typically the woman) increases their workload to allow the other to invest in qualifications, highlighting a gendered division of roles.

Nevertheless, more recent qualitative approaches have sought to expand this perspective by including dimensions such as leisure, religious practices, commuting, sleep, food, and health care (Hale & Rivero-Fuentes, 2011; Osili & Xie, 2009). These analyses allow us to capture how migrants subjectively experience their daily activities, revealing what is perceived as obligation

or pleasure, imposition or choice. This dimension is essential for understanding the symbolic and emotional integration of migrants into the destination country.

Residence time, institutional barriers, and cultural norms from the country of origin also strongly influence time-use patterns. Kuhlemann's (2022) study in Germany, for instance, revealed that voluntary migrants tend to maintain a strong commitment to paid work, while refugees—especially recent arrivals—are more involved in domestic work and family caregiving, as well as investing more in education and skills development. These findings highlight the heterogeneity of migration flows and emphasize the importance of distinguishing between types of migration when analyzing time-use patterns.

Furthermore, factors such as language, diploma recognition, access to childcare, and public transportation affect time organization unevenly, impacting not only adults but also the socialization and academic performance of migrant children (Orellana, 2001; Lee & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2011). Religion, food culture, caregiving practices, and forms of leisure also vary across migrant groups.

In the Brazilian context, these challenges are even more complex, as a significant portion of migrant and refugee populations resides in urban areas characterized by heterogeneous dynamics and structural inequalities. Despite being concentrated in centers with greater access to public services and economic opportunities, these groups face social invisibility, stigmatization, marginalization, and residential segregation, phenomena that reflect the deep social inequality in the country (Zapata & Moulin, 2022).

In the case of forced migrations, the challenges are even more acute. Studies show that newly arrived refugees often face long periods of forced inactivity related to waiting for documentation regularization, limited access to work, and uncertainties about the future (Brekke, 2010; Dupont et al., 2005). These periods are often marked by psychological distress, anxiety, and social withdrawal. Time analysis in these cases reveals not only material deprivation but also the dynamics of symbolic and subjective exclusion faced by these populations.

Thus, time-use is a valuable tool for analyzing intersectional inequalities in migration contexts, as it allows for the articulation of economic, cultural, and gender dimensions around everyday experiences. In the case of forced migrants, its application is still in its early stages but promising, particularly when combined with qualitative methods that emphasize the voice and perception of migrant subjects. This research aligns with this perspective, utilizing time-use diaries and interviews with Venezuelan migrants residing in the MRBH region, aiming to

understand not only how they distribute their activities but also how they experience time under conditions of displacement, vulnerability, and life reconstruction.

## 4 DATA AND METHODS

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to understand time allocation among Venezuelan migrants residing in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte (MRBH). Quantitative data collection was carried out through time-use diaries, complemented by semi-structured interviews that provided in-depth qualitative insights into the individual and structural contexts influencing the observed patterns.

Fieldwork was conducted between September and November 2024, based on a non-probabilistic sampling strategy. The sample consisted of six heterosexual cisgender couples, distributed across three distinct age cohorts (20 to 29 years, 30 to 39 years, and 40 to 49 years), aiming to capture intergenerational variations in time organization. Participants were selected based on sociodemographic criteria to ensure diversity regarding socioeconomic status, length of residence in Brazil, and migratory experiences.

The time-use diaries were designed based on the model tested by Professor Neuma Aguiar—an expert in gender and time-use studies in Brazil—in her research "Uso do Tempo: Múltiplas Temporalidades de Referência," conducted in the city of Belo Horizonte in 2001 (Aguiar, 2010). The approach involved creating a time grid with 30-minute intervals over a seven-day period. Each participant was asked to record their main activities every half hour, resulting in 48 entries per day. For analysis, activities were categorized into eleven main groups: (1) employment and job search; (2) unpaid domestic work; (3) unpaid caregiving and support activities; (4) education and training; (5) physical and sports activities; (6) leisure and socialization; (7) religious practices; (8) personal care and sleep; (9) meals; (10) commuting; and (11) other activities. This categorization aimed to ensure completeness and clarity in the coding of time records.

The quantitative analysis of the diaries was conducted using the Classical Optimal Matching (OM) technique for social sequence analysis, which allowed for the identification of patterns and temporal trajectories in the allocation of daily activities. Although the sample is small, the use of OM is justified by its exploratory potential in identifying recurring and divergent patterns of time-use, especially in studies with a strong qualitative emphasis and focus on internal heterogeneity (Cornwell, 2015). This technique enabled comparisons between

participants, considering the intersectional variables of gender, age, and education, and helped identify similarities and divergences in time organization.

Additionally, 12 individual semi-structured interviews were conducted to capture the subjective perception of participants regarding time organization, the challenges faced in reconciling multiple activities, and the meanings attributed to their daily routines. The interviews also aimed to reconstruct migration trajectories, support networks, access to rights, and experiences of discrimination, with a focus on markers of gender, class, religion, age, and migration status.

All participants were informed about the research objectives, data collection procedures, confidentiality of information, and their right to withdraw at any stage, in accordance with the ethical principles of Resolution 510/2016 of the National Health Council. The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Minas Gerais on August 23, 2024 (Opinion: 7.027.506).

The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods enabled a comprehensive and multidimensional analysis of time allocation among Venezuelan migrants, revealing the complex interactions between sociodemographic, cultural, and institutional factors that shape their routines and integration processes in the Brazilian context. This methodological triangulation strengthens the robustness of the findings and contributes to advancing knowledge on time-use in forced migration contexts.

## 5 RESULTS

This section presents the main findings of the research, integrating data obtained through time-use diaries and semi-structured interviews. Using a mixed-methods approach, the aim was to understand how intersectional inequalities—particularly gender and age—shape the daily organization of time among forced Venezuelan migrants in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte. The analysis emphasizes not only the objective distribution of time but also the subjective experiences associated with daily routines, revealing both continuities and tensions in the social norms that structure these experiences.

### 5.1 Temporal Patterns and Gender Inequalities

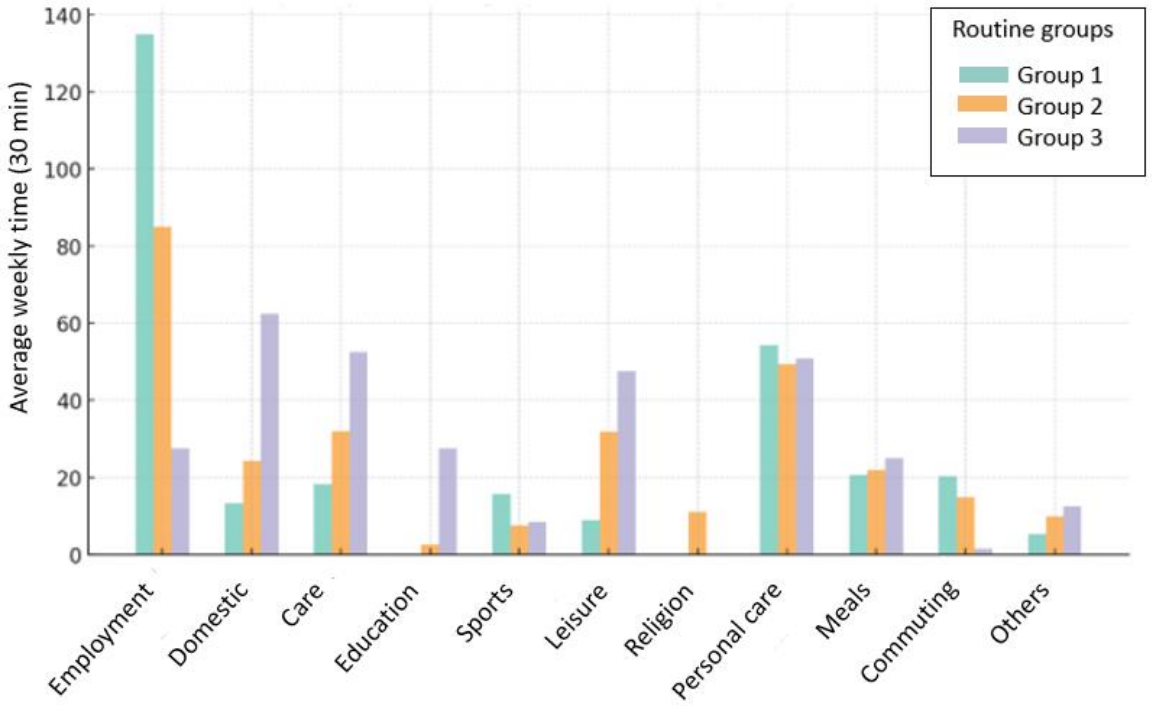
The social sequence analysis, using the Classical Optimal Matching (OM) technique, allowed for the identification of three main weekly time-use patterns among the 12 participants.

The sequences were grouped based on temporal similarity and later interpreted in light of sociodemographic characteristics and qualitative reports. This methodological triangulation revealed the existence of three intersectional time-organization profiles, described as follows:

- **Linear Provider (Group 1 – n = 3):** Men with formal employment, continuous work hours, and time use predominantly structured around employment and commuting. The time dedicated to caregiving, leisure, and domestic tasks is minimal, reflecting the persistence of the sexual division of labor. Interviews reinforce this pattern, revealing limited emotional or practical engagement with the domestic sphere and greater informal leisure tied to the work environment.
- **Multitasking Mother (Group 2 – n = 7):** Women with varied educational backgrounds, with informal or intermittent participation in the labor market. Their routines are marked by overlapping roles—work, caregiving, domestic tasks, and religious participation. Interviewees report experiences of exhaustion, a lack of personal time, and frequent shifts between social roles. Religion appears as a central axis of sociability and emotional support in the face of daily overload.
- **Overburdened Caregiver (Group 3 – n = 2):** Women with low education, outside the formal labor market, whose routines revolve around caregiving activities, domestic work, and education (either for themselves or their children). The high volume of time spent on "leisure" in this group is, in practice, a reflection of fragmented routines, unrelated to employment and mediated by practices with children. Qualitative reports highlight feelings of burnout and labor marginalization.

The figure below summarizes the average weekly time distribution by activity and group:

Graph 1. Comparison of Routine Groups by Activity Type




**Source:** Author's own elaboration based on primary data.

Additionally, the application of the Kruskal-Wallis test confirmed statistically significant differences between the groups in the time dedicated to employment ($\chi^2 = 7.95$; $p = 0.0188$) and leisure ($\chi^2 = 6.43$; $p = 0.0402$). These results corroborate the described profiles: the first, marked by the centrality of male productive insertion, and the third, characterized by a pattern of exclusion from the formal labor market, which manifests in less regulated routines but intense non-paid tasks.

These patterns were confirmed by the interviews, where women frequently reported difficulties in reconciling work and caregiving, as well as the physical and emotional overload resulting from motherhood and the absence of extensive support networks. Only two women interviewed had formal employment, while all men were formally employed.

*"He gets a job easily because he is a man."* (Carmem, 24)

Motherhood emerged as one of the main barriers to female labor market insertion:

*"I've always worked, but now I have to stay with the boys, right?"* (Isa, 40)

In addition to gender inequalities, all participants reported professional dequalification in the migration process, associated with non-recognition of degrees, the need for professional retraining, and experiences of xenophobia in the labor market, often coupled with exploitation. These elements were more intense among women with limited proficiency in Portuguese.

> "[...] *So my friend told me: 'They say that because they think that since you are Venezuelan, you need money, you know? They think we'll accept anything.'*" (Lina, 33)

### 5.2 Unpaid Work and the Naturalization of the Sexual Division of Labor

Care and domestic work activities were distributed highly unequally. The analysis of the diaries shows that Group 3 dedicated, on average, more than 60 half-hour units per week to domestic work and 52 units to caregiving, contrasting with 13 and 18 for Group 1, respectively. The sexual division of these tasks was reinforced by the interviews, where women referred to caregiving as "natural" or "inevitable," while men rarely mentioned it.

> *"For me, it was really good to leave the nest and become a woman like I should be."* (Isa, 40)

Among younger women, more critical discourses toward gender norms emerged. Strategies such as delegating caregiving to other women in the family, especially mothers, were identified.

> *"I'm not a woman dedicated to the home. I just do the minimum that needs to be done."* *(*Carmem, 24)

Responsibility for caring for elderly parents appeared in interviews with older men and women (40-49 years):

> *"When you're the oldest daughter, the responsibility is greater, right*?" (Isa, 40)

### 5.3 Leisure, Sociability, and Unequal Access to Free Time

The time dedicated to leisure and socialization appears contrastingly between the groups. Group 3 shows the highest average values for leisure (47.5 weekly units), but this time is strongly intertwined with domestic and caregiving activities, suggesting family-mediated leisure. In contrast, Group 1, predominantly male, shows very low levels of formal leisure, although the men reported informal moments of socialization tied to the work environment:

> *"Every Friday, there's beer at work. Sometimes we arrange to play football."* (Carlos, 33)

On the other hand, women reported a scarcity of individualized leisure time. When it existed, it was almost always associated with activities with their children:

> *"Sometimes I take my daughter to the mall to eat McDonald's. It's what we can do here."* (Lina, 33)

Social support networks were limited, primarily centered on religious institutions. Religiosity served emotional, practical, and leisure functions for both men and women. It was noted that the networks created in religious institutions helped alleviate a sense of loneliness and social exclusion, which was almost unanimous among the interviewees:

> *"Here, we can only count on our brothers and sisters from the church. We spend the whole Saturday at church, and on Sunday, we meet with them for a barbecue or something like that."* (Ron, 32 years old)

### 5.4 Health, Self-Care, and Limits to Autonomy

The interviews revealed significant impacts of migration on mental health, with mentions of anxiety crises, depression, and panic episodes:

> *"But this transition caused me panic attacks, and I kept thinking: 'What if I need public healthcare here? What am I going to do?' Because in my mind, I had the image of the broken public healthcare system from Venezuela, and I have experience with my son's birth. So I kept thinking, 'What if something goes wrong, what will I do?' I kept thinking about it, and it made me anxious. I'm already an anxious person, but at that time, it was much worse. And that's what triggered my panic attacks."* (Jenifer, 32)

The lack of time posed barriers to regular self-care practices, especially among women with young children:

> *"Sometimes I want to go to the gym, but I think it's better for me to rest. Besides, I wouldn't be able to anyway. Sometimes I get stressed, you know? Because there's so much... motherhood is stressful, relationships are stressful... so if I did anything else, I think I would go crazy."* (Lina, 33)

Diary data reinforced these perceptions: the female groups reported less average time spent on sports and personal care compared to men. Even activities such as sleep and rest appeared fragmented between blocks of caregiving and domestic work.

### 5.5 Migration Trajectories and Reconfiguration of Gender Roles

In several cases, the men migrated before their families, which created unequal temporalities in the migratory experience. In these cases, the female narratives suggest that the men suffered more during the migration process:

> *"The hardest part was for him because he came first. When I arrived, everything was ready... house, documentation, everything sorted."* (Jenifer, 32)

However, in most of these cases, the women were left alone with their children for a period in Venezuela, and this period also seems to have been very difficult for them, especially due to gender roles and motherhood:

> *"In Venezuela, a woman who lives alone with a child cannot be evicted by law. That's why no one wanted to rent a house to me. It was very difficult to find one."* (Jenifer, 32)

> *"I was alone with my son there, it was very difficult to work and take care of him at the same time."* (Leidy, 32)

The results presented show that the daily organization of time among forced Venezuelan migrants in MRBH is deeply rooted in unequal social norms, which persist even in the face of the disruption that migration represents. The sexual division of time is evident both in objective allocation patterns and in the subjective experiences reported, with the overload concentrated on women, especially those with lower education and young children.

This pattern becomes even more evident when comparing the three identified routine groups. Group 1, consisting solely of men with formal employment, presents linear routines focused on employment and commuting, with minimal involvement in caregiving, leisure, or domestic tasks. Groups 2 and 3, predominantly female, reveal distinct—yet equally overburdened—ways of organizing time. In Group 3, routines marked by intensive caregiving, domestic work, and low formal labor market participation are predominant, indicating an overlap of responsibilities that drastically limits free time and individual autonomy. Group 2, on the other hand, brings together women with multiple roles—religious, domestic, and, in

some cases, labor-related—and shows significant internal heterogeneity, with indications of double or triple shifts.

As observed, time dedicated to employment is significantly greater in Group 1, while Groups 2 and 3 lead in caregiving and domestic activities. Education appears significantly only in Group 3, suggesting professional retraining strategies among women outside the formal market. Commuting time, higher in Groups 1 and 2, reflects the daily mobility demands associated with work; in Group 3, nearly absent, this mobility is replaced by staying in the domestic space. Unexpectedly, Group 3 also shows the highest average time spent on leisure and sports, which, in light of the interviews, may indicate not a privilege, but leisure mediated by childcare practices—thus, not representing individualized rest time.

The observed intersectionalities reveal that gender, education, and age jointly influence the production of temporal asymmetries in these cases. Women with lower education and economic stability are overrepresented in Groups 2 and 3, subjected to greater time fragmentation and multiple responsibilities. Men are concentrated in Group 1, with more linear routines and less involvement in reproductive work. Among younger participants, especially those aged 20 to 29, there is a tendency towards more fluid routines, primarily in Group 2, where study, informal work, family support networks, and religious participation intersect. These results indicate that time—understood here not only as a chronological dimension but as a social expression of inequalities—operates as a critical marker of the hierarchies that shape the migratory experience.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper investigated the daily organization of time among forced Venezuelan migrants residing in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte, focusing on the intersectionalities of gender and age. Using a mixed-methods approach—combining time-use diaries and semi-structured interviews—the results highlight that, despite the social discontinuity represented by migration, deeply rooted structural patterns of inequality persist. The sexual division of labor, extensively documented in both national and migratory contexts, reappears strongly in the organization of time, with particularly intense overloads for women with low education and/or precarious labor ties.

Social sequence analysis allowed for the identification of three distinct temporal routine groups, revealing that men tend to occupy positions with greater linearity and predictability in

their time-use, focused on formal employment with minimal involvement in caregiving and domestic work. In contrast, women, especially those outside the formal labor market, assume fragmented routines, navigating multiple shifts and marked by tensions between caregiving responsibilities, the pursuit of qualifications, and the attempt to preserve spaces for self-care. The triangulation with qualitative data showed that these inequalities are experienced both concretely and emotionally, with implications for mental health, autonomy, and the future aspirations of these women.

Through an intersectional lens, the study contributes to understanding how gender, education, and generational position interact to shape the lived time of forced migrants in the Brazilian urban context. The reported experiences also illustrate the combined effects of professional dequalification, language barriers, xenophobic discrimination, and the absence of institutional support networks. Despite these adversities, the study also identified strategies of reorganization and resistance—particularly among younger women—which, although limited, partially challenge normative gender roles.

By proposing time as a critical lens for analyzing social hierarchies, this article emphasizes the importance of methodological approaches that articulate multiple dimensions of the migratory experience and are sensitive to the persistent inequalities in everyday life. Public policies aimed at the labor market integration of migrant women, the expansion of collective caregiving networks, and equitable access to professional qualifications are essential to ensure that migration does not reinforce patterns of subalternization but enables pathways of recognition and social justice.

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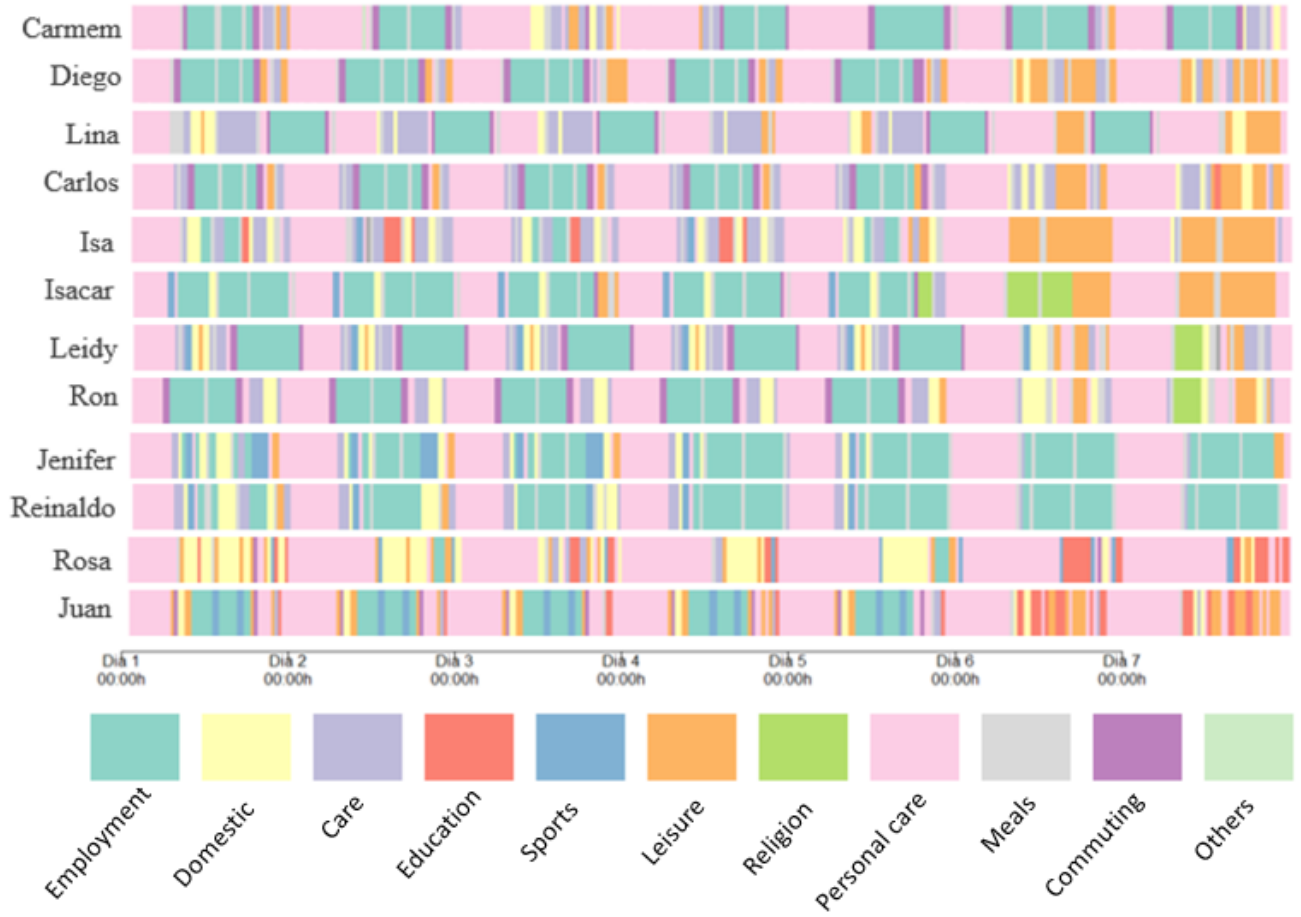
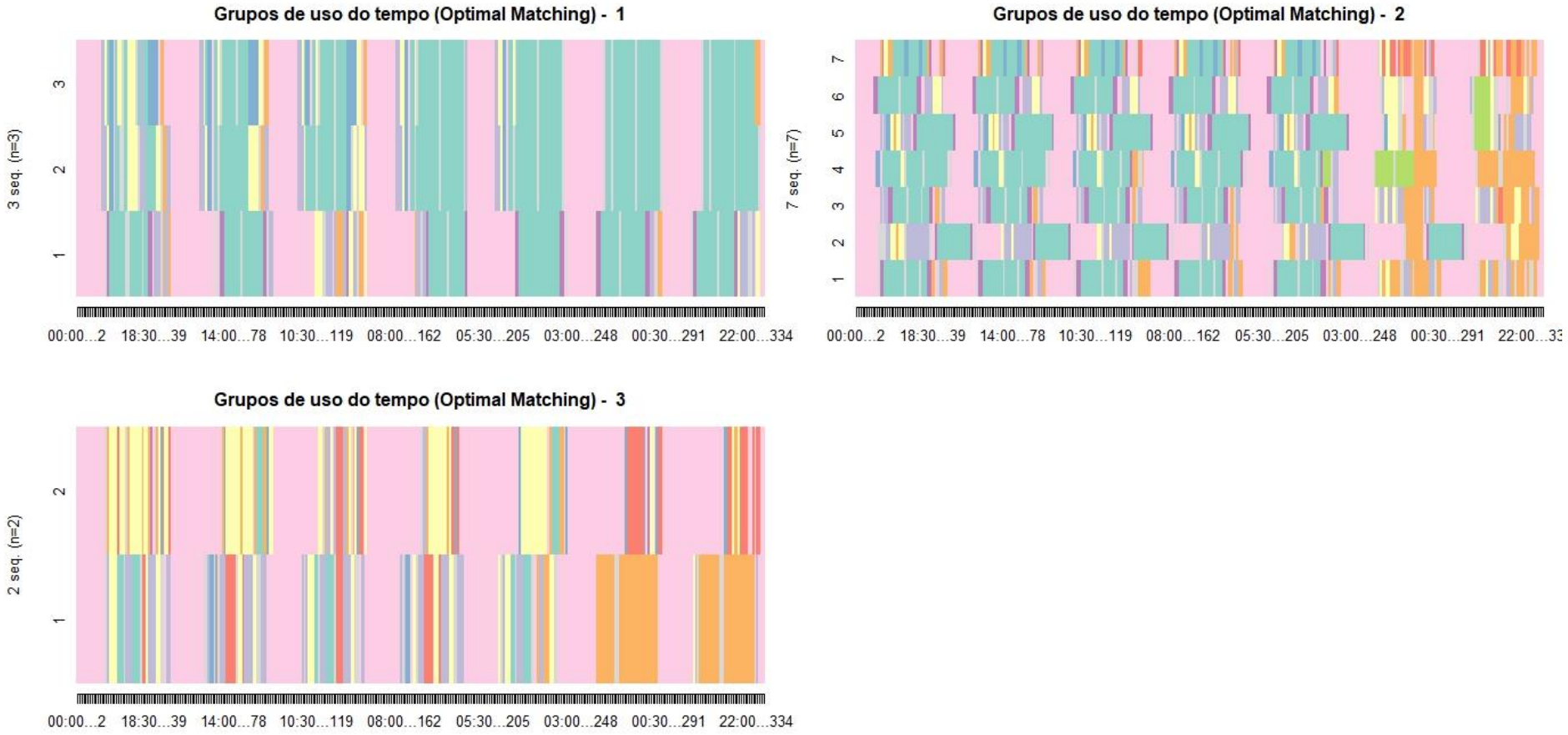
## ANNEXES

**ANNEX 1 –** Weekly Time-Use Sequences among Forced Venezuelan Migrants, by Participant (n=12)




Source: Author's own elaboration based on primary data.

**ANNEX 2 –** Grouping of Daily Time-Use Patterns among Forced Migrants in MRBH, Based on Sequence Analysis (Classical Optimal Matching)




Source: Author's own elaboration based on primary data.

**ANNEX 3 –** Average Weekly Time (in 30-minute units) Dedicated to Each Activity Category, by Routine Groups Identified through Social Sequence Analysis (OM).

| Routine Group | Employment | Domestic | Care | Education | Sports | Leisure | Religion | Personal | Meals | Commuting | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Group 1** | 135.0 | 13.3 | 18.3 | 0.0 | 15.7 | 9.0 | 0.0 | 54.3 | 20.7 | 20.3 | 5.3 |
| **Group 2** | 85.0 | 24.3 | 32.1 | 2.6 | 7.6 | 31.9 | 11.1 | 49.3 | 22.0 | 15.0 | 9.9 |
| **Group 3** | 27.5 | 62.5 | 52.5 | 27.5 | 8.5 | 47.5 | 0.0 | 51.0 | 25.0 | 1.5 | 12.5 |

Source: Author's own elaboration based on primary data.

**ANNEX 4 –** Kruskal-Wallis Test Results by Activity and Routine Group

| Activity | $\chi^2$ Statistic (Kruskal-Wallis) | p-value | Significant (p < 0,05) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Employment | 7,95 | 0,0188 | Yes |
| Domestic Work | 3,84 | 0,1462 | No |
| Care | 0,22 | 0,8979 | No |
| Education | 5,86 | 0,0535 | No |
| Sport | 0,22 | 0,6471 | No |
| Leisure | 6,43 | 0,0402 | Yes |
| Religion | 2,65 | 0,2662 | No |
| Personal Care | 3,09 | 0,2137 | No |
| Meals | 0,01 | 0,9863 | No |
| Commuting | 3,48 | 0,1752 | No |
| Others | 3,00 | 0,2231 | No |

Source: Author's own elaboration based on primary data.