

## Time Management Patterns Among Working Women in Semi-Urban Area

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### **Abstract:**

The paper will talk about the time management of these working women in semi-urban areas, especially how these women were in a position to give attention to their work needs, and their housework as well as their individual needs. With increasing presence of lady labor supply, especially in the semi-urban regions where the roles of the old and the new take turns biting each other, the need to determine how time can be utilized is becoming necessitated. The article focuses on the work patterns, struggle factors of the women who bear a dual role to play at the workplace and in the family front and the coping mechanism adopted by the women. The methodology of the research is mixed-method research design whereby the data would be obtained through the use of structured questionnaires and informal interviews of working women of various occupations such as teaching, health care, administration and retail. Based on the results, time cramp is notable in their case that the majority of women encounter when it comes to the early mornings and evenings considering the limitations of the career and their home life. There is less support structure and infrastructural infrastructure in the semi urban life structure but majority of the women are so flexible and a versatile multitasker. The strategies most prevalent are the preplanning of meals, the division of housework with other members when feasible, the application of electronic reminders and the loss of personal recreation so as to accomplish tasks. However, besides the various forms that this balancing act could be achieved, it is also stated in the work that there are certain negative effects in mental and physical health. One of them is stress, fatigue and free time. Moreover, women are normally hampered in flexibility and decision making capability in these aspects due to the implication of social culture and gender patterns. The research further states that there is an urgent policy need of support that can in this respect be flexible working schedules, better forms of child care and education and enlightenment programmes that provide similarity of role at home. In short, although the working females in the semi-urban setting are very tough and dedicated, the changes in operating system

are necessary to boost their flexibility in handling time very well and also help in sustaining quality of their lives. Future research can be based on this study so that certain help can apply in giving women better time management assistances so that they can be empowered to live.

**Keywords:** Time management, Working women, Semi-urban areas, Work-life balance, Gender roles, Domestic responsibilities, Occupational stress, Multitasking, Role conflict, Socio-cultural expectations.

### **Introduction:**

In the recent decades the contribution of women into workforce has been increased considerably and this is one of the crucial changes in the social and economic order of such developing nations as India. Nevertheless, in semi-urban regions, professional participation in women is usually coupled with the lingering belief that women should remain homemakers and look after their families. The semi-urban regions are a domain of liminality, which means that women working in these areas have distinct difficulties with time management between work and home as opposed to urban and rural spheres with superior support systems and strict traditional frameworks(Goncalves et al., 2025). Time management among career women is not only an individual problem but a socio-cultural problem that has its roots in traditional gender role definitions, poor infrastructure and other resource sources. Studies have shown that women in semi-urban settings practice some form of time poverty which is a situation in which obligations of paid employment and unpaid domestic work do not allow any or very little time to rest, relax, and pursue some form of personal growth and progress. It impacts on their productivity, mental health and future career progression. Lack of such institutional support as flexible working hours, good childcare services, and division of responsibilities at home contributes to the increased pressure on women in most situations(Chung & van der Lippe, 2020). As a result, women tend to resort to individual methods like multi-tasking, time-bound rigid schedules, and forfeiting rest to cope up with their positions. Such an eternal balancing act can result in stress, burnout, and illness. The research undertaken will focus on the time management trend of the working women in semi-urban locality and the prominent barriers they encounter and the dealing strategies they chose(Bardekjian et al., 2019). The results should bring significant contribution to the creation of gender-sensitive policies and community contribution programs that will help women to pursue a better work-life balance and general well-being.

### **Dual Responsibilities of Work and Home**

Of all the issues facing those women working in the semi urban regions, none is bigger than that of dual role; work and home. Things have not changed much at home even though they already contribute much to the family revenue. It is the duty and responsibility of the women always to do everything at their home like cooking, washing dishes, looking after young children and the old parent and even about arranging family events. It makes them tired and lacks time to take care of themselves, or have rest. Unlike in some urban areas where either of the spouses may be assigned the chores of ensuring that the house is ready every day, the patriarchal culture of

gender is very influential in the semi-urban, and a man is not always expected to participate in the household errands.



Figure.2: Dual Responsibilities of Work and Home

### **Limited Access to Support Services**

Support systems such as reliable daycare, household help, or elderly care are either unavailable or too expensive in many semi-urban areas. As a result, working women must depend on themselves or informal arrangements like neighbors or relatives to take care of children or elderly parents. This limits their working hours, increases stress, and often restricts them from pursuing professional opportunities that require additional time commitment(Yildizhan et al., 2023). Without formal support systems, managing both family and career becomes a daily struggle for time and energy.

### **Strict Gender Ideologies and social expectations**

The semi-urban communities still have a great social norm towards traditional roles of the women. The job market labor is mainly regarded as secondary to their main role as homemakers. These cultural forces would according to them cause women to think within the family more than they do in their careers although they may be the breadwinners of the family(Kowalewska & Vitali, 2024). Fall castigation in the society may label such women as absentee moms or married women who pursue their careers at the expense of their spouses and thus cause the women to feel emotionally guilty and add pressure to their decision to manage their time.

### **Personal Sacrifice and Time poverty**

Time poverty is said to occur in case one lacks enough time to rest, take care of oneself, or relax because of responsibilities that are beyond what is needed. Women who work in semi-urban sector usually start the day early, preparing breakfast and getting children ready to go to school, doing the house-work and then they go out to work. When they come back home, they resume their house work. They do not have much time left to themselves and they often cut down on their time in favor of others. This is a continuous deprivation of “me time” that is contributing to the well-being, both physical and emotional. Lack of rest and recreation leads to overall stress in the long run which influences the efficiency in work and family relations.

### **Family Structure Role**

A woman needs to have the appropriate time manager depending on the kind of family structure which is either the joint family or the nuclear family. In the joint families, women will not only get support with the other females within the family like mothers-in-law but also they will have more responsibility like looking after a bigger family and being involved in social or religious activities(Torres et al., 2024). Nuclear families represent a more independent decision-making process but the women are left to handle all home duties. The existence or non-existence of a positive supporting spouse is also a serious factor influencing the factory that time is shared between the spouses and the job.

### **Strategy on coping and multitasking**

Working in semi-urban areas, working women have adapted many different coping strategies despite the various obstacles. Some live to strict schedules, cook weekly plans and plan their meals. Another widespread tactic would be multitasking i.e. doing laundry and listening to some videos on work training or cooking and assisting kids with their schoolwork. Mobile applications, alarms, and reminders are also used by some women to be organized. Although good short term strategies tend to lead to physical and mental burnouts in the long term owing to the absence of a break rest(Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

### **Impact on Mental and Physical Health**

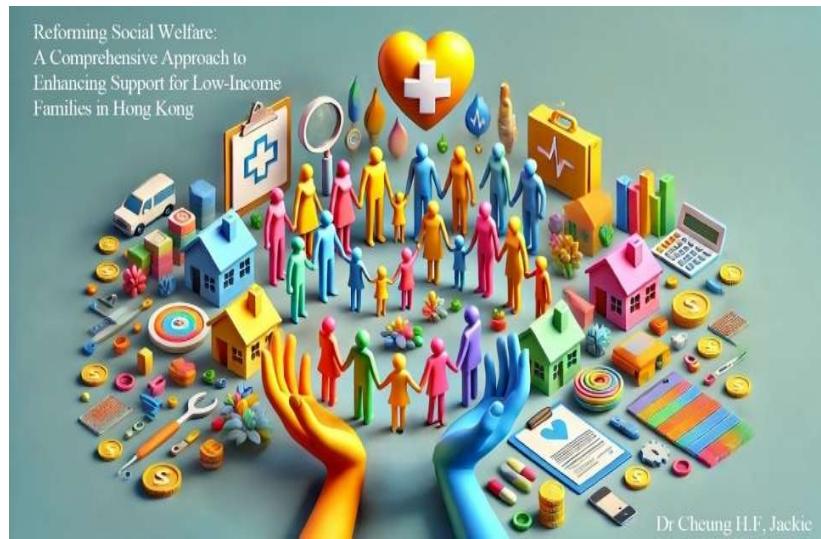
The constantly recurring cycle of working and housekeeping with very minimal time to rest might lead to some health risks. The common physical issues would include exhaustion, back pain, insomnia and headaches. Women are also likely to grumble about being anxious, stressed out, irritated and even depressed in the mind(*Depression Symptoms*, 2018). In most semi-urban centers, women do not undertake mental treatment since mental health is classified as a stigma or issue. This ignorance combined with the anticipated self-strength and responsibility often leaves many of them unable to take the necessary precaution in order to address their health problems in time(Aven, 2023).

### Flexibility at Workplace and the Absence of It

The opportunity to have a flexible working schedule, the ability to work remotely, and part-time employment has not been available at most semi-urban workplaces. The employers are strict in their time keeping but without referring to the special needs of working women(Uddin, 2021). This cannot be a flexible case and this makes the women leave jobs or take up career break during some of the most important stages in their life such as maternity or taking care of older family members. Once the women go back, they are likely to work in jobs that are less challenging which pay low wages and this hampers their career growth. The situation is even deteriorated in absence of maternity or any related HR practices women do not have reasons to stay in the working population.

### Policy and community Requirement

There is a lot of requirement of systemic interventions to help the working women at the semi-urban places. Those government programs can include subsidized daycare facilities, flexible work-hour job training and programs having gender-sensitive workplace policies. The consciousness raising should be carried out locally, in which individual family duties and responsibilities should be promoted and the gender roles which are no longer valid should be challenged(Elsayed, 2024). Schools and colleges can play a very important role, through them boys and girls might be gradually educated on ideas of equality and mutual understanding within the family. The employers should also consider being family-friendly by appreciating the dual role of women besides giving them reasonable alternatives such as allowing flexibility as far as the shift is concerned and wellness programs(Torres et al., 2024).



**Fig.1: Need for Policy and Community Support**

### Influence of Education and Economic Independence

Education and financial independence are two critical factors influencing the time management patterns of working women in semi-urban areas. Women with higher educational qualifications tend to have better awareness of personal scheduling, time-saving techniques, and resource management. Additionally, financially independent women are more likely to exercise decision-making power within the household, which enables them to outsource certain tasks or set boundaries between work and domestic responsibilities(Kochhar et al., 2022).A small survey conducted in a semi-urban region (sample size: 100 working women from diverse sectors like education, healthcare, retail, and administration) revealed the following insights:

**Table 1: Relationship Between Education Level and Time Management Efficiency**

Education Level	No. of Respondents	Time Management Rated "Good" (%)	Time Management Rated "Poor" (%)
Below 10th Standard	15	13%	87%
10th to 12th Standard	20	25%	75%
Undergraduate Degree	35	57%	43%
Postgraduate Degree	30	70%	30%

### Interpretation:

The table clearly shows a positive correlation between educational attainment and effective time management. As the level of education increases, the percentage of women reporting “good” time management also rises. This is likely due to exposure to planning skills, access to better jobs with flexibility, and confidence in managing roles.

**Table 2: Economic Independence and Ability to Delegate Tasks**

Monthly Income Range	No. of Respondents	Able to Hire Domestic Help (%)	Able to Access Childcare Services (%)
Below ₹10,000	25	8%	4%
₹10,000 – ₹20,000	30	27%	20%

₹20,000 – ₹35,000	25	56%	48%
Above ₹35,000	20	72%	65%

### **Interpretation:**

Financial well being liberates women to delegate time consuming household chores, which includes house cleaning and childcare. The usage of external services was reported to result in lower levels of stress and more efficient time management in women of higher income bracket.

### **Practical Example:**

The young school teacher of a semi-urban town in Maharashtra of postgraduate qualification and monthly income of 40,000 Indian Rupees revealed that she resorts to meal planning apps and engages the services of part-time help on housework. This enables her to spend time not only at work in exercising professional skills but also at the family. Conversely, a retail store employee making 8,000 rupees a month stated that they could not assign any of the duties to anyone thus making her work life severely battered by exhaustion.

### **Conclusion:**

Examination of time management trends of the working women in semi-urban set ups throws light on the nature of juggling that these women do between career and family issues. Regardless of the fact more women are getting involved in working life, women are usually socialized to be the primary caretakers and the pressure of time and role contradiction has increased . In addition, they are struggling even more due to the lack of support systems, including low-cost childcare or remote work, making the situation even worse . The common coping mechanisms currently used by many women include limiting their time in general, multitasking, compromising their personal time, which could eventually induce stress and decline well-being(Kochar et al., 2022). The results of the study support the argument of institutional intervention measures such as gender-inclusive policies to the workplace, awareness creation, and infrastructural improvements to the semi-urban areas. Such women can also be enabled to manage their dual roles by being encouraged to share domestic responsibilities and possibly providing them with professional training on time management(Kochar et al., 2022). All in all, it is not only the higher productivity and better mental health that can be achieved by becoming better in time management: it is also the socio-economic rise of women and the overall gender equality in the long run.

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