8.1 Summary

A large number of studies have been conducted regarding time-use of women between paid and unpaid work at the international and national level. Amartya Sen’s work on the theory of the household represents the household not as an undifferentiated unit, but as a unit of cooperation as well as of inequality and internal discrimination (Sen, 2001). A large research gap is also found while examining previous time allocation studies which left out time use of working women, their occupational differences and similarities in time use and so on. Such a gap became the main thread of this study and an occupation wise comparison of time allocation of working women is undertaken.

This study focuses on problems faced by working women in their time allocation and also examines their status within the family. For the purpose of occupational comparison, India’s National Classification of Occupations (NCO) 2004 is adopted as a standard tool which divides occupations into ten divisions. As geography has a significant role in time use survey (1998-1999) as revealed by CSO’s time use survey, the central most district in Kerala that, Thrissur district is selected as the sample area. A sample of 450 working women are randomly selected from Thrissur district which covers the regions of Thrissur Corporation, Kodungallur...
Municipality, Valappad Panchayath and Pazhayannur Panchayath. The study area is thus confined only to Thrissur district which covers Thrissur Corporation, Kodungallur Municipality, Valappad Panchayat, and Pazhayannur Panchayat. The area selected is comprised of geographical features namely highly urbanized, semi-urban, coastal area and hilly terrain. Occupational comparison on the basis of NCO is then made.

A look back on the woman’s position reveals that traditionally her work is confined to the four walls of the household. She is supposed to do all domestic works which are considered as unproductive and therefore was left out of national income statistics. In such a patriarchal nature of the family, men are considered as the bread winners who are possible to do productive jobs and exercise control over woman and the entire family. Domestic work and care related work always remain as the main duties of women in spite all developments in the field of education and employment All such works performed by women remain invisible from our national income statistics. Domestic work in fact consists of the production or creation of use values through a combination of commodities bought from the market along with labour time of household members. The present study observes how working women spend their time for domestic and paid market work. Status of working women in the family is also examined on the basis of her decision making power and asset ownership position.

Time allocation is a multi dimensional phenomenon and if time is not properly managed it will put women especially working women in a high time poverty group. Since time is a limited factor, when more of it is devoted to paid and unpaid work, less time is left for leisure and it results in high time poverty. The present study is carried out on the basis of the following four main objectives:

1. to examine the time allocation of working women across different occupations and to quantify the value of their domestic work,

2. to examine the status of working women in the family on the basis of decision making power and asset ownership,

3. to analyse the main factors which influence the household time allocation of working women and
4. to identify the major problems faced by working women related to their time allocation.

8.2 Major Findings of the Study

The analysis based on these objectives reveals the following findings:

8.2.1 Time Allocation of Working Women across Different Occupations and Quantification of the Value of Their Domestic Work.

To examine the time allocation of working women total time allocated to household work is classified into three: (a) Main household work (which include cooking, cleaning and washing etc), (b) Care work (which include child care, elderly care, personal care) and (c) Time devoted to Household management (which includes paying bills, shopping, fuel gathering, water collection, domestic outsourcing etc). One way ANOVA is used to compare the domestic time allocation of working women having different occupational status. The values presented are mean value of time (per day). An occupational wise comparison of domestic time allocation reveals that there exists significant difference between different occupational categories in their domestic time allocation that is time devoted for household work. As F value is found to be significant post hoc test (Duncan Multiplier Range Test DMRT) is performed to check between which groups the difference is significant. Results revealed that plant and machine operators have highest time allocation for domestic work (4.17 hours per day) and the professional has the lowest time spent for domestic work (1.94 hours per day). Time devoted to main household work (4.17 hours per day) is more among women working as plant and machine operators and assemblers which include rubber sheet makers, drycleaners, pencil and bead makers and the like. Professionals spend least time for the main domestic work (1.94 hours per day), because of their heavy stress and strain related market work along with their better income situations enable them to appoint domestic workers and thus the time they themselves spend on domestic work shows a decline.

Whatever be the occupational classification a homogenous trend towards time devoted to care related work is noticed. This shows that women in spite of all her outside work gives significant attention for giving care to all members in the family.
Professionals had less time devoted to household management (.70 hours per day). And those belong to elementary occupations consume more time for household management. Time spend at work place has a significant influence upon their activities within the family. The agricultural, fishery related working women spend comparatively less time at the work place (5.21 hours per day). Legislators, senior officials, managers and plant and machine operators spend more time at the work place, nearly 8 hours per day.

Sleep is a major expenditure of time that exhibits substantial variation within every population. If working women gain sufficient time for sleeping it will surely increase their alertness and day time functioning. Turning to time allocated for sleeping, legislators, senior officials and managers spend more time (7.15 hours per day) and craft and related workers (5.92 hours per day) the least. Such a finding is quite interesting considering the age old notion that these groups are very busy and even gain less time for sleep. The results gained from the survey made it clear that they realize the significance of good sleep for efficient and better tomorrow.

For rest and leisure an interesting correlation is found in the case with fishery and agriculture related women workers who spend less time at the work place and use a major chunk of their time for rest and leisure. Such a finding clearly shows the flexible nature of their work. Working women in total spent twenty eight percent of their total time for market work and nearly twenty five percent for household activities. Market work plus unpaid domestic work consume fifty percent for the total time of working women. And the balance fifty percent is used for sleeping, rest and leisure. An occupational wise comparison reveals that technicians and associate professionals spend 31.3 percent of their time at the work place. For household activities legislators, senior officials and professional spend proportionately less time and it forms a high proportion in the case with those women employed in elementary occupations. Regarding rest and leisure skilled agricultural and fishery related working women have more time (29.2 percent ) and plant and machine operators who spend proportionately more time at the work place spend less time for rest and leisure (13.8 percent ) of their time on it. It is a known factor that enough and sufficient rest,
leisure and sleep will function as meditation and will improve the quality of work of human beings both inside and outside.

Women are noted for their love and affection as mothers and child care often consume a major portion of the time of woman and time spend on child care is divided into three: *Primary child care, Educational child care and Recreational child care.* The F value reveals that there is no significant difference between different occupational groups in providing child care. Woman whatever their occupational status is, spends almost similar time for child care. But regarding professionals the mean value of time spend for educational and recreational child care approaches zero reveals that they face high time poverty due to their tight work schedules as is clear from the interview schedule. In the case of time spend on personal care slight difference can be noticed in the case with professional and associate professionals who spend somewhat a little bit time more than other occupational categories.

Among different occupational categories no significant difference in providing care and care time allocation can be found. One feature that can be noticed in relation to skilled agricultural and fishery workers, plant and machine operators that the mean value for elderly care time approaches zero. Two main reasons are behind this. Among the total samples these two contain lowest sample size and their households are mainly nuclear with no elderly members living with them. So no elderly care and zero mean value for elderly care time.

The economic value of domestic work is calculated mainly with the help of time use surveys. If these unpaid activities are properly recognized, it will become very easy for the policy framers to frame suitable policies. But ironically all such domestic work is classified as ‘economically unproductive’ and the women’s true work is thus economically undervalued. The time use surveys thus make the invisible hands visible and thus give a better estimation of our national income. A formula is evolved to calculate the value of domestic work performed by working women across different occupations. 

\[
\text{Value of domestic work performed by woman} = \text{Average time spent for domestic work} \times \text{Average salary per hour (equivalent to the salary position of each occupational category)}
\]
On the basis of the formula, from the sample survey average time spent at the work place per day is calculated for different occupational categories. For example, the first occupational group consisting of legislators, senior officials and managers spend on an average 7.33 hours per day at the work place, their average salary per day can also been gained from their monthly salary. From that it is possible to find out their average salary per hour. The sample survey also gives the data on average time spend for domestic work. When their average salary is multiplied by the average time they spend for domestic work, their value of domestic work can be calculated. The first occupational category on an average spend about 4.5 hours per day on domestic work and the value of domestic work per day is 879.95 rupees. Similarly for the professionals, they spend 3.94 hours per day on domestic work and its value is about 624.70 rupees per day. Group three consists of technicians and associate professionals who spend about 6.19 hours per day on domestic work and the value of their domestic work per day is 668.52 rupees. As we go down the occupational ladder, one significant feature noticed is that amount of time devoted to domestic work increases and it is highest in the case of those who belong to elementary occupation that is about 6.57 hours per day and for that they earn only 119.34 rupees per day. Similarly plant and machine operators and those working women coming under group ten that is those who work under leave vacancy and temporary occupations spend above 6 hours per day on domestic work and the value 161.57 and 146.04 rupees respectively.

8.2.2 Status of Working Women in the Family

The second objective is to examine the status of women in the family and it is carried out on the basis of their decision making power and asset ownership. To examine the decision making power of working women 6 new variables are introduced:

a) decision related to what to cook in the household
b) decision making related to family planning
c) decision related to own health care
d) decision in household purchases
e) decision and freedom to participate in socio-political activities

f) decision making in financial matters.

Decision making related to what to cook in the household reveals that legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals and associate professionals have more freedom compared to the agricultural, fishery workers. Those belonging to elementary occupations have less say in household affairs including what to cook in the household. It shows that education and employment status to a great extent influences even the basic decision making within the family. More than 80 per cent of sample working women have the power to make decisions related to what to cook in the household. In Kerala decisions related to family planning and in related matters working woman belonging to all occupational categories have high degree of decision making power that is above 90 per cent.

Women especially working women are much concerned about health and health care. Among all occupational groups more than 80 per cent had their own decisions related to health care and more than 95 per cent of working women belong to the group one which include legislators, senior officials and managers. They have decision making power in relation to health care. More than 84 per cent of the total sample women had their own decision related to healthcare.

Turning to the purchase of household assets, working women had a high degree of say in such matters and among different occupational groups the first group that is the legislators, senior officials and managers had a high degree of decision making power related to household purchases. More than 80 percent of working women had their own decisions and turning to the last two that is freedom to participate in socio-political activities and financial freedom to spend the money they earned, working women had comparatively less decision making power.

In the case with socio political participation only half of the working women in the sample had the freedom to participate in such activities. Similarly, in the case with decision making in financial matters only three fourth of the working women had freedom in financial matters and among the different occupational classes, class one occupational category had high freedom and those who belong to agricultural and
fishery related occupational groups, plant and machine operators and those falling under elementary occupations all exercise less financial freedom even if they are working and earn money.

Household purchases mentioned here are related to both durable and non-durable articles purchased. Decisions related to such purchases in the past are mainly performed by males and females who have only a marginal say in affairs relating to household purchases. But with the increase in employment opportunities and increase in the number of working women and more income in their hands increased their role in decision related to household purchases. From the above six variables related to decision-making power, a measure of decision-making power of working women under three categories is derived:

1. Working women having low decision-making power
2. Working women having moderate decision-making power
3. Working women having high decision-making power

It is a welcoming trend that 63.3 per cent of the working women enjoyed high level of decision making power and only 8 per cent of the working women reveal that they have low level of decision making power within the household. This classification revealed to an extent that working women have a say in the household which surely improves their status within the family and now too in spite of high level of education and employment status a section of women have less degree of decision making power.

While examining the association between occupation and level of decision making in the family reveals that the first occupational group consist of legislators, senior officials and managers(90 per cent) and the second group consists of professionals (87.5 per cent) have a high level of decision making power compared to other occupational categories. Those working women in the sample belong to plant and machinery related occupations, and those belong to agriculture and fishery related works have only average level of decision making power. To examine whether there exists any association between occupational status and decision making power, chi-
square test is performed. The calculated value is significant which reveals that there exist close association between occupation and decision making power.

The second variable used to measure the status of woman in the family is her *asset ownership*. Level of asset ownership of working woman is examined with the help of three types of assets:

a) Land ownership

b) Vehicle ownership

c) Financial asset ownership

From the above explained three types of assets, a measure for analyzing the level of asset ownership of working women under three categories has been derived:

1. *Working women having low level of asset ownership*

2. *Working women having moderate level of asset ownership*

3. *Working women having high level of asset ownership*

Only 21.8 per cent of the sample women reveal that they have high level of asset ownership. Nearly 43 per cent of working women falls under low level of asset ownership in spite of their income earning capacity. An occupation-wise distribution of the sample women in relation to the asset ownership reveals that skilled agricultural and fishery workers, craft related workers and those belong to plant and machine operators and elementary occupation reveal that they have land of their own, but turning to vehicle and financial asset ownership they have less owner ship status. For example, those belong to craft and related works (12 per cent), elementary occupations (12.28 per cent), plant and machine operators (16.67 per cent), skilled agricultural and fishery workers (25 per cent) have less per cent of vehicle ownership. A high per cent of (80 per cent) of working woman in the occupational group Legislators, senior official and managers along with professionals (70 per cent) had vehicle ownership. Similarly in the case with financial asset ownership woman belong to elementary occupations (24.56 per cent) and craft related workers (28 per cent) have less percent compared to legislators, senior official and managers (100 per cent) and professionals (87.5 per cent). While considering all the occupational groups in
total 57.11 per cent of sample woman reveal that they have land ownership and 40.44 per cent reveal that they have vehicle ownership and 68.22 per cent had financial asset ownership.

The association between occupation and level of asset ownership reveals that 50 per cent of professionals have a high level of asset ownership. Only 4 per cent of working women belongs to craft related occupations have high level of asset ownership. While considering samples across occupational groups, only a minute segment fall under the group enjoying high level of asset ownership. 73.68 per cent of working woman belong to elementary occupations, 72 per cent belongs to craft related occupations, 66.67 per cent of plant and machine operators and 58.33 percent skilled agriculture and fishery workers revealed that they have low level of asset ownership. In total, among the 450 working woman across different occupational classes only 42.67 have low level of asset ownership, 35.56 percent have average level of asset ownership and only 21.78 per cent had high level of asset ownership.

By combining these entire variables, six for decision making power and three for asset ownership that is from a total of 9 variables a measure of the status of working women in the family is derived.

1. Working women having low status within the family
2. Working women having moderate status within the family
3. Working women having high status within the family

It is quite clear that employment in fact increased the status of working woman in the family. On the basis of this measure it is reveal that more than half of the sample women (54.9 per cent) have high status within the family. 36.9 per cent of sample women have a moderate status level in the family. Nearly 8.2 per cent of working women in spite of their position as an income earning member of the family exercise a low status within the family. No sample women falling under first occupational group exercise a low status in the family, except one sample woman all other in this group have high status level in the family. Similar is the case with professionals too. One important feature noticed that only a small per cent of working women in all occupational groups have a low status in the family. A welcoming trend
which can be noticed is that more than half of the working women have high status level in the family. A look across occupations reveals that it is high among the first two occupational groups that are 95.24 and 81.25 per cent of working women belongs to this two groups exercise high status within the family. Majority of working women who belong to elementary occupations that is nearly sixty per cent of them fall under the group exercising moderate status level in the family. Whether there exists any association between occupational status and family status is examined with the help of chi-square test. The results reveal that there exists significant association between occupation and status of woman in the family.

8.2.3 Main Factors Influencing Working Women’s Household Time Allocation

Woman’s domestic work is correlated with so many factors. A bivariate correlation is carried out with one variable as working woman’s household time allocation and other influencing factors like income, nature of work, time spend at work place per day, presence of servant, care of elderly, type of house, status of woman in the family, age, educational status, number and age of children, number of adult members, family size and occupational status. A step wise multiple regression is also done to know the main variables that influence working women’s household time allocation.

The relation between income and time devoted for household work seems to be negatively correlated. It shows that as income increases, the time devoted to household working time shows a decreasing tendency. With an increase in income working women can either appoint a domestic worker to support them or can purchase time saving household equipments to save their valuable time. The correlation between nature of work and time devoted to household work also shows a negative correlation. As a woman move from temporary nature of occupation to permanent nature her household time allocation shows a diminishing trend. This is mainly because with a sure level of income, they can even purchase durable and time saving equipments or can appoint a domestic helper. The correlation between time spent at work place and time spent for household work seems to be non significant. The main reason for this is that whatever be their working time, they somehow manage to adjust and arrange their household time which suits to their market working time.
One most significant factor that influences household working time of a working woman is the presence of the servant. Thus the bivariate correlation between them shows an inverse relationship. The correlation seems to be highly significant; when a domestic worker or servant is appointed it reduces the working woman’s time devoted for total household work.

Care work is considered as one of the main and time consuming works of woman. While considering the correlation between elderly care time and time devoted to household work, it shows its influence in two ways: firstly, if there is the presence of mother or mother in law it will not increases working women’s household working time. Because she somewhat adjusted to her daughter or daughter in laws even in works which needed less strain. But the elderly care related to father or father in law in fact increases the household working time of woman and here we can notice the gender influence.

Turning to the type of house and household time allocation, there is a belief that large house increases household working time compared to small house. But the correlation results shows that the relation between type of house and household time allocation is negatively correlated. The correlation between status of woman in the family and time devoted to household work is found to be not related or non significant. These results revealed that household work is mainly the duty of woman and whatever be their status they have to do household work. Age of working woman and household working time shows a negative correlation. It shows that with an increase in age they can more efficiently and speedily perform the routine domestic work and thus reduce the time devoted to household work.

Women are noted for their child care activities, and it is true that a woman who has children below 15 or have tender aged children has to spend more time for household work compared to grown up children. The results revealed that the presence of younger children and time devoted to household work is positively correlated. Similarly the correlation between number of adult members in the household, education and family size to that of the household working time of women seems to be non significant.
An occupational wise correlation with household working time reveals that only the first and second occupational categories shows a negative correlation that is they spend less time for household related activities. The correlation between all other occupational categories and time devoted to household work gives non significant results.

Multiple regression equation in step wise is fitted with time devoted for household work as dependent variable and time for rest and leisure, time for sleeping, presence of children, presence of servant, time for elderly care, income, age, education, occupation 1(which club together 1-3 occupational divisions) and occupation 2 (which club together 4-10 occupational divisions), travelling time, time spend for personal care, domestic help received from husband, domestic help received from elderly members are taken as explanatory variables.

One main problem while examining the factors influencing household time allocation is the high degree of multicollinearity or linear relationship between explanatory variables as is clear from the correlation results. Under such circumstances even some variables which are found to be statistically significant while examining the bivariate correlation seems to be non significant in their combined effect in multiple regressions. Under such circumstances the t value reveals that only five variables that is the time for rest and leisure, time for sleeping, presence of children, presence of servant, time for elderly care shows to be significantly influences the household working time.

The first variable that is the time spend by working women for rest and leisure influences her household time allocation. This is because after her market work, if she spends more time for rest and leisure activities to relax she gain only less time for rest. Regression coefficient for the time spend for rest and leisure is -0.431, the negative sign indicate if a working women spend more time for rest and leisure less time is gained for household work. Next independent variable found to be significant influence on working women’s household time allocation is the time spent for sleeping. If a working woman spends more time for sleeping with her specific span of market work, she gains only less time for household work and also the opposite will happen that is if more time devoted to household work less time is gained for sleeping. Here too the
regression coefficient is negative (-0.467) which indicates an inverse relationship between the two.

Children and child care often consume a major portion of women’s time and if she had tender aged children, she had to put more hours for household work including childcare. The regression coefficient shows a positive relation between child care and time devoted to household work (0.809). Another variable that produce profound influence on working women’s household time allocation is the presence of servant. If there is a servant to assist working women in her household work, it will surely reduce her time devoted to household work. The coefficient value is -0.518 which shows that independent variable X4 is influencing the dependent variable inversely and the influence is so significant at one per cent level. Even though the variable income had shown a significant influence in the bivariate correlation but in the regression analysis while explaining the combined effect of factors influencing household time allocation the direct effect of income turned to be insignificant. But the results revealed that presence of servant is one main factor influencing working women’s household time allocation. Only with a better income status a women can appoint a domestic helper to help her in their domestic work, thus income is indirectly influencing working women’s household time allocation through the presence of servant.

The last variable found to have a significant influence in the regression model is the time spends for elderly care. It is found that it shows a positive influence upon the working women’s household time allocation. If there are elderly members in the household and if they are physically weak working women had to spend more time for household work to look after them.

8.2.4 Problems Faced by Working Women Related to their Time Allocation

For the sake of simplicity and easy understanding the main problems faced by working women associated with their time use are divided into three like health, family and psychological problems.

It is true that healthy woman build healthy communities and health status of Kerala women is much better than the national average. Women’s multiple roles affect not only her own health and well being but affect the overall health and well
being of the family. The heavy stress and strain they face while combining the outside work and domestic work, child care, care for elderly made her more tiresome and she gain less leisure. Working women’s total hours of work increases at the expense of her leisure time.

Details related to health problems revealed that nearly one fourth of working women belong to elementary occupations faces permanent health problems (22.81 per cent), followed by service workers and sales and shop workers (19.74 per cent). It is clear from the interviews conducted with the sales girls and those belong to elementary occupations revealed that they face back pain and related problems which mainly formed due to the nature of work they performed. Similarly the plant and machine operators mainly face the problems related to lung related diseases that is about seventeen per cent revealed that they face such problems.

Regular physical exercise has a significant influence upon the health of every person especially in the case of working woman. Even after realizing its significance, due to lack of enough and sufficient time working woman belong to elementary occupations, plant and machine works, agriculture works and craft related works face problems related to practicing regular physical exercise. But turning to the case with legislators, professional and associate professionals instead of their busy life schedule, they consider the significance of regular exercises and they in any way try to adjust their time span for this too and they try to solve this problems to a great extend.

In Kerala due to high level of educational background women always consider the significance of nutritious diet and its impact on her health. Working woman who belongs to agricultural works and those belongs to elementary occupations face problems related to the intake of nutritious diet, they due to their low income status are unable to take nutritious diet daily. About 75 per cent of working woman belong to this occupational group revealed that they are unable to take nutritious diet daily. Not only their low income status but also their time use pattern influences their food consumption habits. 64.91 per cent of those working woman belong to elementary occupations face the problem related to the intake of nutritious diet daily. Those working woman belonging to the first and second occupational group like legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals etc felt such problems at its minimum
because they realize the role of nutritious diet in a human being's daily life. Thus in spite of their busy and tight schedules they try their maximum to take nutritious diet daily. Only 19.05 and 12.5 percent of working women belong to these two occupational groups face the problem related to the daily intake of nutritious diet. Even regarding the intake of nutritious diet 36.7 per cent of working women revealed that they are not able to take nutritious diet daily due to tight time schedule and long hours of traveling etc.

While considering the health problems faced by working women across different occupational categories in total, 13 per cent of sample woman revealed that they suffer from permanent health problems and about 87 per cent revealed that they do not face any permanent problems related to health. An examination of lung diseases caused by the traditional methods of cooking (with the use of wood, dry cow dung etc), 92 percent of sample woman are in a much better health situation through increased use of LPG rather than traditional methods of cooking. Such a positive trend in the health status of Kerala women revealed that they are in a much better health situation than the national average.

Turning to family problems, disintegration of joint families and development of nuclear families often put heavy stress on the time allocation of working women. As the survey revealed that nearly one third of the interviewed working woman face some problems basically in relation to family support to participate in income earning activities outside. Whatever be the occupational status the presence of children often had a significant impact on the time allocation of woman. Nearly half of the sample woman expressed that if they had children with age less than 15 years, they have to spend more time to look after them.

If the working women are not living with their husband, it also stood as a problem in their time use even though such constraint is only less felt (less than 8 per cent) across different occupational classes. Traditionally caste and social barriers had profound influence on the educational as well as occupational life of women. But with the passage of time things changed, now with the progress of education and increase in employment opportunities, more women are breaking the traditional barriers of caste. Even after such a progress about 43.3 per cent of the working woman considers
lack of family support as one important problem in participating in income earning activities outside.

If there is a domestic servant to assist working women in their household activities, it is quite a relief for them and can manage their work in a more efficient manner. About three fourth of sample women consider the absence of servant as a problem to perform domestic work along with the market work. Those occupational categories belongs to elementary occupations (like door to door service workers, domestic servants, kitchen helpers etc) and those belong to plant and machine operator class (like pencil and bead makers, dry cleaners etc) found it as a main problem because their economic situations do not allow them to appoint a domestic worker. But in the case with legislators, senior officials, managers, professional and associate professionals, this problem is least felt because in any way they try to appoint a servant and reduce the problem associated to the minimum.

While examining the problems related to the gaining of family support to participate in income earning activities outside revealed that those families with high level of education and employment status provide more support for women to work outside. But women who work as agricultural labourers, fishery workers, elementary workers and those work as salesgirls face such problem severely. And in the case with agricultural workers nearly ninety per cent face such problems.

Presence of active or healthy elderly in fact save the time of working woman by helping them to manage their time use in a more efficient manner but if the elderly member are physically weak or bedridden the opposite will happen. Working women have to spend a lot of time and energy to look after them along with the love and care given to them. In the case with legislators, managers, professional and associate professionals the time allocation problems in association with elderly care is least felt because they are in a economic situation to appoint a home nurse or any other alternative methods can be undertaken to look after the physically weak or bed ridden elderly.

People living with mental health problems may experience poorer health placing individuals at an increased risk of chronic disease. Women face so many
physical and mental illness including behavioral disorders and all these are the result of a complex interaction between biological, psychological and social factors. Occupational wise psychological problems revealed that and a good sign can be noticed that only 88 out of 450 sample (19.6 per cent) faced psychological problems relate to time allocation. A much better mental health status can be found and turning to different occupational groups, those working women belonging to elementary occupations like door to door service workers, domestic servants, sweepers, cleaners etc face such constraint most followed by professional’s basically medical professionals including gynecologists, computer engineers and the like. Such psychological problems related to time use is least felt (12.32 per cent) by the workers not classified by occupations mainly casual workers during school holidays, graduates and post graduate seeking occupations and the like.

Time taken for resting, leisure, sleeping and travelling has a profound influence upon the working woman’s time use. While examining the average time taken for resting, leisure, sleeping and travelling reveals that for resting and leisure activities working woman as a whole on a daily average gains 2.92 and 2.56 hours per day. While considering time spent for sleeping, working women across different occupation spend about 6.4 hours per day on an average. It is often hailed by health professional that 8 hour sleep is very good for a better tomorrow, but it is limited in the case with working women. But realizing the significance of rest and leisure the legislators, senior officials etc spend more hours on sleeping compared to other occupational categories and it is least in the case with craft related workers like building and construction workers, jewelry makers, etc. Time related to traveling is very crucial while examining the time allocation problem. Not only the traveling time but also the mode of traveling is also had significant influence on working woman’s time allocation, whatever be the occupational classification nearly one hour on an average is spend by working women per day on travelling.

8.3 Theoretical and Methodological Improvement over the Past Studies

The present study has made some theoretical and methodological changes in the form of defining and developing a new classification for time devoted to total
household work (which comprises of time devoted to main household work, care time and household management time) and time devoted to child care (time devoted to primary, educational and recreational child care). A new classification type is also evolved for measuring the status of working woman on the basis of six variables for decision making power (which include Decision related to what to cook in the household, Decision making related to family planning, Decision related to own health care, Decision in household purchases, Decision and freedom to participate in socio-political activities, and Decision making in financial matters) and three variables for asset ownership (which include Land ownership, Vehicle ownership and Financial asset ownership).

Similarly while concerning the methodology part, an examination of the factors influencing the household time allocation of working woman, all factors shows a high degree of multicollinearity. In similar studies doing regression and confronted with the problem of multicollinearity, they lack one important factor that they left out to calculate the degree of correlation between the variables. Such correlation is very essential while studying the overlapping of domestic and care work performed by women within the household and such a methodological improvement is carried out in this work. Unpaid domestic work performed by women always kept out of the usual national income accounting methods of our nation. But such quantification is very essential for gaining a true and real picture of the economic contribution made by women to the nation. Realizing its significance a new formula (Value of domestic work performed by woman = Average time spend for domestic work × Average salary per hour (equivalent to the salary position of each occupational category)) for calculating the value of domestic work performed by women across different occupations is made in this study.

Their economic value is calculated mainly with the help of time use surveys which again helps the above said quantification tool to have a practical applicability. If these unpaid activities are properly recognized, it will become very easy for the policy framers to frame suitable policies for the improvement of not only working women but also improve the conditions of home makers. Therefore in this study a suggestion is made to conduct a large scale time use survey in Kerala by the
government and use the quantification tools and apply sustainable tools to calculate the true and sustainable growth of our state.

### 8.4 Policy Implications

Time use and time use studies have gained much attention in today’s world. It is only through an efficient time use survey the real contribution made by all the sections of the society can be brought into light. Woman and her true work which often goes unnoticed can be brought into day light only with the help of an efficient time use survey. Thus a large scale time use survey by the authorities is very essential for the quantification of unpaid work performed by woman. It is only through a time use survey that a visible picture of paid and unpaid work performed by men and woman can be made which helps in the better estimation of GDP. Not only this, it will give a better accountability of extended SNA activities and will help the authorities to frame suitable policy measures.

Policy authorities should try to apply a more sustainable measure like Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) to calculate the true and sustainable growth of our state. The significant feature of GPI is that along with other factors, the unpaid domestic activities (promoting the welfare of every economy) which are mainly performed by women is also taken into consideration. The inclusion of unpaid activities into the production boundary will surely help to frame policies which will improve the economic efficiency of our nation. Since time use survey gives a visible picture of unpaid work and the quantification of such work is also so significant, the policy authorities should consider it as a serious task to develop a suitable statistical tool to quantify the value of unpaid work carried out in every economy. It will bring out the true and real contribution of women in our society.

Gender disparity now exists in every field and it is mainly with the help of time use surveys the extent of gender disparity even in the basic time use pattern can be brought into light. With the help of that, Government can frame policies which plays very significant role in gender mainstreaming. Whatever is the policy frame work, a better gender awareness should be created in the minds of people by the authorities and the traditionally male dominated system is replaced by a more liberal system in
which woman has a say. Attitudes of the society towards gender roles should be changed through better educational system and through efficient mass media communications. Women’s self perception that they are economically non active should be changed from the basic schooling level itself and such self confidence generating counseling classes should be given to girls. Social and cultural bias against female education should be removed through efficient mass media communication.

8.5 Conclusions

One important conclusion derived from the study is that women whatever be their employment status, they themselves remain solely responsible for domestic work and care related activities including both child care and elderly care. Now too domestic and care work is considered as the sole responsibility of women and such an attitude of the family and society put her in a realm of low health status. If the women have better health, they give birth to healthy children and it is the woman who mainly performs the role of care taker within the families. A public awareness and community based help and support is also essential for promoting the better health of women in every society.

If the value of domestic work performed by women is calculated it is sure that it will improve their true economic contribution to the society. The traditional male dominated society should be replaced by a more liberal system in which woman play a better role and they can utilize their time more effectively. From the very beginning from the school days and even in the case with marriage both male and female should understand the significance of efficient time use for a better home management.

Women who gained better education and employment status have a better say including decision making in different household matters. But after gaining employment and income her asset ownership position is not much satisfactory. Similarly, while examining the factors influencing the household time allocation of working women a significant correlation between influencing variables can be found. When we think logically it is true that we can’t specifically point out which factors influence working women’s household time allocation, the regression results too points out that women’s education, occupation, income or status level is not directly
influencing her household time allocation. From the sample survey and interview conducted with working women revealed that a woman’s time devoted to household work is also influenced by so many psychological and non quantifiable factors including love, affection and care towards her family, attitude and nature of family members towards helping her in domestic work and so on.

Women across different occupations face so many problems related to the efficient and optimum allocation of time. It is only possible to quantify the domestic and care related work with the help of time use survey. Therefore a study on the time allocation of working women across different occupational categories is significant in the Kerala context. Only few studies are concentrated on this topic at the state level, and they touched only the topic at a micro level. Women are disadvantaged absolutely relative to men in terms of access to education and employment.

Working women face many problems related to health, psychology and family in association with their time allocation. It is true that with tight time schedule in between market work and domestic work, majority of working women even after realizing the significance of regular exercises can’t do it due to lack of time. Another significant health problem faced by Keralites is associated with their life styles and we beautifully call it as life style diseases. Interview conducted with the working women revealed that after doing all domestic work including preparation of food and feeding young children, preparing them for school, they themselves do not gain enough time to take nutritious diet daily. Majority working women point out that they skip their breakfast. One sad reality found that now too working women face lack of family support as one main problem in participating income earning activities outside and this problem is mostly felt by those working women belonging to agriculture related activities, elementary occupations and the like.

If we try to fix a price for the mother’s love, care for sick and elderly, it is in fact undervaluing women’s true contribution to the nation. By taking into consideration the moral value of love and affection provided by women for the overall well being of their family, my view is not to pay them a price for their love and affection, but the quantification of their economic value is necessary to know their true economic contribution to the nation. Therefore along with considering the
economic value of unpaid work, the love care and affection shown by a woman towards the family should also been considered. Such an attitude is very essential for the overall wellbeing of the family and society.

Woman’s participation in decision making within and outside the family will surely increase her self confidence and will power. Along with this an efficient time management by the woman especially by that of working woman will surely help her to increase her time for leisure, rest and sleep which surely made a better and healthier tomorrow. Everybody should realize the value of time and consider it often as a scarce resource and make an efficient use of time which would open the golden door for a more harmonious day to day life.

8.6 Suggestions for Future Research

Time use survey can be conducted on micro as well as macro levels; here a micro level comparison of working women’s time use across occupations is carried out. It can be extended to a macro level too. Gender disparity in time use can be very effectively revealed with the help of time use survey. Such gender based variation across occupational divisions can also be carried out. The present study has only focused upon working woman, and has excluded males. A wider field of research associated with time use of males across occupations is open. An occupational wise gender variation in time use is also not considered in the study and that too is another important and wide area of future research. In Kerala a large gap can be found associated with time use research associated with home makes which is another area of future research. Geography had a significant influence in time use surveys, and the present study is focused only on Thrissur district. An interstate and inter district comparison of time use of working women across occupations is a very vast area of future research. Along with this the development and application of suitable statistical tools for quantifying the unpaid work of woman too surely improves the national income accounting of our state as well as nation. The development of such quantification tools and its application levels is another fruitful area of research. Waiting, though an important time consuming activity, is even neglected in time use surveys which can also been considered in future research. Even in the case of time
budget studies, overlapping or simultaneous activities (which means the performance of multiple tasks) by the females is difficult to quantify and a study on such overlapping activities will surely picture the real work load of women in the society. The time use pattern of children is also a significant area of research and it will reveal the pattern of child labour in the country and the policy makers can make sufficient steps to remove the extend of child labour in the country. Time is thus a basic and scarce resource and the research in the area of time use gives a wide scope for the future researchers as such research should surely make us to realize the real world situations and can suggest measures for the improvement of the entire society and nation.