
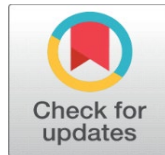


ME TIME AWARENESS AS A MEANS TO ACHIEVE WELLBEING IN WOMAN

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ABSTRACT

Human civilisation has been striving for excellence for as long as it can be remembered. They have soared for higher potential to improve the state of being as an individual, in family, group, depending on geographical, socio-economic, and cultural diversities. Experiences across circumstances and situations help man and woman as well to adapt and respond to changes to achieve this state of wellbeing. Woman plays a very dynamic role in such a developing scenario of the society. She cultivates a balance between responsibility and challenge at home and beyond. Me time is a tool, when used, can make a marked difference in the quality of life. It is the time when you can do what you want to do for enjoyment, which differs from person to person. Awareness is the ability to know or be conscious of something. It is a relative concept which depends on the internal state of individuals, influenced by external events or stimuli. Wellbeing is a state of happiness of an individual or group relating to diverse dimensions of satisfaction in physical, mental, social and personal arenas of life. The objective of this paper is to discuss about how self-awareness and its dimensions can influence wellbeing, the various strategies which can be followed to achieve well-being of woman with reference to me time.

Keywords: Awareness, Wellbeing, Me Time, Strategies

1. INTRODUCTION

“Nurturing yourself is not selfish - it's essential to your survival and your well-being” Renee

The true self of an individual is his basic intricate nature which makes him different from anyone and everyone. This unique nature forms the core of his personality. To Allport (1961) personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho physical systems that determine his characteristics, behaviour and thought. Human civilisation has been striving for excellence for as long as it can be remembered and both man and woman have played significant roles in this regard. Together they have soared for higher potential to improve the

state of being as an individual, in family, group, depending on geographical, socio-economic, political and cultural diversities. In today's world, a woman is a daughter, wife, mother, homemaker, entrepreneur, educator, a pilot, a scientist, a doctor, an engineer – the list is endless. She plays a very dynamic role in the present scenario of the society. From her very early age, she learns to absorb, integrate and coordinate between the various experiences of life. She has the natural ability to convert her weaknesses into strength, failures into success, thus cultivating a balance between home and beyond.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To explain what self-awareness entails and its role in an individual's life.
- 2) To explore the various aspects of self-awareness, including emotional awareness, social awareness, personal values, strengths, and weaknesses.
- 3) To examine the impact of self-awareness on women's mental health, confidence, decision-making, and overall life satisfaction.
- 4) To identify strategies that can enhance women's well-being, such as practicing mindfulness, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, seeking social support, and pursuing skill development.
- 5) To highlight the importance of personal time ("me-time") in helping women alleviate stress, achieve balance, and foster positivity in their lives.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is basically based on the review of information collected from secondary sources i.e. published book, reports, research work, journals and newspaper. Some information is also collected through internet browsing.

3.1. WHAT IS "ME TIME"?

"Me time" is defined by the MacMillan Dictionary as the amount of time spent by an individual for their own benefit rather than for the benefit of others. In the context of psychological and educational research, "me time" can be understood as a self-regulation technique that allows people to momentarily distance themselves from obligations and expectations outside of themselves in order to concentrate on their own needs, interests, and general well-being. By lowering stress, increasing self-efficacy, and fostering general mental health, "me time" can be a powerful tool that, when intentionally used, can significantly improve quality of life.

Each person has an entirely distinct interpretation of what exactly qualifies as "me time." For some, it might entail artistic expression, reading, meditation, or other restorative activities; for others, it might entail working out, taking up a hobby, or just spending time alone. The fundamental goals of psychological renewal, self-nourishment, and self-care are what bind these disparate practices together. In contrast to required social or professional obligations, "me time" puts the individual's autonomy and personal preference first, which promotes inner fulfilment and a sense of freedom.

Self-awareness is an essential precondition for meaningful "me time." People may find it difficult to choose what kind of personal time is best for their wellbeing if they don't have a sufficient awareness of their own feelings, preferences,

strengths, and limitations. Therefore, self-awareness is the cornerstone upon which productive "me time" is built. The relationship between self-awareness, stress management, and life happiness is frequently emphasized by researchers in the field of well-being today. By developing self-awareness, people—especially women who are juggling many responsibilities in their personal and professional lives—are better equipped to plan and make use of "me time" in ways that promote psychological equilibrium, empowerment, and resilience.

3.2. WHAT IS AWARENESS?

Awareness, as defined by Cambridge Dictionary, is the knowledge that something exists or understanding of a situation...based on information or experience. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as knowledge or perception of a situation or fact; the Merriam Dictionary defines awareness as the quality or state of being aware (having or showing realization, perception or knowledge). So, from the above definitions, it can be said that awareness is the perception and realization based on knowledge, information, and experience. Psychology defines awareness as a part of consciousness, wherein an individual is able to perceive the environment, internal and external. It is the ability to know or be conscious of something. It is a relative concept which depends on the internal state of individuals, influenced by external events or stimuli. Self-awareness has been defined as one's own perception about self. Daniel Goleman has defined self-awareness as "knowing one's internal states, preference, resources and intuitions".

4. DIMENSIONS OF SELF-AWARENESS

According to Daniel Goleman, a pioneer in the field of emotional intelligence, the dimensions of self-awareness consist of emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence. These dimensions form the foundation of emotional intelligence and are regarded as crucial for personal growth, social adjustment, and psychological well-being.

The goal of emotional awareness is to comprehend each of the phases of our emotions. It entails having the capacity to recognize emotions as they arise and comprehend the reasons behind them. Being conscious of our feelings puts us in a better position to manage stress, form wholesome relationships, and make deliberate choices.

Being able to honestly examine ourselves and clearly identify both our strengths and faults is the foundation of accurate self-evaluation. It is being aware of how our thoughts and emotions change and being honest with ourselves about our strengths and areas for improvement. This type of candid introspection aids in our development and positive transformation.

Self-confidence grows when we are aware of our feelings and have a realistic understanding of who we are. When we have a firm understanding of who we are, we start to believe in our skills and feel more equipped to face obstacles. Being confident in ourselves allows us to take chances, make choices, and live a great life.

All things considered, self-awareness facilitates our profound understanding of ourselves, directs our personal development, and eases our acceptance of others and ourselves. We gain more self-confidence and become more adaptable when we acknowledge our talents and shortcomings. In this sense, having self-awareness sets the stage for living a more prosperous, well-rounded, and satisfying life.

5. LEVELS OF SELF AWARENESS

In 2003, following a thorough examination of existing studies, Phillippe Rochat formulated a theory concerning The 5 Stages of Self-Awareness. These stages delineate the process by which children come to recognize themselves and their caregivers as separate and distinct individuals. The 5 stages extend from birth to the age of 4 or 5 (Rochat, 2003).

- 1) **Differentiation:** An infant starts to recognize their own reflection. They may sense that there is something unique or special about observing their reflection.
- 2) **Situation:** An infant begins to identify their own reflection, being, and movements as distinct from those of others around them.
- 3) **Identification:** This stage is characterized by a child fully understanding that the reflection in the mirror is indeed their own. They recognize, "This is me."
- 4) **Permanence:** At this level, they possess a comprehensive sense of self and can recognize themselves in photographs or videos, even as their appearance evolves.
- 5) **Self-consciousness or meta-self-awareness:** A child adopts a third-person perspective regarding themselves; they become aware that others view them in specific ways. This awareness can lead to emotions such as pride or shame.

According to Rochat's approach, self-awareness starts at a very young age and progressively becomes more complicated. Eventually, what begins as rudimentary physical awareness in infancy develops into the capacity to consider oneself in light of other people and society at large. This process emphasizes how self-awareness is a crucial component of social and emotional development as well as a personal developmental accomplishment.

6. CONCEPTUALIZING WELL-BEING: DEFINITIONS AND DIMENSIONS

The concepts of well-being have been extensively researched in the social sciences, psychology, and education since it is regarded as a key determinant of both society advancement and personal development. A state of comfort, health, and happiness is a broad definition of well-being. It shows the degree to which a person is content in all facets of their life. Because it encompasses physical, psychological, social, and economic facets of human functioning, well-being is a multifaceted concept that cannot be limited to a single domain, according to scholars.

Being well is more than simply not being sick or uncomfortable. It represents a condition of well-being where people may reach their objectives, form deep social connections, and make valuable contributions to society at large. Since it improves social harmony, professional productivity, and personal fulfilment, it is also seen as a prerequisite for the holistic development of both the individual and society.

6.1. DIMENSIONS OF WELL-BEING

Researchers have identified several dimensions of well-being, each representing a unique area of human experience:

- 1) **Physical Well-Being:** This dimension relates to health, bodily fitness, and the absence of physical ailments. Proper nutrition, adequate rest, exercise, and healthcare are crucial factors that influence physical well-being.
- 2) **Social Well-Being:** This refers to the quality of interpersonal relationships and the ability to interact positively within a social group. Social well-being provides individuals with a sense of belonging, security, and acceptance.
- 3) **Emotional Well-Being:** Closely tied to self-awareness and self-regulation, emotional well-being is the capacity to manage feelings, reduce stress, and maintain a positive outlook on life. It allows individuals to cope effectively with challenges.
- 4) **Economic Well-Being:** Financial stability and access to resources are critical determinants of overall well-being. Economic well-being reduces stress and provides opportunities for growth and security.
- 5) **Psychological Well-Being:** This aspect emphasizes personal growth, autonomy, resilience, and purpose in life. It reflects an individual's ability to realize their potential and maintain mental health.

6.2. THE DEVELOPMENTAL CONDITION OF WELL-BEING

According to academics, wellbeing is crucial for both individual and group growth. On a personal level, it supports resilience, productivity, and self-assurance. Well-being at the societal level guarantees peace, economic development, and cultural enrichment. Therefore, scholars from several fields concur that promoting well-being is a societal obligation rather than just an individual one that calls for consideration in community development, healthcare, education, and policymaking.

7. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ME-TIME AWARENESS AND WELL-BEING AMONG WOMEN

The word "strategies" refers to the methodical approaches, tools, and methods that can be used in me-time awareness initiatives to improve and maintain women's well-being. These tactics are essential for ensuring that women can maintain their physical and mental well-being while juggling their many duties and obligations in the social, professional, and personal domains.

Training in time management is one useful tactic that enables women to prioritize their responsibilities and intentionally set aside time for themselves guilt-free. Another strategy is the combination of mindfulness and stress-reduction and emotional stability-promoting relaxation methods including yoga, meditation, and deep breathing. Counselling programs and awareness seminars can also be implemented to help women understand the value of self-compassion and self-care. Peer support groups can also give women a forum to exchange stories, pick up coping mechanisms, and strengthen healthy self-care practices.

Using these techniques on a regular basis not only enhances wellbeing but also builds resilience, productivity, and self-determination over the long run. Thus, organized programs that promote me-time awareness and are backed by holistic approaches have the potential to significantly enhance women's lives in general.

8. THE INTERPLAY OF SOCIAL CONDITIONING AND PERSONAL AGENCY IN WOMEN'S PURSUIT OF ME-TIME

Since early childhood, a girl child is tutored or trained for the future. Skills are inculcated in her to take up responsibilities whenever and wherever required, whether known or unknown. She is prepared to deal with the familiar and unfamiliarities in life. A woman rises to situations and challenges in life, coping with them as desired, by the family and society as well and helps in overcoming with ferocious intensity. Often it is seen that she is blessed with a natural ability to deal with the unexpected with ease. Her positive attitude toward life along with her unique qualities helps in integrating the family. She becomes loving, charming, kind, strong, adjustable, compassionate, courageous, considerate, generous, and intuitive and so much more- her maternal instincts, irrespective of her age, come into play. This is only one part of the scenario, where a woman is perceived as the superpower who can manage anything and everything that comes in her way; however, the opposite is also often observed. There are circumstances, challenges which leave a woman weak, shattered, hurt, imbalanced, uncertain; she loses herself amidst all the demands around. She plunges to create wellness in her environment which includes her family, and forgets herself, her very entity. She forgets that she is also an individual, who needs to be loved, pampered, nourished, cherished and taken care of.

Thus, a period is reached wherein she becomes frustrated and depressed. Then the question arises, in the words of [Krishnamurti \(2011\)](#), 'What are you doing with your life?'

At this juncture of life, she is forced to look for an answer for the above. This is the moment of truth. She becomes aware of herself and her surroundings. She forces herself to think about her needs or, if lucky someone from inside or outside the family drives her to ponder over it. She tries to accept and acknowledge the fact that she needs to be happy in order to keep the people around her happy. Self-realisation helps in the process of introspection. It is at this moment that she starts thinking about her own wellbeing and explores the choices available to realise that it can be achieved through me time.

9. DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN'S WELL-BEING AND THE ROLE OF SELF-AWARENESS

Physical, cerebral or intellectual, social, emotional, moral, spiritual, religious, and artistic qualities are all part of women's overall well-being. Every one of these areas supports a person's healthy functioning and overall growth. When it comes to determining which particular area of wellbeing needs attention, self-awareness and its essential elements—emotional awareness, correct self-assessment, and self-confidence—are vital. Self-assessment aids in determining one's skills and weaknesses, while emotional awareness makes it possible to identify one's inner requirements. In the end, this builds confidence to face obstacles.

In this regard, [Rath \(2010\)](#) divides well-being into categories related to professional, social, financial, physical, and community in his book *Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements*. When taken as a whole, these frameworks highlight that women's well-being encompasses more than just their health or happiness; rather, it represents a more comprehensive integration of self-awareness with social, personal, and professional domains, guaranteeing long-term development and empowerment.

10. VARIOUS ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S WELLBEING

The various aspects of wellbeing, as commonly viewed by a woman are as below:

- 1) **Physical:** The physical appearance reflects the state of mind of an individual. It includes facial expression, body posture, body weight, skin pallor, any type of physical ailment, etc. gives an insight into the physical wellbeing of a woman.
- 2) **Mental or psychological:** The expression of unusual behaviour pattern in the woman demonstrates the lack of mental well-being. She gets stressed, strained, depressed, frustrated; becomes anxious may lose sanity in extreme cases. She might have a lack of trust, faith due to her circumstances, at workplace or at home.
- 3) **Social:** Any disruption in the above two wellbeing is reflected in her social relations, inside and outside her family. Lack of proper social development from her childhood, parental relation and sibling relationships may also cause an imbalance in her social wellbeing.
- 4) **Emotional:** It is concerned with control of her emotions, training and channelizing them if and when required. In this case also, self-awareness plays an important role as it helps her to identify the high and low emotional states along with her moods. Emotional wellbeing of a woman is also influenced by her physical well-being.
- 5) **Financial:** An important aspect of a woman's life is the financial condition of the family she lives in. A strong or adequate finance in the family provides mental and emotional security to the family members and the woman is not an exception to it. A lack may cause emotional instability, social and mental insecurity, which may lead to mental and physical ailments.
- 6) **Cultural:** An important aspect of a woman's character and development is her cultural wellbeing. Every family has its own values, norms, culture which are imparted or transmitted to the young ones in course of their development. Often, a woman is unable to pursue her cultural activities due to various socio-economic constraints like age, marital status, vocation or carrier, etc.
- 7) **Spiritual and Religious:** To some woman spiritual and religious practices play an important role in their life's wellbeing. Any disruption in these practices may also result in physical, mental and emotional imbalance.

11. PHYSICAL WELL-BEING AND ITS INTERRELATION WITH ME TIME

Physical well-being is a crucial aspect of a woman's overall health, encompassing the maintenance of her body, energy levels, and capacity to perform daily activities effectively. It can be achieved through self-awareness of bodily changes, acknowledging deviations from normal functioning, and taking timely action such as consulting a physician, undergoing regular health check-ups, and following prescribed medical advice. In addition, adopting preventive measures like maintaining a balanced diet, engaging in regular exercise, ensuring adequate rest, and sustaining healthy lifestyle habits play a vital role in sustaining physical health.

However, the absence of mental and emotional well-being often manifests physically—through fatigue, stress-related disorders, or unhealthy behavior

patterns. This highlights the interrelationship between body and mind, where neglecting emotional needs can lead to physical imbalance. Thus, creating dedicated me time allows women to prioritize self-care, reduce stress, and consciously work toward physical and psychological equilibrium, thereby ensuring holistic well-being.

12. CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVING ME TIME WELL-BEING: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS

There are a number of barriers that keep many women from taking advantage of me time, even though it is being increasingly acknowledged as a crucial aspect of women's wellbeing. These inhibitions fall into two general categories: external barriers and internal barriers. A woman's own brain structure and psychological makeup are frequently the source of internal inhibitions. They could show up as indecision, fear, concern, anxiety, or self-doubt. Resistance to self-care is also a result of deeply rooted biases, superstitious beliefs, and predetermined conceptions about her role in the family and society. Her capacity to put her own well-being first is further limited by low self-esteem and a resistance to change.

In contrast, external inhibitions are a result of a woman's larger surroundings. Constraints are frequently caused by things like household duties, socio-cultural standards, financial limitations, and restricted access to resources or facilities. When taken as a whole, these internal and external obstacles prevent women from appreciating the value of me time and using it as a useful tactic to preserve overall wellbeing. These external and internal obstacles work together to prevent women from understanding the value of me time and using it as a useful tactic to preserve overall wellbeing.

13. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION AS A TRANSFORMATIVE TOOL IN CULTIVATING ME TIME AWARENESS AMONG WOMEN

'Me time' means pursuing things she loves, or once loved doing like reading, singing, listening to music, drawing, painting, travelling, playing a game, cooking, dancing, etc. thus making an attempt to incorporate them in her daily schedule. Modification of behaviour, self-reflection, and if required psychological counselling may help her in maintenance of her social well-being. Her present family members, friends, colleagues, if she is working, play an important role in this case. Emotional wellbeing can be addressed or catered by pursuing her hobbies, taking care of her physical health through me time awareness. Woman, skilled or unskilled, educated or uneducated, in any sort of financial crisis often try to overcome the situation by utilising their inherent skill of adaptability, suitable in that particular situation. Continuation of participation in cultural activities like dance, music, acting in plays, playing instruments, managing events, etc. should play an important role in me time wellbeing. Women who are inclined towards spiritual and religious practices should make time for these as a part of their 'me time' programme. Engaging herself in activities she loves ensures her all round well-being. So, once a woman is aware of the need for her me time, she will make an attempt to include the activities she loves doing the most, the activities which helps her to breath.

The seed of the concept of me time has to be planted in a woman from a very early stage of development. The curriculum in school includes co-curricular activities like music, dance, art, painting, craft, gardening, cooking, and games of various types which aim at the development of the body and aesthetic aspect of an individual. Often these activities are pursued up to a certain level of education as

part of the curricula and children move on with their regular courses. This continues till they are well established in life, whatever the definition of the term maybe. These co-curricular activities are lost from our lives and our system of education fail to establish the fact that these activities can be beautifully utilised for the purpose of me time wellbeing, for all. So, it can be said that education can be used as a tool to bring about the change in our thought pattern and plant the concept of me time wellbeing as part of the curricula from late childhood classes and continue till the college levels. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) has said that education is a powerful tool or instrument to bring about change in the society and so it is through education that this concept can be planted and nurtured over the coming years.

14. CONCLUSION

A crucial factor in determining women's overall well-being, 'me time' awareness and practice have a big impact on family relations, individual health, and the advancement of society. In order to ensure the durability of this practice, self-care awareness must be incorporated into workplace regulations and educational curriculum, normalizing it as a lifetime habit rather than a one-time pleasure. The promotion of institutional support networks that motivate women to maintain a balance between their personal, professional, and family life is what makes policy relevant. Incorporating me time awareness into larger gender-sensitive health and education programs can support resilience, long-term empowerment, and inclusive societal advancement.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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