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Nothing is Left for the Nick of Time: A Mixed-Methods Study into Time Burdens on Teachers in the Punjab

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify the time pressures experienced by teachers in Punjab and to explore how they interpret these demands by themselves. It was anticipated that educational organizations responsible for planning and delivering training could use the findings to make more informed decisions regarding the quantity and timing of professional development provision. A review of the relevant literature indicated that the teachers experience such time pressures differently according to gender; therefore, the research aimed to compare the experiences of male and female teachers. The study employed a bespoke mixed-methods research design with an exploratory sequential approach. Six teachers who were also parents were interviewed about their daily routines. A questionnaire was subsequently developed, incorporating insights from the initial phase, to test and seek to generalize the findings. The results indicated that women undertook more unpaid labour than men, while men are engaged in more paid work (tuition) than women. Teachers' understandings regarding their responsibilities were shaped by prevailing beliefs based on gender roles. Analysis of the interview data generated themes including choice versus obligation, inside versus outside the home, and wellbeing, enabling the researcher to present a comprehensive account of how teachers in the Punjab perceive and experience time pressures.

Keywords: Teachers, Gender, Unpaid Labour, Professional Development, Time Burden.

Introduction

Educational bodies may view professional development opportunities as an indicator of good institutional practice; however, scheduling training outside work hours without regard for its effects can negatively impact teachers' lives and impede their ability to fulfill other responsibilities. Awareness of the time burdens already placed on teachers — and of how teachers themselves interpret those burdens — is essential for schools, educational bodies, and International Development organizations when they plan and execute training courses. Various elements of remote teaching in Pakistan were examined in several studies that were carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the findings these studies produced was evidence of a gendered difference in the experiences of teaching parents working remotely (Kabeer et al., 2021). It is found that teaching mothers seem to struggle with their tasks, because their families expect them to play the role of mother and to cook and manage household chores as a housewife, whereas their schools expect them to teach with dedication (Kalsoom, 2022; Abid et al., 2021). This raised the question of whether the issue of divided responsibilities was a consequence of COVID or whether it was a pre-existing concern that only became more visible when intensified by the pandemic. Accordingly, this study aimed

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to revisit the situation following the end of the pandemic and the resumption of normal teaching, to determine whether the same disparities persist. On the other side of the gender divide, there is societal pressure on fathers to be the breadwinner for their family (Khattak, 2019; Tahir et al., 2021) and teachers in developing countries often take on paid tuition work to supplement their low salaries (British Council, 2023), so the study also looked into the situation of teaching fathers and what burdens were on their time.

Teachers' effectiveness is shaped not only by their professional responsibilities but also by their self-concept, how others perceive them, and how their teaching role is prioritized alongside other obligations in their lives. The study further explores how educators conceptualize and interpret the constraints on their time. In examining the roles associated with both men and women, the research does not adopt a normative stance on gender, nor does it aim to advocate for changes in prevailing interpretations of gender roles, as might be characteristic of a Critical Theory approach. Instead, its purpose is descriptive: to offer a detailed portrayal of existing patterns and perceptions as they are currently experienced. It is anticipated that the findings will assist those responsible for organizing professional development for teachers in Pakistan to gain a clearer understanding of the circumstances of the immediate beneficiaries, particularly in relation to their daily schedules and the competing demands on their time. The conclusion will be formulated based on the findings, and recommendations will be provided.

Review of the Literature

Impact of COVID on Teaching in Pakistan

In Pakistan, the shift to remote instruction was affected by multiple obstacles that limited its effectiveness. Notably, the evidence indicates a gendered disparity: women experienced more pronounced challenges in facilitating online teaching than men. Female teachers' families did not consider remote teaching actual work and believed they ought to keep carrying out household chores at times when their schools expected them to be preparing or delivering lessons (Kalsoom, 2022; Abid et al., 2021; Thaheem et al., 2021). Female teachers who do not have adequate space and live with limited devices to facilitate several family members who are trying to study or work, reported that their need to access quiet working space and devices is considered less important than that of their other family members (Kalsoom, 2022, p.397). Many of the effects associated with distance learning were transitory and could reasonably be expected to return to normal when face-to-face learning resumed. However, the findings indicated a problem that may have predated distance learning and possibly endured beyond it. A teacher's responsibilities, even without distance learning, do not simply begin when they arrive at school and end when they get home. Dalessandro et al. (2023) have looked into the degree of choice men and women have in whether and where to work, relative to their responsibilities for household chores

(Naqvi et al., 2002). A greater sense of workspace choice was reported by men and by workers whose partner took responsibility for housework (Dalessandro et al., 2023). This invites the question of whether female teachers, while ostensibly equal in professional status to male colleagues, find that their work beyond school hours is treated as less important and must vie for time alongside unpaid domestic duties.

Unpaid Labour

To build a clearer picture of the connection between human effort and its economic expression—or lack thereof—scholars have introduced the concept of Unpaid Labour. This encompasses tasks such as maintaining living spaces, shopping, and care of others, which, while not monetarily recognized if they are performed by a member of the household, are nonetheless essential to maintaining living standards and reproducing a workforce capable of performing paid labour (Picchio, 2003). While there is still debate on how Unpaid Labour can be measured and properly accounted for (Chiappero-Martinetti, 2003), merely acknowledging it as labour allows it to be compared and taken into account as time productively spent. Some nations are now using the concept of *total work*, the accumulation of paid and unpaid work, when recording activities of men and women (Picchio, 2003). The idea of a *double burden* or *second shift* is used to refer to the workload of people who have a paying job and are also responsible for significant amounts of unpaid labour (Hochschild & Machung, 1989).

Globally, women take on the lion's share of unpaid labour. Picchio (2003, p. 4) writes that the female labour market is ‘marked by the very interweaving of paid and unpaid work.’ This has been studied most extensively in Italy, where women on average do 37.3 hours of unpaid labour per week compared to 13.2 for men (Addabbo & Caiumi, 2003, p.30). In Pakistan, it has been found that women do about ten times more unpaid care work than men (Butt et al., 2020). In addition to the household tasks which are performed but not paid, women in Pakistan contribute unpaid labour to family-run enterprises, which are often but not always agricultural (Akter, 2021). Elsewhere, people who participate in the economy in this way—helping with a family enterprise rather than being in direct employment—are categorized as UPFH, *Unpaid Family Workers* (Khan et al., 2023). Unpaid labour in Pakistan cannot be reduced to a simple, one-dimensional balancing act between spouses over household chores. Contributions are also made by other family members, and these extend beyond domestic tasks alone. The surfeit of unpaid labour in women's lives leaves them time-poor (Sepúlveda & Donald, 2014), with fewer opportunities for leisure and activities associated with self-actualisation. This has a negative effect on their happiness and life satisfaction (Piovani & Aydiner-Avsar, 2021). Unpaid labour has also been linked to burnout and attrition in the teaching workforce (Hanneman, 2014). Up to this point, the paper has concentrated on women. However, since teaching fathers may encounter comparable time burdens, their situation will be addressed in the following section.

Masculinity

Chaudhry et al. (2022) looked into masculinity in Pakistan and found it to be a "tight society," governed by strict norms and low gender egalitarianism, with deviations from gender norms likely to provoke some social punishment from the community or society. An idea noted by this paper is the notion of the man as the 'breadwinner' (Khattak, 2019; Tahir et al., 2021), providing for his family's material needs. Any departure from this expectation is frowned upon. Shah (2023) looked at the experiences of stay-at-home fathers in Pakistan, finding that they experienced 'stigmatization, social isolation, and labeling from their friends, family, and community, resulting in their increasing stress and anxiety' (p.1). While it may be assumed that Pakistan's teaching fathers have already sufficiently met the gendered expectation of becoming breadwinners by gaining employment as teachers, it has been recorded that Pakistani teachers often take on some tutoring work in addition to their regular work within the school because they struggle to make enough money from a teaching salary alone (British Council, 2023). In contexts outside Pakistan, it has been found that teaching practice is impacted by teachers' vocational interests and secondary jobs (Erickson, 1986). Although information about the situation of Pakistan's teaching mothers initially inspired this study of gendered differences in teachers' time burdens, an effort has also been made to develop an understanding of the time pressures affecting teaching fathers and how teaching fathers make sense of them.

Research Methodology

Having earlier discussed the area of inquiry, two hypotheses and one research question were proposed.

H1) *Teacher-mothers spend more time on household chores than teacher-fathers or teachers without children in the Punjab.*
H2) *Teacher-fathers spend more time giving extra tuition than teacher-mothers or teachers without children in the Punjab.*
Q3) *How do teachers in the Punjab make sense of these time burdens?*

Structure of Mixed-Methods Design

The investigative propositions could not be answered by one method alone. To test the two hypotheses (H1 and H2), data on how teachers spend their time would necessarily be quantitative (Muijs, 2010). Q3, however, required qualitative data as it is probing for information that cannot be expressed quantitatively (Muijs, 2010). The situation necessitated a mixed-methods research design. The qualitative stage would approach the phenomenon from a

constructivist perspective, seeking different understandings to build a picture of how the phenomenon of time burdens is socially constructed (Maudsley, 2011). During the quantitative stage, the idiographic picture created by the qualitative stage would be used to inform the questions asked during the quantitative stage (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), now seeking to objectively measure nomothetic information (Maudsley, 2011). The two elements of the investigation were combined during the analysis stage (Drisko & Maschi, 2016).

An *exploratory* sequence was employed, collecting the qualitative data first, subsequently gathering quantitative data to test the generalizability of what was found during the first stage (Cresswell, 2007). The *exploratory* sequence was deliberately chosen over an *explanatory* sequence, where the quantitative data would be gathered first and the qualitative data second. This study was undertaken with *outsider* positionality in terms of the researcher's race, nationality, and employment status. *Outsider* researcher status meant that it might not be possible to make reliable predictions about the teachers' lives when selecting questions for the questionnaire. First, the open-ended qualitative stage was carried out to explore unanticipated elements of teachers' lived experience. This was then followed by a quantitative stage, designed to test and generalize the findings emerging from the initial stage. For example, the qualitative data revealed an unanticipated finding; interviewees were spending a considerable amount of time tutoring their own children. This discovery made it possible to include a question in the questionnaire regarding how much time respondents were devoting to this activity. Six semi-structured interviews were carried out. Once the interviews had been transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed, a set of questions was written for a questionnaire which was disseminated via WhatsApp to teachers in the Punjab, 67 teachers responded.

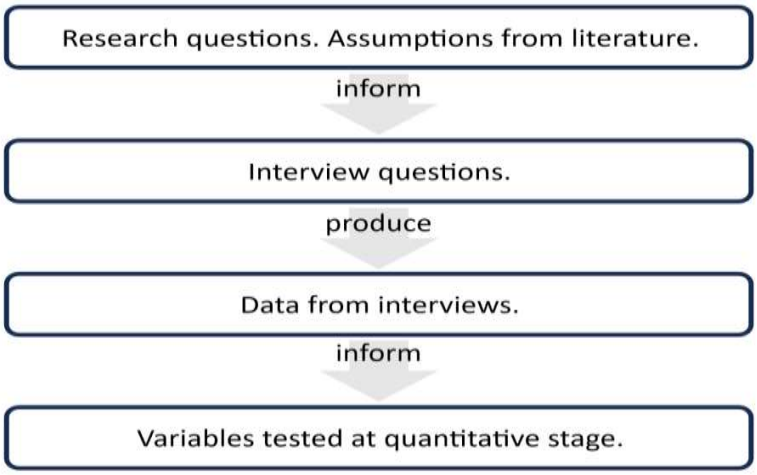


Fig 1 shows how the findings from the first stage informed the questions in the second stage.

Participants / Sampling

A researcher's ideal situation would involve having a comprehensive list of the population being examined (in this case, teachers in the Punjab). Here, because of the small scale of the study and because the range of possible participants was limited to those who could speak English, a decision was made to settle for a *volunteer* or *convenience* mode of sampling (Black, 2001), where the participants for the interviews were chosen from those who responded to Whatsapp posts, with those who responded first being favoured. Though the situation necessitated a volunteer approach to sampling, the conclusions of this study must be restrained in their claims of having generalized findings by the caveat that a volunteer sample may misrepresent the target population to some degree (Black, 2001).

Analysis of Qualitative Data

Thematic Analysis was chosen for the qualitative data, as it permitted the generation of codes and themes directly from the data, without the constraint of pre-formulated coding (Xu & Zammit, 2020). Braun and Clark's (2017) six-step process of thematic analysis was chosen as its inductive and reflective approach was deemed the best way to combine rigour and flexibility with the data.

When the codes were grouped into themes, it was evident that the coding of the data was not suited to its intended purpose. One code which had been used in more than one instance was, 'Time at home used preparing for work.' However, gender-based differences could not be discerned if the statements from male and female interviewees were coded in this manner, without the speaker's gender being explicitly identified.

Finding an issue with the codes while organizing them into themes did not create an issue. Braun and Clark's method is intended to be used recursively (Braun & Clark, 2017), and circling back to previous steps to take a different view in the light of a new understanding is an indicator of rigour, rather than a failure of the method. At this point, two new codes were created: 'Time at home used preparing for work by father,' and 'Time at work used preparing for work by mother.' This was not the only case where the data was recorded to make the gender of the speaker explicit.

Analysis of Quantitative Data

To compare with the qualitative stage, the mean weekly hours that each demographic category spent on particular tasks were calculated. Even a perfunctory survey of the data made it clear that grouping all teachers without children together

was problematic, since the original intention, reflected in the two hypotheses, had been to examine men and women separately.

H1) *Teacher-mothers spend more time on household chores than teacher-fathers or teachers without children in the Punjab.*

H2) *Teacher-fathers spend more time giving extra tuition than teacher-mothers or teachers without children in the Punjab.*

Here two main issues arose. First, for numerous questions, the gap between male and female teachers without children was as pronounced as that observed between teaching mothers and teaching fathers. This suggested that the investigative propositions may have been mistargeted, and that the tacit assumption—that parenthood leads to a gendered division of labour—might need to be reconsidered. Second, 15 childless female teachers responded, whereas only 12 childless male teachers did. This meant that calculating the average number of hours spent on any given task by childless teachers would slightly over represent women's experiences compared with men's. Therefore, these two demographics were eventually treated separately during analysis.

In the interests of privacy, all the interviewees mentioned in the next section are referred to by a pseudonym.

Findings

First Hypothesis

H1) *Teacher-mothers spend more time on household chores than teacher-fathers or teachers without children in the Punjab.*

Data from the study's first stage indicated that women typically took on household chores. Within the main themes of male and female roles, teaching mothers noted that they were primarily responsible for housework, whereas teaching fathers reported doing little housework, leaving these tasks to their partners. The interviewees identified these responsibilities as gendered.

"…it is common in every household that a female is, especially the eldest daughter, the daughter-in-law. Uh, they are going to be responsible for the well-being of others living inside."
-Tasnim

Tables 1 – Values shown are average hours spent on each task per week, accurate to one decimal place.

	Teaching mothers	Teaching fathers	Childless female teachers	Childless male teachers
Cooking	6.9	0.6	7.9	0.4
Organizing domestic workers	7.9	3.9	7.9	6.3
Shopping for groceries	2.0	3.4	3.4	3.4
Cleaning the house	5.8	0.7	6.7	2.1
Washing clothes	1.9	0.1	4.5	1.3
Tutoring one's own children	6.4	3.4	1.6	0.6
Total time on chores	**30.9**	**12.1**	**32.1**	**14.0**

The quantitative findings provide only partial support for H1. Teaching mothers spend more hours on household chores each week than teaching fathers, yet the difference between male and female childless teachers is even larger than that between teaching mothers and childless female teachers. These results suggest that gender, rather than parenthood, is the key factor associated with the greater time devoted to household chores.

In the second stage, thematic data were used to inform the questionnaire, leading to the inclusion of questions on household chores, tutoring one's own children, and grocery shopping. Two teaching fathers mentioned tutoring their children, potentially indicating that men dedicated more time to this task, while one teaching mother reported helping her children with homework. Yet the quantitative results do not confirm this: on average, teaching mothers spent 6.4 hours per week tutoring their children, while teaching fathers reported just 3.4 hours.

Second Hypothesis

H2) *Teacher-fathers spend more time giving extra tuition than teacher-mothers or teachers without children in the Punjab.*

The qualitative findings did not confirm the hypothesis in its original form. Out of all the participants, none of the three teaching fathers reported giving paid tuition, one teaching mother did, and one teaching father indicated that he had given paid tuition in the past but no longer.

Tables 2 – Values shown are average hours spent on each activity per week, accurate to one decimal place.

	Teaching mothers	Teaching fathers	Childless female teachers	Childless male teachers
Paid tuition	2.0	6.2	0.7	4.3

Nonetheless, the quantitative data point toward confirmation of the hypothesis: teaching fathers reported higher weekly hours of paid tuition than the other groups.

There may be justification for revising the focus of the inquiry. Before the qualitative stage, the hypothesis was restricted to paid tuition under the assumption that any additional work undertaken by teachers would take this form. However, all three male interviewees reported doing paid work outside their salaried teaching, though not tuition. Because H2 sought to examine whether teaching fathers' self-perception as breadwinners manifested in their engagement in extra work, it is both reasonable and consistent with the study's aims to include other forms of paid work in further analysis.

Tables 3 – Values shown are average hours spent on each activity per week, accurate to one decimal place.

	Teaching mothers	Teaching fathers	Childless female teachers	Childless male teachers
Paid tuition	2.0	6.2	0.7	4.3
Other paid work	1.9	0.8	0.9	2.8
Total time on paid work other than the main income	**3.9**	**6.9**	**1.6**	**7.0**

Adding together paid tuition and other paid work beyond salaried teaching reveals a pattern analogous to H1. Teaching fathers and childless male teachers show only a slight difference, yet both report more paid tuition than either teaching mothers or childless female teachers. The evidence, therefore, suggests that maleness, rather than fatherhood, is the factor linked to increased time devoted to paid work outside salaried teaching.

Other Findings

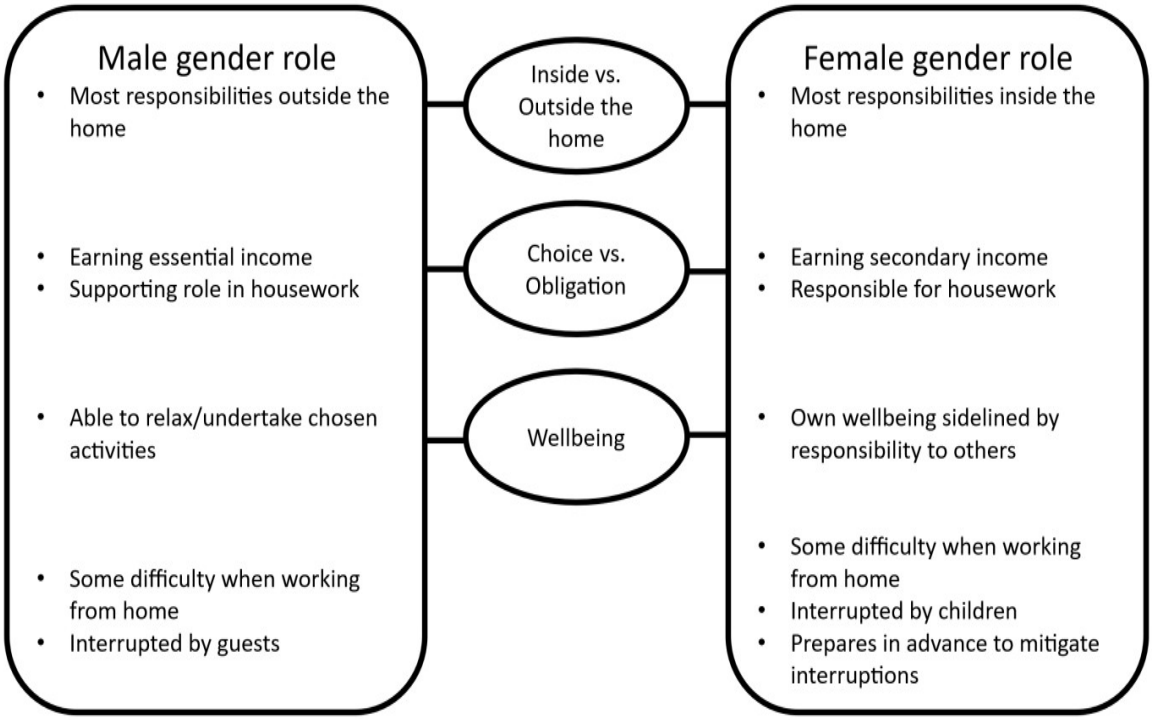


Fig. 2 shows male and female gender roles as key themes, with the other themes as cross-cutting themes.

Inside vs. Outside the Home

Both male and female interviewees indicated that men perform errands outside the home, while women are tasked with chores inside the home.

"…I don't go for groceries. So he brings all the groceries, he does all the billing, he does all the, uh, the maintenance of the cars, the fueling, everything that is related to outside. So obviously, then there are some responsibilities that I have to take at home."
-Soraya

Grocery shopping emerged as the one outdoor chore consistently described as a man's task. In the quantitative stage, respondents were asked how much time they spent on this activity, making it possible to compare this with the time spent on indoor chores.

Tables 4 – Values shown are average hours spent on each activity per week, accurate to one decimal place.

	Teaching mothers	Teaching fathers	Childless female teachers	Childless male teachers
Cooking	6.9	0.6	7.9	0.4
Organizing domestic workers	7.9	3.9	7.9	6.3
Cleaning the house	5.8	0.7	6.7	2.1
Washing clothes	1.9	0.1	4.5	1.3
Tutoring one's own children	6.4	3.4	1.6	0.6
Total Inside work	**28.9**	**8.7**	**28.7**	**10.6**
Shopping for groceries	**2.0**	**3.4**	**3.4**	**3.4**

A standout finding is that teaching mothers reported fewer weekly hours spent shopping for groceries, while the other three groups reported roughly equivalent time. The implications of this result are unclear, and it cannot be considered confirmation of the qualitative stage findings. It is possible that this variable is linked to motherhood specifically, rather than to gender alone. It could be that, once a couple have children, it is most convenient for one parent to stay at home with the children while the other parent leaves to shop for groceries and the mother is deemed, through expectations of gender roles, to be the most appropriate to stay at home (McCabe, 2021) but that before teachers have responsibility for children, gender does not have any significant impact on this.

Choice vs. Obligation

This theme grouped comments on which roles interviewees took on voluntarily and which they undertook out of duty. For the most part, interviewees agreed that earning the family's livelihood was mainly the man's responsibility. Soraya was the only exception, claiming that both she and her husband were equally responsible for the family's financial support.

When discussing work outside of their salaried teaching responsibilities, the male interviewees tended not to report feeling obligated to perform extra work.

"I used to earn, um, um, 80k. And, uh, now it's, uh, between if average, I took 20 to 30 k, so, uh, it's not a big difference, but I do prefer that."
-Murad

Female participants often described the income they earned as being directed toward discretionary spending, including occasional expenses and luxuries.

"We both are earning. But, um, my husband is the one who is doing all the household bills, the utility bills, the grocery bills, and everything. Whatever I'm earning, it's my, uh, own will if I want to spend or if I don't want to spend."
-Rahima

"I do extra tutoring for this extra stuff for my children, like, um, celebrating their birthdays or giving them gifts or taking them out."
-Soraya

Evidence under this theme suggests that work, and the allocation of income from work, is largely an obligation for teaching fathers, but largely a matter of choice for teaching mothers. This goes some way to contradicting the findings of Dalessandro et al. (2023)—mentioned on page 16—that men and workers whose partners took responsibility for housework experienced a greater sense of choice in whether and where to work.

Female interviewees framed household chores primarily as obligations. The quantitative data in Table 4 reflect this: teaching mothers are responsible for tasks such as cooking, washing clothes, and cleaning, which the Literature Review categorizes as reproductive labour. In contrast, when men described their housework, particularly childcare, they emphasized less essential, more enjoyable activities.

"…the responsibilities at home…taking care of the children and providing them with food, cooking, and cleaning up, where cleaning up, especially, means organizing things. These are the main jobs when we come back."
-Tasnim

"…to spend time with, uh, them to play a little, uh, to make them, uh, provide a company, uh, for that, uh, sake of fun, for the sake of watching some videos, for the sake of visiting some, uh, rural areas and places."
-Osman on his role in looking after the children

In summary, women experience chores and childcare primarily as obligations, whereas men tend to view them as matters of choice. This pattern matches with broader literature on gendered divisions of household labour, including studies carried out during the pandemic.

Well-being

The theme of *well-being* was strongly connected to that of *choice vs. obligation* in the qualitative data. Teaching fathers indicated that their decisions about taking on additional work were informed by concern for their own health. Teaching mothers, however, described daily routines in which the support and care of others were prioritized above their own well-being.

"…it was impossible for me to carry it on, uh, on, because I thought that it would be some, uh, loss of health and, uh, especially mental health when you're over drained. Uh, you are, you get money, but you are not satisfied with the way that you want to live."
-Murad on why he stopped doing private tuition

"…getting my children ready for the same school that which I used to go. Um, at times skipping breakfast because we're getting late and then going to school."
-Soraya on her daily routine

When considering both work and domestic labour, men seem to have greater flexibility than women to prioritize their own well-being. This is consistent with other literature, especially research into Pakistani teachers during COVID, where Kalsoom (2022) reported that the time and space of teaching women were not treated as priorities within their families. It can also be taken as an example of several effects of Unpaid Labour mentioned in the Literature Review; women having less time for leisure and self-actualization (Sepúlveda & Donald, 2014) and experiencing lower happiness and life-satisfaction (Piovani & Aydiner-Avsar, 2021).

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 - Teacher-mothers spend more time on household chores than teacher-fathers or teachers without children in the Punjab.

The qualitative stage gave the impression that the hypothesis would be borne out, although all six participants interviewed were parents, and no data were gathered from teachers without children. The quantitative findings, however, challenged this expectation. Although teaching mothers reported undertaking more household chores than male teachers, there was little difference between teaching mothers and female teachers without children in terms of time spent on such tasks. It had been assumed that the transition to parenthood would intensify the manifestation of gender roles. These findings prompt further reflection: Is it womanhood rather than motherhood that is linked to greater engagement in household

chores? Or might motherhood remain central, with women being socialized into maternal responsibilities well before they have children?

The qualitative findings suggested that fathers were allocating a significant portion of their time to tutoring their children, yet this pattern was not replicated in the quantitative results. Rather, teaching mothers were shown to devote the most time to this task. A different research design might have yielded additional relevant data. Although every questionnaire respondent was a teacher, the profession of their partners was not established. It may therefore be that tutoring is less a matter of gender and more a function of professional identity, with the teaching partner perceived as the more suitable person to assume responsibility.

Hypothesis 2 - Teacher-fathers spend more time giving extra tuition than teacher-mothers or teachers without children in the Punjab.

The interview question was deliberately framed so as not to lead participants directly towards paid tuition, but rather to provide scope for discussing any additional paid work. Although all the teaching fathers interviewed mentioned undertaking extra paid work, none referred to private tuition, leading to the inclusion of a specific question on this at the quantitative stage. Comparison of the average time devoted to additional paid work revealed a pattern analogous to H1: maleness, rather than fatherhood, appeared to be the relevant correlate. This, in turn, raised similar speculative questions. Might childless male teachers already be socialized into the role of father? Are they financially supporting extended households? Or is there a broader expectation that man, whether fathers or not, should assume greater earning responsibility?

A clear discrepancy emerges between the qualitative and quantitative findings. None of the teaching fathers interviewed referred to private tuition, yet survey data indicate an average of 6.2 hours per week devoted to private paid tuition, compared with just 0.8 hours spent on other forms of paid work. Although this cannot be confirmed with certainty, it may reflect a bias in the qualitative sample towards teachers confident enough in English to take part in interviews. A third variable—such as educational attainment, seniority at work, or generational wealth—may influence both English-language confidence and the financial necessity of providing private tuition.

Total Work

The concept of *total work* (referenced in the Literature Review) could also be a salient measure when planning and scheduling CPD for teachers, even though it did not emerge inductively from analysis of the interviews. A table to show *the total work* from the gathered quantitative data is presented for discussion of this concept.

Tables 5 – Values shown are average hours spent on each activity per week, accurate to one decimal place.

	Teaching mothers	Teaching fathers	Childless female teachers	Childless male teachers
Time at school (x5)	34.6	35.0	33.0	32.5
Paid tuition	2.0	6.2	0.7	4.3
Other paid work	1.9	0.8	0.9	2.8
Total time on chores	30.9	12.1	32.1	14.0
Total work	**69.4**	**54.0**	**66.7**	**53.5**

There are grounds on which commute time might have been included in this calculation; however, it was excluded because its inclusion would not have changed the comparative direction of the findings. The pattern observed mirrors data from other national contexts: female teachers report higher overall workloads than male teachers, with teaching mothers reporting the highest total workload of all groups.

Other Findings

The findings from the qualitative data about *choice vs. obligation* would seem to intersect interestingly with what Dalessandro, Patterson, and Lovell (2023) found. Whilst their study found that men and workers whose partners took responsibility for household chores experienced a greater feeling of choice about whether and where to work, the findings are more specific here. Men seem to feel they have more choice about whether to take on extra work and what household chores (particularly child care) they take on. Women experience more choice in how they spend the money they earn by working. Conversely, women experience less choice in whether to do household work and which tasks they undertake. Men seem to experience no choice in whether to be the household's primary earner.

Limitations

Even though the study was carefully designed with the goal of minimizing bias, it is possible that certain biases still influenced the results.

Conformity bias, for example, it is possible that participants' self-reported behaviours were shaped by societal notions of gender, causing them to overstate the time spent on

activities seen as gender-appropriate. *Voluntary response bias* may also be an issue, as survey respondents might not reflect the full target demographic. In particular, the busiest teachers were unlikely to find time to respond, potentially skewing the data towards those with lighter workloads. Furthermore, because all participants were contacted via WhatsApp, the sample could be biased towards users who are more active on the platform—perhaps younger teachers or those with better internet connectivity. All of these considerations are important when assessing the reliability of the findings.

While the positionality of the researcher was addressed earlier in relation to the research design and the selection of the analytical approach, there are further ways in which it could have affected the study and its results. A low degree of shared cultural understanding may have caused certain implied meanings to be overlooked. At the same time, this lack of shared knowledge may have offered certain benefits in interactions with the interviewees. Mercer (2007) has pointed out that an *insider* is more likely to take the same things for granted as the interviewee, meaning that pertinent questions do not get asked and understandings which are shared are never made explicit in a way which can be referenced in the write-up. There is a possibility that teachers, aware of being observed by someone from outside their system, viewed themselves as representatives of the Schools' Education Department and consequently tempered their responses. It would have been practically impossible to avoid all issues of positionality in a study of this type, but reflexivity itself is a quality marker of Mixed-methods research (Trainor & Graue, 2014; Hall, 2013), so, though there are several factors which might have increased researcher bias, a methodology can be said to be more robust for taking the time to acknowledge these factors of positionality.

Conclusion

This paper concludes with three recommendations for educational institutions planning the training of teachers in Pakistan.

Where feasible, schedule face-to-face training to take place within regular working hours.

While asynchronous online training might be expected to offer maximum convenience, enabling teachers to participate at times of their choosing, this study demonstrates that teachers of both genders are frequently interrupted when engaging from home. Teaching mothers, in particular, encounter additional time pressures while participating, a finding consistent between this research and other relevant studies (Chauhan, 2020:2022; Derndorfer et al., 2021; Cheema & Mohmand, 2021). Participation in training at school allows teachers to give their full attention to the session. Yet, as teaching parents of both genders have family responsibilities outside of normal hours, the least disruptive form of training seems to be face-to-face instruction conducted during standard work hours.

Investigate how total work influences participants' capacity to retain the knowledge gained during training.

While findings from the qualitative stage of this study indicated knock-on effects from a substantial burden of unpaid labour on female teachers' wellbeing—also supported in wider research literature (Sepúlveda & Donald, 2014; Piovani & Aydiner-Avsar, 2021) —organizations delivering training will necessarily be concerned with how effective their training is. There is a dearth of understanding of the effects on educational practice of internal and external pressures on teachers (Erickson, 1986). Assessing the retention of training content relative to participants' *total work* could be valuable.

Explore a research design that incorporates additional cycles of alternating between qualitative and quantitative data collection (Flick, 2018).

The analysis highlighted multiple benefits of both *exploratory* and *explanatory* approaches within mixed-methods research (Ivankova et al., 2006). While it can be advantageous for the qualitative stage to precede the quantitative stage, there are also circumstances where starting with the quantitative stage is preferable (Johnson et al., 2004). This invites consideration of whether a multi-stage design, alternating between qualitative and quantitative methods, could offer further benefits. One possible approach would be to begin with a pilot quantitative survey to test key assumptions (De Vaus, 2014), followed by a qualitative stage that both explains the first stage's findings and explores directions for a third, larger quantitative stage.

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