

## Analysis of the Meta-Time Management Model in the Teachings of Imam Reza (A.S.)

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### Article info

### Abstract

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Contemporary time management is predominantly founded on a secular worldview, centered around material productivity. However, an examination of Islamic teachings, particularly the conduct of Imam Reza (A.S.), reveals that the religious perspective on time is more comprehensive and profound. This research aims to elucidate the “Razavi Meta-Time Management Model” and compare it with conventional models, using a qualitative, analytical-inferential method and collecting data through a library-documentary approach from authentic religious texts. The findings led to the design of a theoretical framework that organizes time into four overarching, interconnected dimensions: “Communion with God” (Spiritual Dimension), “Sustenance Livelihood” (Economic Dimension), “Association with Trusted Brethren” (Social-Ethical Dimension), and “Attaining Permissible Pleasures” (Psychological Dimension). The distinguishing feature of this model is its placement of “Servitude to God” as the ultimate end goal and its establishment of a dynamic, synergistic balance among the four dimensions of life. This paper demonstrates that the “Razavi Meta-Time Management” model, relying on a holistic and transcendent perspective, provides a comprehensive response to the shortcomings of secular models, capable of simultaneously leading to both material productivity and human otherworldly felicity.

**Keywords:** Imam Reza (A.S.), Time Management, Lifestyle, Work-Life Balance.



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## 1. Introduction

Time, as humanity's most precious capital, faces numerous challenges in the contemporary era regarding its optimal management. The dominant global paradigm of time management is primarily based on a secular worldview centered on material productivity. Models such as the Eisenhower Matrix and the 8-8-8 Rule, while technically efficient, adopt a reductionist approach and lack a comprehensive perspective on the spiritual, ethical, and ultimate dimensions of human existence. In contrast, Islamic teachings, with a holistic and teleological view, regard time as a unique opportunity for moving towards perfection and divine servitude. This research aims to elucidate the "Razavi Meta-Time Management Model" and compare it with conventional time management models by examining the conduct and statements of Imam Reza (A.S.) as an authentic and comprehensive source.

## 2. Research Objectives

This research is designed with the primary objective of formulating and explaining the "Razavi Meta-Time Management Model" and identifying its fundamental distinctions from the dominant time management paradigm. The secondary objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To explain the theoretical and philosophical foundations of time management in Razavi teachings.
2. To present a coherent theoretical framework based on the fourfold division mentioned in the narration of Imam Reza (A.S.).
3. To conduct a comparative analysis of this model with prominent time management models in secular literature.
4. To analyze the synergistic relationships and dynamic interactions between the four dimensions of the model.

## 3. Methodology

This research is applied in purpose and qualitative in method, of the analytical-inferential type. Data were collected through a library-documentary approach by studying reliable religious texts, including the narrations of Imam Reza (A.S.) in sources such as 'Uyūn Akhbār Reza, Tuḥaf al-'Uqūl, and Wasā'il al-Shī'ah. Thematic analysis was used for data analysis, which included the following stages:

Open coding of texts and narrations.

Organizing codes into basic themes (the four dimensions of time management).

Extracting overarching themes (purposiveness, balance, and holism) as pillars of the final model.

Validation of the findings was achieved through citation of multiple hadith sources and review by domain experts in Islamic studies and management.

#### 4. Findings

Based on an in-depth analysis of the narrations and conduct of Imam Reza (A.S.), a novel theoretical framework titled the “Razavi Meta-Time Management Model” was designed. This model, extracted from his four-part narration, organizes time within an integrated and dynamic system. At the heart of this model lie four interconnected dimensions that operate not in opposition, but in a mutually reinforcing manner.

The first dimension is “Communion with God” (Munājāt ma‘a Allāh) which acts as the axis and ultimate purpose of the model. In this view, worship is not limited to prayer and fasting; rather, “reflection upon divine matters” is considered the highest form of worship, and “serving creation” and bringing joy to the hearts of believers are seen as supreme manifestations of servitude. This spiritual dimension gives meaning and direction to all other activities.

The second dimension is “Securing Livelihood” (Ta‘mīn al-Ma‘āsh) which holds an elevated status in the intellectual framework of Imam Reza (A.S.). Earning lawful sustenance for one’s family is not merely a material necessity but is itself considered a great act of worship, bearing reward greater than jihad. This perspective elevates economy and livelihood from the realm of worldly affairs to a spiritual plane, transforming it into a bridge between materiality and spirituality.

The third dimension is “Association with Trustworthy Brethren” (Mu‘āsharat al-Ikhwān al-Mu‘tamin) which plays a key role in an individual’s moral and social development. This purposeful association is not merely for recreation; rather, it is a space for self-improvement, recognizing one’s faults, receiving sincere feedback, and strengthening the spirit of cooperation and social responsibility. This dimension internalizes ethical values within the very process of time management.

Finally, the fourth dimension is “Seeking Lawful Pleasures” (Kasb al-Ladhdhāt al-Ḥalāl) which demonstrates the realism and comprehensive nature of this model. Islam, by rejecting monasticism, responds to the natural human need for recreation and joy. These lawful pleasures, ranging from sports and outings to wholesome social interactions, serve to renew spiritual and physical energy, providing the nec-

essary vigor to effectively engage with the other three dimensions. The key point is the reinforcing relationship of this dimension with the others, as Imam Reza (A.S.) stated: “And through this hour (of lawful pleasure), you gain strength for the other three hours.”

The fundamental distinction of this model from secular models like the Eisenhower Matrix or the 8-8-8 Rule lies in its monotheistic purposiveness. While conventional models consider “material productivity” as the ultimate end and focus on the “urgency” and “importance” of tasks, the Razavi model places the “realization of servitude to God” (taḥqīq al-‘ubūdiyyah) as the ultimate goal and adds “consideration of long-term consequences” (‘āqibat-nigārī) to the decision-making matrix. Furthermore, Western models, with their reductionist view, often neglect the spiritual and socio-ethical dimensions, whereas the Razavi model, with its holistic perspective, covers all dimensions of human existence and establishes a dynamic balance among them. This model provides a qualitative and flexible roadmap adaptable to various life circumstances.

## 5. Conclusion

The Razavi Meta-Time Management Model, relying on a holistic and transcendent perspective, offers a comprehensive response to the shortcomings of secular time management models. This model not only addresses material productivity but also realizes otherworldly felicity and human spiritual transcendence. Establishing a dynamic equilibrium between the four dimensions of life enables harmonious individual and social growth.

### Suggestions:

1. Model Application: Developing operational programs for individual and organizational levels based on the Razavi model.
2. Education and Promotion: Incorporating the foundations of Islamic time management into training courses and educational curricula.
3. Future Research: Conducting comparative studies of the Razavi model with other schools of time management and measuring its effectiveness in different environments.

**Keywords:** Imam Reza (A.S.), Conduct of the Ahl al-Bayt (A.S.), Time Management, Life-Work Balance.