



Extent of participation of couples especially husbands in household activities

■ Jiju N. Vyas and Bhawana Asnani*

Polytechnic in Home Science (J.A.U.), AMRELI (GUJARAT) INDIA
(Email: bhawana_asnani@yahoo.com)

ARTICLE INFO :

Received : 10.09.2014
Accepted : 21.11.2014

KEY WORDS :

Couples, Husbands, Wives, Extent of participation, Household activities

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE :

Vyas, Jiju N. and Asnani, Bhawana (2014). Extent of participation of couples especially husbands in household activities. *Adv. Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 5 (2): 230-232.

*Author for correspondence

ABSTRACT

Women play a dynamic role in their home activities, as wife, as mother who is responsible for development of the children and as homemaker, in charge of the operation of their homes. In recent times, with the increase in educational facilities and wide spread change in resource available, women have gradually started taking employment outside the home. They have now an added major role that of as a wage earner. The research objective was to explore the extent of participation by young and old spouses in selected household activities. Survey and interview schedule was used on the selected couples of Mehsana District of Gujarat. The result concluded that young couple's participation was more than old couple; the deference was not waste but it would be noted that young generation took more interest in domestic responsibilities and managed their challenge efficiently.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, a woman has been given a role where she just has to be obedient and look after her husband, children and home and in-laws at cost of her own life. But gradually the society realized the importance of a woman in educating, her children, even herself and helping her husband in earning money as well. Traditional societies structured their culture institutions based on the mythical religious conception (Kaila, 2001).

Through educational reforms, women have demonstrated immense talent in academics and professions and now seek to fulfil their potential in the public sphere. In the case of women, the opportunity to work has too often created a double burden of work within and outside home. Recently, the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) attributed the reason for increased homes violence to the gender specific responsibilities such as preparing meals caring for children and managing the household. And, if any, woman is holding

an executive position she has to take care of the office meeting, specially seminars and other routine office work as well.

The search on house work in dual earner families in western societies have mainly concentrated on time budgets *i.e.* the amount of time each spouse spends on domestic work, calculated either on a daily or weekly basis. There is a slight change in the amount of time that husbands in dual earner families spend on house work. Most of the other studies have concluded that there is little change over the years in the amount of time husbands in dual earner families spend on domestic tasks. Dual earner families have examined house work in the context of role conflict and the fatigue experienced by employed wives. Their husbands do not assist their wives in childcare. Paid domestic help is sought only by couples and it is usually unreliable. Most Indian wives continue to engage in longer hours of domestic work in addition to time spent on the job. Few researchers have provided qualified evidence comparing the patterns of house work among wives in the single and dual earner household in order to establish the magnitude of role

overload experienced by wives among the dual earner wives. However, with the entry of middle class wives in to the labour force, the supposition that the home is the centre of a women's life is no longer as universally accepted as the belief that raising children is part of becoming and being a woman. The sheer burden of two jobs has persuaded many working wives to express their dissatisfaction and yet adhere to the notion that women are primarily responsibilities for house work, while others express their discontent by totally rejecting the notion that domestic chores are women's duties. Consequently there exit diverse attitudes and approaches to house work convergence (Banerjee, 1945).

A major area of marital adjustment for many couples concerns the wife's employment outside the home. Most married women would like the option of working outside the home and feel it would help their marriage. Although many husbands agree with this idea, only substantial minority do not. In one survey, three-fourth of the wives either strongly favored the wife working outside the home or felt neutral about it: only 25 per cent of the women opposed the idea. However, only two-third of the husbands favored their wives working or felt neutral about it while 34 per cent of them objecting to the idea. There was greater agreement on this issue among cohabiting couples though once again women felt more strongly than men interestingly, when women work outside the home. Couples tend to share power more equally and are more satisfied with their marriages (Blumstein and Schwartz, 1983).

Educational differences between spouses are rarely associated with divisions of labor, and men with more education often report doing more housework, rather than less, as resource theories predict. Similarly, total family earnings have little effect on how much housework men do, though middle-class men talk more about the importance of sharing than working-class men. Some studies show that spouses with more equal incomes-usually in the working class-share more household labor, but women still do more than men when they

have similar jobs. Thus, relative earning power is important, but there is no simple trade-off of wage work for housework (Gerson, 1993; Thompson and Walker, 1989).

In today's time, we can see a lots of changes in women's life e.g. girl child education, women's liberation movement, lifestyle, modernization, serious problems of adjustment due to accepting liberty. We can see vast changes in women's role in India. New social importance has brought in new serious problems. Both employed women and unemployed women (housewives) are facing mental problems due to their jobs, marriage, and domestic work. Problems do arise in terms of adjustment and co-ordination if educated, professional, married women are given opportunities to utilize their talents, these problems arise if women prefer to jobs and simultaneously they have to perform laborious family and household duties, wife duties etc and ultimately if women choose to do jobs, they face effect on family life. The real problem is how to deal with all these situations.

Indian women choose jobs to help their family, to earn money, to help their husbands, to know the work, to satisfy ambitions, to have independent income family in times of poor economic, social condition; whereas other women choose to remain as housewives and administer their homes. They do not give much importance to jobs (Parmar, 2008).

The *main objective* of the research was to explore the extent of participation by young and old spouses in selected household activities.

Extent of participation is operationally defined as the frequency of performance of selected household activities by the respondents.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The sample was selected from the Mehsana city and selected towns namely Visnagar, Unjha, Vijapur and Kadi were included for the study. The selection criteria decided were as follow:

Table 1 : Assessment of extent of participation in selected household activities by young and old husbands

Sr. No.	Extent of participation	Young husband		Old husband	
		f	%	f	%
1.	Poor score 105 to 164	09	6	13	8.66
2.	Fair score 165 to 243	51	34	47	31.33
3.	Good score 244 to 315	15	10	15	10
	Total	75	50	75	50

Table 2 : Assessment of extent of participation in selected household activities by stages of family of couples

Sr. No.	Main score	Beginning		Expanding		Contracting	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Poor score below 170	02	1.33	10	6.66	09	06
2.	Fair 170 to 242	15	10	44	29.33	27	18
3.	Good above 242	18	12	11	7.33	14	9.33
	Total	35	23.33	65	43.33	50	33.33

- Couples who were in the age group of 25 years to 55 years.
- Those couples whose monthly family income was in the range of Rs. 5,000/- to Rs. 45,000/- .
- Those couples who lived in joint and nuclear family.
- Couples whose education was between standard 12th to post graduation.
- The occupation of husband was business and service whereas wives occupation was categorized as working and non-working.

The research design used for present study had two pronged approach. A descriptive survey with pre-tested, validated interview schedule was used to acquire the information needed for knowing the extent of participation of couple in household work.

Purposive random sampling technique was used for selection of the sample. 150 couples were selected as a sample from both Mehsana city and selected towns.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Every human being needs a home. It is a place where a good portion of one’s time is spent; a place of shelter, where one may seek from the tensions and worries of the outside world. Women have a great responsibility to play as home makers. Technical and industrial advancements on one side have made life easy, while on the other side the role of women has also changed considerably. It is not only that the functions of the family change with general social changes, but the roles of various members within the family also change. Family life today is no more the same as it used to being. Homemakers’ responsibilities have changed considerably.

Fig. 1 and Table 1 revealed the assessment of extent of participation by young and old couples. 34 per cent young and 31.33 per cent old husbands, participated in household activities; whereas 6 per cent young husbands and 8.66 per cent old husbands had participated poorly in household

activities for managing home.

Table 2 revealed that in expanding and contracting stage majority of the couples (29.33% and 18 %, respectively) had fair contribution in household activities; whereas in the beginning stage both were perhaps enthusiastic to help each other and thus illustration showed that in the beginning stage the scores of good and fair was more as compared to poor score percentage.

The expanding stages were more tedious in work and number of responsibilities was higher so contribution of couples were more seen in these stage of family. Less than one third female respondents strongly believed that husband participation were positively supportive reaction for us in smooth running of household task.

‘f’ value for extent of participation with different selected variables such as place of residence of husbands and wives, stages of family life cycle and education of husband and wives. Results showed highly significant effect at 0.1 and 0.05 levels. It proved that place of residence, education and stages of family life cycle influenced participation of household task in selected activities.

The amount of free time available to the respondents influenced the respondent’s participation in household activities. The respondents with more free time participated more in all the household activities except in selection and buying activities.

Conclusion :

Study concluded that as the stage of family life cycle advanced the work participation became fair. In households the activities that take place in homes require labour. Gender is often used to divide labour; however, there is no universal set of tasks defined as “women’s” work or “men’s” work.

REFERENCES

Banerjee, M.N. (1945). Hindu family and Freudian Theory. *Indian J. Soc. Work*, **5** : 180-186.

Blumstein, P. and Pepper, S. (1983). American couples: money, work, sex. New York Publication, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

Gerson, K. (1993). No Man’s Land: Men’s Changing Commitments to Family and Work. Basic Books, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

Kaila, H.L. (2001). Women, Work and Family. Rawat Publications – Jaipur (RAJASTHAN) INDIA.

Parmar, P. (2008). A study of employed women and unemployed women’s family adjustment problem’s effects on their mental Health: counselling work. Research Paper Published in *Gujarat J. Psychol.*, **25** : 61 p.

Thompson, L. and Walker, A.J. (1989). Gender in families. *J. Marriage & Family*, **51** : 845–871.

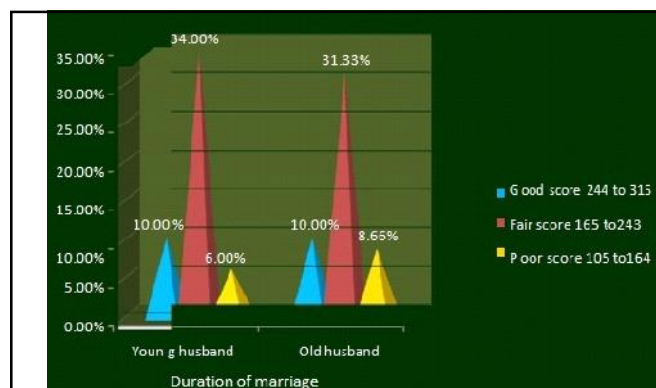


Fig. 1 : Assessment of extent of participation in selected household activities by young and old husbands

★★★★★⁵th Year of Excellence★★★★★