

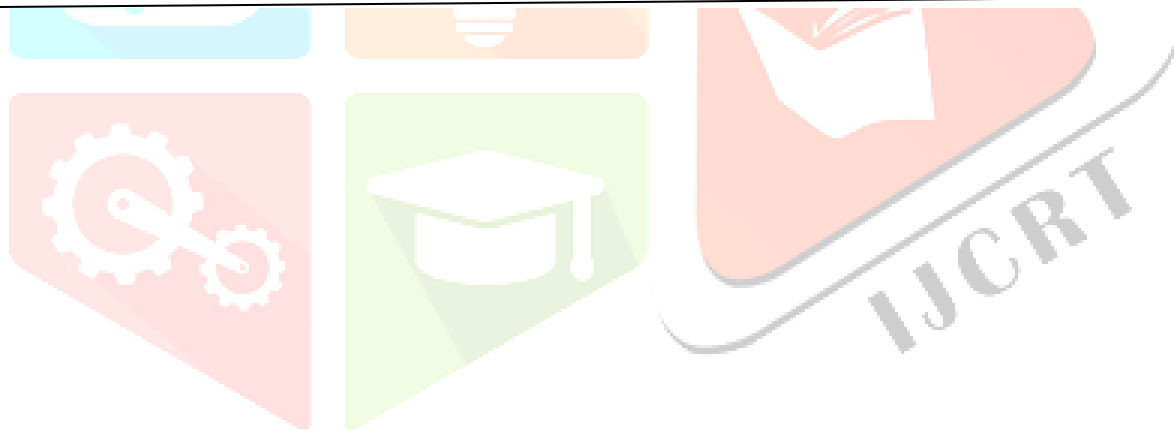
THE EFFECT OF SPOUSE SUPPORT ON FEMALE'S ROLE-OVERLOAD PERCEPTION OF DUAL CAREER FAMILY IN PUNJAB.

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Abstract: The Present World is changed one. This change has entered in our families by changing the set pattern of traditional sex roles for spouses in relation to independence & financial stability. This change has brought an opportunity for woman to come forward to prove her competency beyond her domestic capabilities. The study will highlight the various causes for this change & its outcome of being 'overload' perception made by woman. This research will be carried on female spouses of dual career families that struggle for meeting the work and family expectations. This study will try to find out the effect of spouse support given to working married woman. The spouse support to be considered by woman can be household, emotional or help in taking care of children. This study will help to find out correlation between role-overload perception of woman & spouse support provided by man of Dual Career Family in Punjab.

Index terms- Role-overload, Dual Career Family, Spouse Support



INTRODUCTION:

Dual Career Family is no longer a new concept in India. Dual Career Family in India is understood as a family in which both the spouses are working while managing their family life together. Rapoport & Rapoport defined a Dual Career Family as “one in which both the heads of household pursue careers & at the same time maintain a family life together.” The emergence of Dual Career Family Concept has changed the well-developed norm of Indian society which considers man as a sole provider for the family & woman as a homemaker. About 41% of married women are working as compared to 27% unmarried women, according to India Census 2011.

From last two decades, there comes a drastic change in Indian houses due to the following reasons:

Woman’s Self-worth: Now, women are educated. So, in order to develop their self-identity in society, they like to take up their careers which can provide them financial as well as emotional independence. Women are enjoying earning while learning that help them in upbringing their children in a better way.

Male Aspirations: A radical change in male aspirations is observed in relation to their life partners. Man wants his spouse to be equally competent, who must possess good education with job & can contribute to the family in all ways even economically to fulfill the future aspirations of better home, gadgets & good up-bringing to children. Earlier due to stereotypic norms prevalence in the Indian society, man desires for a woman, who must be submissive, good in household chores & inclined towards elderly care. But, now time has been changed, rejecting his male-supremacy, man desires for working, career-oriented & an earning spouse.

High Cost of Living: Due to high cost of living, it is necessary that both the partners of household should be working to cope with increasing demands of family. They can provide better education to children & better lifestyle for the family. As, double earning hands in comparison to single earning hand provide more financial stability to the family.

Better upbringing of Children: Working woman not only supports for their children expenses. But also, she can better guides her children for their future goals and objectives. Various studies on working mothers reveal that children having working parents are more responsible & less dependable on others. Gradually they have learned to be self-sufficient & self-reliable. They are able to handle odd life-situations in a fitter way.

Scope for Socialization: Now-a-days, no woman wants to confine herself to the four boundaries of the house. Every woman wants to maintain her social circle. Being working, gives her an opportunity to interact with different people. Socialization helps her in broadening her vision. It also strengthens her to tackle any situation.

Insecurity in families: These days, jobs are very demanding. There is great risk involved of getting sacked if one fails to meet the deadlines, causes insecurity in families. If both partners are in job, fear of insecurity is almost zero. In case, one spouse lost his or her job, other partner is there to support & bear the family expenses.

So in India, more number of dual career families is evolved. Due to this change, woman would be able to fortify her beyond a domestic worker tag. Now woman is struggling to remove all her grits by changing the traditional family structures with traditional sex role orientation according to which she is solely responsible for household work, child rearing & nurturing, elderly care etc. Educated woman proved her capability not only in the fields that were primarily considered to be feminine but also in the fields that were considered to be masculine like defense etc in our parochial Indian society. However, her economic status & work lost its significance when it comes to household work. Still it is expected out of woman that whenever there comes any family responsibility like cleaning, washing, cooking etc or family emergency like sickness of family member, child education, child sickness etc., she should play her role. These expectations follow the traditional division of duties. It leads to many health problems for women like stress, strain, anxiety disorder, physical issues etc. Also, working woman has to face a guilt of leaving kids behind. She has to compromise with her motherly emotions. With continuous efforts at work and at home, woman struggles to meet the demands of both ends .i.e. work & family. She often claims that, she hardly gets time for herself. She has to keep on rushing to do everything because of having more responsibilities. This juggling act, creates role-overload perception in woman.

There is one famous saying, that *working woman have to think like a man, act like a lady & work like a dog in order to be successful.*

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: There are several researches related to topic which focuses on dual career female spouse & the challenges faced by her.

Desai, discussed about the change in the position of women's status wrote "Now woman is no longer looked upon child bearing machine and helot in the home. She has acquired a new social status." (Desai, N., 1957). Whereas Claramma Thomas K.(2007) in her research reviewed various researches on the position of working women in dual – earner families in the west have showed considerable proof to imply growing equalitarianism in dual earner families. But, this doesn't hold truth about Indian society. The transformation of Indian society has failed at traditional institutions and structures that still continue to exist forcefully. As a result, however India promises gender equality in employment, it is not convoy by gender equality at home. Looking after the home, family members & children fall primarily on women and hence they are faced with the dilemma of fulfilling the needs of career and domestic roles which lead them to role-conflict. The conflict may be less or more at times, nevertheless, it exists always. Married Women professionals are also forced to reconcile their career aspirations with societal expectations about women's deeds and roles within the family. Whether by pressure or by lack of other options, women professionals often curb their quest of career advancement and limit their career aspirations for the sake of their families. Sidramahetter(1991) in her thesis, white collar marriages: A study of Dual earner couples found that despite of women contribution towards the family, her status in family has not improved man still carries the same viewpoint towards woman which cause disharmony between partners. Further, she also revealed that woman supposed to consider her work secondary & family for her should be at first place. Whereas man always place their career or work at a first place. She further suggested that man have to change his attitude due to changing circumstances. Mehtha Vijayshri (2012) in her thesis wrote that women have been burdened with work of all sorts all through their lives, from reproduction to all household chores and outside, their role as worker is significant, unique and burdensome. But they are discriminated and exploited all over. There is always a pressure of career and family hits women at the mid-level especially hard. Mid-level career women face more challenges when balancing work and life, leading to more difficulty in career growth. The difficulty stems from the fact that there is a double push on these career women as they are forced to compete between two competing ideals: of mother and devoted worker .

Thus, Women's occupational status has been closely associated with the home and family. By taking up employment, they have to play a dual role: housewife and career woman. There is a clear conflict between the society-approved status of women as housewives and mother of children on one hand, and their status as more productive workers on the other. Family duties have also imposed restrictions on their role in their employment. For most of them, the major role they have to play is that of a wife and mother. The home always revolves around her and she plays the key role in the house. She faces the dilemma of somewhat contradictory role perception. On the other hand she must conform to the traditional ideal person always ready to subjugate her own interest to the happiness of others in the family. She assumes almost a different personality as a member of the personnel in office or factory. Her loyalties, interest and aims differ between one place and the other and it demands two different type of individuals (Shameer & Soloman, 1985). It is an undisputed fact that in this 20th century the status of women has certainly risen up compared to that of the past. But it is a reality that even now a woman has not become independent. She faces a lot of problems especially, the career women. And the conditions of a married career women are still worse since she has to play a dual role; that of a house wife and of an employed women (Mira Seth, 1995).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY: From the above literature review, it is evident that there is addition in role played by female spouse of dual career family but no studies reveal how much a woman has overload by her role expectations. The study also attempts to find out if her load is shared by her spouse & if yes, in what ways.

Apparently, studies suggest male spouses have to break the traditional norms, which states woman is solely responsible for home responsibilities (children, family well-being etc.). Male should also shoulder the responsibilities with his spouse at home as she does in gaining the financial security for family. This helps in their wife's social & emotional wellbeing.

The study aims to find effect of spouse support on the role overload perception of female spouse of Dual Career Family.

1. To study the spouse support in house-hold work.
2. To study the spouse support in nurturing children.
3. To find the extent of role overload perceived by dual career female spouse.
4. To suggest recommendations for the same.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: The research design is explanatory in nature. The research is based on both primary & secondary data. Primary data is collected through interviews & questionnaires whereas secondary data is through journal, magazines & newspaper articles. The sample size taken is of 100 units. The sample unit is female spouse of dual career family,

having 5 years of marriage & at least one child. The data is collected in the period of 1 month. The sampling area considered is of Punjab. The sampling technique used is simple random sampling.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS:

1) Why woman likes to work?

Women work for



Fig.1.1 shows woman work for

Explanation: The objective behind the question was to know the real reason behind woman’s interest on being working.

Interpretation: It was found that 24% women said they like to work for their respective families, 14% women said they are working because of their independence and rest of 62% women prefer to work because of both reasons. So it is inferred that there are some women who only work to cater their family needs, some for their independence & majority for both. Thus, they like to work in order to achieve their own self-actualization need as well as financial stability for the family.

2)Do you feel, you are overloaded with work & family Roles.

Overload



Fig. 1.2 shows overload felt by women

Explanation: The objective behind the question was to know the status of woman over a perception of being overloaded.

Interpretation: It was found that 97% women said they are always occupied with work. Whether, it is office work or family responsibility. And feel stress & anxiety to finish the pendency’s. There were only 3% of women who said they are comfortably handling their responsibilities & are happy with their roles.

3)How much does your spouse help with the housework?

Household help by spouse



Fig. 1.3 shows household help provided by spouse of woman

Explanation: The objective behind the question was to understand the spouse help given to his female spouse in her household work, that primary considered as her work.

Interpretation: It was found that majority of women .i.e. 79% said very little help is given by their spouses. 13% said they are helped by their spouses to little extent. But there exist, 8% of women who said much needed help is provided by their spouses & were satisfied by it.

4)How much emotional help does your spouse gives you in regard to your work?

Emotional Help by Spouse



Fig.1.4 shows emotional provided by spouse of woman

Explanation: The objective behind the question was to understand the extent of emotional help given by spouse to his female spouse.

Interpretation: It was found that 26% of women said very much they are supported by their spouses, 46% said they are helped by her spouses as much they needed. 19% said little help is provided by their spouses & according to 9% of women very little emotional support or help is provided. The majority of women were happy by the emotional support provided by their spouse. No women reported absence of emotional help.

5)Does your spouse care for your children?

Care for Children

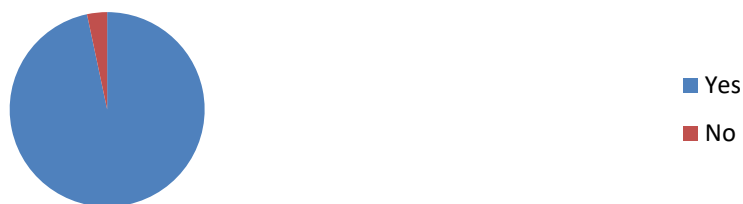


Fig.1.5 shows care for children provided by woman's spouse

Explanation: The objective behind the question was to understand the help provided by caring of children.

Interpretation: It was found that majority 93% of women said their spouses do care for their children. Rest 7% had viewpoint that their children hardly get any care from their spouses. Thus, it is evident that majority of men understand their family responsibilities when it comes to children. Only a few still considers child caring is solely a responsibility of women.

6)How do you describe your spouse’s attitude towards your work?

Attitude towards work



Fig.1.6 shows woman’s spouse attitude towards her work

Explanation: The objective behind the question was to understand the attitude of Male spouse towards the female spouse’s work of Dual Career Family.

Interpretation: It was found that 84% of women said their spouses showed positive attitude towards their work, 13% of women said their spouses are having neutral attitude towards their work & only 3% of women said their spouses carries negative attitudes regarding their work. So, it is clear that men even want their partners to be independent & self-sufficient. Only a few men carry orthodoxy in their views regarding women work.

Further, questions were asked to know a kind of help provided by male spouse to their female spouse’s of dual career family.

If they have children,

a) Who take care of them, during their sickness?

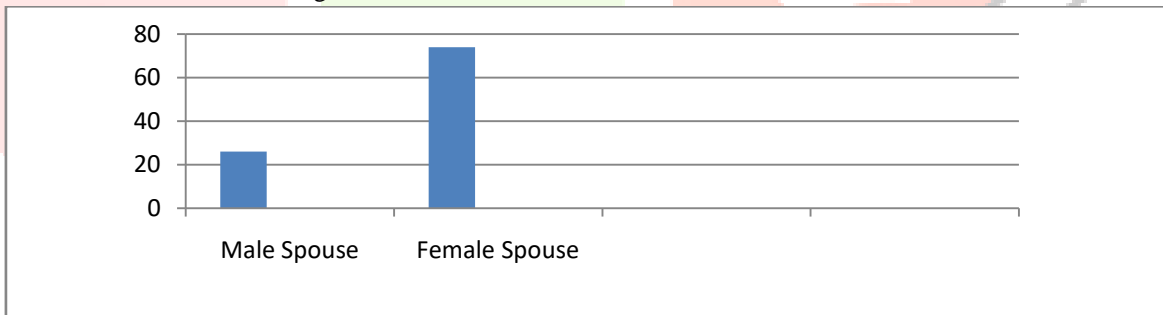


Fig.1.7 children care, during their sickness

Interpretation: It was found that male spouses were concerned about their children but when they are sick more concern is shown by female spouses. Responses revealed that 74% of woman take care of children during their sickness & prefer to take leave due to them. Whereas, there exists 26% of male spouses too, who prefer to make adjustments during their children sickness.

b). Who picks & drop from School or Coaching Classes

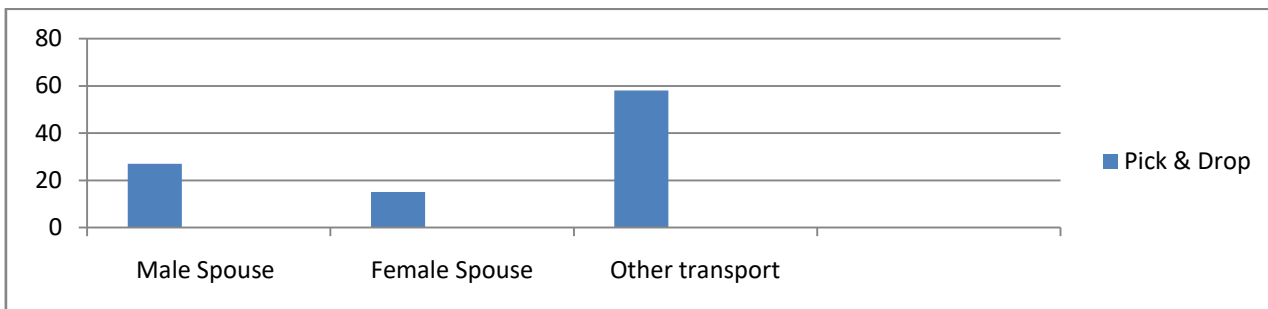


Fig.1.8 shows who pick & drop dual career couple’s children

Interpretation: It was found that majority 58% Dual Career Couples had hired transport facility for their children that picks & drop their children from school & coaching classes. Despite of private transport, there are 27% of male spouses took this responsibility whereas female spouse contribution is 15%, somewhat less from husbands.

c) Who assists children with homework?

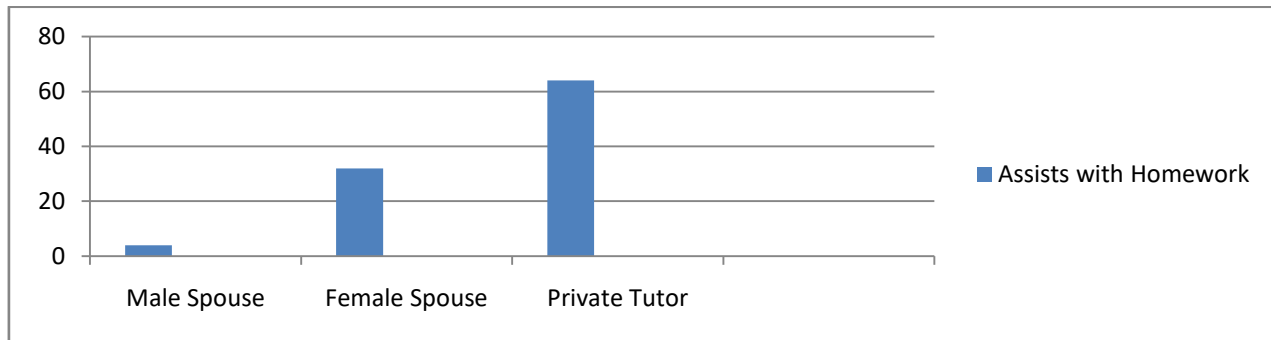


Fig.1.9 shows who assists dual career couple’s children with their homework

Interpretation: It was found that in Dual Career Families, mostly assistance to children is provide by private tutor i.e. 64%. Whereas if we talk about parents, only 4% of male spouses took interest in their children homework & 32% woman took responsibility of assisting with homework of their children.

d) Who takes children out for outings?

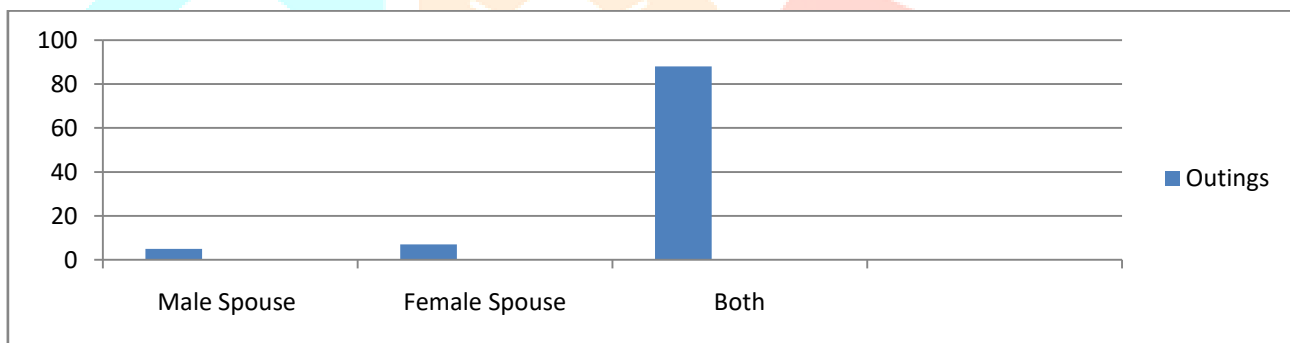


Fig.1.10 shows who takes dual career couple’s children out for outings

Interpretation: It was found that in Dual Career Families, both together prefer to take their children out for outings. Responses showed 88% of families go out together. However, responses showed that 5% male spouses & 7% female spouses go out with their children for casual outings.

e) Who attends parent-teacher meeting for children?

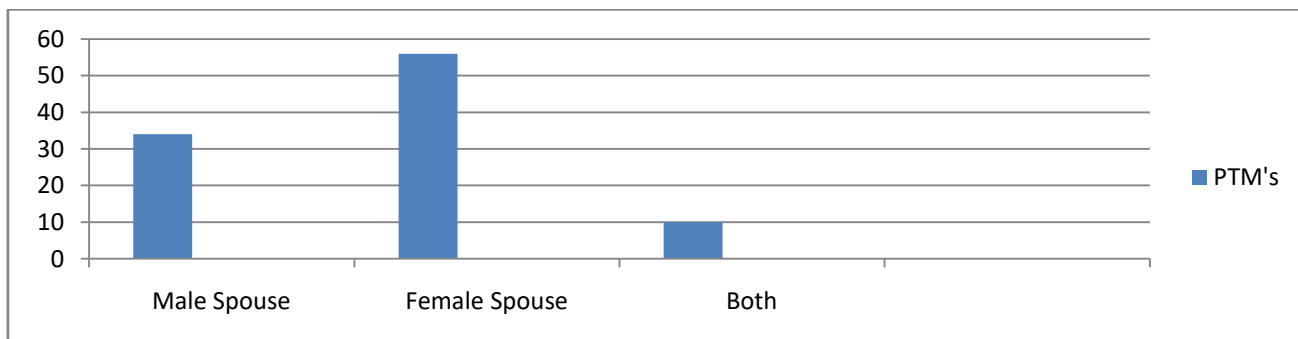


Fig.1.11 shows who attends parent-teacher meeting for dual career couple’s children

Interpretation: It was found that in Dual Career Families, in case of Parent-Teacher Meetings both the spouses made adjustments to attend meeting for their children, they coordinate with each other. According to responses, 34% of male spouses go to attend meeting & 56% of females. Also responses showed, there are 10% of couples who prefer to attend meetings together in order to encourage their children.

FINDINGS:

Both man & woman get into companionship of marriage that can provide them a dependable partner, love and friend. Woman is relishing the freedom to work that is given by her companion that makes her independent & self-reliant. However, a woman from dual career family aspires for both career and family often face difficulty in meeting the demands of work and family that leaves her a feeling of being role-overloaded. This feeling can be compensated by the spouse support. There exists a negative correlation between the role-overload perception & spouse support.

It was found majority of women (62%) are working for both family & their independence. While working, women would be able to achieve self-sufficiency as well as financial stability for the family. But also, it was found that 97% women said they are always occupied with work.

It was found that majority of women .i.e. 79% said very little help in household work is given by their spouses. But, when we talk about emotional support, 26% of women said very much they are supported by their spouses, 46% said they are helped by their spouses as much they needed. The majority of women were happy by the emotional support provided by their spouse. No women reported absence of emotional help.

It was found that majority 93% of women said their spouses do care for their children. Thus, it is evident that majority of men understand their family responsibilities when it comes to children. Only a few still consider child caring is solely a responsibility of women.

It was found that 84% of women said their spouses showed positive attitude towards their work. So, it is clear that men even want their partners to be independent & self-sufficient. Only a few men carry orthodoxy in their views regarding women work.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Family is a social unit that influences each and every-one which is a part of family. As a way, man accepted the concept of dual earning, he should also consider the change in traditional sex roles, that is very much needed according to changing time. He must support his spouse physically & emotionally. Male spouses should contribute in household, & child nurturing activities as per their schedules. They should freely communicate with each-other & should discuss their problems with each other. They should plan the various tasks of home & children together in advance. They should respect & appreciate each other. This would lessen the role of woman by which she found herself overloaded. This would help the woman for raising her morale & would be able to perform well both at professional & personal front.

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