SOME THEMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

The occupation and family are interconnected due to demographic changes in the work force. This results in the changing notion of work and career. This chapter provides a look at the various works on different themes in relation to occupation and family.

According to Le Play, one of the fundamental functions of the family is obtaining means of subsistence for its members; consequently family organization is determined by the methods of obtaining the means of subsistence - work. Work is determined by the environment in which the families live. Thus Le Play arrived at his famous formula of place, work and people (family). In this way the social unit (family) is connected with geographical environment and work. Beginning with the family his system of analyses has embraced the geographical location of the family and of a corresponding society, the work or economic organization of the family and of a corresponding society; and the whole social and political institutions of a given society.

Frederic Le Play was one of the earliest social scientists to delineate family as elementary and basic social unit. He chose family as a social unit for a variety of reasons which are as follows:

(i) It exists in all societies in various forms and at all times due to the helplessness of the new-born babies.
(ii) It is the first social environment which surrounds, trains and educates these new-born babies. It shapes them to be members of a society.
(iii) It is an institution which procures means of subsistence for its members.
(iv) The family budget reflects the entire life, organization and functions of the family.

The study of influence of work on the family lives has not been limited to Le Play. In recent times, work has been seen as a central social process that links individual to industrial society and to each other. Work determines their daily activities, the rhythm of their days, the people they meet and the relationships that they form. In addition, work largely defines a person's class and status in the social structure. The concept of work now includes both paid and unpaid work. The concept of work has been reformulated so that the work people do can be viewed in context to their
whole lives, i.e., both the home and place of work is to be given equal importance.

The phenomenon applies to both sexes, and the responses to a particular cue would differ if normative standards are sex-specific. The sex composition of an occupation may be an important factor in eliciting apprehension (Cherry & Deaux 1978: Janda et al 1978). However, the critical issue was whether these "fears" inhibit achievement. Zuckerman and Wheeler (1975) report in their review that there is no consistent relationship between fear of success and either academic performance or career choice.

Recent studies show that almost all background factors have stronger effects on male aspirations than on female work plans. Sewell, Hauser & Wolf (1980; 564) report that men's aspirations are more influenced by paternal occupation, ability, high school grades, and significant others than are women's. These findings are similar to those from other samples (Hout & Morgan 1975: DeBord et al 1977: Marini & Greenberger 1978). The general findings regarding sex differences are remarkably consistent: The factors that influence occupational aspirations do so more strongly for males than for females.
SOME LIMITATIONS OF TWO-EARNER COUPLE RESEARCH

There are a number of conceptual and methodological issues and limitations in the two-earner family research, which will be discussed briefly at this stage. Much of the literature is biased towards middle-class couples. Stress from the home work interface arises out of the social context, particularly as a consequence of gender role attitudes, which are internalized, and are also reflected externally in organizational and state policies.

The volume of research on both dual-earner couples, and also occupational stress, is such that any review must, of necessity, be selective. The extensive literature on dual-earner family dynamics (e.g. Hoffman, 1986)\(^2\) and on job-specific sources of stress (Cooper & Smith, 1985).\(^3\) It must be recognized, however that all these factors would have to be considered to do justice to the complexities of individuals' experiences.

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Following a consideration of the limitations of dual-earner couple research, evidence concerning potential sources of stress from the home-work interface, as well as certain individual characteristics. Some possible manifestations of stress would then be individual's inability to cope with perceived environmental demands. Definitional confusion has arisen because of the use of the word 'stress' to denote a stimulus, or property of the environment, and a response, or state of the individual, which may be inferred from recurring signs and symptoms. The view of stress as an individual response to demands that are appraised as stressful, appears to be the most useful in considering the impact of work and family pressures on two-earner couples.

Reviews of research into occupational stress have identified a number of pressures in the work environment, including role, strain, overload, underutilization of skills, inequity, and lack of control. (Cooper & Marshall, 1976; French, Caplan & Harrison, 1982) In addition, certain personality and attitudinal variables, such


as hurried, pressured behaviour and work commitment, have consistently been shown to moderate the impact of potentially stressful situations (Caplan & Jones, 1975; Davidson & Cooper, 1983; Sekaran, 1983-1985). All these pressures and individual variables may be involved to some extent in work family management problems facing dual-earner couples, and may be manifested in symptoms of stress. Currently, however interest in work-family inter-relationships is producing a shift in emphasis and convergence of these two lines of research, reflected in concern about the impact of both occupational and family experiences, and their interface, on the well-being of employed spouses (Nieva, 1985; Sekaran 1983, 1985; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984).


__________ (1983) - "Factors Influencing the Quality of Life in Dual Career Families", Journal of Occupational Psychology, 56(2).

The term stress, although by no means new, has increasingly become an integral part of everyday vocabulary. As numerous authors have noted, however, there is much diversity in the definitions of stress used in research. (Glowinkowski & Cooper, 1985; Jick & Burke, 1982; Monat & Lazarus, 1985). The earliest models of stress were physiological; recent models of stress have emphasized the impact of psychological variables, and especially the interaction between the person and the environment, in the perception of and reaction to stress (French, Caplan & Harrison, 1982, Lazarus, 1966). Thus, it is not the situation that is inherently stressful, but it may be perceived as such by the individual. Characteristics of both individuals and situations are therefore implicated, with signs of stress indicating a relative neglect of factors beyond the work environment, and there is a particular recognition recently of the interdependence of work and family in relation to well-being (Burke and Bradshaw, 1981; Glowinkowski & Cooper, 1985; Kasi, 1978). It has been argued

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that the homework interface is especially significant for employed parents (Lewis & Cooper, 1983).10

Parallel research initiatives on work and family have been stimulated by demographic and social trends. The increasing rate of employment of married women with children, a group who have traditionally fulfilled the role of full-time homemaker, has produced a growing research interest in two-earner families. The early research was designed primarily to chart social changes in the evolution of the family (Fogarty, Rapoport, & Rapoport, 1971;11 Rapoport & Rapport, 1969)12 and this perspective is reflected in the ever expanding literature on dual-earner couples and marital satisfaction (Burke & Weir, 1976; Chassin, Zeiss, Cooper and Reaven, 1985 House, 1986, Yogev & Brett, 1985b). Thus, just as early occupational stress research within organizational psychology tended to neglect the impact of extra organizational influences, family psychologists and sociologists studying dual-earner have

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been concerned with family dynamics to a great extent than occupational experiences (Gutek, Nakamura & Nieva, 1980).

Heightened concern for the quality of working life, together with mounting evidence of a relationship between stress and illness (Holmes & Masuda, 1974; Kasi, 1978) had generated a cumulative literature on sources and manifestation of occupational stress (Cooper & Smith, 1985; French, Caplan, and Harrison, 1982). Among the negative and positive influences the transfer of personal satisfaction from work to family life was most often mentioned, and that women more often experienced positive influences than men. In negative or conflicting relations between paid work and family, for the women the family was the source of conflict whereas for the men it was the job. In the women's experience of conflicts there are important differences between countries.

When discussing the uneven share of domestic work and possible mechanisms for furthering a more egalitarian share of responsibilities within the family, a general shortening of working hours has been one of the main requests.

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Rosemarie Naveherz\textsuperscript{14} tested the time variable hypothesis derived from the argument, namely, that the inner familial division of labour was dependent on the married partner's employment and the length of their working hours. She came forward with the striking result that the hypothesis cannot be maintained at the general level because it does not apply to both sexes to the same extent.

Eline Haavio-Mannila\textsuperscript{15} described the type, extent and consequences of gender segregation in paid and unpaid work, seeking the division of labour between men and women as a social and cultural phenomenon which is possible to change. Functional segregation was common all over Europe. The segregated women's work was connected with low education, employment status and wages. It means more often part-time or shift work and strict control. In all countries segregated women's work was related to human reproduction and service. In unpaid work there also appeared a clear gender division of labour, but there is more variation between the nordic countries compared. The North-South difference was more remarkable than the East-West divide in this respect.


\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
In Nevenka Cernigoj Sadar’s investigation of the psycho-social relations between paid work and family life, the focus was on the subjective experiences and feelings of men and women. Her thesis was that from the subjective point of view the two life spheres are strongly interrelated, no matter to what extent family life and paid work are formally segregated. Perhaps her most striking result from the empirical data was that it revealed the shortcomings of previous research strategies. Walker & Woods (1976) and Berk & Bek (1979) use these techniques to obtain a more comprehensive perspective of housework and more precise assessments of the contributions of each person. Actual time spent on a task was measured in minutes.

Turning to the substantive findings, studies of the division of labour in the family show unanimous agreement on two points; household tasks are sex-typed, and women do most of the housework (see e.g. Oakley 1974). The sex typing of household labour was also evident in the tasks assigned to sons and daughters (White & Brinkerhoff, 1981). These observations were the starting point, and most studies of division of labour seek to determine the source of variation

16. Ibid.

in the distribution of family roles. Under what circumstances do more (or less) egalitarian patterns emerge?

The research on division of labour in the family was further complicated by methodological problems: small and highly restricted samples, crude measurement and coding of task specialization, and imprecise inventories of the roles and behaviours used to define family labour. Walker & Woods (1976) reported that findings differ depending on the specific measures of household labour examined and how tasks are grouped. Regularly performed tasks (e.g. meal preparation and clean up) generally have stronger correlations with predictor variables than infrequently performed tasks. The grouping of specific tasks into broader categories can also result in lower correlations (1976: 247-48). The discrepancy between behavioural and attitudinal measures is also problematic (Araji 1977). Other studies note divergent reports from husbands and wives (Duncan & Duncan, 1978; Slocum & Nye, 1976). These discrepancies also vary by task (Berk & Shih 1980). They probably occur because neither the husband nor the wife (nor the researcher) knows the total amount of work actually performed.

Sociologists have generally down played the role of biology. Rossi (1977) argues that we must learn more about human biology (specifically endocrinology) and incorporate biological realities in our theories of sex roles. Confronting biological factors, she argues, does not entail accepting the status quo as a biological given; rather, the fusion of biological and sociological knowledge may ultimately result in more successful feminist strategies. Rossi suggests that a better understanding of the biosocial basis of parenting might lead to a greater success in creating shared parental roles. One possible outcome might be compensatory training for males. Neglect of the biological dimension could lead to unprecedented stress for young mothers (Rossi 1977: 21). Rossi’s paper is a call for new research rather than the presentation of a fully articulated theory. It has proven highly controversial.

The Functionalist View of Task Specialization:

The functionalist position is expressed in the widely cited work of Parsons and Bales (1955). Instrumental and expressive activities are viewed as the specialised responsibility of males and females, respectively. This allocation, they claim, arises out of the biological acts of...
child-bearing and nursing. Males, exempted from these tasks, turn to instrumental roles (Parsons and Bales, 1955:23). This premise has been challenged by studies demonstrating substantial variation in the division of labour across societies (Aronoff & Crano, 1975). Active paternal participation in expressive activities is common, and the instrumental contributions of mothers are not dependent upon the expressive activities of either parent (Crano & Aronoff, 1978). Other critiques suggest that the functionalist theory of family roles rests too heavily on observations from a single period in the history of industrial societies (Bernard, 1974; Vanek, 1980; Block, 1978). Although the universality of strict instrumental expressive task specialization in the family is questionable, some functions are constrained by biological sex differences. The implications of these facts are incomplete in their scope and extent.

The Hindu family in its urban setting (1961) was the first book-length empirical study of effect of technological and industrial change on the Hindu family. The effects have been studied on the traditional middle and upper class families who are facing the full impact of the rapidly changing conditions due to growing industrialization. The study which was conducted at Bangalore, consisted of 157 upper and middle class men and women belonging to different castes, linguistic groups, income levels and occupational
groups living in different types of families. This sample consisted of people from both rural and urban backgrounds.

**FAMILY ROLES AND GENDER: The Division of Household Labour:**

Studies of the division of labour in the family fall into two categories: those concerned with the origin and necessity of task specialization and those concerned with cross-sectional variations in family role allocation. Functionalist theory dominates the former while the latter consists mainly of the findings of survey research of the town. In certain occupational groups urban life increases the life of the joint family. There is a variation in the family pattern among various castes. Data from Navsari town in Gujarat showed that agricultural castes and artisan castes, whether they live in a town or a village, tend to stay predominantly in a joint family. Even though people mentioned the stress and strains of joint family, yet they realised the advantages of joint family such as economic help, support in crises, restraining influence on husband-wife tension and so on.

In another chapter Kapadia discusses the recent and contemporary trends affecting the joint family. Various legislative acts introduced since British days and various labour laws have reduced the dependence of individuals on the joint family. Kapadia insists that in spite of changes
the joint family as an institution has undergone little integration. Even though the form of the family has changed, yet its functions have not undergone profound changes. During recent years developments have taken place which has reduced the reliance on the joint family; yet it still stands as an organization for social security, for the agencies and devices which have emerged recently to take up this primary function of the family, are still limiting on the careers of other family members. Parenthood is an obvious example, involving the two parents, other children, kin and so on.

A Review of Family Studies:

The family is the smallest unit of man and woman living together which has an influence on society. To anthropologists it is a natural growth which has been moulded and protected by a series of taboos and conventions, which succeeding generations of society have deemed of value, until other ideas appear to justify new experiments and a gradual abandonment of older customs. The evolution of the family has thus been a slow but continuing process of selection, test and occasional rejection in search of a more suitable structure of unity in a prevailing social culture.

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If any family pattern ceases to adapt and change according to circumstances it must weaken and ultimately die. But the family has never been rejected; only its forms have been changing.

In terms of theoretical approaches used in the study of dual-earner families in India, it is accurate to say that most studies are descriptive in nature; and the exceptions are the works of Chakrabortty (1978), and U. Sharma (1980). Chakrabortty successfully attempts to apply certain elements such as interaction theory to account for inter and intra-role conflicts among employed wives, while Sharma treats her Shimla subjects within a feminist perspective. Parenthetically, however, it should be noted that, in general, systematic and theoretically sound analysis of the socio-economic status of contemporary Indian women, including married working women, can be found mainly in feminist scholarship (e.g. Meiss, 1980; Karlekar, 1982; K. Sharma, et al., 1984; Jain and Bannerji, 1985; Kelkar, 1985a, 1985b, Desa and Krishnaraj, 1987).

In brief, urban middle-class dual-earner families are a tiny minority in contemporary Indian society and do not significantly differ either in structure or function from

other urban families as observed by Ross (1961), Gore (1969), Ramu (1977) and Srivastava (1986). More important they operate in a social and cultural atmosphere that does not overtly support them. The result is that dual-earner couples are forced to conform in most areas of their lives to customary family and marital roles. This, we argue, is because of the continuing dualistic approach of Indian society towards their economic role.

III. The Correlates of Occupational Aspirations

Fear of success Horner (1972) postulated that women anticipate social rejection for succeeding in sex-typical careers. This phenomenon is interpreted as a motive to avoid success and a factor contributing to sex-typed aspirations. Subsequent research has not consistently confirmed sex differences in fear of success (Zuckerman & Wheeler 1973; Levine & Crumrine 1975; Tresemer 1976) but the concept cannot be unequivocally rejected. Measurement and sampling differences, variation in same-sex and cross-sex design, and change in the definition of sex-atypical achievement over time make comparisons inconclusive. Some studies support Horner’s (1972: 159) contention that the fear of success is


situation, genders tend to voice preferences for careers traditionally associated with their own sex (Looft 1971; Kriedberg et al. 1978). These preferences are developed early and are evident even among preschoolers (Papalia & Tennent, 1975).

Less is known about the development of career choices as children mature. Studies of children at different ages are not easily compared; samples differ in content, place, and time. However, evidence suggests that as girls approach adulthood and labour-market entry, they revise their career goals toward more traditional targets (Rosen & Aneshensel 1978). The pressure to revise plans is also suggested by studies that compare occupational aspirations with exceptions. The degree to which girls (but not boys) expect to reach their occupational aspirations was related to the sex composition of the occupation (Marini & Greenberger 1978:163).

Women lower their aspirations as they near labour-force entry. But there was also evidence suggesting rising levels of aspiration in more recent cohorts. In a study of two cohorts of Virginia high school seniors, Garrison (1979) found that female aspirations for high-status professional jobs rose 7% between 1970 and 1976, while male aspirations for those jobs declined by 5%. The shift, along with declining percentages of females aspiring to clerical and
sales job, results in greater sex similarity in aspirations. The reduction in sex-typing occurs among rural and urban students and among students of all ability levels. Leuptow (1981) also reported a decline in sex-typed occupational choices in his comparison of 1964 and 1975 cohorts of seniors in 17 Wisconsin High Schools.

In Chapter on the Family in an urban setting Kapadia (1966) incorporates results of a number of empirical inquiries - mainly household composition surveys, opinion and attitude surveys, and analysis of National Register data on households. K.T. Merchant inquiry among college students in 1930-32. Merchant analysed the family types and the student’s opinion with regard to them in a sample of 445 students. I.P. Desai’s study of 410 households in the town of Mahuwa in Saurashtra. Ramnick Chudasama’s opinion - survey of 113 teachers in secondary schools in Rajkot. B.V. Shah’s opinion - Survey of 200 first-year students of M.S. University of Baroda. Edwin D. Driver’s survey in Nagpur of 2,314 families in the sample 822 lived in the city, 309 in towns, and 1,123 in villages. Sunil Sengupta’s analysis of family in rural Bengal. A.S. Patel’s study of the composition of families of 580 students in Kaira district. B.G. Desai’s study of 540 students in Baroda district. Vimal P. Shah’s study of 300 post-graduate students of Ahmedabad to study their attitudes towards marriage and family. Kapadia has also used data from his own surveys. These data
show that joint family is not only a characteristic of villages but also of towns and cities.

There was also evidence to show that individual family persisted side by side with the patriarchal family. Both the aspirations of the son and daughter were satisfied by creation of individual property which was distinct from the family property. Thus women's property included what (was given) before the (nuptial) fire, what (was given) on the bridal procession, what was given as token of love, what was received from her brother, mother or father, a gift subsequent and what was given (on her) marriage by her affectionate husband. When a woman died her property was equally divided among all her children.

"The whole history of the Hindu family unfolds one significant fact viz. that even when the trends towards individualism were recognized and attempts were being to harmonize them with the interests of the joint family, the family constitution was unequivocally declared to be, and maintained as, joint and agnatic". (Ibid pg.245).

Like all exploratory studies, the studies on urban Indian dual-earner families suffer from many methodological and theoretical shortcomings. In methodological terms, samples have been purposive and have included only wives. Thus, the sociology of dual-earner families in India is the
'sociology of wives', as Safilios-Rothschild (1969) puts it. Consequently, the husbands's role portrayed in these analyses was invariably dependent upon the wife's perception and evaluation. The methods of analysis are uneven some used refined statistical methods (e.g. Devi, 1987), while other tended to use data to illustrate the author's theoretical position (Meiss, 1980). Although the independent variable in this analysis was the wife's earner role, few studies established the relationship between wife's employment and other variables such as decision-making, sharing of the household work and the degree of personal freedom of learning wives (the exception being (Devi, 1987). In no study attempt has been made to compare single and dual-earner couples (exception being Ramu, 1989).


1987; Ramanamma and Bambawale, 1987; and Dak, 1988) have attempted to investigate the reasons why married women enter the labour force, the degree of kin support, the division of domestic labour, the balance of power and, of course, the impact of their work on children. The major conclusions of these studies were similar to those drawn by studies of dual-earner families in Europe and the United States in the 1970s. In short, women in Indian dual-earner families seek employment mainly for economic reasons; they experience role conflict, role over-load and marital stress, mainly because husbands do not alter their domestic roles. A recurrent theme in these studies is the dilemma that wives/mothers experience by virtue of their employment. For example, Chakrabortty’s (1978) study highlights the ambivalent position of women by placing it in the context of societies that are moving towards modernity or Western social patterns.

Chakrabortty argued that while many middle-class women with a university education prefer to marry and perform their usual roles as wives and mothers, they also prefer to seek employment opportunities so that educational training can be used to enhance the family’s living standards. A consequence of such competing goals is that

many married women at work cannot balance the two roles. Ultimately, as Chakrabortty concludes, most married women employees give low priority to their careers and attach primacy to their domestic roles. By contrast, the experience of poor married women employees suggest that they have to strive hard to escape unemployment by engaging in low status occupations (Karlekar, 1982:128). For example, the women sweepers of Delhi seldom reported role conflict or ambivalence. This is because they were more concerned about earning adequate income so that their families could survive in a hostile economic environment. It is from this point of view that a brief review of the major studies of Indian dual-earner families is provided here.

In India the research on dual-earner families has been sparse and uneven mainly because of scholarly preoccupation with the largest issue of the status of women. A recent bibliography, Women at Work in India (Anant, et al. 1986) lists only a handful of studies on this topic. The studies that dealt with married women included discussions of married women’s work (de Souza, 1975; Mehta, 1975; Nanda, 1976; Phadnis and Malani, 1978; Blumberg and Dwaraki, 1980; Meiss, 1980; Karlekar, 1982; K. Sharma, et al. 1984; Desai


Kapur's (1970)\textsuperscript{30} study was one of the first attempt to focus exclusively on the marital and family lives of employed women. Her research examined the influence of the wife's employment on the couple's marital adjustment. In essence, Kapur argued that a married woman's work in itself does not affect her marital adjustment negatively. Rather, it was the nature of marital adjustment prior to employment that was the cause of continuing disharmony after employment, while in some cases employment aggravated the situation. A full understanding of dual-earner dynamics requires the examination of the experiences of both wives and husbands, and the mutual impact of adapting to developing roles. Implicit assumptions about appropriate gender roles are also reflected in research questions addressed. Thus, the impact of wife's employment on husband's mental health has been investigated (Fendrich, 1984, Rosenfield, 1980), while the impact of husbands' unemployment on families was of greater concern (Fagin & Little, 1984).

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Finally, it should be noted that recent research on dual-earner couples has been predominantly American. Cross-cultural research would be valuable in highlighting the impact of different social contexts. A comparison of professional couples in the East and West suggests that many of the issues are similar in spite of differences in prevailing ideologies (Lapidus, Reuschemeyr, 1981). In the United Kingdom, recognition of converging roles of men and women has been reflected in research interest in employed mothers (Moss & Fonda, 1985; Sharpe, 1984) and in the fatherhood role (Beail, 1985; Beail & McGuire, 1982), but research into dual-earner couples was fairly sparse (Lewis, 1986; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969, 1971).

The original definition of two-earner couples referred to the combining of two jobs with the raising of children (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969). Nevertheless, not all research specifies whether or not there are children in the family (Huser & Grant, 1978; Pendleton, Paloma & Garland, 1982). Other studies group together parents of children up to the age of 18 (Bryson & Johnson, 1978; Holohan & Bilbert, 1979; Sekaran, 1983, 1985, 1986). The impact of the specific pressures affecting parents of one or more children of different ages is thus frequently obscured.
Much of research on dual-earner was 'women-centered'. Often different techniques of assessment are used with female and male subjects (Berk, 1985) or extraneous variables controlled more strictly for wives than husbands (Weingarten, 1978). Certain questions, especially those relating to domestic work, are frequently asked only in relation to wives (Pleck, 1985; Robinson 1977). The perception of problems of balancing home and work as women's issues perpetuates the belief that domestic and family work are primarily their responsibilities. Women's role cannot and do not allow variations in employment conditions and number and age of children are frequently obscured. The original interest in two earner families was centered on the "emergent" life-style of the middle-class, professional, dual-earner couple (Fogarty, Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971; Huser & Grant, 1978; Pnedleton, Paloma and Garland, 1982; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969) and was thus of limited generalizability. The dynamics of couples with jobs, rather than careers, have received some attention (Keith & Schafer, 1980; Lein, 1979) and several studies analysed large-scale survey data based on more representative samples (Pleck,
Nevertheless, more needs to be known of the experiences of two-earner blue-collar workers.

Most studies stated that both members of dual-earner couples are in full-time employment. When number of hours constituting full-time employment are specified, however, these vary from a minimum of 20 hours a week (Pleck & Staines, 1985) to 35 hours (Chassin, Zeiss, Cooper & Reaven, 1985; House, 1986). Other research includes couples in which one partner, usually the wife, may be employed part-time (Pleck & Staines, 1985). There was no correlation between the length of working time for men and the degree of their participation in family activities. The chances of higher participation of men increase with full-time working women, but not with part-time working women.

Some of the major issues concerning the present study have been discussed but scope for wider discussions exist and only a few cases have been taken up for detailed analysis to give a perspective to the present study.
