Chapter V

“Though Miles Apart, Be Closer at Heart”

Summary and Conclusion
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Over the decades there has been significant changes in the developing countries of the world due to population explosion, urbanization, spread of literacy, industrial development and exposure to the media of communication. Due to these changes males have to migrate to urban areas for maintaining the standard of living. Male migration motivates the formation of dual established families in which life partners stay apart either for short or extended periods. The process of migration with its positive and negative consequences continues to be a social reality. Male migration made its impact on female members to undertake the roles and responsibilities of male counterparts.

In the past such families tended to gravitate to the care and shelter of women’s natal home and in some cases to that of her in-laws. However, with the recent trend in favour of nuclear families, the homemakers are more likely to set up a separate, independent household along with their children. Hence dual established family management is a great challenge for the female counterparts of both full time and gainfully employed groups to empower and manage all the situations resourcefully to maintain standard of living and quality of life with harmony, peace and joy in the family.

Studies relating to the role of women in economic development, gender disparity, discrimination and other aspects have been undertaken so far but specifically resource management behaviour of female headed families have not been done adequately. Hence the research study has been carried out on “Contextual Perspective and Resource Management Behaviour of Homemakers in Dual Established Families of Andhra Pradesh”, with the following objectives:

- Study the socio-economic profile of the selected dual established families and find out the circumstances that led the families towards dual establishment.
• Understand the values possessed, goals defined and decision making pattern adopted by the homemakers on family life management.

• Focus on resource management behaviour of employed and full time homemakers with regard to time, money, energy and community facilities

• Examine the situations causing stress, consequences and measures adopted to overcome stress by the homemakers of dual established families.

• Know the feelings and behavioural conditions of children in dual established families and elicit opinion of spouses and children about dual establishment.

• Identify the prospects and problems experienced by spouses on dual establishment.

• Assess the level of satisfaction derived by the employed and full time homemakers on dual establishment.

• Analyse the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) experienced by the homemakers of dual established families on family life management

• Assess the relationship / difference of managerial aspects against socio-economic variables between employed and full time homemakers of dual established families

• Determine the extent of discrimination of the selected managerial aspects between employed and full time categories through discriminant function analysis.

• Explore the indepth information from the selected dual established families and gather impressions from both the spouses on family life management.

• Develop strategies by the investigator for the spouses of dual established families to augment resource use and strengthen relationship towards better family living.
The design of the research study on “Contextual Perspective and Resource Management Behaviour of Homemakers in Dual Established Families of Andhra Pradesh”, comprised of:

- General profile of Andhra Pradesh and conducting survey in 300 dual established families of male migrant female headed households and identifying 200 samples from the employed homemakers category and 100 samples from full time homemakers category through purposive sampling technique, distributing 25 samples each from 12 districts, selecting 125 samples covering five districts from coastal Andhra region, 50 samples covering two districts from Rayalaseema region and 125 samples from five districts of Telagana region in the state of Andhra Pradesh to find out their living pattern of dual established families through interview method.

- Assessing the satisfactory level of employed and full time homemakers of dual established families by contacting all the 300 samples using three point Likert Scale – Fully satisfied, Partially satisfied and Not satisfied towards family life management.

- Analysing the Strengths gained, Weaknesses experienced, Opportunities utilized and Threats faced by 200 employed homemakers and 100 full time homemakers through SWOT analysis on their managerial strategies in dual establishment.

- Conducting case studies in ten families randomly selected from 300 surveyed samples to gather indepth information by interviewing both spouses to find out their perceptions and feelings on their living pattern in dual establishment.

- Developing guidelines for the spouses of dual established families by the investigator to optimize resource use pattern and strengthen relationship towards family living.
The findings of the research study are summarized beneath:

A. Socio-economic Profile of Dual Established Families

Over three fourth of the dual established families were of nuclear family type due to the disintegration of joint family system. A majority of 55.3 per cent of families belonged to medium family category followed by small and large family size (41 and 3.7 per cent) respectively. A vast majority of 83.3 per cent families were in the expanding stage of family life cycle. Over half of the employed homemakers inhabited in their own houses. A high majority of 88.7 per cent of the surveyed families were Hindus. With regard to family income, nearly one third of the families of employed category earned a higher income of above Rs.40,000/- per month due to dual career spouses, whereas 39 per cent families of fulltime category earned a monthly income of less than Rs. 20,000/- due to single earning of male spouse alone.

With regard to general profile of homemakers, about 54 per cent of dual established homemakers were above 35 years of age having more than three years of experience indicating the existing trend in dual establishment due to male migration seeking job elsewhere. A majority of 77 per cent of both employed and full time homemakers stayed either singly or with children without seeking support from either parents or in-laws in managing the home. On an average 82.7 per cent homemakers were graduates and the educational status was significantly related at one per cent level between the two categories of homemakers. A majority of 57.5 per cent employed homemakers opted for teaching profession followed by one third of them were in clerical cadre. Nearly one third of the employed homemakers earned a monthly income of above Rs. 15,000/- and Rs. 5,000/- to Rs. 10,000/- by 29.5 per cent of them.
Regarding general account of male spouses, a majority of 78.6 per cent of them were of above 36 years of age and habituated to dual established pattern. About two third of the male spouses occupied private houses whereas 11.7 per cent of them stayed with friends and the rest of them housed in office quarters. About 40 per cent of the spouses of dual established families were either post graduates or professional degree holders. A majority of 46 per cent of them were employed in clerical cadre followed by officers (21.3 per cent), professionals and business (14 and 12.7 per cent) respectively. On an average the male spouses of both categories earned an income of above Rs.40,000/- per month by 27 per cent followed by Rs.30,000/- to Rs.40,000/- by 23.7 per cent.

Nearly half of the male spouses resided in other districts far from the wife's residential district followed by one fourth of them within the district of wife's residence. A minority of 11.3 per cent of them were at abroad to fetch higher income for the family. Only 38 per cent of male counterparts were able to make weekly visits to spend with the family.

B. Situational Analysis of Dual Establishment

A majority of 85 per cent of the homemakers in dual established families opined that education of children was the main cause towards dual establishment followed by transferable job by male spouse (80 per cent), economic necessity (78 per cent) and to enhance the standard of living (75 per cent), whereas traditional occupation and sentiment attached to home town were expressed by a minority of each eight per cent of them.

Irrespective of income level, all the dual established homemakers utilized postal / courier and phone services as a means of communication to the male spouses who were away from home. As income increased the communication between spouses was carried
out daily or as and when possible on comparison with weekly interval. It was indicated through statistical analysis that there was a significant relationship between frequency of communication and family income at five per cent level with employed homemakers and at one per cent level with fulltime homemakers.

C. Motivating Factors in Management

The values prioritized by the homemakers of dual established families were love and health (90.3 per cent each), honesty (89.3 per cent), self-confidence (88.3 per cent), co-operation (88 per cent), knowledge (87.3 per cent) and economy (87 per cent).

The mean value scores gained by the fulltime homemakers were found to be higher on comparison with the employed homemakers except in the income level of above Rs. 40,000/- per month. There was a significant difference observed at one per cent level on values upheld by the full time homemakers with socio-economic variables such as families earning income of Rs. 20,000/- per month, whereas it was five per cent in the case of nuclear family type, expanding stage of family life cycle, age level of homemakers above 35 years and families earning Rs. 20,000/- to Rs. 40,000/- per month. The overall difference in value scores was found to be statistically significant at one per cent level between employed and full time homemakers.

A majority of 84 per cent of homemakers stated that good education for children was their prime goal followed by living together with husband and children (78.7 per cent) and developing happy family relationship (71.3 per cent).

The mean scores of goals set by the employed homemakers was found to be higher in comparison with fulltime homemakers and the statistical analysis showed significant difference at one per cent level. With regard to socio-economic factors, the difference was significant at
one per cent level in the expanding stage of family like cycle whereas it was five per cent in the nuclear family type, above 35 years of age of homemakers and educational level of homemakers who had only high school/ intermediate.

D. Decision Making Pattern

A majority of 83 and 78 per cent of employed and full time homemakers respectively took decisions on household chores in consultation with spouses, whereas 76 per cent of employed homemakers and 63 per cent of full time homemakers took decisions individually on family management. Only a negligible 6.3 per cent of the homemakers of dual established families availed guidance from professional experts.

A majority of 95.3 per cent homemakers of both groups had full liberty in decision-making on food preparation, followed by visiting parents (89 per cent), purchase of groceries, buying clothes and festival celebrations (87.7 per cent each), house maintenance (87 per cent) and decorating the house (85.7 per cent).

A majority of 27, 35 and 48 per cent of homemakers dealt independently on borrowing loans, marriage of children and family investments respectively. It was inferred from the study that 72.4 per cent of employed homemakers took more liberty in decision-making than fulltime homemakers (66.6 per cent) on household management.

The socio-economic factors such as nuclear family type, contracting stage of family like cycle, the age level of homemakers above 35 years and the educational status of post graduate / professional qualification of employed homemakers were found to be the influencing factors on decision making pattern over fulltime homemakers and it was proved statistically significant at one per cent level, whereas five per cent
significant difference was noticed with regard to families earning Rs.20,000/- to Rs. 40,000/- per month.


The resource management behaviour of homemakers pertaining to time, money, energy and community facilities belonging to dual established families is narrated as below:

1. Time management

The employed homemakers spent more time on food preparation and other household activities on sundays than week days whereas not much variation was observed in the case of full time homemakers.

A significant variation at one per cent level was observed between full time and employed homemakers on time expenditure pattern during week days in the activities such as personal, religious, food preparation and serving, other household activities, recreation, transportation, marketing / shopping, rest and leisure, care of family members, walking / exercise, sleep and sundries.

The activities during sundays by full time homemakers in food preparation and serving, marketing / shopping, walking / exercise and sundries were found to be significant at one per cent level whereas five per cent significant difference was observed in transportation by the employed homemakers.

The full time homemakers spent more time on personal and other household activities than employed homemakers upon the arrival of male counterparts which showed significant difference at one per cent level whereas the employed homemakers spent more time on transportation showing one per cent significant level and also rest and leisure and care of family members indicating five per cent significant level.
2. Money management

The full time homemakers were involved much in financial management than employed homemakers in budgeting (83 and 66.5 per cent), account keeping (74 and 70 per cent), savings (71 and 60 per cent) and investment 57 and 48.5 per cent). There was a significant relationship observed on financial management by family members between full time and employed homemakers for budgeting, payment of bills on electricity, telephone and water charges at one per cent level and for account keeping, savings, payment of taxes and bank transactions at five per cent level.

The full time homemakers invested more on assets such as household equipment (71 per cent), land (50 per cent), investment (35 per cent) than employed homemakers by 62, 46.5 and 29.5 per cent respectively. The employed homemakers procured assets such as house (61 per cent), two wheelers (57.5 per cent) computers (38 per cent) and four wheelers (22.5 per cent) over full time homemakers by 53, 52, 33 and 15 per cent respectively. It was proved from the statistical analysis that five per cent significant difference was observed on procurement of assets by the full time homemakers earning less than Rs. 20,000/- per month.

The monthly expenditure on household management of employed homemakers was found to be higher of Rs.31,720/- over full time homemakers of Rs.23,500/- and it was proved statistically significant at one per cent level. The amount spent by the employed homemakers for various items such as food, clothing, housing and maintenance, education, health, recreation, sundries and savings was higher over full time homemakers with the statistical significance of one per cent level. It was praise worthy to note that the dual established families contributed 39 per cent of their income towards savings and investments for children's education and future welfare.
The employed homemakers spent more money on household expenditure than full time homemakers irrespective of various socio-economic factors as it was proved statistically significant at one per cent level.

There was a significant difference observed on the expenditure pattern with socio-economic factors such as joint family type, large family, size of above six members, expanding stage of family life cycle and the families earning less than Rs.20,000/- per month and Rs.20,000/- to Rs.40,000/- per month and proved statistically significant at one per cent level.

3. Energy management

Over 90 per cent of full time homemakers took responsibility for the care of children, food preparation and serving, but over 80 per cent of employed homemakers were fully responsible for the care of children, food preparation and serving and purchase of clothes, groceries and equipment. Certain household activities such as gas booking and payment of bills were assisted by children in one tenth and one fifth of the households of employed and full time homemakers respectively.

Food preparation was considered as a fatiguing task by 77.3 per cent of the homemakers of dual established families. The tiresome activities such as house cleaning, dish washing, and washing and ironing of clothes were carried out mostly by the domestic helpers engaged by three fourth of the families of both categories.

A majority of 88 per cent of employed and 74 per cent of fulltime homemakers in dual established families experienced fatigue due to single responsibility undertaken for the household management and showed a significant relationship at one per cent level.
The employed homemakers of nuclear family, small sized family and expanding stage of family life cycle underwent more fatigue than full time homemakers showing statistical significance at one per cent level. In order to reduce drudgery in household chores, the homemakers of dual established families engaged paid helpers (75 per cent) followed by using labour saving devices (47.6 per cent), seeking help from family members (45 per cent) and doing light and heavy tasks alternatively (44.3 per cent).

4. Community facilities

It was heartening to note that on an average 75 per cent of employed homemakers utilized the community facilities very effectively over fulltime homemakers (69 per cent). The significant relationship at one per cent level was observed between the two categories of families for the use of certain services such as bank services and train reservation whereas five per cent was observed for bus reservation, shopping, going for theatres and temples.

F. Stress Management

Nearly 60 per cent of employed homemakers felt stress due to health problems followed by dual responsibility (51 per cent), difficulty in looking after the family matters (44 per cent), transferable jobs (42 per cent) and lack of safety (40 per cent), whereas fulltime homemakers experienced stress due to education of children (48 per cent), health problems (46 per cent) and lack of safety (40 per cent). On an average 30 and 25 per cent of the employed and full time homemakers experienced stress in managing household chores single handedly.

The physiological symptoms such as tiredness (58.7 per cent), dizziness (52.7 per cent), headache (47.7 per cent), sleeplessness (46 per cent), muscle / body pain and a feeling of discomfort (37 per cent each) and the psychological symptoms such as loneliness (46.3
per cent), anxiety / worry (39.7 per cent), anger (36.7 per cent),
wandering thoughts (30.3 per cent) were mainly experienced by the
homemakers of dual established families.

The stress caused behavioural changes such as short temperedness
(43.3 per cent), feeling bored and confused (37.7 per cent), dislike
towards household work (34 per cent) and poor health status
(29.3 per cent) to the homemakers of both categories of dual
establishment.

In order to alleviate stressful situations, the homemakers adopted
measures such as watching television and listening to music by over
50 per cent followed by involving in prayer / pooja (47.3 per cent),
developing positive thinking (44.7 per cent) and conversation with
friends (40.3 per cent).

The employed homemakers experienced more stress on comparison
with full time homemakers against selected variables such as nuclear
family, small and medium sized families, beginning and expanding
stages of family life cycle and various income levels such as less than
Rs. 20,000/- and above Rs. 40,000/- per month and the statistical
analysis showed significant difference at one per cent level and five per
cent level was observed in the case of families earning Rs. 20,000/- to
Rs. 40,000/- per month.

It was evident from the study that on the whole more stress was
experienced by employed homemakers than full time homemakers
against socio-economic factors and the difference was statistically
proved at one per cent level.

G. Views of Children and Spouses on Dual Establishment

Homemakers remarked that fathers’ migration caused both positive
and negative impact on the behavioural aspect of children. The
children were adjustable (57.6 per cent), responsible (35.6 per cent) helpful (29.3 per cent) and co-operative (25.6 per cent) when father was away due to migration. Children exhibited negative impact such as unhappiness (44 per cent), missed father too much (33.3 per cent) freedom of self movement (12 per cent) and behavioural problems such as problematic, frustrated and rebellious (12 per cent).

Children could not avail regular counselling and guidance from father (53.6 per cent) followed by missing the company of father as play mate (51 per cent). In 72 per cent of dual established families, children expressed their joy and happiness over the arrival of father.

A majority of over three fourth of male counterparts of both categories opined that they could sacrifice the family togetherness by being away from family and adjust for a shorter period only in dual establishment for the sake of better prospects for the family.

Above 80 per cent of female counterparts suggested that spouses had to maintain good relationship and might opt for dual establishment under genuine reasons.

A majority of 88.3 per cent of children viewed that they would prefer to stay with parents under one roof to get good parental guidance.

H. Prospects and Problems of Dual Established Families

The prospects such as responsible and co-operative nature of children, and freedom of homemakers in dealing family matters were gained on dual establishment by over half of the homemakers. The prospects of enhanced economic status and sense of belongingness towards spouse were experienced especially by the employed homemakers. On the other hand full time homemakers gained prospects on healthy family relationship (49 per cent).
The prospects gained by the families of employed and fulltime homemakers showed no significant difference excepting in the joint family system and three to six years of experience in dual establishment by five per cent significance.

The problems faced by the homemakers of dual established families were – missing spouse during festivals and special occasions (63 per cent) followed by difficulty in sharing views personally (56 per cent) and depending on others under certain events (48.3 per cent).

The problems faced by the employed homemakers in dual establishment was found to be more over their counterparts in the beginning stage of family life cycle which was statistically significant at five per cent level.

The prospects envisaged by over half of the male counterparts of both categories were welfare of children, enhanced standard of living and job satisfaction.

Over two third of male spouses of both categories felt problems such as staying away from family, burdening wife with more responsibilities and inability to give closer attention to family.

I. Level of Satisfaction Gained by the Homemakers

The observations on the level of satisfaction on family life management revealed that the employed homemakers were fully satisfied in the aspects of clothing management (44 per cent), communication between spouses (39 per cent), and food management and decision-making (34.5 per cent each).

Over 50 per cent of fulltime homemakers were fully satisfied in the activities like food management, communication between spouses and clothing management.
It was assessed from the study that a majority of 56 per cent of the homemakers of dual established families derived only partial satisfaction towards family life management.

There was a significant difference at one per cent level with regard to satisfaction derived between employed and fulltime homemakers against socio-economic factors such as large family size, expanding stage of family life cycle and homemakers having less than three years of experience in dual establishment and families earning above Rs. 40,000/- per month. The satisfaction perceived by the fulltime homemakers over employed homemakers in the nuclear family type indicated statistically significant at five per cent level.

**Discriminant Function Analysis**

The discriminant function analysis was done to find out the variables which significantly discriminate between the employed homemakers and full time homemakers of dual established families and the results of the analysis showed that overall stress score was the maximum discriminating variable (48.58 per cent) followed by overall satisfaction (13.84 per cent), total money expenditure (13.32 per cent), values (10.30 per cent), decision making (9.24 per cent) and experience in dual establishment (5.66 per cent) whereas the other variables such as assets created, frequency of communication, prospects and problems contributed least discrimination between the two groups.

**J. Reflections of Homemakers on Dual Establishment**

The homemakers with their experience in dual establishment gave their opinions on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of staying apart from male counterparts.

The homemakers of dual established families enlisted strengths such as monetary boon for the family (90 per cent) followed by children's
education (88 per cent), enhancing standard of living (82.6 per cent), empowerment of women (81 per cent) and acquiring assets (80 per cent). About 84.8 per cent of employed homemakers favoured more on strengths over full time homemakers (75.1 per cent) on dual establishment.

Over 90 per cent of homemakers remarked the weaknesses on dual establishment such as absence of spouse during social functions, burdened with more responsibilities, difficulty in sharing views over phone.

Above 80 per cent of the homemakers stated the opportunities of dual establishments such as empowerment of women, children acquiring responsibility and freedom for homemaker in resource management.

About 35.9 per cent of employed homemakers and 26 per cent of full time homemakers opined the threats such as fearful situations in the society and children's misbehaviour affecting their development respectively.

K. Perceptions of Spouses Through Case Studies

The report of the case studies of ten dual established families is highlighted beneath:

Spouses were being on dual establishment due to the transferable nature of jobs, education of children and jobs abroad. It was noticed from the study that some spouses were in dual establishment since more than 15 years due to non transferable jobs of couples and business away from hometown.

Expressions of female spouse

Female counterparts expressed that single family management in the absence of male spouse was troublesome and strenuous and family
missed the opportunity of visiting places, recreation and social get together during festivals and special occasions.

Regarding decision making, even simple decisions were taken by majority of spouses with mutual discussion due to the modern means of versatile communication. The decisions regarding day today matters were taken by homemakers on themselves and financial management of savings and investments was handled mainly by male counterparts. The homemakers belonged to joint family made decisions in consultation with parents or in-laws.

When the children were not given full care and attention by the homemakers, they would become frustrated, rebellious, problematic and lagging behind in education. Some of the children were adjustable and responsible though they were unhappy with the absence of father. The couple wanted to continue the dual establishment until the children complete their education and settle in life. In some cases the children were placed in residential institutions due to their inability to give proper guidance to the children.

The homemakers utilized the assistance of sahayak provided by the army as the male spouse being an army officer.

The homemakers who had ample time at their disposal utilized the opportunity for their academic / professional growth.

Homemakers experienced the constraints like loneliness, insecurity, fear of theft, health problems, psychological fatigue and even depression at times.

The homemakers felt that it was a chance for empowering themselves and hence they accepted the single management in a challenging way.
Expressions of male spouse

The male spouses expressed that they were worried much about wife and children who were alone at a distance. They faced lot of frustration because of inability to shower love and affection by being together in the family. Some of them felt happy that the children were growing well with good education under mother’s guidance.

The male spouses had to visit home as and when possible for better family relationship. They opined that frequent travel to visit home town was expensive and tiresome.

The separate establishment by male spouse incurred more expenditure on transportation, communication, housing and boarding.

Health was much affected for not taking homely food and long distance travel to home town. Some of them who resided nearer to their families could make weekly visits to meet out all the needs of the family and share thoughts with the family members.

Male spouse being an army officer had no problems in accommodation, food, health and other services as they were provided by the army.

The spouses in general expressed that the dual establishment was not difficult, and could continue further as they were habituated with more experience in dual establishment. They said, if dual establishment was unavoidable, one should face the situation with courage and confidence.

Series of experiences gained in intermittent dual establishment helped to take up life in a challenging way.

Spouses in contracting stage of family life cycle felt high degree of loneliness as the children were away from them.
Spouses felt happy that single management by the homemakers made them empowered to manage the family efficiently.

Spouses strongly suggested that dual establishment benefited them by fulfilling the financial position of the families and giving better education to the children. Later on they planned to join the family under one roof.

L. Guidelines for Spouses of Dual Established Families

The investigator developed a brochure containing guidelines for optimizing resource use pattern and strengthening relationship towards better family living for dual established families.

Conclusion

It may be concluded from the research study that the female headed households of male migrant families were exposed to changing trend of family living. The homemakers had to face much stress and frustration due to the transition of dual establishment. But for economic necessity and enhancing standard of living, the spouses willingly accept the changing domestic environment. It is a challenging situation for the homemakers of dual established families to develop self confidence and empower themselves for strengthening family harmony and enriching the quality of life. An change is inevitable in the present global scenario, the homemakers should be able to adjust to the existing circumstances and tune their minds towards happy family life.

Recommendations

The recommendations emerged from the research study are enumerated beneath:

Policy makers have to be conscious to the problems encountered by spouses of dual established families and possible actions to be taken especially in the issue of transfer of jobs by posting as per their option.
Liberalised leave rules may be enacted to the male spouses in order to make frequent visits to the female headed households for sustaining family relationship.

Provision should be made to establish crèches and play schools at the work spot by public and private organizations for the benefit of employed mothers of dual established families.

Seminars / workshops / conferences should be conducted for the homemakers of dual established families to get empowered and to deal with management practices for better family living.

Family counselling centers should be run by the home scientists in order to deal with issues and problems of spouses in dual establishment and provide proper counselling and guidance in a scientific way.

Women’s club / forum should be organized for the homemakers of dual established families to understand women’s issues and resolve conflicts as this type of family system is inevitable and may be on rise in the days to come.

Yoga and meditation centres should be established especially for women group to strengthen body and mind, free from stress, strain and tensions.

Society should voice their support to the women of female headed households and protect them from social evils, malaises and abuses.

Government should formulate a special programme to women and children of dual established families for development of quality of life and upliftment of standard of living.
Future Research Topics

The following topics may be suggested to undertake future research studies.

Impact of male migration on women over the decades

Comparative study of male and female migrant families on resource management practices.

Strategies on perceptions and constraints of homemakers of dual established families where male counterparts stayed in abroad.

Family resource management practices and stress management behaviour of single parent families.

Appraisal of family structure and household management on female headed households.

"Believe in one's capabilities and trust God in all you do"

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