

Working Women and their Husbands' Status of Well-Being

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The present research explores the extent to which a wife's work status impacts her husband's well-being by comparing husbands to working and non-working wives. Using a two-group design, 84 husbands aged 30-50 were classified into two equal halves based on wives' work status. The research uses the Subjective Well-Being Inventory to examine characteristics such as overall well-being, expectation-achievement congruence, and family support. Results showed that husbands of working wives had higher mean scores of subjective well-being (94.73) compared to those with non-working wives (90.14). Husbands of working women report greater levels of well-being, particularly in terms of positive affect and expectation-achievement congruence indicating that husbands of working wives experienced higher overall satisfaction and harmony in meeting their expectations. On the whole, this study establishes that it is highly likely that a wife's work status increases her husband's well-being through reducing economic problems and balancing of family responsibilities. The research also shows that the wife's role is becoming more acceptable in different labour segments.

Keywords: Well-being, Work Status, Work-life balance, Spousal support.

The working women's work status and its influence on a husband's well-being have drawn an increasing amount of attention during recent years. During the last century, the nature of marital relationships has significantly changed. This shift can be attributed to the existing culture, economic necessity, and traditional gender roles. The most widespread type of marriage was traditionally a single breadwinner household where men worked and women managed the housekeeping with the few exceptions. From the middle of the 20th century, a new family type started to appear, as both partners began to work. In contemporary society, both types of families are observed, and it is important to comprehend which type is more beneficial for the husband's well-being. During the last 100 years, the concept of full-time employment for women has been peculiar and relatively new. Starting the mid-

20th century, both economics and society mainly defined the concept of the husband as the main earner of a family. However, society has undergone significant changes during the 20th century, as there happened to be the women's liberation movement, the educational progresses, and a double income necessity. As a result, at the beginning of the 21st century, a new type of family emerged where the husband was a worker on the same level as his wife. The roots of shifts in marital roles can be traced back to several factors. First, from the economic point of view, the economic reality was the necessity for shifts as the ideal well-being was visible to be dependent on two incomes. The role of men has become more complex, as men were no longer the main or only breadwinner – the role traditionally associated with providing. The use of two incomes has also been associated with the

men's well-being perception at the heart of the two-earner families. Well-being can be described as the state of feeling healthy and happy in the course of one's life. It encompasses several mental, physical, and social systems' aspects. A wife's employment status can affect the well-being of the husband in the following ways. First, when a wife is employed, they work as a team to meet the family's needs. The husband will feel contented since they have some help in meeting the family's financial needs. Second, the wife's employment status can also generate stress in the family. It will require the husband to share household chores and the care of the children, triggering conflict between him and the wife. Research support for this proposition comes from previous studies that were conducted to achieve this goal. The wife's employment status can improve the well-being of her husband since there is a reduction in gender role stress experienced by family members (Greenstein, 2000). Understanding the relationship between a wife's work status and a husband's well-being is challenging due to the broad range of factors that may contribute to such a relationship. Well-being is a multifaceted concept that encompasses subjective, social interactions, and psychological dimensions, as well as associated with health behaviours. High well-being suggests that the person's or group's engagement was positive, whereas low well-being is associated with a negative experience. Subjective well-being is highest among persons who are happy and comfortable with their lives and report encountering positive rather than negative emotions (Paunio et al., 2009). The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of a wife's work status on her husband's well-being. The wife's work status and her husband's well-being are essential issues as far as academic research is concerned. There have been a great number of studies focusing on types and aspects of these results and implications of the wife's type of

work for the functions of the family and the well-being of her husband. The fact is that there are particular concerns surrounding the wife's employment and its impact on her husband's mental health and satisfaction with the marital life. According to the study by Amato and Booth (1991), husbands of employed wives were currently satisfied with their lives and reported the higher well-being of more than 10%. Besides, when employed wives' husbands felt little stress and had more positive perception of life. Therefore, a woman's type of work was associated with a husband's level of well-being. However, not all sources assert that the wife's employability types are good for her husband. In addition, the wife's type of work is associated with her husband's well-being in other ways. Husbands of employed wives did more work about the house and implied in the affairs of raising their children. respectively, they were more likely to like when a wife share work with him than have to take it solely. Husbands of employed wives engage more in household work and childcare duties (Presser, 1994).

The role of women in society has significantly shifted over the years, with many women currently spending much of their time at work while also taking care of their families. A common argument or claim is that with the increased number of working women across the world, most of these women tend to disregard their household obligation for their husbands and children. This research is aimed at investigating and comparing the subjective well-being of husbands of working women and those of non-working women to test the reasoning above. Subjective well-being is a fundamental aspect of the general happiness and satisfaction of individuals, which also plays a crucial role in the dynamic family relationship. When subjective well-being level of a wife is high, it can motivate her to have a more positive and supportive mental and emotional state towards the

husband. Some husbands' contentment and emotional well-being, on the other hand, might be significantly impacted by the division system of house chores, especially if the wife is also doing full-time employment. The analysis and investigation of such a phenomenon are expected to determine and answer the question of the affectation of women's working status towards family life. Systemic analysis of comparison between husbands of working women and non-working women will determine and provide the evidence to determine whether this claim is true or otherwise.

Objective:

To assess and compare the levels of subjective well-being of husbands of working wives and non-working wives.

Method

Design

Two-group design was adopted. Group I - Consisting of husbands of working wife. Group II - Consisting of husbands of non-working wife. This research study analysing the effect of wives' employment status on husband's well-being, a two-group design chosen. The two-group design is suitable for this type of study as it offers an opportunity to structure and systematize comparison and contrast of the two differing employment statuses of husbands' wives on various aspects of well-being of husbands' lives. Thus, through the use of this particular methodological approach, larger and more valuable insights can be gained into the functioning of households based on the wives' employment status. The knowledge about the differences and disadvantaging dynamics between well-being, socio-economic status, and husband's satisfaction brought by working wives can enhance the general understanding of the effect and interaction of work, family, and relationships in contemporary society. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to come to a view

within a particular context of the impact the employment status of wives can have on the overall well-being of their husbands. The systematic comparison of the two groups also allows for more meaningful conclusions regarding the differing group statuses.

Sample

The research study was conducted on a purposive sample of 84 subjects, both belonging to the age group of 30-50 years. The sample consisted of 42 husbands of working women, while the other half comprised 42 husbands of non-working women based on convenient sampling. The objective was to assess and compare subjective well-being among the two groups of husbands. To act fairly, the researchers worked on equating the subjects as much as possible in terms of socio-demographic variables. It implies that the approach helped reduce biases and increase the reliability of the findings. Specifically, the research study gives real information about either the differences or similarities among the husbands of working and non-working women of the mentioned age bracket. For this reason, the research initiatives provide relevant information about various aspects regarding society and human behaviour.

Assessment Tool

Sell and Nagpal developed the Subjective Well-Being Inventory in 1992. This is a thorough tool intended to assess the well-being of an individual that is divided into 11 important components. On the one hand, it includes such "positive" components, as general well-being and confidence in coping, mood and emotions, relationships with other people, environment and perception of self and future. On the other hand, a number of "negative" factors are measured, such as perceived ill-health, social contacts as source of deficiency, reactivity to loss, attack and threat, anticipated one-upmanship or down-playing, deficiency in social contacts,

concern for family and primary group concern, religiousness, stress at and about work or at home and transcendence as a vital and leading force. The systematic evaluation of the components supplies an insight into an individual's well-being in general and points to the importance of both positive and negative experience in determining one's well-being status. This scale is very reliable among raters, scores, and test-retests. The scale was determined to be very significant and of excellent validity. Patil and Halyal (1999) found that the inventory had a test-retest reliability of 0.79 and a validity of 0.86.

Results

According to the obtained results, husbands of working women have a mean score of subjective well-being equal to 94.73, which is higher than that of non-working women's spouses, equal to 90.14. Although the obtained difference did not prove to be statistically significant, the fact of its upward tendency, with a higher mean score belonging to the spouses of working women, raises certain concerns about the discovered trends. The fact that the spouses of working women received a relatively high number of mean scores allows for some reasoning regarding the trends in their well-being. It is quite interesting that the employment of women is closely related to the higher subjective well-being of their spouses; it is mediated through a certain combination of the lifestyle and sense of occupation balance, which also includes the load of daily duties. General well-being positive affect is the initial aspect of the subjective well-being. This component is about one's well-being as a function of a general feeling that he/she has a life that is running smoothly and joyfully. Group I had a mean score of 7.86 and Group II had a mean score of 6.95. The t-value was 2.82 which was significant at 0.01. It means that husbands of working women had a higher level of overall positive affect, perceiving that their life is running more

smoothly and joyfully. Thus, it seems that the husbands of working women demonstrated a higher level of positive affect meaning that they regard their lives as running more smoothly and joyfully in comparison to the husbands of non-working women. There can be several reasons explaining the higher positive affect among these men. First, their wives' work may result in additional financial stability, leading to a decrease in financial pressure and a higher comfort level. However, another crucial factor seems to be their work-family relations. When both members of a couple work, there seems to be a stronger sense of partnership and support as both people share the responsibilities of housekeeping and providing for the future of their family. Moreover, work makes the women feel more productive and self-sufficient, which likely results in a higher level of self-esteem. In combination, these factors result in a higher sense of well-being excluded by the working women's husbands as demonstrated by the high difference in mean scores. The second component was Expectation-achievement congruence. This factor refers to feelings of well-being generated by achieving success and the standard of living as per one's expectation. The two groups differed significantly on this component. The higher mean (7.26) of husbands of working women indicates that they experience a higher sense of well-being arising out of a feeling that they have been able to achieve as per their expectations and are satisfied with their family life. So, they have been observed to have a higher level of expectation-achievement harmony. It should be noted that husbands of working wives have higher mean score than their counterparts. This implies that these men experience a sense of well-being in being able to achieve their expectations. In addition, being satisfied with their family life, these husbands of working women have also higher mean score. Being content with their family with the way they

have achieved their expectations, there is a better harmony in their lives. The mean confidence in coping for husbands of working wives is higher to 7.64 (SD = 1.22) than the mean score for husbands of non-working wives, which is 7.43 (SD = 1.23). This is confirmed by the t-value of 0.80, meaning that it is not significant. Thus, it can be stated that confidence in coping is not significantly different with the employment status of wives. The transcendence mean score for a husband of working wife is higher, 7.65 (SD = 1.23), than for a husband of non-working wives, 7.19 (SD = 1.32). However, the calculated t-value is 1.62, meaning that, though it is higher, it is not significantly different as the measures are typical for $p < 0.05$. The mean family group support score for a husband of working wives is 7.5 (SD = 1.70), while for a husband of non-working

wife, it is 7.31 (SD = 1.56). The t-value is 0.52, meaning that it is not significant. The social support means for the former husbands measure 6.78 (SD = 1.60), and the latter is 6.69 (SD = 1.68). The t-value of 0.26 shows that it is not significantly different as well. Thus, the social support for husbands is not influenced by the employment status of their wives.

The next important component was Primary group concern. This factor measures how much the spouses feel positively vs. negatively towards primary family. The t-value obtained was significant which states that spouses of working women have significant primary group concerns implying that they have more concern for their wives and children and do extra work for the family which in turn can promote their high feeling of well-being.

Table 1. Mean, SD and mean-differences on Subjective Well-being of Husbands of Working and Non-Working Wife

Variables	Husbands of Working Wife	Husbands of Non-Working Wife	t-value
Subjective well being	94.73 ± 11.56	90.14 ± 13.89	1.64
General well-being-positive affect	7.86 ± 1.14	6.95 ± 1.73	2.82**
Expectation-achievement congruence	7.26 ± 1.34	6.50 ± 1.67	2.30*
Confidence in coping	7.64 ± 1.22	7.43 ± 1.23	0.80
Transcendence	7.65 ± 1.23	7.19 ± 1.32	1.62
Family group support	7.50 ± 1.70	7.31 ± 1.56	0.52
Social support	6.78 ± 1.60	6.69 ± 1.68	0.26
Primary group concern	8.11 ± 3.59	6.67 ± 2.11	2.27*
Inadequate mental mastery	14.35 ± 4.04	14.59 ± 4.63	0.25
Perceived ill health	13.28 ± 3.58	12.64 ± 4.32	0.74
Deficiency in social contacts	6.98 ± 1.80	7.09 ± 1.41	0.34
General well-being-negative affect	7.26 ± 1.56	7.07 ± 1.58	0.55

*Significant at 0.05 level, **Significant at 0.01 level

With regard to inadequate mental mastery, husbands of non-working wives have had higher levels of the variable had M = 14.59 (SD = 4.63) than husbands of working wives had mean (M) = 14.35 (SD = 4.04), which has been evidenced by the minimal t-

value of 0.25. It may imply that the wives' employment status may not be of noteworthy influence on their husbands in terms of mental mastery. With regard to perceived ill health, the related t-value has been equal to 0.75, with mean of 12.64 (SD = 4.32) for husbands of non-working wives and mean of 13.28 (SD = 3.58) for their counterparts whose wives have been working. It implies that the presence of non-working wife may be associated with better perceived husbands' health. The deficiency in social contacts has not been much evident, as a minimal t-value of 0.34 has indicated that husbands of non-working wives Mean (M) = 7.09 (SD = 1.41) have had slightly higher related levels than their counterparts whose wives have been working Mean (M) = 6.98 (SD = 1.80). The difference between the two groups has been minimal in terms of general well-being-negative affect with the related t-value equal to 0.55 and the two groups of non-working wives' husbands M = 7.07 (SD = 1.58) and working wives' husbands Mean (M) = 7.26 (SD = 1.56).

The results, considered together, have shown that the wives' employment statuses and their husbands' well-being have not been evidently much related, implying that further research may be needed on those two when present as related interacting variables. The better financial statuses of working wives may contribute to their husbands' feelings of well-being. Families with working women may be relieved of economic burdens, contributing to better living standards. More importantly, the male recognition and appreciation of their wives' working conditions may provoke a sense of relevance and importance. This is likely to be absent among men who are keen on adherence to traditional gender roles. The idea of a well-working wife outside the home seems to be a new wave that emphasizes equality between the two parties.

Discussion

From the analysis of Table 1, it is concluded that the differences between the two groups regarding the scores on the various domains are not statistically significant. However, an interesting finding was consistently reported in most of the domains examined; husbands of working women tend to report higher levels of well-being. This finding seems to be promising. It may indicate an increasing tendency among males to welcome the idea of their wives working outside the home. This is a sound change for the better. It seems to represent a shift in the prevailing ideologies regarding gender roles and the status of work. There have been slight differences between the two groups on inadequate mental mastery, perceived ill health, deficiency in social contacts, and general well-being-negative affect.

One of the articles corroborating the results obtained during the research is the study conducted by Bakker, Demeester, and Schaufeli (2019), which considers the impact of work-life balance on the psychological satisfaction of individuals. The researchers discovered that people, who combine their duties associated with work and personal life so that to achieve a perfect balance, have higher scores of subjective well-being. This, in turn, implies that husbands of working women also combine their daily and work routine in such a way as to obtain better satisfaction, thus its higher levels. Similarly, Greenhaus and Powell (2006), consider the peculiarities of the dual-earner couples, may be linked to the theme of the current research. According to their results, couples who both have paid occupations experience higher levels of well-being, including those of their psychological satisfaction. It can be concluded that the same tendency holds for the equal type of activity, as well as the lifestyle well-being. The spouses working along with the husband are more likely to

understand one's daily challenges and support in occupational and housework, which may explain more employment satisfaction for husbands. Additionally, the idea of role-sharing which becomes more evident at the contemporary times with the greater presence of equality may explain the higher levels of psychological satisfaction in working women's husbands. Umberson et al. (2016), discussed the equality and role-sharing in the contemporary family. The higher level of satisfaction for two genders raises the concern of more freedom and role achievement shared in the family. In conclusion, the difference in the subjective satisfaction of husbands of working and non-working women may not be statistically meaningful, though the higher scores for working women's husbands mean a certain increase in the perceived level of satisfaction. Men's sense of well-being Stress, health, loneliness, and mental/emotional loneliness were all shown to be associated with perceived support satisfaction. Men value support satisfaction as a psychological global resource (Kafetsios, 2007). The balanced pattern of daily routine and work along with characteristics of a more developing modern approach to role-sharing in the marital couple may be the major reasons. The further research may provide more detailed insights into the characteristics specific for the present times, thus affecting respondents' satisfaction. There is evidence from numerous related studies that positive affect is substantially related to people's well-being. In a meta-analysis study, Diener and Chan (2011) supported the idea that positive affect positively contributes to people's subjective well-being. According to their findings, positive affect is one of the applicable variables for predicting overall life satisfaction and happiness. Positive affect contributes to people's increasement of well-being along with the quality of their life (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

Implications

Implication of working women on families throughout history, working women have drawn criticisms regarding their competency to balance between home and work lives. Despite such criticisms, several studies and researches into the contributions of women into the workplace have refuted these claims depicting the numerous positive implications of women working on their families. Research indicates that the spouses of working women have notable levels of positive emotions and overall affective well-being. This increased well-being and other positive implications is, in part, due to the increase in their standard of living which is usually facilitated by the additional income of the working women. Additionally, the research shows that the husbands of working women show greater concern for their families and children. These implications underscore the significant roles women have in their families since their participation into the labour force is not only beneficial to their well-being but also serves to improve their families' livelihood and well-being. Owing to working women's contributions, their families have a high standard of living which would not be facilitated by the sole income of their husbands. These changes equip the families with the capabilities of affording better services such as education, and healthcare and many others thus increasing their well-being. Subsequently, such benefits in the spread of wealth are shared with the community thus promoting economic growth. In addition, as these women contribute to their families, they also necessitate the changing of subsequent gender roles by changing of power and status. Another implication that is worth noting is that through working women's involvement in the labour force, their husbands are more involved with their families. These husbands share more household roles and responsibility and child care and decision-making responsibilities,

communication, and support networks are higher when both spouses share distribution of household roles. Implications on working women are on their children who would develop more equitable values and healthier relationship patterns and are well-adjusted. Thus, the implications of working women into their families are numerous and positive with their families enjoying a decent and improved livelihood. Thus, in the current scenario, the time has come to put to rest all the stereotypes about the harmful consequences of the women working outside the home. The men at large really need to change their psyche towards the work status of their wives and be more supportive. The scope of the overall well-being of the family becomes more promising in such circumstances.

Conclusion

To summarise, the influence of a wife's employment position on her husband's well-being is a complex subject with far-reaching consequences for both people and families. This study found that men with working spouses report greater levels of subjective well-being than those with non-working wives. This improved well-being can be linked to a variety of causes, including enhanced financial stability, a stronger feeling of connection, and reduced typical gender role stress. The findings are consistent with earlier research, which has shown that the presence of dual-earner households promotes a fairer allocation of home tasks and increases both couples' psychological happiness. The study found that spouses with working women have greater levels of positive emotion and expectation-achievement congruence. These males are more content with their life. Husbands are more content with their lives and regard their circumstances as more rewarding, owing primarily to the collaborative approach to handling both work and home responsibilities. Furthermore, when spouses participate in

domestic tasks and childcare while their women are working, the family environment becomes more balanced and helpful, which improves their well-being even more.

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