



Gendered Division of Household Chores among Married Social Workers and Their Spouses

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ABSTRACT:

Over the last two decades, women have been incorporated into the workforce all over the world. On the other hand, men either do not contribute to household chores or their share is much less. The situation is not different in Pakistan. Therefore, the current study was designed to measure the performance of household chores by married social workers and their spouses. Data was collected from all married social workers working in Social Welfare Department in Punjab-Pakistan through questionnaire. As per inclusion criteria, responses of 297 participants were retained for data analysis. The study results showed that almost all the household chores are performed by women. Although their share was less, men were also found to indulge in household tasks. There was the traditional distribution of household tasks among married social workers either men or women. The state should introduce policies for equal division of household chores in dual-earner families.

Key Words: gender roles, household chores, social workers, traditional, egalitarian

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1. Introduction

In the contemporary world, we find that transition has taken place in almost all strata of life. One of these variations is the change of gender stereotypes. Due to various factors, in the contemporary world, the concept of breadwinner and homemaker is also changing. This ideological change has resulted in changing gendered dynamics in the workforce and household chores. Therefore, gender roles being performed in the workforce and families are also changing now (Gronlund & Oun, 2018).

The women have been occupying the workplaces and thus are helping generate incomes for families and aiding the development of nations. Women have also embraced the activities and departments that were earlier seen as only for the male, for instance, sports (McNiel et al., 2012). This change is the result of many factors like education, media, and economic pressures among others (James-Hawkins et al., 2017).

Employment of women at work is, in practice, viewed as advancing the cause of gender equality. As a result of this change, women are engaging in earning activities and chipping in with family income. But as the culture of women's participation in income-generating activities improves in many parts of the world including Pakistan, this does not change men's attitude in developing participation in any related household activities (Croft et al., 2021). In addition, it was assumed that men would also contribute their working hours in the household and the rearing of children and that women would cut down on the same. In fact, the part of household work that is allocated to married couples is unequally divided.

In many developed countries today, gender roles in households are also changing. Men are also engaging in more household activities than before. Thus, both men and women take up two roles of employment and household chores (Zhao et al., 2019). On the other hand, in developing countries like Pakistan, India Bangladesh and Ghana, there is parity in doing household works where women suffer a lot. Household work is dominated by the female gender where most of the tasks are carried out by them. Situation is not different in the families wherein women also earn income that is used in the family. Despite the fact, men do not perform any household chores and if they do, it is minimal.

2. Situation in Pakistan

Conceivably, in terms of, theoretically and practically, in Pakistan, males and females are associated with two dissimilar worlds. The domestic sphere is the genuine idea and realistic place of women while men are of the realm outside the domestic sphere. Women are expected to be reproductive in that they are expected to reproduce and be caretakers of children and husbands while men are expected to be productive in that they are expected to provide for the household. Employment inside the work sphere refers to male members of the society and employment inside the home is referenced to female members of the society (Zaman, 2020). However, one can notice that a transition is now taking place.





According to Mirza and Jabeen (2020), education, the women's empowerment movements, government initiatives, and the role of mass media have brought a shift in gender roles. Following are the government measures regarding women's empowerment in Pakistan: It has introduced women affirmative actions such as 10% women's reservation in all categories of civil employment, youth business loans for women, and 33 percent women in all statutory bodies. For this reason, endeavors have been observed to enhance the level of education and employment opportunities among females. Pakistan Economic Survey 2020-21 reveals that the net enrollment ratio for the 6-10 years of age in the year 2019-20 was 60% for females (Finance Division, Government of Pakistan, 2021). The United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report (2020) revealed that in 2019, Pakistan was ranked 135 out of 189 on the Gender Inequality Index (GII). It is a staggering 9% female labor force participation. In the total population of 15 to 64 years in Pakistan, using the modeled ILO estimates, 53% was considered in the labor force in 2019, out of which 23% of the total were females (World Bank, 2021a & b). The tradition of men performing household chores is also a reality in Pakistan. Modern-educated men with gender-egalitarian attitudes bear some of the domestic responsibilities of reproductive work at home, resulting in high Work-Family Conflict (WFC) among them (Tabassum et al., 2017).

This is how traditional male and female roles are shifting. Many women are now earning money for the support of the family as well as contributing to the economy of the country. Women are also earning money for the family, but they are still the only ones who perform all sorts of household chores (Rasheed et al., 2018). Their male partners do not chip in with the household chores and if they do, then it is significantly less. The male participants believe that all the household chores including childcare are the responsibilities of women (Islam et al., 2020). This has implications for men, women, and families in many ways.

3. Literature Review

In this section, various studies discussing the division of labor at home are presented. Schoonbroodt (2018) in his work "Parental child care during and outside of typical work hours" highlighted that the survey conducted by the American Time Use Survey in 2017-18 highlighted that married women are involved more in child care than married men. In the case of married couples with children, women spent 13.3 hours per week and men spent 7.4 hours. In the case of married couples with children who were below the age of five years, men spent 10.9 hours per week and women spent 19.8 hours per week engaged in childcare activities. Of the married dual-earner couples with children, women devoted 10.3 hours to childcare routines while the men only spent 7.2 hours. If they have children below the age of five years, women engage in childcare for 16.8 hours as compared to the 10.6 hours per week that men spend on these activities. The percentage of women spending time in childcare activities is 60%, it rises to 70% when calculated between working days from 8 AM to 6 PM.

In another study, "The impact of COVID-19 on gender equality" carried out in the United States of America, Alon et al. (2020) identified that among the 2,76,662 couples in dual-earner





married relationships, women are doing 60 percent of child care. This ratio is higher if the children are young, that is, below the age of five years. In addition, since most of the families with children are dual-earners, 39% of men and 38% of women telecommuted but the women spent more time, 9 hours than the men for telecommuting for childcare. Another study “Beyond formal access: Organizational context, working from home, and work-family conflict of men and women in European workplaces” by Van der Lippe and Lippényi (2020) with 11,011 employees in 259 organizations in 9 European countries, revealed that on average, women work 13.35 hours and men 9.18 hours in a week on domestic work.

Stertz et al. (2017) conducted a study “Gender-role attitudes and parental work decisions after childbirth: A longitudinal dyadic perspective with dual-earner couples” in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. As per study results, in the comparison between men and women, 36.5% of women took more than one year, 27.7% took six to 12 months and 35.8% of women availed less than six months of maternity leave. However 21.7% of fathers did not avail of any leave, 29.7% took one day to two weeks, 34.8% of fathers took more than two weeks but less than two months leave, and only 13.8% of fathers took leave for more than two months.

This data set comprises Germany and Austria where parental leave is prescribed for both parents in the regulations. They also discovered that the employed mothers of the first child were working full time and those of the second or third child were working part-time during their pregnancy, a week averagely working 40.37 hours. Of all the respondents 78.2% of them scaled down their working hours – 15.34 hours in a week, 10.5% of the mothers increased their working hours – 5.43 hours/week, and 11.3% of the mothers did not either reduce or increase their working hours after childbirth. Regarding fathers, before childbirth, first-time fathers were working 46.00 hours/week these were reduced to 43.64 h/week among experienced fathers who were working 42.96 hours/week these were also reduced to 42.91 h/week. According to the collected data, the absolute majority of fathers, or 58% of them decreased 4.94 working hours/week after childbirth, and 34.1% of fathers increased their working hours by 2.69 h/week.

In Pakistan gender roles being performed at home by women and particularly by men is an uncovered research area. In Pakistan, no known literature discussing the performance of household chores by men was found by the researcher. Moreover, general research is found discussing the effect of changing gender roles in various professions like medicine, teachers, and heads of teaching institutions among others through work-family or family-work conflict but no known research is found by the researcher in the field of social work in Pakistan. Therefore the current study was designed to fill the gap in the literature. Social workers are studied in the current research focusing that social work is considered a care-oriented profession. It not only helps clients handle gender inequalities both at workplaces and at home but also assists people and families in acquiring the knowledge and tools necessary to properly manage their homes. The researcher selected social workers for the fact that how they manage their own home duties when they are helping clients to manage home duties in more egalitarian manner.





4. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the gendered division of household chores among married social workers and their spouses.
2. Measure the division of household chores among married social workers and their spouses in terms of traditional and egalitarian gender roles at home.

4.1.Hypothesis

H1: There is a statistically significant mean difference in the performance of household chores between men and women.

5. Methods

The research is quantitative in nature and survey design is used for data collection. Data were collected from all the married social workers working in BPS-17 and BPS-18 in Social Welfare Department, Government of the Punjab. There were a total of 338 married social workers at the time of data collection. Only the data of social workers who were married for more than 12 months and have at least 12 months of working experience in Social Welfare Department were retained for analysis purposes. A total number of 297 social workers were fulfilling the criteria. Out of these 297 participants, 133 were men and 164 were women.

A structured self-completion questionnaire was used in the current study and a scale of gender balance regarding routine chores developed by ISSP (Scholz et al., 2014) was adapted with some modifications according to the cultural context. In this study, six items such as grocery shopping, cleaning of house, cooking daily meals, washing utensils, washing clothes, and ironing clothes were included. These are some of the household activities that are considered time-consuming and since they result from routine and unavoidable responsibilities, they appear to lack 'control.' Apart from that, six more items concerning child-rearing activities involving changing diapers, feeding the child, changing the clothes of the child, washing them or bathing them, assisting them in their school work as well and helping them psychologically were also added. The related responses were categorized on seven points, namely, exclusively by wife, more by wife and lesser by husband, equally by husband and wife, more by husband and lesser by wife, exclusively by husband, by some other person, and not applicable at all.

Since the face validity of the measure is an important criterion, it was checked with the expert and she found it reasonably quite valid. As advised by the expert, some questions like changing diapers, feeding, changing dresses, and bathing, and each of the items were also asked separately for children and in combination for the elderly sick and disabled as they may also require these services depending on their situation. The question 'providing emotional help' was also applied to all the members of the family including children. After that, one more question that was common to all the groups was posed concerning how health care was provided to family members.





The measure was pretested on 17 respondents and a question regarding small repairs at home was incorporated on the feedback of some of the respondents. After that questionnaire was administered to the whole population. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data through SPSS 26. Frequencies and percentages were used for descriptive while chi square and independent samples t test were utilized for inferential statistics. The reliability of the measure is presented in table 1.

Table 1

Cronbach Alpha of the Scale

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's α
Gender Balance of Household Chores Scale	18	0.84

Results

The study conducted to measure the distribution of household chores among married couples presents the following results. Data were analyzed through SPSS and the results are presented in descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 2

Frequency Distribution of Gender Role Performance in Household Chores

Items	Performed only by the wife		Performed more by Wife and less by husband		Shared Equally by both husband and wife		Performed more by husband and less by wife		Performed only by husband		Performed by someone else		Not applicable	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Grocery	21	7.1	53	17.8	131	44.1	52	17.5	33	11.1	7	2.4	0	0
Cooking	169	56.9	96	32.3	17	5.7	0	0	0	0	15	5.1	0	0
Doing Dishes	129	43.4	48	16.2	28	9.4	0	0	0	0	92	31.0	0	0
Washing Clothes	128	43.1	23	7.7	27	9.1	0	0	0	0	119	40.1	0	0
Ironing Clothes	72	24.2	58	19.5	63	21.2	2	0.7	3	1.0	99	33.4	0	0
Cleaning Home	87	29.3	39	13.1	29	9.8	0	0	0	0	142	47.8	0	0
Changing Diapers of Children	156	52.5	50	17.0	33	11.1	1	0.3	1	0.3	9	3.0	47	15.8
Changing Diapers of Elderly/Sick/Disabled	24	8.1	14	4.7	41	13.8	4	1.4	3	1.0	9	3.0	202	68.0
Feeding Children	95	32.0	89	30.0	68	22.9	2	0.7	1	0.3	4	1.3	38	12.8
Feeding Elderly / Sick /	27	9.1	21	7.1	52	17.5	3	1.0	0	0	3	1.0	191	64.3





Disabled														
Changing the Dresses of Children	108	36.4	83	27.9	54	18.2	1	0.3	0	0	7	2.4	44	14.8
Changing Dresses of Elderly/Sick/Disabled	18	6.1	16	5.4	46	15.5	4	1.3	1	0.3	6	2.0	206	69.4
Giving Bath to Children	136	45.8	66	22.3	41	13.8	4	1.3	0	0	6	2.0	44	14.8
Giving Bath to the Elderly/Sick/Disabled	15	5.1	12	4.1	44	14.8	4	1.3	5	1.7	9	3.0	208	70.0
Helping Children in School/College Works	54	18.2	68	22.9	107	36.0	14	4.7	7	2.4	9	3.0	38	12.8
Helping Children and Other Family Members Emotionally	32	10.8	43	14.5	190	64.0	21	7.1	4	1.3	1.0	0.3	6	2.0
Medical Care of Sick Family Members	32	10.8	54	18.2	159	53.5	21	7.1	8	2.7	1	0.3	22	7.4
Small Repairs of House and Equipment	15	5.1	18	6.1	47	15.8	58	19.5	138	46.4	19	6.4	2	0.7

Note. N=297.

To study the actual gender roles being performed by men and women in household chores is the main objective of this study. Table 2 presents the frequency distribution of the performance of household chores. According to the data, 44.1% of respondents answered that grocery is performed on an equal basis by husband and wife. While 17.8% of respondents answered that grocery is done more by the wife and less by the husband. Almost similar percentage 17.5% of respondents answered that grocery is done more by their husband and less by their wife, 11.1% answered only by their wife, 7.1% answered only by their husband and 2.4% answered that grocery is done by someone else. On the question of cooking, 56.9% of respondents informed that cooking is performed only by the wife, and 32.3% informed more by the wife and less by the husband. Only 5.7% of respondents informed that cooking is equally shared by husband and wife. Almost the same number 5.1% informed that cooking is done by someone else. While answering the question of doing dishes, 43.4% of respondents reported that dishes are done only by the wife, and 16.2% reported more by the wife and less by the husband. A very small number 9.4% share it on an equal basis by husband and wife. However, 31% of respondents reported that it is done by someone else.

According to 43.1% of respondents, clothes are washed only by the wife, and 40.1% of respondents added that clothes are washed by someone else. Clothes are washed more by the wife and less by the husband as per 7.7% of respondents. Only 9.1% of respondents added that clothes are washed equally by husband and wife. Regarding ironing clothes, 33.4% of respondents said it is done by someone else, 24.2% said it is done only by the wife and 19.5% said it is done more by the wife and less by the husband. Whereas 21.2% of respondents said





clothes are ironed equally by husband and wife. Only 1% and 0.7% of respondents said that clothes are ironed only by the husband and more by the husband and less by the wife respectively. Home is cleaned by someone else answered 47.8% of respondents. While 29.3% of respondents reported it is done only by the wife, 13.1% reported done more by the wife and less by the husband and only 9.8% reported it is done by husband and wife on an equal basis.

The questions regarding changing diapers of children, changing diapers of elderly/sick/disabled, feeding children, feeding elderly/sick/disabled, changing dresses of children, changing dresses of elderly/sick/disabled, giving bath to children, giving bath to elderly/sick/disabled, helping children in school/college works, helping family members emotionally and small repairs of house were not applicable to 15.8%, 68%, 12.8%, 64.3%, 14.8%, 69.4, 14.8%, 70%, 12.8%, 2%, 7.4% and 0.7% respondents respectively. The task that is shared equally with a higher percentage is “helping children and other family members emotionally” with 64% of respondents who said that the task is shared equally by husband and wife. Next to it is providing medical care to sick family members with 53.5% of respondents that medical care of sick family members is shared equally by husband and wife, next is grocery with 44.1%, then helping children in school/college work with 36%, feeding children with 22.9%, ironing clothes with 21.2%, changing dresses of children with 18.2%, feeding elderly/sick/disabled with 17.5%, small repairs of the house with 15.8%, changing dresses of elderly/sick/disabled with 15.5%, giving bath to elderly/sick/disabled with 14.8%, giving bath to children with 13.8%, changing diapers of elderly/sick/disabled with 13.8% and changing diapers of children with 11.1% respondents who said that these tasks are shared by husband and wife equally.

On the questions that were not applicable to all, 52.5% of respondents said that diapers of children are changed only by wife, 8.1% said diapers of elderly/sick/disabled are changed only by wife, 32% said children are fed only by wife, 9.1% said elderly/sick/disabled are fed only by wife, 36.4% said dresses of children are changed only by wife, 6.1% said dresses of elderly/sick/disabled are changed only by wife, 45.8% said children are bathed only by wife, 5.1% said elderly/sick/disabled are bathed only by wife, 18.2% said children are helped in school/college work only by wife, 10.8% said that only wife gives emotional support to children and other family members, 10.8% said only wife gives medical care to sick family members when they are in need and only 5.1% respondents said that small repairs of the house are done only by wife.

On the same questions that were not applicable to all, 17% respondents said that diapers of children are changed more by wife and less by husband, 4.7% said diapers of elderly / sick / disabled are changed more by wife and less by husband, 30% said children are fed more by wife and less by husband, 7.1% said elderly / sick / disabled are fed more by wife and less by husband, 27.9% said dresses of children are changed more by wife and less by husband, 5.4% said dresses of elderly / sick / disabled are changed more by wife and less by husband, 22.3% said children are bathed more by wife and less by husband, 4.1% said elderly / sick / disabled are bathed more by wife and less by husband, 22.9% said children are helped in school / college work more by





wife and less by husband, 14.5% said that emotional support to children and other family members is given more by wife and less by husband, 18.2% said medical care to sick family members when they are in need is given more by wife and less by husband and only 6.1% respondents said that small repairs of house are done more by wife and less by husband.

While telling about the tasks performed more by husband and less by wife regarding tasks that were not applicable to all, only 0.3% respondents said that diapers of children are changed more by husband and less by wife, 1.4% said diapers of elderly/sick/disabled are changed more by husband and less by wife, 0.7% said children are fed more by husband and less by wife, 1% said elderly/sick/disabled are fed more by husband and less by wife, 0.3% said dresses of children are changed more by husband and less by wife, 1.3% said dresses of elderly/sick/disabled are changed more by husband and less by wife and similarly 1.3% said children are bathed more by husband and less by wife. Likewise, 1.3% said the elderly/sick/disabled are bathed more by husbands and less by their wives. However 4.7% of respondents said children are helped in school/college work more by husband and less by wife, 7.1% said that emotional support to children and other family members is given more by husband and less by wife, 7.1% said medical care to sick family members when they are in need is given more by husband and less by wife and 19.5% respondents said that small repairs of house are done more by husband and less by wife.

On the same questions that were not applicable to all, while recording the tasks done only by the husband, 3% of respondents said that diapers of children are changed only by the husband, 3% said diapers of elderly/sick/disabled are changed only by husband, 1.3% said children are fed only by husband, 1% said elderly/sick/disabled are fed only by husband, 2.4% said dresses of children are changed only by husband, 2% said dresses of elderly/sick/disabled are changed only by husband, 2% said children are bathed only by husband, 3% said elderly/sick/disabled are bathed only by husband, 3% said children are helped in school/college work only by husband, 0.3% said that emotional support to children and other family members is given only by husband, 0.3% said medical care to sick family members when they are in need is given only by husband and only 6.4% respondents said that small repairs of the house are done only by husband.

Table 3

Overall Gender Roles in Household Chores Along with Fisher’s Exact Results (Two-Sided) for Gender Differences

Items	Men		Women		Total		Gender Difference (x ² , sig.)
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Husband Performs Almost All Chores	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5.898, 0.098
Husband Performs More Chores	2	1.5	1	0.6	3	1.0	
Shared Either Equally by Husband and Wife or Performed by Someone else	9	6.8	18	11.0	27	9.1	
Wife Performs More Chores	57	42.9	85	51.8	142	47.8	





Wife Performs Almost All Chores	65	48.9	60	36.6	125	42.1
Total	133	100	164	100	297	100

Note. Gender roles in household chores are computed only from six items regarding household chores e.g. who performs the specific household chores like grocery, cooking, doing dishes, washing clothes, ironing clothes, and cleaning home. It is scored from -1(performed only by husband) to +1 (performed only by wife) and 0 if shared or done by someone else. In this overall scale, the computed values range from -6 to +6 wherein the husband performs almost all chores = scores -6 to -3, husband performs more chores = scores -2.9 to -0.1, shared equally or performed by someone else = 0, wife performs more chores = +0.1 to +2.9 and wife performs almost all chores = +3 to +6.

Fisher’s Exact Test is performed because more than 20% of cells have an expected count of less than 5.

Table 3 is a composite of household chores on only six items that were applicable to all. According to the data in table 2, 47.8% of respondents answered that the wife performs more chores, and 42.1% of respondents added that the wife performs almost all chores. Contrary to this, only 1% of respondents said that the husband performs more chores. Only 9.1% of respondents answered that the chores are either equally shared by husband and wife or performed by someone else. Whereas no respondent recorded that the husband performs almost all chores.

For men, the category "Husband Performs More Chores" was represented by 2 participants (1.5%), while the category "Shared Either Equally by Husband and Wife or Performed by Someone Else" included 9 participants (6.8%). The most prevalent category for men was "Wife Performs More Chores," with 57 participants (42.9%), followed by "Wife Performs Almost All Chores" with 65 participants (48.9%). Notably, no men reported the category "Husband Performs Almost All Chores."

For women, the category "Husband Performs More Chores" was reported by 1 participant (0.6%), while the category "Shared Either Equally by Husband and Wife or Performed by Someone Else" had 18 participants (11.0%). Similarly, the most common category for women was "Wife Performs More Chores," with 85 participants (51.8%), followed by "Wife Performs Almost All Chores" with 60 participants (36.6%). No women reported the category "Husband Performs Almost All Chores." The chi-square test results indicated no statistically significant association between gender and chore division ($\chi^2 = 5.898, p = 0.098$).

Overall, the study revealed that, among men and women, the majority reported chore divisions where wives performed more or almost all of the chores. However, Fisher’s exact test results suggest that there is no statistically significant association between gender and chore division in this sample, underscoring the diversity of chore arrangements within households.





Table 4

Categories of Gender Roles in Household Chores Along with Chi-Square Results (Two-Sided) for Gender Differences

Categories	Men		Women		Total		Gender Difference (x ² , sig.)
	N	%	n	%	n	%	
Less Traditional and More Egalitarian	11	8.3	19	11.6	30	10.1	.889, .346
More Traditional and Less Egalitarian	122	91.7	145	88.4	267	89.9	
Total	133	100	164	100	297	100	

Note. Categories of gender roles in household chores are computed from table 2 wherein “more egalitarian and less traditional” = almost all chores are done by husband, more chores are done by husband and shared equally, and “more traditional and less egalitarian” = more chores are done by wife and almost all chores are done by the wife.

In the provided table 4, there is a breakdown of respondents' behaviors related to gender roles in terms of household chores. Out of a total of 297 individuals surveyed, 30 people, constituting 10.1%, exhibit behaviors aligned with more egalitarian and less traditional gender roles. On the other hand, a majority of 267 individuals, representing 89.9%, demonstrate behaviors that are more in line with traditional and less egalitarian gender roles. This data suggests that a significant portion of the surveyed population tends to adhere to traditional gender role behaviors, while a smaller but still notable group displays more progressive and egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles.

Reporting the results separately for men and women, out of 133 men and 164 women, 8.3% of men and 11.6% of women exhibited more egalitarian and less traditional behaviors. In contrast, 91.7% of men and 88.4% of women displayed more traditional and less egalitarian behaviors. A chi-square test for gender differences in GRBs related to HHCs showed no significant association ($\chi^2 = 0.889, p = 0.346$). This suggests no differences between men and women regarding responses about gender roles in the context of household chores among the study participants. Both men and women said that traditional gender roles in household chores are being performed at their house and women perform almost all or more chores as compared to men.

Table 5

Mean Comparisons of Participants Based on Gender Role Performance in Household Chores

Variable	Men		Women		t(295)	P	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Who Performs Household Chores	64.00	18.673	64.24	18.759	.008	.993	0.01





Note. Cohen's *d* is calculated online through the effect size calculator for the t-test from Effect Size Calculator (Cohen's D) for T-Test (socscistatistics.com)

An Independent sample *t*-test is conducted to compare the mean differences between men and women regarding who performs the household chores. The data of test variable household chores fulfilling all the assumptions for independent samples *t*-test and is also normally distributed as per Shapiro-Wilk test with statistic value .995 and $p = .481$ at the level of 0.05. According to the value of Levine's test $F(\text{sig.}) = .017 (.896)$, equal variance is assumed at the level of 0.05. According to the results available in table 5, there are no statistically significant mean differences between men ($M=64.00, SD=18.673$) and women ($M=64.24, SD=18.759$) with $t(295) = .008, p > .05$ regarding the answer to the question "who performs the household chores". The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = .016, 95% CI: -4.053 to 4.087) is very small. Hence H1 is not supported at 0.05 level. The value of Cohen's *d* is 0.01 (<0.2) which is even less than the border value for a small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Therefore the effect size is insignificant. It means there is no difference between men and women regarding the question of who performs the household chores. According to table 3, women perform almost all or more chores. So, it is clear from the results that women perform more chores than men.

6. Discussion

It was one of the objectives of the study to examine how men and women social workers perform actual roles in the perceived division of housework. As seen in Table 3, the results indicate that more or almost all chores are done by the wife. Only a small proportion of respondents i.e. 9. 1% said that some chores are done with equal turns or by other people. However, the tasks that were being equally shared by husband and wife that received the highest proportions as per table 2 were – offering emotional support to children and other family members, offering medical assistance in case of illness to immediate family members, doing grocery shopping, and helping children in their homework and other assignments related to school and college. These are the activities that are not performed with all the respondents and also not performed on a daily basis. As for the washing of utensils, clothes, ironing of clothes, cleaning the house and other everyday chores, the proportions indicating a fair sharing between the husband and wife were as low as 5. 7%, 9. 4%, 9. 1%, 21. 2%, and 9. 8% respectively. Three and two respondents indicated that ironing of clothes is being done only by the husband and more by the husband respectively. Based on the mean scores in the question "Who performs household chores?" as presented in Table 5, there is no difference between men and women social workers using independent samples *t*-test Hence, regardless of gender, for either men or women professional social workers, the answer remain practically the same Almost or more chores are done by Women at home.

Current study shows that there is a gendered division of labor in the assignments related to family work. More women social workers than men are reported to perform all or most of the domestic chores. As compared to women social workers, a very lesser proportion of men social workers reported that they perform more tasks than their spouses. Works that offer evidence, such as Sultana, 2021, and Hernández-Albújar et al., 2023, reveal that gender norms persist in





domestic work and how that creates gender inequity. Carreiro (2021) has also shown in his study that women are still found to perform almost all chores even in dual-earning families.

Gender stereotypes are deeply rooted in Pakistan and society presumes that only women have to manage all the household chores. Hence women have to stay and complete most of the household chores even if they have a job. In compliance with the expectations of the culture, women are tasked with the responsibility of taking care of elderly and sick persons regardless of employment. Thus, women are compelled to take up both household chores and work responsibilities. The cultural setting of Pakistan particularly embellishes the fact that men are seen to be the breadwinners of the family even if the wife earns more than him. This idea frees them from carrying out household tasks and they do not share equal responsibilities in the docket. In addition, the absence of appropriate support networks, such as shared household responsibilities and accessible or fairly priced childcare, made it harder for women to carry out their responsibilities at home and work. Furthermore, both men and women have to face societal stigma if they deviate from traditional gender norms, particularly at home. They may face societal disapproval if they go beyond conventional gender norms. In this way, they do not even think to deteriorate these conventional gender roles at home. It is therefore very important to challenge these conventional gender norms to promote a balanced and egalitarian division of labor at home. According to the studies carried out by Kabeer (2005) and Farooq (2020) in Pakistan, a complicated relationship exists between social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to the existence of traditional gender roles at home.

The findings of the current study, however, also point to a little divergence from these conventional functions. Gender stereotypes are challenged by some presence of shared responsibility in tasks like cleaning, cooking, and food shopping. There is evidence that men social workers share responsibility even in tasks typically performed by women, such as feeding and changing diapers. The shift in workload toward a more equitable allocation is consistent with the changing gender roles in families, as research such as Akanle (2016) "Men at work keep-off: Male roles and household chores in Nigeria." highlights. This points to a progressive change in the expectations and conventions of society toward a more egalitarian labor divide within homes.

7. Conclusion

It is concluded that men and women generally follow traditional roles at home. Women perform almost all the household work irrespective that they also contribute to the family income. On the other hand, men either do not indulge in household activities or their contribution is much less to create a disproportionate share in this sphere of life. Some of the household tasks are equally shared by husband and wife. Out of equally shared tasks, grocery shopping, and emotional or medical care to family members have higher percentages to conclude that men share only those household tasks that do not need to be done daily or have less to contribute to the daily workload of household tasks.

8. Recommendations

To improve the situation, efforts are needed at individual, community, and state levels. At the individual level, people should try to fix their problems through communication. Spouses





should talk to each other regarding equal division of labor in household chores particularly when their spouses are working. They should support each other in facing societal pressures in this regard. At the community level, the leaders and influencers can play a vital role in promoting gender equality in the performance of household chores.

On the other side, the state should introduce policies for equal division of labor both at work and home. These policies may include cultural shift through education, supporting women through family-friendly workplace policies, flexible working hours and maternity and paternity leaves among others. These changes can be introduced both at institutional and societal levels. The state should also work with non-governmental organizations to achieve the objective of gender equality in both spheres of life i.e. work and family. Further researchers are recommended to use qualitative methods to explore the phenomenon in detail.

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