

Doing gender during the Covid-19 pandemic among academicians in Nueva Ecija, Philippines

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ARTICLE INFO

DOI:10.46223/HCMCOUJS.
soci.en.15.3.3239.2025

Received: February 11th, 2024

Revised: April 22nd, 2024

Accepted: May 20th, 2024

Keywords:

academicians; Covid-19 pandemic; domestic roles; dual-earning households; educational attainment; gender ideology; gender role attitudes; Philippines

ABSTRACT

Research on the division of labor within families needs to be conducted, particularly regarding how housework is divided, resisted, and modified, which is under-researched (Carlson et al., 2020). To address this gap, a survey was conducted to investigate the gender role attitudes and domestic division of labor of academicians from various colleges and universities in Nueva Ecija, Philippines. This survey included 43 male and 106 female respondents.

Cross-tabulation, T-tests, and correlational analysis were employed to analyze the data. The T-test results revealed a positive gender role attitude among men and women. In terms of household involvement, on average, men spent approximately 25.42 hours per week on domestic responsibilities, whereas women dedicated 31.68 hours per week to these tasks. Interestingly, men allocate more time to household chores such as dishwashing and ironing clothes than women.

This study enriches the ongoing conversation about how dual-earning couples manage their division of labor, particularly within academic settings. Furthermore, the correlation results indicate that men with higher income and higher educational attainment tended to endorse traditional gender role ideologies. In contrast, women with higher income and educational attainment were more likely to negotiate their domestic duties. These findings reveal that gender during the Covid-19 pandemic is nuanced by spouses' relative income and educational attainment. Furthermore, those who embrace egalitarian attitudes tend to participate more in housework. Young children among dual-earning couples promote an egalitarian attitude where husbands assume childcare responsibilities, and couples are more inclined to engage in childcare activities jointly.

The findings provide more profound insights by showcasing the potential for egalitarian attitudes within these couples. Additionally, the study highlights the pivotal role of young children in fostering such egalitarianism. Moreover, it observes that factors such as income and education can reinforce egalitarian values or contribute to dismantling traditional gendered divisions of labor within families.

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has drastically altered work and family life dynamics. With the closure of schools and offices, work arrangements underwent significant restructuring, leading to telecommuting and work-from-home schemes becoming the new standard (International Labor Organization, 2021). Alongside these changes, families worldwide have grappled with the pandemic's profound impact, as parents find themselves facing heightened demands in managing household chores, childcare, and homeschooling (Boca et al., 2021).

Amidst these shifts, traditional roles within Filipino families are also evolving. The Philippines has achieved a commendable position in global gender equality, securing 16th out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index report (Abad, 2023). According to Alampay (2014), while Filipino culture historically assigned mothers as primary caregivers and fathers as providers, there is now a discernible trend toward shared responsibility for sustaining the family. Alampay (2014) added that this transformation is underscored by the increasing participation of Filipino women in the workforce, with nearly half of them now employed. Consequently, a significant portion of Filipino households now operate as dual-earning units. Hasnan (2019) explains Southeast Asia's escalating cost of living has prompted both spouses to join the workforce and adopt the dual-career household model. This arrangement ensures financial stability and enables them to pursue their respective careers actively.

As households increasingly shift from single-earner to dual-earner setups, research reveals that women still bear a disproportionate burden of unpaid household labor compared to men. This perpetuates gender disparities, hindering progress towards achieving gender equality. Addressing this issue aligns with SDG5's objective of valuing unpaid care and domestic work and promoting shared responsibility within households (David et al., 2017).

In light of the prevalence of highly educated women, the National Economic and Development Authority of the Philippines (National Economic and Development Authority, 2023) recognizes the imperative of bolstering Filipino women's involvement in the workforce. This entails ensuring adequate childcare support for working women and facilitating their full participation in economic activities.

Quadlin and Doan (2018) found that men living in urban areas allocate less time to tasks typically associated with male responsibilities than their counterparts in suburban and rural settings. However, despite this shift, urban men do not compensate by increasing their participation in traditionally female-dominated tasks. This observation highlights a distinct chore distribution pattern in urban households, where household tasks are often categorized based on gender among heterosexual couples. On the other hand, Bünning (2020) examined how fathers' part-time employment affects their engagement in childcare and housework. Conducted in Germany, the study found that fathers tend to become more involved in childcare and housework when working part-time. This indicates a positive relationship between reduced work hours and heightened participation in domestic duties.

During the pandemic, lines between family and work became increasingly blurred, with working parents experiencing constraints that hindered their ability to manage their domestic and work responsibilities regarding location and timing (Otonkorpi-Lehtoranta et al., 2021). Working from home during the pandemic reduces gender disparities as both parents allocate more time to childcare compared to when they are in the workplace. However, a notable discrepancy exists for full-time working fathers, which is disproportionately large. When a father works exclusively from home, the time spent on housework remains higher for mothers than for fathers (Lyttelton et al., 2022).

A study in the UK revealed that both women and men during the pandemic increased their involvement in domestic duties. However, men's participation did not overturn the unequal division of tasks at home, and women decreased their time in employment to balance the demands of responsibilities (Garcia, 2021). Similarly, according to the OXFAM survey 2020 conducted among men and women in the US, UK, Canada, Philippines, and Kenya, women continued to shoulder a disproportionate share of household responsibilities during the pandemic. Nonetheless, there was an increase in the time men spent on childcare compared to the pre-pandemic period.

Role attitude plays a significant role in men's involvement in domestic chores. According to Baxter and Kane (1995), men with liberal sex role attitudes perform a more substantial share of household tasks and spend more time on domestic chores. Similarly, recent research on American society highlights the importance of establishing an egalitarian distribution of labor as a critical factor in advancing gender equity across both public and private spheres (Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010).

Several factors are found to be associated with egalitarian attitudes. For one, Vijayasiri (2011) elucidated how traditional gender expectations within marriage dictate that women are primarily responsible for household maintenance, while men are expected to provide financial support for the family, illustrating the enduring influence of these norms on gender roles within the domestic sphere. On the other hand, Vandecasteele et al. (2022) found that households with children tended to halt or slow down the process of adopting gender-egalitarian attitudes when faced with abrupt changes in their routines.

Research findings on gender attitudes within Filipino families present inconsistencies. Pingol (2001) observed that Filipino househusbands with migrant wives adopt egalitarian gender attitudes, as evidenced by their willingness to engage in caregiving and domestic responsibilities, thereby redefining their masculinity to include these tasks. In contrast, Parreñas (2005) found that Filipino husbands left behind by Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) wives tend to resist participation in household chores. Instead, they uphold traditional gender norms, believing that women should primarily perform domestic tasks despite their wives being the primary breadwinners in the family.

The present study aims to broaden the investigation of gender-egalitarian attitudes by analyzing how dual-earning households perpetuate and challenge traditional gender roles. Specifically, this research examines the socio-demographic profiles, gender role attitudes, and engagement in household chores among male and female academics in Nueva Ecija. By exploring the intersection of gender attitudes and household chore participation with their backgrounds, the study aims to provide insights into the dynamics of gender roles in contemporary dual-earning households. Additionally, the research examines the correlation between gender role attitudes and household division of labor. Thus, this study addresses gaps in prior research, including the limited exploration of the pandemic's impact on household division of labor in dual-earning families and the scant literature on the relationship between gender role attitudes and household division of labor during the pandemic.

Applying West and Zimmerman's (1987) concept of "doing gender" as a framework for this study will illuminate whether dual-earning couples actively challenge the gendered division of labor within their households or perpetuate traditional expectations despite both partners contributing financially to the family during the pandemic.

2. Theoretical basis

The division of household labor, with women predominantly participating and men often lacking involvement, illustrates gender-specific attributes assigned by societal norms. This allocation of household tasks determines who performs which duties and reflects societal reflection of femininity and masculinity. It demonstrates how societal expectations interpret gender within the framework of household responsibilities (West & Zimmerman, 1987). According to Vijayasiri (2011), an “implicit marital contract” exists among married couples, wherein women are conventionally tasked with household maintenance in marriage, while men are primarily responsible for economic provision and decision-making. This dynamic could contribute to why men spend less time on housework. On the other hand, men who are married to women advocating egalitarianism tend to engage in more housework than those married to women with traditional views (Vijayasiri, 2011).

A study in Australia revealed that between 1987 and 2005, men who held more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles dedicated much of their housework time to core tasks. This finding suggests that as men adopt more egalitarian attitudes, they are more willing to engage in cooking, cleaning, and laundry (Chesters, 2012). Similarly, women who embrace egalitarian values tend to do less housework than those who adhere to traditional gender roles (Carriero & Todesco, 2018).

Parkman (2004) applied the gender ideology perspective and discovered that spouses view their contributions as fair when considering the motives or net benefits from their employment. Despite wives’ employment, they still do much household work, given their concern about the durability of the marriage.

3. Methodology

This exploratory quantitative study investigates gender role attitudes and household division of labor during the pandemic among married male and female academicians from dual-earning households. Purposive and referral sampling techniques were employed to select respondents, focusing on academicians from various universities and colleges in Nueva Ecija, including both state-run and privately managed institutions such as Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST), Araullo-Phinma University in San Jose City, Colleges of the Republic in San Jose City, Our Lady of Sacred Heart College in Guimba, Nueva Ecija, and Central Luzon State University in Science City of Munoz. A total of 149 respondents participated in the survey.

Purposive sampling is aptly employed in this study because it explicitly targets academicians from dual-earning households. Educational institutions encompass academicians from varied demographic backgrounds. Given the study’s emphasis, this sampling method is the most appropriate.

Data collection utilized both online and printed questionnaires, divided into four sections. The first section gathered socio-demographic information, encompassing personal details, family background, and employment history. The second section assessed gender role attitudes, adapting and modifying the instrument from García-Cueto et al. (2015), comprising 15 statements on a four-point Likert scale ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement. The third section focused on labor force participation, inquiring about the amount of time spent on reproductive work per week and employing a four-point Likert scale to gauge the involvement in household tasks for both respondents and their spouses.

The instrument underwent a pre-test, and its validity was confirmed through a Cronbach's Alpha result of 0.79. Data is analyzed using cross-tabulation to compare the socio-demographic profiles of male and female respondents. To examine any significant difference in gender role attitudes and weekly time spent on household chores among respondents, a T-test was used to compare means. Pearson's correlation was then utilized to examine the potential correlations between the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics and the above variables and explore the relationship among them.

To safeguard the anonymity of the respondents, identifiers such as names, email addresses (for the online survey), and school affiliations were omitted. Additionally, the online and printed questionnaires were accompanied by a cover letter inviting participation and an informed consent form, ensuring voluntary involvement.

Given the small sample size and the specific focus on academicians from dual-earning households, the findings of this study are limited as they cannot be extrapolated to generalize the population of dual-earning households in the Philippines. The study needed more depth in exploring the nuances of respondents' experiences and conducting a comprehensive analysis of their lived realities, as it primarily focused on gathering quantitative data. Additionally, it did not investigate how dual-earning couples negotiate their roles.

4. Result and discussion

The findings of the study are presented in this part.

4.1. Socio-demographic characteristics

Table 1

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Socio-demographic characteristics		<i>f</i>	%
Total observations		149	100
Sex	Male	46	30.87
	Female	103	69.13
Age			
Male	26 to 35	12	26.1
	36 to 45	14	30.4
	Over 45	20	43.5
Female	26 to 35	38	36.9
	36 to 45	42	40.8
	Over 45	23	22.3
Education			
Male	College	14	30.4
	Masters	22	47.8
	Doctorate	10	21.7
Female	College	44	42.7
	Masters	42	40.8

Socio-demographic characteristics		<i>f</i>	%
Total observations		149	100
	Doctorate	17	16.5
Spouse's education			
Respondent's wife	Vocational	4	8.7
	College	24	52.2
	Masters	13	28.3
	Doctorate	5	10.9
Respondent's husband	Vocational	25	24.3
	College	60	58.3
	Masters	15	14.6
	Doctorate	3	2.9
Spouse's occupation			
Respondent's wife	Teaching	22	47.8
	Non-Teaching	24	52.2
Respondent's husband	Teaching	20	19.4
	Non-Teaching	83	80.6
Family income bracket			
Male	low income but not poor (P12,030 to P24,060)	2	4.34
	lower middle income (P24,060 to P48,120)	10	21.73
	middle middle class (P48,120 to P84,210)	20	43.47
	upper middle income (P84,210 to P144,360)	10	21.73
	upper income but not rich (P144,360 to P240,600)	4	6.69
Female	low income but not poor (P12,030 to P24,060)	3	2.91
	lower middle income (P24,060 to P48,120)	37	35.92
	middle middle class (P48,120 to P84,210)	47	45.63
	upper middle income (P84,210 to P144,360)	15	14.56
	upper income but not rich (P144,360 to P240,600)	1	.97
Mean income			
Male respondents			P42,499
Respondent's wife			P30,282
Female respondents			P31,551
Respondent's husband			P31,102

Source. Data analysis result of the research

Table 1 illustrates the demographic breakdown of respondents. It reveals that 69.13% of respondents are female, while 30.87% are male academicians. Regarding age distribution, 43.5% of male respondents are over 45, whereas 40.8% of female respondents fall within the 36.45 age bracket. Additionally, more males (47.8%) have obtained Master's degrees than females

(40.8%). Furthermore, more males (21.7%) have earned doctorate degrees than females (16.5%), indicating higher educational attainment among male respondents.

Comparing the educational attainment of respondents and their spouses, it is evident that both male and female respondents have higher levels of education than their spouses. The majority of spouses are employed in non-teaching occupations, although 47.8% of respondent's wives are engaged in teaching.

Regarding combined income, 43.47% of male and female respondents are classified as middle-middle class, earning approximately P48,120 pesos to P84,210 pesos. Male respondents generally have higher mean income than female respondents and their wives. However, female respondents and their husbands exhibit relatively similar mean income levels. A 2019 census by the Philippine Statistics Authority reveals that women's average daily wage is 13.9% lower than men's, a prevalent indication of the gender wage gap.

4.2. Gender differences and gender role attitudes

Table 2

Gender Differences and Gender Role Attitudes

Gender Role Attitudes	Male		Female		
	M	SD	M	SD	p-value
Childcare should be divided among spouses	3.76	.705	3.37	.950	0.02*
Equally participated in household chores	3.76	.473	3.60	.732	0.05*
The wife is responsible for housework	2.19	.957	2.27	.982	0.292
Spouses should provide economically	3.47	.585	3.47	.790	0.119
The husband should take on the breadwinning role	3.02	.106	2.58	1.05	0.451
The husband should be better educated	1.69	.865	1.50	.850	0.574
When the husband is earning high, the wife need not work anymore	1.86	.832	1.56	.824	0.782
When the wife is earning high, the husband need not work anymore	1.69	.756	1.46	.802	0.821
When both are working, and the child is ill, the wife should sacrifice work and care for the child	2.19	.957	2.35	.968	0.139

Note. Legend: 1 - 1.75 (strongly disagree); 1.76 - 2.50 (disagree); 2.51 - 3.26 (agree); 3.27 - 4.00 (strongly agree)

Source. Data analysis result of the research

A T-test was conducted to determine whether there is a significant difference between married male and female academicians regarding their gender role attitudes. It was revealed that they have similar attitudes except for "childcare should be equally divided among spouses." Men have a higher mean ($m = 3.76$) than females ($m = 3.37$) with a p-value of 0.002, indicating a positive appraisal of husbands' participation in childcare. This reflects a noticeable shift in male attitudes towards their involvement in childcare responsibilities. Studies conducted in Canada and Japan support this observation, demonstrating an uptick in the time fathers devote to domestic tasks, especially childcare (Nishimura, 2022; Shafer et al., 2020).

Additionally, although there is no significant difference in the respondents' attitudes toward household chores, the survey highlights a consensus among respondents in favor of equally sharing these tasks. In line with this attitude, both genders disagree with the belief that wives should bear the exclusive burden of domestic duties. Alternative approaches, such as outsourcing and support from extended family members, offer avenues to alleviate the burden of

prolonged domestic responsibilities for women. This dynamic is particularly relevant in Filipino households, where extended family structures are prevalent. Regrettably, this arrangement undermines the pursuit of egalitarian childcare distribution within the family unit (Kubo, 2012).

Given that respondents and their respective spouses contribute to their family's financial resources, men and women agree that they should provide economic support for their families. Nevertheless, the prevailing belief that the role of the primary breadwinner should be the husband remains, which is consistent with the traditional Filipino cultural practice of assigning breadwinning responsibilities to husbands.

Respondents also show a clear consensus in firmly rejecting the notion that husbands should have a higher level of education than their wives. Furthermore, even if either party quits the job. Additionally, respondents disagree that wives should be expected to sacrifice their work when one of their children is unwell.

4.3. Correlates of gender role attitudes among married male academicians

Table 3

Correlates of Gender Role Attitudes among Married Male Academicians

Division of labor at home	Males		Females		Total	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i> (149)	<i>p</i>
Weekly hours spent on meal preparation	4.78	3.64	5.81	5.38	1.368	0.02*
Weekly hours spent in washing the dishes	3.21	1.56	4.21	2.71	2.321	.039*
Weekly hours spent in doing household chores	4.23	1.94	4.63	2.55	.927	.818
Weekly hours spent doing laundry	3.54	2.01	3.96	2.60	9.66	.456
Weekly hours spent shopping	3.80	1.80	3.06	1.56	2.38	.226
Weekly hours spent in ironing clothes	3.36	2.08	2.88	1.56	1.575	.002*
Weekly hours spent in childcare	5.86	3.55	7.13	8.07	1.329	.230

Source. Data analysis result of the research

The division of labor at home was measured by asking respondents how much time they dedicated to various activities such as cooking, dishwashing, housework, laundry, shopping, and ironing. Men allocate approximately 25.42 hours per week, while women dedicate 31.68 hours per week to domestic responsibilities. Generally, respondents invest most of their time in meal preparation, with an average of 10.59 hours. It is noteworthy that men spend more time on dishwashing ($m = 3.21$, $p = 0.039$) and ironing clothes ($m = 3.36$, $p = 0.002$) than women, which is surprising.

4.4. Correlates of gender role attitude among married male academicians

Table 4

Correlates of Gender Role Attitudes among Married Male Academicians

Socio-demographic profile	Gender role attitudes	Correlation coefficient	p-value
Age	When the wife is earning high, the husband need not work anymore	.310*	0.036
Educational attainment of spouse	Equal decision on the education of children and childcare	.292	.049

Source. Data analysis result of the research

Using Pearson's correlation, this study found a positive correlation between men's age and their acceptance that when their wives earn a substantial income, husbands no longer need to work ($r = .0310$, $p = 0.036$). This suggests that as men age, they become more receptive to the idea that their high-earning wives can take on the role of the family's breadwinner, potentially allowing men to retire from their careers in such circumstances. Also, higher-income husbands may prefer that their wives quit work to focus more on caring for the children.

4.5. Correlates of gender role attitudes among married female academicians

Table 5

Correlates of Gender Role Attitudes among Married Female Academicians

Socio-demographic characteristics	Gender role attitudes	Correlation coefficient	p-value
Income	Childcare should be divided among spouses	.258**	0.009
Educational attainment	When both are working and the child is ill, the wife should sacrifice work	-.255**	0.009

Source. Data analysis result of the research

Among women, noteworthy correlations shed light on their beliefs and gender role attitudes. A positive correlation exists between income and the belief in shared childcare responsibilities ($r = 0.258$, $p = 0.009$). This suggests that as a married woman's income increases, so does her inclination to support the idea of dividing childcare duties with her spouse. In other words, higher-earning wives are more likely to advocate shared parenting. This is consistent with the findings of Vijayasiri (2011) that women who prioritize career investment and earn more tend to allocate less time to household chores. Moreover, the active involvement of husbands in childcare plays a crucial role in fostering greater gender equality within the family dynamic, thereby alleviating the burden typically borne by wives (Goldscheider et al., 2015).

There is also a negative correlation between women's educational attainment and the belief that "when both are working and the child is ill, the wife should sacrifice work" ($r = -0.255$, $p = 0.009$). This indicates that as the educational level of wives rises, their inclination to sacrifice work when their children are ill diminishes. This phenomenon is logical, as women with higher academic achievements are more likely to hold positions with greater responsibilities, making it challenging to solely bear the burden of sacrificing their careers in such situations.

4.6. Correlates of the division of household tasks among male academicians

Table 6

Correlates of the Division of Household Tasks among Male Academicians

Socio-demographic characteristics	Household Involvement	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
Educational attainment	Both spouses are on chores	-.295*	0.046
Wife's income	Husband only dishes	.425**	0.030
Age of the youngest child	both spouses on childcare	-.487**	0.01

Source. Data analysis result of the research

There are several correlations among men about their educational attainment, work experience, age of youngest children, and household involvement.

Firstly, as men's educational attainment increases, there is a notable decrease in spending a fair amount of time with their wives doing household chores ($r = -0.295$, $p = 0.046$). In other words, higher education levels among men are associated with reduced participation in domestic tasks alongside their spouses. Secondly, their wives' income exhibits a strong positive correlation with only the husband washing the dishes ($r = 0.425$, $p = 0.003$). This implies that when their wives have higher incomes, husbands are more likely to take on the sole responsibility of dishwashing. Thirdly, the age of the youngest child is negatively correlated with spouses spending childcare time together ($r = -0.332$, $p = 0.024$). This indicates that when the youngest child is younger, husbands are more likely to assume childcare responsibilities, and couples are more inclined to engage in childcare activities jointly.

4.7. Correlates of the division of household tasks among female academicians

Table 7

Correlates of the Division of Household Tasks among Female Academicians

Socio-demographic characteristics	Household Involvement	Correlation Coefficient	p-value
Highest educational attainment	Weekly hours on chores	-.216*	0.028
	Husband only on chores	.217*	0.028
	Husband only on laundry	.265**	0.007
	Husband only on shopping	.245*	0.013
Income	Wife only on chores	-.199*	0.043
	Wife only on laundry	-.318**	0.001
	Wife only in ironing clothes	-.315**	0.001

Source. Data analysis result of the research

Women's educational attainment shows interesting correlations with their household chores and their husbands' involvement in domestic responsibilities.

Firstly, a negative correlation exists between women's educational attainment and the number of weekly hours they spend on chores ($r = -0.216$, $p = 0.028$). In other words, they dedicate less time to household tasks as their educational level increases. This observation is further substantiated by the positive correlation between the level of education and the practice of the husbands taking charge of chores ($r = 0.217$, $p = 0.028$), handling laundry ($r = 0.265$, $p = 0.007$), and managing shopping ($r = 0.245$, $p = 0.013$). This implies that as these women's level of education rises, the likelihood of their husbands assuming responsibilities for chores, laundry, and shopping also increases.

Moreover, their income exhibits a negative correlation with the practice of wives taking charge of chores ($r = -0.199$, $p = 0.043$), handling laundry ($r = -0.318$, $p = 0.001$), and ironing clothes ($r = -0.315$, $p = 0.001$). This suggests that as their income increases, these women tend to spend less time on domestic chores, including laundry, ironing, and general chores.

4.8. Correlation between gender role attitudes and division of household tasks

Table 8

Correlation between Gender Role Attitudes and Division of Household Tasks

Gender role attitudes	Household involvement	Correlations coefficient	p-value
Childcare should be equally divided among spouses	Husband on childcare	.235**	.004
	Both spouses on childcare	.271**	.001
Equal participation in household chores	Both spouses on meal preparation	.251**	.002
	Both spouses on dishes	.215**	.008
	Both spouses are on chores	.256**	.002
	Both spouses are in the laundry	.235**	.004
	Both spouses in ironing clothes	.193*	.018

Source. Data analysis result of the research

A positive correlation exists between gender role attitudes and husbands' and spouses' household involvement. Specifically, an egalitarian attitude toward childcare is associated with increased husbands' and spouses' participation in childcare ($r = .235$, $p = .005$). Similarly, an egalitarian attitude towards household chores is correlated with higher levels of involvement from both spouses in various tasks, including meal preparation ($r = .251$, $p = .002$), dishes ($r = .215$, $p = .008$), chores ($r = .256$, $p = .002$), laundry ($r = .235$, $p = .004$), and ironing clothes ($r = .193$, $p = .018$).

4.9. Discussion

Gender during the Covid-19 pandemic happened when family and work space intersected, and the line between these two domains was blurred (Otonkorpi-Lehtoranta et al., 2021). Before the pandemic, women who worked 35 hours per week in the United States dedicated 4.9 hours to household chores, whereas men in the same employment bracket allocated 3.8 hours to household responsibilities (Weisholtz, 2020).

This study reveals that amid the pandemic, women dedicate approximately 31.68 hours per week to domestic and childcare duties in households where both spouses were employed, compared to men, who devoted approximately 25.42 hours to domestic responsibilities. Approximately, there is a 21.9% difference in their household involvement. It is smaller than the difference before the pandemic, about 22% (Otonkorpi-Lehtoranta et al., 2021). Before the pandemic, the traditional division of household labor persisted, particularly among couples where both partners worked at least 30 hours per week. Wives were more inclined to dedicate more time to household tasks than men (Bartley et al., 2005; Lyonette & Crompton, 2015). Parkman (2004) explored the limited involvement of husbands in household chores despite their wives earning more and being employed. The study revealed that the availability of time and resources significantly impacts spouses' allocation of household duties.

Traditional gender norms dictate that men should be the primary breadwinners, limiting their involvement in household chores. Job loss can lead to a shift towards more egalitarian attitudes in men. Conversely, when women are unemployed, they lose spousal support in domestic tasks, reinforcing traditional gender roles (Reichelt et al., 2021). Challenging the conventional gender norms among men proves difficult, as their masculinity often links to minimal involvement in household and childcare responsibilities, traditionally viewed as women's domains. Men whose sense of masculinity feels threatened are less inclined to engage in household and childcare responsibilities.

In contrast, those embracing the new masculinity ideology reported higher involvement in childcare than housework (Kaplan & Offer, 2022). Likewise, in the study of Levant et al. (1987), among 40 upper-middle-class families in a metropolitan area, it was revealed that although fathers are spending significant time in childcare and household tasks, the traditional pattern persists: mothers spend more time in child care and do traditionally feminine roles while fathers do more of the historically masculine household chores. Therefore, as long as the traditional masculinity ideology persists, the practice of “doing gender” and reinforcing conventional gender role expectations for husbands and wives persists as well. According to Butler (2004), achieving an egalitarian division of labor at home is contingent upon individuals undoing gender. By redistributing household responsibilities more equally and challenging traditional gender roles entrenched in domestic labor division, Butler (2004) proposes that we can initiate a process of undoing the gendered expectations imposed on individuals.

The T-test results reveal that male and female respondents exhibit an egalitarian attitude towards domestic chores and responsibilities. Fischer and Arnold (1994) underscore the importance of egalitarian attitudes and behaviors advocating for the belief that men and women should assume identical roles in domestic responsibilities. Male respondents show a positive inclination towards equally dividing childcare duties among spouses. This sentiment aligns with their active involvement in meal preparation, dishwashing, and ironing clothes.

Moreover, as respondents’ age increases, men are likely to relinquish their work when their wives earn a high income. Additionally, higher levels of education attained by respondents’ wives correlate with a higher likelihood of observing equal decision-making regarding children’s education and childcare. Likewise, as women’s income increases, the more they promote that childcare responsibilities should be divided among spouses. Furthermore, advances in women’s education make them less inclined to sacrifice work when their children are ill. Hence, the prospect of “undoing gender” and fostering an egalitarian approach to domestic chores among male academics intersects with factors such as their age, their wives’ income, and the educational level attained by their wives.

Research indicates a link between socioeconomic status, education, and gender relations (Kolpashnikova et al., 2019). Zhou and Kan (2019) argue that higher salaries and levels of education correlate with more gender-egalitarian attitudes and behaviors, consequently reducing the time women spend on domestic work. However, despite having higher education levels compared to their spouses, women continue to experience slow progress in achieving equality in unpaid labor (Treas & Tai, 2016), with minimal changes observed in the division of labor between genders (Kan et al., 2011). Maintaining employment is crucial for wives as it serves as leverage for achieving a more balanced distribution of domestic duties.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

The survey reveals a clear consensus among respondents who are part of dual-earning households. They emphasize the importance of equally sharing household responsibilities among couples. Additionally, respondents have shared agreement regarding the need for dual-earning couples to continue providing for their families. Both genders express disagreements with the notion that wives should bear the exclusive burden of domestic duties. Furthermore, respondents strongly disagree that wives should be expected to sacrifice their work when one of their children is unwell. However, this study cannot definitively conclude that this egalitarian attitude leads to men departing from work to care for their sick children. In the Philippines, the ongoing engagement of working

mothers in the labor force hinges on the presence of female relatives or paid caregivers and house helpers who can assume the domestic and nurturing responsibilities typically shouldered by employed women. This is reified by Hochschild's global care chain (2014).

Interestingly, men show a higher mean score than women concerning the equal division of childcare responsibilities among spouses. This suggests a notable shift in male attitudes towards greater involvement in childcare responsibilities, marking a positive trend towards more equitable household roles.

Regarding the respondents' involvement in household tasks, men, on average, allocate approximately 25.42 hours per week, while women dedicate 31.68 hours per week to domestic responsibilities. The findings from correlation indicate that when husbands earn more than their wives, they tend to adhere to traditional gender roles within the household. Similarly, their income increased, so they had less time for domestic duties with their wives. Furthermore, as the educational attainment of husbands increased, their likelihood of spending time on household chores, meal preparation, dishwashing, and ironing decreased.

This means they expect their wives to be primarily responsible for household chores and prioritize caregiving over work when their child is unwell. Husbands who outearn their wives also tend to view themselves as the primary providers for the family, suggesting that they perceive the wife's contribution to the family's economic resources as minimal. Consequently, they believe that husbands should have higher levels of education to reinforce their role as the breadwinners.

The study highlights a disparity between the egalitarian attitudes of men towards childcare and household chores and their actual participation, particularly among those who remain the primary breadwinners in their families. Despite their progressive views, a noticeable gap exists between attitude and action in household responsibilities. This underscores the challenge of "undoing gender" when traditional roles, such as the primary breadwinner, persist among men in their families.

Based on these findings, men and women negotiated gender roles during the pandemic. Men with higher incomes and educational attainments perpetuate traditional gender divisions of labor at home, often dedicating less time to household tasks. Conversely, women's income and educational attainment become sources of bargaining power in renegotiating domestic responsibilities typically associated with them, increasing the likelihood of husbands taking on chores such as laundry and family shopping independently.

The findings of this study contradict the study conducted by Medved (2016) that breadwinning mothers, particularly high-earning women, underplay their financial contributions to conform to traditional gender roles. Consequently, they encounter hurdles in juggling their primary earners and caregiver roles. Furthermore, previous studies argue that women are more inclined to leave their jobs when their husbands work long hours, highlighting a societal bias that favors men's careers over women's. This unequal burden on women to prioritize their spouses' overwork at the expense of their careers perpetuates traditional gender roles within households (Cha, 2010).

To conclude, the findings of this study suggest that fostering egalitarian attitudes among men may be more feasible than increasing their engagement in household chores and caregiving. Consequently, challenging traditional gender roles in dual-earning households necessitates that women attain higher levels of education and receive equitable or higher salaries than their spouses. Only then can they effectively challenge gender norms and demand an equitable distribution of domestic responsibilities.

5.2. Recommendation

Drawing upon the conclusions of this study, numerous suggestions can be made forth for further research:

1. To gain a deeper understanding of the nuances surrounding gender dynamics in dual-earning families, it is essential to consider respondents from lower-income and higher-income sectors outside academia.

2. An unexplored variable in this study is the presence of house helpers, potentially influencing the study's outcomes. Investigating how this variable interacts with the involvement of both spouses in domestic duties warrants further examination.

3. To enhance the depth of our findings, employing a qualitative approach can provide valuable insights into the subjective experiences of both men and women about their engagements in gender roles. Employing either a phenomenological or narrative approach offers useful insights into how dual-earning couples navigate and reinforce traditional gender roles, providing a nuanced understanding of the contextual factors at play in "doing gender."

4. For policymakers, the study underscores how men with higher income and greater educational attainment tend to perpetuate traditional gender norms within the home. Conversely, women with higher incomes and greater academic attainment negotiate these gender norms. Addressing the issue may require the implementation of support services, training programs, and policies to encourage both men and women to contribute equitably to household responsibilities and realize the goals of SDG-5.

5. Future researchers could utilize the theory of intersectionality to explore how cultural practices, socioeconomic backgrounds, gender, race, and ethnicity intersect to either challenge or reinforce the traditional division of labor within families.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We want to express our gratitude for the financial grant provided by the CLSU Gender and Development Office, which greatly facilitated the completion of this research. Additionally, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the numerous state colleges and universities in Nueva Ecija for their invaluable assistance in recruiting respondents from their respective institutions.

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