

Contributed Article

Factors Influencing Happiness & Satisfaction in Single & Dual-career Families

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The study examines the factors influencing happiness and satisfaction in the single- and dual-career families. Data were collected from 240 single- and 240 dual-career spouses at Kolkata and Kharagpur. Results suggest that the level of educational attainment, family income, and jointly living do not influence happiness and satisfaction. Irrespective of family type, the higher the level of multi-tasking attitude and marital adjustment, the higher are the level of happiness and satisfaction. More time spent on household work, freedom of both the partners, and liberated belief on gender roles retard happiness and satisfaction. The findings lend support to traditional gender roles.

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Background

Men are no longer considered to be the sole 'economic provider' for the family. With the rise in females' education, their psychological need to develop self-identity, materialistic orientation, status consciousness, and the rising cost of living, even married women are entering into professional careers, and at the same time taking care of the family members. The dual-career life style is on the rise and joint/extended families are being replaced by nuclear families. As a result, a new picture in marital life is emerging. Negotiations with work-family demands and responsibilities, adjustment, and relationships play a role in these transitions. Contrary to the single-career family where either spouse is engaged in gainful occupation, in the dual-career family, both husband and wife pursue an economically gainful career and also maintain a family life together.

Indian families were well-known for their stability and long-term relationships. Members of the family dwelt in the same house, took their meals together, and enjoyed property in

common. The family was governed by the elderly, male members worked outside in formal or informal sectors and earned money while the female members took care of the family members and children. Females generally did not seek career fulfilment as much as they seek family work and children. But today, the traditional family system—husband as the breadwinner and wife as the homemaker— is in transition. In contemporary society, wives and husbands have different expectations. They are striving to define themselves and their family relationships, in less-restrictive ways. Also, they are trying to balance the conflicting demands of work and family. In such a transitional state, it is pertinent to examine the factors that influence overall happiness and satisfaction in single- and dual-career families.

Evidences suggest that age and socio-economic conditions (Roth & Peck 1951) and socio-demographic factors (Andrade, Postma, & Abraham 1991) are unrelated to marital happiness. Advancing in age, educational level, and employment status are found to have no impact on marital happiness and satisfaction (Singh, Thind & Jaswal 2006). Also, differences in age, education, income, and occupation among the spouses create conflict and unhappiness (Spanier & Glick 1980). Contrarily, other studies suggest that the higher the level of educational attainment for the spouse, the higher the level of happiness and satisfaction (Khanna & Varghese 1978). Education plays an important role in shaping life.

Education not only builds skills, knowledge, and attitude but also increases the chance of employment, income, and status. Spouses with higher education have better skills to negotiate a win-win agreement in family life. Highly educated spouses are expected to be egalitarian on gender attitude and positive towards marital quality. So, we propose that higher level of education would increase marital happiness and satisfaction.

In dual-career families, both wives and husbands are benefited out of their employment and income.

In dual-career families, both wives and husbands are benefited out of their employment and income. The benefits for wives include: a heightened sense of self-esteem, positive physical and mental health and financial independence. The benefits to husbands include: less pressure to be the sole economic provider for the family, greater participation in parenting, and better general health. Income is associated with good mood and happiness of people's life (Kahneman et.al 2006). So, we propose that more income would increase the marital happiness and satisfaction.

Most of the people marry because they want companionship. They do not want to be lonely in life. Having a life partner makes one happy. Staying jointly in the family provides scope for sharing not only the material possessions of life but also the experiences of good and bad times. Contrarily, staying separately

leads to loneliness, unhappiness and dissatisfaction. So, we propose that staying together in the families would increase the marital happiness and satisfaction.

Polychronicity refers to the attitude of a person who does many tasks at the same time block. People with polychronic/multitasking attitude have better skills for planning, scheduling, and making sure that many things are done at a time. To a polychron, all time is the same, and they tend not to separate their work time from their personal time. So, we propose that polychronic/multitasking attitude would increase the marital happiness and satisfaction.

The amount of time spent on household work by the spouses has great impact over the marital happiness and satisfaction. It has been observed that spouses who spend more time on household work, experience greater level of unhappiness and dissatisfaction (Bird 1999). Spouses are prone to role strain arising out of competing demands and lack of time (Silverstein, Auerbach, & Levant 2002). Based on this discussion, we propose that the amount of time spent on household work by the spouses would be inversely associated with marital happiness and satisfaction.

Marital happiness and satisfaction depend on the ability of the partner to adjust to a variety of changes and to cope with a number of stressors.

Marital happiness and satisfaction depend on the ability of the partner to adjust to a variety of changes and to cope with a number of stressors (Gore & Manigione 1983). Adjustment reduces conflict fostering, better communication and sharing of activities that moderate spouses' feeling. Hence, we propose that better adjustment of spouses would increase marital happiness and satisfaction.

In the family context, relationships between the spouses play an important role. Happy and satisfactory relationships include: (a) freedom of spouses, (b) intimate bond through self-disclosure, likes, respects, and attaining common goals; (c) assertive conflict-resolution and communication skills, (d) partners' participation in decision-making; (e) egalitarian beliefs, and (f) romantic attitudes (Stevens & Stevens 1994). Spouses having freedom, closer bond, resolved conflict, participation in decision making, equality of status, and charming behaviour would enrich and sustain their marital life with satisfaction and happiness. Hence, we propose that better relationships among spouses would predict their marital happiness and satisfaction.

Sample

Participants were 240 single- and 240 dual-career spouses. They were drawn from the membership lists of professional organizations of law, medicine, physiotherapy, social work, and teaching in Kolkata and Kharagpur.

The average age of the spouses was about 39 years and 4 months. The dual-career spouses were a little older than the single-career spouses because of late marriage. So also husbands were older than their wives because in accordance with the norms of the studied locality, generally men are older than women in marriages. The single- and dual-career husbands had more years of job experience than the wives. Husbands were employed full time with higher pay; wives were either part-time employed or full-time employed with lower pay. Husbands in both the single- and dual-career families had more education than their wives because parents allowed

boys for higher education rather than the girls. The single- and dual-career families were nuclear consisting of four/ five members. Every family had, by and large, one child above 12 years. The length of the marriage of dual-career spouses was a little more than in the case of the single-career spouses because the former group was older than the latter group. Out of the 120 families each in single- and dual-careers, only three families in single-career, and seven families in dual-career, spouses were living separately. While more than 50 per cent of the dual-career spouses were living in urban areas, a little more than 40 per cent of the single career spouses were living in urban areas (Table 1).

Table 1: Sample Profile

Category	Age	Experience yrs.	Education Years	Family Size No.	Home back ground			Monthly family income	Monthly Individual income (Rs.)	Length of Marriage contribution (Percentage)	Living together
	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	R ^b (per cent)	SU ^b (per cent)	U ^b (per cent)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i> (per cent)	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	No
SCH	39.95 (7.41)	10.76 (8.34)	17.67 (4.24)	4.65 (1.90)	44 (36.7)	26 (21.7)	50 (41.7)	29,652 (17,445)	27,879 (94.02)	12.24 (8.44)	117 (97..5)
SCW	36.37 (7.42)	6.40 (8.79)	15.75 (3.93)	4.58 (1.81)	41 (34.2)	29 (24.2)	50 (41.7)	29,654 (17,451)	1,150 (3.88)	12.81 (7.98)	118 (98.3)
DCH	42.27 (7.64)	11.55 (9.93)	17.05 (5.06)	4.25 (1.50)	32 (26.7)	25 (20.8)	63 (52.5)	45,775 (91,950)	18,991 (41.49)	14.00 (9.15)	112 (93.3)
DCW	38.55 (7.81)	7.94 (9.17)	16.36 (4.88)	4.19 (1.58)	25 (20.8)	25 (20.8)	70 (58.3)	44,750 (94,439)	15,986 (35.72)	13.50 (8.50)	115 (95.8)
Total	39.29 (7.85)	9.17 (12.2)	16.71 (4.59)	4.41 (1.71)	142 (29.6)	105 (21.9)	233 (48.5)	37,460 (67,295)	15,962 (42.61)	13.14 (8.53)	462 (96.3)

SCH = Single-career husband, SCW = Single-career wife, DCH = Dual-career husband, DCW = Dual-career wife.

^bR= Rural, SU = Semi-urban, U = Urban.

Measures

Besides the socio-demographic characteristics on the number of years studied in formal educational institutions, the total family income from primary and secondary occupations, whether staying jointly; polychronic attitude (Kaufman Lane, & Lindquist 1991), time spent in hours per week on household work, dyadic adjustment (Spanier 1976), and relationships (Stevens & Stevens 1994) were assessed.

Polychronic/multitasking attitude assessed how time was planned and used. Polychronic attitude (Kaufman Lane & Lindquist 1991) was composed of four items with three negatively keyed items. Sample items include, 'I do not like to juggle several activities at the same time' (negatively keyed), and 'I am comfortable doing several things at the same time' (positively keyed). The response descriptions against each item were on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' (=1) to 'Strongly Agree' (= 5). Confirmatory factor analysis showed the fit of the data on four items to one-factor model ($X^2/df = 1.28$, CFI = 1.0, GFI = 1.0, NFI = 0.99) that ensured the convergent validity of the scale. The Cronbach alpha was 0.60. High scores indicated a stronger multitasking attitude.

To measure *Time spent on household work* (in hours) per week a 15-item questionnaire was developed. The activities included cooking, shopping, cleaning, doing laundry, child-caring (parenting, healthcare and education),

looking after the elderly (parents/senior members), house keeping, attending to friends/guests/relatives, social functions/obligations, religious practices (prayer, yoga, puja, etc.), playing with children, gardening, watching TV, attending telephone calls, and other household works. The respondents were asked to specify the time spent in hours per week on each household work. The total time spent for all work indicated the amount of time spent on household work.

Dyadic Adjustment used to measure marital satisfaction had four interrelated dimensions: (a) dyadic consensus—the level of agreement between the spouses on matters of importance to the relationships, (b) dyadic satisfaction—level of spouses' satisfaction with the present state of relationships and commitment to its continuance, (c) dyadic cohesion—the degree to which spouses engage on activities together, and (d) affectionate expression—the level of spouses' expression of affection and sex in the relationships. The scale had 32 items. Four-items were vetted to be inappropriate in the Indian context according to the judgment of three experts in family studies and were excluded.

Dyadic Consensus had 13 positively-keyed items. The response descriptions against each item were given on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'Always Disagree' (=0) to 'Always Agree' (=5). Sample items include, 'One should always consult with their partner before making any decision for handling family finances.' and 'One should

always consult with their partner before making their career decisions'. The Cronbach alpha of the sub-scale on the present sample was 0.75. High scores indicated high dyadic consensus.

Dyadic Satisfaction had eight items with one negatively-keyed item. The response descriptions against items were given on seven- ['Extremely Unhappy' (=0) to 'Perfect' (=6)], six-point ['All the Time' (=0) to 'Never' (=5) and from 'Almost' (=1) to 'Never' (=6)] Likert-type scales. A sample item on a seven-point scale includes, 'Please indicate the degree of happiness, considering all other things of your relationship'. A sample item on a six-point scale includes, 'How often do you or your partner leave after a fight?' (Cronbach alpha = 0.55). High scores indicated high dyadic satisfaction.

Dyadic Cohesion. This dimension had four positively-keyed items. The response description against each item was given on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'Never' (= 0) to 'More Often' (= 5). Sample items include, 'Have a stimulating exchange of ideas.' and 'Do you work together on a project' (Cronbach alpha = 0.83). High scores indicated high dyadic cohesion.

Affectionate Expression had three positively-keyed items. The response descriptions against two items were given on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'Always Disagree' (=0) to 'Always Agree' (=5) and one item had dichotomous responses (Yes =0, No =1). Sample items on a six-point scale

include 'One needs to always consult with their partner about demonstrations of affection'. The item on dichotomous response includes, 'Did you face any problem in your relationship during the past few weeks, for not showing love' (Cronbach alpha = 0.54). High scores indicated highly affectionate expression.

Stevens Relationship Questionnaire, comprising 72 items, was designed to obtain information about intimate relationship, happiness, and overall satisfaction. Of the 72 items, 23 were considered irrelevant to the Indian context as per the judgments of three experts in family studies and were excluded. The response descriptions against each item were given on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' (=1) to 'Strongly Agree' (=5). Following are the interrelated dimensions:

Independence had 14 items with seven negatively-keyed items. Sample items include, 'One should always consult with the partner before making even small decisions', and 'My partner and I each has own funds from which to buy personal things without consulting the other' (Cronbach alpha = 0.68). High scores indicated high independence.

Intimacy had 10 items, with three negatively-keyed items. Sample items include, 'If I am under more stress than usual, my partner will usually do extra things for me', and 'I frequently do not know what my partner really wants or feels' (Cronbach alpha = 0.58). High scores indicated high intimacy.

Assertive Conflict-Resolution and Communication had 12 items, with six negatively-keyed items. Sample items include, 'My partner and I rarely agree about the same issue.' and 'Overall, I criticize my partner with a bit more than I praise him/her' (Cronbach alpha = 0.63). High scores indicated highly assertive attitude.

Equality of Decision Making had five items, with one negatively-keyed item. Sample items include, 'One partner makes more of the decisions than the other', and 'My partner and I strongly agree on most long-term goals' (Cronbach alpha = 0.61). High scores indicated high equality of decision-making power.

Liberated Beliefs on Gender Roles had six negatively keyed items. Sample items include, 'There are certain tasks that are more the woman's responsibility, such as cleaning house, fixing meals, etc', and 'If the man and woman have a career conflict in which one has to quit his/her job, the woman should be the one to quit' (Cronbach alpha = 0.65). High scores indicated high egalitarian beliefs.

Overall Happiness and Satisfaction was measured on how spouses felt happy and satisfied with their partners. This dimension had two items. The items include, 'Overall, I have an extremely happy relationship with my partner', and 'Overall, I am extremely satisfied with my partner.' The response description varies from 'Strongly Agree' (=5) to 'Strongly Disagree' (=1). The Cronbach alpha of the sub-scale on the present

sample was 0.74. High scores indicated more happiness and satisfaction in married life.

Procedure

Each questionnaire with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the study was distributed to 600 respondents (300 single- and 300 dual-career spouses). Both husband and wife in each family were given the questionnaire. They were asked to return the completed questionnaire within a fortnight. Majority of the respondents who did not reply were reminded. A second reminder was also sent. When 80% of respondents (= 480, 240 single- and 240 dual-career spouses) returned the questionnaire, further data collection was stopped.

Results

The descriptive statistics and correlation amongst the sociodemographic variables, polychronic attitude, time spent on household work, adjustment, and relationships of the marital dyads that affect the overall happiness and satisfaction (OHS) in the single- and dual-career families are presented. For the husbands in single-career families, the results indicated that the higher the level of liberated beliefs on gender roles, loving and living bonds between spouses through self-disclosure, and spouses' satisfaction with the present state of relationships and commitment to its continuance, the higher was the level of OHS. For the single-career wives, the higher the level of agreement

between the spouses on matters of importance to the relationships and the degree to which spouses engage on household work together, the higher was the level of OHS. However, more freedom of both partners and liberated beliefs on gender roles decreased their OHS (Table 2).

For both the spouses in dual-career families, the results evidenced that the higher the level of agreement between spouses on matters of importance to the relationships, spouses' satisfaction with the present state of relationships and commitment to its continuance, the higher the degree to which spouses engage on household work together, and level of spouses' expression of affection and sex in the relationships, the higher was the level of their OHS. However, more freedom between both spouses and liberated beliefs on gender roles decreased their OHS (Table 3).

Correlations indicate the bi directional relationships that are unreserved in regression analysis. In order to know the antecedents influencing OHS, multiple regression analysis was used. Family type was treated as dummy variables. For four categories of family, three dummy variables were entered in the first step of multiple regression analysis with dual-career wives as the reference dummy. In the second step, the socio-demographic variables on the number of years studied in formal educational institutions, family income from all sources, and living jointly (husband and wife living jointly=1) or living alone (= 0) were entered. In the

third step, polychronic attitude, time spent on household work, dimensions of marital adjustment, and constructs of relationships were entered.

Results indicated that the husbands in the single-career families were found to be happier and more satisfied than their wives and the spouses in dual-career families.

Results indicated that the husbands in the single-career families were found to be happier and more satisfied than their wives and the spouses in dual-career families. The level of overall happiness and satisfaction did not differ among wives of single-career and spouses of dual-career families. Except the husbands in single-career families, all were more or less equally stressed in their family relationships. Irrespective of types of the single- and dual-career families, the level of educational attainment, family income, and living jointly/alone did not influence OHS. These findings contradicted our propositions.

When the effects of family type and socio-demographic variables were partially treated in the third step of regression analysis, multitasking attitude, the level of agreement between the spouses on matters of importance to the relationships, the level of spouses' satisfaction with the present state of relationships and commitment to its continuance, and the degree to which spouses engage on household work together, enhanced the OHS. These

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Interrelationship among Variables with Overall Happiness and Satisfaction in Single-career Families

	EDU	MFI	LTG	TSH	PCA	DCN	DSN	DHN	AEX	IND	INT	ACR	EDM	LBG	OHS
EDU	1	-0.08	.29+	-0.09	.22#	.38*	0.11	.19#	0.18#	0.02	-0.06	-0.03	-0.1	0.11	0.08
MFI	.22#	1	0.13	-0.12	.20#	-0.1	-0.11	-.22#	-0.14	-0.1	-0.1	-.32*	-0.01	-0.12	0.12
LTG	0.11	0.03	1	-0.06	0.08	0.17	.22#	-0.16	.21#	.02	-.21#	-.38*	-.25+	0.17	0.06
TSH	-0.03	-0.07	-0.16	1	0.09	-0.12	0.03	0.02	-0.02	0.05	-0.09	-0.09	-0.12	-.19+	-0.16
PCA	-0.16	-0.13	0.1	0	1	-.20#	.22#	0.01	-0.07	.21#	.18#	0.01	0.07	0.07	0.01
DCN	0.16	0.05	18#	-0.05	-0.1	1	.35*	.35*	0.1	0.08	-.28+	0.06	-0.1	0.12	0.15
DSN	0.17	0.06	0.08	-.24+	-.26+	.56*	1	.27+	.19#	.26+	0.15	.26+	0.14	.18#	.18#
DHN	0.06	0.06	-0.12	-.34+	-0.11	.33*	.26+	1	0.14	0.09	-0.05	0.06	.26+	-0.05	0.11
AEX	0.13	0.12	0	-.29*	-.30+	.43+	.63*	.28+	1	.24+	-0.01	0.03	-0.09	0.04	0.06
IND	0.02	0.04	0.12	-0.05	-0.01	0	.36*	-.36*	.38*	1	.22#	.20#	0.13	.28+	0.13
INT	-.20#	-0.1	-0.1	-0.03	0.09	-0.04	0.11	0.13	0.09	0.13	1	.38*	.30+	0.11	.19#
ACR	-.30*	-0.16	-0.21	-0.13	-0.03	-0.1	.19#	0.04	.19#	0.11	.70*	1	.29+	0.13	0.10
EDM	-0.16	-0.18#	-0.15	-0.01	-0.09	0.09	.24*	.37*	.23#	0.08	.55*	.52*	1	.19#	-0.02
LBG	-0.17	0.01	0.03	-0.14	0.02	-0.14	0.15	-.47*	0.18#	.67*	.19#	.37*	0.02	1	0.24+
OHS	0.14	-0.02	0.02	-0.11	-0.05	0.34*	0.11	.51*	0.09	-.38*	0.05	-0.14	0.17	-.62*	1
SCH	17.68	29662.50	0.98	60.37	8.78	56.35	31.69	16.4	10.61	48.97	39.9	47.72	19.15	20.08	9.00
MD	4.24	17445.13	0.16	33.16	0.89	4.81	2.25	3.59	1.25	4.67	3.84	3.95	2.45	3.24	0.8
SCW	15.75	29654.17	.98	84.83	10.26	52.03	28.67	15.64	9.00	41.03	39.11	43.16	19.12	15.84	7.71
MD	3.93	17461.96	0.13	39.00	2.99	6.87	4.18	3.74	1.47	9.16	4.68	6.16	2.51	4.33	1.43

The values above the diagonal are for husbands and below the diagonal are for wives

SCH= Single-career husbands. SCW= Single-career wives

#p<.05. *p<.001.

EDU= Education; MFI= Monthly family income; LTG= Living together; TSH= Time spent on household work; PCA= Polychronic attitude; DCN= Dyadic consensus; DSN= Dyadic satisfaction; DHN= Dyadic cohesion; AEX= Affectionate expression; IND= Independence; INT= Intimacy; ACR= Assertive-conflict resolution; EDM= Equality of decision-making; LBG= Liberated belief on gender roles; OHS= Overall happiness and satisfaction.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Interrelationship among Variables with Overall Happiness and Satisfaction in Dual-career Families

	EDU	MFI	LTG	TSH	PCA	DCN	DSN	DHN	AEX	IND	INT	ACR	EDM	LBG	OHS
EDU	1	0.04	-0.04	-.24+	0.05	0.03	.19#	0.01	-0.16	.29+	-.24+	-.29+	-0.12	-.19#	0.11
MFI	-0.1	1	0.01	-0.08	-0.06	-0.06	0.06	-.24+	-0.08	0.17	-0.14	0.01	-0.11	0.08	-0.02
LTG	-0.08	0.01	1	0.04	-.02	0.08	-0.06	0.04	-0.01	0.12	-0.09	-0.13	-0.12	-0.09	0.08
TSH	-0.09	0.08	-.24+	1	-.11	-0.04	-0.06	-0.05	0.03	-0.1	0.1	0.06	0.02	-0.04	-0.06
PCA	0.01	0.04	-0.04	-0.07	1	-0.07	0.01	-0.04	-0.01	0.02	.29+	.26+	0.15	.22#	0.03
DCN	-0.1	-0.03	0.17	-.19#	-0.17	1	.42*	.47*	.47*	-0.14	-0.06	0	0.01	-.30#	.57*
DSN	-0.02	-0.06	0.08	-.18#	-0.14	.59*	1	.29+	.41*	.18#	0.14	.26+	0.17	0.03	.38*
DHN	-0.14	-.21#	-0.03	-0.17	0.02	.62*	.43*	1	.38*	-.31*	0.11	0.01	0.15	-.40*	.52*
AEX	-0.03	-0.1	0.02	-0.02	-0.04	.66*	.53*	.46*	1	0.04	0.12	.26+	0.17	-0.12	.27+
IND	0.04	0.08	-0.07	-0.05	-0.07	-0.11	.21#	-.23#	0.09	1	-0.14	-0.08	-0.09	.50*	-.41*
INT	-0.08	-0.09	-0.17	0.13	.24+	0.1	0.12	.21#	0.15	0	1	.65*	.60*	0.14	-0.07
ACR	-.21#	-0.01	-.25+	0.14	0.09	0.12	0.16	0.01	.21#	0.08	.64*	1	.48*	.27+	0.01
EDM	-0.20#	-0.04	-0.17	0.08	0.05	0.08	.21#	0.12	.28+	0.13	.53*	.62+	1	-0.08	0.10
LBG	-0.12	-0.02	0.01	-0.09	0.01	-.24+	0.02	-.36*	-0.16	.61*	0.06	.21#	-0.02	1	-.66*
OHS	-0.16	0.03	0.07	-0.12	0.03	.52*	.32*	.52*	.32*	-.34*	0.14	0.09	0.14	-0.60*	1
DCHM	17.05	-45775.00	0.93	62.73	10.02	53.55	28.61	15.26	8.94	40.13	37.15	41.19	18.07	15.89	7.74
SD	5.06	91960.70	0.25	4.61	3.02	11.61	4.59	4.40	1.71	7.80	5.05	6.47	3.21	4.50	1.62
DCWM	16.36	-44750.00	0.96	75.60	9.53	51.93	28.59	14.90	8.97	41.61	37.57	41.72	18.08	16.23	7.58
SD	4.88	94439.37	0.20	33.16	3.38	7.72	4.47	4.42	1.77	7.82	5.65	6.36	3.10	4.71	1.72

The values above the diagonal are for husbands and below the diagonal are for wives

DCH = Dual – career husbands. DCW = Dual – career wives

#p<.05. +p<.01. *p<.001.

EDU= Education; MFI= Monthly family income; LTG= Living together; TSH= Time spent on household work; PCA= Polychronic attitude; DCN= Dyadic consensus; DSN= Dyadic satisfaction; DHN= Dyadic cohesion; AEX= Affectionate expression; IND= Independence; INT= Intimacy; ACR= Assertive-conflict resolution; EDM= Equality of decision-making; LBG= Liberated belief on gender roles; OHS= Overall happiness and satisfaction.

findings supported our proposition. However, more time spent on household work, freedom of both partners, and liberated beliefs on gender roles retarded OHS (Table 4).

Table 4: Variables Predicting Overall Happiness and Satisfaction

Step	Independent Variable	B	SEB	\hat{A}	R ²	R ² Change	? F	F
1	Single - career Husbands	1.42	.19	.40#	.14			25.62*
	Single - career Wives	.13	.19	.04				
	Dual - career Husbands	.16	.19	.04				
2	Education	.01	.02	.04	.15	.01	.89	13.24*
	Family income	.001	.00	.01				
	Living jointly	.47	.35	.06				
3	Polychronic attitude	.04	.02	.07#	.57	.42	39.70*	34.57*
	Time spent on household work	-.004	.01	-.10+				
	Dyadic consensus	.04	.01	.23*				
	Dyadic satisfaction	.05	.02	.16*				
	Dyadic cohesion	.05	.02	.12+				
	Affectionate expression	-.02	.04	-.03				
	Independence	-.02	.01	-.08#				
	Intimacy	.02	.02	.05				
	Assertive conflict -resolution	.01	.01	.06				
	Equality of decision - making	.004	.02	.01				
	Liberated belief on gender roles	-.15	.02	-.45*				

$p < .05$. + $p < .01$. * $p < .001$.

Discussion

Findings suggest that husbands in single-career are happier and more satisfied than their wives and the spouses in dual-career families. Wives of single- and spouses of dual-career families score lower on happiness and satisfaction than the husbands in single-career families. Except the husbands in single-career families, all are not so happy in their marital relationships. Spouses' levels of educational attainment, family income

and living jointly/alone have no impact on OHS. Irrespective of family type; (a) multitasking attitude, (b) the level of agreement between the spouses on matters of importance to the relationships, (c) the level of spouses' satisfaction with the present state of relationships and commitment to its continuance, and (d) the degree to which spouses engage on household work together, enhance OHS. More time spent on household work, freedom of both partners, and liberated beliefs on gender roles decrease OHS.

These results bring out the significance of cultural context. Wives are more accustomed to the obligation of doing household work and respecting husbands. They are less reactive to negative feelings as they respect their husbands and are more committed to their relationships. Also, social pressures force wives to accept the role of submissiveness and subordination. Hence, the husbands in the single-career families enjoy more power and better opportunities than their wives.

The husbands in the single-career families enjoy more power and better opportunities than their wives.

In Kolkata and Kharagpur, wives generally treat their husbands as belonging to a higher order of being. They take care of the physical needs of their husbands, keep their house and cloths clean, cook meals and serve them without demur. Husbands are not seriously involved in parenting and family work. Moreover, the husband's domination is a culturally accepted norm (Shukla & Kapoor 1990). Hence, the husbands in the single-career families are happier and more satisfied than their wives.

Spousal and social supports are important predictors of wellbeing in employed wives with multiple roles (Rao, Apte & Subbakrishna 2003). Also, partnership, gender equity, joint activities, and collaboration are essential for OHS. In families of Kolkata and Kharagpur, power distance prevails.

Husbands have more social and economic power even if wives make financial contribution to the family. Employed wives receive less social and familial support, and as a result, they experience more daily hassles (Thakar & Misra 1999). Wives merely execute the decision of the husbands (Shukla 1987). There is little partnership, gender equity, joint activities, and collaboration in the family. Wives in dual-career families are prone to role strain due to conflict between their jobs and family. Besides career job, dual-career wives perform duties of caretaking and homemaking, in order to maintain family relationships. It becomes difficult for them to meet and satisfy the needs of their husbands and families. Also, working wives have anxiety, fatigue, guilt, extraversion, and arousal causing adverse influences on the marital and social adjustment (Pandey 1996). Hence, wives in dual-career families are also stressed (Patra & Suar 2007).

Wives in dual-career families are prone to role strain due to conflict between their jobs and family.

Employment provides the wives in dual-career families scope for challenges, structure, and self-esteem, besides an increase in the family income. Moreover, employed wives tend to have higher achievement, autonomy, and dominance (Mathur & Bharti 2001). Accordingly, wives in dual-career families sometimes react to the negative feelings causing insubordination in the family relationships. On the other hand, husbands in dual-career

families are required to negotiate with work-family arrangement and provide some support and help on household work. That is why the findings reveal that husbands in dual-career families are also stressed with their marital relationships compared to husbands in single-career families (Patra & Suar 2007).

Husbands in dual-career families are also stressed with their marital relationships compared to husbands in single-career families.

Socio-demographic factors are not associated with the wellbeing of spouses (Andrade, Postma & Abraham 1991). Even career wives are unable to use their career status as a resource to alter their image from homemakers to co-providers (Thakar & Misra 1999). Also, wives' educational level and employment status have no impact over marital adjustment. Rather, they are emotionally, socially, and economically dependent on their husbands (Singh, Thind & Jaswal 2006). Husbands invariably enjoy more power than wives. This power dynamics is not affected by the educational attainment, earnings, and living jointly or alone. Hence, the level of educational attainment, family income, and living jointly/alone do not influence OHS.

Polychrons have better skills for planning, scheduling, working hard, and making sure that many things are done at a time. Our findings reveal that polychronic attitude enhances OHS. Spouses' consensus, harmony, and satisfaction are necessary for OHS (O'Rourke & Cappelliez 2002). Hence,

Fairness in the division of household work has an impact on marital quality.

the level of agreement between the spouses on matters of importance to the relationships, the level of spouses' satisfaction with the present state of relationships, and commitment to its continuance, and the degree to which spouses engage on household work together, enhance OHS.

Fairness in the division of household work has an impact on marital quality (Frisco & Williams 2003). Those who perform more than their fair share of household work report a lower level of marital satisfaction (Bird 1999). Accordingly, more time spent on household work retard OHS. According to the traditional gender norms: (a) husbands are the breadwinner and wives are the homemaker, (b) husbands work outside and wives take care family members, (c) husbands have more socioeconomic power and wives have less power, (d) husbands are respected and wives are obligated, (e) husbands have more freedom and wives have little freedom, and (f) husbands take major decisions affecting life and livelihood and wives hardly take decisions. Any deviation from these norms in Kolkata and Kharagpur dilutes the power equation which results in stress and distress in marital life. That is why findings reveal that freedom of both spouses and liberated beliefs on gender roles decrease OHS.

Though the roles of husbands and wives are in transition, the study reveals the adherence to traditional gender relations between husbands and wives for OHS. Social values and perception towards wives' employment have changed very little. Despite the expectation that wives' entry into career would result in lessening husbands' superiority, it is not happening in reality. Husbands' dominance is still a culturally accepted norm.

Implications

The marriage and family therapists often neglect to include societal context in their treatment plans. They empathise with the wife about her feelings of guilt over working outside the home, neglecting intervention about arrangement of justifiable distribution of household responsibilities. They generally advise the wives to alter their work schedules. Family therapists need to emphasize on traditional gender roles for happiness and satisfaction in married life. Both the spouses should help each other in maintaining balance between their career and household work. There cannot be equal division of work between the husband and the wife, but there can be satisfactory arrangement with proper understanding. It is necessary for both the spouses to (a) resolve conflicts during times of stress, (b) disclose private thoughts and feelings (c) spend time on talking, discussing, and expressing feelings for OHS.

The study has certain limitations that must be acknowledged. The information

There cannot be equal division of work between the husband and the wife, but there can be satisfactory arrangement with proper understanding.

sought in the study is private and family related, so spouses have not fully disclosed their thoughts through the questionnaire. So, qualitative research may be undertaken through unstructured interviews for better understanding and unfolding the reality, and probing deep into the phenomena of gender relations. Samples used for this study are not randomly selected from all professional spouses throughout India. Hence, caution must be exercised in generalizing the findings. For example, the values infused into the families located at Mumbai or Delhi may be different than those observed in the families located at Kolkata or Kharagpur.

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