

A Sociological Study on the Conflict of Roles for Married Girls Engaged in Higher Education

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Abstract: The advancement and prosperity of any nation significantly rely on the educational opportunities provided to its populace. Herbert Spencer aptly stated that 'the primary objective of education is not knowledge but action.' Higher education is essential for a merit-based, open civil society. It facilitates comprehension of society's norms, fosters individual self-sufficiency, and mitigates discrimination based on gender, beliefs, religion, and socioeconomic status (Karmarae, 2000). The desire of female students to pursue higher education does not come without hurdles. Paula (1994) asserts that role conflict occurs when an individual feels stress from contradictory roles associated with two different statuses. A married woman who is both a wife/mother and a student may encounter role conflict due to the dissimilarity of these two statuses. One can anticipate her reconciling her pursuit of higher education with her obligations to the household and children. The study aims to uncover the problems encountered and the solutions implemented by married girls engaged in higher education. The study is descriptive, relying on both primary and secondary data.

Keywords: women, married, higher education, problems, solutions.

INTRODUCTION

Access to quality education is a key factor in a nation's development and economic success. As Herbert Spencer points out, "the great aim of education is not knowledge but action." A meritocratic, open civil society cannot exist without access to higher education. According to Karmarae (2000), it gives individuals the ability to be self-sufficient, assists in the comprehension of society's standards, and inhibits behaviour based on gender, beliefs, religion, and social class. When compared to women who have not received an education, educated women have a better sense of control over their lives, as well as more authority and influence over the resources that are available within the family. They gain acceptance from their peers and learn to identify the negative aspects of their current situation. Educated women can perceive a better situation and the opportunity to attain it. (Sharma and Usha, 2001). The desire of female students to attend university is not without its obstacles.

Role conflict, according to Paula (1994), occurs when a person feels pressured because of the competing demands of two different statuses. For example, due to the distinct nature of her two roles, a married woman juggling the responsibilities of a student and a wife may find herself experiencing role conflict. It is reasonable to assume that she will juggle her academic pursuits with her responsibilities as a housewife.

Sociological Roles:

The term "role" is employed by sociologists to denote a set of anticipated behaviours and obligations that an individual is expected to fulfil

in accordance with their position in life and in relation to others, as is standard practice in other fields. In addition to being a parent, spouse, friend, professional, and member of the community, each of us also fulfils the roles and responsibilities of our family at home. Within sociology, 'Role Theory' was developed by American Sociologist *Talcott Parsons* through his work on *social systems*, along with German Sociologist *Ralf Dahrendorf*, and by *Erving Goffman*, with his numerous studies and theories focused on how social life resembles theatrical performance.

Researchers interested in role conflict have paid more attention to people in apparently conflicting roles in the last several decades, especially women trying to balance work and family responsibilities (Blair-Loy 2003; Cinamon 2002; Feldman 1973). Given this heightened focus, it is critical to investigate the potential significance of role conflicts in the perpetuation of gender inequality in contemporary American culture (Gornick and Meyers 2003). According to studies conducted by Cinamon (2002), work/family conflict happens when the needs of one area are incompatible with those of another.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The study is based on the married girls pursuing their higher education and the prime purpose of the study is to identify the problems/challenges faced and solutions adopted by the respondents.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The married girls who are pursuing higher education are the focus of this study, which aims

to uncover the problems they encountered and the solutions they found. The study is based on and limited to the married girls pursuing higher education at the Government First Grade Colleges of Belagavi taluka (Karnataka State, India) only. The survey identified forty-five (45) married girls pursuing their Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), and the researcher conducted interviews with all of them. The study is descriptive in nature with the help of primary and secondary data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

The respondents discussed the difficulties they were facing. The majority of the married girls contacted were 22 years old (51.11%), followed by 44.44% who were 21 years old and 4.44% who were 20 years old. When asked about the difficulties they encounter, nearly all of the respondents (97.77%) cited the difficulty of juggling several responsibilities. The majority of 91.11 stated that they were unable to prioritise self-care, despite its essential nature. The majority of the respondents (77.77 percent) said that they struggle academically because of all the household chores they have to do. Among the students interviewed, 71.11 percent said they had difficulty connecting with and making friends among their fellow college students. When asked about the impact of housework on their academic achievement, most respondents acknowledged that it is something they struggle with. They discovered that there just wasn't enough time to finish their assignments without distractions. Due to their constant involvement in juggling many responsibilities, respondents admitted that they do not have enough time for their own pleasures.

The majority of respondents said time management was their biggest challenge for homework, child rearing, and housework. According to them, married girl students confront various challenges in higher education. It is considered quite important to be approved by the husband and the in-laws. Married women's partners' support significantly influences their educational pursuits. It is the respondent's husband who decides on the institution of higher learning. The majority of respondents mentioned that the husband and the in-laws need to be given the assurance that their married lives will not suffer as a result of higher education.

For families, raising children is of paramount importance. The majority of respondents say their in-laws don't help them, which may make their grandchildren's lives harder. The researcher

noticed that the respondent's family expects them to complete all household duties promptly, which can impact their time management skills.

Respondents' primary concerns include a plethora of domestic duties, as well as taking care of friends, family, and neighbours. It was disclosed by the respondents that their mother used to attend guests before they got married, but since they got married, the respondents have been attending despite their hectic schedules.

The respondents reported that they encountered a number of disagreements when they attempted to reconcile their roles as college students with those within the context of marriage and the institution of the family. Within marriage, these strains can include, but are not limited to: quarrels between spouses, feelings of exhaustion, and resentment over inequitable divisions of household labour (McRoy and Fisher, 1982; Pittman, Kerpelmen, and Solheim, 2001).

The issue of married women students' limitations due to familial obligations has garnered the most attention. As a result of their function as students, the fact that they were not present for their children, the quality and cost of daycare, and the fact that they had to compromise their family and career duties, the respondents indicated feelings of regret. Even though most respondents' husbands have supported their wives' roles as students, they still fail to offer the necessary assistance around the house. Many women also reported that their husbands fail to assist when their wives are occupied with other responsibilities. Respondents who did not have children found that when men brought in tension from the outside world, their wives would take on the responsibility. However, this was not the case when the female student brought in additional stress from outside duties. When it comes to understanding why women may be more prone to role conflict, the orientations towards roles are an important factor to consider. The findings do not reach a consensus; they are not unanimous.

SUGGESTIONS

According to Julie Akpotor in "Role Conflict of Married Female Students and Academic Performance," the following study reflects her findings:

It is important for married female students to prioritise their assignments and follow the order in which they are most important. Put another way: they need to learn how to prioritise. Therefore,

priority must be given extra consideration in order to function properly.

In situations where there are disagreements, it is important for students to have the ability to compartmentalise their roles. For example, if a respondent is responsible for preparing breakfast for her husband and also has an assignment to complete, she should ensure that she wakes up early enough to finish the homework before the time allotted for breakfast preparation. In addition, there is a requirement for a proportional adjustment to the growing number of roles that are in conflict with one another. This adjustment should be carried out in such a way that marital roles should not be used as an excuse for poor academic performance.

This study adheres to a few limitations. The results of this study can only be generalised to a certain extent because they were only conducted on married women who were enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts (BA) programme at the Government First Grade College, which is located in the Belagavi taluka of the Belagavi district in the state of Karnataka, India. The selection of this sample, exclusively from female students, may not accurately represent all girls. Therefore, additional research is required to conduct an empirical comparison of numerous married girls and women who are pursuing higher education.

To Sum Up:

Over the past few decades, researchers have delved deeper into the topic of role conflict among married female students. This is especially true for women who seem to be balancing the needs of their careers and families (Blair-Loy 2003; Cinamon 2002; Feldman 1973). Through this increasing attention, the relevance of understanding how role conflicts might play a factor in contributing to gender inequities in contemporary American culture has been brought to light (Gornick and Meyers 2003). The assistance married women once enjoyed in the traditional setting from extended family members is no longer there, as it was almost eradicated by the advent of Western education in Indian society. The responses revealed that marriage and its associated responsibilities impede excellent academic achievement. This conclusion was consistent with the findings of other research, such as the ones conducted by Sheldon and John (1996) and Famoriyo and Abifor (2009), which found that the academic performance of married female students was impacted by numerous roles.

Domestic duties make role conflict unpleasant for married female tertiary students. According to the study's findings, the fact that married female students have numerous role duties is the primary reason they don't have enough time to dedicate to their academic activities, which ultimately leads to poor academic performance. The study implies that married female students may constantly struggle with conflict management due to the intrinsic constraints imposed by marriage on women. University-enrolled married women must effectively manage their responsibilities to achieve success. In order to realise their goals and ensure that their marriage's obligations are not hindered, they need to do additional work to achieve their aspirations.

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