

**GENDER DIFFERENTIALS IN WORK  
RESPONSIBILITIES AND DECISION-MAKING  
PARTICIPATION AT HOME AND AT WORK  
AMONG COLLEGE FACULTY MEMBERS  
IN THE FOUR UNIVERSITIES  
IN ILOILO CITY\***

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This study was conducted to determine gender differentials in work responsibilities/activities and in extent of decision-making participation at home and at work among college teachers in the four universities in Iloilo City. The study further aimed to determine the influence, if any, of certain personal and work-related factors on the gender differentials in work responsibilities and extent of decision-making participation.

This descriptive study utilized quantitative approaches - a sample survey, in-depth interviews and focus group discussion (FGD). The study's sample consists of 250 full-time college faculty members in the four universities in Iloilo City; namely, Central Philippine University (CPU), University of San Agustin (USA), West Visayas State University (WVSU), and University of Iloilo (UI). The sample was drawn using stratified and systematic sampling with a random start. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, in-depth interview and FGD.

Data were analyzed using frequency distribution and the Z-tests for differences between means and/or proportions.

**MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The college faculty members in the four universities in Iloilo City were mostly middle-aged married women holding bachelor's degrees. There were more women than men who had completed or were pursuing graduate studies. Most of

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\* Abstract of a dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Central Philippine University.

the spouses of the married teachers were working; the wives, mostly as teachers and the husbands, mostly as managers or professional practitioners. The teachers' monthly income averaged P7,960 in 1995, with the men earning more than the women by about P592.70 per month. Average monthly family income was around P14,500 for families of both male and female teachers. The teachers' teaching experience averaged 16 years, most of which had been in the institution they were connected with. Most of them had no gender-related training.

Significantly more women than men were involved in household chores and child care, in which the former spent significantly more time than the men. In child care, men's participation was concentrated on watching or playing with the children.

TV viewing and entertaining friends/playing/outing were the most common leisure/recreational activities of both male and female teachers, but the men spent a significantly longer time than the women in these activities. About the same proportion of men and women did school work at home, spending about nine hours a week on this.

Aside from teaching, the majority of both groups also did paper work, remedial instruction/counseling, and attended faculty/academic meetings in which they spent more or less the same time. Significantly more men than women, however, were involved in coordinating, advising school activities, coaching, participating in union activities, attending socio-civic affairs, and serving as resource persons in training or seminars, but those involved in these spent more or less the same time for each. Significantly more men than women spent some of their school time for socialization and "coffee break".

Decision-making at home was generally a joint husband-wife responsibility, particularly in buying of household furnishings, buying/selling property, and hiring household help, in choosing a school and a course for the children, in child discipline, in health care and reproductive health matters, and in the choice of religion. Food preparation, however, was either independently made by the woman or jointly with her husband. When conflict arises during participative decision-making, the wife's decision prevailed in home management, that of the husband's in child discipline and in the choice of religion, and either that of the wife's or the husband's in health care and reproductive health matters.

The extent of participation in decision-making in home management tended to be “moderate” for both men and women, but significantly greater among women than men in food preparation, in buying household furnishings, and in hiring household help, but higher among men than women in buying or selling a property.

Extent of participation in decision-making in the choice of school and course for their children and in child discipline was also “moderate,” with men and women participating in these to a more or less the same extent. In health care and reproductive health matters, the participation was also “moderate,” but participation scores of women were significantly higher than those of men in health care and family planning. Decision-making participation in sexual activities was more or less the same for men and women.

Policy formulation concerning personnel was mostly done by the school administrators, either independently or jointly with other school personnel. This was particularly true to salary adjustment and selection of deans/department heads. Teachers’ participation in policy-making was almost nil.

Decision-making in school program development was a shared responsibility of the school head, college deans or department chairpersons and teachers, while decisions on curriculum planning and revision was either independently made by deans and/or department heads or shared by the administrators and teachers. Planning and provision of inservice training for teachers, on the other hand, tended to be a joint effort of the administrators and other school personnel or by department heads or the deans. Planning and implementing co-curricular and evaluation of school programs and activities were cooperative endeavors of administrators, college heads/deans and faculty members.

The teachers’ role in decision-making was quite pronounced in the area of instruction, specifically in the choice of teaching method, subject content and textbooks. These were decided by the teachers either independently or jointly with their immediate supervisors.

Participation in policy formulation concerning personnel and curriculum planning and changing was low for both men and women, but participation scores of men were significantly higher than those of women. The teachers’ decision-making participation in evaluation was also “low.” The area in which they were most involved was instruction, particularly in the choice of teaching methods,

subject content and textbooks, in which they posted “moderate” extent of participation.

Participation in decision-making both at home and in school tended to increase with age, educational attainment, and length of teaching experience. Moreover, the married teachers and those with gender training tended to participate more than those who were single and those with no gender training.

Gender differentials in the teachers’ decision-making at home and in school were significantly influenced by age, civil status, educational attainment, length of teaching experience, family income, and attendance in gender-related training.

### **MAJOR CONCLUSIONS:**

The consistently greater participation of women than men in most domestic activities supports the long accepted theory of gender division of labor at home and the well-established norm that home management is still a woman’s domain.

The active participation of the male college teachers in household chores, even if not as much as that of women, suggests that men’s attitudes towards gender division of labor are already changing and that men are gradually accepting the responsibility of participating in household chores. It seems clear, however, that the men still prefer the less complicated and less difficult home tasks. In child care, they would still rather watch and play with the children than be involved in direct child care.

The joint husband-wife decision making concerning home management, children’s education and child discipline seems to be the established norm among the teachers’ households. The findings of this study support Castillo’s conclusion that Filipino families are “more egalitarian than patriarchal.” One should not ignore the fact, however, that when conflicts in a participative decision-making arise, the more influential spouse makes the decision. In this regard, there are clear gender divisions in decision domains. The women tend to have more control over decisions on home management, such as running the house, what food to buy and prepare and household budgeting, while the men tend to have greater authority over investment and child discipline.

The female college teachers seem to be more liberated than their elders and their traditional and less educated “sisters” in regard to sex and reproductive matters. Unlike their elders who have been stereotyped as passive sex partners, the female college teachers tend to be open and assertive in their reproductive choices, such as the number of children to have, what family planning method to use and whether or not to have sex. Their educated husbands may have helped make possible this bilateral mode of decision-making.

The observed gender differentials in participation in school activities and decision-making in school fail to support the hypothesis that there is a significant difference between the male and the female teachers’ involvement in school activities, since most of the differences between proportions of men and women involved in specific activities are not significant. This may be explained by the fact that teachers’ responsibilities in school are usually not gender differentiated since these are often regular and expected responsibilities of all teachers, except probably the extra-curricular activities.

Decision-making in the universities tends to be centralized, with the administration or middle managers still controlling decisions pertaining to organizational operations. Teachers’ participation in these areas is minimal and does not vary between the male and female teachers. It is only in participation in policy formulation concerning selection of department/college head and in curriculum planning and program development, where the men exhibit a significantly higher participation than the women.

The active involvement of the college teachers in decision-making regarding instruction matters supports Campbell’s and Bridges’ conclusion that teachers generally prefer to participate in decision-making in areas which directly concern their work and in which “they can contribute something of consequence.” In most areas of instruction participation in decision-making of men and women does not significantly vary. The findings fail to support the hypothesis that the extent of participation in decision-making of the male teachers significantly vary from that of the female teachers.

Given the female teachers’ responsibilities at home and in school, not to mention the other extra-curricular and social tasks they perform, they appropriately fit into Moshers’ “triple burden” classification of a woman’s role (reproductive-productive-managing). In Moshers’ framework, most women are seen as burdened with multiple responsibilities. In addition to her reproductive tasks of

childbearing and rearing, she runs the home and does much of the domestic work (home production, nurturing and managing) and on top of these, she is full-time wage earner, and thus, an economic producer. The woman's multiple burden limits her time for rest and leisure. This fact is borne out by the significantly more time spent by men than of women in TV viewing, entertaining, and outing.

The gender differentials in involvement in some activities and in decision-making at home, only in some areas, are found to be influenced by age, civil status, educational attainment, family income, length of teaching experience and attendance in gender-related training. This supports the hypothesis that certain personal and work-related characteristics of the teachers influence gender differentiation in involvement in work responsibilities and in decision-making participation at home, particularly household management, health care and reproductive health matters.

The data confirmed that participation in decision-making increases with educational attainment, family income, length of teaching experience and attendance in gender-related training. Gender awareness training particularly improves women's participation in decision-making and this in turn tends to reduce men's control over some reproductive decisions, allowing women more participative decision-making in that area.

The role theory which was earlier forwarded as the basis for predicting gender differentials in work responsibilities and decision-making participation at home and at work is further established by the results of this study. The work and decision-making domains attributed to men or women at home are evidences of social prescriptions and expectations. On the other hand, the emerging changes in participation, such as the increasing involvement of men in household chores, can be possible effects of the dynamic social processes and changing cultural values in the world the teachers revolve in - - - the academe.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In order to provide male and female teachers equal access to opportunities and resources, they should be provided equal chance to participate in major activities and decision-making at work, which at present are still biased against women.

2. To correct the disproportional representation of women in decision-making in the work place, they should enhance their capability to “contribute something of consequence” and be provided an atmosphere that will encourage them to actively participate in critical activities and decision-making. Both male and female teachers must, therefore, develop knowledge and expertise not only in the field of instruction, but also in organizational behavior and management.
3. The educational institutions should encourage decision-making participation by providing institutional support for faculty development in the form of short term in-service training in instructional development, program development, evaluation and instruction and by providing equal opportunities for teachers, male or female, to be involved in the decision-making process in school, through membership in committees that help review or develop organizational and instructional plans and programs for the university.
4. Since the “multiple burden” of women limits their access to opportunities and resources and their chance to participate in decision-making, there is an urgent need to “deload” them of some of their domestic responsibilities. The men can help by increasing their participation in domestic work, especially in situations where a family can not afford hiring household help. Men should not only participate in the simple and uncomplicated tasks but share the burden of “real” housework (cooking, washing, etc.) and direct child care (for those with young children), which have been traditionally prescribed for women. Children should also be trained and encouraged to share these responsibilities.
5. So that recommendations Nos. 3 and 4 can be effected, there is a need for gender-sensitivity trainings, not only for women, but also for men, and not only for teachers, but also for school administrators, so that they can understand and appropriately respond to existing gender issues. The universities could make these trainings a part of their school program. Only in an atmosphere where individuals believe in and accept the need for women to participate and enjoy the same rights as those of men that women can truly assert their views and choices.

6. In order to effectively promote gender equality, not only among teachers but also among other groups, professional or not, there is a need to reorient educational programs and materials so that these will develop understanding of women's concerns and needs, of women empowerment, of the value of equal sharing. Since the school curricula, textbooks and many instructional materials are still sexist and promote role stereotyping, there is a need to develop curricula and instructional materials that will promote gender-fair knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. If both the home and the church reinforce these school efforts, gender equity can be achieved more quickly.
7. More gender-related studies are required in the field of education and in other areas, so that policy-makers and program planners, as well as school administrators will have a scientific basis for the formulation of gender-sensitive policies, programs and projects that will benefit the women and improve their status. Results of these studies can also help people understand better the phenomenon of gender inequality.
8. Studies with gender disaggregation of knowledge and attitudes towards certain gender issues such as sexism, sexual harassment and violence, women empowerment and the like are urgently needed and used as basis for programs that will address these issues. These studies should examine the possible determinants of the varying perceptions and behaviors of people towards identified gender issues.