

**AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON PARTNER ROLES IN
HETEROSEXUAL MARRIAGES**

By

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submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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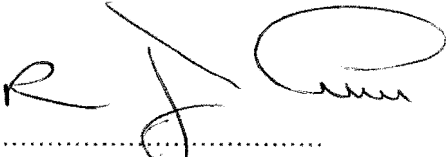
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NOVEMBER 2000

DECLARATION

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I declare that *An Educational Psychological perspective on partner roles in heterosexual marriages* is my own work and all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.


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28 / 03 / 2001
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DATE

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Anything you can do

I can do better.

No you can't.

Yes I can.

No you can't.

Yes I can.

Yes I can.

Any note you can sing

I can sing it higher.

I can sing any note

Higher than you.

No you can't.

Yes I can.

No you can't.

Yes I can.

Yes I can.

(composer unknown)

SUMMARY

Contemporary and traditional sex roles differ in clarity. As such couples find it difficult to share these sex roles because of beliefs and attitudes they hold about them.

In an attempt to generate guidelines with regard to the complementary sharing of these roles, sex differences and the nature of sex roles were discussed.

Although men and women are similar in some respects, they however have fundamental unchangeable differences. Sex roles on the other hand, have changed drastically over the years.

Data was gathered through the use of interviews. The result of this study indicates that men and women hold conflicting beliefs and attitudes concerning the sharing of sex roles.

A set of guidelines have been formulated to assist couples to share their sex roles in a complementary way so as to make their homes authentic primary educational environments..

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KEY WORDS

Partner	Sex differences
Marriage	Sex typing
Sex role	Socialization
Stereotype	Feminism
Gender	Patriarchy

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, AIM OF STUDY AND CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Among the many roles that heterosexual couples should play in their married lives in order to keep their marriages and families intact are sex roles. The extent to which each partner plays his or her role as expected by the other partner, determines to a large extent the quality of the couples' relationship, and the home environment as a primary education situation (Calhoun & Acocella, 1990 : 216).

Contemporary couples, unlike traditional ones, experience problems concerning the sharing of these roles (Charon, 1992 : 479). In the olden days, sex roles were well defined in most communities, whereas the same cannot be said with modern sex roles. Because of the ever-changing nature of our societies (Louw, 1991 : 507) gender roles seem to be ill-defined. Berndt, Cheung, Lau, Hau and Lew (1993 : 157) assert that factors that are responsible for the continued societal changes are modernization, economic development and the official ideologies. For instance, a women's place of operation during the olden days used to be her home, whereas currently, women are no longer restricted to their homes only. Most of them are found in areas that were previously the sole domain of men. Many women, for instance, are found in management positions and some work as security officers.

It appears, therefore, that gender roles should be redefined (Bassis, Gelles & Levine, 1992 : 332). In defining the women's sex roles, the redefinition of the men's sex roles, cannot be left untouched, as there are many questions raised with regard to these sex roles. For instance, since both men and women may spend most of their time in the corporate world, on arrival home after a heavy day's work, which may be tiresome to both partners, who should attend to household chores such as cooking, bathing of children, mending of leaking taps and attending to tyre punchers?

Attempts to answer these questions have led to raging debates among the various members of the societies. Husbands, for instance, consider themselves as doing a lot more than they can take, whereas women still feel that their husbands are not doing enough in assisting them (Louw, 1991 : 507 - 508). In this regard, Marais (1988 : 478) argues that husbands still expect their wives to adhere to their traditional sex roles, such as cooking, cleaning, child care and other home chores, and yet the insitution of the family has changed from what it used to be during the period of traditional marriages (Charon, 1992 : 479). Mwamwenda (1995 : 482) maintains that husbands expect wives to continue doing their domestic and marital duties, and they get beaten if they neglect these duties. Professionals, too, are battling to arrive at a solution (Santrock, 1997 : 341 & Rice, 1992 : 41) but in vain, as both males and females, seem to be engulfed in the beliefs and attitudes they have acquired from their communities (Santrock, 1997 : 341). They are, however, agreed that societies are continuously changing, and so are gender roles.

While this debate continues to rage like it does, most families are in pains. The end result of the lack of clarity with regard to a suitable and acceptable contemporary definition of gender roles is among others, diffusion of

responsibility and marital conflicts, with some marriages ending up in divorce courts (Louw, 1991 : 509).

1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

1.2.1 Awareness of the problem

There are situations that the researcher found himself in that led to the awareness of this problem, namely, school environments and couple therapy.

As a teacher, it dawned to the researcher that boys and girls behave differently in many ways. Girls, for instance, seem to interact with teachers more frequently than boys, and they seem to engage in more informal discussions with them than boys. When boys do engage in such discussions, the depth of the contents of what they discuss with teachers seem to be shallower than that of girls, and it is also characterized by the teacher dominating the discussions with questions. Girls also seem to report cases related to disobedience, bullying and aggression to teachers more frequently than boys. Boys seem to do so under pressure, especially when the reporting is treated as a revenge. Girls seem to be more cooperative than boys. Boys' aggressive behaviours appear to be far much above that of girls.

In couple therapies that the researcher handled as a student Educational psychologist, some couples' problems centred around the sharing of gender roles. The initial problems presented revolved around the management of the joint family income. These problems proved later to be a woman's way to complain about equal involvement in as far as the earning of an income for the family was concerned, with unfortunately lack of equality in the performance of household chores. In one of the couple interviews the

researcher conducted, the woman expressed disappointment at how her husband would watch television, while she had to bath their two children, and prepare meals for the family. She argued that she could not understand why her husband would not allow her to employ a domestic servant. Her husband defended himself by telling her that his parents never made use of a domestic servant even though they both held full time jobs. In this interview, this couple, expressed different views which fascinated the researcher concerning their sex roles in their family.

These behaviours and the arguments raised in couple therapies made the researcher feel that there must be some differences between the two genders that make them behave and think the way they do.

1.2.2 Preliminary literature investigation

The confusion with regard to gender roles, seem to have its roots in the fact that the traditional determinants of sex roles are giving way for contemporary ones. According to various authors, physical characteristics of people such as strength, were the main characteristics taken into consideration in the division of labour between men and women. For instance, the Arapesh of Guinea, assigned the task of heavy loads to women because it was believed that their heads were harder and stronger than that of men (Zanden, 1990 : 333). Other societies, according to Ember and Ember (1993 : 289 - 298), assigned work that required strength to men because it was believed that they had greater height and heavier skeletons compared to women. It appears that tasks were given to a sex that was physically best suited for it.

With regard to physical characteristics, Rossi in Bassis et al. (1992 : 333) maintain that physical qualities, such as superior size and strength, good

vision and the ability to make quick decisions in the case of men, were, and are still meant for adaptation. Women, on the other hand, possess certain physical qualities meant to look after children. Rossi in Bassis et al. (1992 : 333) state that the sound of an infant crying " stimulates the secretion of oxytocin in a mother, a process which makes the nipples ready, by inducing erection in them." Mothers could have been assigned the task of staying at home to take care of children and other household chores related to the home because of their genetic predisposition to take care of children.

Currently, there are other considerations, which differ significantly from traditional ones, for the determination of gender roles, although, according to Marais (1988 : 171) whenever attempts are made to tamper with the traditional male-female gender roles, chaos and problems come into being. Stephen (1993 : 95) maintains that the differences between men and women in the world of work is so minor that even if they are ignored they will be of no harm. He argues that in areas such as problem solving ability, analytical skills, competitive drive, motivation, sociability or learning ability, no consistent significant differences between men and women were found. In this regard Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 258) argue that there is no difference between the intelligence quotient of males and females, except for a few specific abilities. Women in general, tend to excel in verbal ability, whereas men do better in spatial ability, although, according to Maccoby in Santrock (1997 : 337) the difference in verbal ability has disappeared.

The assertion by Rossi in Bassis et al. (1992 : 333) seems to complicate the determination of gender roles even further. He argues that there are differences in the ease with which the sexes can learn certain things. That is, there are certain gender roles which men may acquire in an easier manner than females, and vice versa. Zanden (1990 : 336) supports Rossi's

argument by maintaining that the different types of hormones found in both men and women, coupled with environmental factors, make it easier for them to acquire gender roles associated with their gender.

There is, however, something that will never change - the categorization of human species into male and female at both the biological and gender level. With regard to biological differentiation, Reber (1995 : 715) maintains that children will always be born as either boys or girls, and from the minute a child is born, other forces, such as socialization, reinforce and maintain the differences between the two sexes. It is through the socialization process that children develop gender roles that are consistent with their sexes. Once developed, these gender roles continue to be refined until adulthood (Stark, 1994 : 162 - 163). There is no doubt, therefore, that the human race will always be categorized as either male or female (Calhoun & Acocella, 1990 : 412), with different gender roles determined in accordance with the beliefs of the various cultural groups. Gender roles seem, therefore, to be the product of the combination of biological and environmental factors (Shaffer, 1996 : 530).

Stark (1994 : 170) asserts that children are not born having been programmed by nature to be either boys or girls. They are being taught to develop either a male or female identity. Stark (1994 : 162 - 163) further argues that they are being taught from an early age to assume certain roles as determined by culture (cultural determinism) in adulthood (differential socialization) both inside and outside home. The principle of cultural determinism maintains that culture determines the behaviour of all persons who are socialized in it (Stark, 1994 : 159). In this regard Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 423) maintain that the differences that exist between males and females are due to environmental factors. In Sarason and Sarason's (1993 :

230) view, it is imperative that children should be assisted to accept their being either male or female. If this is not done, they may suffer from gender identity disorder.

As a result of physical differences which are further emphasized through socialization in its different forms, males and females differ in many other respects such as their emotional states (Roediger, 1991 : 481). These differences lead to the subjective experiencing of their environments (Rice, 1992 : 142). Men, for instance, regard themselves as being a superior sex, whereas women feel that they deserve to be treated with dignity, too. Men and women are entangled in a " tug of war " because of a sense of belonging to two separate "worlds ". Clashes under such circumstances seem to be inevitable.

Those who regard sex differences as a weakness have a tendency of making use of the differences to enhance their own power at the disadvantage of the opposite sex (Napier, 1993 : 24). From Santrock's (1997 : 341) assertion, it appears as though females are disadvantaged in this power struggle, since they do much household work than their husbands. In this regard Mwamwenda (1995 : 481) maintains that sometimes wives are being beaten by their husbands because husbands hope to reassert their status as heads of their families, especially when their wives are intellectually superior to them.

In an attempt to bridge the gap between males and female gender roles (Calhoun & Acocella, 1990 : 415), there is a tendency to encourage people to be androgyneous. Man is by nature to a certain extent, androgyneous, and it is however regrettable that most people possess the qualities of one sex than the other (Scandura & Ragins, 1993 : 252 - 253). Rathus (1988 : 484)

who seems to blame gender role confusion on sexism, maintains that couples should rid themselves of sexism if their discussion with regard to the sharing of gender is to be productive.

The problem of gender roles seem to be universal. According to Lemmer, and Badenhorst (1997 : 202) the problem of gender roles also apply to South Africa. Although there are statements proclaiming equality between men and women, in practice, women are still generally subordinated to men, and as such, they are still disadvantaged in the sharing of sex roles.

If the South African couples are to be assisted in closing the gender gap, especially with regard to the sharing of their gender roles, they should be shown that the differences that exist between them should not be perceived as a source of weakness, but strength that is to be used for complementing each other. There is, therefore, a need for couples to be given guidelines that ought to enable them to share gender roles in a way that will not disadvantage one sex. That is, the sharing of gender roles should be such that a husband his wife's roles are complementary in nature.

1.3 PILOT STUDY AS EXPLORATION OF THE PROBLEM

The researcher conducted a focus group interview with a group of three married heterosexual couples. A question which was stated as follows was posed for discussion.

How would you like to share your household chores with your partner?

From the discussion that followed it was clear that these couples did not experience problems with the identification of household chores, although

activities consistent with the subjects' sex dominated their lists. They, however, had different opinions concerning who should do a particular activity and why it was supposed to be performed by either the wife or the husband. Household chores identified were, among others, cleaning the house, washing dishes, taking care of children, helping children with their school work and taking care of the environment.

Male subjects argued that nature has predetermined the sex that is supposed to play certain roles whereas female subjects argued against this predeterministic view. For instance, the male subjects argued that due to their strong bodies, their work is to be found outside their homes, whereas mothers' tender bodies, placed them in the best position to take care of children. The female subjects rejected this argument. They maintained that the washing of nappies has nothing to do with tenderness nor strength.

There seem to be a need for couples to be guided on how they should go about with the sharing household chores to avoid family conflicts and violence.

1.4 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

As a result of the wide nature of this topic, the researcher will, in this study, pay attention to only Black married heterosexual couples who have children who are still of school going age. These couples should come from nuclear families where both partners are economically active, as it appears that these are couples that may be experiencing problems because of the roles that they play outside home as workers.

As far as the educational psychological nature of the roles is concerned, attention will be paid to the characteristics of a home in its capacity as an authentic primary education space in relation to children's affective life. Consideration will be given to emotions, as they, according to Fox (1991 : 863) play a pervasive role in children's lives, in that they influence many aspects of their lives such as their relationships, self-concept and their school work.

1.5. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The lack of a clearcut definition of gender roles, which seems to have been brought about by conflicting beliefs and attitudes held by men and women in this ever-changing world, results frequently in marital conflicts that sometimes end up in divorces. As a result of these conflicts, homes fail to fulfill their tasks as authentic primary education environments. Instead, they become a source of emotional problems for all members of the family, including children. Since emotions are pervasive in the life of children, the disturbance of their emotions lead to various adverse effects which affect their schoolwork negatively. It appears therefore that a pertinent question to be asked, whose solution may benefit contemporary couples, may be framed as follow:

Which beliefs and attitudes held by heterosexual couples render the sharing of sex roles in a complementary manner difficult among these couples, with the result that their homes fail to cater for their family members' wellbeing.

1.6 AIMS

The aim of this study is twofold, namely, primary and specific.

1.6.1 The primary aim

The primary aim of this study is as follows:

To identify beliefs and attitudes held by married heterosexual couples that render the sharing of sex roles in a complementary manner difficult among these couples.

1.6.2 Specific aims

The specific aims of this study, which will be achieved by either literature study and/ or empirical investigation, are as follows:

- * to explore the knowledge of couples concerning gender roles with regard to household chores.
- * to identify sex differences between men and women.
- * to explore ways in which gender roles were shared between married heterosexual couples during the olden days.
- * to develop guidelines for couples that would assist them to share household chores in a complementary way so as to render their homes to be authentic primary education environments.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

There are a number of key concepts that will be used in this study which need to be clarified. Clarification of concepts is an important aspect of research as it, among others, enhances communication.

1.7.1 Partners

Hornby (1981 : 610) defines the word partner as a person who takes part with another or others in some activity. For the purpose of this study, partners will be regarded as two people, that is a couple, engaged in the same activity (establishment of a home) as result of a marriage.

1.7.2 Marriage

Marriage, according to Reber (1995 : 435) is an institution in which two (or even more people) are bound together by means of local customs and norms. The bonding between the various members of a family is characterized by a particular relationship, which, according to Morrison (1995 : 504) may be birth, marriage or adoption. People united in this way, are expected to behave in certain acceptable ways so as to maintain a family unit. Charon (1992 : 466) defines a family as a " primary group living together in one household, responsible for the socialization of children and usually built around one man, one woman and children ".

1.7.3 Educational Psychological perspective

For the purpose of this study, a psychological educational perspective will refer to a study of homes as primary educative environments. Since this study

is concerned with married heterosexual couples, attention will also be paid to the mothers and fathers in their roles as educators who are supposed to lay a foundation for the child's participation in secondary education environments. Attention will also be paid to the parents' psychological educational wellbeing by way of assisting them in the mutual sharing of their sex roles.

1.7.4 Sex role

Various authors conceptualize sex roles in different ways. Rathus (1988 : 480) describes sex roles as " complex clusters of ways in which males and females are expected to behave." These behaviours, according to Marais (1988 : 166), are common to a particular social or cultural group. For instance, Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 601) regard them as norms and generalization about masculinity and femininity. Bassis et al. (1992 : 332) describe them as attitudes and motivations held by communities as appropriate for males and females. Roediger (1991 : 353) sees them as gender schemata. These attitudes, motivations, norms, gender schemata and generalization are, according to Shaffer (1996 : 505) sex role standards. Santrock (1997 : 264) describes them as " a set of explanations that prescribe how males and females should think, act and feel ". It appears, therefore, that every society or cultural group has sex roles or gender roles that guide and control behaviour of its members. For the purpose of this study, attention will be paid to sex roles that are concerned with household chores, and they are defined as clusters of activities performed by couples in accordance with norms and values peculiar to particular societies (that is, the South African society in this case). The concepts sex role and gender role, will be used interchangeably in this study as most authors do not make a distinction between them.

Sex role is said to have been acquired if an individual attains sex role identity. Mussen, Conger, Kagan and Huston (1990 : 394) define sex role identity as a sense of being feminine or masculine. That is, a feeling that one's interest, personality and behaviour conform to one's own definition of femininity or masculinity.

1.7.5 Complementary sex roles

The word complementary is derived from the word complement, which generally refers to that which completes something (Reber, 1995 : 142). To complete is to have all parts of something that makes it whole in place (Hornby, 1981 : 172). In this study, household roles will therefore be regarded as being complementary if both a wife and her husband attend to all the household chores in such a way that no partner is disadvantaged. That is, the sharing is such that there is more or less equality in the amount and quality of roles shared, although the word equality is not emphasized.

1.7.6 Stereotype

Rathus (1988 : 480) defines a stereotype as " fixed conventional idea about a group." According to Feldman (1985 : 337) these fixed conventional ideas may manifest themselves in the form of beliefs and expectations. With regard to stereotypes as beliefs, Taylor, Peplau and Sears (1994 : 372) assert that gender stereotypes are " beliefs about the personal attributes of females and males" . These beliefs have a negative value in that they have a tendency of colouring our perceptions of individuals and bias our evaluation of their performance (Taylor et al., 1994 : 372). Stereotyping (Robbins, 1993 : 143) is related to judgement in that judgement of someone is based on the " basis of our perception of the group to which he or she belongs ".

Sometimes stereotypes manifest themselves in various ways. One such manifestation noted by Feldman (1985 : 337) is sexism. Rathus (1988 : 484) defines sexism as the prejudgement based on a person's gender, where it is believed that an individual possesses certain traits or performs inadequately because of gender. Neubeck (1979 : 288) asserts that sexism entails a systematic subordination of persons because of their sex by way of ignoring the individual's actual talents and abilities (Marais, 1988 : 174).

1.7.7 Gender

Zanden (1990 : 333) defines gender as a social term used to categorise human beings into either male or female by making use of social roles. This concept is sometimes confused with the word sex. Gender refers to sex roles, whereas sex has to do with the biological characteristics of either being male or female (Bassis et al., 1992 : 332).

1.7.8 Sex differences

Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 419) define sex differences as the actual physical differences between males and females. Reber's (1995 : 715) definition of sex differences is supportive of that of Papalia and Oaks, but he adds the element of personality. He distinguishes three main aspects of sex differences which are characteristics that can be used to classify human beings into either male or female. These characteristics are primary characteristics (biological sex), secondary characteristics (for instance, deep voice), personality characteristics such as mental, emotional states and social patterns.

1.7.9 Sex-typing

Sex-typing, as defined by Mussen et al. (1990 : 393) are the " ways in which biological gender and its cultural associations are incorporated into the child's self-perceptions and behaviour ". According to Roediger (1991 : 352) sex typing enables a child to know whether he or she is a boy or a girl, and thereby adopt societal behaviour for either males or females. In this regard Rathus (1988 : 480) remarks that it is through sex-typing that a child acquires gender identity which he defines as " one's concept of being male or female ". Bassis et al. (1992 : 332) maintain that the feeling of being either male or female is subjective, and according to Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 419) this subjective awareness of being either male or female develops early in childhood.

1.7.10 Androgyny

Androgyny is a concept that is used to describe an individual who combines feminine and masculine psychological qualities (Mussen et al., 1990 : 394). Taylor et al. (1994 : 383) who coined the word androgyny from Greek terms andro (male) and gyne (female) maintain that androgyny is characterized by the combination of the strongest masculine and feminine qualities.

1.7.11 Socialization

Socialization is defined by some authors as a behavioural process, while others describe it as both a behavioural and cognitive process. According to Feldman (1985 : 342), for instance, socialization is a process through which individuals learn what the roles are, that are appropriate for the different sexes in a particular society. Becvar and Becvar (1996 : 3 - 4) on the other

hand, define it as a process that enables people to acquire appropriate behaviour and ways of thinking that are peculiar to a particular society.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

Bless and Higsson-Smith (1995 : 63) define research design as a scientific plan of action that guides a researcher in the collection, analysing and interpretation of collected data. Any researcher that aims at achieving his objectives should, therefore, plan his or her work before embarking on research of any kind.

There are two types of methods, namely, the qualitative and quantitative methods to be considered when planning research, and the suitability of these methods in research depends on the kind of information to be collected (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992 : 154). According to Krueger (1994 : 27) a researcher who intends gathering information that lays emphasis on words and observations to explain reality, should make use of the qualitative method. The usage of the quantitative method, on the other hand, is suitable for the collection of data that centres mainly around numbers.

In this study, the nature of data to be collected is verbal in nature. That is, respondents will be requested to express their perceptions and attitudes with regard to sex roles. The emphasis will be on the explanation of their views, and one does not know exactly what form the discussions and explanations by respondents will take. As such, the qualitative method, as a research method, is suitable for gathering this type of information, since it also gives room for flexibility. Focus group interviews and individual interviews will be the researcher's main tools for gathering data, as they give room for the use of unstructured questions and interviews (Palmer in Burgess, 1991 : 107).

According to Renzetti and Lee (1993 : 106), focus group interviews are suitable for exploring the meanings underlying behaviour, whereas individual interviews are suitable for verifying information collected through focus group interviews.

1.9 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Over and above this chapter, this study is comprised of the following chapters:

CHAPTER TWO : Sex differences

CHAPTER THREE : Sex roles

CHAPTER FOUR : Research method and design

CHAPTER FIVE : Empirical study on sex roles

CHAPTER SIX : Findings of the research

CHAPTER SEVEN : Conclusions, guidelines, and recommendations
of this study

1.10 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the background, statement of the problem, aim of the study and the clarification of concepts have been outlined. Attention was also given to the overview of the nature of problems posed by the ever-changing nature of gender roles which seem to create problems for married couples

because of sex differences. The research design and method that will be used in this study has also been highlighted.

The chapter that follows, will deal with sex differences.

CHAPTER TWO

SEX DIFFERENCES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

There are definite sex differences between males and females which make them to develop different interests in the kinds of roles they choose to play (Lippa, 1998 : 996). Although these differences may vary across cultures and time, there are those that are common to all cultures and to the different historical periods.

These differences are recognizable from early childhood in the children's play (Moller, Hymel & Rubin, 1992 : 332 & 348). Already at elementary school-age, children's play shows signs of sex differences. They differ in both the type and style of plays. While boys' play is characterized as somewhat cognitively immature (for example solitary-functioning play), solitary boisterous (for example, aggressive and rough and tumble play) and play more actively than girls, girls spend most of their playtime engaged in quiescent and constructive activities, and they generally tend to be more sedentary and talkative in their play than boys.

These are significant differences which have lead Ember and Ember (1993 : 287) to argue that human beings, unlike other species, are dimorphic. That is, there are marked differences in size and appearance dating back to birth (Marais, 1988 : 164). It is therefore quite easy to differentiate between human males and females, whereas the same cannot be said of many animals. In this regard Bassis et al. (1992 : 333) argue that it is worthless to

argue over whether there are sex differences between males and females or not.

Some authors, such as Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 419) determine sex differences on the basis of physical characteristics only (that is primary sex characteristics), whereas others consider, over and above the physical characteristics, secondary characteristics and psychological characteristics (Butler & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1994 : 331) or personality characteristics, such as the mental, emotional and social patterns (Reber, 1995 : 715). Primary sex characteristics refer to those features which are exclusively associated with either males or females, and they are meant for reproduction purposes. Secondary sex characteristics such as body hair, are also features associated with either males or females, but they have nothing to do with reproduction.

In discussing the differences between men and women, Smelser (1991 : 205 - 206) makes use of what he refers to as a four-part concept.

- * Biological sex, which consists of the primary and the secondary physical traits.
- * Gender identity, which refers to a person's self-image. It is a feeling of either being male or female. He argues that there are individuals, called transsexuals, whose biological sex and gender identity do not coincide.
- * Gender ideals, which refer to social expectations with regard to what men and women are supposed to be like.
- * Sex roles, which refer to the division of labour, rights and responsibilities according to sex.

Feingold in Gibson and Cook (1997 : 163 - 164) outlines three models of gender differences in personality, which are the biological model, evolutionary model and the socio-cultural model. According to the biological model, sex differences occur as a result of hormonal, chemical and chromosomal differences, predisposing both men and women to behave in certain ways. Men may for instance, behave in aggressive and dominant ways due to levels of gonadal hormones. Women too, may develop depression , anxiety and neurotism as a result of chromonal vulnerability. The socio-cultural model suggests that sex differences have their roots in social expectations for each sex. It should, however, be noted that there is overlapping between these models, as will be shown in the next chapter.

Maccoby and Jaclin in Lefrancois (1994 : 55) argue that there are some differences between males and females that seem to be disappearing with time, and those that prevail unquestionably. In a research where the 1974 and the 1990's data were compared, differences in the following areas which were once acute, appeared to have either been on the decline, or non-existent. (It should also be noted that various authors seem to be in disagreement in as far as the extend of the existence of these sex differences).

- * Verbal ability which previously favoured females, especially in the lower grades.
- * Mathematical ability, which favoured males.
- * Spatial-Visual ability, favouring males.
- * Aggression (which appears to be lower among females).

It is perhaps the realization of the decline of the sex differences that prompted Steinberg, Belsky and Meyer (1991 : 278) to assert that while in

traditional societies masculinity and femininity were regarded as opposite, independent poles, modern psychologists regard qualities of femininity and masculinity as overlapping. In the new modern approach, social scientists make use of two new concepts, namely, agency (active, assertive and self-confident behaviour) and communion (supportive, helpful and empathic behaviour). Individuals whose personality traits are dominated by communal and agentic traits, are considered to be feminine and masculine, respectively, whereas those who are strong in both communal and agentic behaviours are said to be androgyneous.

In Lippa's view (1994 : 339 & 362) many individuals possess, for one reason or another, either masculine or feminine personality traits. There are, however, individuals who possess both masculine and feminine traits, although their number is insignificant (Mussen, et al., 1990 : 394). In her discussion of Jung's personality theory, Engler (1995 : 81) maintains that Jung argues that although all individuals are assigned either the male or female gender, no one is purely male or female. All individuals have qualities of the opposite sex although to varying degrees.

Although sex differences seem to be a source of friction in some cases, they (that is, sex differences) are however regarded by some authors as positive features of mankind. Gibson and Cook (1997 : 164) for instance, maintain that they serve a particular purpose. According to them, the behavioural patterns which tend to be allocentric in boys and autocentric in girls, make it possible for individuals to assume gender roles associated with their roles.

In the section that follows, sex differences will be discussed under three main features, namely, primary characteristics, secondary characteristics and psychological characteristics.

2.2 PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS

According to Sroufe, Cooper and DeHart (1992 : 489) men and women's sex differences date back to conception with the presence of a Y chromosome, or the absence thereof. In this regard Rice (1992 : 351 - 352) maintains that males and females are products of different chromosomes which exert a great influence in human development. According to him, male standard chromosomes are XY, whereas those of women are XX.

2.2.1 The influence of chromosomes on sex differences

The powerful role of chromosomes in human development is illustrated in the manner in which developmental abnormalities may develop as a result of the unusual combination of chromosomes. Rice (1992 : 351) has noted that in instances where males are endowed with an extra X or Y chromosome, where the chromosomal composition then becomes either XXY (called the Klinefelter's syndrome) or XYY, chances of abnormal development are high. In the former instance, a man is born with a clear-cut feminine appearance, with unfortunately small testicles, whereas in the latter case, he becomes a tall man, with subnormal intelligence, which is accompanied by heightened violent behaviour (Reid, 1991 : 129). Women are sometimes born with a missing X chromosome (labelled XO , which is called Turner's syndrome) or with an extra chromosome (labelled XXX). Those women with the XO combination, their external sex organs are poorly developed, with missing ovaries, whereas those with the XXX combination, may either be normal and fertile or sterile and mentally retarded.

The presence or the absence of a Y chromosome, according to Vander, Sherman & Luciano (1998 : 636) activates the development of primary

reproductive organs, the gonads, which are testes (singular testis) and ovaries in males and females respectively. The gonads are regarded as primary reproductive organs because they are the determinants of masculinity and femininity through the secretion of primary sex hormones (testosterone in males and progesterone in females). It should be noted that all male sex hormones are collectively called androgens, whereas those of females are collectively referred to as estrogens.

2.2.2 The role of hormones in the development of sex differences

As already indicated above, hormones, which means " I excite " (Rice, 1992 : 157 - 160) are the main determinants of an individual's biological sex, and they continue doing so even after conception. Hormones are also responsible for other sex differences during the growth process.

2.2.2.1 Further development of sex organs

According to Money and Erhardt in Shaffer (1996 : 519) a few months after conception, that is three to four months, the testes secrete the testosterone hormone, while the ovary secretes the progesterone that leads to the development of the penis and the scrotum in the case of males, and vagina in the case of females. This testosterone and the progesterone, assisted by another hormone called the mullerian inhibiting substance (MIS) sends messages to the brain to effect the development of the nervous system, so as to ensure further development of male or female characteristics at a biological level.

The role of hormones is also explained by making reference to a research conducted by Money and Erhardt in Morgan, King, Weisz and Schopler

(1986 : 445) and Calhoun and Accocella (1990 : 412). In this reserch, it was found that children whose mothers were exposed to high levels of androgen like hormone (progestin) to prevent miscarriage, were more masculine than children whose mothers were not exposed to this kind of treatment. Rathus (1988 : 480) refers to this phenomenon as androgenital syndrome, and he regards it as a disorder.

2.2.2.2 Acquisition of skills

Hormones seem to exert an influence in the acquisition of some skills. Feldman (1985 : 341) asserts that the study of the brain structure has, for instance, shown that early exposure to androgens (male sex hormones), inhibits the growth of the left hemisphere of the brain and thereby inducing the right hemisphere, which is responsible for Mathematical ability, to become stronger, so as to compensate for the loss of the left hemisphere. In females, high levels of estrogen (female sex hormone) enables them to be better than males in verbal abilities.

2.2.2.3 Emotional vulnerability

The influence of hormones on the levels and kinds of emotions felt by males and females, bears testimony to the strong influence that hormones exert on people. For instance, the level of aggression which is higher in males than in females, is an inherent characteristic which is determined by the level of male sex hormones (androgens) such as testorene (Siegel & Senna, 1991 : 222). In this regard, Conklin, (1995 : 133) asserts that certain behavioural problems whose roots lie in the disturbance of emotions, may be traced back to the levels of enzymes which are controlled by hormonal factors. He argues that the lower level of monoamine oxide (MAO), which is a neurologically

active enzyme that is controlled by hormonal factors in men as compared to women, causes behaviours such as extreme impulsivity and childhood hyperactivity in boys.

There is also a link between hormones and the difference in males and females genetic structure. As a result of this difference caused by hormonal influence, females and males emotional vulnerability differs, with females being more emotionally vulnerable than males (Huff in Shaffer, 1996 : 520). The brain structure and functions which also develop in accordance with the dictates of hormonal influence, causes differences between males and females with regard to the expression of emotions (Konner, 1991 : 375). For instance, Davis (1995 : 665) observed that women's ability to express emotions better than men, may be attributed to the structure of their brains which affords them greater inner capacity for learning to communicate non-verbally.

The effects of the biological differences between men and women is illustrated by Butler and Nolen-Hoeksema (1994 : 331) in the way in which certain pathological disorders affect males and females. For instance, women are about twice as likely as men to show depressed moods as revealed by self-reported questionnaires. Among the theories used to explain this state of affairs, are biological theories which refer to the role of ovarian hormones as a possible cause of depression.

2.2.2.4 Gender identity

In some cases, gender identity is dependent on the influence of hormones. Neale and Davidson (1998 : 360 - 361) discuss gender identity problems by referring to excess hormones. They maintain that individuals whose feelings

of gender differs from their biological sex, may be having excess hormones of the felt identity. For instance, a woman who has feelings of a man, may be having excess testosterone, whereas a man that has feelings of a woman, may be having excess progesterone. They argue further that girls whose mothers were treated with progestins (which are precursors to male sex hormones), developed tomboyish behaviour during their preschool years. On the other hand, those mothers who were injected with female hormones while carrying boys, gave birth to children who were less athletic and they (the boys) engaged in less rough and tumble play during their childhood days.

Although it is possible to change some of these male biological characteristics, there are, however limits (Marais, 1988 : 166). Changing a biological makeup, should be avoided as much as possible, as it might, according to Symons in Sears, Peplau and Taylor (1991 : 446) disturb the maximization of chances of survival. The link between the biological makeup and survival is explained by these authors by making reference to the sociobiological analysis of sex differences, which in turn links genetic inheritance and the process of evolution which states that man's biological makeup enables him to survive, and thereby ensure the continued survival of mankind.

Woodson, Tillman and Tillman's (1992 : 544) description of the physical differences between males and females which they maintain should be considered in work places, seem to bare testimony to the link between genetic inheritance and evolution. These physical differences are noted in the following table.

Physical aspect	Male	Female
* Quantity of blood	567cm	330cm
* Lung capacity	4.5 to 9.5qt	3.3 to 5.7qt
* Air intake		
- Resting	0,79qt	0,36qt
- light work	1,77qt	0,91qt
- Heavy work	2,15qt	0,93qt
* No. of breath per minute at rest	14 to 18	20 to 22
* Deepest intake (vital capacity)	5,18qt	3,17qt

Table 2.1 : Physical differences between males and females

It appears from this table, that although men and women may perform similar duties, some duties cannot be effectively done by individuals who do not possess the necessary physical qualities to perform them.

Hormonal influence leads to the development of secondary characteristics.

2.3 SECONDARY CHARACTERISTICS

The male and female characteristics whose starting point is the biological sex, are maintained and widened, especially during puberty (Roediger, 1991 : 364 - 365) as a result of the influence of hormones.

Sroufe et al. (1992 : 489) maintain that at puberty, there is an increase in the secretion of either androgens or estrogens which lead to different characteristics in males and females. The secretion of androgens results in

the development of secondary characteristics peculiar to men, whereas the secretion of estrogen leads to the development of female characteristics.

Various authors mention different male and female secondary characteristics. Ember and Ember (1993 : 287) maintain that females have wider pelvises, whereas males are taller and have stronger skeletons than females. Female bodies are largely covered with fat, whereas those of males are mainly made up of muscles, and as such they are somewhat stronger than females (Steinberg et al., 1991 : 248). Males also have a greater grip strength, larger hearts and lungs than females. The production of sperms and the development of other secondary characteristics such as facial hair and a deeper voice, in the case of men, and the development of characteristics such as menstruation and growth of breasts in the case of females, is the function of hormones (Sroufe et al., 1992 : 489).

2.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical differences that exist between men and women, which date back to birth, affect how men and women feel, think and behave (Clarke-Stewart, Friedman and Koch, 1985 : 593). In this section the various ways in which men and women differ psychologically, will be discussed.

2.4.1 Emotional differences

Both men and women have emotions. They however differ in the way in which they express them (Roediger, 1991 : 481) at both verbal and non-verbal levels (Papalia & Oaks, 1993 : 422). Women have a tendency to express them in overt ways, whereas men hide them. Women are therefore more willing than men to reveal their feelings and personal experiences (Rathus,

1988 : 492). As such, they may be regarded as externalizers of emotions, whereas men are internalizers. Men tend to be more calm than women even when stressed up. Women are in particular more expressive of sadness, disgust, fear and happiness.

2.4.1.1 Verbal expression of emotions

Dysregrove, Kristoffersen, Matthiessen and Mitchell (1994 : 379) have noted that women have the ability to talk and share emotional experiences in discussing general issues, including personal problems, especially when talking to other females. Males on the other hand tend to talk about objects, events, cars, sports, current events and music with no feelings involved (Lippa, 1994 : 346). Feldman (1985 : 340) argues that women are more talkative than men, and their speech is also more precise than that of men.

In discussing what he regards as the five major interpersonal behaviours (that is nurturance, dependency, prosocial dominance, egoistic dominance and sociability), Koner (1991 : 311) maintains that among these behaviours, two of them emerge as associated with sex differences, namely nurturance and egoistic dominance (ordering someone around for purely selfish reasons). He maintains that the former is associated with females, whereas the latter with males.

Women's verbal interpersonal interaction engenders the development of a particular kind of friendship, which Jones, Bloys and Wood (1990 : 134) refers to as a " face to face " relationship, which differs from the male kind of friendship, which they refer to as a " side by side " friendship. In a side by side interaction, men are more concerned with the sharing of activities and

interests than the sharing of emotions. They are therefore emotionally detached from people around them.

In his description of the different types of relationships established by men and women, Rice (1992 : 356 - 359) makes reference to two types of individuals. He makes mention of the inexpressive male and the passive female, which describe the personality traits associated with the traditional sex behaviours of the two sexes. The inexpressive males are further divided into two categories, the cowboy and the playboy, who are said to be emotionless. Although the cowboy type does sometimes appreciate women, he however keeps distance between himself and women. The playboy type likes the company of women, but he never gets emotionally involved with them. The passive female has personality traits such as dependence, meekness, warmth, gentleness, and shows more emotions than men.

The type of partners men and women choose, seem to confirm the existence of passive female personality traits. In choosing partners, women tend to choose those partners on whom they may depend, whereas men go for those that seek their protection (Hewstone, Stroebe, Codol & Stephen 1988 : 30). Women prefer men who are taller, more intelligent and older than themselves, whereas men's preference are younger, attractive women who are likely to be good home-makers. It appears, therefore, that there is a link between gender and physical characteristics of the different sexes.

To summarise the characteristics of men and female communication styles, Tannen in Napier (1993 : 127) has concluded that " women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, " whereas men speak and hear a language of status and independence. The main difference in their

communication styles is that women's communication style leads to affective relationships, whereas that of men leads to status-acceptance relationships.

In this connection, Robbins (1993 : 338) maintains that the essence of the research conducted by Tannen, is that in communication, men emphasize status, while women make use of it to establish connections. Men seem to think that independence plays a role in the establishment of status, whereas the emphasis on connection in women makes it possible for them to establish intimacy. The search for status and independence leads to separateness and differences, whereas intimacy produces closeness.

The different ways (that is intimacy versus just the sharing of activities and interests) in which females and males express emotions, manifest itself in the way in which they relate to children. Fathers, according to Berndt et al. (1993 : 161) are less warm and affectionate to their children as compared to mothers, no matter how much they are involved in child rearing.

2.4.1.2 Non-verbal communication

Kring and Gordon's (1998 : 687 & 698) observation is that women's emotions can be easily detected on their faces. Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 423) found that women smile and laugh more than men and they (the women) are able to maintain longer eye contact than men, a skill which makes them to be better readers of people's facial expressions. After having analysed research findings, Taylor et al. (1994 : 394 - 395) concluded that in decoding non-verbal behaviour, women beat men in some areas, where the reading of facial expressions tops the list, followed by the decoding of body cues and voice tone.

The decoding of non-verbal cues in communication seem to have convinced Taylor et al. (1994 : 395) that mothers are more of experts than fathers at telling why a baby cries. He advances three reasons for this state of affairs:

- * Women have been genetically programmed to be sensitive to non-verbal cues.
- * Women, possibly through the process of socialization, have been trained to be experts in emotional matters, which enables them to be more skillful in non-verbal communication.
- * Because of men's greater dominance in many social settings, those in positions of lesser power (who happen to be women unfortunately) pay more attention to feelings of those in charge.

Women's expression of emotions in a non-verbal way surpasses that of men in two other areas, that is, in sexual matters and the performance of tasks. In a research conducted by Donald, Lucke, Dunne and Raphael (1995 : 462), the percentage of girls who reported feeling bad and used after sexual contacts, was more than that of boys. Females' involvement in sexual relationships is supported by love and commitment, whereas males may derive satisfaction from physical contact in the absence of psychological involvement. In the performance of tasks, women do better than men in tasks that require discussion and negotiations, whereas men are better than women in " focused, task oriented behavior " (Lippa, 1994 : 346).

2.4.1.3 Characteristics of men and women's communication

Napier (1993 : 24 - 25) identified a few differences that characterize men and women's verbal and non-verbal communication styles. Firstly, men's communication styles have a tendency of dominating the scene with no

concern for the rights of others. Women, on the other hand, are considerate of the rights of others. Secondly, in their interaction with others, men have a tendency to preserve their independence and superiority, whereas women promote equality by listening and by being suggestive in their communication, like in expressions such as " isn't it ", which might sometimes be interpreted as uncertainties, as observed by Feldman (1985 : 340).

2.4.1.4 Perceptions

Men and women perceive the world around them differently (Rice, 1992 : 308 and Hallden, 1997 : 308) which leads them to different beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. Various authors mention various indicators of this difference in perception.

According to Breakwell and Millward (1997 : 29) men and women's development of the self-concept differ. In a study they conducted, they found, for instance, that males and females develop different sexual self-concepts. Men's concern revolves around socio-emotional issues (romance, sensitivity and eroticism), and relational issues (exploitative, seductive and experimental issues). Women on the other hand, are more concerned with assertiveness (unwillingness to have sex before marriage, controlling when sex occurs and pretending to enjoy sex).

The two sexes also perceive each others' physical being differently, with the result that certain behaviours and attitudes towards the opposite sex are engendered. For instance, Sarnoff and Sarnoff (1989 : 170) assert that men, regard the structure of women's sexual organs as symbolizing their ability to lie back and be passive, so as to get erotic pleasure without having to perform for it.

Negative evaluation of women by men creates perceptions and beliefs that further create bigger sex differences. Vukile Pokwana, a City press journalist (City Press, 27 February 2000 : 34) regards women as people who, unlike men, always cry because, according to him, " tears maketh a woman ". He argues that woman cry over issues that are not eventful, such as a husband's failure to kiss her in the morning. Men cry only when there is a serious need to do so, like when he needs " all the love he can get " (City Press, 27 February 2000 : 34). Men who cry, in his view, do so because they are idiots who are being influenced and encouraged to do so by feminist ideologies.

The development of a self-concept is further influenced and entrenched by names, which in most cases, differ according to sex (Allport & Lawson in Twenge, 1997 : 418). Names, they argue, are anchorage points for self-hood, and as such, there is a link between one's name and one's identity or status. These writers maintain that a person's name is his or her shadow. It follows him or her wherever he or she goes throughout his life. Since masculinity is held in high esteem as compared to femininity, masculine names will also be held in higher esteem than feminine names, and chances are that the holder of feminine names will also be looked down upon.

Self-devaluation and negative evaluation by others may aggravate sex differences as a result of identity problems. Identity problems, identified by Conger (1991 : 61) are identity foreclosure (identity search crystallizing prematurely) and identity confusion. In the case of identity foreclosure, the process of identity formation is prematurely fixated on a particular self-image before an opportunity is given to the development of other possibilities of self-definition. Such people (especially adolescence) have certain characteristics with which they may be identified from others who have found their real

identities. Such individuals are high on the approval scale, and as such they usually have high respect for authority, and tend to conform more and manifest less autonomy.

On the other hand, those with identity confusion problems, take a long time before they finally achieve a sense of identity, and others never develop a strong and a clear sense of identity. Like the individuals with the foreclosure identity problem, these individuals may be identified through the way they behave, as a result of their low underlying self-esteem. They are for instance, impulsive, disorganized in thinking and have difficulty in taking responsibility for their own lives.

According to Conger, (1991 : 61) it appears as though individuals who experience identity problems have characteristics similar to those with feminine qualities. Those who have successfully found themselves, that is, those who have achieved ego identity, behave in masculine ways, such as being autonomous, creative, have positive self-concept, complex in thinking and resistant to conformity.

With regard to conformity, Feldman (1985 : 655) and Lippa (1994 : 346) agree that women conform more often than men. Taylor et al. (1994 : 394) appear to convey a mixed reaction to the notion of women's conformity, as they assert that research reviews are highly inconsistent on this issue to an extent where a conclusion may not be drawn. They argue that although women may seem to conform more than men, it appears that such conformity reveals itself in matters pertaining to the opposite sex, a behaviour which men are also victim of.

There are times when self-devaluation influences perception of oneself. Research (Shashaani, 1997 : 46) has proved that although boys and girls' performance in computer studies, for instance, does not differ, women's interest, ability and self-confidence was found to be poor as a result of their negative attitude towards computers, as a result of self imposed anxiety emanating from negative evaluation of themselves. They regarded themselves as being inferior to boys in this field.

In the world of work, men and women's belief system differ. As a result of divergent perceiving, as explained by means of the gender schema theory, men and women attach different gender characteristics to the various occupational fields known to them, with the result that men develop a masculinity schema, whereas women develop the femininity schema (Judd & Oswald, 1997 : 468). The schemas are used to classify any information they process into men-women categories.

2.4.1.5 Altruism (prosocial behaviour)

Men and women differ with regard to prosocial behaviour and the difference seem to be brought about by their personality traits. For instance, Eagly and Crowley in Taylor et al. (1994 : 393) noted that while men are more helpful in situations where heroism is called for, women appear to be more helpful in situations which require nurturing and caregiving. Womens' nurturant ability seem to lie in the fact that they are more responsible than men (Ember & Ember, 1993 : 299). In roles such as primary caregiving for the family, taking major responsibilities for the caring of children (including aging parents) women are superior than men. Mens' heroism is seen in emergencies, especially when they are being watched, and when the victim is a female (Lippa, 1994 : 346).

2.4.1.6 Aggression

According to Lippa (1994 : 339) men are more aggressive than women in all forms of aggression, that is, both physical and psychological aggression (Taylor et al., 1994 : 392) and mens' physical aggression is higher than psychological aggression. It is this high level of aggression that renders more boys than girls to be candidates for serious forms of crime (Trojanowicz & Morash, 1992 : 33) as they (the boys) sometimes make use of their aggression to achieve their goals. The higher level of aggression in boys is confirmed by the incidences of recorded delinquency. Mussen et al. (1990: 669) maintain that boys outnumber girls in juvenile arrests, particularly in serious offenses. For example, in rates of burglary and robbery, boys to girls' ratio is approximately 15 : 1.

There are various divergent personality traits that are responsible for the aggressive behaviour in women. In Rathus' opinion (1988 : 492) the lower rates of serious crime among women may be attributed to the fact that they are more empathic than men, and Buntaine and Constenbader (1997 : 625) attribute it to their difficulty to acknowledge and express anger, despite the fact that they are a more emotionally expressive gender. Gumbiner and Flowers (1997 : 479) consider women to be less antisocial, hostile and cynical as compared to men.

Santrock (1997 : 337 - 338) explains the difference in aggression between men and women by making use of the concept of social connectedness (feeling of an emotional bond between an individual and people around him). Social connectedness or the lack thereof, starts early in a child's development and continues into adulthood. Feelings of connectedness,

manifest themselves in adulthood in the form of caring, being supportive and empathic, whereas people who do not feel connected, are self-reliant, independent and unexpressive, being personality traits that may be associated with aggression.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, sex differences between men and women were discussed with regard to primary characteristics, secondary characteristics and psychological differences. It seems as if there is absolute evidence that men and women differ in as far as primary characteristics are concerned. The same cannot, unfortunately, be said in the case of secondary and psychological differences, although in both cases, differences are sometimes either subtle, obscure or questionable.

In the next chapter, sex roles will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

SEX ROLES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Men and women, according to Calhoun and Acocella (1990 : 216 - 220), are role partners in their marriages. As role partners, they make certain demands, called role demands (that is, cues aimed at making the other partner aware of what he or she is expected to do) on each other, as gender roles, according to McKendrick (1990 : 128), are bi-directional in nature. In performing a particular role, the individual acts in accordance with what is expected of him by others, as well as his expectations for himself. Interaction between the partners runs smoothly if both partners act appropriately, that is, in accordance with the expectations of the other partner.

During this era of ever-changing sex roles, there are times when couples do not act appropriately even though role strain (failure to satisfy the requirements of their roles), is unthinkable (Bassis et al., 1992 : 137) because of, among others, the following reasons:

- * Unwillingness or inability to continue with a role already established.
- * Role dissensus (that is, partners disagree on what is expected of one of them).
- * Role conflict (an individual is faced with conflicting demands from his or her different roles).

Although there are indications that there are ever-changing societal roles, Steinmetz, Clavan and Stein (1990 : 447) maintain that modern society is still bound to traditional roles. Husbands are still regarded as heads of their

families and as such, make major family decisions, sometimes including decisions with regard to household chores, although the end result of such a practice may be divorce as women demand joint decision making.

With regard to the divorce rate that appears to be on the increase these days, Buli Siwani in Bona (April, 2000 : 30) asserts that the traditional stereotypes that gave men the position of head of the family are giving way. As a result, couples are coming into conflict over who is really in charge of a family. What couples, especially men, may not be aware of is the fact that as social forms evolve and change with times, " so will the division of labour adjust or reconstruct itself to reflect these changes " (Hardy & Conway, 1988 : 66). As a result, the rigid distinctions between the sex roles of men and women are disappearing.

Sue and Sue (1999 : 294) point out that certain roles may change more than others. For example, some women's views on education and employment may be modern, but remain traditional in the area of sexual behaviour and personal relationship. Moreover, in a multicultural country such as South Africa, gender roles in the various cultural groups may differ as a result of the influence exerted by the dominant group. Gender roles in some cultural groups may be closer to that of the dominant group, whereas others may be far from it.

According to Lenski, Lenski and Nolan (1991 : 339 - 340), there are various reasons that are responsible for the change of family roles, namely, technology, industrialization, democratic ideology and multiple options available to severe ties. Industrialization has led to the undermining of authority of fathers. Whereas fathers had complete authority over their families during the agrarian period, various factors such as the peer group

influence displayed on both the electronic and print media, have eroded these powers. As a result of technology and industrialization, certain roles that were done by certain members of the family, such as the caring of children, are now done by certain institutions manned by professionals who are specialists in their roles. As far as democracy is concerned, Lenski et al. (1991 : 340) maintain that with the emphasis placed on individual rights rather than responsibilities, democracy has changed family roles, like it has altered roles within political, economic and educational institutions.

Despite their disappearance, women's household chores still surpass that of men greatly, irrespective of whether they hold full time jobs or not (Sears et al., 1991 : 455). Instead, they are now faced with double workload - as paid workers and as housewives and primary parents (Minas, 1993 : 491), and in fact, they thought that by gaining entry into the men's world of work, they would be freed from household chores.

While it seems some women do not any longer accept the dominant role of men as a result of changing sex roles, they nevertheless indirectly continue to surrender what is supposed to be their right in most cases, and thereby place themselves in subordinate positions (Sear et al., 1991 : 455). For instance, when college students were requested to list separately the actions that a man and woman would do when preparing for a date for the first time, meet the date and spend some time together, traditional sex roles emerged. The women welfare organizations in America, too, demanded that they be given preferential treatment, while they were, on the other hand, demanding equal rights (Valk, 2000 : 41 & 44). On the 14 May 1968, these women, for instance, held demonstrations through the streets of Washington, DC, where they were demanding that poor women be given sufficient money to run their households.

This chapter will focus on the effects of the basic differences between men and women, which are primary, secondary and psychological characteristics on sex roles during the various phases of the different societies' socio-economic development. Attention will also be paid to other issues related to sex roles.

3.2 STAGES OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER ROLES

In their discussion of the various activities aimed at making a living that ancient and modern societies were engaged in, Coleman and Cressey (1990 : 281 - 283) point out the way in which sex roles developed from these activities. While Cargan (1991 : 154) also sees a link between man's activities and sex roles, he however points to sex roles that differ from Coleman and Cressey's sex roles, especially with regard to the advent of the industrial age. There is however consensus among these authors with regard to the nature of roles that developed during the different phases of societal economic development.

3.2.1 Hunting and gathering societies

These were the first primitive communities that depended on hunting and the gathering of edible plants for their livelihood. Since it were men that were physically stronger, they were the ones who went out to hunt and gather edible plants for their families. The meat from the hunts, which was distributed to the entire members of their families, gave the hunters, that is men, prestige and power that women could not share.

According to Zanden (1990 : 341 - 342)) and Kottak (1991 : 185 - 186) this division of labour was based on the functionalist and the conflict theories. According to the functionalist theory, division of labour was guided by what each sex could do best considering their physical characteristics, whereas the conflict perspective states that man's life is characterized by conflicts arising out of a desire for, and securement of prestige, power and other privileges. Men could therefore do the more strenuous roles because of their physical strength and their tendency towards greater mobility, whereas women were biologically well suited to give birth and nurture children.

The functionalists further argue that this arrangement makes sense as families could not have survived if these arrangements were not put in place. In this regard Ember and Ember (1993 : 289 - 298) make reference to the strength and compatibility-with-child care theories. With regard to the strength theory, they argue that men's physical strength, combined with other physical characteristics such as greater height and heavier skeletons as compared to women, put them in a position to perform tasks (such as running with great speed) that women could not perform. The compatibility-with-care theory maintains that it is better for women to be near children, especially during breast feeding, as children thrive well if they are breast fed. Women are a nurturing sex by anatomical design, and this nurturance begins as a biological process whose deep roots lie in their ability to provide children with the crucial lifeline in breast feeding (Minas, 1993 : 481). Other motherly nurturant behaviours such as cleaning, caring and protecting children from danger, including creating a healthy home atmosphere, flow from, and are supportive of the basic biological process - breast feeding. Although men may also take care of children, it is however in the interest of children to be taken care of by their mothers for the sake of breast feeding.

This theory also holds that it may be dangerous for children to be carried around by their mothers when performing certain roles such as hunting.

Contemporary employers' attitude towards women seem to confirm the validity of the compatibility-with-child care theory. From a research conducted by Hedges in Neal, Chapman, Ingersol-Dayton and Emlen (1993 : 61), it seems as if employers prefer male employees over female employees because of the latter's high rate of absenteeism from work. In this study, it was found that women's regular absence from work was caused by the fact that they were the ones who stayed away from work whenever there was a sick child in the family. Once again, this research seem to have tried to prove that a woman's place is her home.

The expendability theory also supports the view which holds that a women's place is her home. According to this theory as expounded by Ember and Ember (1993 : 295) women should also be protected from dangerous activities, such as wars, since men are more expendable than women. That is, the loss of men is not as disadvantageous as the loss of women, whereas the loss of women means the loss of reproductivity. It should, therefore, be men who are exposed to dangerous roles such as mining, for if they die while performing such roles, the few remaining ones will ensure that reproductivity continues.

While it may appear that a woman's place is her home, the conflict theory also maintains that women are reduced to powerlessness by keeping them out of the economic systems, and by making them baby producing machines to fuel capitalism. Coleman and Cressey (1990 : 296 - 297) note in this regard that exploitation and oppression are universal human problems. They argue that men made use of their power to put women into subordinated

positions, and ensured the continued existence of this power by creating some kind of institutions like any other dominant group. Currently, although power is not the dominant feature of males, women are being kept in subordinate positions by institutions and attitudes established during the days when male power monopolized men and women's relationships. These institutions were established to serve the interests of one section of the community, that is men. According to Haralambos and Holborn (1991 : 781) if it were not for the differences in interests, which tend to favour one group at the expense of the other, there wouldn't be conflict between men and women, and as such, gender roles would not have taken the current shape. As the disadvantaged group tries to create an equilibrium, conflict results. This is what has perhaps led Mwamwenda (1995 : 481) to remark that in family violence, husbands are the ones who are the perpetrators of violence, and wives do not fight back in most cases for fear of encouraging beatings. Husbands therefore emerge as victors in most cases.

The power of men over women does not seem to have changed. In this regard Giddens (1989 : 169) asserts that there is no known instance where women are more dominant than men. He further argues that there is no where in the world where men are primarily charged with child care, and women with the responsibility of herding large animals, the hunting of large game and deep sea fishing. In this regard Gilbert (1993 : 24) maintains that the position of women today, is still the same as in the past. They are the ones (and not men) who are concerned with combining work and family. Attempts to let go of traditional and patriarchal pressure as a result of growing freedom of self-determination creates risks and confusion.

3.2.2 Horticultural societies

These societies, unlike the hunting and the gathering of edible plants societies who led a nomadic life, settled at one place for longer periods, as they depended on the cultivation of land for their livelihood. In this communities, although men cleared the land and worked with their wives in the cultivation of the land, they were more concerned with warfare than the cultivation of the land. Women were therefore supposed to be responsible for their households, and to take care of the fields. Housekeeping was therefore, according to Cargan (1991 : 154) a full time job. While the cultivation of the soil was at the centre stage during this period, some women in some communities manufactured and sold goods which enabled them to gain prestige and access to outdoor life, although on a small scale.

3.2.3 Agricultural societies

During this period use was made of technological instruments for ploughing, irrigation and the harnessing of domestic animals. Because of the strength necessary for the handling of farming apparatus, such as ploughs, men dominated the outside world, while women were forced to stay at home and take care of children. The women's privileges of outdoor life gained during the horticultural period dwindled away, while men's power increased, and they multiplied their power by way of monopolizing other spheres of life such as the political and religious domains (Coleman & Cressey, 1990 : 281).

3.2.4 Industrial revolution

It was during this period that rapid changes that made it possible for women to gain permanent access to the men's world took place, and as such, the

categorization of sex roles as they existed in the previous societies started to give way. Many women were exposed to the life-style of men. There were several factors responsible for this state of affairs. Firstly, the reduction of physical labour struck a blow to the privileges that men were enjoying. As a result of the use of machines, physical strength was no longer an important factor in the determination of sex roles outside home. The categorization of sex roles outside home did not therefore depend on physical strength. Secondly, children were no longer regarded as assets (to plough the fields) and this led to fewer births. Women were therefore no longer bound to stay home for long periods to raise children. In some cases, however, the position of women (except for those who were breadwinners, such as unmarried women) worsened as they were cast into the role of being full-time housewives during this period (1860 - 1920). Women had to remain home, while their husbands went to work far from home in the city factories (Cargan, 1991 : 154).

From this historical background, it appears as though sex roles had their origin in the physical being of both men and women. Because of their strength, men found themselves faced with difficult tasks such as hunting, whereas women, because of their disposition to give birth, were forced to stay home and take care of children that they gave birth to. Although the theories discussed above are still questionable, they do however, shed some light on the reasons for the universality or near universality of some roles. The universality of tasks does suggest that there is something intrinsic in men and women, other than socialization, that determines the division of labour.

3.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF SEX ROLES

Problems related to sex roles between men and women date many years back, and they were fuelled by the advent of feminism, an old phenomenon, which opposes patriarchy. While patriarchy endorses the domination of women by men, feminism demands that women and men should enjoy equal social, political and economic rights (Steinmetz et al., 1990 : 307).

According to patriarchal views, men are supposed to dominate women, as women are naturally subject to men because of their biology. Feminism (Macionis, 1994 : 251 - 252) values human dignity, equal opportunities for all and freedom with regard to decision making. It shuns predetermination of sex roles which disadvantages women and violence against women.

In Nevis, Rathus and Greene's (1997 : 137) view, feminist ideology challenges the validity of gender role stereotypes and expectations that have traditionally maintained patterns of male dominance and female subordination in our society. Evans (1994 : 238) and Auerbach (1999 : 701) maintain that the word gender was coined as a reaction to the patriarchal claim. The use of this word (that is gender) indicates that women's position in the society is not dictated by nature, but by societal perceptions of what women are.

With regard to the relationship between feminism and patriarchy (which is also equated with masculinity), Hofstede (1991 : 261 - 262) states that feminism requires that social gender roles should overlap, where both men and women should be modest, tender and concerned with equality of life. Masculinity, which is a direct opposite of feminism, stands for a society in which men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material

success. Men are not expected to be modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life.

Feminism appears to have its roots in France where women were inspired by the French Revolution. Feminists argued through their leader Marie Gouse (who was later executed in 1893) that equality would be achieved only if women enjoyed the privileges that men enjoyed, that is, if patriarchy could be done away with (Giddens, 1989 : 178 - 181).

Although feminism is an old ideology, modern feminism, which may be divided into three phases, especially in the United States of America, started in 1830 (Steinmetz et al., 1990 : 307).

3.3.1 The first phase of feminism (1830 - 1850)

Freedom for women has its roots in the emancipation of slaves. Although men and women shared a common wish to abolish slavery, men unfortunately were not in favour of the involvement of women in this matter. Women were as such excluded from membership of organizations whose aim was to fight slavery. Women did not accept this state of affairs. They protested against their exclusion in various ways, and their protestation took many forms, including public speeches. It was at this time that they expressed their realization that freedom of slaves and freedom of women were similar issues.

After the women were refused admission at the World Anti-Slavery Convention held in London in 1840, two women, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Candy Staton, convened a meeting on the 19 and 20 July 1848 in New York. This meeting, which was attended by both men and women, approved a Declaration of Sentiments and twelve resolutions, which among others,

focused on issues, which to a certain extent, resemble current feminist issues, such as demands for equality in political decision making, marriage and access to occupational opportunities (Beijing Conference report, 1994 : 51 - 55). At this meeting, women realized, when their male counter-parts did not support them with regard to equal voting rights, despite having reached easy consensus on many other issues, that they were supposed to win political rights (that is voting status) if they were to secure their freedom. It therefore dawned to them that men's power to subdue them in all spheres of life, including on household issues, lay in the monopoly of the political power they were enjoying.

The differences that emerged at this World Anti-Slavery Convention held in London in 1840 between men and women, may be attributed to the fact that although some men do support feminism, there is a slight difference in the manner and extend to which they support it. In a brief report concerning research on the support for feminism (Jackson, Fleury & Lewandowski, 1996 : 687) it was noted that the support for feminism between men and women differed slightly, with women in the majority, and fewer men identifying themselves with the feminists.

3.3.2 The second phase of feminism (1890 - 1920)

Attempts to secure suffrage for women were continued by two major groupings during this period, namely, The National Women Suffrage Association and The American Suffrage Association. The former organization was concerned with broad issues such as poverty, marital and religious rights for women, whereas the latter devoted its attention to the problems concerned with suffrage itself. In 1890, the two organizations merged to become The National American Suffrage Association, with the sole objective

of securing voting rights for women. Ever since then, the right of women to vote, which was finally ratified in 1920, was tabled at each congress. During this period, women made considerable progress with regard to gaining entry into men dominated arena of politics.

3.3.3 The third phase of feminism (1960 to date)

The Great Depression of 1929 dealt a heavy blow to feminism as a result of a shortage of employment which was given to men and breadwinners only. Most women were supposed to stay at home and play their role as homemakers, wives and mothers. Women were forced into this roles as those who tried to compete with men in the labour market were regarded as being unpatriotic.

It was not until the second world war in 1939 that women once again found themselves active in the world of work, as men were compelled to play the social role of being soldiers and defenders of their countries. Unfortunately, after the war, women returned to their housemaker roles, as men reclaimed their primary roles as breadwinners, but there were those that remained in the labour market. Davis in Cargan (1991 : 155) asserts that both men and women accepted the idea of working mothers at this point, and this was a major breakthrough for women in contemporary history.

Feminism was saved by a revived interest in human rights during the early 1960s. The political confrontations, sit-ins, marches and protests organized during this time, enabled women to draw up a bill of rights for women in 1966 (which was in some ways similar to the 1848 New York document), and to fight for the enactment of the equal rights amendment of the constitution. The equal rights amendment was defeated in June 1982. Despite this defeat,

feminism continued to exist until now, and its focus has been, and is still, advocacy for flexibility in gender roles for women and men, although men's opportunities and rights still surpass that of woman (Lauer, 1995 : 268). Women are currently more concerned with freedom in occupational, economical and political spheres (Beijing Conference Report, 1994 : 51 - 55). According to Sowetan (7 April 2000 : 10) women in South Africa (and in the whole world) still have a long way to go in all aspects of their lives, as they are still a disadvantaged sex despite the fact that this country boasts of the most admired constitution that clearly affirms their rights.

They are, however, not alone in their battle to gain entry into these occupational, economic and political spheres. The government, through its Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST), puts some mechanisms in place to uplift them, since it is aware that their involvement in some areas of life such as Science and Technology is still at a low ebb. At the third World Organization for Women in Science held in 1999, DASCT national director in Science and Technology, Kelebogile Dilotsotlhe, indicated that women made up only twenty percent of the staff at eight government and parastatals Science and research institutions. Women are therefore being encouraged from youth to follow careers in this man dominated fields, so as to slowly, as noted by Dilotsotlhe in City Press (19 March 2000 : 8), start breaking " the stereotypes with which we have been socialized, of prescribing certain careers for boys and others for girls " through various ways, such as youth camps..

3.4 KINDS OF ROLES

The different types of roles that married heterosexual couples may play in their families may be divided into two main categories. Charon (1992 : 471)

describes two societal roles which are also applicable to families, namely, expressive (or socio-emotional) and instrumental (or task oriented) roles. According to him, researchers have found that in smallll groups, there are usually two leaders, an expressive and instrumental leader. The task of the former leader, whose qualities, according to Smelser (1991 : 214) are associated with that of women (which are similar to those of type B personalities characterized by submissiveness), is to keep the group together, whereas that of the latter (which are similar to those of type A personalities characterized by the need for power), is to give guidance that is aimed at making the group to achieve its tasks. In the case of families, leaders would be mothers and fathers. Men, because of their ambitiousness and their assertiveness, which is made possible by muscular qualities, such as physical strength, are expected to be instrumental leaders. Women, on the other hand, are expected to be caring and nurturing. They are there to deal with people rather tasks.

It appears, however, that a clear cut off point between masculinity and femininity has got both advantages and disadvantages, especially in the performance of household chores. Lipka (1994 : 363 & 365) points out that either masculinity or femininity may cause higher levels of anxiety and lower self-esteem in girls, and impulsivity and aggression in boys. These qualities do not serve the interest of a household. However, women who are feminine and play expressive roles in their families, seem to enjoy successful relationships. The reason he advances for this success lies in the fact that they do not compete with their husbands, but instead, complement them. In this regard, Jones et al. (1990 : 134 & 142) argue that people should have a particular orientation, that is, either instrumental or expressive. People with undifferentiated sex orientation experience interpersonal problems because of their inability to recognize the needs of others.

As a compromise, Charon (1992 : 478) argues that couples, especially men, should play more of expressive roles, which are companionship (couples living as friends), empathy and physical affection (expression of love through touch and caresses). He maintains that marital needs have changed from being predominantly instrumental to being expressive, and if this change is not realized, marriages will be dysfunctional. In Mina's (1993 : 493) view, men can also possess expressive qualities, provided they experienced a positive parent-child relationship that made the development of both trust and individuation in their childhood possible. Such individuals would have the emotional capacity to parent, which is characterized by the following attributes:

- * Provide frequent and sustained physical contact;
- * Soothe the child when distressed;
- * Be sensitive to the baby's signals, and
- * Respond promptly to a baby's crying.

In this regard, Cargan (1991 : 208 - 209) argues that the mother and the father's qualities supplement each other. Fathers, with their instrumental characteristics, influence children to begin to explore their environments earlier, and their development of social competence is also being accelerated. Mothers' expressive personality characteristics, which are transferred to the child through interaction, which is characterized by talking to their children and stroking them, afford children an opportunity to acquire feminine qualities such as warmth.

In support of Cargan's argument, Schaied and Willis (1991 : 128) indicate that mothers and fathers in their interaction with their children differ with

regard to the types of stimulation they offer their children. They maintain that fathers' play tend to be more physical and arousing, while mothers' play tend to be more verbal and instructional. Kennedy and King (1994 : 39) maintain that each parent " serves a purpose for children that go beyond the love and care inherent in both parent roles ". They argue that children growing up without one parent experience problems in life. For instance, boys raised without male presence, show insecurity about their gender identity, low self-esteem, and later in their lives they experience trouble with the establishment and maintainance of intimate relationships.

With regard to the role of mothers in families, Lyons-Ruth (1995 : 434) explains mothers' influence on their children by making use of a mood-disorder model. According to this model, mothers' depression affect children negatively more than fathers' depression. In this regard Sroufe et al. (1992 : 349) argue that children are affected more negatively by their mothers' criticism as compared to fathers' criticism. Children therefore need the parental care of both parents in order to develop androgeneous personality traits.

Although the kinds of roles (expressive and instrumental) seem to be at the centre, Brodzinoky and Schechter (1990 : 158) hold a different view. They maintain that in their study of forty nine, two child families, it was found that sex-linked role functioning (that is mothers' expressiveness and fathers' instrumentality) was not crucial for families to function well. Instead, normal functioning families were found to be working towards achieving observable form of cohesiveness as a unit.

3.5. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ACQUISITION OF SEX ROLES

There is consensus among various authors with regard to the existence of male-female gender roles in all societies. These authors, however, differ with regard to what could be the factors influencing men and women to adopt different sex roles. Some authors assert that gender development is a cognitive and socialization process that goes through stages, whereas Sarason and Sarazon (1993 : 234) maintain that it is a product of three factors, namely, cognitive, biological and social factors. The feminists, however, reject the notion of biological causes in favour of social factors only. According to Alant (1990 : 72 - 74) the feminists' support of the nurture argument in the nature-nurture debate (whether sex roles are biologically or socially determined) maintains that :

- * Gender is a learned attribute which is transmitted to individuals through the process of sexist socialization.
- * Male domination and the oppression of women is reinforced through the socialization process.

In the discussion that follows, attention will be paid to the role of cognitive, biological and social factors in the acquisition of gender roles.

3.5.1 Cognitive factors

3.5.1.1 Kohlberg's cognitive-development theory of gender roles

Children acquire appropriate gender roles in stages. Kohlberg in Shaffer (1996 : 527) identified three stages, which are:

- * basic gender identity (labelling oneself as either boy or girl at about the age of three),
- * gender stability (perceiving gender as stable over time, and the realization that boys and girls eventually become men and women respectively), and
- * gender constancy (the realization that one's sex is also stable across situations).

Steinberg et al. (1991 : 279) added the fourth stage, sex stereotypes, which are social expectations about how males and females behave. Mussen (1990 : 398 - 399) identified only one step, gender identity, which he explains as the children's ability to classify themselves as either boys or girls.

After having acquired this identity (that is basic gender identity), a child is motivated to learn about sex roles which are then incorporated into his or her gender schema (that is, organized sets of beliefs about how males and females behave). The rate at which children acquire these gender roles depends on the level of a child's intelligence (Papalia & Oaks, 1993 : 363). The process of sex typing is rounded off when a child reaches the level of gender constancy.

According to Woolfolk (1995 : 171) gender identity, (which he refers to as gender-role identity) is part of our self-concept, and an individual whose gender identity is either masculine or androgeneous, has a higher esteem than an individual having a feminine identity - perhaps because feminine qualities are not valued.

From this argument, it seems as if one's biological sex is not a determinant of gender identity. Men may acquire feminine qualities and vice versa. After a gender identity has been established, children form gender schemas (organized networks of knowledge and beliefs about what it means to be a male or female) through their interaction with family members, peers, teachers and their environment in general (Kohlberg in Shaffer, 1996 : 527).

3.5.2 Biological factors

According to Money and Erhardt in Shaffer (1996 : 516) biological factors play a role in the development of sex roles. Biological influence on gender roles is illustrated by Peter Murdock, Talcott Parsons and John Bowlby in their discussion of gender role theoretical assumptions based on three theories, namely biology and practicality, biology and the expressive female and mother/ childbond (Haralambos & Holborn, 1991 : 528 : 529).

3.5.2.1 Biology and practicality theory

According to the biology practicality theory, it appears as if there is a relationship between biological differences and gender roles which does not necessarily have genetic implications. Instead, this relationship appears to have developed out of sheer practicality. It has been established that roles such as hunting, lumbering and mining, seem to be predominantly male roles in all the 224 societies that were studied in a cross cultural survey. In this survey, women were found to be engaged in lighter tasks, such as the gathering of vegetables, fetching of water, preparation of food and the manufacturing of clothes and utensils. It was because of biological functions such as childbearing and because of their weaker physique that they were kept in and around their homes.

3.5.2.2 Biology and expressive female theory

This theory maintains that industrialization has placed the task of socializing children in the hands of nuclear families because of the isolated way of life of these families. The main role player in this socialization process is the woman. The reasons Parsons advances for this state of affairs is that a woman (or a mother) is the closest parent to children because she bears and nurses them, and as such, women enjoy better relationships with their children as compared to fathers. The effective socialization of children, therefore, takes place through the expressive role (which entails warmth, security and emotional support). The expressive and the instrumental roles (cf 3.4), however, complement each other (Talcott Parsons in Haralambos & Holborn, 1991: 529).

3.5.2.3 The John Bowlby's mother/ childbond theory

Bowlby in Haralambos and Holborn (1991 : 529) agrees with the biology and expressive theory. He argues that there is a genetically based psychological need for a close and intimate mother-child relationship. That is, children need to experience the expressive role of mothers if they are to triumph in life. In a study Bowlby conducted among juvenile delinquents, it was found that children who were separated from their mothers at an early stage, were psychologically disturbed.

There are however indications that biological factors alone do not determine an individual's gender roles. Cargan (1991 : 40) cites two examples to illustrate this argument.

* Firstly, children born with underdeveloped organs may be raised either as

boys or girls, depending on the hormones that may be administered, and also the kind of socialization that a child is exposed to.

- * Secondly, a boy who was accidentally castrated at the age of 17 months, regarded himself as a girl after 7 years of feminine socialization.

3.5.3 Social factors

3.5.3.1 Socialization

Every community has its gender roles which are embodied in its norms and values. Socialization ensures that children learn the rules, beliefs, values skills, attitudes and behaviours of their societies, without which they may not function adequately as adults in their societies (Westen, 1996 : 541). According to Sroufe et al. (1992 : 16) this theory maintain that children and adults have a tendency of repeating behaviour for which they have been rewarded in the past, after having seen it being modelled or manifesting it spontaneously. It appears therefore that the aspects of culture learnt and acquired are only those for which individuals are being rewarded for.

According to Bassi et al. (1992 : 335 - 337) the socialization process starts as soon as a child is born, that is, as soon as a child's biological sex is known, and it continues until adulthood. Immediately after a child is born, it is treated and dressed in accordance with its sex. For instance, boys are dressed in blue, whereas girls are dressed in pink. As far as treatment is concerned, parents tend to be soft on girls, but a little bit tough on boys. Macionis (1994 : 238) however argues that socialization starts long before birth, since parents seem to be more interested in baby boys than girls. The demand for baby boys is so high that parents in some societies (China and

other strongly patriarchal societies) may abort a female embryo with the hope of giving birth to a baby boy later.

The extent to which socialization plays a role in the acquisition of sex roles is explained by means of conceptual approaches to gender attitudes. According to Cash, Ancis and Strachan (1997 : 435) there are two types of women, namely, those who believe in traditional gender roles, and femininity-identified women. The former type of women have internalized cultural values, and their life style reflects their societal beliefs, especially mens' beliefs about women, which unfortunately causes depression and other psychological difficulties for them. They believe, for instance, that they should invest in their beauty so as to be attractive to men. The feminist-identified women, on the other hand, are free from beliefs held by the traditional gender women, and they regard themselves as mens' equals.

It seems, however, that most women (if not all) are at one time or another in their lives, traditional gender women. According to Bargad and Hyde in Cash et al. (1997 : 435) women move away from being traditional gender role women to feminist-identified women in stages, which, according to Sue and Sue (1999 : 318 - 319) constitute the basis of a feminist-identified theory. The stages are:

- * Passive acceptance (this is a stage at which a woman either denies or is unaware of sexism, and as such, the valuing and the endorsement of role stereotypes are high on her agenda).
- * Revelation (feelings of anger and guilt are experienced as a result of the realization of sexism and the oppression of women).

- * Embeddedness-emanation (emotional attachment to other women grows, and social contact with men is cautiously handled).

- * Synthesis (the acquisition of womanhood leads to the questioning of traditional sex roles and men are being evaluated on an individual basis).

- * Action commitment (feminist identity is consolidated, and a tendency towards strong devotion to action for sociopolitical changes develops and it is put into action).

Beliefs and stereotypes, described as " structured sets of beliefs about personal attributes of men and women " are regarded as useful tools of survival by Six and Eckes (1991 : 57 - 58). They are calling upon societies to develop a new look for gender stereotypes, and thereby discard their old look which arouses negativity towards these stereotypes. The usefulness of beliefs is also raised by Calhoun and Acocella (1990 : 289) who maintain that it serves people in different ways. They argue, for instance, that it imposes order in the people's daily social experiences. In this regard Brigham (1991 : 136) maintains that order is made possible because beliefs act as a scheme which is a way of putting structure to one's environment in a meaningful way.

Beliefs are of various types. According to Myers and Myers (1988 : 87 - 90) there are five types of beliefs, which, in Heath and Levin's view (in Mitchell & Brown, 1991 : 68) may be linked to culture. These beliefs are :

(i) Primitive beliefs (one hundred percent consensus beliefs)

These are beliefs which are generally shared by most members of a particular community. Since they are the kind of beliefs to which most (if not all) members of a community subscribe, they are also referred to as 100 percent consensus beliefs. Through the socialization process, they are being transmitted and reinforced by the various types of socialization agents such as teachers, parents, the media and the peer group.

(ii) Primitive beliefs (zero consensus beliefs)

These beliefs are the direct opposite of the one hundred consensus beliefs in that they are not shared beliefs. That is, they are subjective in nature, peculiar to communities' individuals. What makes them to be subjective in nature is the fact that they are not taught. They are, instead, gained through personal experience which makes them even more difficult to change as compared to the hundred percent consensus beliefs.

(iii) Authority beliefs

Authority beliefs are acquired from the socialization agents that an individual trusts, like one's parents. These beliefs, unlike the ones acquired through personal experience, are quite flexible and therefore very easy to change.

(iv) Derived beliefs

In the case of derived beliefs, the socialization agents should not only be trusted, but they should also be admired. Whereas authority beliefs are acquired from the socialization agents who hold authority, derived beliefs

may be acquired from anyone, that is, those in position of authority such as teachers, and those who do not hold positions of authority, such as children.

(v) Inconsequential beliefs

These are beliefs that are concerned with matters of taste. Generally, inconsequential beliefs do not have links with other types of beliefs. Changing a particular belief, therefore, does not effect changes on other beliefs an individual already holds.

3.5.3.2 Ways in which socialization takes place

The various ways in which socialization takes place may be divided into two broad categories. According to Sroufe et al. (1992 : 273 - 274) these two categories are socialization from inside and socialization from outside. The former refers to socialization that takes place because of a child's inherent tendency to learn the values and norms of his or her society, whereas the latter refers to the process in which these norms and values are imposed on an unwilling child by his or her society. Socialization from outside is a traditional view which is, or has given way to socialization from inside.

This categorization seem to be parallel to Lenski et al.'s (1991 : 112) informal and formal socialization. During the agrarian period, for instance, boys' informal socialization in hunting which was acquired through play and observing and imitating their elders, was consolidated through formal socialization that marked the transition from childhood to adulthood. Informal socialization is made possible by the fact that children are able to read other people's minds, a tool which enables them to understand their behaviour from an early age (Dunn, Brown, Slomkowski, Tesla and Youngblade, 1991 :

1352 - 1353). This kind of socialization, in Smelser's view (1991 : 210) is self-socialization, where behaviours that elicit positive reactions from significant others are maintained, and those that the society punishes, are discarded.

(a) Social learning theory

According to Bandura and Mischel in Shaffer (1996 : 525) children acquire gender identities through direct tuition and observational learning, which are types of social learning theory. In direct tuition, children's sex roles standard (that is behaviour more suited for a particular sex) is either encouraged through reinforcement, or discouraged through the use of punishment. In observational learning, children learn and acquire sex roles through watching others.

There are several role players that exert an influence on children referred to as the agents of socialization in observational learning (Rathus, 1988 : 498) which are, among others, parents, teachers and mass media (Zanden, 1990 : 170)

(i) Parents as socialization agents

Parents determine the kind of gender roles their children acquire through the application of child rearing techniques (Morgan et al., 1986 : 445). In their interaction with their children, parents' behaviour is usually influenced by their cultural stereotypes which children are able to acquire from the age of two and a half years, to three and a half years (Rathus, 1988 : 480). By the age of three, which is regarded as a critical period, most children shall have acquired sex roles, provided the socialization process coincides with the sex

of the child (Money & Erhardt in Shaffer, 1996 : 519 - 520). That is, a boy should, for instance, be treated as a boy and not as a girl.

These cultural stereotypes stipulate different ways in which boys and girls should be treated (Bassi et al., 1992 : 334 - 335). For instance, in most societies, boys and girls are taught different games, the type of clothing for men and women differ, and there is also a division of work into male and female work. Siegel and Senna (1991 : 222) maintain that males are encouraged to be aggressive, whereas girls are being punished for behaving as tomboys. In Hyde's view in Burn, O' Neil and Nederrend (1996 : 420), it is out of the girls desire to be rewarded for behaving appropriately (that is, as girls) that the would be tomboys conform to the norms of their society. In all these activities there is no equality (Bassi et al., 1992 : 335).

Berndt et al. (1993 : 157) maintain that parents tend to treat their children differently as a result of the current and future roles a child is supposed to play in the family. For instance, fathers tend to be controlling on boys as they are expected to inherit the property of the parents, and less controlling on girls as they are to leave their parents' households on marriage. Mothers' socialization of their daughters ensure that they master household chores, and from an early age girls do more household chores than boys.

Arditti, Godwin and Scanzoni (1991 : 195 - 210) explain the role of parental socialization by referring to three children's roles (especially girls) which is a product of parent child rearing techniques. These roles, which are highly interwoven, are as follows :

- * Gender role traits (instrumentality and expressiveness)
- * Gender role preferences (modernity versus traditionalism)

- * Gender role identity (masculinity, feminism, androgyny and undifferentiated role).

Parents inculcate in their children either instrumentality or expressiveness, (that is, traditionalist behaviours) or both (androgyny), which is associated with modernism in their children, depending on the gender role traits they have adopted, and their child rearing techniques. Expressive mothers inculcate in their daughters instrumental roles if they encourage them intellectually, and expressive ones if they are restrictive. Androgyny is, however, encouraged if a mother has adopted cross-sex typed (that is masculine) characteristics.

Fathers' control on the other hand drive both their daughters and sons into instrumentalism if they are restrictive, and androgyny in boys, if they have adopted cross-typed (feminine) characteristics. The difference in the effects of the parents' restrictiveness on their daughters may be attributed to the identification of children with the same sexed parent, and the fact that mothers spend a lot of time with their daughters, and this allows their daughters to acquire their mothers' personality traits.

(ii) Teachers

In schools socialization takes place at both a formal and informal levels in various ways through the teaching of the official and hidden curriculums (Bassi et al., 1992 : 335 - 337). For instance, in one study, the reaction of a teacher towards a boy and a girl that were hammering nails with equal effectiveness, was different. While the boy was given encouragement to continue hammering as he did, the teacher offered to assist the girl. By so

doing, this teacher conveyed different messages to these children, that is, self-reliance in the case of the boy and dependence in the case of the girl.

Rathus (1988 : 498) asserts that children are being complimented if they dress in clothes which are consistent with their sexes, and in guiding them with the choice of subjects, they are being encouraged to choose courses which are reflective of their sexes. Boys are, for instance, encouraged and guided to take technical courses, whereas girls are encouraged to study courses such as homemaking. In a study conducted by Crawford in Napier (1993 : 72) it was found that teachers were biased towards girls. Girls reported that they received less positive praises and encouragement and more negative feedback, as compared to boys, from their teachers.

(iii) Mass media

Zanden (1990 : 170) maintains that mass media, both electronic and printed, has positive and negative effects on people, as it has a tendency of shaping people's beliefs and their values. In this regard Santrock (1997 : 267) asserts that media, including radios, are influential in the development of biased gender roles. Television, for instance, has a tendency of portraying females as less competent than males. In the print media females appear more often than men in advertisements for beauty products while men are shown more often in advertisements for cars, travel and liquor. Media should, however, not be perceived as the inventor of sex roles, as it only depicts what is already in existence.

From the above discussion, socialization is being portrayed as a negative process which favours males at the disadvantage of their female counterparts. There are, however, some authors who regard socialization as a positive

process without which community members would be at loggerheads over gender roles. O' Donnell (1994 : 5 & 253) asserts that while socialization is seen as being disadvantageous to girls, as it is being accused of encouraging female submissiveness, it is nevertheless the most effective way of ensuring that people within a society work together without disorder, as it lays down behavioural expectations in a particular way.

The language used by the socializing agents contributes towards the development of gender roles. The vocabulary of most languages (if not all) have words that make a distinction between males and females (Cargan, 1991 : 208). In Richardsson and Taylor's (1989 : 5) view, the grammatical and semantic structure of these languages do not offer women full autonomy, as in most cases it is not divided into male and females. For example, in the English language, to father means to impregnate whereas to mother means to give succor and being self-sacrificing.

Santrock (1997 : 265 - 269) points out words such as he and she that categorize people. He and man are used to refer to both men and women as in the phrase " one step for man, one giant step for mankind ". He maintains that as soon as children understand language they associate themselves with these discriminative words and in some cases, these words are used in a sexist manner where they are used to refer to everyone. Use is also made of masculine words such as chairman, policeman and congressman, that are associated with positions of dominance to enhance the status of men at the expense of females (Lauer, 1995 : 278 - 279).

3.5.4 Combination of factors

Some authors attribute the development of gender roles to either cognitive, biological or social factors (cf 3.5). Others argue that they are the product of the interplay between these factors (Doob, 1994 : 273). While Hewstone et al. (1988 : 35) agree that sex role development depends on the interaction of biological and environmental factors, they maintain, however, that biological factors set the pace. In this regard Burn et al. (1996 : 420) maintain that the development of secondary sex characteristics, for example, breasts in tomboys at puberty, paves a way for the elimination of tomboyish behaviour. The development of these characteristics makes tomboys realize that they are females and it is this realization that makes them to be susceptible to environmental pressure. Social pressure puts tomboys in a situation in which they engage in self-regulation of their behaviour in an attempt to win approval and acceptance.

Biological factors seem to have an influence on childrearing techniques (Wicks-Nelson & Israel, 1992 : 8). These authors assert that the reason why boys, for instance, are treated in a hard way as compared to girls, is because males are difficult to handle from an early age. It appears, therefore, that biological endowment interacts with environmental factors in personality development.

Burn et al. (1996 : 426) assert that women who lived in different periods and also in different countries, scored differently on the BEM Sex Role Inventory (BSRI). For instance, Native women exhibited cross-sex behaviour, as it was appreciated prior to European colonization, Mexican women acculturated into American society had higher scores on the BSRI than those that were not acculturated, and female African Americans and Puerto Ricans were found to

be more androgynous than Euro-Americans. It was thought that their androgyny had its roots in the kind of labour they did, which helped them to develop attributes such as self-reliance, strength, resourcefulness and autonomy.

The reversal of gender roles in some communities seem to be an indicator of the interaction of biological and environmental factors in the development of gender roles. Lauer (1995 : 270) for instance, noted in her research of primitive people in New Guinea that in one of the tribes that were studied, the Tchambuli tribe, male and female gender roles were virtually the opposite of our own ideals. Women in this tribe held powers of authority and they were also concerned with fishing and trading. Men's behaviour, on the other hand, was feminine in nature. They were concerned with personal appearance, their jewellery, and were embroiled in rivalry and jealousies in their quest to attract women's attention.

3.6 CONTROL OF GENDER-TYPING

Papalia and Oaks (1993 : 363) maintain that gender-typing can be modified and stereotypes eliminated if children do more or one of the following:

- * Discard all schema - teaching individuals to distinguish the sexes by anatomical and reproductive differences, although young children find it difficult to do so, as they base their decisions about a person's sex on external signals like clothing or hairstyle.
- * Learn the individual different schema - making children aware that there are great variations within the sexes. For instance, they may be made to note that some girls and boys like to play soccer whereas others don't.

- * Learn cultural-relativism - which is the understanding that people in different cultures and different historical times hold different beliefs and customs about what is appropriate for males and females.

- * Learn the sexism schema - the conviction that gender stereotype roles are wrong, no matter how common they are.

There are unfortunately no indications that gender roles and sexism will change easily (Marais, 1988 : 171) as the human race, like all other species, will always be categorised into male and female as a result of biological processes and socialization (Mussen et al., 1990: 393). There are, however, signs and possibilities of cooperation between men and women as noticed by Santrock (1997 : 341). He says that male and female roles in some countries such as the United States of America are becoming increasingly similar, that is androgyneous.

3.7 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SEX ROLES AND HOMES AS PRIMARY EDUCATION ENVIRONMENTS

Married heterosexual couples usually live together as a family (Reber, 1995 : 435) in one household (Charon, 1992 : 466). In every household or home, sex roles are played in order to maintain the household. The manner in which these sex roles are played by married heterosexual couples determines the kind of homes they establish for their children (cf. section 3.1). In some instances where role strain exists (cf. 3.1) homes are dysfunctional whereas where it does not exist, normal functioning homes that effectively function as primary education environments are established.

3.7.1 Characteristics of normal functioning families

Charon (1992 : 466) defines a family as a group of people, usually made up of parents and children, living together in the same household. The main responsibility of a family is to socialize children. Socialization of children in this primary education environment takes place effectively provided a family is not dysfunctional. Van Schalkwyk (1986 : 178 - 180) noted that there are characteristics that distinguish a normal functioning home from a dysfunctional one. In his opinion, a normal functioning home:

- * Provides children with a community of love.
- * Provides children with a sense of togetherness which is based on love.
- * Helps children to attain the acceptable social norms of their community.
- * Takes care of the physical and emotional needs of children.
- * Provides its children with a sense of security.

3.7.2 The nature of a home

According to Fraser, Loubser and Van Rooyen (1990 : 12) a home is a primary, original teaching environment, since it is the point of departure for educating and teaching a child, after which education is supplemented and continued by schools. Unlike schools that offer intentional education, a home is an environment where non-intentional education, which has a beneficial influence on children " through the example of human living which they set them unobstructively and unemphatically, and sometimes even uncounsciously in their daily lives " (Gunter, 1995 : 44).

Although homes and schools are engaged in the same activity, educative teaching, they differ in emphasis. Schools are more concerned with

intellectual development, whereas homes pay more attention to children's emotional development (Griessel, Louw & Swart, 1991 : 4) and the teaching of norms, values and attitudes (Fraser et al., 1990 : 12). Van Schalkwyk (1986 : 178 - 180) asserts that teaching in the primary education environments is made possible by the love the various members have for one another.

Emotional stability, according to Griessel et al. (1991 : 8) enhances the chances of a child to develop a sense of confidence that enables him to explore his or her environment. The instability of emotions (Du Plooy, Griessel, & Oberholzer, 1987 : 148), on the other hand, affect children negatively in many different ways. Children who are emotionally disturbed, may, for instance, develop behavioural problems such as aggression, depression, and withdrawal (Quinn, 1990 : 221) which render effective learning difficult, and sometimes impossible (Biehler & Snowman, 1993 : 214).

A home, therefore, is supposed to lay a foundation for future education and to continue to support it. It should be such that it creates a secure environment which serves as a springboard for a child to explore his environment (Griessel et al., 1991 : 8). A home that is characterized by disagreements and quarrels emanating from conflicting views concerning sex roles may not be in a position to function as an effective primary education situation.

Damast and Mellet (1982 : 44) assert that the role a home plays in the lives of children is so important that if a child's behaviour is to be understood, it is usually worthwhile to go through his family background. There are many questions that may be asked concerning a child's family background, among which are the following:

- * What atmosphere or climate reigns in the home ?
- * Does the mother work during the day ?

Whether a home is dysfunctional or not is sometimes determined by the type of marriage on which the family ties are based.

3.7.3 The types of marriages

Marriages may be divided into three categories if the manner in which sex roles are shared by a couple is considered (Turner & Helms in Morgan et al., 1986 : 487). The way in which sex roles are shared determines the kind of a home a couple establishes for its children.

3.7.3.1 Traditional marriage

In this type of a marriage, husbands are undisputed heads of their families and as such, traditional sex roles are maintained. These are marriages, as indicated previously (cf. 3.1), whose chances of ending up in divorces due to sex role changes that have already taken place, are high. Such marriages are characterized by physical force and violence, as men's traditional gender-role attitudes are being associated with attitudes supporting the use of physical force and marital violence (Stillson, O' Neil & Owen, 1991 : 458).

3.7.3.2 Companionship marriage

This is a marriage where both husband and wife enjoy the same rights, obligations and privileges, depending on the demands of the situation. In this type of marriages, the sharing of sex roles is not always in accordance with

the expectations of both partners. Couples in such marriages (cf. 3.1) may at times experience problems such as :

- (a) Unwillingness to continue with a role already established.
- (b) Role dissensus (that is, partners disagree on what is expected of one of them.
- (c) Role conflict (a partner is faced with conflicting demands from his different roles).

3.7.3.3 Collegial marriages

This is a marriage where individual abilities and interests of both couples play a dominant role. The couples' relationship in this type of a marriage is characterized by mutual understanding and sharing. The sharing of sex roles in this marriage is done in a complementary manner. It is a form of marriage in which couples, as primary educators, find themselves in the best position to provide their children with what an ideal primary education environment can provide its children with, namely, emotional stability.

3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, sex roles that were played by men and women during the various stages of economic development were discussed. The role of feminism, a movement that is opposed to sex roles that are associated with traditionalism, were also highlighted. The two main types of sex roles, namely, the expressive and instrumental roles, were indicated. The various factors that influence the acquisition of sex roles were discussed under three main headings, namely, cognitive development, biological influences and

social factors. It was also indicated that researchers differ in as far as the causes of factors responsible for the difference in male and female sex roles.

Attention will be given to the research proposal in next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The research strategy is the overall plan and approach that directs the research (Botes, 1994 : 12). This reasearch strategy includes the research method and the research design. In this chapter, these aspects, which were briefly discussed in chapter one, will now be discussed in detail.

4.2 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

As already indicated in chapter one (cf 1.6.1), the aims of this research are twofold, namely, primary and secondary aims.

4.2.1 Primary aim

The primary aim of this research is as follows:

To identify beliefs and attitudes held by married heterosexual couples that render the sharing of sex roles in a complementary manner difficult among these couples.

4.2.2 Secondary aims

This study's secondary aims are as follows:

- * to explore the knowledge of couples concerning sex roles with regard to household chores

- * to identify sex differences between men and women.
- * to explore ways in which married heterosexual couples shared sex roles during the olden days.
- * to compile a set of guidelines that would assist married heterosexual couples to share roles in a complimentary way so as to make their homes authentic primary education environments.

4.3 ASSUMPTIONS

The purpose of this study is based on the following assumptions:

- * that couples may not be aware that the lack of insight into their sex differences may be a source of their difficulty in sharing household chores in a complementary way.
- * Men and women's conflicting beliefs and attitudes with regard to sex roles inhibit the sharing of sex roles in a complementary way.

4.4 HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis for this study may be stated as follows :

The complementary sharing of sex roles by married heterosexual couples is made difficult by conflicting beliefs and attitudes held by men and women with regard to these sex roles.

4.5 THE RESEARCH METHOD

This study, which will be ex post facto in nature, will be based on the qualitative research methods which incorporate three other aspects that are inevitable to this study, namely, the exploratory, descriptive and contextual aspects.

4.5.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research, which is one of the two main research procedures (the other one being the quantitative research), lays emphasis on words and observations to express reality. On the other hand, quantitative research makes use of numbers mainly to represent opinions and concepts (Brink, 1991 : 15).

These two procedures differ in two main ways. While the qualitative research's main purpose is to describe, to generate hypotheses in a little known field and to illustrate the meanings of relationships (Brink, 1991 : 15), quantitative research aims at confirming or disputing hypotheses in well-known fields (Leedy, 1993 : 142). As such, qualitative research is considered to be a " warm " approach as it is concerned with human beings. That is, it is concerned with their interpersonal relationships, personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts, and their feelings. Quantitative research on the other hand is regarded as being "cold" because of its emphasis on testing hard facts of reality (Leedy, 1993 : 142 - 143).

The main purpose for laying emphasis on words in qualitative research is to fully describe and understand reality from the respondents subjective world

(Grinnell (jr), 1988 : 186). In this type of research, the researcher does not, therefore, put words and ideas in the respondents frame of reference (Bogdan & Biklen in Tuckman, 1994 : 366). As a result a researcher making use of qualitative research procedures may at times be compelled to conduct field studies so as to be in a position to gain entry into his subjects' lifeworld. On the other hand, in quantitative research, research may be conducted from the researcher's office only.

Since the purpose of this study is to understand and comprehend reality from the couples point of view, the qualitative approach seem to be the best approach for this study. Couples will be given a chance to fully express their views on their sex roles. It is therefore helpful to make use of unobstructive, natural methods of data collection. A reseacher may, for example, make use of observations and in-depth interviews which are guided by open-ended questions, such as in focus group interviews and face-to-face interviews (Best & Kahn, 1993 : 184).

In the application of these unobstructive, natural methods of data collection, a researcher should decide whether his reseach should be explorative, descriptive or contextual in nature. Exploratory research is used for problems about which little is known in the area of interest (Bless & Higsson-Smith, 1995 : 42), in order to familiarize oneself with a topic by developing and clarifying ideas. Herbert (1990 : 19) maintains that research is said to be descriptive if it describes certain characteristics of a population in detail. According to Gay (1992 : 10 - 11) these characteristics should be reported as they are. Research is regarded as being contextual in nature if it takes environmental factors into consideration and any research that ignores the context in which behaviour occurs, is not informative enough (Weinbach in Grinnell (jr), 1988 : 25).

In this study, the explorative, descriptive and the contextual aspects of qualitative research will be taken into consideration. Although extensive research concerning sex roles has been done, the complementary nature of these sex roles in respect of married heterosexual couples has not yet been fully considered, and the researcher should therefore consider exploratory techniques. Whatever new information concerning sex roles that may be found, it will be described in the way it is, and in detail. The context in which these roles are played will also be considered.

4.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

Bless and Higsson-Smith (1995 : 63) define a research design as a plan of any scientific research which guides the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting data with a view to generating answers (Herbert, 1990 : 18). This plan assists a researcher in achieving his plans, which are, in this study, the understanding of the beliefs and attitudes of heterosexual couples towards sex roles. It appears, therefore, that every scientific research should be preceded by the formulation of a research design (Luthans, 1995 : 13).

The type of a research design to be used is determined by the research method chosen, that is either the qualitative or the quantitative method. There are as such research designs that are qualitatively or quantitatively inclined. Research designs that are quantitatively inclined follow fixed research designs whereas those that use qualitative method are flexible. That is, they are open to modification throughout the research process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992 : 58). Data analysis, for instance, takes place throughout the research process in qualitative research designs whereas in quantitative designs it is

considered towards the end of the research process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992 : 154).

4.6.1 Selection of a sample

According to Neale and Liebert (1986 : 31) a sample is a subset of a population of interest. Wimmer and Dominick (1990 : 69) define a population as a group or class of subjects, variables, concepts or phenomena under investigation. Since it is not always possible to investigate the entire population of interest, researchers make use of samples.

There are various sampling techniques in research. In choosing a sample, a researcher should decide upon the most suitable technique to suit his research design. Bradley (1993 : 440) asserts that the most suitable sampling technique in qualitative research is purposeful sampling which is not controlled by any set of rules as is the case in quantitative research. Samples in qualitative reseach designs may be of any size, and they may be changed if the need arises to suit circumstances in which a researcher finds himself. This study's sample will be made up of three married heterosexual couples, two groups of six women and men each, and two gender equality activists.

Samples in qualitative research should however be made up of respondents that the researcher regards as average persons of the population under study. According to Trembling (in Burgess, 1991 : 100) these individuals should be people who are in the best position to provide the kind of information that is needed on a continuous basis. In this research, the following criteria will be used to select such individuals and these will be couples :

- * who have been married for at least 5 years,
- * both partners should be economically active, and
- * should have children of school going age.

4.6.2 Pilot study

Before a full scale study was conducted, the researcher conducted a pilot study. Various authors agree on the usefulness of a pilot study. Gay (1992 : 233) argues that its usefulness lies in its ability to pre-test an interviewing schedule. Through the use of a pilot study, McNeil (1990 : 34) argues that the ambiguity of questions that is sometimes caused by wording problems, may be rectified. Tuckman (1994 : 237) finds its usefulness in the identification of sensitive topics which respondents may find difficult to respond to. Herbert (1990 : 65) sums up the value of a pilot study by referring to it as a " dress rehearsal " because it helps in identifying unforeseen difficulties.

A pilot study, where a group of three married heterosexual couples, who responded to the following question, took part in a focus group interview.

How would you like to share your household chores with your partner?

4.6.3. Data Collection

Data will be collected by means of the following techniques :

- * Focus group interviews
- * Individual interviews and

- * Observations.

4.6.3.1 Focus group interviews

According to Krueger (1994 : 6) a focus group interview is " a carefully planned discussion on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment." Focus groups are mainly made up of 6 to 10 members and discussions of these groups are guided by an interviewer who is referred to as a moderator.

Focus groups, according to Renzetti and Lee (1993 : 106), have advantages that are highly valued in this study. They encourage active group participation, especially among shy people, and they are ideal for exploring the meanings that underpin behaviour. The disclosure of private family matters may not be easy for many people as it involves the invasion of one's privacy and it is through focus groups that some kind of support is given to them to enable them to talk freely.

What makes active participation possible in focus group interviews, is that discussions take place in a situation that resembles real-life situations (Burgess, 1991 : 15). In such situations, discussions are free as a result of the unstructured nature of the interviews. Unstructured interviews, according to Singleton (jr), Strait, Strait and McAllister (1988 : 236) are characterized by the formulation of general objectives. These objectives are referred to as a set of thematic areas to be explored. The areas to be explored in this study will be presented to three focus groups in a form of a question which will be poised as follows:

How would you like to share your household chores with your partner?

The composition of the five focus groups will be as follows:

- * Three groups of three couples each.
- * One group of six women only.
- * One group of six men only.

4.6.3.2 Individual interviews

For the purpose of verifying information collected by means of focus group interviews, individual interviews, also called face-to-face interviews, will be conducted on a small scale. According to Baker (1988 : 182) a face-to-face interview is a data collecting method where an interviewer addresses questions (either closed or open-ended questions) to a respondent. Responses from the interviewee may be recorded. In this study, open and closed ended questions will be asked.

The individual interview will be used in this study because of some of its advantages which are relevant to this study. This techniques' adavantages, as discussed by Palmer (Burgess, 1991 : 107) are, among others, the securing of vivid, accurate and inclusive accounts from informants, because it provides a researcher with the opportunity to probe deeply. Probing, which is not possible in focus group interviews, is made possible by the fact that questions may either be modified, changed and repeated as the need arises (Bailey, 1994 : 174 - 175). In this study, two individuals from organizations involved with women issues will be interviewed.

4.6.3.3 Observations

Observations are reflected in field notes which are made up of two kinds, namely, the descriptive and the reflective parts (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992 : 108 - 124). In the former part, the main concern of a researcher is to give a description in a written form of the setting, people, actions and conversations observed. On the other hand, the latter is concerned with the researcher's own impressions (which must be objective in nature) about the phenomena under study.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992 : 107) field notes are made up of that which the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks about while collecting and reflecting on data in qualitative research. Note taking, an activity that should be regarded as an integral part of research interview, may be conducted either during (Miles, 1994 : 89) or after the interviewing sessions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992 : 107). The best time, however, depends on the nature of the interview and the personal taste of the researcher.

4.6.4 Data interpretation

A technique known as data analysis will be used to interpret data collected. Data analysis is an ongoing process that is concerned with organizing fieldwork data (Zaharlick, 1992 : 118). There are various techniques used to analyse data. In this study, a technique known as content analysis, will be used. It is a technique which aims at organizing information into themes and categories (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1984 : 124). These category scales are being arrived at through the process of exploration of the phenomenon under investigation (Herbert, 1990 : 67). During the exploration process, the researcher breaks the phenomena (as reflected in the transcribed individual

and focus group interviews recorded earlier, and field notes) under study, into meaningful parts (that is, into themes and categories).

There are as many coding procedures as there are researchers (Baker, 1988 : 265). In this study, the system of coding data, as described by Bogdan and Biklen (1992, 176 : 177) will be used.

- * Firstly, the researcher will read through the collected data carefully, and while doing so, will develop a preliminary list of coding categories which may be changed or modified if there is a need to do so.
- * After the preliminary coding categories have been developed, they will be assigned with abbreviations that will be assigned to units of data (which may be sentences or paragraphs in the interview scripts and fieldnotes in this study).
- * Further reading of the data will be done so as to break the categories into additional categories and sub-categories, if necessary.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the research method and research design were discussed with the view of shedding light on how data to accept or reject the hypothesis stated above, would be collected. Attention was also paid to the value of qualitative research and its aspects, namely, the exploratory, descriptive and contextual aspects relevant to this study. In discussing the research design, attention was paid to data collection and the intepretation of data collected.

In the next chapter, the transcribed interviews will be presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

EMPIRICAL STUDY ON SEX ROLES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, data collected through interviews will be presented in a transcribed form. The purpose of these interviews, which have been divided into two main categories, namely, the focus group and the face-to-face interviews, was to enable the interviewees to express their views concerning beliefs and attitudes they hold with regard to sex roles.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Each interview was guided by one main open ended question and a few other minor questions of any type where they were found to be necessary. The main questions were different for the two types of interviews. The main question for the focus group interviews was " How would you like to share your household chores with your partner? " That of the face-to-face interview was " Which household chores should husbands and wives perform in their families? "

5.3 INTERVIEWS

There are five focus groups, and two face-to-face transcribed interviews presented in this section. The composition of the focus groups is as follows:

- * Three groups of three couples each
- * One group of six men
- * One group of six women

Use has been made of pseudo names to conceal the identity of the interviewees, and each transcript is preceded by a key.

5.3.1 Focus group interviews

5.3.1.1 First couples focus group interview

Key :

R	: The researcher
TA	: First gentleman
Mk	: Second gentleman
Nt	: First lady
Mm	: Third gentleman
Ny	: Second Lady
Lb	: Third lady

R: Good evening ladies and gentleman. Thank you very much for having accepted my invitation to this discussion and the research that I am conducting is on sex roles in families, and the question that I would like us to to discuss is as follows: " How would you like to share your household chores with your partner?"

(Silence)

R: Anyone is free to make a start.

TA: (Softly) I personally believe in ...

R: (Interrupts) : Will you please come nearer and speak a bit louder?

TA: (Continues) in the division of labour. I don't believe that we must do everything at home. Each gender should specialize in... in activities suitable for that gender, like in the olden days when men used to serve as security officers and providing for food. Domestic chores were limited to females. Thank you.

Mk: And to add to that, I think (pause) it's ... it's very much genuine because that makes eh... that makes a man to feel as a man and a woman to feel as a woman, and as such, it means that this people should not be on the same level. In this way, there would be a lot of respect and children will respect them and there would be lots of love.

Mm: Okay, I also think..., I believe in the division of labour but at the same time (pause) when she is not feeling well..., I think those who are parties must be able to assist each other.

Nt: I think they should just agree because you find that if we divide labour, you may find that husbands, most husbands, want to cook. You may find that you are denying other people their opportunity to cook. So household chores should be discussed so that it should be determined as to who wants to do what, like for instance, if I want to wash a car, I can do it (pause) as long as we agree. Thank you.

TA: But now eh ... this question of eh... gender equality. There is this school of thought which says that when we do different things, it is as if we are not equal. I... I personally feel that eh... , regardless of the activities, we are equal beings, but let us do the things we are capable of. I think my colleague indicated that if one party is not feeling well, then you can do that. In families where the husbands are staying far away, the

mother chops wood. She does everything that the... the father would do when he were around. He would take over.

Mk: "Ja", it looks like when you want to help as a man in the house (pause) it happens to become something that you should do regularly. If you don't, you are asked why you didn't do it because it looks like it was your turn (laughter). So, just stay away from the problem. Don't just start it until you feel like, unless if you feel like you won't be having a problem the next time you are asked why didn't you do it. Like cooking, you say no, it's your turn because yesterday it was my turn. I am the one who cooked. As you know very well that women are for cooking and men are for doing the garden, and (pause) things like that.

Mm: Eh ... let me make an axample in the division of labour. Let's say, one tile on top of your house is broken and the house is leaking. Eh ... just think about that one, when now your wife is right on top of the roof of the house and busy attending to those tiles and her husband is sitting there (pause) washing dishes. How about that (laughter)? How do you feel about that one?

Mk: No, in that case if... if the wife is the one who wants.. I mean if... if she is the one who wants to go up and fix the roof, there is no problem but she must make sure that I am not going to feel offended because I must feel like a man for doing men's job, and she must do women's job. Otherwise we are going to end up in a situation where I will be saying but this woman, if she can do this, she can as well do everything in the house. So, what am I there for. Maybe I better go outside, find a place

where I can do those things. She does not have to be a master of everything.

TA: And we must not forget that this is Africa. I mean if people can see my wife on top of the roof, even if we are together, they will look at me and wonder what could have happened to me. So, if we are in Africa, the environment must also be considered. I mean..., just imagine a man putting nappies on a washing line, and women will be saying no, he has been bewitched (laughter).

Nt: That's why I still maintain that people should discuss. We should sit around the table and discuss. If we start drawing a time-table, and say you are a woman, you are supposed to do this and that, you will experience problems. If you discuss and agree, then there would be no problems, because if the roof is leaking, then the man will say " ag ", but how about if I do it because I will be able to climb on top of the roof.

Mk: No..., I don't believe in discussing because some of the things happen spontaneously in a way that you may not have discussed them. I think I must be made to feel like a man, then the woman must be made to feel like a woman.

Ny: (Agitated) How, how can you be made to feel like a man ? By doing man's job ? Do you mean that ...

Mk: (Interrupting) Yes, by doing men's job. By buying things, and if I buy a bag of maize meal, I will feel like a man. That I am doing something in the family, but if everyday when I come home there is something, sometimes I might think I am very useless in the house.

Ny: But nowadays we are all working. Men are going out there. They wake up early in the morning. They go to work and we ladies, too, we do the same things. So, you find that in the long run you, ... you the wife, your money is ... is the only source of income whereas your husband's money does not come at all. So really ...

Mk: (Interrupts) No, it is not your source of income. It should come here to me (laughter).

TA: Eh..., and we must never measure a man in terms of what he brings home. That is not a good measurement. No... no, if we talk about the salary now, you... you..., no I cannot be measured by my salary. I must be measured by the service I render. I... I think I have a better service to render as a man, like negotiating contracts, for example. If we are to buy something, I must be the one to take the lead in negotiations. I must be the one who must be seen because they look at my house, and they say it belongs to so and so (that is, it belongs to the man).

Ny: Maybe one in a million. Not everybody will do that. Only one in a million, but people let me tell you. People, let's face facts. In most cases if we can just look around here, women are the only ones who... you know..., this houses are there because of women. Most men are not doing what they are supposed to do. Yes maybe, just because of talking. Yes that's why you are saying things but in actual fact, that's not the truth.

Mk: In an African way, they will always say your man has built you a very beautiful house (laughter).

Mm: Because of what he is paying.

Mk: Who is paying, yes.

Ny: But let's be real, and let's look at the examples that we are seeing each and everyday.

Mk: The minute we become real, the divorce rate becomes high.

Nt: But I have something to say. That is, fifty-fifty makes hundred percent. As a woman I have weak points and strong points. And the man also has weak points and strong points, and we must complement each other (pause). What I mean is that my husband should bring fifty and I will bring my fifty so as to make a hundred.

R: What's your view on this matter madam (pointing to a lady that has not expressed her views up to so far).

Lb: But I think a man is still taking a lead. A man is still superior because if we can look at the houses, who is paying for the houses? The man. Who has taken the subsidy? I think it's a man.

Ny: (Interrupting) Can't a woman do that? Let me give you an example right now. I am a lady teacher and my husband is working somewhere. Who is supposed to take the subsidy?

Lb: It is the lady, but I think ...

Ny: (Interrupting) Ah... eh..., no, don't expantiate. I say who is supposed to take the subsidy? Is it not me the lady?

TA: I miss one thing here. When in a family, where a man brings in a larger percent of salary, we don't talk of... I don't evaluate my wife in terms of what she is bringing home. No, no, that salary belongs to the family. But when the woman is the one who brings more, I must be measured. No, no, the money part must not be used to measure a man. If the subsidy is in your name, well and good. Eh .. eh..., and then, can't I repair that roof when it is leaking, because the subsidy is not in my name?

Ny: No, you can, but what I am saying is this. Let's face reality people. If the roof is leaking I tell my husband: " Please can't you do something? " But you will find that weeks will pass without him doing anything, and that's true. Weekends will pass without him doing anything, and then the next thing you as a woman you will go and look for somebody that you will have to pay. That's what you men are doing.

Mm: But I think that is an exceptional case. I don't know. It's an exceptional case, and if your wife is paying a bond now, which means then that your husband is now supposed to cook? Are you saying that...

Ny: (Interrupting) Yes he must cook.

Mm: Ah ... ah ... ah

Ny: (Interrupting) Yes he must cook. Yes my husband must cook. I mean we have to help each other, because I am paying subsidy. What I mean is that we are supposed to help each other. If maybe on that day my

husband feels like cooking, he must cook and he must help me in doing all the house chores. You sometimes hear husbands asking about the whereabouts of their clothes such as socks. Why can't they look for these things on their own. Yes...

Mk: (interrupting) There are times where you find a man asking for his pair of socks, not because he does not know where they are. He may do so only to make a conversation (laughter).

TA: Ah... and this song by..., I have forgotten the lady. She says " monna wona ke waka (this man is mine). If you see him dressed like that, it is because of my hands...

Mm: (Interrupting) That's why he is so clean. It is because of his wife.

TA: When you are doing that valuable job, you want to destroy it by saying he should do everything on his own.

Mk: We are going back to Africa thing. Your man has built you a very beautiful house and when a man looks nice and beautiful, they say, yes, this one must be having a wife. His wife is taking good care of him. They won't say : " Are you washing for yourself (laughter)? "

Nt: I think that it is customary because you know in the olden days men used to work, and women were to be at home and look after children, (softly) but now things have changed. We are sharing almost everything, and I think there shouldn't be hard and fast rules. I still say people must agree, and it is also based on the interest. If I like washing cars, why can't I do that?

R: But what if you don't agree on certain items in the house? What should be done?

Nt: I think we must argue until we agree because (laughter) things can't be left loose like that. We must argue until we say, okay, or perhaps..., otherwise we must reach a compromise.

Mk: So, madam, you mean in agreeing... you mean saying, okay, this week you will be the one to wash the car my wife and this one will be mine to cook ?

Ny: No, no...

Nt: (Interrupting) That day if I feel like washing a car, I will wash it.

Mk: Let me be spontaneous that day. If I feel like cooking I may do so but I won't cook on regular basis. I will only do it when I feel like doing it. You can only...

Ny: (Interrupting) But is it not you who is supposed to help? How?

Mk: Just to make sure you are safe.

Ny: Not everything, security only ?

Mk: Not security. Safety also (laughter).

TA: Lo ... lo ... look, this days we are not cooking for children. We are not washing them but the trend this days..., children are closer to their fathers, unlike in the olden days. This shows that we are moving closer. So, my plea is that don't push us. Just give us time. Maybe our sons and daughters but not this generation. I think the way we are doing things is just fine.

Ny: So, but what I want to understand is this. Do you mean that I don't know whether I am lost or not or do you mean that women are the ones who are supposed to do all the house chores?

TA: The house work like cleaning, I can help you with cooking. I can help you where possible, but (emphasizing) it must not be routine work.

Ny: But, if maybe that day I don't feel like cleaning, and you don't feel like cleaning, too, do we leave the house as it is?

TA: We must go and hire somebody to do the work fo us because ... we are not able to do it regularly. It is just like when the roof is leaking and I am not good at repairing it. We must agree to get somebody to come and do the work for us. If I am not able to do gardening regularly, we must agree to get somebody to do it for us.

Ny: I thought maybe, no... I thought maybe what you were saying is that women are the ones who are supposed to do everything. That's why I came up with this point that you should not forget that we are all bringing money to the house (laughter).

Mk: But what if I am trying to do that and the woman feels offended?

Ny: (Softly) Trying to do what?

Mk: Trying to help in the house , and she feels offended.

Nt: Then she must say it openly. She must say that she is offended.

Ny: But don't forget that we are not the same. Others like it (that is, to be assisted).

Mk: So, I don't feel offended when she is supposed to help me outside in washing a car and she never comes.

Ny: To wash a car?

Mk: Yes.

Ny: You want her to come and help?

Mk: Yes !

Ny: No, that one is just a matter of, ... you know, agreement.

Mk: And she says that that's man's work (laughter).

Ny: No, if she doesn't (laughs) feel like?

TA: No interest in that?

Ny: Yes, this means she is not interested, and you are not supposed to force her, I mean ...

Mk: (interrupts) And then what about if I ... I want to go to the kitchen, and she does not want me in there?

Ny: No, that one is an exceptional case because you know we women... what I know most of us, nearly ninety five percent of us, that's what we like but that's not what we get.

Mk: But, okay, just tell me, then. What makes a woman feel like a woman?

Ny: Is when her husband loves her, does all these things, and you know, protects her (emphasizing) and then helps her in whatever case it may be necessary.

Mm: Wash nappies?

Ny: Yes, and also washing nappies because the child is ours. Is not mine alone.

TA: I ... I have a problem if my love is going to be measured by washing the dishes, nappies (laughter by all). My love must be measured by...

Mm: (Interrupts) Or paying lobola.

TA: (Continues) or paying lobola, being very honest, faithfull and treating her very well. I ... I didn't ..., those are the signs that I love you, not

abusing you. That's negotiating with you in good faith. That shows I love you even if I don't wash dishes.

Mk: But look ... look, when you are busy washing nappies, and dishes in the house, I will be busy around with some other men trying to find ways in which I can bring a lot of income to the house, and all those things, such as negotiating contracts and all things, finding people to come and fix what we cannot fix. You see, I am doing men's work.

Ny: As long as you are telling me what you are doing outside.

Mk: There are times when you just meet someone.

Ny: Bring him or her to my home.

Mk: When you will be busy cooking, I will be busy negotiating.

TA: Do women tell us in advance when they buy things such as recipes and the like (laughter)? We are not told. We just see those things at home. They always say that they were at the society and they learned these things from colleagues. So now, if I get someone who can do that, you complain.

Ny: No, I don't deny that. What I say is tell me first. Let me not just see a plumber in my house busy doing things. No.

TA: Introducing! By introduction do you mean I should just say this is a plumber? I thought you wanted to give an approval (laughter).

R: Eh... ladies and gentleman, thank you for your contributions. I highly value them. Thank you very much. I really enjoyed this discussion .
Thank you.

5.3.1.2 Second couples focus group interview

KEY:

R	: The researcher
AM	: First gentleman
BM	: Second gentleman
CF	: First Lady
DM	: Third gentleman
EF	: Second lady
FF	: Third lady

R: Good day, ladies and gentlemen.

All: Good day, sir.

R: Thank you very much for having accepted my invitation to this focus group interview, and the topic or question that I would like us to discuss, eh... is as follows: " How would you like to share your household chores with your partner? "

(Silence)

R: Thank you, there you are.

(Silence)

R: Anyone may make a start.

AM: Right. Men must do men's work. Men should do work like gardening. I think that they must do men's work eh... as well as fixing leaking taps,

broken windows, faulty electricity. I think men feel more respected in our culture when they are given what is thought of as men's work rather than washing the dishes and nappies, you see.

BM: Eh... personally I feel that my wife is my partner and in all the things we do at home, we need to help each other because... for example, let say she is sick, I must not say because she is a woman, she must cook. I must also cook for the kids. They are our kids. They are not her kids alone. I am also responsible for them. So, we need to help each other all the way.

CF: Personally I feel that eh.... some of the duties men cannot perform, for an example, like changing baby's nappy. I don't think men should do that.

BM: Eh... I do change my child's nappies. I sometimes remain with them when their mother is not around. I don't see any problem in changing their nappies and thus..., eh... that man has said I don't think there should be chores which are for men and women because in this life, everybody is free to do everything. We can also do needlework and sew other people's clothes to generate income. That's it. So everybody must do everything he knows.

FF: I also think it is necessary for us to know all the parts which should be played at home. For example, if a man leads the whole family in everything, when he is not there, other members of the family will be able to continue working in his absence. While men should do work which is heavy for women, they can clean and women can also clean.

But basically I think we should share equally so that we can be able to prepare ourselves for unforeseen circumstances, such as death cases.

AM: Our society believes in witchcraft and if you find a man cooking, changing nappies and doing what is supposed to be done by a woman in the house when the woman is around, people may think that, that man has been bewitched. So whenever the woman is in the house, she should do the cooking and the changing of nappies, but you can change your child's nappies as a man if your wife is not around, or perhaps when she is busy outside doing some other household chores. You cannot leave a child crying. But when you are sitted here with your wife, I ... I am sorry. There will be something else (laughter).

BM: But I think that there is something wrong with our culture because we grew up believing that there are certain jobs reserved for men, and those that are reserved for women. Since the inception of the RDP, somewhere in 1994, we have seen women doing jobs which were previously reserved for men. For example, women have been busy eh... preparing roads, and so forth, and if you look at the job that they have been doing, it is an excellent one. So it means that both men and women eh... they are supposed to do anything in the world. And another example, if you go to schools eh...there are certain fields of study which were eh... believed to be for men only, but today both men and women are doing such jobs, like engineering, for instance, and civil engineering. This shows us that any person can do anything.

EF: So, this means the roles are no longer different. We have the same roles. We can play the same roles. Women have been long building houses in the rural areas. Men go as migrant labourers and come back

home after a long time, and women were building houses. It was their responsibility. It is only in townships and urban areas where women are not responsible for building. Building houses is therefore not only a men's job. Some people say it is wrong for women to dig graves. What is wrong in that (laughter)? Is there anything wrong in that?

AM: Yes, there is something wrong in that. It is a heavy job.

EF: It is not a heavy job. The problem is that women don't develop themselves. If ladies can develop themselves, they will be as strong as men.

AM: How do you develop yourself?

EF: " Ja, " by digging graves and by making gardens.

EF: But some women like gardening, like myself, but I can't dig graves.

R: Why can't you dig graves, madam?

FF: I just feel I won't be able to do that.

EF: Are you saying that it is a men's job?

FF: Yes, because eh...

EF: (Interrupting) That is a problem but if you can tell yourself that you want to make a start and then try it, you are going to find it easy.

R: In the case of household chores, which chores should be for men and women?

CF: Eh... in the case of a family... changing nappies.... perhaps we can help each other, but eh... as far as roofing is concerned... I can't do that. It must be done by men, and also plumbing, it should be done by men.

R: Why?

CF: Because I think it is a heavy job.

BM: I just want to give you a certain example. When I was still at a primary school, I... I... I had four elder sisters who left for boarding schools, and I was left with my younger sister who was still very young. I had to do everything at home. I was cooking and cleaning the house. I was also washing my clothes and those of my sister. This shows that everybody can do everything. There is no job that is reserved for boys and girls or for men and women.

CF: You see, cooking and washing and all those, are not heavy jobs. They are light.

R: She talks of heavy jobs and light jobs. What's your comment on that?

CF: Which one is heavy job and light ones?

EF: Plumbers, eh... , I mean roofing and digging graves.

CF: You see, I come from where big trucks are being driven by ladies, including buses.

EE: Taxis as well.

FF: And there was once a technikon student from Telkom. She was a lady. She climbed roofs to install telephones all by herself. So you can see that there is no job which is meant for men only. The men with whom she were with just had to give her spanners only. We say, let us share.

EE: Women are more adventurous than men and as such they are ready to venture into all avenues whereas men are not prepared to do that (laughter).

BM: I think everything that is happening is being influenced by culture. We need to look at our culture and we need to get eh... rid of the things that are not good and carry on with whatever is good because I believe that sharing the work at home is not my wife's responsibility. It is also my responsibility because the child belongs to us both and not her alone. I believe that women are stronger than men. I don't understand why some say heavy work should be done by men when women are stronger than men.

R: There you are ladies. You are strong enough to do heavy work.

CF: Perhaps what we can do is to try to change a little, step by step. We cannot just change everything now, like we cannot start digging graves now. Our culture does not just accept that. Let's start from small things and carry on. Maybe after five years we will come up with something where the work will be distributed equally.

EF: We need to transform our society.

FF: Yes, but women do dig holes deeper than graves. There are those who dig water pipes, for instance. "Ja", they dig holes deeper than graves. This implies that women are stronger than men and they can do heavier work than men.

EE: There is an advertisement on the television Action station which says " salute the women of Africa ". They show roles women play in our societies. This advertisement shows us that women have more responsibilities than men and even in the household if a woman is not strong the family would not have resistance. It is a woman who is a pillar of the family whether she is employed or not.

FF: Men are afraid of pain than women. You may be using us like punching bags but if I can just pinch you a bit you will complain. So, men are a weaker sex.

DM: We are not weaker. If you say men are more afraid of pain, who are then boxers?

EF: We have women boxers, too.

DM: Very few, very few. We know that it is very painful to box with someone, you know. We know that we are going to be beaten and injured, but we still box. You see, come to football and to rugby. All those things are sporting codes which cause injuries.

CF: No, that is derived from the Bible. You know, in the Bible, not more women are recognized and men are more aggressive than women. What I am saying is that we cannot match boys with girls. Girls are more patient than boys. In most cases, when men are frustrated, they become physical.

(Silence)

R: Thank you very much ladies and gentleman.

All: Thank you sir.

5.3.1.3 Third couples focus group interview

Key:	R	: Researcher
	Sn	: First gentleman
	Lg	: First female
	Gd	: Second gentleman
	Pp	: Second female
	Mb	: Third female
	Qm	: Third gentleman

R: Thank you very much for having accepted my invitation to this interview, and this afternoon our discussion is going to revolve around the following question: " How would you like to share your household chores with your partner? " There you are.

(Silence)

R: Anyone may make a start.

(Silence)

Sn: Uhm..., since there is gender equality nowadays, I don't see any reason of having eh ... to differentiate what work must be done by a man or a woman. I believe we all must help each other. I don't know people if you understand what I mean. I think we should share ideas here. Thank you.

Lg: Eh..., I will like to think that there are some roles that men cannot operate properly, for example, cooking eh... at home. I think the lady is responsible for the cooking and the menu and all those things. I don't know what you think.

Gd: I would agree with the first speaker who said nowadays we should not differentiate roles but I would eh... eh... eh... accept it, more so if it eh... eh... at the beginning when we... we... we... , I mean when we grow our children we shouldn't... differentiate the roles at that stage but when it comes to adulthood I hundred percent agree that roles are not the same because eh... there are some roles which are more heavier for women and those which cannot be done by men. We cannot everytime do the same jobs as women. There are jobs which are not so appropriate to be done by women.

Pp: I think... eh... eh... I don't agree with the differentiation of sex roles since we... eh..., let's just focus on a single parent where you have different..., I mean boys and girls in the same family. As a single parent you need to try by all means that the upbringing must be such that you do not... differentiate between them. You need to teach them all the household jobs in the same way.

Mb: My submission will be this. I think it depends with the family background and the culture. Our culture is what made us to believe in roles, which make us think that men should do that and women should do something different, but if basically we do the same things from the beginning, there wouldn't be a problem concerning cooking. Boys must cook for themselves. It depends on when and how the mother has taught the family to do.

Lg: Alright, let's talk about we ..., eh .. about the cooking. I don't believe that at home when we are two, the husband and the wife, the husband should cook when I (the wife) am around. Our culture does not allow it.

Mb: I... I... did clarify that..., I said that it's our culture that made us to believe that but if you are married to a man who comes from a family that taught him to cook, he is going to cook at home. Not that it is some kind of punishment or what, but he ... he will do that willingly because he is used to.

Pp: I think eh... as the parents, the way we are ... I mean grow our... I mean the upbringing depends on eh..., I mean..., I can say eh..., the policy each family has, for instance..., let's say the boy has passed standard five and is going to a high school or tertiary institution. You must then try to teach him all the necessary skills so that he can try to go and be independent. He must know to cook. He must know how to do everything. So then, I agree..., disagree that there must be differentiation between sex roles.

Sn: "Ja ", as I have said, the fact is .. , I said since there is gender equality nowadays, I don't believe in differentiating, uhm... eh... sex roles. Let say eh... female must do this, and a man must do that. Eh... I believe in doing everything. Nowadays there are some families where a woman is alone. She does everything on her own. Even a man, let us assume eh... something has happened to his wife, and the man is staying with kids. You find that most of the work..., the man tries to upbringing children by doing everything. So what I understand is eh..., I don't believe in differentiation nowadays on sex roles, because I believe we Black people we have got a problem. Most of us have been brought..., taught by our parents to cook, do everything that a woman does but when we grow up there are some changes which happen in the family. You are afraid to be laughed at by your friends that you are cooking and doing such things, many things, but I don't see any problem in helping my wife but the only thing that I cannot do is not to give my wife heavy things like lifting heavy since women are weaker (pause) than men.

Lg: Now it means we are agreeing on one point. We are agreeing that things are different now but in the olden days each one of us had roles to play. Now things have changed. Let's talk about work eh... uhm... at home. I am working and my husband is also working. At the end of the month I bring my salary and he brings his salary, too. So, you see, it is not like during the olden days where I waited for my husband to cater for the whole family.

Qm: If you can go around our residential areas here, you may find eh... single parents eh... women, but I suspect that you will get a family which is led and maintained by a man alone. Which means that there are some roles which men are unable to play, not because they are

afraid of other people. No, even in the house my wife can do the whole washing of the family but I cannot even try to wash my ... kids. Seven years, eight years, I can't wash their panties. So, men cannot be exactly the same as women and do the same things which women do.

Lg: But do you think eh... there is something wrong when washing your own kids? Is there any problem with that? What if your wife is ill? What are you going to do?

Gd: Eh ... if my wife is ill, I think I will get somebody to look after her (laughter).

Mb: Ai ! Eh African men (Laughter)!

Gd: If a person is ill, is it a chronic disease? What do you mean by illness? Is it a chronic thing or you mean ...

Lg: (Interrupting) She has done an operation.

Gd: For a certain period?

Lg: Yes!

Gd: No, I won't be alone eh... eh... in taking care of that person. What if she dies. No, I cannot do that. I will look for people to come and assist me (laughter).

Pp: Are you saying that there are some weaknesses with men?

Gd: Not weaknesses. No, just that we are not meant to do that.

Pp: (Agitated) Who said that? Who said that you are not meant to do that. That's why I said that every family has got to have its own policy. So, if I inculcate all those eh... eh... the... the household chores to the young ones, I don't differentiate, whether it is a boy or a girl. He must know how to cook. He must know how to wash. He must know how to clean the house. I am guarding against that which might happen next time if..., when they are..., especially when the wife is sick. Then you are going to look for somebody to take care of your own kids, even yourself.

Gd: "Ja," I mean you are generalizing. I am specifying. Once eh... eh... you must not just say to cook or wash. Wash for who or for what? If I wash the dishes, "ja", that one I'll do. If ... if I want my child to be learned, I cannot teach him or her myself. I must get somebody to do that right job for my child. I can assist where I can but I cannot do it. It's not a matter of culture or inefficiency or what. That's how men should operate. We are not the same. We are not loaves of bread.

Lg: Alright. Let's talk about the surrounding in the family. I think even the women can do gardening, clean the whole surrounding and all those things. What do you think?

Qm: "Ja," that one. You know, men... , I don't know other cultures or cultural differences, but I know of my Black men. We don't care whether in my or at my residential area there are flowers or what. This flowers and houses are for women. If I can get where I sleep, a flat or where I can stay for my whole life. So, I wonder if there is a man who is a man who

can built a house to come and put some flowers and cook in that house.
Better eat somewhere. No, we are not the same.

Lg: (Who seemed to accept defeat or disillusionment) Okay .

R: Previsously you said something about African men. What did you mean?

Mb: I think eh... what this gentleman is saying is the way he was brought up. His beliefs and values. He was taught in that manner eh... eh... but I have said things are changing. The roles are no more differentiated. So, that is why we are wondering what is he saying now. Maybe it is just because he is old. Maybe now he is still living in the old way but things have changed.

Gd: "Ja ", things have changed and things are changing and they will keep on changing, but eh... you cannot expect to have a nation or community which doesn't have roles. Even anywhere, where you are in you must have some standards. Some values you cannot just live.

Pp: But, I don't think there are roles and values and standards where they are saying a man shouln't wash his kids and wash his panties. That one is totally out of question.

Gd: No, we have values as a community.

Qm: But, I believe in one thing which we must look at. Let's say if you go eh... we talk about budget, we budget our things. So, the same with the family. We have policies which we must lay down. Eh... let's say if a

man has to do this and that and then a woman also must have her own share of responsibility. Now this man..., I do understand him if he says he won't wash eh... his kids pants eh..., I don't understand him in the same way as a woman. You find that they won't do the same type of heavy duties at home. Ladies will wait for the husband to come and tackle that particular problem. So eh... eh everything must have..., I mean in the family each and every parent has got his own department, but since things are changing as I have said at first..., uhm..., eh ..., I don't see any reason of differentiating work, but now eh... eh... like the body as I am, you cannot say this leg will help me to eat food. Thus, a leg it's not its department to eat food. Eh... we have got hands we are using when we eat. So, the same with we people. Let's say our families or let's say working environment. You find that there is a registration department. There are departments. I believe that when God made these departments within our bodies they must also apply to, I mean family environment. Everything. So, this argument, we can argue until tomorrow morning. What I would like to say is that I do support him but if ever there is a need and he cannot afford to get someone to come and help, I believe that he must... he is going to shoulder that responsibility.

Lg: Alright. Let's talk about single parenting where the mother is the owner. That is, where the mother is supposed to give protection, financial assistance and all those things, and check the repairs of the house.

Qm: In ... in actual fact, what happens if it is a single parent family? You find that some of the departments are not attended to eh... hundred percent. I can assure you that because you find that she might think that she is managing all departments but in actual fact you find that when kids

grow up there will be some weaknesses in them to show that they were brought up by a single parent.

Lg: Alright. So, let's talk about a family where there is a mother and the father and the father is drinking. He is not always there when the family needs him. What is going to happen there?

Qm: In some instances you find that the child will respect the father because he is not spending most of his time with him. Once the mother says your father is coming. He is coming to beat you. That child will not do any nonsense at all. So, it's another department, although he is drinking but somewhere he is also helping the family.

Pp: Okay, I just want to ask you a question. Do you think that single parenting has got some weaknesses? You stipulate your own policy and say okay, I am going to upbringing my children in this way whether you are single or whatever. That is how you are going to eh... eh..., I mean upbringing your children. So, I mean if you can say nowadays..., if you can take eh... eh a family which is having a man and a wife... I mean a complete family, and a single parent, you are going to find that somewhere somehow people are going to find that a single parent is managing totally. It is managed in the same way as a nuclear family that we are used to.

Mb: Is this topic only concerned with roles or other roles, too?

R: Say whatever you want to say. Anything you want to say.

Mb: Okay, in fact we are focusing too much on families than on other things.

Okay I was worried by the answer you gave. I think the single mother manages the family perfectly, because I think women are able. Sometimes you find that your husband is drinking or your husband is working in Gaunteng or somewhere else. He is not always around. So, you are responsible for the family. Even the boys should be given some rules. You must control the whole family, make sure that everything is going well. So I think women can do it.

Qm: I think eh... perhaps we should eh... not look at this topic eh... eh..., we must not limit this topic. I think we must take some trends which are happening in business currently. You see, in... in business we must take a family unit as if it is a business where there are departments, There are workers. There are managers and all those, and then if you can follow eh..., the trends in business currently eh... business which try to do everything by themselves, they are not succeeding. So, if we come to this eh... roles also, I think women who are single parents and are managing, they... they are able to outsource some or to... hire people to come and do those roles which they cannot do. So, if you are going to try to do those things by ourselves while we have our jobs to satisfy also I don't think we are going to ... to succeed.

(Silence)

R: Eh ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much. I think we have come to the end of this interview. Thank you very much.

5.3.1.4 Males only focus group interview

Key:	R	: Researcher
	A	: First gentleman
	B	: Second gentleman
	C	: Third gentleman
	D	: Fourth gentleman
	E	: Fifth gentleman
	F	: Sixth gentleman

R: Good afternoon gentlemen. Thank you very much for having accepted my invitation to this group interview, and the question I would like us to discuss this afternoon is: " How would you like to share your household chores with your partner?"

A: Alright, let me start eh... by saying that eh... as the Bapedi nation, eh... in our society, men and women are assigned certain duties to perform. For example, men are used to maybe eh... take care of cattle and go to the fields to search for food. Women's work is to fetch water to cook for their men or their husbands and to see to it that children at home are cared for. That is how our culture eh... is all about.

B: According to the Bible, a man is the head of the family and is the one who must lead the family and the woman must always be under the man and she must listen to his instructions. By helping a woman, it's a good thing but a woman must not take a chance that she is at the same level as the man, as myself. I agree with the issue of helping the woman but she must know that I am the head of the family.

D: "Ja," well, eh... , gentlemen, I think nowadays we are unfortunate with these things like urbanization. And because of this urbanization, men's

duties are limited. You can't anymore go to look for cattle. You cannot go to the fields anymore. I sometimes feel that we should share work with our ladies because men cannot just sit at home and wait to go for cattle because we do not have cattle anymore. We must help women in almost everything but to a limited degree as the Bible says the man must always be above. So if you do everything that a woman is supposed to do they will undermine you somewhere or somehow and people will say "ba go jesitse" (you have been bewitched).

E: Eh..., remember I married that woman to work whether she is coming back being tired or not. She must cook. She is my property. I paid lobola for her to do the same job until we arrive in bed. There she must also satisfy me, and I must also satisfy her.

A: Today we are having many problems with our wives because you took your wife to be your equal, instead of retaining the culture that we Blacks have. But because these days we say this is my darling, she is my what, what. We have abandoned our culture. If now God would say as from next week you will be changing to become a woman, I don't think we would agree with the idea of changing to become woman. Look at the divorce rate. It is because we have allowed women to be above us. I'm not saying we must not help our wives to cook but helping them should not be some kind of a norm or a must. Again, let's look at how Whites are. Our culture and theirs are different. If you want to enjoy being a Black man you must retain your culture. Let us retain our status as men and then things will be right.

B: "Ja", some people say people must act in accordance with the constitution and as such, we should do equal chores. Unfortunately we

want to follow the constitution as it is. We don't modify it. That's just where we experience problems. Some say children should be prepared for boarding school life where they would have to take care of themselves in all respects. But remember that we, too, have been to boarding schools. What really matters is that we should take care of our culture.

R: Okay, for those who say perhaps men should try to help their wives to a certain extent, in what way would you then try to help them or which household chores would you be able to give assistance in ?

C: With me at home, especially during weekends, when she is doing the washing I would take the vacuum cleaner and clean the whole house, and thereafter I would take the duster and try to clean the furniture until she has finished the cleaning. But we have disagreements when it comes to the washing of dishes and the clothes, especially when I watch television programmes that I like. Sometimes when she is tired, maybe she has done a lot of work, I can take the pots, put them on the stove and cook for her (laughter).

D: Eh... that is what I do but ... but especially when she is sick I do the job. I cook for her and I take the food to her. There is no problem because I know there is a problem but when she is well and she expects me to cook for her, that's where I disagree.

R: Up to so far you have been concentrating on the man giving assistance to his wife. So what about the kind of assistance that a man should receive from his wife ?

A: Financial, financial help !

F: To add to that, in most villages we find that building work is mainly for men and not for women but most of the houses, mud houses, men never took any part in building them. You find that women built them on their own. They do a tough job just to give their children shelter. They do not wait for men to come and built these houses for them. They help one another.

D: "Ja", you see, if you pad the situation to such an extend where it explodes, you will be in trouble and no one is eh... going to assist you, or help you. Therefore, my request to everybody is that now let us not be misled by the eh... the White culture. We have our own culture. We don't know where we belong, you see, because we claim to be living in the cities or urban areas. I am not saying do not do this. All I'm saying is that you must not be forced by your wife.

(Silence)

R: Well, gentlemen, thank you very much. I think you have said a mouthful.
Thank you very much.

5.3.1.5 Females only focus group interview

Key:

R	: Researcher
A	: First lady
B	: Second lady
C	: Third lady
D	: Fourth lady
E	: Fifth lady
F	: Sixth lady

R: Good afternoon ladies. Thank you very much for having accepted my invitation to this interview. This afternoon, I would like us to focus our attention on the following question : " How would you like to share your household chores with your partners? "

(Silence)

R: Anyone may make a start.

A: Okay, eh... I think as far as culture is concerned we are channelled to discriminate between the chores which eh... should be done in the family because eh... men, for example, are considered for their physical power to perform certain duties. So, as we are moving towards a new dispensation and the encounters that we are encountering in life, I think the chores in the home should be shared by both eh... people or parents. Let alone the individual's sex, because men can also do some tasks that are designed for women. How do you view it madam?
(pointing at one of the interviewees).

B: I..., because previously men used to think eh... that women are their slaves and eh... we no longer like that because we should help each other. For example, if I'm ill my husband should be able to cook for the family and he can also wash some dishes and so on (laughter).

D: More so, that also our government gender equalities should be taken into account in as far as some other jobs that were previously prescribed for men. Women can also do them. For example, we are having a lady, some powerful ladies like eh... who is this lady,

Nkosazana Zuma. The position she is holding now was done by men long ago, but now she is performing it well. She is going to different countries performing and bringing some changes in our country. So, I think jobs that were done by men, women can do them, too. I still support women because women are everything in the family. They are mothers, social workers, nurses and advisers. So I think we can still do without them (that is, men).

E: Yes, we can do without them and especially if we are well qualified. I think we can even be directors and managers of companies, "ja," and most of the women are qualified and they are very powerful but is just that men don't realize that women can also manage companies, you know. They think we must just be left at home and look after children.

A: I'm still on that point. They must just thank God when it comes to child bearing because if they were to give birth, I think there would be two or three children in the family because if we were taking turns they would fail to play their role. I think they would run away (laughter). So I think women are playing a greater role in the family.

R: Is there anything else?

F: "Ja," I think... like considering the majority of women who are driving today..., I was listening to the radio. There is one lady..., I don't remember her name, but her surname is Mahapa. I think she is a pilot, and she is the first Black pilot lady. So that thing can show that women are just doing fine. We can do without men. Let's thank God because there is only one thing they are helping us with and sometimes we can deal with that... (laughter) without them.

R: What's that (laughter). What is that thing?

E: I think scientists will help us with that in some days to come. We can deal with that. So, men must be careful of that. So, I think if we can look at eh... eh the number of women who are driving..., we have a lot of them, and if we can look at accidents happening, eh... accidents are mostly caused by men because they are careless and reckless. And most men eh... eh... they drink and drive. So women cannot drink and drive at the same time, you know, they are always careful and responsible by the way.

F: And a woman alone can run a family. How about that?

C: That's why many families around here eh... are single parent families, and they are having children. They can manage the whole family. They are working very hard to educate their children without men. But eh... eh... we can't find a man having a family without a woman, but a woman can stay for years without a man. That's why I am saying there's only one thing that they help us with. Very soon they must be careful.

(Silence)

R: Ladies, thank you very much. I think we have come to the end of this discussion. Thank you very much.

5.3.2 Face-to-face interviews

5.3.2.1 First face-to-face interview

Key: R : Researcher
N : First Interviewee

R: Thank you very much for having accepted my request for this interview, and eh... the question that I will like us to focus our attention on is, " Which household chores should husbands and wives perform in their families? "

N: Thank you very much. Maybe I need first to focus on what sex is. What do we actually mean by sex? As we are now in the new South Africa..., we know for a fact that the sex roles that men and women play in their families are determined by the gender rules and when one talks of gender rules, one will have to go deep into the inequalities that were created by societies. So, one would have to say sex in itself, is biological and natural, and gender are the things that society expects us to do. If one is to give some examples, like giving birth, is a sex role. There is no way that a man can give birth. Another example would be women can breast feed babies and men cannot do that. Let me go to gender roles now. Little girls are gentle while boys are tough. Those are the things that can be changed. That is why I say sex roles are natural whereas gender is learned behaviour. That is, it starts from home. How we are socialized as a society. So maybe, if I have to give another definition of gender that is clear is that gender is a social construct of femaleness and maleness. That is, in itself, what society says and does to promote womanhood and manhood. Whether or not it is natural about man and woman, it unfolds. It depends on the theories according

to the perception of these theories. And again, when we talk of gender issues, they differ from place to place. So one can say the social construct of maleness and femaleness as mutually exclusive social categories which become stereotypes positions and those in social development. This hold the possibility that one category may be subordinated to the other, with the result that the subordinate would have their labour develop to suffer various forms of oppression. And historically, women have been subordinate to them in aspects of social development with negative effect from women's labour and that is where the development comes in.

- R:** Are you saying there are roles that can be performed by women only and those that can be performed by men only?
- N:** A man can drive a train as much as a woman can drive a train. A man can be a taxi operator and a woman can also be a taxi operator. That is... is... is just that we were never given the opportunity to do that as women and if we look deep into that it was in a way when we have to look at the labour of man and woman. When I say our labour will be subordinate such that it will be devalued it is this type of an example that I am giving that put everything into us. If women are to perform work that is not paid to that standards, and men are paid, that is to the development of our economy, then that is where the inequalities of our society is. Moreover, that women can perform that very jobs better than men are doing. It is just that they don't have equal access to that.
- R:** What makes it difficult for people to gain equal access to opportunities.

N: How we are socialized. The problem is how we were socialized. You... you know, it is like in the olden days in the education of children. There was this..., there was that type of a culture where boys would have to be educated more than women, I mean, more than girls. So, that thing tells us that as they grow because life unfolds from an early age to adulthood, girl child did not have the same education as boys. And as such, they would grow to an extent where they would contribute equally to the economy. But nevertheless, even if we are saying we will not contribute equally, I am saying as a person women have always contributed to the economy. It is just that the economic system that we are in, did not acknowledge women's contribution.

R: What effects does socialization have on the sex roles to be played in families?

(Silence)

N: You know, as I have indicated, we are actually playing the same roles. except those that we can't perform. Those are natural roles, like giving birth, breast feeding. Men can't do that, but a woman can, but we have got to play equal roles at home. If..., I..., if a woman can cook, a man can also cook but we are not saying we need to categorise the whole issue because we have all learned this behaviour as women. I also believe that you... you know, when my husband comes home I have to prepare this type of food. This does not suggest that a man can't do that. A woman is forced to do those things. So we need to harmonize the whole situation, especially when it affects us economically.

R: In what you have been saying, you made reference to physical characteristics of people which seem to be having a bearing on sex roles. Are there any other, perhaps, eh... physical characteristics that exert some kind of influence on the sex roles performed by men and women?

N: I... I don't think so. I..., it is as if men and women have different needs. You see, if a woman is pregnant you cannot expect her to climb the ladder, and repair ceilings. That would not be good for her health, and the baby that is coming. But in essence you can really do everything except when there are those natural things that we need to take care of.

R: So what you are saying eh...is that both men and women can perform tasks of equal difficulty.

N: Exactly.

R: What physical characteristics of women and men have a bearing on the extend of the difficulty of tasks?

N: You know, it is like..., I... I have indicated that we can perform all those things. The situation was such that we were never given chance to perform those tasks I have indicated. Women can drive a train like men. We are having, for example, women at Bloemfontein. They have gone underground and up until now, I think it is about a year that they have not been experiencing any difficulties. Their performance underground is perfect. We... we all have power.

R: In performing roles, do you think men and women perform these roles to the same degree, or is there a sex that is a bit lower in performance than another sex?

N: They are performing them equally, but one will have to say a woman is performing more than men, considering the roles that women are playing at home before they go to work. Before they go to work, women have to wake up early in the morning, prepare breakfast and make sure that kids are having proper clothes for school. Their husbands expect them to take out their shirts from the wardrobe so that they can look okay. And as she goes to work she is already tired but she will (emphasizing) perform. So that is why I am saying women are performing more because of the triple roles they are playing.

R: Thank you, any other matter of interest that you would like to bring to my attention?

N: We need to sit around the table where we show each other that when we are doing things, they impact on men negatively, and if we do things this way, then we are going to reach something concrete.

R: Are you saying that men and women should discuss their family sex roles?

N: Exactly, exactly!

R: What guidelines should be taken into consideration to ensure that more or less people agree on what they are discussing?

N: Communication. If they communicate, so to say, then (softly) it will be better and maybe if the government could see that the situation is like this, it may intensify empowerment, especially in terms of gender issues, where both men and women are given this type of training so that they can be aware of what is better for them, especially their lives and for the country.

R: Okay, perhaps my final question will be... it looks like the situation is... is not favourable for women at present. What should be done to ensure that women are brought to the same level as men?

N: The... the underpinnning thing is that we are having a constitution in our country that states everything clearly, that we are equal as a society. Of course..., but unfortunately, the legacy that we come from is so bad that we inherited some dirt, and we have carried those dirt, and as we have carried those dirt, we are having basic needs as a society, like education, health and now we are having a serious problem here where our human resource lacks behind in terms of knowledge and this and that. Now the question is how do we prioritize these things. The priority will always be the basic needs and now when we come to gender issues..., when we are trying to bring the society on board, then it is a problem because we lack behind in terms of implementation.

R: And why do we lack behind in implementation?

N: Because we lack resources. That is, the bottom line of our problem is that we do not have enough resources. That is why for now we have

been to New York as a society, as a country, and other countries coming back from Beijing, and Beijing plus is now Beijing minus.

R: What do you mean?

N: By Beijing minus I mean that the results from the New York conference is zero in terms of implementation. That is, in terms of uplifting the standards of women, it is zero. So we are starting afresh.

R: Are you saying the solution to this problem lies in the implementation of the constitution of the country and the resolutions taken at the Beijing conference?

N: (Emphasizing) Exactly, exactly! That's it! And as long as the government is saying it does not have enough money, resources for bringing in real implementation, so to say, we may not achieve equality.

R: Thank you very much madam for your time. Thank you very much.

N: Thank you very much.

5.3.2.2 Second face-to-face interview

Key: **R** : Researcher

P : Interviewee

R: Thank you very much for having accepted my request for an interview with you. The question that I would like us to discuss is: " Which

household chores should husbands and their wives perform in their families? "

P: The most important thing to be said about sex roles is that one needs to draw a distinction between sex on one hand and gender on the other hand. Sex is your biology, the biological sexuality. Gender on the other hand, refers to the social meanings attributed to your biology, and in patriarchal societies, there were incredible role divisions, where women and men occupied low and high status positions respectively. There shouldn't be roles demarcations. People of either sex should be able to do either or any roles they choose.

R: What about the physical differences between men and women. Won't they perhaps, also go to some length to force people to perform different roles...

P: (Interrupting) The only determining force involved is when it comes to impregnation, pregnancy and breast feeding. Those are the only three things... but as you know, babies can be fed by bottles. Women can bear children but men can share those responsibilities for caring for these children, for taking care of their basic needs. I say roles can be shared. There are very few roles that are actually unique to one sex.

R: What about some other physical characteristics that perhaps may be considered when differentiating between sex roles?

P: In case you look in sport, women sport, for an example, you see that there are very few things that men do that women can't do as well.

R: So, basically men and women can do more or less the same kind of things.

P: More or less the same kind of things? Yes, there are more of individual differences than gender differences. Individually, I might be a weaker person because my muscles are not as well developed as yours. That is an individual difference. So, it is more of an individual thing and we should see it as individual difference rather than gender difference.

R: So, when you consider again this question of physical differences as well as individual differences, on the average, which sex may be considered to be a weaker sex?

P: There is no stronger or weaker sex.

R: What I mean is, on the average, in which group would you find more individuals with stronger muscles?

P: Are you talking just about physical strength?

R: Yes.

(Silence)

P: Then, men are probably physically, in terms of muscles, a stronger sex.

R: Ok.

P: And that doesn't mean that they need to automatically dominate the society.

R: That doesn't necessarily mean that there are certain jobs that should be reserved for men only.

P: No.

R: I understand. What could have happened in the past where in almost all societies, women performed what you said may be low status jobs.

P: This has not always been the case in History. There are societies in civilizations, way, way back, where women occupied positions of high status.

R: There is this question that eh... while women are busy taking care of children and raising them, what should men be doing in the meantime?

P: Men should be involved actively in raising their children, changing nappies, feeding or bathing or washing them.

R: What should happen when, say, a woman cannot carry out functions which require the use of muscles because of pregnancy?

P: We share. I mean, it is a matter of sharing responsibilities, and if a woman is pregnant, then the husband should show he loves her. He will do all these things for her if she is not able but a pregnant woman can do a lot of things.

R: So you are saying a question of love should also play a role?

- P:** Yes, care, natural care. If you love a woman, show that you care for her. As a woman, care for the man you love.
- R:** Supposing a selection of the best players to take part in a particular international competition, for instance, soccer, is made. Which individuals would be selected to maximize chances of winning?
- P:** I should think it will be fifty three percent women and forty seven percent men, or else you will put the most qualified people.
- R:** Thank you very much. Is there any other gender issue that you would like to bring to my attention?
- P:** No, just that, you know, South Africa is a patriarchic society. There are gender stereotypes that need to be changed.
- R:** If you are to lay down guidelines for men and women to share sex roles in a complementary way in their families, what suggestions would you come up with?
- P:** The first thing to be done is to do away with patriarchial ideas, that somebody is superior and somebody is inferior, and somebody's work has higher status than another person's work. There is a need for equality.
- R:** According to patriarchial views, men are heads of families. Does it mean that a family unit should not have a head of a family?
- P:** No, a woman can be a head of a family. I am the head of my family.

R: What about in the case where a family has a father?

P: Why does a man have to be a head of a house?

R: How should people decide on who should be the head of a family?

P: He doesn't need to be the head of a family. The roles and responsibilities have to be shared equally.

R: So, we don't have to have someone who is said to be the head of a family.

P: Increasingly economically speaking, men and women have to share roles. They will have to share roles economically to survive, and why should men enjoy status of being heads of families?

R: May I give you this scenario. Supposing there is an issue that a man and a wife are discussing and they are unable to agree. What is supposed to happen in this case.

P: There should be a negotiated agreement.

R: But what if they fail to reach a negotiated agreement?

P: They should seek assistance for their marriage problems, and an outside party, like a therapist, may be consulted. They should finally reach a compromise.

R: Thank you very much. Any other matter of interest I may not be aware of?

P: There is a lot of theory work on feminism. South African women are very strong in this country.

R: Are you saying that feminism in South Africa is strong and growing?

P: It's on the rise. It is increasing, especially amongst African women.

R: What activities are they engaged in which are related sex role issues?

P: They are actively involved with legislation.

(Silence)

R: Thank you very much

P: Pleasure.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the different types interviews, namely, the focus group interviews and the face-to-face interviews, were presented in a transcribed form. The different beliefs and attitudes held by men and women with regard to the sharing of sex roles in a complementary way, are embodied in these interviews.

In the next chapter, the analysed version of these interviews will be discussed.

CHAPTER SIX

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF THIS STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the analysed data will be presented in the form of themes and categories identified. In discussing these themes and categories to illustrate the conflicting beliefs and attitudes between women and men, parts of the respondents' views as presented in the transcribed interviews will be quoted to substantiate them.

The following five themes and categories were identified:

- * Cultural views (cultural views versus matters of personal taste, cultural views versus equality-inequality, cultural views versus statutory directives, cultural views versus deterministic view of man, cultural views versus social pressure, cultural views versus issues of physical strength).
- * Power struggle (patriarchal views, the role of income, pivotal figure, Biblical teachings).
- * Self-esteem (Undermining of human dignity, servant-master relationship).
- * Place of operation (men's conditional assistance).
- * Changes versus maintaining the status quo.

Men and women's beliefs and attitudes may, however, be classified into three broad categories on the basis of their responses, namely,

- * Stereotypical views (Traditional and cultural views)
- * Compromising views (Conditional playing of gender roles) and
- * Progressive views (Playing of gender roles is in line with contemporary views)

The number of men who hold stereotypical views is far much above that of those who hold compromising views. In the case of women, those whose views are stereotypical in nature, is far much less than those who hold compromising views and there are no women who hold compromising views. It appears, therefore, that men and women generally hold conflicting beliefs and attitudes with regard to household chores, and as such, they are unable to play their roles in a complementary manner. Failure to play these roles in a complementary manner makes it difficult for them to create effective education environments for their children.

In the section that follows the main areas of conflict will be discussed.

6.2 DISCUSSION OF THEMES AND CATEGORIES IDENTIFIED FROM DATA GATHERED

In this section, themes and categories will be discussed so as to point out the conflicting beliefs and attitudes that render it difficult for married heterosexual partners to share sex roles in a complementary way. Relevant quotations from the interviewees' transcripts will also be presented to substantiate these themes and categories.

6.2.1 Cultural views

This theme has five categories which are cultural views versus matters of personal taste, cultural views versus equality-inequality, cultural versus statutory directives, cultural versus deterministic view of man, cultural versus social pressure and cultural views versus issues of physical strength.

6.2.1.1 Cultural views versus matters of personal taste

Male and female respondents differ with regard to cultural views and matters of personal taste. While male respondents' beliefs and attitudes seem to be driven by cultural views, women's beliefs and attitudes appear to be influenced by matters of personal taste. Men believe that they should cling to their roles as handed down to them by their forefathers.

" Alright, let me start eh... by saying that eh... as the Bapedi nation eh... in our society, men and women are assigned certain duties to perform. For example, men are used to maybe eh... take care of cattle and go to the fields to search for food. Women's work is to fetch water to cook for their men or their husbands. That is how our culture eh... is all about."

Men believe that culture requires that there be some specialization in the performance of household chores, where women are supposed to take care of homes and children while men perform functions that are outside home.

" ... I don't believe that we must do everything at home. Each gender should specialize in... in activities suitable for that gender."

According to men, some tasks are not meant for men only and it is not permissible in their culture to swap roles with women.

" Eh... let me give you an example in the division of labour. Let's say, one tile on top of your house is broken and the

house is leaking eh... just think about that, when now your wife is right on top of the house and busy attending to that tile and her husband is sitting there (pause) washing dishes. How about that (laughter). How do you feel about that one? "

" ... as you know very well that women are for cooking, men are for doing the garden, and things like that."

" Right, men must do men's work. Men should do like gardening. I think that they must do men's work eh... as well as fixing leaking taps, broken windows and faulty electricity."

Women are totally opposed to cultural views. They maintain that roles should be equality shared, and that partners, both men and women, should discuss their household chores so as to reach agreements based on their interests.

" ... and it is also based on the interest. If I like washing cars, why can't I do that?"

" I think they should just agree because you find that if we divide labour, you may find that husbands, most husbands, want to cook. You may find that you are denying other people their opportunity to cook. So, household chores should be discussed so that it should be determined as to who wants to do what, like for instance, if I want to wash a car, I can do it (pause) as long as we agree."

" That's why I maintain that people should discuss. We should sit around the table and discuss. If we start drawing a time-table and say you are a woman, you are supposed to do this and that, you will experience problems. If you discuss and agree, then there would be no problems because if the roof is leaking, then the man will say " ag," but how about if I do it because I will be able to climb on top of the roof."

Some women, although quite few, seem not to be comfortable to see their husbands performing household chores that are regarded as female tasks as they believe in cultural views.

" Alright, let's talk about we..., eh..., about the cooking. I don't believe that at home when we are two, the husband and the wife, the husband should cook when I (the wife) am around. Our culture does not allow it."

6.2.1.2 Culture views versus equality-inequality

Female respondents believe that issues of culture should be set aside as they promote inequality in the performance of household chores. They believe that the performance of household chores should be characterized by equality, where men and women play any role. As such, they argue that children should be taught all roles from an early age so as to complement one another in marriage.

" But I have something to say. That is, fifty-fifty makes hundred percent. As a woman, I have weak points and strong points. And the man also has weak points and strong points,

and we must complement one another (pause). What I mean is that my husband should bring fifty and I will bring my fifty so as to make a hundred."

" I think eh... as the parents..., the way we are ..., I mean grow our..., I mean the upbringing depends on eh..., I mean... I can say eh... the policy each family has. For instance..., let's say a boy has passed standard five and is going to a high school or tertiary institution. You must then try to teach him all the necessary skills so that he can try to go and be independent. He must know to cook. He must know how to do everything. So then, I agree... disagree that there must be differentiation between sex roles."

Men, however, believe that equality in the performance of household chores is the source of friction in families.

" With me at home, especially during weekends, when she is doing the washing I would take the vaccum cleaner and clean the whole house and thereafter, I would take the duster and try to clean the furniture until she has finished the cleaning but we have disagreements when it comes to the washing of dishes and clothes, especially when I watch television programmes that I like."

6.2.1.3 Culture views versus statutory directives

While women seem to be in favour of equality in the performance of sex roles as required by the constitution of the country, men are opposed to such

directives, as these directives work against their cultural values. They believe that even if boys are exposed to equal performance of household chores from an early age, their ability and attitude towards their performance will not change, like they (their fathers) have been exposed to such training with no women's desired results. They believe that the ultimate determinant of the ability and attitude towards sex roles are cultural values and not statutory directives.

"... some people say people must act in accordance with the constitution, and as such, we should do equal chores. Unfortunately, we want to follow the constitution as it is. We don't modify it. That's just where we experience problems. Some people say children should be prepared for boarding school, where they would have to take care of themselves in all respects. But remember that we, too, have been to boarding schools. What really matters is that we should take care of our culture."

According to female respondents, cultural values have no rules that require men to avoid the performance of certain tasks. There are, however, regulations in the constitution concerning equality.

" But I don't think there are rules, values and standards where they are saying a man shouldn't wash his kids and wash his panties. That one is totally out of question."

" Uhm..., since there is gender equality nowadays, I don't see any reason of having eh... to differentiate what work

must be done by a man or a woman. I believe we all must help each other."

6.2.1.4 Culture views versus deterministic view of man

Agreements on the complementary performance of sex roles in the families is rendered difficult by the fact that men regard the division of sex roles as having been pre-determined by nature. As such, they believe that they are naturally incapable of performing tasks meant for women. Men argue, for instance, that human sex roles are as differentiated as the functions of body parts.

" So, eh... everything must have..., I mean in the family each and every parent has got his own department, but since things are changing as I have said at first, uhm..., eh..., I don't see any reason of differentiating work, but now eh... like the body as I am, you cannot say this leg will help me to eat food. Thus, a leg it's not it's department to eat food. Eh... we have got hands we are using when we eat. So, the same with we people. There are departments. I believe when God made these departments within our bodies, they must also apply to, I mean family environment, to everything. So, this argument, we can argue until tomorrow morning (probably because there is not much that can be done about sex roles, as they have been pre-determined by nature)."

" So, men cannot be exactly the same as women, and do the same things as women."

" No, we are not the same."

The pre-determination of sex roles is so strong that even if a father's authority is taken away from him by substances such as alcohol, his influence is nevertheless still being felt by his children.

" In some instances, you find that a child will respect the father because he is not spending most of his time with him. Once the mother says your father is coming, he is coming to beat you, that child will not do any nonsense at all. So, it's another department, although he is drinking, but somewhere he is also helping the family."

Men maintain that the fact that they are unable to play certain roles does not necessarily mean that they are weak in anyway. The fact of the matter is that nature has not designed them to perform some roles.

" Not weakness. No, just that we are not meant to do that."

It looks like sometimes men have an inner urge to assist their wives, but because of their pre-deterministic beliefs, no matter how strong their wish to help may be, they are unable to render assistance, even if the role to be played is a simple one.

" ... if you can go around our residential areas here, you may find eh... single parents eh..., women, but I suspect that you will get a family which is led and maintained by a man alone. Which means that there are some roles which men are

unable to play, not because they are afraid of people. No, even in the house my wife can do the whole washing of the family but I cannot even try to wash my kids. Seven, eight years, I can't wash their panties."

In their rejection of the pre-deterministic views of their husbands, women question the mastermind behind deterministic these forces. They seem to suggest that the source of their husbands' behaviour is found in their culture. Cultural influences, according to them, are not acceptable, and they must therefore be discarded from society.

" (Agitated) Who said that? Who said that you are not meant to do that? That's why I said that every family has got to have its own policy. So, if I inculcate all those eh...eh..., the... the household chores to the young ones, I should not differentiate between boys and girls. He must know how to cook. He must know how to wash. He must know how to clean the house. I am guarding against that which might happen next time when they are, especially when the wife is sick. Then you are going to look for someone to take care of your own kids, even yourself."

" I think everything that is happening, is being influenced by culture. We need to look at our culture, and we need to get eh... rid of the things that are not good and carry on with whatever is good."

In response to male respondents' beliefs about women's mediocre strength as a result of nature, female respondents maintain that women are as strong as

men. All what they need to do to achieve the same level of strength as their male counterparts, is to develop themselves physically.

" It is not a heavy job. The problem is that women don't develop themselves. If ladies can develop themselves, they will be as strong as men."

6.2.1.5 Cultural views versus social pressure

Sometimes men's inability to cooperate with their wives in performing household sex roles may be attributed to social pressure. Men who deviate from norms and values of their communities receive indirect punishment from members of their communities, which forces them to live up to the expectations of these societies.

" Our society believes in witchcraft, and if you find a man cooking, changing nappies and doing what is supposed to be done by a woman in the house when the woman is around, people may think that, that man has been bewitched."

6.2.1.6 Cultural views versus issues of physical strength

Some male respondents believe that even if their wives are expected to do all household chores as expected of them by their culture, they will not expose them to roles that require the use of power.

" ... but the only thing that I cannot do is to give my wife heavy things, like lifting heavy things, since women are weaker than men."

" I would agree with the first speaker who said nowadays we should not differentiate between roles, but I would eh... accept it, more so if it were eh... at the beginning when we..., I mean when we grow our children, we shouldn't differentiate the roles at that stage but when it comes to adulthood, I hundred percent agree that roles are not the same because eh... there are some roles which are more heavier for women and those which cannot be done by men. We cannot everytime do the same jobs as women. There are jobs which are not so appropriate to be done by women."

Male respondents also argue that even if their wives claim that they can do all household chores, they seem to be unable to perform tasks where power is needed. Such tasks are given to men.

" You find that they won't do the same type of heavy duties at home. Ladies will wait for their husbands to come and tackle that particular problem."

Women respondents are, however, not convinced that there are tasks that they cannot perform because of the amount strength needed, which men say, they (the women) do not have. They argue that there is nothing that they cannot do. The dawning of the new era has proved that they can do everything, as there are ladies currently, who are doing heavy work which was previously thought of as men's work. They maintain that it is not their

mediocre strength, but culture, that denies them the opportunity to play all roles.

" But I think that there is something wrong with our culture because we grew up believing that there are certain jobs reserved for men and those that are reserved for women. Since the inception of the RDP, somewhere in, 1994, we have seen women doing jobs which were previously reserved for men. For example, women have been busy eh... preparing roads, and so forth, and if you look at the job that they have been doing, it's an excellent one. So, it means that both men and women eh... they are supposed to do anything in the world. And another example, if you go to schools eh... there are certain fields of study which were eh... believed to be for men only, but today, both men and women are doing such jobs, like engineering, for instance, civil engineering. This shows us that any person can do anything."

6.2.2 Power struggle

Four categories were identified in this theme, namely, patriarchal views, the role of income, pivotal family figures and Biblical teachings.

6.2.2.1 Patriarchial views

According to male respondents, the head of the family is supposed to be a man. Wherever women are allowed to come to the same level as men or above them, chaos is inevitable. Men should, therefore, never, allow women

to control them. Equality in the performance of household chores is therefore, according to men, out of question.

" Look at the divorce rate. It is because we have allowed women to be above us."

" Today we are having many problems with our wives because you took your wife to be your equal, instead of retaining the culture that we Blacks have."

" Let us retain our status as men, and then things will be right."

In their responses, men seem to suggest that some men give away their position of authority in their households because of the love they have for their wives. It appears, therefore, that they believe that men should avoid any form of equality as a result of the love for their wives, including the equal performance of household chores.

" But because these days we say this is my darling, she is my what, what. We have abandoned our culture."

Male respondents also indicated that in their culture it is known that a woman is a powerless being who should always wait for her husband to do things for her, as she does not own any property. A woman should not, therefore, claim equality in all respects, including the performance of household chores.

" If we are to buy something, I must be the one to take the head in negotiating. I must be the one who must be seen,

because they look at my house, and they say it belongs to so and so (that is, it belongs to the man)."

Women respondents do not accept the subordinate position given to them by their culture as expounded by men. In response to a question by a male respondent with regard to what is supposed to happen if negotiations concerning some sex roles do not bear fruit, one female respondent rejected the notion of superiority of any kind by saying that there can rather be an argument until a solution is found. Neither men nor women should be given the right to impose decisions on another partner.

" I think we must argue until we agree because (laughter) things can't be left loose like that. We must argue until we say okay, or perhaps, otherwise, we must reach a compromise."

" I still say people must agree."

A female respondent, who could have been experiencing a sense of powerlessness as a result of the dominant role that her husband is playing in her family, pleaded for at least consultation, as negotiations seem to be out of question in her family.

" No, I don't deny that. What I say... tell me first. Let me not just see a plumber in my house, busy doing things..."

6.2.2.2 The role of income

Male respondents indicated that a man is always a head of his family at all times. This position is not dependent on the level of his income, but on the performance of his men's household chores.

" Eh..., and we must never measure a man in terms of what he brings home. That is not a good measurement. No... no, if we talk about the salary now, you... you..., no, I cannot be measured by my salary. I must be measured by the service I render. I... I think I have a better service to render as a man, like negotiating contracts... "

Women were, however, adamant that the politics of economy determines the status of men in their families. In a response to a question pertaining to the roles that a man should play if a house mortgage bond is in the name of his wife, a woman respondent said that such a man should perform household chores which are culturally known to be for women.

" ... (Interrupting) Yes he must cook."

" (Interrupting and agitated) Yes he must cook. Yes my husband must cook. I mean we have to help each other, because I am paying subsidy. What I mean is that we are supposed to help each each."

During this contemporary era women argue that a position of authority in a family is conditional.

" But nowadays we are all working. Men are going out there. They wake up early in the morning. They got to work, and we ladies, too, we do the same things. So, you find that in the long run, you,... the wife, your money is... is the only source of income, whereas your husband's money does not come at all."

There are, however, some women respondents (although very few) who seem to agree to, and abide by their cultural values with regard to superiority in the family.

" But I think a man is still taking a lead. A man is still superior because if we can look at the houses, who is paying for them? The man. Who has taken the subsidy? I think it's a man."

6.2.2.3 Pivotal family figure

Female respondents believe that despite the fact that their husbands exploit them, they (their husbands) actually depend on them for survival. Women are convinced that they can do all household chores and manage a household without their husbands' assistance.

" This advertisement shows us that women have more responsibilities than men, and even in a household, if a woman is not strong, the family doesn't have resistance. It is a woman who is a pillar of a family, whether she is employed or not."

" ... women are everything in their families. They are mothers, social workers, nurses and advisers. So, I think we can still do without them (that is, men)."

" Okay, I was worried by the answer you gave. I think a single mother manages a family perfectly. Sometimes you find that your husband is drinking. If your husband is working in Gauteng or somewhere else, he is not always around. So, you are responsible for the family. Even the boys are given some rules. You must control the whole family, make sure that everything is going well. So, I think women can do it."

" And a woman alone can run a family. How about that? "

" We can do without men. Let's thank God because there is only one thing they are helping us with, and sometimes we can deal with that (laughter)..., without them."

" But people, let me tell you, let's face facts. In most cases if you can just look around here, women are the only ones who... you know..., this houses are there because of women. Most men are not doing what they are supposed to do."

Men, according to women, cannot maintain a home alone because they are irresponsible.

" No, you can, but what I am saying is this..., let's face reality people. If a roof is leaking, I tell my husband, please can't you do something? But you will find that weeks will pass

without him doing anything, and that's true. Weeks will pass without him doing anything, and then the next thing you as a woman will go and look for somebody that you will have to pay. That's what you men are doing."

6.2.2.4 Biblical teachings

Male respondents believe that it is not only culture that places men above women. The Bible also teaches that women are men's subordinates. They should therefore avoid challenging men with regard to household chores.

" We must help women in almost everything, but to a limited degree, as the Bible says the man must always be above."

" According to the Bible, a man is the head of the family, and he is the one who must lead the family, and the woman must always be under the man, and she must listen to his instructions. By helping a woman, it's a good thing but a woman must not take a chance that she is at the same level as the man, as myself. I agree with the issue of helping the woman, but she must know that I am the head of the family."

Women seem to believe that the Bible is biased towards them. Its teaching in some cases should not be applied when consideration is given to the sharing of males and females' household chores in a complementary manner.

" No, that is derived from the Bible. You know, in the Bible, not more women are recognised..."

6.2.3 Self-esteem

There are two categories to be discussed under this theme, namely, undermining of human dignity and servant-master relationship.

6.2.3.1 Undermining of human dignity

Male respondents indicated that they might lose their dignity as men and heads of their families in the eyes of their wives and their communities, if they perform all household chores, as that is not in line with their culture. They maintain that they should perform only men's duties to earn the respect of their wives and their communities.

" I think I must be made to feel like a man, then the woman must be made to feel like a woman."

" So, if you do everything that a woman is supposed to do, they will undermine you somewhere or somehow, and people will say " ba go jesitse" (you have been bewitched)."

Besides being afraid of being undermined by their wives and their societies, men also seem to suggest that their greatest problem would be a loss of a feeling of manhood.

" Right, men must do men's work. Men should do, like gardening. I think that they must do men's work eh... as well as fixing leaking taps, broken windows and faulty electricity. I think men feel more respected in our culture when they are

given what is thought of as men's work, rather than washing dishes and nappies."

"... but she must make sure that I am not going to feel offended because I must feel like a man for doing men's job, and she must do women's job."

The loss of self-esteem may lead to unpleasant consequences such as separation and divorce. Men seem to suggest that divorce is sometimes caused by attempts to maintain one's self-esteem.

"... otherwise we are going to end up in a situation where I will be saying, but this woman, if she can do this, she can as well do everything in the house. So, what am I there for? Maybe I better go outside, find a place where I can do those things (that is, men's work). She does not have to be a master of everything."

" (Interrupting) Yes, by doing men's job. By buying things, and if I buy a bag of maize meal, I will feel like a man. That I am doing something in the family, but if everyday when I come home there is something, sometimes I might think I am very useless in the house."

Men believe that their support for the differentiation of household chores along cultural lines does not necessarily mean that they undermine the integrity of their wives. To them, the differentiation of household chores is a strategy which is necessary for survival.

" But now eh..., this question of eh... gender equality. There is this school of thought which says that when we do different things, is as if we are not equal. I... I personally feel that eh..., regardless of the activities, we are equal beings, but let us do the things we are capable of."

Although some men seem to say that they respect women's dignity, it does not seem so, as they do not seem to value womanhood. As such, it may not be easy for them to perform household chores associated with women. It appears as though they associate womanhood with worthlessness.

" If now God were to say as from next week you will be changing to become women, I don't think we would agree with the idea of changing to become women."

Women seem to be totally opposed to the association between manhood feelings (that is, self-esteem) and household chores.

" (Agitated) How, how can you be made to feel like a man? By doing men's job? Do you mean that..."

6.2.3.2 Servant master relationship

Male respondents seem to regard women as their properties and slaves that must serve them at all costs. It could be this kind of a belief that will always make it difficult, if not impossible, to engage in negotiations concerning household chores with their partners, as a slave and a master do not negotiate contracts.

" Eh..., remember I married this woman to work, whether she is coming back home being tired or not. She must cook. She is my property. I paid lobola for her to do the same job, until we arrive in bed. There she must also satisfy me..."

" Ah... and this song by..., I have forgotten the lady. She says " monna wona ke waka" (this man is mine). If you see him dressed like that is because of my hands..."

" (Interrupting) That's why he is so clean. It is because of his wife."

" ... and when a man looks nice and beautiful, they say, yes, this one must be having a wife. His wife is taking good care of him. They won't say, are you washing for yourself? "

Male respondents express shock when their wives make demands that have to do with the sharing of household chores.

" When you are doing that valuable job, you want to destroy it by saying he does all on his own! "

Women respondents, on the other hand, reject the idea of slavery. They regard themselves as men's equals, and as such, they argue that men and women should help one another in the performance of their household chores.

" I..., because previously men used to think eh... that women are their slaves and eh...we no longer like that, because we should help each other."

6.2.4 Place of operation

Male respondents regard household chores as women's work. Whenever reference is made to these chores, male respondents talk in terms of assistance being given to their wives. They seem to associate household chores with women, as women and men's place of operation are homes and outside home respectively.

" ... I think that it is customary, because you know in the olden days, men used to work, and women were to be at home and look after children."

" But look... look, when you are busy washing nappies, and dishes in the house, I will be busy around with some other men trying to find ways in which I can bring a lot of income to the house, and all those things, such as negotiating contracts and all things, finding people to come and fix what we cannot fix. You see, I am doing men's work."

" You know men..., I don't know other cultures or cultural differences, but I know of my Black men. We don't care whether at my residential area there are flowers or what. This flowers and houses are for women."

The male respondents' expression of their belief concerning the place of women being their homes, seem to spark confusion among women which leads to many questions whose answers appear to be out of reach. "

" So, but what I want to understand is this. Do you mean that I don't know whether I am lost or not, or do you mean that women are the ones who are supposed to do all the house chores? "

6.2.4.1 Men's conditional assistance

Some of the male respondents are willing to help their wives, but such help is conditional.

" I believe in the division of labour, but at the same time (pause) when she is not feeling well, I think those who are parties, must be able to assist each other."

" I think my colleague indicated that if one party is not feeling well, then you can do that (that is, render assistance)."

" The house work like cleaning..., I can help you with cooking. I can help you where possible, but (emphasizing) it must not be routine work."

" ... but helping them should not be some kind of a norm or a must."

" ... sometimes when she is tired, maybe she has done a lot of work, I can take pots, put them on the stove and cook for her (laughter)."

6.2.5 Changes versus maintaining the status quo

Since women find themselves in a disadvantaged position in as far as the household sex roles are concerned, they advocate for change to improve their position. Their attempts are, however, being frustrated by men who seem to blame the spirit of changes on White culture, which according to them, is threatening their authoritative positions and their sense of security in their families.

" Therefore, my request to everybody is that now let us not be misled by the eh... White culture. We are out of our culture. We don't know where we belong, you see, because we claim to be living in the cities or urban areas."

" ... things have changed and things are changing, and they will keep on changing, but eh... you cannot expect to have a nation or community which doesn't have roles. Even anywhere, where you are in, you must have some standards. Some values you cannot just leave."

Although some men appear to be willing to change with the times, they however, seem to prefer to either move very slowly in the direction of change, or leave matters as they are for sometime, as they do not see anything wrong with the present situation.

" Lo... lo... look, this days we are not cooking for children. We are not washing them, but the trend this days..., children are closer to their fathers, unlike in the olden days. This shows that we are moving closer. So, my plea is, don't push us. Just give us time. Maybe our sons and daughters, but not this generation. I think the way we are doing things is just fine."

" The minute we become real (that is, change with times), the divorce rate becomes high."

Women respondents reacted to men's refusal to change with shock. Although they seem to realize that their male counter-parts are victims of circumstances they, however, seem to find it difficult to accept that change is difficult for these men.

" Ai! Eh... African men (Laughter)!"

" I think eh... what this gentleman is saying is the way he was brought up..., his beliefs and values. He was taught in that manner, eh... eh... now I have said now things are changing. The roles are no more differentiated. So, that is why we are wondering what is he saying now. Maybe it is just because he is old. Maybe now he is still living in the old way, but things have changed."

Despite the difficulties that appear to be in the way of changes, women are determined to ensure that change does take place.

" We need to transform our society because (softly), ... now things have changed."

6.2.5.1 Support for changes

It seems as if the winds of change have come to stay. Beliefs and attitudes held by men and women who advocate for change, are supported by individuals who seem to exert a great influence on sex gender related issues, by virtue of powers they hold, which they derive from societal positions they occupy.

The analysis of transcripts of interviews held with two such individuals (cf 5.3.2) that is, gender equality activists, indicates that there is a link between beliefs and attitudes held by men and women respondents who advocate for change, and those upheld by these activists. As a result of the activities of these activists, beliefs and attitudes upheld by men and women who advocate for change, are likely to prevail for at least some time, if not permanently.

The core arguments of these activists, which appear to be pivotal beliefs and attitudes on which all other beliefs and attitudes hinge, are as follows:

- * Sex role differentiation is not biologically determined, but culturally bound.

" That is, it starts from home (that is, through socialization). How we are socialized as a society. So maybe, if I have to give another definition of gender that is clear is that gender is a social construct of femaleness and maleness. That is,

what society says and does to promote womanhood and manhood."

- * Women and men are by nature equal.

" The first to be done is to do away with patriarchal ideas, that somebody is inferior, and somebody's work has higher status than another person's work. There is a need for equality."

" He doesn't (that is, the man) have to be the head of the family."

" We all have power."

- * Men and women, should as such, perform the same sex roles, as both sexes have the ability to do so.

" There shouldn't be role demarcations. People of either sex should be able to do either or any roles they choose."

" A man can drive a train as much as a woman can drive a train. A man can be a taxi operator, and a woman can also be a taxi operator."

" If..., I..., If a woman can cook, a man can also cook."

" ... you know when my husband comes home, I have to prepare this type of food. This does not suggest that my

husband can't do that. A woman is forced to do these things."

* According to these interviewees, change is inevitable, to reduce the burden that women are carrying.

" So we need to harmonize the whole situation, especially when it affects us economically."

" Increasingly and economically speaking, men and women have to share roles. They will have to share roles economically to survive."

" South Africa is a patriarchic society. There are gender stereotypes that need to be changed."

6.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the collected data were analysed. Five themes and their categories were presented to illustrate the beliefs and attitudes held by men and women with regard to the performance of household chores. Quotations from the transcribed interviews were used to substantiate these themes and categories.

This analysis clearly shows that the complementary sharing of sex roles by heterosexual couples is made difficult by men and women's conflicting beliefs and attitudes held by these couples.

In the next chapter, guidelines aimed at helping married heterosexual couples to share sex roles in a complementary way, will be discussed.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS, GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THIS STUDY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, attention will be given to some guidelines concerning the sharing of sex roles by married heterosexual partners in a complementary way. In formulating these guidelines, whose common denominator is compromise, both literature and empirical study findings were taken into consideration. The chapter will also focus on the shortcomings of this study and recommendations for further study.

7.2 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

In drawing conclusions from findings in this study, the researcher took the primary and the secondary aims of the study into consideration. These aims are as follows:

7.2.1 Primary aim

The researcher's primary aim in this study was to identify beliefs and attitudes held by married heterosexual couples that render the sharing of sex roles in a complementary manner difficult among these couples.

7.2.2 Secondary aims

The secondary aims of this study are as follows:

- * to explore the knowledge of couples concerning sex roles with regard to household chores.

- * to identify sex differences between men and women

- * to explore ways in which gender roles were shared between married heterosexual couples during the olden days.

- * to compile a set of guidelines that would assist married heterosexual couples to share roles in a complementary way so as to make their homes effective primary education environments.

7.3 LITERATURE AND EMPIRICAL CONCLUSIONS THAT UNDERPIN THIS STUDY'S GUIDELINES

The following literature and empirical conclusions underpin the guidelines on the complementary sharing of household chores by heterosexual couples in this study. These findings and the proposed guidelines, apply to the Black population, as the empirical research was conducted among Black people, as stated in the delimitation of the study (cf 1.4). It should, therefore, be noted that these findings cannot be generalized to all race groups.

- * Men and women seem to compare more favourably in the performance of task requiring mental application than in tasks requiring physical strength. While it may be possible for partners to share most of the household chores requiring intellectual application (for example, working out a budget) with ease, the same may not be said about tasks where physical strength is at stake. The reason is that most of the intellectual tasks are light tasks that require the use of little energy,

whereas most tasks involving physical strength, are heavy tasks which require the use of a lot of energy.

- * Although a possibility exists that both men and women may perform similar tasks, there is, however, a difference between the two sexes with the ease with which certain tasks may be learnt and performed (cf 1.2.2).
- * The performance of certain sex roles, especially roles concerning the care of children, require the ability to express positive emotions in an overt manner. The ability to express these emotions overtly, renders the development of an attachment bond possible, without which children may not triumph as required. (cf 2.4.1.1).
- * Although sex roles change continuously, it is highly unlikely that sex differences between women and men, which may be the source of the differentiation of sex roles, will disappear in the immediate future. Partners should, therefore, rather work at the sharing of sex roles in a complementary manner, than work towards conditional acceptance of each other (cf 2.1).
- * Although the role of fathers is supposed to change as a result of the ever-changing world in which we live, most men seem to cling to patriarchal views and roles associated with it, which most women oppose vehemently (cf 1.1). As a result of these patriarchal views, most men are alienated from their partners who find it difficult to discuss household matters with them.

- * As a result of societal changes, women are faced with double load of work, that is, they are both mothers and paid workers (cf 1.1). Their work load is therefore a source of stress which makes it difficult for them to create educative environments for their children. There is therefore a need for guidelines to assist men and women to share household chores in a complementary way.

- * Although it is argued that the differentiation of sex roles has its roots in the interaction between biological and cultural factors, it appears as if biological factors, however, set the pace. It seems, therefore, that this differentiation will be a permanent feature of our societies, or it will take many years before it is discarded from our way of life (cf 2.1). When discussing the sharing of sex roles couples should, therefore, give great consideration to biological factors.

- * Some of the biological factors that kept women at home, such as child bearing and rearing, while their husbands explored the outside world, are either disappearing or have disappeared. Women therefore have more or less the same access as men to the outside world (cf 2.4). When discussing household chores, it should be kept in mind that women are no longer housewives only.

- * A clash exists between feminism and patriarchy. A balance between feminism and patriarchy, which are two major conflicting ideologies in gender issues, should be found so as to enable partners to create tension free primary education environments for their children (cf 3.3).

- * Because of the different roles that men and women play in their families, that is, the expressive and instrumental roles for women and men

respectively in child rearing, it appears that for the sake of children this differentiation should be maintained (cf 4). Morrison (1995 : 527) maintains that " fathering and mothering are complementary processes ".

- * Both men and women seem to be suffering from denial which Baltus (1992 : 156) describes as refusal to accept the situation as real, that is, as it is. Despite indications that men and women have fundamental physical differences that may be responsible for sex role differentiation, women maintain that the differences that exist are minimal. They infact seem to be arguing that the only significant difference between men and women are physical differences that concern childbearing and breast feeding only. Men on the other hand, although they are aware of the access women have to the so called men's world, continue to deny that women's status as housewives has changed drastically.

7.4 THE PROPOSED GUIDELINES

The proposed guidelines for the sharing of roles by married heterosexual couples discussed in this study have been divided into nine categories as follows:

- * Consideration of strong qualities of an individual
- * Consideration of a partner's ability
- * Enhancement of communication
- * Respect for human dignity
- * Androgynity
- * Patriarchy versus a " constitutional head " of a family
- * Therapeutic assistance

- * Conditions of worth
- * Empathy

Although these guidelines have been divided into categories, it should be noted that they are interrelated.

7.4.1 Guideline 1 : Consideration of strong attributes of an individual

A man and a woman, as two different unique individuals, who also belong to different sexes, do not possess the same attributes. These attributes are, among others, intellectual, physical, and emotional in nature. It is possible, for instance, that the wife may be physically superior to her husband or vice versa, although it is generally accepted that men are physically superior to their wives. It should, therefore, be on the basis of these attributes that they decide on household chores to be done by each partner.

When sex roles are shared on the basis of the partners' strong attributes, the following guidelines should be taken into consideration:

- * Equality in the assigning of household chores should not be high on the agenda. Chores should be shared in a way that would ensure that no partner is overburdened.
- * A task should be performed by a partner who is in a better position to perform it. For instance, Dyregrove et al. (1994 : 379) seem to believe that mothers are in a better position than men to take care of children's emotional life, although, according to Morrison (1995 : 527) definitions of nurturing are changing. He asserts that contemporary fathers are

positively involved in their children's lives as caregivers. The final decision should, however, be made by the couples themselves.

- * Partners should guard against assigning tasks in a way in which another partner's self-esteem may be threatened. Louw (1991 : 550) asserts, for instance, that while some women enjoy the shared responsibility of running a home, others feel threatened by their husbands' greater involvement in domestic tasks.

7.4.2 Guideline 2 : Consideration of a partner's abilities

Although one may qualify to perform a particular task on the basis of his or her strong attributes, he or she may lack the ability to learn and perform that particular task (Woodson, Tillman & Tillman, 1992 : 544). For instance, while it may be easy for a woman to learn to cook, and be in a position to cook for his family, it may be difficult for her to learn a skill such as scrubbing floors and to apply polish. Consideration should therefore be given to partner abilities, when household chores are being shared (Mussen et al., 1990 : 220).

7.4.3 Guideline 3 : Enhancement of communication

The sharing of household chores in a complementary way may be possible if the needs, feelings and other personality traits necessary in the execution of tasks, are known to both partners. Issues should not be left to chance, as such a practice may lead to confusion and conflicts (Bassis et al., 1992 : 137).

Among the many other ways that may be used to understand these personality traits, is communication (Napier, 1993 : 496). In Meier et al.'s (1991 : 332) opinion, couples are unable to share sex roles because they have a great problem in communicating their feelings to each other, as they have not learnt to do so. Healthy and reliable communication that breeds understanding and progress (Meier, Minirth, Wichern & Ratcliff, 1991 : 205) is based on healthy relationships. According to research conducted by Gottaman and Levenson in Lippa (1994 : 416) happy couples' relationship are characterized by a " good manners " model of relationship success which states that the level of communication in successful marriages is satisfactory, and the ratio of positive comments is much higher than that of negative comments. In Baltus' (1992 : 218) view, communication is probably the single most important factor in developing successful relationships. Couples find it difficult to share household chores in a complementary manner.

Successful communication, according to Napier (1993 : 496), has the following characteristics :

- Good communication skills.
- Discussion involves interpersonal matters, as well as task issues.
- High level of disclosure.
- Acceptance of difference of opinion.

Such communication is possible because both partners are encouraged to express their feelings without fear.

7.4.4 Guideline 4 : Respect for human dignity

Partners need to respect each other if they are to succeed with the sharing of household chores in a complementary way (Napier, 1993 : 496). What they may regard as weaknesses in another partner should not be used to degrade that partner by exposing him or her to functions that will expose his or her weaknesses. Partners that respect each other will further avoid making use of their own strong attributes for personal gains, which might leave the other partner with feelings of uselessness and being discriminated against. There is no single individual who wants to be discriminated against because of some characteristics over which he has no control (Baltus, 1992 : 21). Partners that respect each other should be in a position to recognize each person as having abilities that contribute to the achievement of family goals.

7.4.5 Guideline 5 : Androgyny

The contemporary circumstances in which partners find themselves differ significantly from conditions that existed some years ago. For instance, men are no longer the sole breadwinners in their families, and in some instances, women are more often than not, away from their homes more frequently than their husbands, because of their work requirements. Baltus (1992 : 7) asserts that men and women's roles are no longer as separate as they were in past generations. It has, therefore, become imperative that men and women should move away from playing predominantly either expressive or instrumental roles. Contemporary men and women should display androgenous behaviours even if that may not be how they feel, if their homes are to serve as authentic primary education environments.

7.4.6 Guideline 6 : Patriarchy versus a " constitutional head " of a family

There is a need to avoid extremes in this ever-changing environment, and instead, couples should constantly seek a balance in all aspects of their lives (Baltus, 1992 : 21), which includes the household leadership, which seem to exert a great influence on the sharing of household chores. The term patriarchy, a traditional concept described as the male head of a family or tribe by Hornby (1981 : 614), should therefore be replaced with a balancing concept such as a " constitutional head ". There is no room for patriarchal way of life in a democratic society.

A constitutional head of family, like all other constitutional rulers, should be controlled by rules and principles of a constitution. In the case of a family, these rules and principles controlling a constitutional head of a family, would be those agreements which the partners agree upon on the basis of their strong attributes, interests and qualities. A family should, therefore, operate like a democratic society which values democratic principles.

Family democratic principles are, among others, as highlighted by Gunter (1995 : 204 - 205) as follows:

- * Respect for every individual as a person.
- * Equal in dignity as persons.
- * Unity-in-diversity (Partners differ in many respects and yet they should complement each other and work towards a common goal).
- * Dynamism (believing in change which fosters growth and development).
- * Unselfish leadership (In this case the leadership of a constitutional head of the family is of utmost importance).

In Morrison's (1995 : 39) view, the definition of fatherhood has changed. Fathers should, therefore, no longer regard themselves as stereotypically unemotional, detached from everyday responsibilities, authoritarian and disciplinarians.

In making decisions concerning the sharing of household chores, male partners should, therefore, avoid considering themselves as undisputable heads of their families whose word is unquestionable. Lauer's (1995 : 282) advice to them is that they should cast off their traditional roles and help their wives with household work if their wives' lives are to be prolonged. They should, nevertheless, be given the privilege of being heads of their families, as there can be no group of people who can operate successfully without a leader of some kind.

7.4.7 Guideline 7 : Therapeutic assistance

As a result of the fast changing nature of our societies, partners need to keep pace with developments that are taking place, and the impact of these changes and developments on their psychological being. Background knowledge about one's environment helps in the understanding of the dynamics of the phenomenon at hand, as false beliefs and attitudes are being dealt with (Gurney, 1987 : 135).

It has therefore become imperative that partners should seek professional help to enable them to cope with these changes. For instance, Morrison (1995 : 36) maintains that because many men feel unprepared for contemporary fatherhood, agencies such as hospitals and community colleges are conducting courses to introduce them to the joys, rewards and

responsibilities of fathering, and to teach them problem-solving skills to help them deal with unforeseen circumstances (Moursund, 1990 : 19).

7.4.8 Guideline 8 : Conditions of worth

Hjelle and Ziegler (1981 : 412) define conditions of worth (also called unconditional positive regard) as the acceptance and respecting of an individual for what he or she is. It seems as though some partners are unable to accept each other for what they are, because of lack of knowledge concerning the sex differences that exist between men and women. The relationship of couples that lack such knowledge, may be characterized by accusations and anti-accusations. Such relationships may malfunction with the result that communication of any kind, including communication with regard to the sharing of household chores in a complementary manner, is jeopardized. Partners should, therefore, learn to accept each other unconditionally if they are to engage in meaningful discussions concerning the sharing of household tasks in a complementary way. Unconditional positive regard will ensure that each partner is given manageable tasks.

7.4.9 Guideline 9 : Empathy

According to Reber (1995 : 249) people who are emphatic are in a better position to be cognitively aware, understand and accept (Fernald & Fernald, 1979 : 403) the emotions and feelings of other people. They are able to assume in their minds the roles of other people because of their ability to see the world from other people's perspectives. Couples that have empathy, are in a position to be aware of the pains and suffering endured by their partners as a result of either their shortcomings, with regard to certain attributes and

abilities necessary to accomplish certain tasks, or work-overload that is unbearable.

7.5 SHORTCOMINGS OF THIS STUDY

There are a few shortcomings of this study that the researcher would like to highlight, most of which presented themselves during the empirical investigation.

- * Interviews were conducted in English, and some respondents could not express themselves adequately. A possibility exists, therefore, that they did not express themselves as they would have liked to. It would have been better, perhaps, to conduct the interviews in the interviewees' mother tongue.

- * It is therefore possible that couples that were excluded on the basis of their inability to express themselves in English, could have expressed different views from those interviewed, which could have led to different or additional conclusions.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The issue of sex roles, especially sex roles with regard to household chores, is so wide that the limited nature of this study did not enable the researcher to pay attention to all aspects that should be studied to make families authentic education environments. There is therefore a need for a further study on the sex roles of couples.

Further research should consider the life-span of marriages. The beliefs and attitudes of the newly married couples, possibly differ from those that have been married for some time. It also appears that couples beliefs and attitudes may be influenced by the number and age of children. Couples in older marriages may find themselves having beliefs which differ from the couples in new marriages, because of the bigger number and older children in their families.

The level of education may also be another determining factor of beliefs and attitudes held by couples. It is recommended that a study of this nature should also concentrate on couples with either a low or no academic qualification.

Another determining factor of beliefs and attitudes are the couples's socio-economic status. It is possible that beliefs and attitudes of couples who are both unemployed, may not be the same as beliefs of couples in the middle or very high income group.

Lastly, there is also a need to develop a programme to teach couples how to implement guidelines with regard to the sharing of sex roles.

7.7 CONCLUSION

Sex roles that heterosexual couples are supposed to play in their families differ from those that were played in the olden days. These roles keep on changing as a result of a variety of factors. Couples are unfortunately unable to play their roles in accordance with modern demands as a result of the conflicting beliefs and attitudes held by men and women with regard to these roles. After this conflict was confirmed through a pilot study, literature study

that was conducted, revealed a number of factors that could be responsible for this conflict. The qualitative empirical research that was conducted, led to the development of guidelines concerning the sharing of roles by heterosexual couples in a complementary way. If these guidelines are put into practice, conflicts that couples find themselves faced with, will be minimized or avoided, and a way will be paved for the establishment of authentic primary education environments.

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