

# Couples who do the dishes together stay happier

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A new study published by The University of Western Ontario reveals that couples who share the responsibility for paid and unpaid work report higher average measures of happiness and life satisfaction than those in other family models.

The 'shared roles' category, where each partner's unpaid work is within 40-60 per cent of the total unpaid work, is a growing category that now represents more than 25 per cent of respondents. [Couples](#) are more likely to be in a shared roles model when women have more resources and when the couple is less religious.

The 'complementary-traditional family' model - with men doing more paid work and women doing more unpaid work - is declining, but remains the largest category.

Researchers suggest that the shared roles model is advantageous to society in terms of gender equity and its ability to maximize labour force participation by all adults. It also leaves women less vulnerable in the case of separation, divorce or death of a spouse.

Lead researchers, Rod Beaujot and Zenaida Ravanera from Western's Department of Sociology, believe that a key policy challenge in Canada is that of accommodating the shared roles model within diverse families.

To promote this model, they suggest policies that support equal opportunities for men and women to access education and work, provide

conditions that facilitate work-life balance and promote greater involvement of men in housework and childcare.

"Adequate childcare facilities and equal opportunity to parental leave should also be a focus of Canadian public policy," adds Beaujot.

Provided by University of Western Ontario

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