

Women in Spain still work double shifts

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Only 0.64 percent of women state that they do not do any housework, while 55 percent take on the entire workload of the household, compared to 1.4 percent of men. Credit: SINC

The proportion of the workforce represented by women rose from 20.7% to 41.1% between 1978 and 2002. However, this trend has not resulted in a similar increase in the proportion of men who participate in household tasks. Some 55% of women who are part of a dual earning couple still perform all household tasks. Furthermore, 33% of men do not do anything at home.

"[Younger women](#) still carry out a larger amount of unpaid work than men, although in less proportion than [older women](#). The same occurs with [education](#). The lower the level of education, the more likely women are to have more household chores", co-author of the working paper and researcher at the Public University of Navarra (Spain) Salomé Goñi

explained to SINC.

In order to obtain the data that the journal *Sex Roles* publishes this month, the researchers selected 2,877 Spanish male and female workers from the total sample of the Survey of Quality of Life at Work in Spain between 2001 and 2004 who stated they were members of a dual earning couple.

The experts conducted a variable analysis of the division of unpaid work following three models: the role-strain approach, the traditional gender division approach and the resource-bargaining approach. According to the study, all three theoretical models help to explain the unequal division of household labour and can therefore be regarded as complementary.

Only 12 % Share Household Tasks

According to the study, only 12% of the women surveyed share their household responsibilities equally with their partner. The European average, albeit low, stands at 25%.

Without distinguishing by gender, 18.91% of the people surveyed state that they "do nothing" at home, compared to 57% who say they "share the housework" and 23% who "do everything".

If we divide the sample by gender, these figures change drastically. Only 0.64% of women state that they do not do any housework, while 55% take on the entire workload of the household, compared to 1.4% of men. Furthermore, 33% of men in relationships in which both members work say they do not do "any housework".

"If we take the sample as a whole, one might think the situation is balanced, but when we distinguish between men and women, the

difference is clearly visible", the researcher added.

Economic Dependence Only Affects Women

The study also analyses couples' level of employment and economic dependence in relation to unpaid work. "What we found was that the variables that explain the participation of women in household tasks are different to those that explain the participation of men", Goñi said.

In this sense, economic dependence is important in the case of women, whereas this variable does not affect the involvement of men in unpaid work.

As regards the variables relating to paid work, having a job results in women no longer "doing everything" but "sharing chores". However, if men work more outside their home, women are more likely to do everything.

Similarly, the less women contribute in terms of wages, the more likely they are to take on all the unpaid work. "The opposite occurs in the case of men, who would change from doing nothing to sharing", Goñi concluded.

More information: Salomé Goñi Legaz, Andrea Ollo López, Alberto Bayo-Moriones; "The Division of Household Labor in Spanish Dual Earner Couples: Testing Three Theories". *Sex Roles* 63 (7-8): 515-529, Oct 2010.

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