Influence of Individual and Household Characteristics on Unpaid Work of Women – An Exposition of the Case of Malayali Women

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Abstract

Purpose : The amount of time that women in Malayali families spend working for free each day took on importance when considering Kerala's lower rate of female labor force participation despite the state's accomplishments in social development, gender-neutral health and education outcomes, and exposure to matrilineal systems. This made it necessary to examine how family and individual traits affected the unpaid labor that Malayali women performed.

Methodology : The purpose of the time-use survey was to calculate the average number of hours that men and women work without compensation each day. Taking into account the influence of culture in defining women's unpaid labor, the sample consisted of ninety-one female Malayalam-speaking individuals. The chi-squared test was utilized to determine the attributes that affected women's unpaid labor.

Findings : The average number of unpaid hours worked by women in Malayali households was higher than that of men. Personal traits, including educational background and earning capacity, decreased women's unpaid labor. Women's unpaid labor was lessened by household features like the availability of necessities and male members sharing unpaid labor.

Practical Implications : The problem would be resolved by workplace nap areas, senior care facilities, social security protection, paid sick days, paid maternity and paternity breaks, etc. There appeared to be plenty of room for the care economy to expand, given its reliance on market-based care services and the demand for payment for unpaid labor.

Originality : The present study proved that there is a gender gap in unpaid labor among Malayali families. The study's conclusions indicated that there was great potential for a thriving care economy.

Keywords : unpaid labor, invisible work, care work, domestic chores, time use survey, individual characteristics, household characteristics

JEL Classification Codes : J16, J70, J71

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The emphasis of mainstream economics is on labor that is valued and acknowledged by society. As an economic activity, paid work is recognized as being essential to an economy's expansion. Nevertheless, a significant amount of labor that is necessary for the economy and society to function normally goes unrewarded and unacknowledged because it is invisible. This is applicable to the caregiving and household duties that are necessary for a family's and society's survival. It is a sad truth that women carry out 3.2 times more unpaid

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care work than men do, accounting for 76.2% of all unpaid care work performed by women in families (Addati et al., 2018).

The U-shaped female labor force function described by Goldin (1994) has also sparked worries about women leaving the workforce to take on caregiving and unpaid household tasks. Recently, there have been coordinated attempts to determine the worth of women's unpaid labor performed in their homes at the international, national, and local levels. According to Addati et al. (2018), unpaid labor is worth US$11 trillion, or 9% of the world's GDP. According to Oxfam India, 2020, women's unpaid labor in India accounts for 3.1% of GDP, highlighting the seriousness of the problem. The state of Kerala, located in the southern part of India, has been hailed for its tremendous achievements in social development, gender-inclusive educational and health outcomes, an enlightened citizenry with civic consciousness and a predominant presence of communities exposed to matrilineal culture and norms. Despite these applauded achievements, the female labor force participation in Kerala. However, it has been improving, remained low at 37.5%, much below the male labor force participation rate that stood at 73.7% in 2022–2023 (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2023). In fact, in the latest Female Labour Utilization in India Report, 2023, released by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, one of the reasons cited by 44.5% of the female respondents to stay out of the labor force has been childcare responsibilities and personal commitments in homemaking. The highlighted research gap has instigated a comprehensive examination of the current allocation of unpaid labor in Malayali homes, along with the identification of the fundamental personal and household determinants that dictate the distribution of household duties and care services. The empirical study is pertinent in light of the developing market-based care economy as well as institutional and governmental initiatives to honor and value women's unpaid labor.

Unpaid labor has always fallen on women, notwithstanding regional variations in the distribution of paid and unpaid labor between men and women. Table 1 clearly illustrates the gender disparity in the amount of unpaid labor performed throughout the world.

Table 1. *Time Spent on Unpaid and Paid Work Across the Regions of the World (Minutes per Day)*

Region	Unpaid Work		Paid Work	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
World	265	83	183	322
Africa	263	78	154	271
Americas	268	155	175	268
Arab States	329	70	36	222
Asia and Pacific	262	64	201	353
Europe and Central Asia	272	132	126	227
Low-income countries	262	89	193	290
Middle-income countries	267	89	192	290
High-income countries	257	135	154	249

Table 2. *Time Spent on Unpaid and Paid Work in India (Minutes per Day)*

Country	Unpaid Work		Paid Work	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
India	297	31	160	360

Source : Charmes (2019).

When it comes to dividing one's time between paid and unpaid labor, gender differences are extremely evident in India. In India, women make up 90.5% of all unpaid labor, compared to men's meager 9.5% (Charmes, 2019). The seriousness of the problem in the Indian setting is shown in Table 2.

Literature on Gendered Division of Labour in Families

The division of home labor was not extensively studied before the 1970s. Feminist scholars started to investigate the gendered distribution of labor as the women's movement gained traction. Despite the fact that males work in a paid capacity, they made the point that women spend more time cleaning the house than men. Several theoretical perspectives provided explanations for the household division of labor. Disproportionate allocation of family work was explained in terms of three perspectives: time availability, relative resources and gender ideology (Cunningham, 2008; Fauser, 2019; McFarlane et al., 1998). According to theories of time availability, a person is likely to perform more domestic unpaid labor when they work less hours for pay. A person with greater money and education should be expected to do less domestic duties, according to theories based on the relative resource viewpoint. The third perspective on gender ideology created a separate role for men and women in household chores.

In relation to the current study, which focuses on how unpaid labor is distributed within homes, Mattila-Wiro (1999) provided a clear explanation of household economic models that are helpful for comprehending the intricate workings and behavior of households in diverse cultures and communities. These were classified into unitary and collective models of household behavior. Under the unitary model, households were assumed to behave as single decision-makers, irrespective of the number of household members. Household preferences could then be represented through a single utility function. Conversely, collective models of household behavior captured the disparities, disputes, and preferences of household members. There were two varieties of collective models: cooperative and non-cooperative. According to the cooperative collective model, people in families would choose a collective strategy if it proved to be more advantageous for them than going it alone. The non-cooperative strategy was predicated on the idea that people are incapable of making legally binding agreements with one another. Rather, people's behavior was dependent on other people's behavior. Mattila-Wiro, 1999 cited Gary Becker's New Household Economic theory, which describes resource allocation, decision making and utility maximization of the household. Time was presented in Becker's theory as a limited resource while making decisions. According to Becker, the division of labor that follows specialization is advantageous for married couples. Household labor division was predicated on the idea of comparative advantage. The individual who possessed a comparative advantage in terms of income would go to work, while the other would be responsible for household chores like cooking and cleaning. Decision-making depended on a bargaining process that would become more intense when gender differences were taken into account in bargaining models where two parties worked together to better their respective positions. These theoretical expositions demonstrated the interaction of factors influencing the decision-making at the household level crucial to the exploration of the current research theme that focuses on the gender-based division of unpaid work within families.

The onus of the unpaid work falling on the women folk of the household is largely attributed to the societal assignment of gender roles wherein women mostly rendered the household duties and care services in a family. Cunningham (2008) observed that couples with egalitarian attitudes towards gendered family roles and sharing of unpaid family work were more likely to enter the labor market and get employed in paid work. Households with less egalitarian beliefs were more likely to exit from the labor force. Egalitarian gender attitudes were the strongest predictors of the amount of time that employed women devoted to paid work. According to Adem and Mohammed (2019), the factors determining the gendered division of labor in the household were natural or biological, cultural or religious, and modern values and norms influenced indigenous cultures. According to Singh and Pattanaik, 2020 constraints (social and religious), choices (failure of markets and states to provide

essential provisioning) and career (low opportunity cost of unpaid work in the market) were the factors that determine the unpaid domestic work of women.

Cunningham (2007) suggested that women's entry into the paid labor force had measurable effects on men's participation in the kinds of household tasks. Fixed effects models provided evidence to suggest that women's entry into the paid labor force increased men's relative participation in routine housework.

Moreno-Colom (2017) explored the distribution of domestic work between men and women by analyzing time use according to the type and daily frequency of the tasks. Segregation of tasks represented a limit to the equal distribution of work between men and women. Furthermore, women's employment status had an impact on the gendered distribution of housework. For equitable gender distribution in daily maintenance and family management, female labor market involvement was a required but insufficient requirement. The distribution of housework was clearly influenced by the institutional setting as well as the job status of women, even though the two variables tended to be inversely correlated with the amount of time spent providing care. Nevertheless, these explanations were insufficient to account for the gender divide in household chores.

The study examines the ideas of paid and unpaid work, accounting for theoretical and empirical research on the gendered division of labor and the prevalence of women in the unpaid labor sector. Dewan (2017) defined paid work as the one that was remunerated either in cash or in kind while the tasks performed without any direct remuneration were unpaid work. The first category of unpaid labor covered a wide range of tasks, including unpaid labor performed by family members in family businesses, households producing subsistence goods for their own use, and gathering free goods like water, fuel wood, fish, fruit, etc., for use in production or personal consumption. Unpaid care work, such as caring for children, the elderly, the ill, and the crippled, as well as unpaid voluntary services, comprised yet another category of unpaid labor. Daily household maintenance tasks included cooking, washing, cleaning, and shopping. While the UN System of National Accounts (SNA) counted the first category of unpaid work in the computation of Gross Domestic Product, the second category was left out. It was regarded as non-SNA or extended SNA work. The unpaid labor of women in a household fell within the ambit of non-SNA or extended SNA. In this context, the research paper presents its objectives and frames the methodology.

Objectives

(1) To investigate the relationship between the sample's female respondents' characteristics and the average amount of time they spend performing invisible labor each day.

(2) To investigate the relationship between the typical daily duration of invisible labor by women and the household attributes of the sample's female respondents.

It is anticipated that both individual and household variables influence the amount of time women spend working for free each day.

Methodology

Time use survey of the female respondents forms the core part of the research paper to determine the average time spent by them on unpaid work per day. The study purposefully included in the sample those female respondents who come from similar cultural backgrounds and adhere to similar sets of values, customs, and traditions because gender roles and norms prescribed by society across various cultures define the nature of women's invisible labor. Hence, 91 female respondents with Malayalam as their mother tongue, irrespective of their place of residence comprise the sample of the study. The period of the survey was from January to March 2023. The sample includes

those who reside in Kerala and also non-resident Keralites. Time use survey has been employed to estimate the average time women spent on domestic chores and care work per day. The data on unpaid work efforts of male counterparts within the families are obtained as proxy responses from the female members of the household. The focus of this research is on the amount of time respondents spend on household work and care services, excluding unpaid voluntary services, given that household work accounts for 81.8% of women's unpaid care work and care services for 13% (Addati et al., 2018). The mean hours of unpaid work per day were determined in order to illustrate the disparities in the distribution of unpaid work duties between male and female members of Malayali households. The study utilized the Chi-squared test to ascertain the individual and family attributes that influence the voluntary labor performed by women in Malayali homes. The SPSS program was used to run the statistical tests needed for the analysis.

Analysis and Results

The report begins by describing the characteristics of the female respondents who were part of the sample. The information about the respondents pertinent to the current study is shown in Table 3.

The amount of time that women spend on home chores on average each day has been estimated using time usage surveys. The average number of hours that female respondents in the sample worked without receiving payment was 5.25 hours per day. This is much higher than the mean hours of unpaid work reported to have been performed by their male counterparts. The average number of hours that male relatives of the female respondents in the sample worked without compensation each day was a mere 1.47 hours. This roughly aligns with the results of Addati et al. (2018), which show that women in Asia perform 4.1 times as much unpaid care work as males do (see Table 4). This scenario, as noted by Mitra (2019), inevitably suggests greater time poverty and stress for women, as well as a decrease in their ability to make an income and a loss of opportunities for socialization, education, leisure, and enjoyment.

Table 3. *Profile of the Respondents in the Sample*

Descriptive Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Educational Qualifications	Below X standard	15	16.5
	X standard	19	20.9
	Plus Two	10	11
	Graduation	25	27.5
	Post Graduation	22	24.2
	Total	91	100
Earning Status	Earning member	50	54.9
	Non-earning member	41	45.1
	Total	91	100
Employment Status	Regular full-time job	35	38.5
	Part-time job	14	15.4
	Unemployed	42	46.2
	Total	91	100
Mothers with Babies and Children	Yes	56	61.5
Below School-Going Age	No	35	38.5
	Total	91	100

Table 4. *Gender-wise Distribution of Mean Hours of Unpaid Work in Families*

Mean Hours of Unpaid Work	Females	Male Counterparts in the Families of the Female Respondents
Mean hours	5.25 Hours	1.47 Hours

Table 5. *Types of Unpaid Works by Respondents*

Types of Unpaid Work	Frequency	Percent
All indoor	35	38.5
All indoor and all outdoor	24	26.4
All indoor and outdoor except driving	30	33.0
All outdoor	2	2.2
Total	91	100.0

Table 6. *Type of Unpaid Work by Male Counterparts in the Families of Female Respondents*

	Frequency	Percent
No work sharing	4	4.4
All indoor	6	6.6
All indoor and all outdoor	57	62.6
All indoor and outdoor except driving	1	1.1
All outdoor	23	25.3
Total	91	100.0

Care labor involves tending to infants and children, the elderly, and the ill, while household duties undertaken by women fall into the categories of cooking, cleaning, and laundry. Other forms of invisible labor that women perform outside of the home include driving and shopping. The categories of women's unpaid work are shown in Table 5. According to a study on the several types of invisible labor that women conduct, 38% of them work in jobs that are strictly classified as inside, like cooking, cleaning, and caring for others. A sizeable number of women (33%) are found to perform shopping along with their indoor work. A significant number of women (26.4%) engage in all kinds of work, both indoor and outdoor. While only 2.2% of them are found to engage exclusively in outdoor work such as shopping and driving.

It is noteworthy to note that a small proportion of men (4.4%) still refuse to share the invisible labor load that falls on women and do not perform any household duties. But it's encouraging to discover that 62.6% of the male counterparts in the households are taking care of all domestic chores, both inside and outside the home (see Table 6). However, a sizable portion of their male counterparts only perform outdoor jobs like driving and shopping.

Against this backdrop, the paper examines the influence of individual and household characteristics on the unpaid work of Malayali women.

Association Between Individual Characteristics and Average Time per Day Spent by Female Respondents on Invisible Labour

The average time spent per day on invisible labor by female respondents is examined with respect to their characteristics such as age, social category, educational qualifications, employment status, and earning status.

Table 7. *Association Between Personal Characteristics and Average Time Spent per Day by Female Respondents*

Personal Characteristics	Chi-Square Value	Degrees of Freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2 - sided)
Educational qualifications	10.39	4	0.034**
Earning status	10.16	1	0.001*
Employment status	8.98	2	0.011**
Motherhood (mothering babies and children below school-going age)	6.24	1	0.012**
Age	0.14	1	0.707***
Religion	1.24	2	0.538***
Social category	1.86	2	0.394***

Note. *statistically significant at 1% level, ** Statistically significant at 5% level, and *** Statistically not significant.

Table 7 demonstrates how the unique qualities of being a mother of infants and children under school age, income level, job status, and educational background all have an impact on the unpaid work burden that women bear. Higher educated, employed, and self-sufficient (i.e., salary or pension for retired women) female respondents exhibit less invisible work effort because their daily average time spent on household chores is less than the sample's mean hours of household work. The results of Hess et al. (2020), who investigated the connection between unpaid labor and gender-based economic disparities in the US, lend support to this. The study raises questions about how women's incomes and financial security may be impacted by spending more time working unpaid. Singh and Pattanaik (2020) verified that women with lower levels of education and those in the lower quintile of wealth in society are more likely to engage in domestic work intensely. This study's findings are consistent with the relative resources hypothesis, which postulates that women's unpaid labor should decline as their proportional resource ownership increases.

However, female respondents who are mothers with babies and children below school-going age have to engage in longer hours of invisible work due to the care responsibilities of their offspring. Particularly when small children are living in the family, Biernat and Wortman (1991) noted that partners with occupations of comparatively comparable standing do not necessarily have to share tasks equally. The study revealed that women are critical of their roles as husbands and parents and that equal status outside the house does not appear to translate into equal sharing of childcare tasks within the home.

The amount of caregiving and household duties that fall on female responders is overwhelming, regardless of their social or religious background. The results of the chi-square test also highlight the depressing reality that women of all ages, regardless of age, are not exempt from unpaid labor.

The size of the family, the amenities provided at home, and the level of support provided by the male family members are household characteristics that influence the invisible work stress experienced by women (refer to Table 8). The larger the family, the more work women must put in since they must put in longer hours to take care of the family. However, the presence of facilities at home, especially the availability of basic amenities such as electricity, regular water supply, cooking gas stove, mixer and other kitchen gadgets, have a positive impact on reducing the work burden of women. The amount of support that male family members provide is another factor that lowers the amount of unpaid labor that women perform. The average amount of time that women spend on these caregiving and housekeeping tasks decreases when the workload among male family members increases. Hirway (2015), focusing on unpaid non-SNA work, observed that the size and nature of

Table 8. *Association Between Household Characteristics and Average Time Spent per Day by Female Respondents*

Household Characteristics	Chi-Square Value	Degrees of Freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2 - sided)
Size of the family	4.88	1	0.027*
Facilities at home	4.33	1	0.037*
Male members support household work	3.68	1	0.055**
Location	2.35	1	0.126***
Presence of sick/disabled/elderly	1.199	2	0.549***

Note. *statistically significant at 5 % level ; ** Statistically significant at 10 % level ; and *** Statistically not significant.

Table 9. *Opinion on Remuneration on Unpaid Work*

Opinion	Frequency	Percent
No	35	38.5
Yes	56	61.5
Total	91	100.0

Table 10. *Criteria for Remuneration for Household and Care Work*

Criteria for Remuneration	Frequency	Percent
Number of hours of work done	11	12.1
Number of works done	11	12.1
Token as a recognition	34	37.4
No remuneration desired	35	38.5
Total	91	100.0

unpaid work at the household level tend to depend on household income; structure, size and composition of households; the presence of elderly, sick or disabled persons in the household; prevailing social norms, etc., Raihan et al. (2017), analyzed the key characteristics of unpaid workers, revealed the importance of several socio-economic factors in the decision to choose unpaid work as opposed to paid activities. Factors like occupation of household head, land holding size, marriage, age and university education affect household's decision to engage in unpaid work.

It is necessary to take action to legalize and market care services in order to lessen and redistribute the burden of unpaid labor. Women's opinions regarding the need for compensation for their unpaid labor indicate that they realize the necessity of moving to paid care systems. The fact that the majority of respondents (61.5%) want payment for the care they provide and other home tasks suggests that these women are willing to transfer these duties to caregiving institutions and systems that are focused on the market (see Table 9).

This shows that women have realized that they shouldn't be the only ones to shoulder the responsibility for caregiving and domestic duties. Approximately 24.2% of the respondents who requested compensation did so in accordance with the quantity of labor performed and the number of hours worked. In comparison, a significant number (37.4 %) demand a sum merely as a token of recognition of their work (see Table 10). Moreover, Table 11 indicates that 31.9% of the female respondents who request payment for their labor anticipate receiving it from an outside organization like the government. These factors imply that there is a growing need to acknowledge and

Table 11. *Who Must Pay Remuneration?*

Financing Remuneration	Frequency	Percent
Spouse	11	12.1
Beneficiaries in the family	16	17.6
External agency/Government	29	31.9
Not applicable	35	38.5
Total	91	100.0

Table 12. *Reliance on Domestic Help*

Reliance on Domestic Help	Frequency	Percent
No	67	73.6
Yes	24	26.4
Total	91	100.0

Table 13. *Eat out from Restaurants per Week*

Eat out from Restaurants per week	Frequency	Percent
Never	32	35.2
Weekly once	34	37.4
Weekly twice	16	17.6
Weekly thrice	4	4.4
Most of the days per week	5	5.5
Total	91	100.0

Table 14. *Reliance on Market-Oriented Systems and Reduction in Unpaid Work of Women*

Factors	Chi-Square Value	Degrees of Freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2 - sided)
Paid domestic help	3.324	1	0.068**
Eat out	9.044	4	0.060**

Note. ** statistically significant at 5 % level.

compensate women for their caregiving and housekeeping duties, which will open the door for the progressive transformation of women's unseen labor into a profitable industry.

The first step in moving the weight of domestic work onto institutions focused on the market would be for women to look for institutional assistance for their invisible labor in the home. These include a wide range of actions like relying more on paid domestic help to take care of household chores, eating out more frequently, hiring home nurses to care for infants, children, the sick, the elderly, and the disabled, providing institutional support by opening daycare centers and creches and passing laws requiring paid maternity and paternity leave, among other things.

Table 12 shows that only 26.4 % of the respondents relied on paid domestic help. However, they are keen to reduce the time allocated for cooking as about 64.8 % of the respondents ate from restaurants at least once a week, as seen in Table 13.

The results of the chi-square test demonstrate that hiring domestic help to handle caregiving duties and household chores reduces the unseen work effort that women put in. On average, cooking takes up 2.34 hours of a woman's valuable time each day, which is a heavy workload. Regular dining out and greater dependence on food providers based on the market alleviate women's invisible labor burdens (see Table 14).

Summary of Findings

Empirical analysis has thus served to establish the prevalence of the gender gap in the distribution of unpaid work within Malayali families. Personal as well as household characteristics have played a significant role in deciding the unpaid work burden of women folk within Malayali families. Higher earning potential, greater employment status, and more education were associated with less unpaid work hours for women. Motherhood, however, placed an additional care load on women because mothers of children under school age were found to be providing care for their children for longer periods. The new research also highlights the stark reality that some personal attributes have little bearing on how much unpaid work women in Malayali families are expected to do. For Malayali women, the burden of unpaid labor pervaded both social and religious institutions. Similarly, the results of the chi-square test show that women of all ages, young or elderly, are not exempt from unpaid labor.

Household characteristics, too had a key role in reducing the unpaid work burden of women within Malayali families. Availability of all the basic amenities such as regular water supply, electricity, stove, cooking gas and other kitchen gadgets had a favorable effect on reducing the unpaid work burden of women. Women in those families where male members share the unpaid work too enjoyed fewer hours of unpaid work. However, women in extended families had to engage in longer duration of unpaid work as they had to attend to the needs of all members of the family. Hence, the findings of the research signal the dominant role exerted by individual and household characteristics on the division of unpaid work within families.

Conclusion

Unpaid work within the families is primarily the responsibility of the women folk. The gender divide in the distribution of unpaid work in families is quite explicit across the regions of the world, with the gravity of the problem aggravating in middle-income countries and Arab states. The situation is alarming in India, with women spending 4.95 hours per day on unpaid labor while men engage in hardly half an hour per day for the same. This is corroborated by the findings of the Time Use Survey that emphatically establishes the invisible work efforts of Malayali women respondents who engage in unpaid labor for over 5 hours per day vis-à-vis the male counterparts in their families who engage in less than 2 hours of work per day. The study has established the influence of individual and household characteristics on the extent of unpaid labor by women in families. Women with higher educational qualifications and better-earning prospects are spared from longer durations of unpaid labor, as confirmed by the results of the chi-square test.

Similarly, those households with electronic gadgets and basic amenities that simplify tasks enable women to reduce unpaid labor and enter the workforce. Further, the sharing of unpaid work by the male members of the family also plays a critical role in reducing the unpaid work of women. As 61.5 % of surveyed women demanded remuneration for household work, there is ample scope for developing institutional and market-based external care systems to relieve women of their unpaid and invisible work. This will be a positive step in achieving the UN's "recognize," "reduce," and "redistribute" unpaid labor as well as "reward" and "represent" paid care labor (UN Women, 2022).

Considering the importance of the current research in developing a sustainable care economy that can gradually lessen women's unpaid labor in households, there are a few issues that need to be taken care of. To ensure the accuracy of the information gathered, the Time Use Survey should be administered to the respondents

on a regular basis. The information regarding the unpaid labor performed by men in the families should be directly gathered from the male family members rather than depending solely on proxy responses. The male members, as a result, would realize just how much unpaid labor their female counterparts in their households performed. A step like this would have made it easier to evaluate how differently men and women divide up the unpaid labor in families. It has been essential to the gradual decline in unpaid labor and the development of a sustainable care economy.

Implications

Theoretical Implications

The results of the current research establish the potency of resources in altering the distribution of unpaid labor within households, bearing testimony to the propositions found in the literature on relative resources. Compared to their less educated and jobless colleagues, educated and employed women with earning potential are found to put in fewer hours of unpaid labor.

Policy Implications

Quantification of the time spent by women and men on unpaid labor is the key to recognizing gender disparities in the distribution of unpaid work. Reckoning the gender disparities in the distribution of unpaid labor within families, the State must take affirmative action regarding the provision of institutional and legislative support. Institutional support includes setting up creches for children at the workplaces, daycare centers for the elderly, etc., that can relieve the women of their unpaid work burden. Besides, legislation entitling social security protection, paid sick leaves, maternity and paternity leaves for all, including those employed in the informal sector, would enhance the opportunity cost of non-participation in paid work, attracting them to join the labor force. Considering the growing dependence on market-driven care services and the vocal calls for compensation for women who work in the home and give care, there is great potential to establish an atmosphere that supports the expansion of market-driven care service providers. This is especially important in Kerala, where there is a sizable senior population.

Authors' Contribution

The concept was created by Dr. Kavitha A. C., who also created the research framework after conducting a thorough literature study. Dr. Parvathy P. created an organized interview plan after determining the variables pertinent to the study's focus. Dr. Parvathy P. and Kavitha A. C. conducted the survey. Dr. Kavitha A. C. and Parvathy P. jointly selected the statistical tools and analysis techniques, and SPSS software was used to carry out the analysis. Dr. Kavitha A. C. and Parvathy P. collaborated on the manuscript following a number of discussions and academic debates.

Conflict of Interest

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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