

A study of Nepalese families' paid and unpaid work after
migration to Australia

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page no.
Acknowledgments	i
Abstract	ii
List of Tables	iii
List of Flow Charts	iii
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction	1-17
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Shifts of participation in household work and paid work	4
1.2 Gender and fairness in household work	8
1.3 Issues faced by immigrant families from non-English speaking background concerning household work and paid work	12
1.4 Justification for the study of household work, paid work and childcare of immigrant families from non-English speaking backgrounds: country Nepal	14
1.5 Objectives of this study	16
1.6 Research hypothesis	16
CHAPTER TWO : Research Design	18-25
2. Research design	18
2.1 Interviews with 28 respondents: 14 husbands and 14 wives	19
2.2 Data type	19
2.3 Selection of informants	19
2.4 Research parameters and variables	21
2.4.1 Personal details	22
2.4.2 Paid work	22
2.4.3 Household work	22
2.5 Childcare	23
2.6 Support from others	24
2.7 Issues on current household work	24
2.8 Interaction, communication and decision making	24
CHAPTER THREE : Literature Review	26-42
3. Literature review: the relationship between paid and unpaid work in couple families	26
3. 1 Relationships between household work, paid work and childcare of couple families: what other researchers have found	26
3. 2 Household, paid work and childcare – Immigrant families from non-English speaking backgrounds	33
3.3 Immigrants from Nepal	40
CHAPTER FOUR : Research Findings	43-77
4. Research findings	43
Introduction	43
4.1 Profile of respondents	44
4.1.1 Composition of the households in the study	44

<i>Age groups</i>	44
<i>Place of birth of child</i>	44
<i>Age of child</i>	44
<i>Family type: current</i>	45
<i>Family type: before</i>	45
4.1.2 Employment: Previous and current	47
4.1.2.1 Previous employment	47
4.1.2.2 Current employment	48
<i>Travel to work</i>	50
<i>Income</i>	52
<i>Childcare</i>	53
<i>Home work help to children</i>	53
<i>Telephone calls from work to children at home</i>	54
<i>Support from others</i>	54
4.1.3 Previous educational qualification	55
4.1.4 Further education and training undertaken in Australia	56
4.2 Household work of husbands and wives before and after migrating to Australia	59
4.2.1 Household work prior to coming to Australia	59
4.2.2 Current household work done by both husbands and wives	61
4.3 Change of household work	64
4.4 Satisfaction with current household work	65
4.5 Issues in juggling household work and paid work	66
4.6 Change of lifestyle after migrating to Australia	67
4.7 Attitudes on household work and paid work	71
4.8 Importance of employment for partners	73
4.9 Changes of interaction, communication and decision-making of husbands and wives after migrating to Australia	73
CHAPTER FIVE : Analysis and discussion: shift of household work and paid work of husbands and wives after migration	78-89
Introduction	78
5.1 Husbands' increased participation in household work	79
5.2 Gender bias in education	80
5.3 Wives' entry into paid employment	81
5.4 Increased household work for husbands and wives	83
5.5 Women perform more household work than men	83
5.6 Changes of lifestyle of husbands and wives after migration	84
5.7 Attitude, interaction, communication and decision-making	86
5.8 Issues raised in juggling household work, paid work and childcare responsibilities after migration	87
Conclusion	88
BIBLIOGRAPHY	90-96

Appendix: Interview Questionnaire

Abstract

The patterns of paid and unpaid work adopted by migrant families with dependent children are more or less similar to that of the prevailing working patterns of men and women of Australian born couples. A case study with 14 couple families, 14 husbands and 14 wives who migrated from Nepal under the “skill” or “professional” category and the literature review on paid and unpaid work of couple families with dependent children show that in both Nepalese-born and Australian families in general the trend of change of working pattern in paid and unpaid work is similar. With the increased participation of married women in the paid labour force, men have increased their participation in household work. There is increased household work for both husbands and wives, but women tend to do more household “inside” and childcare work than men. In the mean time, men tend to do more work in the “masculine” sphere of “outside” work in house maintenance, repair and car care.

The major factor that differentiates the working pattern of migrant families from Australian born families is the experience of migration and the category under which they migrated. The change of working practices of paid and unpaid work by migrant families is affected by the change of their family type from a three generational extended family to a two generational family and their education and previous work experience that they brought along with them. These professional migrants migrated as a “family unit”, that is, migrated as spouses and dependent children and they made their own decision to migrate, unlike other categories of migrants who migrated from political or economic pressure.

One of the important experiences of migrant families is that there are new opportunities, new lifestyle, new intimacy and companionship and new sharing of work between husbands and wives after migration. At the same time, there are losses of extended family relatives, close friends and cultural events which affect their day to day lives. There are Australian-based friends who provide support in the initial period of migration but these families do not provide regular assistance or support which family relatives provided in Nepal.

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LIST OF TABLES

	Page no.
Table 1.1: Labour Force Status of “Couple” Families with Dependent Children: 1991 Census	11
Table 4.1: Previous Employment	48
Table 4.2: Current Employment	49
Table 4.3: Previous educational qualification	56
Table 4.4: Further education and training carried out by husbands and wives	58
Table 4.5: The types of household work currently undertaken by husbands and wives	62
Table 4.6: The types of household work occasionally carried out by husbands and wives	63
Table 4.7: The types of household work never done by husbands and wives currently	63
Table 4.8: Lifestyle changes: positive aspects	68
Table 4.9: Lifestyle changes: negative aspects	69
Table 4.10: Importance of employment	73
Table 4.11: Positive changes experienced by husbands and wives	74
Table 4.12: Negative changes experienced by husbands and wives	75
LIST OF FLOW CHARTS	
Flow Chart 3.1: Findings from the Literature	42
Flow Chart 4.1: Findings from this Study	77

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

This study is concerned with the patterns of change of household work and paid work in couple families who migrated to Australia from Nepal¹. This study is also about the impact of migration on gender participation in household work, paid work and the care of children. This is specifically a study about one small group of “two parent” families who migrated under the “skill” or “professional” migration program². When the Australian Government introduced the “skill” or “professional” migration category during the 1980s and 1990s, a few Nepalese families of professional backgrounds migrated to Australia under that scheme.

In general, since the 1970s numerous studies have been conducted regarding household work and paid work of employed men and women in Australia, United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America. As such, a great deal has been written and said about women’s ‘double day’ or ‘second shift’ or ‘double take’ or ‘double burden’, the amount women carry out in their household work before and after the hours of paid work. Also, a great deal has been written about changes in the household work that men and women do. Furthermore, the importance of not only sharing but also gender equality in the carrying out of household work has also been discussed with regard to Australian families. (Baxter, Gibson, Lynch-Blosse, 1990;

Bittman, 1991; McDonald, 1991; Baxter, 1993; Cass, 1995; Bryson and Bittman, 1994; Baxter and Bittman, 1995; Russell, 1996; Baxter, 1998). Baxter (1991) studied the relationships between social class and the domestic division of labour in Australian families.

¹ Nepal is a small country in the South Asia region with an area of 147,181 sq.km bordering India in the West and Tibet region of the People’s Republic of China in the North.

² Professional/skill migration category – This component of the migration program is designed to contribute to Australia’s economic growth. This comes under the independent category, and these migrants’ education; skills and ready employability are intended to contribute to the Australian economy.

The shifts in attitudes and values in household work and paid work studied by various social scientists tend to reflect the views and attitudes of men and women in general. However, owing to the diversity of Australian families in terms of composition, culture, ethnicity, race, language and other social characteristics the patterns of participation in household work, paid work and the care of dependent children by men and women vary significantly (Storer, 1985; de Lepervanche, 1992; Collins, 1992; McDonald, 1994; Hartley, 1995).

Storer (1985) in his edited collection of family studies argued that “the family is not always, or even typically a unit in which the wife stays at home as mother, the husband goes to work as provider and the children can depend upon both parents performing those tasks adequately in an idyllic suburban home, but we had to identify the vast range of ethnic and class differences which give ‘the family’ such different meanings for whole groups and for the individuals within them”(p. ix). Storer, referring to Edgar stated that “a gap clearly existed in Australian research on the family characteristics and values of the non-English speaking groups that make up Australian society” (Storer: 1985; p.ix).

Australia has a more diverse immigrant population than most western societies (Collins, 1992, p.26). Many individual families and communities have distinct experiences which vary according to their ethnicity, age, gender, occupational or economic status, length of stay in Australia, location, English language proficiency and migration status (McDonald: 1991; Collins: 1992). Australia’s ethnically diverse post war migrants are not homogenous (Collins:1992, p.2). Similarly Australia’s families from non-English speaking backgrounds are not homogenous (Bittman: 1991; McDonald & Hartley: 1994; Alcorso: 1991; Collins: 1992; Cass: 1994). The 1996 census identified families from more than 150 different birthplaces. Therefore generalised statements cannot be made about families from non-English speaking backgrounds as a whole. To do this is to construct a homogeneity which obscures difference.

Hartley (1995:p.1) in her work on family values and change in Australia highlighted that

Australia has a unique history, an important element of which is an indigenous population, a British colonial past and recent immigration of people from many different countries and culture. “The complex set of values, attitudes, behaviors and life experiences which people bring with them (their cultural background); the circumstances of migration; the impact of migration itself, which involves leaving behind an environment that is familiar and usually integral to how people define themselves; and Australian social and economic conditions on and following arrival” (Hartley, 1995 p. 10) are important factors which determine new roles in Australia.

To understand the household work and paid work patterns of immigrant families, Hartley (1995) suggested that several factors need to be taken into consideration: the history of immigration, country of origin, circumstances in which migrants arrive and impact of government policies.

The literature on family issues collected by the National Council for the International Year of the Family (NCIYF) in 1994 reveals that many migrant families find difficulties in balancing household work and paid work (NCIYF: 1994). Alcorso in her study of non-English speaking background immigrant women in the workforce reveals that “the costs of establishing a home, family and life in a new country are high; two low or medium incomes are usually required to support a basic standard of living in the host countries” (Alcorso: 1991, p.20). Further, Alcorso (1991) found that recently arrived migrant families from non-English speaking backgrounds have little direct support from other relatives.

Moreover, very few studies have been done regarding household work, paid work and child care in non-English speaking background families (Cass, 1987; Alcorso, 1991; Bittman, 1991). There are few studies which highlight the nature of change of non-English speaking background families, specifically men’s attitudes and actions regarding their household work, paid work and child care after migration. These are the families we need to learn more about if we are to understand the full extent of male and female participation in both paid work and household work and the changes which may have occurred.

1.1 Shifts of participation in household work and paid work

Over time and across various cultures there have been shifts in attitudes and values concerning household work, paid work and the care of children by men and women in couple families with dependent child(dren) (Storer:1985; Pleck:1985; Bittman:1991; McDonald:1991; Cass:1992; Baxter:1993; Bittman and Pixley: 1998). Baxter's (1993) study of patterns of household work in Australian families reveals that wives undertake more domestic work than their spouse. However, many recent studies show that this trend has been changing in some societies. In the United States there have been changes in household patterns and organisation. As such, women who are in full-time employment are likely to do less domestic work than women who are full-time mothers (Pleck,1985). Moreover, according to the analysis of Pleck, the ratio of working women's time in household work compared with the time spent by their husbands has been decreasing, whereas their spouses' time in household work has been increasing (Pleck,1985). This change is due to the greater range of opportunities available to women in education and employment.

In Canada, a study carried out by Lam and Haddad (1992) interviewing 99 married men in Toronto, found that household work was normally performed jointly by husband and wife. However many men performed fewer hours of household work than their spouses and men's domestic work was generally concentrated in traditionally male dominated areas of work. The study also found that the numbers of hours their spouses spent in paid work determined significantly the men's contribution to family work. This shows that there is a relationship between women's involvement in paid employment and their partners' involvement in household work. This finding is different from Bittman's study (1991) of Australian families.

Dube (1980) studied the status of women in South East Asian countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand and found that women with higher levels of education and training choose to enter the labour force and earn income independently

(Dube:1980). As in Australia and other developed countries, it is increasingly likely that as more women participate in paid work the amount of time which they spend on domestic work will decrease. This may not be the general pattern, however. Dube (1980) states that women's participation in the labour force does not in every country or social class help them to reduce their time in household work, rather it is likely to add an extra burden to their current work load. This was found particularly among Thai women. Further, "when the wife becomes actively involved in employment, the husband is unlikely to take part in a greater degree of responsibility toward family welfare and is even likely to develop a sense of relaxation in his own work efforts"(Dube:1980, p.27). Nevertheless, there is a need for studies to be done to explore whether these findings are replicable with regard to work loads among various family groups at different socio-economic levels. In this regard, UNESCO during the *United Nations decade for women: equality, development and peace (1976-1978)*, called for more in-depth empirical research on the division of labour between husband and wife and their relationship in the family. Dube (1980) in her studies on women in South East Asia emphasised a need for more research on the division of labour and for more accurate measurement of labour input by husband and wife at various socio-economic levels.

Regarding work patterns of Australian families, Bittman (1991) found that there was a strong association between paid and household work for women. However, there was almost no association between paid work and household work for men. Bittman's study *Juggling Time: How Australian Families Use Time* (1991) found that if a woman has paid work she still is expected to do more household work than is her male partner. Further, Bittman (1991) states that: "no matter how many hours of paid work a wife does, her husband's contribution remains relatively constant" (p.7). The survey clearly showed that, even if women are in paid work, they still do more unpaid work than do men. Many studies conducted in Australia and in other countries confirm this statement (Bittman: 1991; MacDonald: 1991; Baxter:1993; Cass 1994; Bryson and Bittman: 1994; Baxter and Bittman: 1995; Russell, 1996; Bittman and Pixley: 1998). According to Bittman, (1991) husbands do around 18 and a half hours per week of household work no matter how many hours wives are in paid work. Australian men appear to be different from Canadian men in this regard (Lam and Haddad, 1992).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 1994 survey *Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities* confirmed the findings of Bittman. The study found that “in 1992, employed mothers of 0 to 14 year-old children spent an average of 43 hours a week on household activities while other employed women spent half of that amount (21 hours). Generally, the same pattern applied for employed fathers of children aged 14 and under, although the average time spent in household work was less than that for women. Full-time employed fathers of children aged 14 and under averaged 18 hours a week on household activities, which was more than the 13 hours spent by other full-time employed men”(ABS: *Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities*, 1994, pp.8-9). In other words, while the household work time of employed women with children under fifteen was twice as great as that of other employed women, the household work load of their male counterparts was only 40 per cent greater than that of other employed men. Further, employed mothers had a domestic work load which was 2.4 times greater than that of employed fathers.

The 1994 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) study on *Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities* found that “the presence of very young children has less effect on the household work time of employed fathers than on that of employed mothers” (ABS: 1994, p 10). The study also found that “employed partnered mothers of children aged one and under averaged 58 hours a week engaged in household work, almost three times the amount of time spent by partnered fathers with children of the same age (21hrs)” (p. 1). The Australian Bureau of Statistics study further notes that fathers of young children are likely to spend considerably more time in paid work than mothers of young children. “As the age of children increased, the hours spent on household work decreased, from 44 hours among employed mothers of 2 to 4 year-olds, to 32 hours among employed mothers of children aged 15 and over” (ABS, 1994, p.10). The study concludes that the presence of very young children reduces the hours of paid work of employed mothers but not of employed fathers.

In pre-industrial societies, as in agricultural communities of today, the family is an

economic unit in which all do their share of work (Bittman and Pixley, 1998). Bittman and Pixley (1998) referring to Young and Wilmott's study (1973) stated that " the pre-industrial family was the basic unit of production. Most individuals depended for their existence upon membership in a household which was broadly self sustaining. Most of what they ate was produced by themselves for this purpose and the same applied to clothes, shelter and fuel "(Bittman & Pixley: 1998, pp.116-117). Studies undertaken by Collins et al. in 1975 referring to household work in pre-capitalist societies also highlighted that the family was the site of production and consumption where both men and women contributed to production for the welfare/good of their family. Further, according to Collins et al, in pre-capitalist societies there was no clear cut division of labour. As such, production and consumption took place at home, men and women worked together, and children helped in the family work or business (Collins et al., 1975). Collins et al. (1995), further found that most modern sociological theory assumes that urbanization and industrialization necessitated the separation of home and work. In industrial capitalist society, there was a radical separation between production and consumption. Family is considered as a unit of consumption. Paid work is carried out away from the household in the factory or office.

In late capitalist society, there was a dramatic change in the concept of home and work in the family, and in the society, at large. Over the last two decades, there has been an increasing recognition that women's work is not only at home, and a greater number of women have been entering the labour force. At the same time there has been a growing concentration on the recognition of women's unpaid household work (Bittman, 1991; Baxter, 1991; Goodnow and Bowes, 1994).

Previous studies of household work found that the types of domestic tasks undertaken by husbands and wives have taken place on gender lines: for example women are likely to engage more often in work associated with the care of young children - bathing, feeding, getting up to the child at night. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to perform general household maintenance, repairing the car and mowing the lawn (Russell, 1996).

In his study on the *Changing meaning of family household work*, Russell (1996) argued that, "married women's large-scale entry into paid employment has been identified as the

most important of several major social changes affecting Australian society in recent times (Russell referring to Mackay, 1993: p. 2). Yet despite its profound impact on family life, little appears to have changed with respect to the domestic division of labour by gender” (Russell referring to Baxter, 1988; Baxter, Gibson and Lynch-Blosse, 1990; Glezer, 1991; Bittman, 1992, 1995; Baxter and Bittman, 1995).

Russell (1996) further noted that over the past 20 years after surveying family studies research, the most important change to have occurred is not that of men increasing their participation; but of women reducing the time spent on some tasks. Women are also spending more time doing certain activities traditionally done by men. The only area in which men increased their activity over the period surveyed is that of childcare (Russell referring Bittman, 1995: p. 2), which women have also done. The situation applying in many family households, then, is of women continuing to do the bulk of unpaid work, irrespective of the amount of time they or a male partner spend in paid employment.

1.2 Gender and fairness in household work

Several explanations have been put forward for these continuing gender inequities. Goode (1982), for example, argued that women’s greater involvement in domestic work is because of men’s resistance to an increase in their household participation; whereas Bryson (1983) interpreted this as women’s desire to retain some degree of autonomy. Finch (1980) suggested that the gender division of labour is maintained because it allows readily available and conventionally acceptable male and female identities (Russell referring Goodnow,1989: p.2).

While there has been a reduction in the hours of household work done by women over the past decades, there has also been an increase in the participation of married women in paid employment. There are also social, economic and political changes promoting greater equity.

Bryson and Bittman (1994) examining the unpaid work that women and men do at home

revealed that “women’s work tends to be the urgent tasks which cannot be postponed. Many jobs are done at the same time, in a non-sequential, stop-start manner. There seems to be a disinclination to plan and organize. Men’s work in contrast, is largely confined to the yard and home maintenance, and seems to be done whenever he feels like it”(Bryson and Bittman, 1994, pp.36-37).

While a strict sexual division of labour, paid employment for men and unpaid housework for women, still seems to remain the ideal, it is no longer the reality (Reiger, 1991). On the contrary, Baxter argued that “It seems that few men realise the significance of the fundamental changes occurring in the 1990s, as many men still tends to be unconsciously selfish, emotional and unreasonable about working female partners and helping in the home” (Baxter, 1993: p. 74).

To quote, Russell citing Bittman (1991) “There came the realisation that women bear the double load of paid work and family responsibilities. There was little recognition of this by the family itself, in the workplace or in the community. Not until the end of the 1980s did support for working women emerge onto the political agenda” (Russell, 1996; p. 20). In this respect, in the 1980s, Australian governments began to address gender equity and equality of opportunity through social policy: childcare, parental leave, after-school care, single-parent pensions and family support (Bryson & Bittman, 1994).

Despite these social and policy changes, the report on *Women in New South Wales* (1995), published jointly by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the New South Wales Ministry for the Status and Advancement of Women indicates that “despite the increasing involvement of women in the paid labour force, there has not been a commensurate sharing of unpaid household and caring duties between women and men. The on-going development and implementation of flexible work practices is important for assisting parents to accommodate work and family responsibilities in a balanced way” (1995:p.85).

Studies conducted in Australia and overseas suggest that increasing numbers of women

in couple families with children under 14 years are entering the labour force. The study carried out by the Australian Bureau of Immigration and Population Research *Immigrant Families: A Statistical Profile* found that in 50 per cent of all couple families with dependent children both parents were employed in 1991. The ABS report shows that there were 659,605 Australian born couple families with dependent children (51.1 per cent of all couple families with dependent children), where both the man and woman were in employment. Further the Table below shows that in 55.2 % and 55.1% of couple families born in India and Sri Lanka, both husband and wife with dependent children were employed. The labour force participation of couple families born in Nepal is not shown in the Table 1.1. However, to have a South Asian comparison the figures for India and Sri Lanka are highlighted. More over, the labour force participation of Nepalese families with “skill” or “professional” backgrounds can be assumed more or less similar to that of the labour force participation of professional couple families from the South Asian region countries like India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. It is evident that the proportion of families with dependent children from the South Asian region with both partners in employment is slightly higher than for Australian-born families.

**Table 1.1: Labour Force Status of “Couple” Families with Dependent Children :
1991 Census**

Birthplace	Both parent employed ³		Total couple families with dependent children
	No.	%	
Australia	659,605	51.1	1,290,046
United Kingdom	87,513	53.5	163,651
Ireland	4,306	54.4	7,913
Greece	14,076	46.8	30,047
Italy	22,157	44.8	49,440
Lebanon	3,604	19.8	18,195
Cambodia	1,082	30.6	3,540
Indonesia	2,135	41.7	5,116
Laos	737	40.2	1,833
Malaysia	6,182	52.4	11,800
Philippines	5,759	58.6	9,825
Singapore	1,517	46.7	3,247
Vietnam	7,364	35.9	20,536
China (excl Taiwan)	5,066	43.2	11,729
Hong Kong	3,867	46.6	8,297
Japan	445	20.0	2,228
Korea	1,426	40.6	3,508
Taiwan	317	16.5	1,917
India	6,456	55.2	11,700
Sri Lanka	3,934	55.1	7,140
Other South Asia	707	34.3	2,064
USA	3,066	50.1	6,122
South Africa	4,862	60.0	8,102
Whole country	950,556	50.0	1,900,984

Source: Bureau of Immigration and Population Research *Immigrant Families: A Statistical Profile*, Statistical Report No.12.

³ Definition of employed: according to ABS employed are those person aged 15 and over who worked for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind, in a job or business or on a farm .(ABS 1997, The Labour Force Australia, June 1997 cat. no. 6203.0)

Despite the increasing participation of both parents in the labour force, studies show that mothers are still considerably more likely than fathers not to be in the labour force (ABS: *Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities*, 1994). Further, the Australian Bureau of Statistics study shows that 62.2 per cent of mothers who have children aged 14 and under were in the labour force, compared with 95 per cent of fathers with children in the same age group who were in the labour force. This shows that women with dependent children do not enter the labour force at the same rate as men with dependent children.

1.3 Issues faced by immigrant families from non-English speaking background concerning household work and paid work

The National Council for the International Year of the Family (NCIYF, 1994), which undertook consultations with community groups throughout urban and rural Australia on a range of family matters including issues for non-English speaking background families, found that “the major impacts of migration and resettlement on families of non-English speaking backgrounds concern problems with English language acquisition, reduced employment status, lack of recognition of overseas qualifications and experience, isolation and social dislocation”(NCIYF, 1994, p.147). All of these background issues affect directly or indirectly the experience of balancing household work and paid work for husbands and wives in immigrant families.

There are a number of studies relating to settlement issues in Australia and overseas countries which have discussed in a comparative perspective the economic status and adjustment of Asian and non- Asian immigrants groups (Khoo et al.: 1993; Collins:1992; Morrissey: 1991; Alcorso: 1991; ABS: 1994; Buijs: 1993). These studies show that how immigrants fare in economic terms in their new country of residence is a very important indicator of their overall settlement and adjustment to their new life. Success in the labour market is of primary importance to all immigrants who migrate for economic reasons- to seek better employment, or business opportunities and to provide a better standard of living for their families. These studies also show that not all immigrants enter

the work force after arrival. Immigrants arriving under the “skill migration” program usually enter the work force immediately, but those arriving in the family migration program to rejoin family members or those arriving in the “refugee” category may not do so. As noted previously, the Bureau of Immigration and Population Research (BIPR) study on characteristics of immigrant families shows that the labour force participation rates of men and women born in India and Sri Lanka are higher than for Australian born men and women (see also Table 1.1). The study also indicates that while Asian born immigrants may be classified as coming from non-English speaking background countries, it is important to note that English is widely spoken, taught and is also the medium of education in many schools in many Asian countries, particularly those which had been under British colonial rule (BIPR, 1994).

Khoo et.al, studying Asian immigrant settlement and adjustment in Australia in 1993, stated that an important feature of the Asian immigrant population is the diversity in backgrounds and motives for migration, which are reflected in the migration category eg. “skilled” and “business” migration, or “family reunion” or refugee status.

Considering the major migration issues of non-English speaking background families in Australia, in particular how non-English speaking background families with dependent children balance household work and paid work, has been a subject of study for social scientists. The study carried out by Bittman (1991) with regard to household patterns of non-English speaking background families revealed that women from a non-English speaking background spend more time in unpaid household work compared with Australian-born women. Further, the study found that non-English speaking background women spend less time in paid work and leisure, and spend more of their time (more than 40 per cent) in childcare than their Australian born counterparts. The study also found that non-English speaking background women spend more time in food preparation than their Australian born counterparts. Alcorso (1991) found that families from non-English speaking background, in many cases, are most likely to be hindered by lack of adequate support from other members of the family. Furthermore, according to Alcorso (1991) “the trauma of immigrating to a new society was accompanied by the difficulties of combining paid work with domestic responsibilities”(Alcorso (1991:23). Collins (1992) referring

to a survey of 84 immigrant families in Australia in the 1970s found that the “loss of extended family networks by many non-English speaking background families in Australia led to loneliness and lack of support”(p.10).

Further, Collins comments on the work of Krupinski (1977) who found that “many immigrant families in Australia complained of social isolation and a lack of emotional support because of the absence of the extended family” (p.10). The extended family normally defined the parameters of socially acceptable behaviour and imposed sanctions if these were over-stepped. Without it, Krupinski argued, a major social control mechanism was lost in immigrant families in Australia at the time when the “culture clash” between the new and old societies was also a source of tension between family members. (pp.10-11).

Taylor studying issues of child rearing and poverty among Asian migrants reveals that, “coming to Australia had a range of advantages and disadvantages for the Asian families. While some mothers emphasized greater employment and educational opportunities in Australia, many also spoke of less support from relatives and of their loneliness, especially around caring for their young babies” (Taylor, 1993: p.193).

1.4 Justification for the study of household work, paid work and child care of immigrant families from a non-English speaking background country, Nepal.

There is a general notion that the paid work of husband and wife or partner often leads to the improvement of the living standard of the family in general. When both parents are employed, the family is likely to be better off financially. However, studies have indicated that the pressure on husband and wife and women in particular with regard to paid work, household work and childcare work needs to be studied. The ABS study on “*How Australians Use their Time*” indicated that “the balance between paid work, unpaid work and leisure are important for a person’s wellbeing and economic welfare” (ABS, 1997, preface, v). The literature reveals that in many immigrant families men and women are finding difficulties in balancing household work and paid work and at the same time taking care of dependent children in a new country where there is a no direct support

from family relatives and the cost of living is high (Alcorso: 1991). At the same time, studies have indicated that families from non-English speaking backgrounds are hindered from smooth adjustment to Australian society due to many resettlement factors such as ethnicity, age, gender, occupation, economic status, length of stay, English language proficiency and migration status (McDonald, 1991; Collins 1992, Taylor, 1993). Therefore pressure on immigrant couple families might be expected to be more intense than on those couple families who are Australian - born. So far very few studies have investigated this.

This study is an attempt to fill the information gap by collecting qualitative data from an interview study on the working patterns of husband and wife in household work, paid work and child care in couple families from a non-English speaking background. Specifically, the study focuses on married couple families with dependent children who migrated from Nepal. The families selected for this study are couples families from the South Asian region of Nepal, who immigrated to Australia under the “skills” or “professional migration” category during 1988 to 1999. The families selected are in paid employment, full or part time, with at least one dependent child.

The Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research (BIMPR), *Settlers arrivals by region, birthplace and eligibility category, July-December 1995* stated that 44.7 % of immigrants who came to Australia from Southern Asian countries are in the “skilled migrant” category. However, data on the proportion of professional migrants who migrated from Nepal is not known because the numbers are small.

1.5 Objectives of this study

The major objective of this study is to identify changes in gender relationships with respect to household work, paid work and childcare activities and how men and women in couple families change their multiple roles in their daily lives after migration, with particular emphasis on couple families from Nepal.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- identify the impact of migration on the paid and domestic work of husbands and wives;
- identify any relationships between household work and paid work of husbands and wives;
- identify changes in education and further training of husbands and wives after migration;
- identify changes of life style of husbands and wives after migration;
- identify changes of attitude, interaction, communication and decision making between husbands and wives after migration; and
- identify issues raised by husbands and wives after migration in undertaking household work, looking after children and paid work.

1.6 Research hypothesis

The following hypotheses are used to explore working patterns among couple families from non-English speaking background who migrated from Nepal. They are:

- the nature of current household work carried out by husbands and wives after migration is likely to differ from the previous household work carried out in their country of origin prior to migration;
- after migration, husbands are likely to do more household work;
- for economic reasons both husbands and wives seek to participate in the labour force;
- after migration wives are more likely to enter into paid employment than in Nepal;

- after migration, the amount of household work increases for both husbands and wives because of lack of support of their relatives and hired maids which they used to enjoy in Nepal;
- women perform more household work than men;
- there is a significant change in attitude, interaction, communication and decision making between husbands and wives after migration; and
- after migration couple families face many issues such as finding time to socialize with friends, and create leisure time for themselves.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Research Design

This research is an exploratory study of paid and unpaid work arrangements in couple families who have migrated to Australia from Nepal. The research method used for this study involved two types of investigation: primary and secondary. The secondary data collection covered intensive library and Internet search for national and international literature on paid and unpaid work in the family between husbands and wives. The literature is divided into two parts: the first part is the general literature search focused on Australian “two parent families” and their pattern of labour contribution to paid and unpaid work. This is supplemented by a literature review from other English speaking countries like US, Canada and UK. The second part of the literature search is on the pattern of paid and unpaid work among non-English speaking background families in Australia, and in particular the impact of migration on the household and paid work of recent migrants in two parent families (see Chapter Three).

The primary research method used for this study is a case study. The information on the relationship between household and paid work and the changes in the household work patterns of husbands and wives after coming to Australia was collected primarily through interviews with 28 respondents: 14 couples who migrated to Australia from Nepal in the years between 1988 to 1999. The selection technique used was a “snowball” technique where interviewees helped to identify other informants through chain networks. A tape recorder was used where ever possible to record the interview. The Nepali language was used during the discussions. Telephone follow-up and in some cases second visits were initiated to verify some unclear responses. Information was collected through face to face interview guided by the structured questionnaire (see Appendix 1).

2.1 Interviews with 28 respondents: 14 husbands and 14 wives

Information was collected from 28 respondents: 14 husbands and 14 wives each within a couple family. Interviews were undertaken with both the husband and wife separately. The reason for interviewing husbands and wives separately is that men and women are likely to have different perceptions and attitudes about household work and the amount which they undertake; whether they share domestic tasks; and the reasons for any changes in these patterns after migration. Partners are likely to have different views about what work they do, how much and how often they do it.

2.2 Data Type

The data type used in this study are primary qualitative data gathered through case studies. The analysis of data is descriptive. This is appropriate given the small size of the sample and the fact that a qualitative survey was the best method for this initial exploration of sensitive issues in family life and the partners' relationships.

2.3 Selection of informants

It is a premise of social research methodology that the extent of validity of information depends upon the characteristics of informants from whom data are collected. Similarly, theories of sociological research method indicate that if the characteristics of informants are more homogenous, more valid research findings can be expected with regard to those informants. Also, if the characteristics of informants are more homogenous and uniform a large sample size is not required to validate the research findings (de Vaus, 1995).

Previous social research on Australian families indicates that Australian post war migrants are not homogenous (Collin, 1992, p.2). In addition, migrants from non-English backgrounds are not homogenous (Alcorso, 1991). Similarly, migrants from Nepal are not homogenous either. The socio-economic characteristics of Nepalese migrants who migrated under the immigration "skill" category are different from those who migrated as refugees eg Gorkha Nepalese or those who migrated under family reunion etc. Hence, owing to the heterogenous characteristics of families from Nepal, the following criteria were developed to select uniform informants as far as possible.

Selection criteria:

- **‘Couple’ families who migrated from Nepal;**
Nepal is selected for this study because unlike other South Asian countries, for example India and Sri Lanka, migration from Nepal is very recent and there is very little information on the migration experiences of Nepalese families, particularly families from professional backgrounds.
- **Interview with both husband and wife;**
As mentioned above, the reason for interviewing both the husband and the wife is to represent both husband’s and wife’s views about their experiences of household work and paid work before and after migration. Collins (1992, p.3) stated that “Gender is also an important dynamic in immigrant families. Men and women have different expectations, different experiences and opportunities in contemporary Australian society”.
- **Family with at least one dependent child;**
Families with at least one dependent child were selected in order to study patterns of childcare responsibilities between husbands and wives.
- **Both partners currently employed part-time, full-time or casual;**
Only families where both partners are currently employed either full-time, part-time or casual were selected in this study, in order to find out their patterns of domestic work, paid work and child care in their day to day lives after migration.
- **Migrated under skill or professional category;**
Studies have indicated that the migration experience of “professional” or “skill” migrants is different from those who migrated under other categories, such as those who migrated under political pressures, or deep displacement due to war and refugee status (Inglis, 1999).

- **Arrived in Australia within the time period of 11 years i.e. migrated between 1988 – 1999.**

As mentioned above, length of stay in the host country is an important factor in determining migrants' adjustment patterns in a new country. Collins (1992, p.4) stated that studies "need to pay attention to differences in the migrant's experiences in Australia due to religious, cultural, language and time of arrival factors".

The criteria indicate that this research is focussed on only one particular category of Nepalese migrants. Hence, the findings are not necessarily applicable to other categories of migrants.

2.4 Research parameters and variables

The parameters and variables selected for this study include personal details; employment status before and after migration; type of household work undertaken before and after migration; child care responsibilities; and change in interaction, communication and decision making between husband and wife; and change in attitudes to men and women's involvement in employment, childcare and household work. These parameters were taken into consideration to determine changes in patterns of paid and unpaid work between husband and wife after migration. Several studies have indicated that socio-economic background, educational qualifications, family type, occupation type, age and number of dependent children are important factors which affect men's and women's involvement in paid and unpaid work (Storer, 1985; de Lepervanche, 1992; Collins, J., 1992; McDonald, 1994; Hartley, 1995; Alcorso, 1991). In the context of Nepali families when resident in Nepal, being patrilineal and also patriarchal families, these factors also play a significant role in determining the shift of paid and unpaid work. Similarly, large extended family types, relatives living together and the availability of cheap hired labour are also significant factors affecting whether men and even women were doing less household work before migration, and what types of household work if any, they were undertaking. Therefore the cultural characteristics of the family, the sex role orientation, different attitudes towards education for boys and girls, the extended

family system and the availability of cheap labour (house maid) influenced the participation of husbands and wives in domestic and paid work, before migration.

The following research parameters and variables were selected:

2.4.1. Personal details

Personal details – such as personal and social background of informants, including sex, recency of arrival in Australia ie year of arrival, country of birth, age, number of children, birth-place of children and their sex, extended family members living together in the same household, formal educational qualification, place where qualification gained educational courses currently undertaken, further education and training after migration (see Questionnaire Appendix 1).

2.4.2 Paid work

The employment status of husbands and wives before migration and after migration plays an important role in determining the gender distribution of household work and paid work. The characteristics of paid work included in the study were: occupation type, type of industry, mode of employment, first job in Australia, duration in paid job, salary range, travel to work, mode of transport to work, and having a driving licence. Similar variables, like employment status, type of occupation, type of industry and mode of employment were used with regard to occupational circumstances in Nepal and /or in other countries prior to migration to Australia.

2.4.3 Household work

Section C in the questionnaire sought information on household work carried out by the husband and wife which includes: type of household work undertaken prior to migrating to Australia and the shift in household work after settlement in Australia (see Appendix 1 interview questionnaire). Both husband and wife were asked if they regularly carried out household work; occasionally carried household work and any types of household work which they had never done before migration or which they never do in Australia.

The list of household work used in this study was modified from Bittman's (1992) definition of household work as follows:

Preparing food: breakfast, lunch, and dinner

Cleaning and vacuuming includes: rooms, bathrooms, toilets, kitchen, patio, verandah and windows and screens.

Tidying bedrooms: own room, children's rooms

Washing and drying include: dishes, clothes and car

Ironing clothes

Gardening includes: watering plants, raking, lawn mowing etc

Home maintenance/improvement includes painting, repairing

Household shopping.

Bittman (1992), in his study "*Juggling Time: How Australian Families Use Time*" defined household work as " a collective name for: food or drink preparation and meal, clean up; laundry, ironing and clothes care, tidying, dusting, vacuuming and other aspects of maintaining the order and cleanness of the interior of the house" (p.65). This is however a narrow definition of household work and household work is much broader than this. In particular, the most time-consuming and emotionally and physically absorbing aspects of household work is childcare and other forms of caring work. The questionnaire explored this issue.

2.5 Child care:

Section four in the questionnaire collected information on the child care responsibilities of husbands and wives, to find out whether there are gender differences in child care responsibilities before and after migration. The variables selected were: Number of children in school, pre-school, after school care, child care, level of grade in school, assistance by parents in children's school homework, telephone calls from work by husbands and wives to their children after school, care of children when sick and who is most likely to take care when children are sick. In addition, the questionnaire looked at issues of child - minding, eg. bathing, feeding, playing.

2.6 Support from others

Previous studies on settlement issues for recent migrants in Australia and overseas countries reveal that recently arrived migrant families receive little direct support from other family members and relatives (Alcorso, 1991, NCIYF, 1994). Similarly Collins (1992) found that “the loss of extended family networks by many non-English speaking background families in Australia led to loneliness and lack of support” (p. 10). Further Collins refers to the work of Krupinski (1997) who found that “ many immigrant families in Australia complained of social isolation and lack of emotional support because of the absence of the extended family” (p. 10). This study asked both husbands and wives what support they received from others after they migrated to Australia: from relatives, friends, paid labour and from each other (husband/wife). The type of support they receive and the reasons for not receiving support if they do not, were asked of both husbands and wives.

2.7 Issues on current household work

As discussed above, the literature reveals that many migrant men and women have difficulties in balancing household and paid work and at the same time taking care of children in a new country where there is no direct support from relatives and the cost of living is high (Alcorso, 1991). Issues in balancing household and paid work as perceived by husbands and wives after migration are an important factor in the process of settlement. Both partners were asked to comment on their experiences of migration, with regard to this issue. Therefore, it is pertinent to ask whether the current household work which they are undertaking now is similar in nature or different from what they did before migration, and the reasons for the similarity or difference. Also, any issues encountered in change of household working patterns between husbands and wives such as family rift, stress and not doing one’s job well were also sought from husbands and wives.

2.8 Interaction, communication and decision making

The literature review indicates that emotional/relational factors are important in affecting the paid and unpaid work of husbands and wives. The following were explored:

- changes in interaction, communication and decision making between husbands and wives, and
- change of lifestyle. “Life style” here means family patterns and change of division of labour in domestic work, paid work and child care after migration.

The first part explained changes in the nature of the personal relationship between husband and wife. In addition, there were attitudinal question which included:

- whether husband and wife agree or disagree that both partners need to be employed,
- whether husband and wife both see paid employment as necessary for them, and
- attitudes to change of household work patterns after migration.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Literature review : the relationships between paid and unpaid work in couple families

This chapter deals with a review of the social science literature regarding research on the patterns of household and paid work, and provision of childcare among couple families in Australia. The chapter includes a review of the literature on patterns of household work, paid work and childcare responsibilities of two parent families in Australia among English speaking background families, and families from selected non-English speaking backgrounds. In particular, the literature review focusses on the impacts of migration on recently arrived migrants who migrated under the professional/skilled category.

There is very little available information or research on the pattern of household and paid work among couple families of Nepalese descent who are recent migrants. However, attempts are made in this project to cover the relevant literature from other South Asian countries, and other relevant non-English speaking background families in Australia who have similar socio-economic backgrounds.

There has been significant work done by social researchers and a vast literature is available on household, paid work and childcare responsibilities. Attempts have been made to cover the relevant literature, as far as practicable and necessary for this study.

3.1 Relationship between household work, paid work and child care of couple families: what other researchers have found

A vast literature is available which discusses for Australian families in general changes in working patterns of men and women with regard to socio-economic status or social class, gender, age, class, type of occupation and mode of employment (Baxter, 1990,1991,1993, 1998; Bittman, 1982, Bittman and Pixley 1998, McDonald, 1989, 1991, 1994; Storer 1985; Edgar, 1985; Goodnow, 1985; Bryson, 1993 and Russell, 1996). However, there are few studies which focus on migrant families from non-English speaking backgrounds, particularly with regard to settlement and adjustment

experiences, labour market experiences, children's schooling and family conflict, and other concerns after migration etc. (Alcorso, 1993; Collins, 1992; Hartley, 1987; Khoo, 1993; MacDonald, 1991 and Morrissey, 1991). There is no literature which focusses specifically on the impact of migration on household, paid work and childcare of couple families from non-English speaking backgrounds.

In the case of Australian families in general, Baxter, Gibson and Lynch-Blosse (1990), in their study titled *Double Take: The Links between Paid and Unpaid Work*, present a general picture of the domestic division of labour between men and women. Their study is based on two samples: one large national sample comprising 1195 employed respondents and a second homemaker sample consisting of 88 full-time homemakers who were wives of respondents in the larger sample. Based on this large national sample, the authors found that "women are still responsible for most domestic labour, despite their dramatic rise in workforce participation" (p.28). They further stated that "when men do participate it is usually in traditional male outdoor tasks, which take about 13 hours a week," as they estimated from their findings. "Women spend on average upwards of 28 hours a week on housework, and this jumps to over 40 hours for women who are full-time homemakers" (p.28). Baxter et.al argue that the 'double burden' is legitimated by the social construction of a division between men's and women's work. Men's work is defined in terms of physical tasks, especially outdoor work, while women's domestic work is defined in terms of so called 'natural feminine skills', such as cooking, cleaning and mothering. They further argue that the reason for the large numbers of women choosing part-time work is the attempt to fit paid employment around the needs of husband and children. Baxter et.al further stated that little detailed empirical knowledge of the precise nature of the relationship between home and paid work is available. They argue that most past research has either concentrated primarily on women's domestic labour, or their participation in the workforce. Their research was concerned with both areas, in particular in the way in which domestic responsibilities shape women's career paths.

Further, their study of the division of time between men and women found that women in paid work are far more likely than men to report spending the most time on routine

child care tasks. The figures they found were 63 per cent for women and less than 1 per cent for men of total time spent on household - based work.

Baxter et.al (1990) reviewed some of the main approaches to the study of housework. Referring to an early study by Blood and Wolfe, (1960), they stated that the first approach is that of “time constraints”, which suggests that men do little in the home primarily because their time is taken up with paid employment, sometimes referred to as the ‘breadwinner trap’. Baxter, referring to the work of Sharpe and Yeandle (1984), stated that “women in paid employment still assume the major responsibility for childcare and housework” (p.41). The second approach is the issue of the relative power of husbands and wives in the home. This approach holds that because men have power over women, they are able to delegate low status jobs to women. The assumption underlying this hypothesis is “that childcare and housework involve menial, boring, low-status tasks” (p.42). The third approach is the importance of attitudes towards gender roles, referring to Oakley, (1974a, 1974b); Yeandle, (1984); Sharpe (1984) and Harper and Richards, (1986). Baxter et.al note that “if husbands and wives hold traditional views on gender roles it is unlikely that tasks will be shared equally. Even if women are forced to move into the paid workforce for economic reasons, traditional beliefs about appropriate male and female roles may inhibit the rearrangement of domestic duties” (p.42). However, “couples with more liberal attitudes can be expected to have a more egalitarian division of household labour. Men with liberal sex-role attitudes are likely to increase their involvement in housework, while women with liberal sex-role attitudes are more likely to decrease their involvement” (p.42).

Baxter (1991) in her study of *Work and the Family: Class and the Household Division of Labour*, studied relationship between class and the domestic division of labour, drawing on a large sample of husbands and wives. Her review of the literature suggests that “men in professional occupations tend to do more work in the home than those in clerical or manual positions” (p.224). Baxter refers to Oakley’s (1974) research which studied attitudes to household work and patterns of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with particular household tasks. Baxter concludes that “ husbands’ participation in domestic labour varied according to social class, with men in middle class positions tending to be more involved in household labour than men in the working class” (p.224). Baxter

referring to Harper and Richards (1986) noted that “husbands of professional women did a larger share of domestic labour than others” (p.225). Harper and Richards further stated that “the larger share was even more marked where their wives worked full-time” (p.191). The same study found that in relation to child care tasks however, there was virtually no variation between classes.

On the issue of class location and participation in household work in the United States, Baxter et. al. referring to Beer (1983) and Coverman (1985) found that socio-economic status is less important than the amount of flexibility available in working hours (Baxter et. at. 1991, p.225). They thus argue that “the opportunity to arrange paid work time to fit the demands of domestic responsibilities may have more impact on domestic labour arrangements than social class or occupational status” (1991, p.225).

However, the Australian study suggests that there is a clear difference in sex role attitudes between working class and middle class women. “In households where women earn a substantial proportion of the family income, domestic labour is distributed more equally between the spouses”(Baxter et al., 1991, p.227). Studies are available which support the hypothesis that wives’ time in paid work is associated with husbands’ increased involvement in domestic labour (Beckman and House, 1979).

Baxter (1998) in her more recent research on “*Moving Toward Equality? Questions of Change and Equality in Household Work Patterns*” studied changes in family work patterns and explained these changes in three different ways. First she identified historical changes in the definition of housework and the historical construction of housework as a job for women. Secondly, she analysed demographic changes in the structure of the family (for example, age at marriage and number of children which may lead to changes in the amount of time women spend on housework). Thirdly, she observed changes in the day-to-day organisation of domestic responsibilities between husbands and wives. Baxter found that there is no equity in the division of labour between men and women. This gender inequity in household work will continue, she states despite women increasing their participation in paid work and men’s participation in household work as women entry into paid jobs. Baxter found that there are social forces which maintain the gender division of labour in the home.

Russell (1996) studied similar matters in *Changing Meanings – Family Household Work Involvement*. This study was based on interviews with fifty-five mature-age tertiary students and their partners. Russell concluded that to understand the domestic division of labour between husbands and wives it is necessary to take into account the meanings individuals give to their involvement in their work. Further, Russell reveals that the division of labour between partners is influenced by two cultural factors: on the one hand, ‘egalitarian values’ which support partners sharing household work and on the other hand ‘traditional ideological values’ which prescribe a gender division of labour according to the breadwinner vs homemaker norm.

Bittman and Pixley (1998) in their study *The Double Life of the Family* state that the family has a double life and argue that Australians believe in domestic equality but in different degrees. They analyse time use surveys carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1991) and show that among Sydney couples women express more commitment to egalitarian attitudes in domestic work than do men. Although men show less egalitarian attitudes than do women, they broadly accept egalitarian values. Bittman and Pixley’s findings show “only one in eight men gave any support for the ‘traditional sexual division of labour’, while the overwhelming majority (81 per cent) expressed overall support for an ‘egalitarian’ position (p.147). In response to the statement “if both husband and wife work, they should share equally in the housework and childcare”, 97 per cent of women and 89 per cent of men agreed. Further, Bittman and Pixley referring to the opinion surveys of Holmstrom (1985) reported that there is an egalitarian shift in Australia. Holmstrom’s study found in 1983 that “most Australians (80 per cent of women and 71 per cent of men), opposed the traditional view that “Australian women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country to men” (p.4). A similar opinion survey was conducted in 1981 as referred to by Holmstrom in which a statement was made that ‘woman should put her husband and children ahead of her own career’, and 67 per cent of men and 75 per cent of women agreed. A similar majority (men 78 per cent, women 68 per cent) agreed that a man should put wife and family ahead of career’. Bittman and Pixley referring to Holmstrom’s study agreed that ‘most women regard their spouse and children to be more important than their career’

(Holmstrom 1985, pp. 9-10). Putting family ahead of career may mean something different for women and for men.

On the national level, the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1992 carried out studies which explore the relationship between paid employment and family responsibilities. The studies are published in a series of reports which focus on demographics and family formation; education and employment; caring in families; family life; income and housing and work and family responsibilities. Some of the key findings that are relevant to this study are extracted from the volume *Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities* (ABS, 1994, catalogue no. 4422.0). They are:

Dealing with roles within the family, the Australian Bureau Statistics (ABS) study found that employed mothers of 0 to 14-year-old children spent an average of 43 hours a week on household activities, while other employed women spent half that amount (21 hours). Also, this study found that employed partnered mothers of children aged 1 and under averaged 58 hours a week on household work, almost three times the amount of time spent by partnered fathers with children of the same age (21 hours).

Dealing with aspects of work experience, this study found that “mothers were almost 9 times more likely than fathers to give a family reason for working part-time (34 per cent compared with 4 per cent respectively)” (p.2). Furthermore this study found that “higher proportions of mothers worked part-time (57 per cent) or on a casual basis (35 per cent) than fathers (5 per cent and 11 per cent)” (p.2).

It was also found that “29 per cent of employed parents with children aged 0 to 11 reported that they found it difficult to manage working and caring for their children, with a greater proportion of mothers reporting difficulty (37 per cent) than fathers (24 per cent)” (p.2). This study also found that “almost half (46 per cent) of mothers in professional and para-professional occupations reported difficulty in managing work and childcare responsibilities, compared with one-quarter of fathers in these occupations” (p.2). Similarly this study found that “thirty-one per cent of parents in couple families with two working parents stated difficulty managing work and child care responsibilities, compared with 22 per cent in families with one working parent” (p.3).

Another important finding relevant to this study is the issue of “workplace options”: “in 68 per cent of families with employed mothers of children aged 11 and under, mothers used a flexible work arrangement to care for children. In families with employed fathers, a quarter (24 per cent) of fathers used such an arrangement” (p.3).

In its more recent study based on 1997 data on *How Australians Use Their Time*, the Australian Bureau of Statistics concluded that there is still a clear gender division of labour among Australian families. The study noted that “fewer men prepared food than women on an average day (49 per cent and 80 per cent respectively)” (p.5). Similarly, men spent more time in home maintenance work than women. The study found that 17 per cent of men and 7 per cent of women spent time in home maintenance work. The Australian Bureau of Statistics data also show that laundry and housework are still a traditionally female role: 13 per cent of men and 52 per cent of women do all laundry activities, while 21 per cent of men and 63 per cent of women do all of the housework.

In this study the Australian Bureau of Statistics defines the activities on which people spend their time. This is divided into four main categories for statistical analysis purposes: *necessary time* describes activities which are performed for personal survival, such as sleeping, eating and personal hygiene; *contracted time* describes activities such as paid work and regular education where there are explicit contracts which control the periods of time in which the activities are performed; *committed time* describes activities to which a person has committed him/herself because of previous social or community interactions, such as setting up a household or performing voluntary work. This involves housework, child care, shopping or provision of help to others; *free time* is the amount of time left when the previous three types of time have been taken out of a person’s day (p.1). These definitions are useful to be taken into consideration in future research on time allocation to analyse data in more theoretically productive ways.

The literature review of household, paid work and child care responsibilities of couple families with a professional background shows that there is a general shift in attitudes and values (see Flow Chart 3.1). There is change in work practices, paid and unpaid work. These changes can be described as follows:

- There is a general finding that wives undertake more household work than their spouses;
- An increased proportion of married women and women with children are entering paid work;
- Women's involvement in domestic work decreases as they engage in paid work;
- Husbands involvement in domestic work increases with the increase of paid work of their wives;
- Women who are in full-time employment do less domestic work than full-time housewives;
- Women who are part-time employed are likely to do more domestic work than full-time employed women;
- Women have major responsibilities for childcare whatever their employment status, whereas men are considered major breadwinners in the household. Women with full-time employment get more help from their husband;
- Husbands' involvement in domestic work is mainly in masculine-defined areas of work; and
- There is some degree of sharing of household work between husbands and wives but there is no equity in sharing household work.

3.2 Household, paid work and child care – Immigrant families from non-English speaking background

The history of immigrant families in Australia is influenced by the immigration policies of successive Australian governments. In Australia, as in the United States, Canada and New Zealand, immigrants were wanted as settlers rather than “guest workers” as in some Western European countries where immigrant families were admitted as “guest workers” only (Collins: 1992, p.4). The history of family reunion has been one of the components of the Australian immigration experience. Before the second world war, the typical pattern of non-English speaking background families' reunion was that a few young persons would arrive from the village in Greece or Italy with dreams of a new country. They would then work hard for years to save enough money to send for their brothers and other male relatives. After time, the men sent for wives to establish the

beginnings of their family unit in Australia. The immigrant couple now in Australia had their own Australian-born children - the second generation. Finally, a wave of extended family residents followed as mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces were sponsored to complete the chain migration process (Price: 1963).

Further in the post-war period most non-English speaking background migrants continued to come to Australia on their own initiative (Collins: 1992, p.5). Only about one quarter of non-English speaking background migrants received government assistance. "Chain migration continued to be the major process of non-English speaking backgrounds migration to Australia" (Collins:1992, p.5). Today Vietnamese and other immigrant families continue arriving under the Commonwealth Government family reunion program, but that part of the Australian immigration program has been scaled back considerably in the last several years.

Family studies undertaken during the past decade confirmed that immigrant families are not homogenous (Bittman:1990; McDonald & Hartley: 1991; Alcorso:1991; Collins:1992; Cass:1993). The 1991 census identified more than 100 different birth places of family households. Each of these show cultural diversity as a result of history, regional differences, internal and external population movements. Moreover, they also differ in terms of their class location and their origins in urban or rural environments (Hartley: 1995, p.1).

In fact, within non-English speaking background families there are major differences in terms of culture, language, religion and geographical regions.

Greek and Italian families who came to Australia before the Second World War may have different family patterns and family values to the Chinese families whose ancestors migrated during 1851 to work in gold mining, or relatively new arrivals (less than ten years) such as families from Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand.

Cass (1993), Collins (1992), Bottomley and de Lepervanche (1984), discuss social class differences within the same ethnic group. For example in the case of Latin American

families, “there are differences between upper, middle and lower class families within each country. In addition, there are differences related to political circumstance, educational and social levels and geographical setting between and within countries. However, in theory, it is possible to assert that rural and working class family lifestyles are organised in a similar manner, and that this is different from the organisation of middle and upper class families. This means, for example, that there are similarities in upper class families, whether they live in urban or rural areas. (Amezquita, L.; R Amezquita and R Vittorino *Latin American Families in Australia* in Hartley ed. “Families and Cultural Diversity”: 1995, p.171).

Collins further suggested that any study of immigrant families in Australia requires careful disaggregation within and between ethnic groups at a number of levels. Some of his suggestions are as follows: the need to make a distinction between English speaking background and non-English speaking backgrounds families; and the need to look at the social class differences within the same ethnic group. For example, the experience of a ruling class Greek family is likely to be different from that of a working class Greek family. Social class is an important factor together with ethnicity in determining the life chances and life styles of immigrant families (p. 3). Gender is also an important dynamic in immigrant families. Men and women migrants have different expectations, different experiences and different opportunities in Australian society (Collins: 1992, p.3).

Researchers are therefore called upon to focus on understanding the intersections of class, gender and ethnicity in shaping the lives of immigrant families (Bottomley, de Lepervanche and Martin: 1991). Researchers also need to pay attention to differences in migrants’ experiences in Australian families due to religion, culture, language and time of arrival. Edgar in his study of the nature of family life in different family groups remarked that “a gap clearly existed in Australian research on the family characteristics and values of the non-English speaking groups that make up Australian society” (Storer:1985, p.ix).

Various studies show that the meanings given to “family” are diverse.

Immigrant families from some non-English speaking backgrounds particularly of Chinese and Indian origin, are resistant to social change despite major economic change. In the case of Pakistani families in Australia, family values and attitudes are influenced by the Islamic concepts or law. The family lives of Pakistanis who have settled in Australia show that most attempt to maintain their family traditions and Islamic perspective in an Australian society of contrasting and often to the immigrants disturbing family attitudes and life styles (Dean-Oswald, 1985, pp.199-200).

Various studies show that the meanings given to “family” are diverse. Chinese – born migrants value the family unit as the major unit of society, and adopt a collectivist rather than an individualistic orientation to family life (Mak, and Chan, 1985, p.71).

In Australian-Filipino families, the importance of relationships, and the values which reinforce them, set the framework for acceptable individual action in society. “From early childhood Filipinos are taught about the importance and precedence of groups, in contrast to the emphasis given to the individual in many western countries” (p.100). Filipino families value interaction and relationship among members of the families (Soriano:1985).

For Australian-Greek families there is also an emphasis on family unity. Like Chinese families, Greek families also define families as collectivist in nature, and family resources are communal. The ideal is that everyone contributes and shares resources both for social and financial support (Tsolodis, 1985).

In the case of Australian-Italian families, the dynamics of social change explain diversity under four substantial themes. The first is the shift from a peasant to an industrial society; the second is the change in the Australian Government settlement policies; the third is the change in the position of women in the family because of better education facilities and the fourth is the generational change in the Italian-Australian family. i.e change between first and second generation Italian-Australian families. (pp.145-146). This created dramatic changes in their work lives, as well as in their cultural and family relations (Vasta, 1985).

Mak and Chan (1995), studied sex roles in marriage and family life among Chinese Australian families and found that “stable family life in traditional Chinese families is maintained by women adopting a submissive role in relating to their husbands and a nurturing role within the family. This is derived from Confucian principles dictating that girls be educated not in books, but in three obediences – obedience to the father at home, obedience to husband after getting married and obedience to the eldest son after the husband’s death” (p.78). However, very significant changes take place in adaptation to conditions in the country of settlement.

For example, Mak and Chan (1995) studying patterns of domestic help among Australian and overseas Chinese families suggest that “hired domestic help is much less accessible in Australia, so that many men in dual – income families have to help to varying degrees, in childcare and household chores. In addition, like many men in Australia, Chinese men are expected to be responsible for gardening and tasks associated with the maintenance of the house. As a result, they often find themselves playing a much more active role in family and house related responsibilities than in their country of origin. This increased involvement can be a source of new found pleasure for some men as they develop new life skills and spend more time at home with their families. For others, the new responsibilities are time – consuming, burdensome and a source of marital conflict” (p.79). The same study also found that women are expected to defer to their husbands in decision making, to put their husbands’ career development ahead of the own needs, to be responsible for all the household chores, to nurture and care for their children and to look after elderly parents. In families from Hong Kong and Taiwan, this study found that many middle class families can afford to hire domestic help for child care and household work. Men may also share household responsibilities to some extent, but it remains the wives’ main responsibility to organise and coordinate these activities, including the supervision of the maids.

Regarding the literature on the perception of paid work, it was found that Lebanese families perceive paid work not only as a means of earning a living but also as a means of establishing one’s honour and standing in a community. A traditional Lebanese proverb stated that “ work until you are exhausted rather than be humiliated” (Batrouney: 1994, p.199). Lebanese families perceive that working in small firms is a

means of upward social movement. However, there is a discernible movement from traditional to emergent values in relation to work as a result of immigration. Second and third generation Lebanese are moving away from small business activities to larger companies in the tertiary sector. The analysis of Lebanese families' work attitudes illustrates the value accorded entrepreneurial activity, typically undertaken by the family as a unit or by two or more members of a family. Entrepreneurial activity has been made possible by a combination of family cohesion and patriarchal control. The former provides the strength and cooperation of the group and the latter an unchallenged unity of purpose and direction (Batrouney: 1994, p.200).

It shows the division of labour between men and women and the sharply defined expectation of male and female roles and place in the family. Alcorso (1991) discusses the difference between migrant women from non-English speaking background and their Australian women counterparts. Alcorso speaks not about "families" as homogenous entity but discusses the difference between men and women, which is the purpose of this study.

Alcorso's (1991) in her study of non-English speaking background immigrant women in the workforce reveals that "Non-English Speaking Background migrant women, and in particular married and recently arrived migrant women, have been over-represented in the paid work force compared to their Anglo-Australian counterparts" (p.19). Furthermore, Alcorso (1991) shows that "...migrant women from non-metropolitan areas are entering paid employment for the first time; and the reasons are primarily economic. The costs of establishing a home, family and life in a new country are high; two low or medium incomes are usually required to support a basic standard of living in the host countries. Migrant women's husbands are more likely to be unemployed or employed in poorly paid jobs than the husbands of Anglophone women; and often migrant women are supporting relatives in their country of origin" (p.20).

The household work patterns of Asian and European migrants in the United Kingdom show similar findings to the Australian studies. In her edited work on cross-cultural perspectives on migrant women, Buijs (1993) describes the migration experiences of Asian and European women in the United Kingdom and other European countries which

show that “ a growing literature refers to the question of whether migration leads to loss or gain in the status of women as a result of changes in the distribution of power within the family and the answers vary according to the immigrant context and cultural background”(p.8).

Describing changes affecting East African Sikh women in London, Buijs (1993) citing Bhachu states that “an improved education has enhanced their ability to find well-paid jobs and, similarly, educated husbands. Good salaries are spent building up dowries, over the contents of which they assume greater control than in the past. This is associated with a shift from extended family households to nuclear family households and an emphasis on the married couple, rather than the kin group. Successful migration has meant, in some instances, a striving by husbands and wives to improve the status of their children through improvement in educational qualifications” (p.9).

The previous studies show that changes in household, paid work and childcare work practices depend upon category of migration, education and employment characteristics. It is quite clear that immigrant families are not homogeneous and the patterns of gender-based household work, paid work and childcare responsibilities differ in terms of class location and the immigrants’ origin from urban or rural environments. The division of labour between men and women also depends upon the above personal characteristics. The studies show that men are considered the major breadwinners and women are doing most household work and childcare, but where women have employment and especially education, significant changes are occurring. It is also evident that a shift in family type from the extended family and kin-grouping to the nuclear family plays a significant role in the changed patterns of domestic responsibilities.

3.3 Immigrants from Nepal

With regard to immigrants from Nepal, there is little research on changes in household, paid work and childcare responsibilities after migration. As stated in the previous

chapter, families from Nepal are recently arrived migrants who comprise a small number compared to other non-English speaking background groups. After the Australian Government's introduction of the "professional" or "skill" migration program during the 1980s and 1990s, Nepalese families with professional backgrounds migrated to Australia under this scheme. Many of them were from high or middle socio-economic backgrounds and most of them migrated as a family "unit" with husband, wife and dependent children. A majority of families from Nepal came to Australia under the professional/ skill migration category and a large proportion settled in Sydney followed by Brisbane, Perth and Melbourne. A small number moved to Adelaide and Darwin and a few families are in Canberra and Hobart.

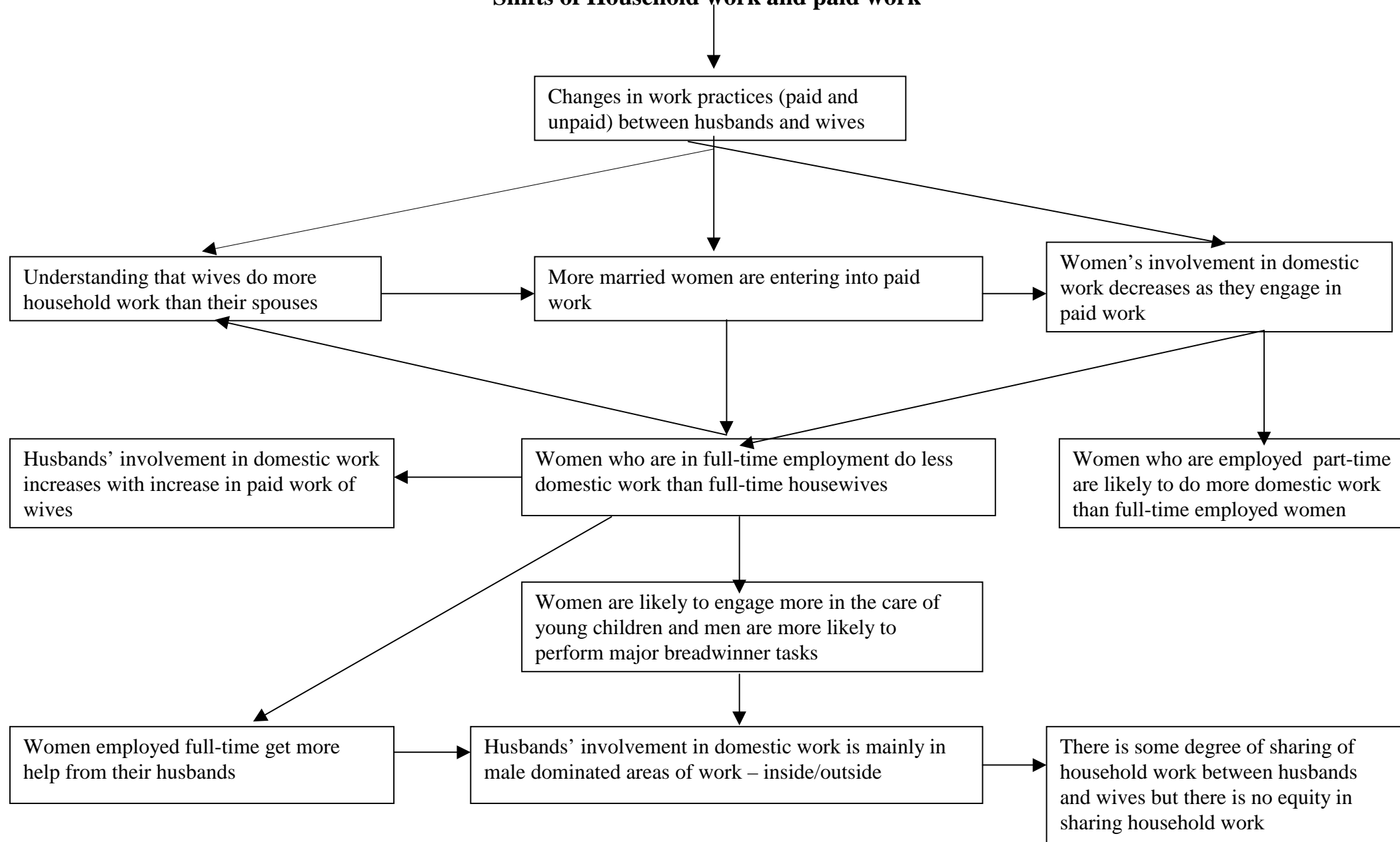
During the 1980s and 1990s, the government emphasis on the importance of selecting immigrants on the basis of their economic attributes has varied. Despite these variations, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of professionals and other middle class migrants arriving to settle in Australia. Inglis (1999), referring to Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) statistics on settler arrivals in 1997-98 stated that " professional, paraprofessional and managers and administrators accounted for 58.1 per cent of all migrants who had been employed prior to migration, and more than two thirds (69.5 per cent) of the professionals arriving in 1997-98 were actually from non-English speaking countries" (p.49).

Further, Inglis referring to a study of immigrants from Asian countries who arrived in Australia in the early 1990s, noted that many of them were from middle class backgrounds and found that there were five main reasons for their decisions to leave their countries of origin: family and social ties; political considerations; education; new opportunities and general dissatisfaction with their home country (1999, p.52). Nearly all the immigrants nominated the search for new opportunities as a reason for their migration. The reason for choosing Australia was related to the presence of family and friends. The second set of reasons for the selection of Australia related to its geographical attributes: its climate, open space and clean environment. In highlighting the settlement experiences of middle class migrants, Inglis asks whether their experiences in settling and being incorporated in Australian society differ from those of earlier groups of immigrants from very different class backgrounds.

Migrants from Nepal are very recent arrivals, unlike migrants from India and Sri Lanka. However the professional characteristics of families from Nepal who migrated under “skill” or “professional” background can be compared with migrants from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan who migrated under similar migratory categories. It is the objective of this thesis to provide information and analysis, in an exploratory way, about the experience of “professional” Nepalese families in Sydney – a migrant group about whose experiences little or no research has been done.

Flow Chart 3.1: Findings from the Literature

Shifts of Household work and paid work



CHAPTER FOUR

4. Research Findings

Introduction

These research findings are based on case studies of 28 respondents: 14 couples who migrated to Australia between 1988 to 1999. All respondents migrated under the professional /skill migration¹ category from Nepal. Both husbands and wives are currently employed either full or part-time. Interviews were undertaken with both husbands and wives. All respondents had at least one dependent child living with them at the time of interview. The sampling technique used in this research was a 'snowball'² technique where interviewees helped to identify other informants, through a 'chain' network.

This chapter describes the characteristics of husbands and wives before and after migrating to Australia in terms of change of family composition and changes in the pattern of household work between husbands and wives. This chapter also describes husbands' increased involvement in household work after coming to Australia and at the same time wives' entry into the paid workforce for the first time. The reason given by wives for their entry into paid work is basically for financial reasons, to cope with the high cost of maintaining living standards in Australia. The reason given by husbands for involvement in greater amounts of household work is to share household work with wives and to adjust themselves to household and paid work in a new environment i.e. living outside of their extended family system, which prevailed in Nepal.

This chapter also highlights the fact that before migration almost all respondents were receiving support from extended family members and also there were servants to help in their household work. The study also shows that 'masculine' and 'feminine' identity shifts and changes the shifts after migration. There is a distinct traditional

¹ Professional/skill migration category – This component of the migration program is designed to contribute to Australia's economic growth. They come under the 'independent' category where the expectation is that the immigrants' education; skills and ready employability will contribute to the Australian economy.

gender division of labour before migration, and a basic shifts in ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ identity after migration: that is women are enabled to enter paid work and men increase their involvement in household work.

4.1 Profile of respondents

This section deals with a profile of respondents in terms of age, place of birth, age of children, family type, employment status, occupation and educational qualifications of husbands and wives before and after migration.

4.1.1 Composition of the households in the study

Age groups

All male respondents in the study were aged between 35 and 44 years, whilst all females were in the range of 25 to 34 years of age.

Place of birth of child

All first children of the respondents were born in Nepal, except for one child who was born in Sydney. The second children of seven couples were born in Nepal. The second child of three couples was born in Bangkok, Thailand. The second children of two couples were born in Sydney. Other second children were born in Tanzania and Singapore. All couple families except two have been to countries such as, Thailand, Africa, Singapore and United States with spouse and dependent children for further education and employment before settlement in Australia. This shows that the majority of families have exposure to other second countries before migration to Australia. Since their spouses and dependent children accompanied them, they tend to have been involved in a process of adjustment before migration to Australia.

Age of child

The age of the elder child was in the range of 10-19 years and for the younger child it was between 2-13 years.

² ‘Snowball’ research method is described in the Chapter Two - Research Design

Family type: current, post migration

All respondent families were ‘two parent families’ without extended family kin living in the same household at the time of interview. In general, there were no other relatives living with the couple at the time of the study, except three families who had their mother or mother-in-law living with them while these older women were visiting their daughters and their families for a short time. As such, all the respondents were the first generation immigrants who did not have any other family members living in Australia. They were all relatively recent immigrants and starting their new life in Australia without any immediate support from their family members or relatives. Although some respondents have their in-laws visiting for some period of time, none of these older relatives wanted to continue living in Australia for the longer duration. In fact, in the Nepalese family system, parents do not like their children migrating to other countries, rather they prefer to have all the children living together.

As stated in the previous section, all respondents, but one couple, migrated as a ‘family unit’ with dependent children. In other words, husband and wife and children and no other family members or dependents migrated together to Australia.

Family type: before migration

All respondents were living with their extended family before migrating to Australia in a patrilineal household. Also all respondents were living in a patriachal household where the household head is the father. If the father is not alive, in that case the mother or grand-mother on the husband’s side is also considered as the household head a position which is an extension of the patriachal tradition, moving from the husband’s father to mother (the patrilineal line) only on the death of the father. The definition of “extended family” in this context includes husband’s father, mother, uncles, aunts, husband’s brother, and husband’s sisters living together in one household and mostly sharing the same kitchen.

All respondents are from high or middle socio-economic status/background in terms of their caste³ and all are Hindu and some are Hindu as well as Buddhist⁴. In some instances in Nepal caste and ethnicity are used interchangeably.

With regard to their ethnic and socio- economic status, 17 respondents are from a Brahmin⁵ family, 11 from a Newar⁶ family. Brahmin and Newar are the predominant⁷ ethnic groups/caste in the Kathmandu Valley. They are the privileged ethnic groups in Kathmandu (Nepal). A majority come from a well to do family, having their father or relatives working as senior officials in government departments, private organisations and/or running a successful business of their own.

Almost all respondents had in Nepal at least one and, in some families more than one, helping hand (maid or servants) to do the household work. Usually the servants are from a low economic status and from a particular caste and ethnic group such as Brahmin, Newar, Chhetri⁸ and Tamang⁹ from rural areas. In some Nepalese Brahmin, Newar and other upper caste families, Brahmin from a lower economic status are kept for preparing food only since they are from high caste. Other low caste families are not allowed to cook/prepare food for high-class families like Brahmin, and to some extent in well to do Newar and Chhetry families.

In the Nepalese family system, an overwhelming majority of women do the household work in the absence of servants. In some families, parents do not allow their sons to do household tasks, such as cooking and washing, which are regarded as a woman's job. This is more in the case of well to do Brahmin and Newar families.

³ Caste definition: The Hindu caste system was based on five primary social classifications: Brahmin (priest), the Kshatriya (warrior or administrator), the vaisya (merchant), the shudra (labourer) and the untouchable (polluted) (Bista (1991), p. 28).

⁴ In Nepal Hindu and Buddhist go together side by side.

⁵ Brahmin – predominantly upper caste family in Nepal.

⁶ Newar – predominantly business caste family in Nepal mostly residing in Kathmandu Valley.

⁷ Brahmin and Newar are privileged ethnic groups in Kathmandu (Nepal).

⁸ Chhetri = An ethnic group, major indo-Arian speaking group, in caste hierarchy come second to Brahmin.

⁹ Tamang = An ethnic group, major Tibeto-Burman speaking group. It is believed that they originally came from Tibet.

4.1.2 Employment: Previous and current

This section deals with the labour force participation of husbands and wives before and after coming to Australia.

4.1.2.1 Previous employment

All 14 male respondents had a previous job in Nepal and have an engineering background in areas such as civil engineering, engineering of water resources, architectural engineering and agricultural engineering (see Table 4.1). Among the men, eight had worked in other overseas countries before migrating to Australia. Six male respondents worked as a project engineer or contract engineer with private organisations in Bangkok. One worked as a United Nations volunteer in Tanzania and another had worked in a private engineering consultancy firm in Singapore.

With regard to female respondents, nine were not in a paid job before migrating to Australia, although they were qualified and had university degrees. Five female respondents worked in their country of origin, and also in other overseas countries. Among three female respondents, one worked as a researcher, two worked as primary school teachers, one worked as a chemist, one in a bank, and one as a hairdresser.

Traditionally, Brahmin and Newar conservative families do not allow their daughter or daughter-in-law to work outside the house. Outside work is regarded as detrimental to their family respect and values, regardless of how well educated or qualified their daughter or daughter-in-law may be. However, these attitudes are now gradually changing and parents or in-laws are accepting their daughters and daughters-in-law working in a paid job.

Table 4.1 below shows the types of jobs that husbands and wives had before they came to Australia.

Table 4.1: Previous employment

Husbands	Wives
Project Engineer Lecturer/ Research Associate Consulting Architect Town Planner Market Promotion Officer Senior Agriculture Officer Engineer Water Supply Architect Contracts Engineer – Civil Engineer Engineer Hydrologist Project Manager/USAID/Nepal Civil Engineer Works/Design Engineer Civil Engineer	Senior Research Associate School Teacher Chemist (Quality control) Bank – Customer Service Officer Hairdresser

4.1.2.2 Current employment

All male respondents are currently employed as a full-time professional, either in government departments, local government, business/industry, private consultancy or tertiary institutions. Five male respondents are working in government departments, three in local government, four in business/ industries, three in private consultancies and one in a university. The duration of employment experience in Australia varies from a year to more than nine years.

In the case of female respondents, eight started their first job in Australia. All female respondents who started their first job in Australia are working as childcare and process workers, except one who is working as a serials officer in a University library.

Almost all the female respondents who started their job as childcare or process workers did not have previous experience as a childcare and process worker in Nepal and had never been employed before. Those who had worked before were in their own profession.

The primary reason for their types of employment given by wives who are working in childcare and process work is lack of local experience in their previous field of study which they had undertaken in Nepal. Also, they had taken these jobs because they wished to work in those areas in which jobs were available to them. The duration of work of female respondents varied from less than a year to five years.

Table 4.2 below shows the types of work of both the husbands and wives at the time of the interview.

Table 4.2: Current employment

Husbands	Wives
Traffic Engineer	Child Care Worker
Resources Planner	Research Officer
Building Assessor	Process Worker
Town Planner	Child Care Assistant
Export Officer	Child Care Teacher
Research Officer	Process Worker
Consulting Engineer	Child Care Worker
Environmental Planner	Child Care Worker
Estimator – Civil Engineer	Child Care/ Authorised Supervisor
Engineer	Child Care Assistant
Service Contracts Officer	Customer Service
Programmer – Construction Industry	Stores Personnel/ Planning Officer
Asset Creation Officer	Serials Officer
Project Engineer	

The above employment status data of male and female respondents show that there are clear differences between male and female employment positions before and after migration. Male respondents were in a better employment position than female respondents, before as well as after migration. Since all male respondents migrated under the skill migration program and males were the principal applicants, all male respondents entered the labour force immediately. The study of the Bureau of

Immigration Research indicates that skilled migrants enter the labour force sooner than migrants who migrated under other categories like refugee or family reunion etc.

These findings are influenced by pre-migration factors. Traditionally in Nepalese families males are given first priority over females to become a qualified professional. The general attitude of the parents is that they want their sons to become a professional doctor or an engineer. Accordingly, sons are given due consideration in terms of financial and other support in their education. On the other hand, daughters are given less preference regarding their level of educational achievement and chosen field of study. This is because the family attitude is such that daughters are married into a different family and their major jobs are inside the house. Bista (1991), in his book *Fatalism and Development in Nepal* stated that “women’s specialised jobs are concerned with the maintenance of the house, the preparation and processing of food and the care of the aged and the very young, all of which tend to keep them at home for a long period of time” (p. 63). On the other hand, sons are considered to be the primary income earners for the household, and take on the culturally considered role of continuity of lineality in the family. Still the belief persists that generally the desirable sex for the first child is a male. Kondos (1989) studied the son’s special ontology among high caste Hindu women in Nepal and noted that the desirability of having a son “ is the son’s importance for the performance of the parents’ death rituals” (p. 172). However this attitude or perception is gradually changing among younger generation couples.

Travel to work

Twelve male respondents travel by train to their place of work. They all travel an average of more than one hour to work. Only two male respondents travel for less than 20 minutes. Nine male respondents learned to drive and received their driving licence after coming to Australia.

On average, female respondents spend less time travelling to work than their husbands. All 14 female respondents travel to work for less than 1 hour. Seven female respondents travel for less than 15 minutes to work. Eight wives drive a car to work

and five catch a train. All female respondents learned to drive in Australia and all received their driving licence in Australia, except one female respondent who received her driving licence while in Tanzania. This shows that after migration women became more independent, more mobile and accessible to enhanced participation in public life and employment.

The above data show that male respondents travel longer distances to work than female respondents and more females work closer to home than males. This is to enable the wife to have enough time to do childcare and household work. As one of the male respondents stated, *“wife’s paid work is just ten minutes drive from home and she has enough time to come home and do the household work”*.

This indicates that there is a clear-cut difference of responsibility between husband and wife. The husband as the principal applicant for migration with previous educational qualifications and employment experience is always expected to enter employment first before his wife, and his employment takes precedence.

Out of the total 14 couple families, in all but two, the husband got a job first and only then did wives start to work or study vocational education at Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or tertiary education at university. In the case of two male respondents, their wives got a job first, one at a university as a senior research assistant and the other as a childcare worker. The husband of the former had to wait almost six months to get a job. The reason given by a male informant was that he was not seriously looking for a job although applying for four or five positions related to his profession. The other reason was that this couple did not find a childcare place for their daughter who was about four years old at the time so the father was minding their young daughter. With regard to the second male respondent, when his wife got a job as a childcare worker he was enrolled in his doctoral course at the university on a full-time basis.

Once the husband got a job and family life started to settle down in terms of housing, children’s school and the provision of childcare, wives started looking for a job or enrolled in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) or university.

The travel to work data also show that both the male and female respondents found it necessary to learn to drive after migration and both husband and wife learned to drive and received their licence after immigrating to Australia. This is to reduce time in travelling by public transport and also to become more independent. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (1994) in its study *on Focus on Families: Work and Family Responsibilities* found that ‘time spent travelling to and from work has the potential to significantly reduce time that families have together. The cost of transport may also affect family wellbeing. For people with childcare or other family responsibilities, being close to work and community services and having convenient access to affordable transport can help to balance work and family responsibility’ (p.30). The Australian Bureau of Statistics study found that on average, employed women who were caring for children or other relatives spent less time travelling to work than their male counterparts. In 1992, 54 per cent of these women either worked from home or lived within fifteen minutes of work, compared with 40 per cent of men (p.30). This shows that after migration high mobility became important in order to cope with the fast and complex life outside the household. With multiple responsibilities in Australia, women have become more self - reliant. This involves self - reliance to do shopping, to take children to and from school or childcare centre, to provide husbands a lift to the station or to and from work. To balance these multiple activities, this study reveals that being able to drive a car is seen as a basic need in Australia. In addition, women became sufficiently independent to enter employment and also to become more able to participate in public activities. This degree of independence and self - reliance was not possible in Nepal, before migration.

Income

The average annual salary of husbands is in the range of \$40,000 to \$60,000. In comparison, the average annual salary of wives is in the range of \$23,000 - \$39,000, which is a little more than half that of their husbands. Only one female respondent had an annual income in the range of \$50,000 to \$60,000. The income level data of husbands and wives show that husbands earn more than wives and husbands are the primary income earner. Nevertheless, wives’ income also contributes significantly to household income. As stated above, it became necessary

for wives to enter the paid workforce in order to cope with high living costs in Australia. However, entry into paid work, often after entry into education, brought a greater level of independence for women, not possible when they had no access to income in their own right.

Child care

All 28 respondents stated that they do not now need childcare services for their first child because they all go to school. Four couples stated that they use childcare services for their second child. Two couples sent their second child to a childcare center. Two couples sent their child to pre-school and long day care. Among those first children who go to school, five children go to primary school, five to secondary school, two to senior high school, one to pre-school and one is a second year university student.

The childcare data show the level of childcare responsibility of the respondents. Some respondents have very young children and send their children to a childcare center while they are at work or study. Some parents have reduced childcare responsibility because their children are at an age when they can look after themselves before and after school. The data also show that the level of childcare responsibility of the parents influences their involvement in the workforce, particularly for mothers. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (1994), study of time off work to care for sick children, *Focus on Families*, found that “mothers in couple families with both parents employed are more than twice as likely than the fathers in such families to take time off work to care for a sick child. Of mothers who took leave, 34 per cent took unpaid leave compared with 19 per cent of fathers (p. 30). All mothers in this study whose children go to secondary school, senior high school or university have full-time jobs and travel to work longer distance than those mothers who have pre-school or primary school children.

Home work help for children

More husbands indicated that they provided greater levels of help with their children's homework than do their wives. When asked how often they help their children with

homework, three husbands said they helped very often and five husbands reported that they helped often and five reported that they helped their children when requested. In the case of women, two said that they helped their children with their homework very often; four said that they helped quite often and five reported that they helped their children only when requested.

The significance of this finding is that both mother and father help their children with their school homework. However, more fathers help with their children's homework than mothers because mothers are more involved in their household work. Therefore fathers get more time to help their children with their homework. Another reason may be that fathers are generally better educated than mothers, and their level of English competency is higher than that of their wife.

Telephone calls from work to children at home

More husbands call their children from work to check that they are back from school. Five male respondents said that they call their children from work once each day. Two fathers did not want to specify the number of times they normally call their children from work. Mothers in the study stated that they normally do not have time to call their children from work. Four mothers call their children from work once each day. One mother said that the facility to call her children from work is not provided.

This finding shows that since all fathers are in responsible professional jobs they have more access to phones than do their wives and they can call their children from work quite often. Although mothers wanted to, they could not call their children. Some female respondents work in an industry where phone facility is not provided.

Support from others

Husbands and wives in the study stated that they support each other in their day to day lives. Besides that, they get support from friends. All 28 respondents mentioned that they got help from friends when they first arrived. The types of support during initial arrival were finding a flat to live in, important information on government support, the job market, children's school, health services, shopping for initial needs etc.

At present the types of support they get from friends include looking after children after school, especially when children are sick. When the family goes away on a holiday trip, friends look after the house, particularly collecting mail and taking care of plants and pets.

Six husbands and wives said that they do not get support from others. The reasons for not getting support are as follows:

Women

- Not having any extended family in Australia
- No need for support
- Friends are busy.

Men

- There is no extended family in Australia
- The situation has not occurred.

The findings on support from others during their day to day lives, in emergencies and during their initial arrival in Australia signify that friends are the main source of help. However, six respondents stated that they do not have support from others, especially from family and relatives, since all respondents are the first family to migrate, and none have relatives or extended family living in Australia.

4.1.3 Previous educational qualification

All 14 male respondents have a master's degree qualification which is comparable to a master degree from an Australian University. One respondent has a Ph D degree. Almost all had their first university degree and/or second degree from overseas countries like India, England, Japan, Thailand, Ukraine and the United States.

Among all female respondents with prior qualifications, five have a bachelors degree, three have a masters degree, two have a certificate and one has her intermediate certificate. Ten female respondents received their degree in Nepal. Two received their degree in India and one received her degree in Bangkok. Except for one who received

her master’s degree from the International Institute of Bangkok, all prior educational qualifications or degrees are not recognized as an equivalent degree of an Australian University.

Table 4.3 below shows previous educational qualifications of male and female respondents.

Table 4.3: Previous educational qualification

Husbands	Wives
Master of Public Administration Master of Rural and Regional Planning	Bachelor of Arts
Master of Architect	Master of Science
Master of Urban Planning	Bachelor of Arts
Master of Water Resources	Certificate of Arts
Master of Agriculture	Bachelor of Arts
Master of Urban Planning	Certificate of Arts
Master of Transportation	Bachelor of Science
Master of Economics	Associate Diploma of Fashion
Master of Civil Engineering	Master of Statistics
Master of Engineering	Diploma in Fashion
Master in Civil Engineering	Intermediate in Science
Master in Civil Engineering	Undergraduate degree
Master in Water Resources Engineering	Certificate in Arts
Master in Civil Engineering	Bachelor in Arts

4.1.4 Further education and training undertaken in Australia

Among 14 male respondents, nine have undertaken further education and training after coming to Australia. Of those who have undertaken training or further education, all trained in fields related to their current jobs. One male respondent had received a Commonwealth scholarship to undertake a Ph D in Engineering. Currently, three male respondents are enrolled in academic courses including Masters in Business Administration (MBA), Master in Environmental Engineering Science, and Postgraduate Diploma in Local Government Engineering. Four male respondents are

undertaking professional development courses, including a bridging course in planning, team leadership training, programming in PASCAL and a graduate certificate in a refresher course for overseas qualified engineers.

All female respondents undertook further education and training after coming to Australia. In contrast to male respondents, all but one female respondent undertook further training or studies which are not related to their previous studies and at a lower level than what they had acquired before. One female respondent is currently undertaking further education in production and inventory management.

All 14 female respondents except one have completed technical and further education courses in the area of library science, accounting, childcare studies, office duties and hospitality courses. Among all female respondents who have undertaken the vocational courses, seven of them have undertaken training in childcare studies. Interviews with wives found that they have undertaken childcare studies because they perceive that there are job opportunities available in these areas.

Further education and training undertaken by husbands and wives are listed in Table 4.4.

The data on previous qualification of husbands and wives before migration show that both husbands and wives have higher educational qualification following migration. (see Table 4.3). However, the data also show that there are significant differences in the level of qualification acquired by husbands and wives before migration and after migration.

Male respondents had higher educational qualifications than female respondents before migration. This is a reflection of the trend in Nepalese families where males are given more opportunity for higher education than are females.

Table 4.4: Further education and training carried out by husbands and wives

Husbands	Wives
Bridging course in planning	Certificate in child care studies
Team leadership course	Master in Accountancy
PhD in Engineering	Hospitality and Dietary Practice
Master in Business Administration	Diploma in Social Studies
Master in Environmental Engineering Science	Associate Diploma in Fashion
Programming in PASCAL	Certificate in Child Care and Senior First Aid
Graduate certificate refresher course for overseas qualified engineer (1 semester)	Diploma in 'Centre Base' Child Care
Post graduate diploma in local government engineering	Bachelor in Teaching (Early Childhood)
Waste water treatment, project management and quality control	English course, certificate in hairdressing, certificate in child care
	Accounting, Office duties, Office practice Book keeping
	Associate Diploma of Arts (Library Practice)

The data also show that in terms of their education levels, females are more disadvantaged than males, because most degrees acquired by female respondents (except one) before migration are not recognized as an equivalent to an Australian university degrees. Women in the study are doubly disadvantaged: firstly, they were disadvantaged by not being treated equally in their education by their parents, in

relation to the educational advantages and priority accorded to their brothers; and secondly, their degrees are not recognised in the Australian education system.

All female respondents (except one) had to undertake studies at a lower level award course in order to be employed. Studies also indicate that the process of migration and settlement requires them to participate in the labor force for financial reasons. Since their previous degrees are not recognized as an equivalent to an Australian degree, female respondents experienced educational disadvantage not experienced by their husbands. For male respondents, the pathway to employment was linear with additional further education in the fields related to their current employment. However, female respondents needed to diversify their studies to fit the employment requirements of the industries which they perceived as providing employment opportunities. All the data indicate that most female respondents end up doing child care studies because they perceived that job opportunities are available in this industry. One of the reasons for the women respondents becoming relatively disadvantaged in the labour market is lack of official recognition of their prior learning.

4.2 Household work of husbands and wives before and after migrating to Australia

4.2.1 Household work prior to coming to Australia

Interviews with husbands and wives show that before migrating to Australia most household activities were regularly undertaken by wives who received help from others such as hired labour (helping hand) or from other family members such as mothers, mothers in-law, sisters and aunts. It was also found that many husbands had never regularly done any household work prior to coming to Australia.

Reasons given by husbands for not doing household work in their country of birth are:

- Servants used to do all the work and availability of helping hand (maid)
- Other family members like mother, sisters and wife performed these tasks
- Household work was mainly done by women or servants
- Plenty of support and cheap labour.

Overall, the men observed that they never had to do household work because there were maids or female relatives and their wife in the household. Wife, mother, sister carried out or administered and oversaw the household work. It was not culturally or socially expected or accepted that men would engage in such domestic labor except under very exceptional circumstances. Types of household work carried out in those circumstances included:

- Shopping
- Ironing
- Child minding
- Preparing food
- Cleaning
- Washing
- Other minor household activities

According to one respondent “ *Occasionally I did prepare food and I did look after a child. I prepared food for the family when mother was sick. Normally servants are not allowed to cook food because servant is from lower caste and not allowed to touch and enter the kitchen. Servant is allowed to do kitchen hand and other cleaning work only such as cutting and cleaning of vegetables, washing dishes and clothes and other cleaning job in general.*

Occasionally I used to look after my nephew when my sister in-law went to study. The reason I could spend more time in house work was that I was a lecturer and lectured in the evening time and thus could afford to spend time to do household work.”

The types of household work regularly carried out by wives in Nepal were:

- Preparing food
- Cleaning rooms
- Tidying beds
- Washing clothes
- Ironing
- Shopping
- Looking after a child
- Giving baths
- Changing clothes
- Feeding children
- Cooking

Household activities that wives occasionally carried out before they came to Australia included:

- Ironing
- Washing
- Helping servants on and off
- Cooking
- Shopping
- Cleaning

Household activities that husbands and wives had never done before included:

- Gardening
- Lawn mowing
- Use of washing machine
- Use of dish washer
- Painting
- Repairing
- Driving and car maintenance
- Car wash

The data above and below indicate that the types of work which men and women undertook before migration have changed significantly since migration. More household responsibility has been added to both husbands and wives after migration. Most husbands started doing more household work and for wives extra household work has been added. The data show that for the husband household work changed from virtually none in Nepal to regular participation after coming to Australia. This indicates a very significant shift in men's behaviour, their actual involvement in household work on a regular, rather than occasional and exceptional basis which is very different to the Nepali custom and practice.

Certain types of household work such as cooking, grocery shopping, cleaning, which the female respondents used to do occasionally in Nepal, are now carried out regularly. This was due to the family support they used to receive in Nepal, which is now no longer available in Australia. Another reason is that because they need to start from scratch or from zero in the financial sense, they can not afford a "helping hand" to do household work as in Nepal. Also, for financial reasons it is considered necessary for both husband and wife to participate in the labour force.

4.2.2 Current household work done by both husbands and wives

It was shown in the study that household work became a regular task for both men and women for all 28 respondents, after they migrated to Australia.

Table 4.5 below shows the type of household work regularly done by both husbands and wives.

Table 4.5: The types of household work currently undertaken by husbands and wives

Husbands	Wives
Preparing breakfast mostly on weekend	Preparing breakfast
Preparing lunch on weekend occasionally	Preparing lunch on weekend
Dinner regularly to help wife	Dinner regularly
Cleaning rooms	Cleaning rooms
Cleaning bathrooms	Cleaning bathrooms
Cleaning toilets	Cleaning toilets
Cleaning kitchen	Cleaning kitchen
Ironing	Ironing
Tidying beds, own room	Tidying beds, own room and children rooms
Washing dishes	Washing dishes
Washing clothes	Washing clothes
Lawn mowing if own or rent house	Grocery shopping
Grocery shopping	Child minding
Car wash	Giving bath
Gardening	Changing clothes
Watering	Playing with children
Raking	

The table above on household work that is regularly undertaken by husbands and wives at present show that there is a clear division of labour. Men are not carrying out the range of household tasks that women are doing. Similarly, all household tasks that

are done occasionally by women are not done by men. There is a clear division of labour evident between husband and wife in what types of household work are carried out outside or inside the home. All the work that needs to be done outside, like lawn mowing, repairing, painting, washing the car were never done by women and household tasks like changing children clothes, feeding children, washing clothes, cleaning the kitchen are never done by men, but always done by women. This shows that the division of labour between husbands and wives is differentiated as ‘outside’ and ‘inside’. This finding of a gendered division of labour between men and women is similar to the finding of Bittman (1991), who found “men spend more time on ‘outdoors’ task while for women, most time is spent on ‘inside’ activities” (p 32-33). Also, Bittman found that women carry out most of the child – related tasks and responsibilities. It is obvious from Table 4.5 in this study that women regularly do child-related care while men do this occasionally.

Types of household work occasionally done by husbands and wives are listed below in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: The types of household work occasionally carried out by husbands and wives

Husbands	Wives
Windows and screen cleaning	Gardening
Tidying children beds	Cleaning windows and screens
Ironing	Raking
Playing with children	Toilet cleaning
Painting	Cleaning patio and verandah
Cleaning rooms	Ironing
Giving bath to children	Watering
Preparing breakfast	
Preparing lunch	
Preparing dinner	
Car wash	
Repairing	

Table 4.7 below shows the types of household work not being carried out by husbands and wives at the time of interview.

Table 4.7: The types of household work never done by husbands and wives currently

Husbands	Wives
Changing children clothes Feeding children Washing clothes Kitchen cleaning	Lawn mowing Repairing Painting Washing car

This is also very similar to the division of labour among English speaking background Australians. Bittman (1991) found that women reported the major responsibilities for children and indoor household work; men indicate that their partner has major responsibilities for childcare and indoor household work, while they have major responsibilities for outdoor household work.

4.3 Change of household work

Interviews with husbands and wives indicate that the types of household work that they are currently doing have changed significantly since migrating to Australia and more husbands than wives stated that this is the case for them. All 14 husbands indicated that the household work they are doing now is not at all similar to what they had done before migration. Some of the reasons given by men for their not doing household work in Nepal compared with their Australian practices include:

- Here we are dependent on ourselves, in Nepal we were dependent on others
- Most of the household jobs were done by the maid
- Men in Nepal are not required to do many household tasks. In Australia it is necessary to do all the household work because we both are working
- Here household work like washing, vacuuming, lawn mowing is done by a machine while in Nepal, these are mostly done manually.

With regard to female respondents, 11 women stated that the household duties that they are currently doing are not of a similar type compared with what they did in Nepal. The reasons given for this by the women include:

- Here we are very much self dependent
- No helping hand and can not afford to hire labour

- At home the main chores are cooking and caring for children, the rest were done by paid labour.

The significant changes in their household work tasks as perceived by the men include:

- Never had to do any household work back in Nepal
- I do a lot of more household work here
- I never had to do vacuuming before
- I never had to do lawn mowing before
- Not the same amount of cooking, shopping, ironing and cleaning work
- I do more shopping and have maintenance work here
- More washing and cleaning.

The significant changes in household work as stated by women include:

- I do more physical work here
- I do much more work here
- I have to play multiple roles as a mother, wife, employee and household worker.

Three female respondents indicated that the types of household work they did before are similar to what they are now doing. These are:

- Cooking
- Cleaning
- Washing
- Shopping
- Ironing
- General household work

4.4 Satisfaction with current household work

In this study both husbands and wives expressed varying levels of satisfaction with or at least acceptance of the way that they are doing their household work. Some of the comments made by the respondents include:

Men:

- It is a new experience in a new country and I am getting used to it
- I do more sharing work and ideas with wife
- To some extent enjoyed household work with a notion of sharing work load with wife, since we do not get support from others

- It would be more inappropriate to leave all work done by wife, if she is also working full time in paid job
- I want to do more household work to help my wife
- Sharing household work to help each other
- Enjoy household work and spent most of the leisure time with wife and children
- Enjoy doing and sharing work with wife, otherwise it would be very difficult to carry all household jobs.
- Work sharing with spouse and children
- Sharing responsibilities is fun as well as necessity here

Women:

- Enjoy household work
- Enjoy sharing work with husband
- Enjoy sharing work with children
- We share household work, working together is always nice
- I enjoy having to do everything here, make very busy
- I enjoy the sharing of the work, do enjoy doing things for family
- I share work with husband and children
- Sharing household work
- Sharing work with husband

Except for three female respondents, the majority express satisfaction with the household work which they are currently doing. The main reason for their satisfaction is that they share household work with their husbands. Both the husband and wife understand that they do not get help from others and they have to do it in order to start a new life in a different environment.

The three women who expressed dissatisfaction with the type of household work they are currently doing stated that:

- Expect more from husband
- Get very tired, full time paid work, housework and looking after two young children, I need more encouragement
- Too much work, very stressed out

The three female respondents who expressed their dissatisfaction with their current household work all had young children who were born in Australia and their husband's workplace was relatively far from their home.

4.5 Issues in juggling household work and paid work

It was shown in the study that more wives than husbands indicated that they had difficulties in juggling household and paid work. Issues identified in juggling household and paid work by both the men and women reflect a picture of intensive juggling of responsibilities. The issues include:

Men:

- Living away from elderly parents is a source of stress which affects family and work
- Although we don't have any problems balancing household and paid work, sometimes it become too much work or pressure to do household work and outside work
- Normally there is no problem in balancing household work and paid work, wife's paid work is just 10 minutes drive from home and she has enough time to come home and do household work
- This is our initial period of settlement, we both are working hard to establish permanent home, there is no time to create rift between us. We are both sacrificing equally to balance household work and paid work.
- We have not had any serious problem in trying to balance family work and office work. Wife works close to home and during weekend she works extra hours. We have to compromise the times.
- Stressful – need to mind child at night – not enough sleep at night, stimulate headache
- Stress and fatigue from work, affects desires and quality of household work
- It is hard to balance house and work. But I don't think we have any issue.

Women

- Get "home sick"
- Missed close relatives sometimes feel "home sick"
- Too much work very stressful particularly not having helping hand when needed - household work, looking after two young daughters and at the same time is very stressful.
- Very little time for us, busy on week days and weekend. Children's activities on weekend make us very busy.
- Because of working shorter hours in week days and longer hours in weekend, help to balance household work and paid work with husband.
- Stressful not having support from relatives
- I wouldn't mind reducing the travel time to work
- Sometimes, I feel stress, but we share work with each other and working smoothly
- Need to keep an eye constantly on children
- It is hard but manageable

The above data show that both men and women share household work to varying extents in order to juggle their household and paid work and childcare. However, both husbands and wives stated that they feel stressed in the constant juggling of these many responsibilities and tasks, all of which must be performed. The main reason for stress is that they do not receive support from other family members, which they used to receive regularly in Nepal, prior to migrating to Australia. They are now in a two generation nuclear family unit, not an extended family unit, and their family support systems have been left behind, while they do not have sufficient income to employ household help.

4.6 Change of life style after migrating to Australia

Husbands and wives were asked about their change of life style after coming to Australia. They both experienced a change in their life style and gave some positive and negative opinions about these changes. These are:

Table 4.8: Lifestyle changes: positive aspects

Husbands	Wives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More independent • Sharing work with wife • Becoming closer to family • More involved in household work • More involved in bringing up children • More choices • More busy • More organized • Better off • Good quality of life. Children are getting quality education • Are more reliant now on ourselves • More self dependent – doing household work by ourselves • Life style is more active and fast and machine dependent • We are more busy and occupied having to do everything on our own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More responsible • More independent learned self reliance – doing all household work by ourselves • Independent more freedom • Learn driving after coming to Australia • Owned car and driving licence which is very hard to achieve at home • Technology here does make chores much easier • Husband also does more household work here • Domestic work is being shared by both • Being on our own we became more responsible, learned to share household work

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn driving after coming to Australia • Own car and driving licence which is very hard to achieve at home • Life has become easier, children are getting better education • Unitary family thus can afford quality food and clothing • Adopting and learning about different culture, mixing with others, making new friends • Sharing work creates understanding • Has become more ‘family man’ • More responsible person as husband and father • Have learned lots of household work skills 	
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Table 4.9: Lifestyle changes: negative aspects

Husbands	Wives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of company of close friends and relatives • Sometimes very frustrating, jobs become very boring and tiring – life style has changed a lot specially preoccupied with more household work • Sometimes too busy to relax and no time to spend with each other • Less social interactions • Loss of family contact • Less cultural/religious interactions • Have to sacrifice time for other activities • More machine dependent • I am doing the household work now which I had not done before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing families and friends • Helpless because miss close relatives and friends • Too busy with work • More busy and little time to spend with family • Sacrifice time for other activities • Miss family members, their support and culture • Have to do a lot more household work here • Stressful at times

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life has become very busy, we miss family members • Here more worried about job • Miss cultural events • Still not in the satisfactory level what they expected • Less time for leisure activities • Stressful at times 	
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The responses above show that husbands and wives indicate that there have been significant changes in their day-to-day life. They have become more independent of extended family, indeed do not have access to their families of origin and their relatives, and therefore have become closer to each other and to their children. Unlike in Nepal, where decisions and responsibility regarding family matters lie solely on the elder and senior members, mainly men or the husband’s mother, now the spouses can make decisions of their own. Another positive aspect is husband’s involvement in more household work than before and for some this is a new activity, sharing household work with their wife. This is partly due to being able to adopt new technology or household appliances such as washing machine, dish washer, vacuum cleaner etc., which they were not used to and had not operated before in Nepal. The adoption of new technology and household appliances also helps them to do household work with more ease and comfort.

The study also shows that there is a shift in responsibilities to look after their children after migration. The data show that women have primary responsibility for early childcare and the reason for their working close to home, not travelling longer distances to work and working part-time or in casual work is because women have the responsibility to look after younger children. The data also show that men help with their older children’s school homework. Further discussion with the informants, men and women, shows that father’s responsibility increases as children grow older, especially to help children with their homework, to take their children to the library, to take them to a private tutor and to take them to sport activities on weekends.

The data in Table 4.8 indicate significant changes in the lives of men and women. The changes perceived as positive are: creating closer nuclear family relationship;

closer relationship with children, and on overall sense of the benefits of independence from the extended family bringing a sharing between husband and wife not formerly experienced. However, the data in Table 9 indicate that there are deep contradictions that are experienced. The major issue raised was loss of close friends and extended family relatives. The lack of time to socialise and less time for leisure are the major issues that most of the husbands expressed. That is because of having to do more household work after migration. As one of the male respondents stated that *“sometimes very frustrating, jobs become very boring and tiring – lifestyle changed a lot specially preoccupied with more household work”*. Discussion with female respondents also indicated that the major problem they experienced was loss of close extended family relatives. One of the female respondents stated that she *“misses family members and their support”*. This loss of family relatives made both husbands and wives engage in more household work. One of the male respondents expressed that *“I am doing the household work now which I had not done before”*. This shows that no matter how positively they view their re-settlement after migration, how well they are doing after migration for the economic betterment of the family, they still indicate some dissatisfaction with loss of family and culture.

4.7 Attitudes to household work and paid work

Attitudes to household work and paid work were sought from all respondents using the statement: *“In families with young children, both parents should not work full-time”*. The men in the survey were more likely than the women to disagree with this statement, while the women were more likely to agree. The reasons given include the following:

Men

Disagree

- Being in a new country we require a strong financial position to establish ourselves and meet the new challenges
- May not usually be possible not to work due to financial commitments
- To be able to look after young children properly
- It would not be possible to pay all family expenses and maintain the life style
- Depends on how young, how many children and family income.

Women

Disagree

- Life will be much more comfortable if wives also start earning
- Depends on how many children and how young and depend on family income
- To meet other expenses both parents should work.

Men

Agree

- Can give time for children when they are actually in need
- This makes it easier to manage household work and paid work between husband and wife
- To provide proper care to children at their young age
- One member should be full-time to be secure financially
- Less time would be left for children if both work full-time
- I believe children should be with at least one of the parents so the child is better looked after and brought up well.
- One parent should be with the children till they go to school and the other should work to be financially secure.
- Somebody has to look after children regularly, one member of the family must be involved in bringing up children. Can not leave children to others to look after them
- It will be a bit easier for both partners if a suitable part-time job was available.

Women

Agree

- One can take care of the young children
- Young children need at least one parent at home when they need them. Specially when they come back from school, to provide them with food when they are hungry, to help them in their homework and to play with them for their personal development.
- One parent should look after children specially young children
- To meet the growing expenses both parents should work, but one parent should work part time
- One parent should be with the children till they go to school and one should work full-time to be financially secure.
- Young children need proper care from their parents. They need a full-time parent not part-time
- Need to give time to children, when they are in need
- One should work part-time so as to give time to children
- One parent should be with children

- Agree, but very hard for mother while children are very young
- If one works part time, it is easier to manage household work
- We can't give time to the children. We won't be able to know what our children's needs are. It may affect children's development
- Once the children go to school, it would be nice to be engaged in some productive activities such as part-time work or education or training.

The reasons given as to why both parents should or should not be employed in full-time work show a difference of opinion between husbands and wives. The men are more likely to think that both should work full-time so that they will be able to meet the necessary expenditure or raise finance to buy a house and other household items, and to provide better facilities for children, including their better education at a private school or extra tutoring.

Women's views about both parents not working full-time are related predominately to being able to look after the children properly, particularly in the case of those families who have young children, who are either pre-school or in primary school. The women's replies were more likely to emphasise the need for one parent to have part-time, rather than full-time employment, and give some indication of their own ambivalence towards the demands on their time of employment and childcare, in the context of post-migration.

4.8 Importance of employment for parents

The respondents were asked how important it is for both partners to work in a paid job. Ten women expressed the opinion that it is very important for both partners to work and eight men also said that it is very important for both husband and wife to be employed. The reasons given are basically financial: to enjoy a good quality of life in Australia, to establish financial security, to pay off the mortgage, to provide for children's care and education. The reasons are listed as follows:

Table 4.10: Importance of employment

Wives	Husbands
Need money to settle in Because of large house mortgage Financial support	For additional income To keep up with personal comfort level Secure regular income

For the financial security For financial reasons Life will be much easier if more money in house For the support of family To meet the expenses both should work To help each other	For financial reasons Basically for income to support good quality of life To pay off mortgage To maintain future financial security To share financial burden To provide good care to children and good education Need money to settle down and not to rely on government support
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4.9 Changes of interaction, communication and decision making of husbands and wives after migrating to Australia

Interaction, communication and decision making between husbands and wives changed significantly after migrating to Australia. The respondents expressed positive and negative feelings about these changes.

Table 4.11: Positive changes expressed by husbands and wives

Husbands	Wives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both of us are more supportive of each other • We are becoming very close to each other in making decision about family matters such as children’s education, household expenditure and future planning. • We are solely responsible in our family matters; there is no interruption from other family relatives, which normally occurred in extended families. • There are more interactions with wife and decisions are made mutually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husband is helpful • More supportive of each other • More understanding • Very close strong relationship • I got an opportunity to know my husband more closely in several aspects – managing our financial situation, helping our children’s educational and personal development • Inter relationships are more transparent after coming to Australia in terms of sharing responsibilities • More interaction with husband due to limited number of family relatives

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions are made equally shared. • Every decision of the house is thoroughly discussed and then decided • More interactions, closeness, warmth and values • More close, more responsible – we discuss things going in office and campus and jointly decide things we need to buy for the home • The relationship has become more open and more communicative • Mutually supportive • Both are equally involved in every aspect of decision • We discuss and share work • Happiness gained by sharing raising the children • Very good as I help a lot with household work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We share and do most of the work together, discuss before doing or buying most of the things for home. We are together most of the time during leisure time, which was uncommon back home • More open communication and more job sharing • Support each other • Greater involvement in decision making process, both domestic and non-domestic matters • We share responsibilities • Better understanding
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Table 4.12: Negative changes experienced by husbands and wives

Husbands	Wives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes, get annoyed with wife when I have to do household work since being a male member, I am not expected to do certain jobs like cooking, washing and cleaning. Back home you don't do that sort of job, it is mostly done by female member of the family. • Become more distant from parents and relatives • There is not much time available to relax and enjoy life due to busy life • Tiring and stressful at times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some times very stressful when husband thinks that whatever is happening at home is because of my desire and my comfort • Less time to relax, too busy • More responsible, make all decision by ourselves

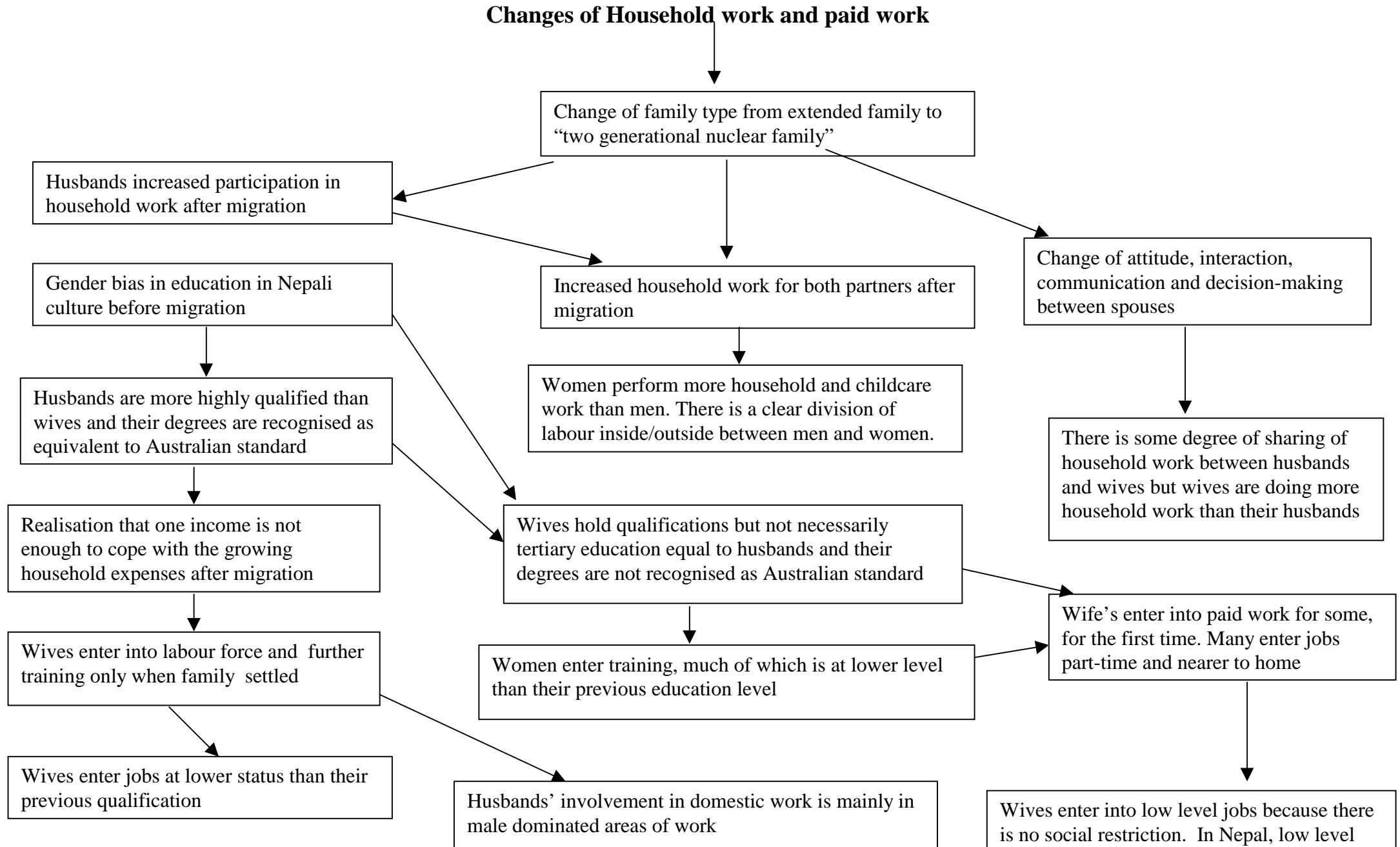
The comments on changes in communication and decision making between the spouses with regard to household activities and family matters indicate that they have become closer in terms of sharing household work and making decisions jointly. These decisions affect in particular participation in education, training, employment, household work and the welfare of children.

The greater companionship, intimacy and closeness which these jointly borne responsibilities have engendered is apparent. Since becoming a two generational nuclear family unit, the couples have of necessity turned to each for their mutual support, social interaction, friendship and decision - making capability which was previously focussed on the other extended family members in Nepal. Here the couple is the focus, in Nepal it was the extended family and indeed the husband's extended family. However, tensions and conflict remain evident in the responses, such as for one male who stated that "*I get annoyed with wife when I have to do household work since being a male member, I am not expected to do jobs like cooking, washing and cleaning, back home, it is mostly done by female members of the family*". Other causes of tension and conflict between husband and wife are not having much time to relax and enjoy life because of the efforts to juggle household work and paid work. Another significant matter raised by the men is being distant from parents and relatives after migration. For women, having little time for relaxation and enjoyment, because of their busy life is similar to the responses of their husbands. Other matters expressed by wives are based on incidents which can be seen as "gendered". For example "*some times, very stressful when my husband thinks that whatever is happening at home is because of my desire and for my comfort*". One important factor that women saw as causing conflict and tension between husband and wife after migration is their necessarily total and unassisted responsibility for making decisions. Before migration some major household decision were made collectively. There has been a significant shift from the cultural/family pattern of Nepal, and new tension has arisen about the extent of men's domestic involvement. Concerns are also expressed about the loss of the extended family network and the absence of relatives in Australia.

The information indicates that after migration (moving from an extended family culture to a nuclear family culture) the roles of husbands and wives changed from dependence on family members and servants prior to migration to the couple's independence from extended family. This led to interdependence between husbands and wives in communication and decision making in their day to day lives. This practice was not evident in the extended family culture prior to migration.

Some negative consequences of migration which have emerged from the study are that juggling of all three responsibilities: employment, household work and childcare, can be stressful. Relatives in Nepal are missed and respondents have less time to relax and socialise with friends. This clearly shows the loss of family support networks. There are Australian-based friendship networks but these do not provide the types of regular assistance and support which families provided in Nepal. There are new opportunities, new lifestyles, new intimacy and companionship, new sharing of work and responsibilities, but there are also losses, and these are expressed as "stress", and the constant necessity to juggle responsibilities at work and home.

Flow Chart 4.1: Findings from this study



CHAPTER FIVE

5. Analysis and discussion: shift of housework and paid work of husbands and wives after migration

Introduction

The research findings described in chapter four indicate that migrating to Australia from Nepal plays a significant role in a shift of domestic and paid work of husbands and wives. The present study of two parent families in professional skilled occupations who have migrated from Nepal shows a significant change in their day to day household and paid work as well as their responsibility to take care of their children before and after migration. But this study also shows that women remain the principal or primary carer of children and men, on the other hand, remain the primary 'breadwinner'. This finding is analogous to the findings of Bittman et.al (1990 –91) and Baxter, Gibson and Lynch – Blossie (1990) in the case of Australian families in general.

This chapter discusses the impact of migration on the paid and domestic work of husbands and wives; how the employment of wives has changed; how husbands' involvement in household work has changed; how both partners are undertaking more household work in new circumstances without servants or extended family. This chapter further discusses the significant finding that the male respondents are undertaking household work responsibilities in Australia. Such tasks would have been totally contrary to the extended family culture and to widely held concepts of masculine identity in Nepal. This study also discusses the change of life style, change of communication, interaction and issues encountered in sharing these multiple roles between husband and wife after migration. These changes are explained with respect to socio-economic variables - education, occupation, income; household activities in Nepal and after migration. In particular, the change in family form from an extended to a nuclear family is emphasised.

Also, while the move to inter-dependence in paid and household work has been very significant, there are clear gender differences: men tend to retain the 'masculine' spheres of "outside domestic" activities; women continue to be considerably more involved with the care of children, are employed much nearer to their homes than are their husbands, carry out

the “indoor” tasks. A gender-based division of labour remains, even though both partners are doing more and different tasks post migration.

5.1 *Husbands’ increased participation in household work*

The most significant finding of this study is that the male respondents are undertaking more household responsibilities and tasks after migration, which is contrary to the extended family culture in Nepal. Household work by the male members of the family in the extended family, in general, is not expected. By tradition, household work is considered the work of women or hired labour or maid in the case of high economic status families in Nepal, including Brahmin and Newar families. In these families the bulk of household work is done by either the senior females of the family or by a hired maid, not by the young people. This is more the case for male than female young adults. Sons are generally encouraged to concentrate more on education rather than engage in household work. This study clearly indicates that all male respondents who have never done household work before migration have started doing household work after migration. Several factors, which play important roles in influencing husbands’ increased involvement in household work, are discussed below.

Interviews with husbands and wives show that husbands’ increased participation in household work is contrary to their role before migration and is justified in terms of the stated rationale of “sharing work with wives”. The main reason expressed is the absence of the extended family living in Australia. The second reason is not being able to afford to employ household help. The third reason is the availability of modern technical household appliances such as the vacuum cleaner, dish washer, washing machine and lawn mower which make household work easier. Modern technology has made household work less odious and less time consuming, while these activities in Nepal are mostly done manually.

This finding is supported by research on contemporary Australian families as discussed by Baxter (1998, p.58) in her study on *Moving Towards Equality? Question of Change and Equality in Household Work Patterns*. She stated that “as new technologies were introduced into the household, house work changed again. With the introduction of gas and later electricity to many Australian urban homes in the 1920s and 1930s, the washing machines, vacuum cleaner and refrigerator rapidly became essential house appliances” (Reiger, 1985).

As my study shows, since women after migration entered paid jobs, and many entered paid employment for the first time, it became necessary for husbands to participate in household work. At least husbands expressed the view that the workforce participation of their wives was the catalyst for their own involvement in household work. As one of the male respondents stated “*it would be more inappropriate to leave all work done by wife if she is also working full-time in a paid job.*” This expressed belief supports other research findings such as Berardo et al referring to Feber (1982) who stated that “the vast majority of husbands and wives believe that when the wife is employed the husband should do more of the household work than he would do if she were not employed” (p. 381). Similarly, Bird and Bird (1984) referring to the work of Pleck and Rustad (1981) stated that “there is a clear trend for more equal sharing of tasks especially when both spouses are employed” (p. 345).

5.2 Gender bias in education

Paid and unpaid work patterns of Nepali couples in Australia show a gender bias which is strongly influenced by their gendered experiences of education and employment in Nepal. Bista (1991) in his book *Fatalism and Development in Nepal* stated that “a university degree is considered as a licence to reach the top of the social hierarchy” (p.132). Dhungel’s (1983) study reveals that “ethnic groups such as Brahmin and Newar who are considered to be of high status socially and economically use education facilities more than socio-economically less privileged ethnic groups in Nepal” (p.69). The same study indicated that “Brahmin and Newar placed high value on education in order to gain status” (p.69). Also, the same study found that more boys than girls go to school in all caste groups in Nepal. Among the girls school enrolment was greater among the higher status ethnic groups such as Brahmin and Newar: there is a significant difference in sending girls to school according to ethnicity (Dhungel, 1983, p.69).

The changes that this study found in paid work and domestic work between husband and wife are related to the level of previous and current educational qualifications of husbands and wives. Husbands were more highly qualified than wives before migration and their degrees are recognized as an equivalent degree of an Australian University. On the other hand, all wives were also vocationally qualified, but not all have tertiary education equal to their

husbands and their degrees are not assessed as equivalent to Australian standards. After migrating to Australia, out of fourteen men, nine have undertaken further education and training, mostly relating to their jobs, and all achieved further education and training before their wives had that opportunity. Most of the women gained qualifications in Australia at a lower level than what they had acquired previously. These trends make a significant impact on the change of household work and paid work between husbands and wives after migration. Thus the wife's lower level of educational attainment compared with her husband before migration and the different pattern of further education and training for husbands and wives after migration are important factors which restricted women's entry into occupations equal in status and remuneration to that of their husband. This can be explained taking into consideration various factors such as: family attitudes towards education for boys and girls in Nepal; consideration of husbands as the primary breadwinner and consideration of wives' primary responsibility for household work and childcare.

Cultural factors like the patrilineal and patriarchal society in Nepal also played a significant role in determining why husbands were more qualified than wives and why wives were relatively disadvantaged in education and training before and even after coming to Australia. The reason why husbands were more qualified than wives is because of the male-centered society in Nepal where traditionally boys are given first priority in education, rather than girls, because men are considered to be the primary earners of family income. The educational attainment of both men and women from high status Brahmin and Newar is high. However, there are significant differences in the education level of husband and wife before as well as after migration. As a result, there was little basis on which the allocation to men of the primary breadwinner role and to women of the primary child care role might be challenged or over-turned.

5.3 Wives' entry into paid employment

This study reveals that most women after migration entered into paid employment and for many, this was their first experience of employment. The reason given by the women for taking employment is basically for financial reasons: to cope with the high living costs in Australia. Women enter into paid work because of the realisation that one income is not

enough to cope with the growing household expenses after migration. When these women were in Nepal, they did not consider that they should work in a paid job.

Previous studies indicate that traditionally, Brahmin and Newar conservative families do not allow their daughters or daughters-in law to work outside of the home. Outside work is regarded to be detrimental to their family's respect and values. Among traditional well-to-do Newar families the daughter-in-law or even daughters are not allowed to work outside their home because of the risk of losing prestige. This is so even though the women may be well educated.

Kondos (1989) referring to Bennett's study on high caste Hindu Nepalese "*Dangerous Wives and Sacred Sisters: Social and Symbolic Roles of High Caste Women in Nepal*" stated that there are not only social differences between males and females, there are differences within the same sex according to social position in the family. Daughters-in-law and daughters are treated differently in high caste Hindu Nepalese families. Kondos further stated that "Bennett claims that in the case of high caste Nepalese women gender notions articulate major categories, the affinal women (wives) and consanguinal women (sisters), where the former are defined negatively and the latter positively according to the religious symbolic system" (p. 163). Kondos agrees with the findings of Bennett. The implication of Bennett's findings to this study is that women gain a higher status in their couple family in Australia than they had in the extended family household in Nepal. Similar conclusions are drawn in the study of Bhachu (1993) who found that among East African Sikh women who migrated to London, the shift from the extended family household to the nuclear family household and an emphasis on the married couples rather than the kin group improved the status of women and children through improvement in their education and qualifications.

As this study shows, after migration to a new country away from a traditional society closely bounded by family and kin, women are enabled to do a variety of paid work: there is no social restriction which under-values low level work. Many women have undertaken training in Australia, many at a lower level lower than their previous education. Also, they are employed in jobs at a lower level of skill and remuneration than might be expected given their previous qualifications. Many women in the study stated that they do not have any

restriction in Australia on the sorts of jobs which they might enter, and most entered training in industries where jobs are available, for example childcare studies.

5.4 *Increased household work for husbands and wives*

After migration, considerably more household work was added to the responsibilities and work loads of both husbands and wives. The changes to paid and household work for husbands and wives after migration are dependent on the current occupational status of both. The traditional Nepali gender bias in household work, especially cooking, cleaning and childcare, changed after migration. These are no longer defined exclusively as women's jobs, and men are also involved in such types of household work. Those who have never done this type of work in Nepal have started participating in the work of the household after migration. Husbands' household work changed from none before migration to regular involvement after settlement in Australia. This is probably a consequence of the absence of the husbands' family, who would otherwise in Nepal have enforced traditional cultural patterns along strictly gendered lines. But, the allocation to women of the prime responsibility for childcare remains, while the conception of masculine identity and responsibility remains that of primary breadwinner. This finding is similar to Russell's study (1996) on *Changing Meanings - Family Household Work Involvement* which found that in general men perform household maintenance, repair the car and mow the lawn etc. In other words, a gendered division of household labour is evident in these migrant families, as in the general population.

5.5 *Women perform more household work than men*

Another significant finding of this study is that wives perform more household work and childcare than their husbands. This study also shows that women were expected to wait to enter education and training or employment. This is because they were required at home to take care of household and children in the initial period of settlement when their husband entered education and training and employment, his education and employment having been given priority. Only when the husband was in a job, children went to school or the younger children were found a place at a childcare center and when general family life settled down, did wives enter further education and employment. When wives entered education and training they chose to study or work at places closer to home to be able to do their household

work and to look after children. Sim and Dhungel (1992), studying women's participation in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) in New South Wales, also found that non-English speaking background women, particularly recently arrived women, indicated that they wanted to undertake their technical and further education course between 9.30am and 2.30 pm (p.42). The reason given was to be able to manage their childcare and household responsibilities side by side. These findings clearly indicate that wives do more household work and childcare than men. This finding confirms Bittman's study (1991) which found that among Australian families even if a woman has paid work she is still expected to do more household work than her partner. In the case of child care responsibility, the Australian Bureau of Statistics study (1992) also shows that the presence of very young children reduces the hours of paid work of employed mothers but not of employed fathers. Russell (1996) similarly found that women are likely to engage more in work associated with the care of young children such as bathing, feeding and getting up to the child at night. Similarly, Canadian findings (Lam and Haddad, 1992) also show that men perform fewer hours of household work than their spouses despite women's increased participation in paid work. All these findings indicate that there is a close similarity between the working patterns of immigrant families after migration with that of Australian families in terms of gender differences.

5.6 Changes of lifestyle of husbands and wives after migration

Another significant finding of this study is the change of lifestyle of husbands and wives after migration. The major change in household work is from close reliance on and interconnection with other family members accompanied by the labour of a "house-maid" prior to migration, to the couples' "independence" and self-reliance in doing all household work after migration, in the absence of extended family members. The change of lifestyle entails a move from reliance on family members and servants to more independent decision-making in household work and family matters, such as children's education, household expenditure, and the choosing of jobs.

Bista (1991) found that "Dependence on parents is much higher and continues for a much longer period among Nepalese compared to other people around the world. In fact, many Nepalese continue to rely on their parents through their lives and never become independent"

(p. 70). Bista further writes “People at any level of society and within any ethnic, caste or linguistic group, are never taught to be independent from their parents. Many may be successful economically, but not expected to be independent ritually, socially or psychologically. Many traditional rituals have to be conducted by father or male older sibling” (p.70). An earlier anthropological study done by Kondos (1989) on issues relating to high caste Nepalese women also found that the reason to prefer a son and to give importance to a son is because of social and cultural reasons which is the importance of the son for the performance of the parents’ death rituals.

There is a significant change in the relationship between Nepalese-born husbands and wives in Australia. Couples turn to each other for companionship and attempt to share household work. This shows a considerable change in lifestyle, with husbands spending much of their time with their spouse while in Nepal they used to spend much of their time away from home with friends and other relatives after their office hours. During the interview some of the male respondents stated that they used to spend much of their evening time in Nepal with their friends and return home late.

This study also shows that men and women learnt to drive a car after migration and this changed their lifestyle, facilitated participation in tasks such as grocery shopping for women, driving their spouse to the train station and children to schools or childcare centers. The fact that wives take their husband to the train station does not mean that the husband does not drive. In fact normally husbands were the first to learn to drive. Because families generally own one car, most wives use the car for household work during the daytime.

This study also shows that change of situation, in fact, change of domicile and family composition leads to changes of roles and responsibilities for individuals. Those who were previously dependent on other family members are taking new roles of family responsibility. Mutual commitment and support between husbands and wives can balance to some extent their dual roles of household and outside work and looking after young children. These changes brought couples into closer relationship and made them more willing to share activities, which they had not done before. The contribution of both partners in their new post- migration circumstances and family commitments is one of greater balance, in the sense

that husbands are doing more household work and wives have entered into further education and training and then into employment.

5.7 Attitude, interaction, communication and decision making

This study shows some significant changes in attitude, interaction, communication and decision making between husbands and wives after migration. Some of the comments made by husbands such as “*we are becoming very close to each other in making decisions about family matters and children’s education, household expenditure and future planning*” show change towards a companionate relationship. Similarly wives comments like “*I got an opportunity to know my husband more closely in aspects – managing our financial situation, helping children’s education etc*” signifies the mutuality which has developed. This finding is contrary to the work of Dube (1980) who found that “women’s participation in the labour force does not help her to reduce her time in household work, rather it is likely to add an extra burden to her current work load. Further, when wives become actively involved in employment, the husband is unlikely to take part in a greater degree of responsibility toward family welfare and is even likely to develop a sense of relaxation in his own work efforts” (p.27).

The major factor in this study that explains the departure from Dube’s study is the migration experience: coming to a new environment and a new form of domicile and family composition away from the extended family, and not having support or social control from family members played a significant role in altering husbands’ involvement in household work.

Hartley (1995) in her study *Families and Cultural Diversity in Australia* found that the complex set of values, attitudes, behaviour and life experiences which people bring with them; the circumstances of migration; the impact of migration itself, which involves leaving behind an environment that is familiar and usually integral to how people define themselves; and Australian social and economic conditions on and following arrival are important factors in determining migrants’ new role in Australia. This study supports Hartley findings.

5.8 Issues raised in juggling household work, paid work and childcare responsibilities after migration

Much has been discussed in the previous sections regarding aspects of lifestyle changes after migration which respondents reported as being positive, i.e. enhancing their sense of well-being and satisfaction, albeit whilst juggling additional roles and responsibilities which are extremely time-consuming. However, there were negative issues raised by both husbands and wives. For the men the loss of company of close friends and relatives and loss of social contacts are the major issues raised following migration. In Nepal, they could afford and were culturally “permitted” to spend their time with friends and get support and advice from them in family matters and career development. Interviews with male respondents reveal that they see themselves having inadequate time to socialise with friends. In Nepal, they had an opportunity to visit their friends and relatives on a regular basis, even during week days after working hours in the evening at restaurants or other meeting places. This opportunity to socialise with friends and family relatives was lost after migration. This is very much the case for male respondents. For female respondents the major issue raised after migration was loss of family relatives, which they expressed as “get home sick”. While loss of close friends was not as big an issue for women respondents, having to look after dependent children at all times and having to carry out more household work inside the home, because of loss of extended family support and loss of the services of a hired maid, were the major issues noted by female respondents. Another issue raised by both men and women was the loss of cultural and ritualistic participation. Participating in cultural and religious events has major significance for most of the families. Quite often people visited temples and attended religious functions, especially during the weekend and on holidays while in Nepal. Such types of activities were lost after migration to Australia. Very few families have visited temples in Sydney, such as Hindu temples in Westmead, Helensburgh and Buddhist temples in Wollongong and Campbelltown. Another issue expressed by both men and women is the time spent in cooking. Due to culturally-observed practices, most families spend much of their time in the kitchen preparing meals of their choice and in most cases preparing

traditional items which are time consuming. There has been very little substitution of commercially prepared “fast foods”.

Conclusion

To encompass the above findings, the study concludes that there is a clear gender division of labour between men and women in the couple families: with the increased participation of married women in the labour force, both spouses are doing more household work but each is doing different tasks. Men tend to take on considerably more involvement in the “masculine” sphere of “outside” domestic labour and women are considerably more involved with childcare and “inside work”. Women take up paid work nearer to home in order to maximise the time available for childcare and household responsibilities. The study also concludes that there are some distinct factors which differentiate the patterns of household and paid work adopted by partners in migrant families compared with the household and paid work patterns of partners in Australian born families. The major factor identified in this study is the migration experience, which plays a significant role in the working patterns of husbands and wives. Both partners are undertaking more household work in new circumstances; wives are employed (many for the first time); the family dynamics and structure are changed from a patrilineal extended family to a two generational nuclear family, where the partners turn to each other for mutual support, intimacy and self reliance in relation to family decisions. Another important factor that differentiates adjustment in the working patterns of husbands and wives is the category of migration and the circumstances of and reasons for migration. The “professional” migrants in this study migrated as a family unit, where dependent spouse and children migrated at the same time. Unlike other categories of migrants who are forced to migrate because of political upheaval, persecution, warfare, these skilled migrants left their country of origin by their own decision. Both men and women in this migration category are able to undertake further education and training and take up employment. There is a clear gender differentiation in the pathways, in that men entered further education and found suitable employment before their wives did, but nevertheless, the wives eventually also undertook further training and found employment. This factor, above all, set the conditions within which household work was organised and the responsibilities adopted and carried out. However of crucial importance, the study also found that there are new opportunities, new lifestyles, new intimacy and companionship, new sharing of work and responsibilities.

However, there are losses too, and these are expressed as “stress”, and the constant necessity to juggle responsibilities at work and home. There are Australian based friendship networks but these clearly do not provide the types of regular assistance and support which family provided in Nepal.

This study is important because it provides information which helps to understand paid and unpaid work patterns of Nepalese families who migrated in the skilled or professional migration category. Such information was not available previously. This study will also contribute to the understanding of ever-challenging research on changing patterns of paid and unpaid work of couple families in two ways:

Firstly, this study shows strong similarities in the gender division of labour between migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds families and Australian-born families. Some of the similarities gleaned from this study are: more married women are entering paid work; husbands’ involvement in domestic work increases with increase in paid work of wives; women perform more household and childcare work than men; and husbands’ involvement in domestic work is mainly in male defined areas of work.

Secondly, this study also shows the distinct differences in the patterns of household and paid work adopted by migrant families compared with Australian-born families. These differences are related to changes accompanying migration: both partners are undertaking more household work in new circumstances; changes from an extended patrilineal and patriarchal family to a two-generational nuclear family emphasising spousal companionship and intimacy; loss of household support from family relatives and house maids.

This research also found that the migrant men and women from Nepal who were part of this study sought out and took advantage of opportunities for further education and training and both partners found and stayed in employment. As a result, they were able to improve their standard of living and adopt a changed life-style. In particular, the status of women was raised: they were included in household decision-making and the allocation of major responsibilities; they entered employment and gained greater financial security. For most, these changes would have been impossible to achieve in their country of origin, due to the restraints and controls of the social, cultural and familial systems.

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Appendix: Interview Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

A study of Nepalese families' paid and unpaid work after migration to Australia

Guidelines for gathering information

The purpose of this study is to gather information on how partners in 'couple' families with children manage their household work, paid work, and at the same time take care of their children. This study will also collect information on problems they may have faced while managing these three different activities, in other words, household work, paid work and child care. Furthermore, the study will also gather information on the type of household work they had have done before and after their arrival in Australia.

The families selected for this study are from Nepal, who came to Australia under the skills or professional migration category. The families selected will be in paid employment, full-time, part-time, or casual with at least one dependent child.

Selection of Informants - (14 couples ie 28 individuals)

- 'Couple' families from Nepal
- Interview with both husband and wife
- Family with at least one dependent child
- Both 'couple' employed full-time/part/time or casual
- Migrated under professional category
- Arrived Australia less than 10 years ie migrated between 1988 - 1999

A. Personal details

Q.1 When did you come to Australia?

Year

Q.2 Where were you born (country of birth)?

Country of origin

Q.3 What is your age group (yr)?

- 15- 24 yrs
- 25 –34 yrs
- 35 – 44 yrs
- 45 – 54 yrs
- 55 yrs and over

Q.4 How many children do you have?

Q.5 Where were your children born?

- First child
- Second child
- Third child
- Other children

Q.6 How old are your children (yr)?

- First child
- Second child
- Third child

Q.7 Do you have any other members of the family living with you?

- Yes No

If yes, how many and who are they (relationship to you) -----

Q.8 What highest formal qualifications do you have?

- Post Doctoral degree
- PhD
- Master degree
- Post Graduate degree
- Bachelor

- Under graduate degree
- Diploma

- Graduate Diploma
- Associate Diploma
- Certificate
- Finished secondary school
- Did not complete secondary school
- Other

Q.9 Where did you gain your highest formal qualification?

- Overseas (please specify the country)
- Australia

Q.10 Are you currently doing any course/study?

- Yes No

If yes, please indicate the course and its duration -----

Q.11 Have you done any further education / training after you have migrated to Australia?

- Yes No

If yes, please specify the course and its duration -----

B. Paid work

After arriving to Australia

Q.12 What is your present occupation/position? _____

Q.13 What type of organisation/agency do you work for?

- Government department
Business/industry
Tertiary education institute
Other

Q. 14 What was your previous occupation in Australia or country of origin?

Q.15 What is your current employment status?

- Full-time
Part-time
Casual

Q.16 Is this the first time that you are in a paid job in Australia?

- Yes No

Q.17 How long have you been in your current job? _____

Q.18 Which is your gross salary range?

- Up to \$20,000
\$21,000 - \$29,000
\$30,000 - \$39,000
\$40,000 - \$49,000
\$50,000 - \$59,000
\$60,000 and above

Q.19 How long do you have to travel to work (hr)? -----

Q.20 Do you have a driving licence?

- Yes No

If yes, where did you get, and where did you learn to drive?

Overseas
Australia

Q.21 How do you travel to work?

Catch a train
Catch a bus
Drive
Other

Paid work prior coming to Australia

Q.22 Were you ever employed in your country of origin?

Yes No

Q.23 What was your occupation? -----

Q.24 What type of organisation/agency did you work? -----

Q.25 If yes, what was your status of employment then?

Full-time employed
Part-time employed
Casual

C. Household Work

Prior to migrating

Q.26 Did you do any household work (for example, preparing food, cleaning, washing, ironing, shopping, child minding) in your country of origin?

- Yes, regularly
- Yes, occasionally
- No, none

If yes, please specify the type of household work you have done -----

If no household work performed, why not -----

After arriving to Australia

Q.27 Do you do any household work?

- Yes, regularly
- Yes, occasionally
- No, none

If yes, what type of work do you do, for example:

<i>Preparing food</i>	<i>regularly</i>	<i>occasionally</i>	<i>never</i>
<i>(on a daily or weekly basis)</i>			
. breakfast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. lunch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. dinner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Cleaning/vacuuming/sweeping

. rooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. bathrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. patio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. verandah	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. windows and screens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Tiding of bedrooms

. Own room	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Washing/drying

. dishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Ironing</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<i>Gardening</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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. watering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. racking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. lawn mowing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Home maintenance/improvement

. painting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. repairing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Household shopping</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Child minding</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| . giving bath (if required) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| . changing clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| . feeding (if required) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| . playing with children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

D. Child Care

Q.28 Does your children go to pre-school, school, after-school care?

Yes No

If no, who takes care of your child?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Parent | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Friend | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Relative | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Child Care Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (e.g. private care/neighbour) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do not need | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q.29 What grade is your child in at school?

- | | |
|--------------|-------|
| First child | ----- |
| Second child | ----- |
| Third child | ----- |
| Fourth child | ----- |

Q.30 Do you help your child in doing their homework?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, how often do you help them?

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Very often | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Often | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Only when asked | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Q.31 Do you regularly call your child from your work place?

Yes No Not applicable

If yes, on an average how many times in a day do you call them?

Only once
Twice
More than twice
Do not want to specify

Q.32 When your children get sick who normally takes the day off?

Self
Wife/husband
Both
Do not take days off

Q.33 When your child is sick who normally takes him/her to medical centre/clinic?

Self
Wife/husband
Both
Other

Q.34 Do you get support from others?

Yes No

If yes, from whom (for example, husband/wife, relative, friends, paid labour) and type of support you get from them -----

If no, why not -----

Q.35 Is the current household work which you are doing now of a similar nature to what you used to do in your country of origin?

Similar

Not similar

If similar, please specify -----

If not similar, could you please specify the difference -----

Q.36 Are you satisfied with what you are doing in your current household work?

Yes

No

No comment

If yes, in your opinion what would be the reason(s) (for example, enjoy household tasks, working, sharing work with wife/husband) -----

If no, why are you not happy (for example, never done before, hate to do work, too much work: doing outside and inside work no or little sharing with husband /wife)

Q.37 Could you please indicate any problems (for example family rift, stress, not doing well on job) that affect you presently while carrying out your household work and paid work)? -----

E. Attitudinal questions

Q.38 Do you agree with the following:

In families with young children, both parents should not work full-time

- Agree
Disagree
No comment

If agree, please give reasons -----

If disagree, please give reasons -----

Q.39 How important do you feel it necessary for both you and your partner to be employed?

- Very important
- Important
- Not important
- Not very important
- No comment

If very important or important, why -----

If not important or not very important, why -----

Q.40 Do you feel that your household work pattern has changed after immigrating to Australia?

- Yes No No comment

If yes, in what ways? -----

If no, comment further -----

Interaction, Communication and Decision making

Q.41 How would you say that your relationship has changed with your husband or wife since migration, please describe?

Positive

Negative

Q.42 How would you say that you have changed your life style since migration?

Positive

Negative

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(Thank you very much for your help).