

**AN ASSESSMENT OF SOME FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERFORMANCE OF
HOUSEHOLD TASKS AMONG WOMEN CIVIL SERVANTS IN LAGOS STATE**

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ABSTRACT: *This study investigated the assessment of some factors influencing the performance of household tasks among women civil servants in Lagos State. Three objectives and three research questions were formulated for the study. Three null hypotheses were postulated, and a sample of 520 women civil servants were drawn from nineteen ministries in Lagos State using proportional random sampling technique. Data were collected using a self designed questionnaire. ANOVA statistics was used to test the hypotheses of significance at 0.05 level of agreement. The findings revealed that (i) there was a significant difference among women civil servants of different educational level and the type of household tasks they performed. The second one indicated a significant difference among women civil servant of different occupational level and the availability of labour saving devices for the performance of household tasks. (iii) revealed that significant differences did not occur among the women civil servants with different income level and hours spent for the performance of the tasks. Necessary recommendations and conclusions were made.*

KEYWORDS: Performance, Household tasks, Women civil servant, Education, Income, Occupation

INTRODUCTION

The Household is a dynamic institution and organization that is constantly adapting to internal and external influences. In a highly monetized and market oriented society, the production of goods and services for household consumption, is a key household economic activity that involves the participation of household members in the labour force. In the market economy, earned income is an important determinant of a family level of economic well-being. In the past, the husband was usually the sole provider of this earned income and the wife's contribution to family economic well-being was most of the monetary income from her household production activities. But in recent times, there has been a great increase in the number of women entering the labour force. Women are no more confined to the domestic chores at home because of their participation in the labour force. This can be considered as economic indicators since it helps to reduce the unemployment rate, and poverty which increases the overall standard of living. It also helps them to contribute to the family income and to achieve economic independence.

Despite the economic importance of women participation in the labour force, there is always a conflict between her family roles and her job. It has been observed that women, in the developing countries perform dual roles as income generator and primary caregivers to their children in family. By performing dual roles, in most of the cases it is hard for working mothers to fulfil the full commitments towards family as well as their professions. As a result, employed women often experience frustration with roles, conflicts, lack of time, energy, and generalized stress. Richardson and Robinson (1993), stated that women household tasks have no limit or boundaries, with no clear beginning and end points, with no guaranteed space or time for leisure. In Nigeria today, especially in the Southern states more and more women are either engaged in private business, as petty traders, or are in the paid employment with the result that they have less time to allocate to household activities. They all have the responsibility of managing a home, no matter their place of work. Demands of home making and paid employment can impose substantial limitations on the amount of time left for the family. A typical example is the hustling and bustling life of Lagos metropolis, where the women civil servants leave home early in the morning for their places of work where they spend long time in traffic congestion making them get home late, tired and unable to perform their household tasks. These make some educated, employed and non-employed men to complain that their houses and surroundings are not kept clean. Others also complain about dirty kitchen, sitting room, unpalatable meal, dirty children, and laziness on the part of their wives. On the other hand, wives also complained about having to do many work. Despite their education, occupation and income women still have problem with these household chores. Hence there is need for intervention that will lessen labour input requirement of women and at the same time maximize productivity. However, with the advent of modernization, urbanization and industrialization, the picture begins to change and the women found themselves undergoing a series of functional structures (Olagunju, 2000). This paper therefore sought to find out factors that are associated with women civil servants' involvement in paid employment and its influence on the performance of household tasks, these major factors analyses both social impacts and economic impacts of social activity.

Education of the women and the performance of Household tasks

King and Hill in Shittu (2006), opined "education is an investment that stays with an individual throughout life". The researchers stated further that the importance of women education can be seen from three dimensions. Firstly, women in Nigeria constitute about 60% of the country's population in 1991 census. Secondly, women spend more time in the early socialization and education of children than men and thirdly education for its own sake is a liberation tool which no man can afford to lose sight of. However, experience and empirical studies have shown that in many countries particularly in developing ones in which Nigeria is one, women education is given secondary education vis-a-vis of males. Nevertheless, women education is important for the economic development of the society. The relevant women education will enable women function effectively in their roles as homemakers and as working class women. In Nigeria, the adult male literacy rate is 62%, almost twice that of females 39% (UNICEF, 1997). Literacy would have a positive impact and a marked shift in the social status of women (Yates, 1997). Osuman (1997) indicated that in developing countries, fewer females are being educated than males. This disparity gives an average of 21% difference. Newsman (1998) observed that the educational opportunities open to women in developing countries and the literacy levels achieved

although generally improving, remained markedly worse than those of men in the same countries. On the other hand, in certain regions, notably in sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab states, and southern Asia, the absolute number of illiterate adults appear to be increasing with women in the sub-substantial majority.

Otu (2003), asserted that allowing women access to education serves as an important indication to social progress; have a direct effect on health, nutrition and family planning; have positive influence on girl's education for future generation; and ensures social equity and sustenance of development effort.

Education being essential to everyone on earth is beneficial not only to the one who has acquired it, but also to those living together with him or her. The dynamic potentials of educated women in the third world countries are that:

- i. Education enables women to improve their family's health and nutritional status.
- ii. Education enhances women opportunities to participate on the wage economy and thus improve their family's standard of living.
- iii. Education enables women to participate in family decision making.
- iv. Education improves women child rearing practices

Buor (2001), also reported that mother's education showed positive relationship with the use of facilities that promote the health of the child. The ability of women to produce healthy surviving children as well as take care of other household services depends largely on their physical health conditions, knowledge, skills and cosmogony, which is largely dependant on their educational level.

Income of the women and the performance of Household tasks

Salamon (1999), defined income as the increase in an economic benefit during the accounting period in the form of inflows or enhancement of assets or decrease in liabilities that result in the increase in equity other than those relating to contributions from equity participants. It is also that total amount of money received from employment (salary, wages, tips) or wages, profits from financial instrument (interest, dividend, total gains) or other sources (welfare, disability, child support, social security and pensions). In the urban areas, the women civil servants are found in almost all sectors of the economy and their income level can be determined by the social class they belong to. This means that women's earnings normally cannot, and usually are not expected to supplant men's within family finances. Despite generally low earnings, the contribution women make to family finances is nevertheless of considerable importance for raising their families' standard of living. There are primarily three factors that determine how a woman's entrance into the labor market will affect herself and her family. These are the amount of money she brings in by working, the monetary costs incurred by having a job, and the effect that her absence from the home has on herself and her family. Broader things such as the gender gap in wages, the cost of childcare, and the effects of childcare influence these factors. Although the relevance of each varies with family structure, they tend to influence all families.

Occupation and the performance of Household Tasks

Research in Western societies showed the relative contributions of household members to household tasks were affected by their labour force participation, whether they generate an income or not, and how dependent they were on others for economic support. It follows that

women contribute less to the household labour when their involvement in paid work gives them an income and decreases available time to perform household tasks. As more women join the labour force, researchers have hypothesized that their load of household tasks lessens and is absorbed by men within the household or by paid helpers. On the other hand, the results of other research as compiled by Habib, Nuwayhid, and Joumana (1981), suggested that women's economic activity and income did not reduce their contribution to household labour in societies where marital power and financial resources remained in the hands of men. As important as the job may be, it does not even account for the constant and un-quantifiable attention mothers give to their children. Just as a woman's maternal duties are always taken for granted, her never-ending toil as a housewife rarely occasions expressions of appreciation within the family. The researcher maintained further that the expansion of the female labour force means that more and more women are finding it increasingly difficult to excel as housewife according to traditional standards.

However, in order to set realistic goals and standards of achievement within given time limitations, the homemaker needs to assess those of her personal characteristics that influence her time use and achievement. Salawu (2005), stated that "time like money can be made to meet needs and desire if its expenditure is planned". A skilful homemaker should be able to package into her day the routine work and tasks to be performed in the home within the few hours she has to spend at home after daily work. He further stated that everyone has the same amount of time in a day but each of us uses time differently. The researcher also showed that the high income group spent less time on household activities. This may be due to few hours spent at home and the use of labour saving equipment and service providers available to her. Budgeting time is important as budgeting money. After all, one can get money if one is really determined, one cannot get any more time.

Objectives of the Study

This study assessed the factors influencing the performance of household tasks among women civil servants in Lagos state. The objectives are to determine the:

- i. educational level of women civil servants and the types of household tasks performed.
- ii. availability of labour saving devices among women civil servants of different occupational level for the performance of household tasks in Lagos state.
- iii. the time spent among women civil servant of different income level in the performance of household tasks in Lagos State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are postulated for this research.

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference among women civil servant of different educational level and the types of household tasks performed in Lagos State.
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference among women civil servants of different occupational level and the availability of labour saving devices for the performance of household tasks in Lagos State, Nigeria.
- H₀₃: There is no significant difference among women civil servants of different income level in the time spent for the performance of household tasks in Lagos State.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

Descriptive research design was used for this study. In order to achieve this purpose a survey research method was employed. This was considered appropriate for this study since it had to collect data from women who were spread over the nineteen Ministries in Lagos Metropolis in Lagos State.

Population and Sample

The population for the study comprises of all women working in the civil service in Lagos State. The total population for the study was estimated at 5,200 (Lagos State manpower, 2008). In order to ensure a representative sample, proportional random sampling was used to select the respondents from the nineteen (19) Ministries. A sample size of 520 women civil servants representing 10% of the population was selected.

Instrumentation and Procedure

A self designed questionnaire was developed in relation to the objectives and hypotheses of the study. The questionnaire had the following sections: **Section A:** Demographic Factors (This section furnished the researcher about the respondent's personal information. It include age, religion, marital status, highest level of education, occupation, income level, employment status, number of hours spent at work per day and no of children. **Section B:** Types of household tasks performed. (This section discussed the various household tasks that may be available for performance. Twenty three (23) questions were used in this section to gather information.) **Section C:** Frequency at which household tasks are performed. This section discussed the frequency at which these tasks are performed. Five level of rating were used to obtain information on nine (9) questions to help solve the problem. **Section D:** Labour saving devices available for use in performing household tasks. This section discussed the various labour saving devices available for the performance of household tasks. Twenty (20) types of labour saving devices were listed to be ticked according to the once used by them. **Section E:** Time spent at performing household Tasks. This section discussed the time spent by women at performing household tasks in relation to Six (6) particular tasks. Six (6) level of hours grouped into three (3) were asked as questions to obtain information. The researcher with the help of two research assistants administered the questionnaire in each sector of the metropolis. The method used for the collection of data was on-the-spot collection; this is to avoid misplacement of questionnaire by the respondents. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents in each of the selected nineteen ministries. Data collected for this study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation which were used to test the levels of significance between the variables. The null hypotheses of the study were tested using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) because of the multiple levels of independent variables in the test. All the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Validity and Reliability

The face and content validity of the instrument was done by colleagues in the department of Home-Economics Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija-Epe. The reliability coefficient, using option was obtained at 0.9224 and 0.8028. This implies that the instrument is reliable for the study.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data analysis was obtained using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS).

RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference among the women civil servants of different educational level in the performance of household tasks in Lagos state.

Table 1a: ANOVA Statistics between the respondents in the different educational level and performance of household tasks.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	408.803	6	68.134	2.980	.009
Within Groups	11665.685	493	23.663		
Total	12074.488	499			

An understanding of the ANOVA (Analysis for Variance) table 1a above showed that there is indeed significant difference among the civil servants respondents in their performance level of household tasks. This position was adopted because the table shows that the calculated F value of 2.879 at *df* 6, 493 is higher than the statistical table or critical value of $F = 2.60$ at *df* 6, 493 indicating a significant difference. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference among the women civil servants of different educational level in their performance of household tasks is hereby rejected.

Table 1b: Mean score of Performance of Household Tasks

Levels of Education	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error
UNIVERSITY DEGREE	194	26.8454	5.08649	.36519
HND	108	26.9352	4.65094	.44745
NCE	100	26.2400	4.62999	.46300
OND	51	24.1569	5.27398	.73851
GRADE II TC	27	23.0741	4.55670	.87694
SSCE/TECHNICAL	17	22.0588	4.32248	1.04836
PRIMARY	3	20.000	1.73205	1.00000
TOTAL	500	26.5320	4.91908	.21999

Table 1b showed the mean (x) scores of the respondents by their educational level and performance of household tasks, the mean ranged from 26.9352 to 20.000. This showed that there is a significant difference in the household tasks that women with higher education degree performed. Buor (2001) reported that mother's education showed positive relationship with the use of facilities that promote health of the child, and the general house keep.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference among women civil servant of different occupational status and the availability of labour saving devices for the performance of household tasks

Table 2a: ANOVA difference among women civil servants of different occupational level and the availability of labour saving device for the performance of household tasks

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	42.083	3	14.028	32.050	0.000
Within Groups	217.084	496	.438		
Total	259.168	499			

Table 2a revealed the results obtained from hypothesis 2 which showed that significant difference occurs in the availability of labour saving devices and the performance of household tasks to the women civil servants based on their different occupational level. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics above showed that the calculated value of F was 32.050 and this value is higher than the critical F value of 2.60 at df 3, 496 which indicated a significant difference among the various occupational status in their availability of labour saving devices for household tasks. This implies that the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 2b: Mean scores of Availability of labour saving devices for Household Tasks performance

Occupation	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error
Administrator	142	5.2817	.89416	.07504
Secretary	157	5.4650	.78060	.06230
Director	59	6.0000	.00000	.00000
Others	142	5.9296	.25676	.02155
Total	500	5.6080	72068	.03223

In fact their calculated mean response of 6.0000, 5.9296, and 5.4650 for others and secretary respectively also confirms this significant mean differences, hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the views of the women civil servants of different occupational level and the availability of labour saving devices for the performance of household tasks is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis states that there is no significant difference among women civil servant of different income level and the amount of time spent for the performance of household tasks in Lagos State.

Table 3a: ANOVA Statistic on income Level and Hours Spent at performance of Household Tasks

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	.014	2	.007	.000	1.000
Within Groups	17310.554	497	34.830		
Total	17310.508				

Table 3a showed the result of ANOVA statistics above stating no significant difference in the hours spent in the performance of household tasks by women civil servants of different income level. This position was taken because the calculated value of F of .000 at df 2, 497 at 1.000 is much more lower than value of F critical of 2.60 at df 2, 497 at 0.05 level of significance. This position implies that the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 3b: Mean scores on income level and hours spent at performance of Household Tasks

Grade Level	N	Mean	SD	Std Error
07 – 09	181	16.3039	5.88892	0.43772
10 – 13	212	16.3066	5.93051	.40731
14 above	107	16.3178	5.86579	.56707
Total	500	16.3080	5.88987	.26340

The mean (x) responses of Table 3b indicated 16.3039, 16.3066 and 16.3178 of income level 07 -09, 10–13 and 14 above respectively. The result indicated that the mean of the various income level represented here were not statistically different, this confirm that there is no significance difference. Salawu (2005) stated that “time like money can be made to meet needs and desire if its expenditure is planned” After all, one can get money if one is really determined, one cannot get any more time, because there are twenty four hours in a day and what one can do with them is what makes one’s life.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data analysis was concentrated at presenting and interpreting the responses obtained from views of the respondents by subjecting them to descriptive and inferential statistics in order to be able to answer the research questions and to test the research hypotheses. This section will try to discuss on the findings so established. The outcome of the first hypothesis in Table 1a showed that significant differences exist in the performance of household tasks on the basis of the educational level of the women civil servants. The ANOVA statistical technique used to test this hypothesis showed significant difference between university degree holders and OND, TC II,

Primary and Secondary. The highly educated women are mostly executives, senior administrators or senior administrative secretaries whose work demand long periods in office having little or no time left for household tasks. They normally pay for these household tasks to be performed or use house help such as relatives, cooks etc. On the other hand the low educated ones are invariably on very low salary level and have no extra money to pay for these household tasks to be performed but instead performed these tasks themselves. This explains why significant difference was established among the women civil servants respondents in the household tasks performed in respect to their educational level. Table 2 showed the different time that these women civil servants spend in performing their task. While 26.4% of them spend between 2-3 hours daily to perform their tasks. The reasons why some go to bed so late could be due to the fact that they return from work late around 9-10 p.m. or 7-8 p.m. and have to do the aforementioned basic household tasks before they sleep.

Table 3a showed a significant difference in the results of hypothesis 3 which had a significant difference in the availability of labour saving devices for the performance of household tasks on the basis of their occupational level. Outcome showed that grade level 14 and above use these labour saving devices more, followed by grade level 10-13 while least users of these labour saving devices are the low level grades of 07-09. The explanation for this outcome is obvious. The very rich women civil servants of the grade level 14 and above earn very high salaries and are well placed occupationally and therefore have extra money to buy/acquire these very expensive labour saving devices like washing machine, microwave oven, electric sandwich maker, deep freezers, toasting machine etc. On the other hand, the lowly grade level women civil servants of grade level 07-09 and even 10-13 earn relatively lower salaries. These meager salaries were not even enough to buy basic necessities like food, shelter and clothing not to talk of having excess to buy these very expensive labour saving devices. This huge economical gap difference between the rich and the poor women civil servant explains why significant difference exists between the women civil servants in the availability of labour saving devices on the basis of their occupational level.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The paper looked at factors influencing the performance of household tasks among women civil servants in urban areas. The woman's education, occupation and level of income have played a role in this paper, exposing to the women ability to take care of their household tasks using the knowledge, skills, exposure, economic power and autonomy which they have to improve their task performance, rest and also to have time for her marital roles. In conclusion, this paper saw the need for more information and assess to some services available on ways women could alleviate some of these problems of task performance.

- It was obvious that the home fronts suffer some neglect as a result of lack of time on the part of woman.
- The pressure of household task performance has made some women neglect to their marital roles to their husbands, therefore encouraging intruders into their family.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i Availability of labour saving devices will reduce tension, time and energy in carrying out household tasks. This can be achieved by government importing and subsidizing for such devices.
- iii There is need to create awareness among women on the use of labour saving and factors to consider before purchasing them to reduce tension, time and energy in performing household tasks.
- iii Women need to understand the advantages of planning their household tasks before going into performing them.
- v Non-Governmental organization should arrange women forum inform of seminars, workshops, radio and television programmes for proper performance of household tasks which brings satisfaction and accomplishment in the family

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