The Filipino family is the basic social unit in the Philippine society. It is also the primary ground where the sex-gender system is established. The role played by each member of the family is determined by gender. Traditionally, in a patriarchal system the father is the principal breadwinner and dominant head of the family. As such father has the obligation to support the family financially. Aside from being the principal support of family, the husband handles decision making as an authority in a traditional Filipino setting. Husband serves as the general handyman around the house, the recognized head and representative of the family in the community; the provider of leadership in determining the goals and aspirations of each members. (Bustos et.al., 1996)

The father exercises authority in the house and project the image of a strong disciplinarian and final decision maker. As the head of the family, father treats children with benevolence, affection, and permissiveness. The father usually suffuses the home atmosphere with strength and vigor. On the other hand the wife has not deviated much from the traditional role of homemaking, rearing children and managing the household. Whatever success the children may achieve is usually attributed to the mother. The wife’s association with children is closer than that of the husband whom most of the times are not around, working for the family’s basic needs. The structure of the family and the needs that the family fulfills vary through times. The role of the parents likewise changed. Many marital roles are sequential as marriage continues over the years. The inability to fulfill the roles of parenthood is often judged negatively by society. Unemployed husband oftentimes coined as batugan and inattentive mother as irresponsible and incompetent.
Nowadays, society is confronted with changes. With more and more Filipino women leaving for work abroad, the country is seeing the rise of Filipino “househusbands”, spouses left behind to take care of the household and the children. Microsoft Encarta (2007) stated that househusbands are men who does not go out to work but stays at home to manage household. In the study conducted, househusband does not only do househoulds but also took care of their children while their female counterpart is at work. Househusbands accepted role reverse, it is a swap of the expected duties and responsibilities between husband and wife wherein father stayed at home doing household chores and rearing. Latest survey conducted by Institute of Labor Studies (Department of Labor and Employment Report 2012) showed that 47 percent of the 1.9 million overseas Filipino workers are women, a proof that the number of men taking care of the home is also increasing.

An average of 700,000 skilled, semi-skilled and professional workers leave the country yearly with a monthly average of 2,400 workers planned out of the country. Statistics show that Filipinas comprise more than 50% of the Filipino migrants with an upward trend (Overseas Worker’s Welfare Administration Report of 2005). Most of these women who leave are mothers whose reason for leaving range from improving economic status of the family to improving one’s career. For this reason, the concerned families are now undergoing dramatic changes in the role of the husband. “The 2011 Employment Situation” noted that “more than three out of every five unemployed were men.” There were more than 1.772 million unemployed males last year, or 63 percent of the unemployment numbers. Comparatively, there were 1.042 million unemployed women, equivalent to 37 percent of the total. This has been the trend for the past three years, according to Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (BLES) data. Educational attainment of women is found to be higher than men. This indicates that more women have better chances of getting employed or obtaining higher job positions. Consequently, women outnumbered their male counterpart in the professional competitive fields such as being official of government and special-interest organizations, corporate executives,
managers, managing proprietor and supervisors (17.6% vs. 8.1%) and professional (7.7% vs. 2.2%), (BLES 2007).

It is important to note that not more attention has been directed to the condition of men in face of women empowerment. It has become more common for men to stay at home and take care of the children and the house while their wives go to work. A househusband is the male equivalent of a housewife doing the task of the wife when they are at worked sometimes they were teased by society as ander da saya (under the control of the wife).

The househusbands adjusted to their role as househusband while staying at home by subscribing to the principles of conservation and principles of self-enhancement.

The local government units should look into the plight of househusbands and design livelihood programs and projects that can help them to earn some more while keeping their respective houses in order. Likewise, the local government unit should provide seminars and trainings that will suit to the job requirements of the househusbands.

The concerned local government units like the Department of Social Welfare and Development should design a comprehensive counseling program for househusband where the latter can learn about the emerging roles and importance of house husbanding in the contemporary times. This could increase self-respect and self-confidence of the househusband particularly in discharging their duties in the house.

An organization of househusbands should be established in the place to highlight the importance of their existence and affirmed their emerging role in the contemporary society. This will serve as the voice of the househusband especially in issues relevant to their roles.

EDUCATORS must highlight in their lessons in Social Studies and in Value Education about Filipino family the emerging important roles of the househusband so that
stereotyping and prejudice may not preempt the eventual understanding of the students about this phenomenon.

References:


