Conjugal Role Debate- Money and Power

**Roles are more equal**

Family power is how families function as a unit to make decisions about how to manage money, about where to live, about occupational and educational choices, about parenting practices, about where to go on a holiday, and so on. Nowadays, roles are more equal in the family as there are a lot more opportunities for women to have a say in the families money as they have equal power to their husbands/partners.

The equality act in 2010 allowed women to have all the same rights as men, meaning they can have a vote in elections for example and they have equal pay to men if they are in the same positions in the workplace. A liberal feminist would say that this is good because it’s a step in the right direction towards having a completely equal society.

More women are now going on to further education than ever before because women now have the right to study and have a career as well as being highly involved in the family. More women are now becoming the breadwinners of the family and the men are becoming stay at home dads. This is due to the decline of the traditional nuclear family and the attitudes towards women in the workplace.

The feminist sociologist Jan Phal and Carolyn Vogler (1994) identified 2 main types of control over the family income:

* The allowance system where the husband gives the wife a certain amount of his income
* Pooling where both the partners have access to his income and joint responsibility of how its spent

This has become more popular as both partners are going to work so they share their income using it when needed.

Young and Willmott declared in 1973 that there was such thing as a symmetrical family. The symmetrical family identified married couples were having joint conjugal roles. This meant in the home the couple share their work and their time around the home. Young and Willmott’s evidence for their symmetrical family came from their research which found 72% of men helped around the house (1974).

In 2013 67% of women aged 16-64 are in paid employment. This is a rise of 14% from the previous figure of 53%. But there has been a decline in men in paid employment with only 76% in 2013, where as it used to be 92% a decrease of 16%.

There is maternity and paternity leave nowadays so that both parents are allowed to take time off of work to raise a child.