

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O1.- Complex research according to the ethnomethodological pattern by applying professiography to the target group of housewives - Macedonia**

Partner: Alliance for Development of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Macedonia

Author: Jelena Peroska

Employment and Women on the 21st century in Europe: From Household economy to SME economy (Small and Medium enterprises) – MUPYME Project

O1.- Complex research according to the ethnomethodological pattern by applying professiography to the target group of housewives - Macedonia

The five observations took place in March - April 2016. Each interview lasted approximately 2 hours. The methodology was provided by FEUP and we followed the instructions in the guidelines.

The observations were conducted by Jelena Peroska, program manager at ADAE. Jelena has experience in research and conducting surveys and interviews. She has been involved in several consultations for adult education policy in Macedonia and participated in many workshops, conferences, seminars.

The 5 women that were selected to participate in the interview were from different backgrounds. Three of them are from Tetovo, one of the biggest cities in Macedonia with mixed ethnical composition. Other women are from Brvenica and Tearce, villages in the Polog region, so they come from rural areas. 4 of the women are ethnic Macedonians and one of them is ethnic Albanian. They are with different age and different educational background. Their families differ also; most of them are on low income level and middle income level. The number of the family members is in the range from 3 to 6 members.

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FINDINGS

1. All women listed the tasks they most frequently perform in the household. The average number of tasks listed is 9-11. The vast majority mentioned the following tasks that they perform:

- Cleaning the house
- Ironing
- Paying bills
- Gardening
- Cooking
- Buying groceries
- Logistics
- Doing Laundry
- Knitting
- Sewing
- Making cakes
- Taking care of elderly persons
- Planning the budget

On individual base some other tasks were mentioned: volunteer work, reading,

2. All of the women are preoccupied with the housework and the specific tasks and they do not notice what else they could be doing. They are not thinking as entrepreneurs. They are concentrated on the specific task, for example cooking and they do not see the coordination behind it, the planning, the management of resources.

3. The housewives that were interviewed were different. Some of them do not have initiatives and they are content with their current position. Some of them were very active and were always trying out new things and new ways to be productive.

4. As for the help from the family, there is a strong division between man's and woman's job so the daughters often help their mother in performing the household tasks. On the other hand, the male members of the family make decisions and take care of tasks related to finances and providing resources for work.

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5. Most of the women are carefully planning the expenses. Since they come from low and middle income families this is very important to them. So they are trying to save money when they are in charge of finances or don't even want to have contact with finances. They usually leave this task to their husbands.

6. Each of the women learned everything they know about the house work from their families, mostly their mothers. They all have strong bonds with their families and even if they don't live together they have frequent contacts, they visit each other every day or talk on the telephone. It is not very uncommon to see three generations of the family living together. That is the tradition or maybe the financial dependence of the children and the impossibility to buy a house or a flat. Even if they do not live together, their family is in the neighbourhood. They often build houses next to each other.

7. Some of the women faced difficulties during their life, for example with finding a job or maintaining good relations in the family. Through these difficulties they learn to adapt to different surroundings and to become stronger.

8. Everyone has good relations with their neighbors. They help each other for bigger events and exchange good practices. They are also good friends and they often go to each other's homes for small talk and coffee.

9. Everyone said that they would like to participate in trainings and improve their knowledge. Some of them are engaged in NGOs in order to have the opportunity to go on trainings or workshops and to participate in different projects. Through this involvement in the NGO sector they are learning a lot about women rights and empowerment, entrepreneurship, project management etc.

10. They all think that a housewife should possess some qualities. Even if it is not a paid job, you need to do it right because your family depends on you. You need to be able to adapt to different situations, to find solutions quickly, to solve problems, to be easy to communicate with, to have some diplomacy skills, to be intelligent, to be creative.

11. As for the personal and social requirements, all women think that to be a good housewife you should have some values such as stable and positive personality, ability to motivate others and to be able to develop good and friendly relationships.

12. About improving of the household performance some of them stated that if they have help from other members of the family, the performance would be better. Also they think that training would be very useful for the performance improvement and they all mentioned

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occupational training as most important but they do not exclude other trainings. About the technology, most of them do not use it much. Although they think that you should have modern appliances in the home so you can easily do plenty of things at the same time.

13. The job conditions in which the housewives perform their work are similar. They all more or less live with older parents and with their children. They need to be very organized in order to adjust the schedule to everyone and perform activities that are time consuming. Multitasking is their reality. They have to know every aspect of the household and everyone's schedule.

14. Also very important for housewives is to be physically and psychologically strong. They need to be cooperative and to establish good collaborative environment.

15. All of the housewives have plenty of social contacts. They all have established good relations with their neighbors so they exchange information and experiences. There is a tradition of drinking coffee with the neighbors and this is a practice that really benefits them to improve their communication skills.

16. The experience they have outside the household is very valuable also. Some of them have experience with NGOs and stated that this is very important to them. Through their experience in the NGO sector they learned many things about empowerment of women and gain confidence in achieving something.

17. Housewives, mostly, have the executive role in the household. The decision making process is often shared with other members of the family as for the execution of tasks they are left on the housewives for realization. Of course there are exceptions and some of the women are in charge of the whole process. They are in charge of the management and the execution of tasks.

18. As mentioned before, the decision making process is shared between the members of the family. Women participate in the process, but they do not make the final decision.

19. All the housewives have the role of resolving conflicts between family members. They have to be calm and stable so they can resolve any issues peacefully.

20. About the financial work, paying the bills or planning the budget, the housewives are pretty divided. Some of them think that is a "man's job" and don't want to deal with that or maybe they feel that since they do not contribute financially to the household they don't have the right to make decisions about the finances.

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21. When the housewives were asked to compare their work with the work in a company, they mentioned that it has certain similarities. In both of the cases you have production of goods, quality assurance of products, management of resources etc. Other comments were:

Concerning Impact: Security and health of family unit, team work, finances, time management, budget, creativity, social life, HR development, production of goods, health care, family mobility etc.

Concerning correspondence: leadership skills, motivation, financial management, event management, time management, external communication, conflict resolution, problem solving, management of HR, team building, quality assurance of products, overseeing production of goods, multitasking, capacity building, maintenance, logistics, resources management, risk management etc.

SUGGESTIONS

1. There is a need of courses or trainings for the basics of gender equality and concepts of gender and women rights. Women accept their traditional role in the society and are not aware of the discrimination or violation of their rights.
2. As a consequence of the traditional role of women they often have lack of self-confidence and don't think they can achieve something bigger than being a housewife. They will need training in building their self-confidence, fostering initiatives, entrepreneurial skills.
3. The housewives do not recognize what skills they develop during the household work. They don't see the processes that happen in the background of their housework. The trainings should have curriculum about managerial processes that can be useful for jobs in companies.
4. Sharing positive examples and experience from women that actually succeeded in establishing their own business should be definitely included in the program. This will serve as motivation to the housewives and as an incentive to continue developing their ideas.
5. The course for housewives should include also development of business plan. If they want to establish a company or they have an idea they have to learn how to put it in a frame. They have to know how to plan the establishment and the sustainability of the company.
6. Even though most of the housewives have experience in working with finances, they have to be trained in the law and accounting regulations for financial operations in their country.

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Maybe they have some knowledge about the taxation system but it is quite different when it comes to obligations of the physical person and private legal entity.

7. There are a lot of measures and projects in Macedonia from public institutions that offer financial support for women entrepreneurs. Most of the women do not know about these measures and do not apply for financial support. Some of the women that apply are not actually the owners of the businesses. Their husbands transfer the ownership of the business to them so they can get the funds. Women should be informed about these measures and should have access to that information. Also they need training in how to apply for the support and how to write the application.