

How Resource Intensive Hobbies Impact Families

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What is a Resource-Intensive Hobby?

A resource-intensive leisure hobby is an activity occurring in free time that requires an investment involving a significant amount of time, money, effort and emotion.

Gender Differences

Studies have shown that gender roles impact leisure-family conflict

- Males and females appear to perceive gender role conflict differently in the context of having resource-intensive hobbies (Simmons, J. M., et. al., 2016).
- Fathers reduced or completely eliminated previous regular commitments.
 - This was due to the self-determined view that independent leisure was irreconcilable with their role as fathers and partners.
 - Mothers who participated in leisure-like activities with children and the family reported the experience as being more “work-like” than leisure compared to fathers.

Effects on Family

- Studies have shown clear evidence suggesting that conflict is present surrounding parents and/or partners participating in leisure based activities.
 - While tensions are present, leisure-family conflict can be minimized
- Misconceptions surrounding leisure activities within the household can lead to unnecessary tension.
- Negative stereotypes surrounding the mother and her need to participate in leisure based activities are diminished without adequate spousal support and family communication.
- The notion of “being with” the children in the context of leisure is crucially different from the notion of “being there” for children (Such, L. 2009).

Solutions

Spousal Support

- Systems of support were agreed to be the best way to achieve more balance between serious leisure and family life (Goff, S. J., et. al., 1997).
- Accepting that the relationship is evolving, and if negotiating and compromising is present in spousal communication, tensions can be reduced.
- Findings suggested that the partners of the authors in ‘do horses cause divorces?’ (Dashper, K., et. al., 2019), were supportive of their hobbies and recognize that it is an important element of their partner’s personality

Family Communication

Overall, while tensions are present, there are a lot of gender disadvantages and misconceptions surrounding leisure-family conflict

- This is unfair as the hobbies can be beneficial for the entire family, not solely the one person interested.
- With open communication, and consideration researchers have determined that resource intensive hobbies do not have to be problematic for married couples or the family as a whole.

References:

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