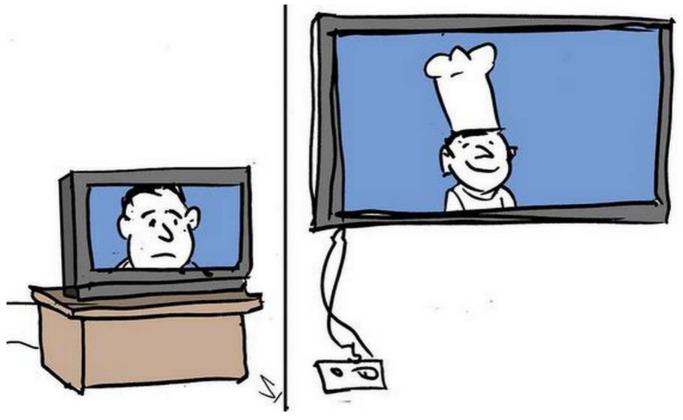
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Daddies and those household chores and tasks



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They are yet to catch up fully, but contribute a great deal to household chores while pursuing their careers

The other day, after seeing Nobisuke, the protagonist Nobita's father in the children's cartoon show Doraemon, fail miserably to prepare a meal for himself, my seven-year-old son, Devank, asked me, "Dad, why are daddies not good at household chores?"

His question took me back to when I was a small child and my dad would prepare meals for us during the weekends. I would often sit on the kitchen shelf and watch him cooking, which was not a way for him to pass time but something he was very passionate about. At times he would prepare not one or two but all three meals for us. And to be honest, his cooking was better than my mom's. In fact, my mom too was (and still is) a big fan of his culinary skills.

Besides cooking, my father would spend a considerable amount of time performing other household tasks, from grocery shopping to doing the dishes, from running errands to attending to our homework, even sewing our torn clothes.

So, to go back to the question that Devank put to me, I told him, reassuringly, that not all daddies are the same. But being the never-give-up kind of child that he is, he quickly retorted by saying, "Do you know that Shinchan's dad is also like Nobita's dad. He too can't do household tasks and it's always Shinchan's mom who does all the household chores".

"But they are not real-life dads; they are only cartoons," I said, trying to diligently hold my stance.

This time, however, before Devank could react, his mother cut in. She said, "Actually, he is right. Even in television serials and films, daddy characters are rarely shown to be doing the dishes, mopping the floor or serving tea to guests"

Her comment left me in a pensive mood. "When was the last time I saw a TV serial or a film where the male lead is shown doing household chores?" I asked myself, but found no answer to. I tried to reason with myself, wondering, "Why are dads projected in such a bad light on television and in films?" It struck me as odd because the truth of the matter, at least according to what I've experienced thus far, is that the modern-day daddies are no less family-centric than their counterparts of, say, thirty, or forty years ago. In fact, nowadays, most dads share the work load at home in equal terms for supporting their partners, taking care of their children and performing domestic chores, however, for some reason, this aspect of dads is rarely, or never portrayed on screen.

One obvious reason for this utter bias and discrimination is that almost all of television serials nowadays are oriented to women; besides, from the producers' viewpoint, it doesn't actually make any sense to portray men as equally capable as their female counterparts.

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Another possibility is that in the present day and age there are more and more moms are pushing the boundaries and joining the workforce. This challenges the traditional idea of dads as bread-winners, making them conspicuous and an easy target. Or, maybe dads are simply victims of primitive thinking that regards domestic work as moms' forte.

This assumption is flawed, not only from a 21st century woman's standpoint, who works at almost double the rate of her predecessors. Also, in most modern families household tasks are performed through the mutual support of the husband and the wife.

But that's not to say we should undermine dads' involvement in household chores. Their contribution to the household is just as much as that of moms. Dads today are more involved with their families than ever before. They are contributing a great deal to household chores while pursuing careers, thus playing their dual domestic and work roles with aplomb and flair.

Today, this calls on the television and film industry to take cognisance of this off-screen reality and give dads an on-screen image makeover. How about starting with cartoons?

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