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## **A study on Kashmiri working women and their contribution towards family life**

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### **Abstract**

A very important aspect of Kashmiri woman is to meet the expectations and obligations corresponding to her various roles within the fold of the family. If she fails to meet the expectations of the members of the family, it creates familial tension within the family. It is quite obvious that the working woman is required to play dual roles; first familial roles as wife, mother and housewife and the other as an employee. The new status involves a fresh array of expectations from those constituting the 'role-set' of the incumbent. The purpose of this study is to find out the reasons behind women taking up the jobs and their contribution towards family. The focus is more on the problems that they face while dealing with the dual responsibilities. Purposive random sampling method is used to obtain the related data from among the working women of various institutions like educational, health, etc. The study reveals that the main reason behind opting for a job is to attain the economic stability and to become self-reliant. Despite various constraints like immense work load, role conflicts, etc. they contribute tremendously towards their family and hence it ultimately increases their level of satisfaction and they feel economically independent.

**Keywords:** Working women, employment, dual responsibility, self-reliant.

### **1. Introduction**

The home has always been a woman's priority; it still is and shall always remain so. With the increased pace of urbanization and modernization in recent years, Indian women of all social classes have now entered the work force/professional occupations. In the context of women becoming keen on shouldering responsibilities as professional and enter in new professions in all concerned spheres, there is an increasing need to discuss this aspect exclusively from the point of view of challenges she has to face and keeping in mind that properly qualified women professionals also aspire no loss for acquiring knowledge expertise and training to develop their capability to shoulder higher responsibilities, achieve professional excellence and to be involved in decision making. In today's changing society, it is very appreciative to find women working outside their homes and becoming self-reliant. Now they are no more dependent on anybody and can survive on their own. The work career not only provides a new role to a Kashmiri woman but also affects her role and status in the family and demands a new adjustment in her personal and social life. Thus, woman's role in work situation is an important area to be explored in order to understand the changing role of the woman. Kapur (1970) <sup>[7]</sup> in his study of hundreds of working women employed in various salaried jobs and professions found that their problems are of three types: environmental, social and psychological. In each of them the problems emerged due to the strained situations at home and workplace. Charlotte O' Kelley (1985) <sup>[9]</sup> found that working women feel more economically independent. Moreover modernized households gave greater autonomy to women in household decision making. Aneesa Shafi (2002) <sup>[3]</sup> carried out a study based on Kashmiri working women with reference to their role conflicts arising out of the occupancy of double roles in contemporary Kashmiri society. The demands of the new situation and the age-old requirements of womanhood are often in conflict and call for adjustment and accommodation. It was observed that the most important reason of women's working outside is the economic need. Varatharaj and Vasantha (2012) <sup>[10]</sup> in their study have found that work-life balance entails attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities, so that it reduces friction between official and domestic life.

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Work-life balance enhances efficiency and thus, the productivity of an employee increases. The relationship between personal and professional life can be achieved through emotional intelligence. Better emotion management is necessary for women in order to accomplish day-to-day objectives of life.

**2. Objectives of the study**

1. To identify working woman’s contribution towards family.
2. To identify the reasons behind opting for a job.
3. To identify the various problems faced by the working women while handling the dual responsibility.
4. To identify the attitude of family members towards the occupational career of working woman.
5. To identify the self-concept among working women.

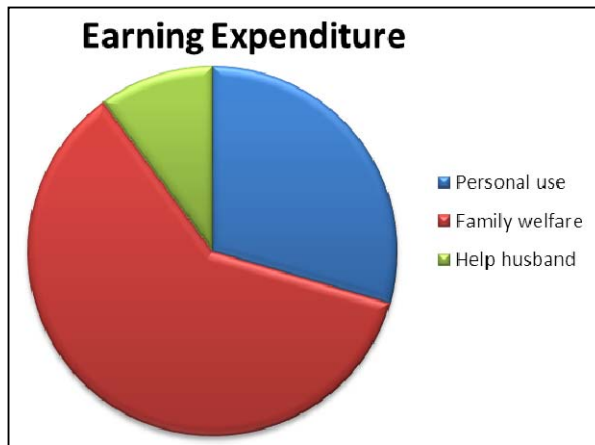
**3. Methodology**

The study has been carried out in Kashmir valley among women working in different situations, belonging to various social, economic, cultural, demographic and professional groups and categories. The respondents were selected from different institutions. The data has been collected through ‘purposive random sampling’ method using closed ended questionnaire as the main tool. To analyze the data, collected information has been classified in the light of objectives set forth for the study.

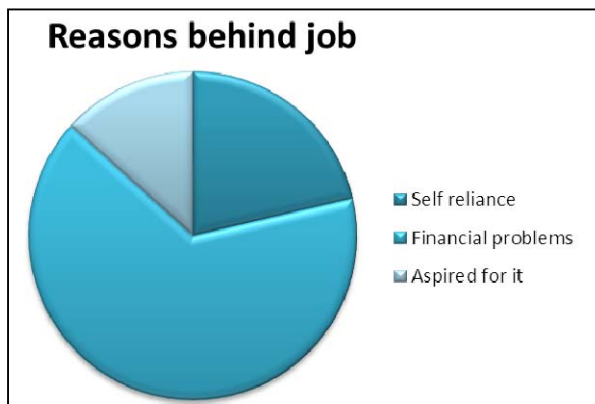
**4. Results and discussion**

The study reveals that the majority of the women opt for a job in order to cope up with the economic pressures and to become self-reliant. Majority of the working women utilize their earnings for the welfare and betterment of their families. They earn in order to fulfill the needs and requirements of the members of their family. Working mothers have the urge to provide all kinds of facilities to their kids. They contribute not only economically but at the same time socially and emotionally as well by nurturing their kids and taking care of the other members of the family. Considering the many objections that could be anticipated to the idea of women working outside their homes, it is amazing that a large percentage of working women are being provided with full support from their families, especially from their husbands in case of the choices they make which proves to be a real boost for their enthusiasm and enhances their courage. Combining the two roles- *home making* and *employment* is the main problem that they face. A pretty much higher percentage of respondents face many difficulties in handling the dual responsibilities. The physical and psychological stress has been felt as disturbing and unbearable by many of them since they have to fulfill all the expectations of people whether inside the home or at work place. The problems they encounter include constant child care worries, dealing with fatigue, work load, role conflicts, less time for personal care, etc. The study reveals that the majority of the working women feel economically independent and are contented with the way they are living which is indeed the most positive and beneficial outcome of being a working woman.

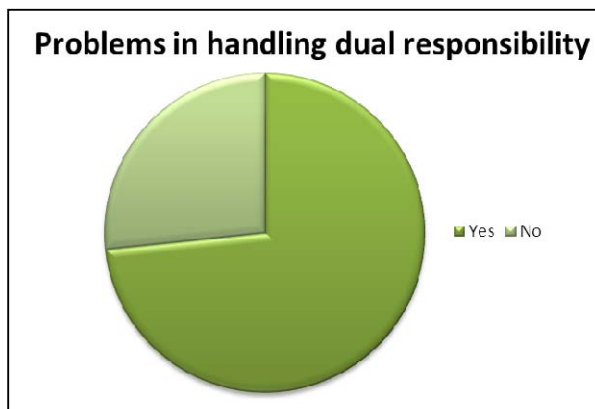
**Earning Expenditure:** The following pie chart shows the earning expenditure. It reveals that more than one-half (60%) of the working women utilize their earnings towards the welfare of their families and less than one-half (29.33) spend their earnings for their own use.



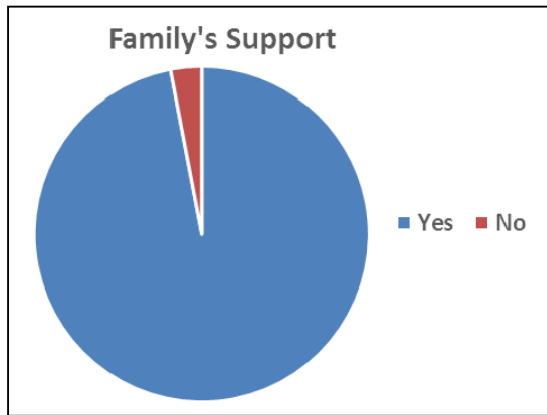
**Reasons behind job:** The following pie chart depicts the reasons behind opting for a job. More than one-half (65.33%) of women had opted for a job because of financial problems and about 21.33% wanted to be self reliant. Aspiration for work is mentioned by a very small number of working women (13.33%).



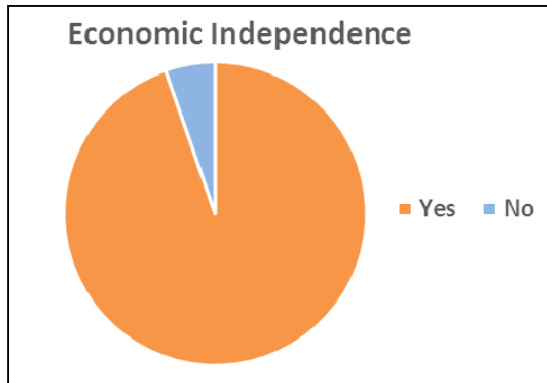
**Problems in handling dual responsibilities:** The following pie chart reveals the problems which shows that as much as (73.33%) of the respondents do face certain problems in handling the dual responsibility. Less than one half of the respondents (26.66%) expressed their satisfaction since they didn’t face any problem and are able to manage well.



**Family’s support:** The pie chart below depicts the family support of the respondents. It shows that a large percentage of working women (97%) are fully supported and encouraged by their families while as just a negligible number of respondents (3%) are not supported by them.



**Economic Independence:** The pie chart below reveals the economic independence and emancipation of the respondents. It shows that the highest percentage of the working women (94.66%) feel economically independent while as a negligible number of respondents (5.33%) don't feel so. This analysis is in accordance to the study carried out by Charlotte O Kelley (1985) <sup>[9]</sup> where the majority of the working women have felt economically independent since they have gained more power due to employment.



## 5. Conclusion

It is concluded with the remark that the strongest reason attributed to the decision of taking up a job by a woman is to attain economic stability and to become self-reliant/self-sufficient. These women do face innumerable problems while handling the dual responsibilities at home and at work place. But they never give up because they are determined to contribute towards the betterment and welfare of their families. They assist their families not only physically, socially and emotionally, but also economically which promotes better standards of their living. Significantly a very high level of satisfaction is achieved by them which eventually raise their confidence as well. They no longer feel dependent now. The need for balancing work-family life of working woman is very important. Work-family life balance entails attaining equilibrium between professional work and other activities, so that it reduces friction between official and domestic life. This can be achieved if a woman is highly determined and dedicated towards her work and manages her time in the best possible manner.

## 6. Recommendations

Despite various obstacles, a satisfying balance between work and family life is achievable. Following are some of the suggestions for working women to cope up with the difficulties that lead to role-conflicts:-

1. Appropriate time management.
2. Set priorities and reasonable goals.
3. Determine your own standards.
4. Establish limits and boundaries.
5. Build a support network and delegate chores.
6. Stay positive and focused.
7. Let go off guilt and stress.
8. Enjoy quality family time.

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