

THE CHANGING PATTERNS IN FAMILY SYSTEM FROM EXTENDED TO NUCLEAR: IN CONTEXT OF WORKING WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Family plays an integral part in person's life. Whether nuclear, extended or single parent system, the primary socialization and bonding have always been essential element in one's life. The shift in the family system from extended to nuclear, is evident nowadays due to number of reasons. Moreover, working women face number of problems in handling both work as well as household. At times it becomes difficult to adjust or live in particular family system. The working women in many cases contribute a lot in looking and satisfying the needs of the family members. However, the gap between the working women and family could be filled by looking at the way both can cooperate with each other. The problems working women are facing in extended family system are different from what they encounter in nuclear or single parent family system. Hence the gap between the working women and the family could result in changing their preference of a certain family system over the other. The change in the family system is thus evident from extended to nuclear family system. The data collection techniques involved mixed method. Both closed ended questionnaires and open ended interviews were conducted for data collection. The results obtained from primary research showed that most of the women preferred nuclear family over extended family system. Therefore, changing the family system or the family, as an institution as was common before. Therefore, the conclusion showed that most of the working women are living in nuclear family system and want to live in nuclear family system. Very few belonged to extended family system or single parent family. The problems prevailing in accepting working women or working mothers a major reason for shift from extended to nuclear family system.

Keywords: Nuclear Family, Extended Family, single parent family, working mothers, social institution, problems in family.

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Introduction

The family plays an integral role in the lives of Pakistanis. There are many social changes that have affected the overall family systems in Pakistan. When we look into the family system Pakistan has enjoyed all cultural heritages being part of family system. It is the culture where joint family system is being replaced with nuclear family system. In case of working women, the preference of a particular family system differs from extended or being in nuclear family system. A working woman plays different role being part of society as a mother, daughter in law, mother in law and a wife. A family is a system where individual share emotional bonding and kinship ties. It is the most important social organization that socializes children and helps them to form their identities. The working women have a lot of responsibilities to look upon therefore need helping hands towards looking after the children. Moreover, type of family system is an important issue nowadays particularly in case of working women, the household, work, children, in laws and multiple needs are necessitate to be managed properly. The paper has been divided into four sections. First section presents literature review which discusses different studies focusing on different family structures in different cultural settings. Second section discusses the impact of culture on the family systems. Third section analysis data and presents results. Final section draws conclusion and findings.

Literature Review

The two most important approaches that are of functionalist writers who have focused on the consensus approach the family are centering the whole society. The primary focus of "family system" is to see how one is socializing including the children, adults bonding particularly at the emotional level. Moreover, it also includes providing basic facilities that are being shared by the family together (food, shelter and clothing). The advent of technology, peer pressure has led to most of the societies following and accepting the change that have taken

place in family (Kakepoto, 2008).

According to Macionis (2005: 462) social conflict, do arise, when It comes to working women who leave their children at home with grandparents in case of extended family. Moreover, in case of nuclear family the working women might face problems in leaving children home or daycare. The conflict might arise in the family system if all members are not cooperating and sharing responsibilities. Moreover women are preferred to look after the family and rearing children. In case of working women the roles are segregated in looking towards home as well as work. The traditional family system believed in the role of women as being a housewife. However the economic crisis and capitalism make revolutionary reform as present Marxist view look at the women as being oppressed and their rights being subjugated.

The question that arises is therefore why there is a shift in the family system when one would talk about nuclear or extended family system. What is the preference of working women in choosing between the family systems?

Austen and Birch (2000), consider that the structural change evident require both parents to work. According to Brown (2005) the working women face a lot of problems in family systems. Hence their choice of a particular family system depends on how they can handle both ends. However children could be nurtured in family when they are able to follow the norms and values and culturally belong to a particular society. There are many differences in altering family structures. There are differences between cultures when it comes in explaining the decision making or character dependence where they define the basic needs of individuals and stress on having private life. Whereas compared to collectivist culture they have a view on having group or family view as the primary source in order to express the process of decision making. Moreover the sight they observe in case of the collectivist culture the concept of “private life” does not exist (Brown, 2003).

It has been observed that the working women face a lot of problems in daily life. Therefore, it is one of the most important issues nowadays which relates to the preference of a particular family system. The main stakeholders for the research will include working women in any organization working. The reason behind research is to know what are the problems working women and their children can face living in extended family or nuclear family system. Moreover, the results obtained will help to find the solution of the problems and what could be done instead. As it has been observed, the divorce rates or single parent family system has been increasing since past many years.

The research only focuses on the issues of the working women in a particular family system. Moreover the research will be done keeping in the mind the role of women played in nuclear family, extended family and single parent family. The research will not include any other groups of society apart from married or unmarried working women of 25 to 45 years relating to their family problems in a particular household. The data obtained will be limited to the objectives stated above due to the limited time frame.

The research was conducted in Karachi targeting different organizations where women are working including the health, education, financial or industrial sector.

The following assumptions have been taken into account for the research:

- Women are facing a lot problems in extended family system when it comes to work outside their house
- Women are facing a lot of problems in nuclear family system when they leave their children at home.

The type of design used is mixed method, including the qualitative approaches; as well as quantitative as the topic of the research requires deeper understanding of the topic objectives stated above.

Moreover, the quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (open ended interviews) will be the research design for the study undertaken. As the topic of the research requires in depth knowledge (exploratory research) to know the shift in family system from extended to nuclear.

The overall population of the study includes working women enrolled in different organizations in Karachi including health, education, banking and small industrial sector. Hence women aging 25 to 46 belonging to any family system will be part of research. The questionnaires were distributed in Aga Khan Hospital health department, City School, Soneri Bank, SZABIST, CAP and Foundation Public School. Secondly, the interviews were taken from working women that included 2 doctors, 2 teachers, 2 bankers, 2 psychologist and 2 nurses.

The total of 130 questionnaires were distributed to the working women in Aga Khan Hospital, Soneri Bank, SZABIST, The Citizens Foundation and CAP (Citizens Archive of Pakistan). Whereas 10 interviews were taken interviewing working Women working enrolled in different professions. The sampling method used was snow ball sampling with the reference given by other respondents.

The data collection includes both primary as well as secondary sources. The data collection tool will be open ended interviews. The reason for in depth interviews is to collect more relevant data and to know the issues pertaining in families of working women. The dependent variable is working women in Karachi whereas the independent variable is nuclear, extended and single parent family system. According to Shriver, the population of the world consists of more women as compared to men. Her report comprises of the three segments of the society that are important including the family household, at work place and in society. Moreover, woman are breadwinners, most of the family members now have working mothers that are primary breadwinners and contribute quarter of

their income at home. The shift, increase in the number of working woman in 1960s could be evident in various parts of the world including the developed as well as the developing countries. In 1970 the women were breadwinners and co breadwinners of their family (Soilen, 1998).

Hence, the transformation is evident when we see woman in twentieth century is working outside their homes and also looking after the family. There are many issues that are evident has to contribute a lot. There are many issues that are evident in the family system where working woman is working outside their homes. There is a movement of woman in the employment sector and increasing family size that has resulted in the increase in overall problems (Shriver, 2001).

The transformation according to Mc Crosky was evident when family system could create conflicts in terms of working mothers. At many cases it is evident that the violence or when women are pressurized at work could result in many problems. The hindrance that the family workload could have on women affects family system in return (Mc Crosky, 1995)

Working women do have multiple roles to look after at home as well as at work place. This is the main issue that the every woman is facing. The situations of working women professionally as well as morally have improved in making them more acceptable. The traditional women concept is no longer prevailing in our society where women used to work in different fields and look after the house. The concept of modern women includes a professional educated mother looking at the family, work and thus managing things very well. The typical family thus comprises of a dual earner where both the parents are working and contributing their share of income for the family (Jacobs, 2008)

According to Lin (1992) conducted a survey which targeted 444 Taipei women working as well as house makers. It was concluded that the

working women are able to enjoy more freedom as compared to house makers. The Taipei working women agreed that they had husband support therefore they were satisfied working outside their house. The family relatives all support working women. Moreover the research conducted also showed that there are more working women who are married, no matter how developed (unrestricted) a society is; most of the work is expected to be done by women. The major responsibilities of women thus include childcare and household work. The dichotomy arisen between the conventional family and the promising roles including many problems faced like leaving children at home. The survey conducted asked several questions including the helping hand in most of the cases at home i.e. social or daily demands. The working women in most of the cases leave their children outside their house and spent most of the hours outside home in most of the cases it is evident that the major problem among the working women in single parent family system includes depression, anxiety as at home there is no one to look after the children (Levitan, 2008).

Nuclear family system is thought to be acceptable in case of working women but in case of children this couldn't be the preference of working mothers. In case of Pakistan, the concept of child centre is much unknown. This fact might prevent working women to leave their jobs and rear children. Moreover like all family systems joint family systems expects women to stay at home give cultural values to all the children including the role of the elder people.

Another important benefit that cannot be ignored, if mother father both are working they can develop the career of children including socialization at their workplace, with peers and family. Family is always there to help share their cultural values, norms, bonds, help in case of members being sick and financial help. The working women also prefer joint family if they have children as it's better that someone is there to look after the children (Levitan, 2008)

In some family systems the conflict may occur especially in joint family system where women are dependent on others in decision making. In case of working women the life could be in more hardship if she doesn't cooperate with her in laws and works. The division of labour is evident in case of number of family, with families where both husband and wife are working comes under the category of Neotraditional. Most importantly the joint family system is thus considered to be supportive for working women as the relatives that are living together can look after the house children including all the needs (Baylan, 2011).

The way the family nurtures, culture plays a significant role in making individuals better able to live by sharing values and living under a roof or shelter. Sometimes a culture may create gender biasness. Some may also resist in that cultural change. In case of working women it also depends on different culture if the family is small the choice is different as in the case of western countries this system is not regarded as so much important (Hollander, 2011).

As the joint family is consisting of at least three generations that are living together, includes grandmother, grandfather, children and a head of family. Like every family system extended family has its advantages and disadvantages. Within extended families there could be conflicts in terms of siblings' rivalries, conflict among family members. In case of working women the extended family system can be best option to support the women and children. The way the family nurtures, culture plays a significant role in making individuals better able to live by sharing values and living under a roof or shelter. The time women usually spent outside house for work also matters when it comes to the gap between working time and family time (OECD, 2004).

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case of western countries this system is not regarded as so much important (Hollander, 2011).

In a research conducted by Itrat et al in 2008 it is culture heritage a sense of pride when an individual is living happily. A strong support of family could make individuals better socialize in their culture. It is common that most of the Asians prefer to be and live with elderly people. There are certain changes which could be seen when we look into changing trends. The structure of family system does influence the way each individual is playing a certain role.

Hussain (2008) describes how working women face problems as compared to men belonging to any class of society. The structural changes in family system both at social and cultural ends have bound women to work and look after the family. However, it could be believed that in both the rural as well as the urban areas the working women face the problems differently. The socio economic conditions under which the women work also matters the way she looks after the family. The type of job and profession also matters when it comes to efficiently looking after the children. In rural areas the situation might be reverse; the family set up includes children, grandparents, and siblings living together. Where the men are not employed or have small business of farming to look after and the fact that the rest of the time they are at home defined as being 'lazy'. They either work as laborers on the basis of contract or either they have vendors (Baylan, 2011).

This is the type of family system where the women are expected to earn as the spouse or the husband's income is not sufficient to run the entire family.

According to Jacobs, working women nowadays work as nurses, teachers, doctors, bankers thus being more professional. They have given up the traditional thought where mothers used to be housewife and just worked for family. The conflict arises when the working woman is expected to run the house as well as her work efficiently.

The role of women is changing having multitasking and expects work to be done efficiently. Extended, and the nuclear family expects women to be supporter of the entire family unit. Many of the researches show that the employment of women has a positive impact on the family in this way they are able to contribute at home as well as running the entire family. The women are giving extended hours at family and this might result in so many problems that she faces (Linda, 2003).

In western society there are many problems society is facing the increased divorce rates, increasing in single parent family system, and decrease in the fertility. The fact many tasks are to be performed in case of joint of family system. The word family means wife children and husband living together this could be denoted as a nuclear family while parents, grandparents living together could portray a picture of an extended family system. In extended family system whether children being married or not they are counted a part of household and their income is further used in family. In extended family system the working women is expected to look after the children she faces problem if the spouse or heads in the family take care of the children and allow the working mothers to step out of their house and work in case of nuclear family system the situation could thus be reverse (Hussain, 2008).

The caretaker in case of the nuclear family system is mother or a father to look at the household.

Moreover when it comes to having kids at home, need someone to look after the house. Moreover in many cases the working women look for the easy solution to leave children in daycare centers to provide them with food and sufficient needs. In case of developing countries the daycare units are not established or successful in catering needs of so many children in society (Linda, 2003)

In most of the cases the daycare centers are afforded by rich people but the matter of fact that the working women mostly belong to the

middle class working sector where both the parents share the income they earn to run the household. In most of the cases it's true that the joint family system have many family members to look after the children at home. Moreover in case of single parent and joint family system there is a problem to have an adult or someone to look after the kids (Dorfler, 2004)

Impact of Culture on Family Systems

The culture impact could be seen in societies where family as an institution plays an integral role in primary socialization. Often there are many evidences, showing that some of the family members do not allow their daughters or in most of the cases mother to work outside their houses. In most of the cases the family expects working women to be at home and work in order to satisfy the needs of the citizens. Most of the eastern societies do expect mothers or their daughters to stay at home and satisfy needs of the citizens (Mc Closkey, 2008).

Often many of the husbands keep their wives at home in isolation and not allowing them to work or go out for any other employment practices. Sometimes in extended family systems this becomes a very rigid problem when working mothers are domestically violated if they work outside their homes (Gewirtz, 1992).

There are many problems that working women face in a particular family system when it comes to looking after the kin. Moreover the problems which were mostly common among the interviewees include looking after children, large number of family members, earnings as well as handling house work. Most of the interview responses showed that the working women in nuclear family system face fewer problems as compared to extended family system. However, the only problem that was defined by the majority of the working women was looking after the kids. The more number of family members in family, the more the income required to run house hold. Despite, the fact structural changes require both men as well

women, to contribute in terms of looking after the kin. Moreover, many shared the problems of unacceptability women outside the house. The working mothers at many times are pressurized to leave their work and fully concentrate at home.

Data Analysis

The questionnaires responses showed, most of the working women (78%) think that there are many problems that they face in looking after the family. Whereas, 27% and 2% think that they don't face any problem in looking after the family respectively

The cross tabulations results comparing the type of family system working women belonged to and the problems they face looking after the family. Table 1.2 shows the cross tabulations results of the working women in nuclear family system encounter a lot of problems in looking after the family. Whereas the women who belong to extended family system agreed that they don't face a lot of problems. The interview responses showed that problems in extended family system are comparatively more as compared to nuclear family system.

One of the interview responses Sara (teacher) said, "In nuclear family we have mother, father and children like my family. I believe in nuclear family system women have less responsibilities as compared to extended family system, sometimes working mothers are not allowed to work for longer period of hours. In nuclear family husbands in most of the cases agrees that the wife is working outside. Moreover, in laws could object and degrade working women from working outside."

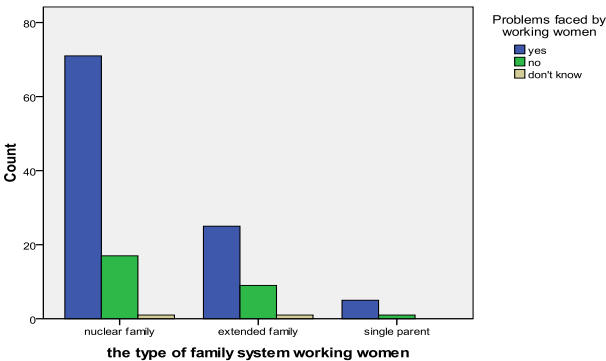
The overall questionnaire results showed that 71% of the women who belong to nuclear family system agreed that they face fewer problems while 25% of the women think that in extended family systems they face fewer problems. The figure below 1.2A shows the bar chart cross tabulations results. Most of the interviewees agreed that in extended

family, the presence of elders, mother in law, sister in law or any other member can make working women less burdened at least when it comes to looking after the children. The difficulty is in upbringing children and also fulfilling the needs of each individual in household. However, in single parent family the working woman alone handles household and work. The problems in extended family system includes: lack of understanding, more family members, shared incomes, children being ignored at certain circumstances, lack of support and no mutual understanding in family unit. But many of them agreed that every family system has its own benefits like in extended family system you share and a lot of problems are also shared.

Table 1.2: The Type of Family System of Working Women
***Problems Faced by Working Women Cross Tabulation**

		Problems faced by working women			Total
		yes	no	don't know	
the type of family system working women	nuclear family	71	17	1	89
	extended family	25	9	1	35
	single parent	5	1	0	6
Total		101	27	2	130

Figure 1.2 A:
Bar Chart



The working women as compared to house makers face a different experience in handling home as well as the work. Most importantly at workplace women has to manage the timings as she has responsibilities to look upon. Moreover, the working women from washing, cooking, cleaning, looking after house, work as well as satisfying every need of the kin. Most of the interviewees agree that the contribution of working women in household is more as compared to the house makers.

The questionnaires responses showed in table 1.3 (84%) of the working women agreed that they contribute a lot at home. Moreover 16% of them think working women contribute less at home. According to the questionnaire results, most of the respondents agreed that working women do look at both the ends work as well as running house hold. At most cases this data could also show that the working women alone contribute a lot at home. She is responsible in looking at the household and needs of spouse including every other at home.

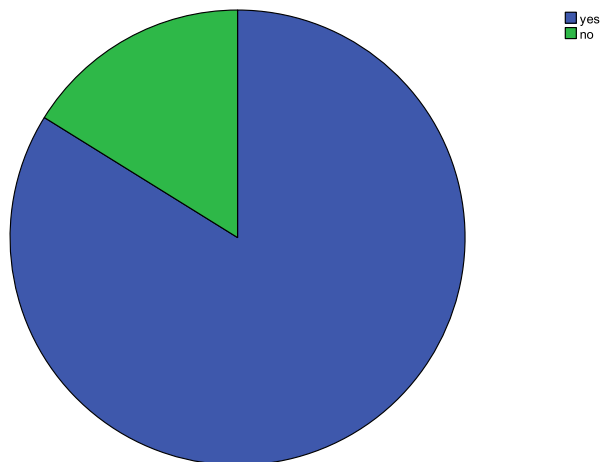
The pie chart (Figure 1.3A) below shows the result. Hence, working women contribute a lot in looking after the family as well as her work.

Table 1.3: The Contributions of Working Women in Looking at the Household

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	109	83.8	83.8	83.8
	no	21	16.2	16.2	100.0
Total		130	100.0	100.0	

Figure 1.3 A

The contributions of working women in looking at the household



The responsibility of women in a particular family system is to look after the house efficiently. Every society expects women to be in charge of running the house chores including the total housework to be done proficiently. Most of the working women agreed that whether they belong to extended or nuclear family system the number of responsibilities towards family is more or less same. Most of the working women agreed that in nuclear family system the working women alone has to do total work, food and preparation, laundry (washing clothes), home maintenance, cooking, rearing children and also looking after the husband.

Whereas, if you are working women in nuclear family system or single parent family the roles you have is less as compared to other family system. You are just a mother and a wife.”

Thus it could be concluded from the above findings from the primary data collection that number of roles working women conform in extended family system is more as compared to other family systems.

Table 1.4: The Number of Roles Working Women Plays in Joint Family System

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid yes	110	84.6	84.6	84.6
no	16	12.3	12.3	96.9
don't know	4	3.1	3.1	100.0
Total	130	100.0	100.0	

The most common perception of every working woman in looking towards the family involves children and their daycare facilities. In child rearing, there are many problems that the working women do encounter. Whether nuclear, extended or single parent family system requires someone to look after the children at home. Moreover, according to the interview responses the major problem or the dilemma comes when the family system having working parents and requires adult to look after the young children. Most of the working women agreed that there is a need for daycare and they do send their children for better socialization. The problem arises when there is no proper daycare system available to keep children.

The problem that was discussed while giving interview was lack of daycare systems in Karachi. Though many of the working women agreed that they do send their children at school but as they work full time or perhaps some working part time requires the best facilities to look after children. However, the interview responses showed that working women in nuclear family system need daycare or early childhood. However, Rubina (Nurse) in her interview said, "In nuclear family system, like I belong too we have young children I send them to daycare. Previously I was living in joint family system, I felt my mother in law used to look after the children.

Table 1.5: Need for Daycare (Looking after the Kids)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	103	79.2	79.2	79.2
	no	26	20.0	20.0	99.2
	don't know	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Family is a strong institution a means of interaction, socialization and bonding. Whether, it's nuclear, extended or single parent family system the attachment one gets by connecting makes lives easier. Many working women shared their experience while interviewing that family plays an important role in case of women. The preference of a family system depends on the environment; bonding one has belonging to a family. Most of the working women agreed that in nuclear family system things are easy manageable. The interview responses showed that mostly working women prefer nuclear family system over extended family system.

Hence, nuclear family is controllable, privacy maintained, manageable, convenient and suitable in case of working women. The extended family system, on the other hand becomes more difficult to manage as there are more number of members living together. The bonding at times becomes difficult due to the differences in the mentality, rigid behavior, age difference and differences of opinion. The preference could perhaps show the change in the family system from extended to nuclear. Due to the problems that are stated above like privacy, close bonding, association with each other where extended could thus create gap within the family members.

The interview responses showed that almost all women preferred nuclear family over joint family system. The questionnaire results below, table (1.6) and figure (1.6A) shows that 75% of the working

women preferred nuclear family system. Whereas, 22% prefer extended family system while 3% favor single parent family. Moreover, the primary data collection shows that working women prefers nuclear family system. Hence, this data collected can also show the change in the family as an institution from the extended to nuclear.

Table 1.6: Preference of a Family System of Working Women

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	nuclear family	97	74.6	74.6	74.6
	extended family	29	22.3	22.3	96.9
	single parent family	4	3.1	3.1	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Though the working women look after the household as well work, it is believed that it is responsibility of the working women to look after the family. Whether, nuclear or extended family system, the family expects women to fulfill all the needs of the members efficiently. Despite of the fact, working women works more than anyone and family. The expectation one has is comparatively more from a women as compared to men. The family system thus expects women to work for the entire family whether nuclear extended or single parent family. Most of the respondents agree that the working women look after the household as a responsibility. The family problems at time hinder working hours. Mostly in the case of nuclear family system the working women alone has to handle all the ends. Whereas in extended family system things has to be done keeping in the mind the time management done efficiently. Most of the working women agreed that family problems hinder their working hours. Almost all shared their experience that sometimes it's difficult to manage work and even they have to compromise their recreational time. The working hours or the nature of job directly impacts the family system.

However, part time full time work impacts the way the working women look at the house. The interview responses showed that the working women is able to give more time it the type of profession they opt for is teacher, receptionist, blogger, whereas compared to doctor, banker that requires full time working hours, life of working women mostly working mothers becomes difficult. The working women in case of part time or comparatively less number of working hours could help her to run the house more efficiently. Often, in the case of less number of hours it's easy.

In extended family system there are fewer objections if the working women are working less number of hours in a profession which is easy to handle. The interview responses showed that the highly prevailing patriarchy have made working women alone responsible to handle family problems. Moreover, the table 1.9 below shows that 79% of working women think, due to patriarchy prevailing the working women are overburdened in all family systems. Whereas 19% think that patriarchy in society doesn't impact on working women in looking towards their family problems.

Conclusion

The data analysis and findings showed that the working women face a lot of problems whether they belong to nuclear, extended or single parent family system. The problems ranging from looking after the family as well as handling work becomes more challenging for a working women thus being more difficult for working mothers at certain circumstances. However, at times the extended family system encourages and supports the working women to work for the benefit of the family by sharing the amount of income earned. Moreover, at times things are different in extended family system, the in laws or other members may not cooperate with the working women and their working hours do clash with family hours. The findings and data analysis showed that most of the women face problems in extended family system due to more number of family members that thus

sometimes results in lack of mutual understanding. The misunderstandings, workload, more family members, more working hours etc were the reasons given by the working women.

The few recommendations that were suggested by the working women included that the number of hours should be flexible so that they can manage time with family. Moreover, the daycare systems in Karachi are not very established which parents could rely on leaving children. Hence, more Daycare schools should be made by the government. By providing flexible hours for women at work could be another solution to make her handling both house as well as household efficiently. Moreover there is no family system which can be regarded as best over the other. It depends on how each and every member is cooperative enough with each other. The segregation of tasks between the family members can also create lesser problems or lessen the burden of working women.

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