



CHALLENGES FOR MARRIED WORKING WOMEN IN JOINT AND NUCLEAR FAMILIES, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MUMBAI

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Abstract:

In cosmopolitan city like Mumbai working or career-oriented women are characterized by unique identity. In the industrialized setup women participation at work force has increased, according to the periodic labour force survey report 2024, the percentage of women participation in the work force is increasing (Ministry of Labour and Employment Directorate General of Employment:2023). Women specially in patriarchal social structure is shouldered with the burden of balancing and handling both duties, outside work place functions as well as household responsibilities, which at times becomes a huge task. This paper elaborates the comparative relationship between married working women in joint and nuclear family in Mumbai. The study is done on married women between the age group of 21 to 60 years who are pursuing similar grade or bracket of job, and following almost similar life style in Mumbai. It is observed in the study that the women staying in the nuclear family structure, are more borne to career upgradation as compared to women staying in the joint family. This is due to availability of various factors like decision-making, minimum or no interference from in-law's or other first relation members in the family. It is observed that working women in nuclear family are more focussed on their career as well as are able to balance between work and home even if it is stressful. They are comfortable and pleased with liberty of authority and decision-making power. While married working women in joint family as this study shows creates a strong pessimism towards her career and face various difficulties in balancing between work and home. The findings indicate a significant role conflict between relationship, grievous work stress, associated social, economic as well as psychological issues between both married working women in joint family in comparison with married working women of nuclear family.

Keywords: Cosmopolitan, Industrialized, Patriarchal, Decision-making, Role Conflict.

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Introduction:

Almost in all fields Indian labour force consists of married working women who are expected to take responsibilities and balance between work and home. In the context the women who are attempting to make their career with joint family as well as with nuclear family have to face different challenges. The paper highlights and compares the working wives with similar income, economically independent but highlighting their challenges, conflicts in joint v/s nuclear families in Mumbai, India.

Objective:

- To explore challenges and consequences of working married women struggling in joint and nuclear family.
- To highlight gap supportive system of joint and nuclear family for working women.
- To focus on how these both working women in joint and nuclear families have attitude towards dealing with their own personality.
- To familiarize detail of challenges of working women for gender analysis and policymaking.

Methodology :

Data is collected from sample of married female women in private, corporate field in metropolitan Mumbai area. The present study is based on the primary and secondary data. Samples were randomly selected from the private corporate sectors in Mumbai. These women engaged in skilled manual jobs, the criteria for the study included the marriage with employment at least compilation of more than 2 years. A total of 125 married working women living with their husband with at least one or two children and the age group between 21 to 60 years of age responded to the questionnaires. Selected women were mainly belonging to upper middle class and middle class. Analyse of the study was carried with simple average scoring scales. The respondents were selected from different job roles and levels which included manager, receptionist, human resource (HR) and marketing.

Working Married Women in Nuclear and Joint Families:

Working married women has to play different roles both at home as well as at work place. In many fields the nature of work among women workers is not significantly different from the work of men. Thus, it is difficult for every working woman to fit into the workplace culture and make adjustment accordingly. For working women every time going to the process of preparing oneself with particular role of mother, wife, daughter-in-law etc thus it gets often complex for women staying in joint families compared to women staying in nuclear family. In patriarchal society the general notion that brings natural gender socialization has empirical evidence. In sharing domestic responsibilities, it is significant for males residing with nuclear families compared to the joint families. In these family's wife's economic dependence has equivalent value and concept of respect is observed more in the nuclear families. The work responsibilities are shared by husband and wife.

To manage the show new ways are defined and agreed. For instance, many products which save time are purchased in the nuclear families like washing machines, dish washer etc. also maids are hired for regular domestic works like cooking. While in past in many joint families there were no maid's and working women was expected to complete domestic work too. However, in recent times the family support for working women is increasing. Also, in earlier times her income was not used for house running. It was just a reserve amount, when required, now the scenario and mentality has changed. Her income source is respectfully brought in use for family chores. Directly or indirectly her income is effective in both nuclear as well as joint families. The women of nuclear family when compared with the women of joint families there was difference in the openness of communication. As joint family women felt that their communication with their family was significantly less open at comfort level. Also, her 'say' was not taken seriously or considered significant in joint families.

Whether joint or nuclear families both women are struggling and are performing dual role with overload of work. She jumbles with the role conflict between expectation from familial responsibilities and societal preferences. This has an immense effect on her personal life, may it be physical stress or mental fatigue.

Working Women: Joint Family and Nuclear Family:

In India patriarchy system has both joint as well as nuclear family system and has witnessed increased participation of women's workforce but at other hand leading to increase of responsibilities or burden of invisible, unrecognized, unpaid inside home and subsidizing paid labourer for outside world.

Table 1: Age of married working women in nuclear and joint family

Age	Sum of Joint Family	Sum of Percentage 1	Sum of Nuclear Family	Sum of Percentage 2
21 to 30	15	24.19	16	25.40
31 to 40	17	27.42	19	30.16
41 to 50	17	27.42	16	25.40
51 to 60	13	20.97	12	19.05
Grand Total	62	100.00	63	100.00

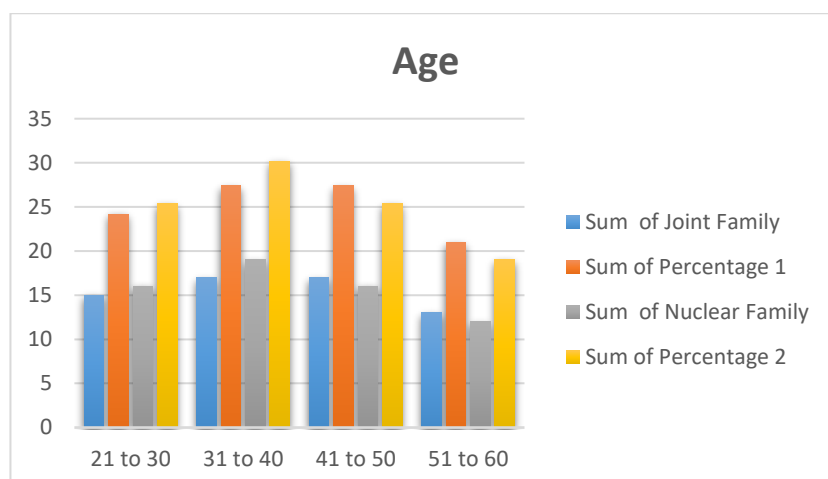


Table 1 Under 21 and 30 years 24.19 % of respondents (15 women of joint families) belong to this age group and 25.40 % of respondents (16 women of nuclear families) both married working women in nuclear and joint family were found to have more struggle in balancing problem in work and home compared to other age group. While age group under 51 to 60 years they were not much struggling that much compared to other groups in both joint and nuclear families. The table reveals that age group i.e. younger married women both from nuclear and joint face more difficulties in achieving work and home balance compared to others.

Table 2: Distribution of household work load

Distribution of household work load	Sum of Joint Family	Sum of Percentage 1	Sum of Nuclear Family	Sum of Percentage 2
Yes	14	22.58	51	80.95
No	48	77.42	12	19.05
Grand Total	62	100.00	63	100.00

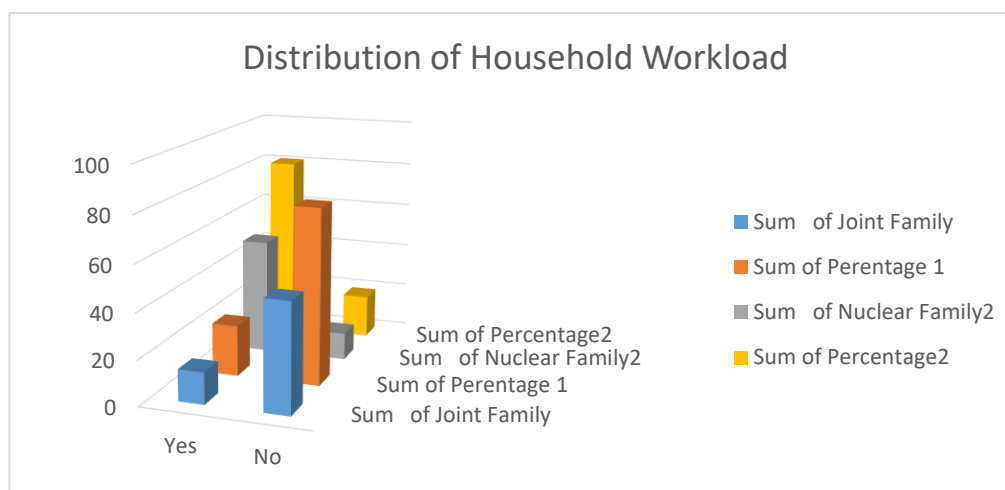
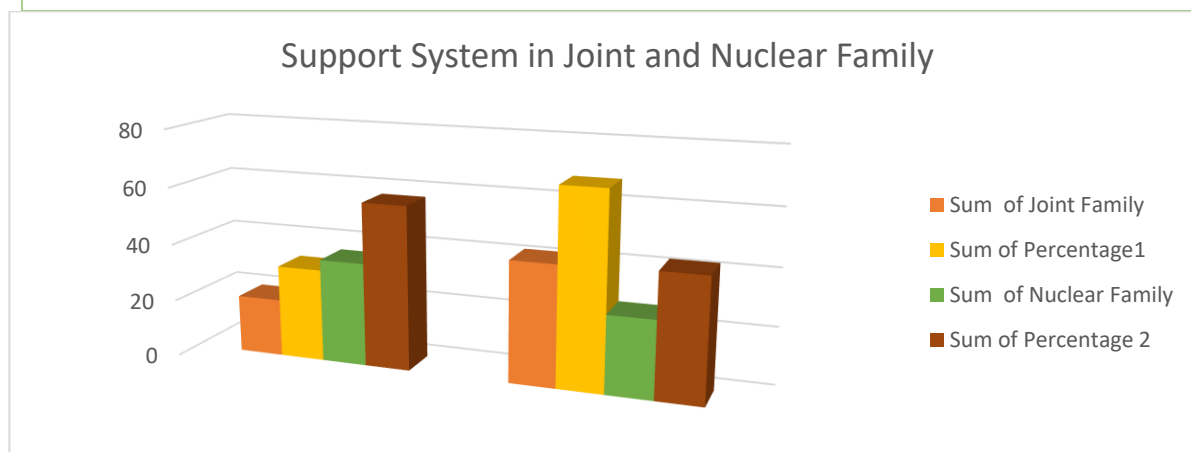


Table 2 indicates females among joint families 77.42% had heavy work load, inspite of in laws at home, women expressed they were expected to work at home from morning covering all responsibilities without much of support. Phenomenon of support system is the strength specially for any working married women. A significant research gap of support system is crucial and is essential for both married women of joint and nuclear family. Table no 3 show working married women in joint family there is only 20 (32.25%) support system management for their responsibilities when compared with nuclear family which is 36 (58.06%). Actually, there is uncommitted relationship which is expected from the women from their family members, but many times there is no crucial understanding and support, which results in emotional misunderstanding and mistrust.

Table 3: Support System in Joint and Nuclear Family

Support System	Sum of Joint Family	Sum of Percentage1	Sum of Nuclear Family	Sum of Percentage 2
Yes	20	32.26	36	57.14
No	42	67.74	27	42.86
Grand Total	62	100.00	63	100.00



In career the major decision or commitment at workplace for growth, promotion, pay hikes are directly related to dedication to work with respect to field visits/ outdoors's, tour, overtimes, long working hours etc. For married working women in joint families, for almost 80% percent, the decision was taken in discussion and by permission and approval of their husband and in-laws'. females admitted wrathfully that their own decision was taken as secondary priority regarding their own career choice. This indirectly resonated and created isolation from the workplace and kept them least interested in their promotion, increment, career growth etc. contrastingly, in case of married working women in nuclear family's more than 95 % percent decision's regarding career were taken by themselves. Not only that they further appreciated that there was full support from her spouse and also parents to do job, this facilitated faster promotion and upgrading in their career. They enjoyed this liberty which gave them more strength in balancing workplace and home and elevating their career.

Table 4: How much of the monthly income do you save and invest?

It was interesting to know that most of the working married women in 'joint families', the major saving and investment were for tax benefits and kept reserved for any unexpected family crises. While for working married women in 'nuclear families' savings and investment were well balanced for future and present needs. Incoming money was judiciously invested for proper retirement plans, investment in mutual funds, and also equally distributed for family and personal lifestyle upgrading, enjoyment and recreation with their children, spouse, close relatives and friends.

It was observed that there is variation in percentage of net salaries earned by working married women when compared in joint and nuclear family structures. Study reveals that working married women having a nuclear family have better and continuous growth in net salary, high investment, possibility of thick CTC (Cost to company) packages, as they are ready to take risk, are more focussed and allot more working hours and dedication towards job. This sustaining attitude and management skill of nuclear working women is fulfilled and achieved due to strong moral support and conducive environment provided by family. This reciprocates and helps upwards mobility and brings more earnings, societal status and above all also reduces work pressure. Another highlight point is noted that, more than 70 % of the working married women in nuclear families own a property on their name.

Table 5: Monthly Income saved and invested in Joint or Nuclear Family.

Property/Investment	Sum of Joint Family	Percentage 1	Sum of Nuclear Family	Percentage 2
10-20%	7	11.29	9	14.29
20-30%	5	8.06	7	11.11
30-40%	9	14.52	12	19.05
Less than 10%	36	58.06	8	12.70
More than 10%	5	8.06	27	42.86
Grand Total	62	100.00	63	100.00


Table 6: What are potential elements for conflicts with families related to work or family?

Conflicts or difference of opinion in any family is normal and natural. But the frequency of eruptions and outbursts differ from family to family and person to person. Same applies for the scruffles and conflicts a working woman in Joint family and nuclear family faces.

A working married woman in a Joint family admitted that she was having difficulty in establishing her own credibility and integrity in the family and added that there was more male or patriarchal domination in decision making, which resulted in difference of thought process and constituted for the main reason of all conflicts.

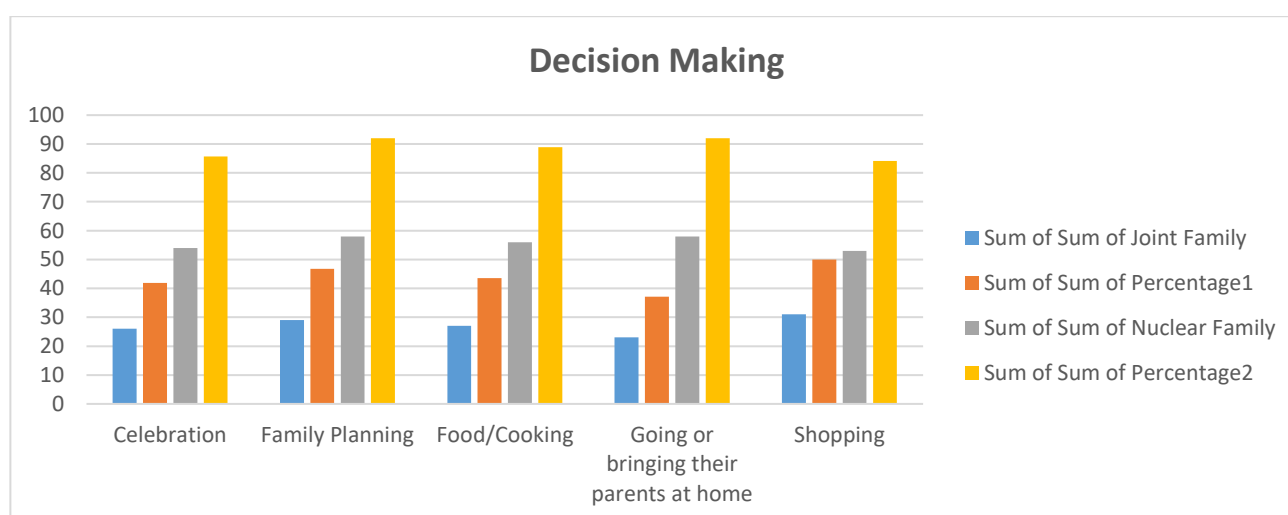
Table 7: Decision Making power between the Married Working Women in Joint and Nuclear Family.


Table 7 shows that in celebration the 41% of working women in joint families admitted that decision of hoteling, birthday party, anniversary celebrations, weekend outings or vacations were all decided either by husband or their in-laws. The preparation for these events constituted for more stress and hustle between the work-home adjustment and hindered their enjoyment and created chaos personally in managing the show and work front wise for attending the office next day. While in a Nuclear setup 85% working married women were happy for the celebration and also admitted that the major decision of celebration was taken by them support and confidence of their spouse and children's.

While working married women staying in joint families possessed no democratic power for important decision of family planning compared to those women staying in nuclear family enjoys 92 % of decision of family planning. It was observed that nearly 88 % women from nuclear families possessed independent decision and were glad to have liberty on deciding cooking and choosing regular meals menu. 43 % women from joint families had to face tantrums of each and every family member and thus become very difficult and overthink every day how and what to cook according to everyone's choose and satisfy all family members. Some interestingly fact was found that in some houses there were pre-decided division of work, there were planned 'turns of cooking' in a joint family. but many a times when the working lady arrived late due to extra work at office or traffic or travelling related issues, even then they merely got opportunity to skip house hold activities and had to compulsorily abide to the 'rule of turn' and sleep late night, tired and fatigued.

'Going to' or 'bringing their parents at home' - 92 % of working married women in nuclear family acknowledged that their parents were welcomed anytime at their place and there was enjoyment, also added they even stayed for many weeks at the parent's place which made them relaxed. In situations like late office work, or important meetings at office or certain circumstances of rain issues or other extreme calamities etc and coincidentally parent's home being near to office rather than own home, they got an opportunity to stay back at parent's place. In joint family 46 % of working married women admitted their parents were not frequently invited, and there was not seamless tuning with the in-laws which made everyone uncomfortable. Which obviously reduced the frequency and duration of their parents coming to their place. This resulted into the working woman requiring to take special holidays from office to spend time or go to their parents' place.

Shopping – percentages observed with respect to shopping had major differences. Activity of shopping was found adored in both women from nuclear and joint families. However amongst the working women in joint families, only 50 percent enjoyed privilege of decision making in shopping and admitted that they many times had to hide or weren't comfortable in disclosing their shopped items, as they felt they might get taunted from their elderly in-law members. Whereas for working women in nuclear family structure the percentage is as high as 84 %. Further, they admitted that they have liberty to purchase as per their desire and need and they need not have to hide anything from anyone.

Decision making - Unfortunately, almost 75 % of women in joint families admitted that their husband or in some cases the in-laws' interfere, in almost all decision-making, right from personal to professional calls. This creates conflicts and tension with their partner. They confirmed that consistently over ruling of even the minor or crucial decisions hampered their decision-making ability and withered their self-confidence. This indirectly influenced health of these women and affected them on professional level.

Table 8: Comparison of growth rate of working women in joint family and nuclear family

Growth Rate	Sum of Joint Family	Sum of Percentage1	Sum of Nuclear Family	Sum of Percentage2
Promotion	45	72.58	14	22.22
Ready to do Extra Work	23	37.10	55	87.30
Time Management	38	61.29	48	76.19
Wages increment	18	29.03	48	76.19



Table 8 The percentage involved increased in wages (76 %) of women of nuclear family compared to the women of joint family (29 %) these shows that growth of working women in nuclear family is continuously increased from promotion. Due to the gradual increase the decision of ready to do extra work has positive impact on women. But Family restriction brings juncture to their upward progress mobility.

Limitations:

- Limited sample was the limitations, as very few families were ready to talk and express their views about personal life and preferences.
- Only educated working females of single metropolitan city (Mumbai) were included in study.
- It included overall perceptive of in-laws, separate views of each member of in-laws would have given more depth.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

The study reveals the challenges that are being faced by the married working women in joint and nuclear families in Mumbai. In spite of the influencing lifestyle, even today family system exists. There exists some issue's especially for the bride entering a new family. She encounters some tension, pressure, due to socialization, cultures etc. She is one who willingly or unwillingly leaves her parents, her home, her birth place and accepts a completely new world, different environment, people, habits, functions etc and gets ready for a journey with the partner. Due to urbanization, lifestyles, growing needs, she moves out of house in search of earning and livelihood. The

survey showed that working women in nuclear family spent 15% of their days' time in leisure, active participation in cultural activities, social media, shopping and self-space as compared to working women in joint family which spend only 8% of their days' time in leisure and other activities.

These married working women in joint or nuclear families in Mumbai faces various challenges in the outside world. It may be the daily travelling, balancing home and office which generates friction which have effect on their social, physical as well as mental well being. It is not important to understand which family system is suitable in this modern era but it is time to seriously understand the suitable condition needs to be given to women living in any family system, honour for their decision, respect for their being, sharing responsibilities with them and understanding their necessities and feelings. As it is of utmost importance in both the 'nuclear' and 'joint family' system. Joint family women have less decision taking power while in nuclear family they are more autonomous. Type of marriage arrangements in the society over the period of time explores type of behaviour, changes in family

structure. In nuclear families it was observed that there exists sharing of responsibilities, social and financial balancing.

There were some bitter instances in relationships between husband and wife due to over dominance and over-powering of female in all decision making. In some cases, some working women are very self-centred, bonding exists only with husband and children, leading for isolation from outer world, which is also alarming and unhealthy socially.

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