

A study on the factors affecting the selection of employment among females, in the Kesbewa Divisional Secretarial in Sri Lanka

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Traditionally in many societies including Sri Lanka, females were expected to be engaged in household duties and less or not promoted for formal education as well as outside employment. However, contemporary societies are debating on equal status for the female and estimating her socio - economic contributions to families and to wider society. Current world of work shows that females are performing various types of challenging careers equal to/or better than males. Accordingly, this study attempts to find out the nature of selecting employments among females and the factors affecting their selection of employment. The study was carried out in the Kesbewa Divisional Secretarial in the Colombo district. Data and information was gathered from randomly selected 50 women through a questionnaire survey. In-depth interviews were conducted with 5 females for further information. It was observed that 80% of females' marital states, 42% of educational background as well as 32% for freedom of the occupation have been severe factors affecting their selection of employments. Further, number of family members has been a major reason in the selection of occupations. It was also noticed that the majority of the occupations do not provide free time for females to take care of their kids and families. As a result, 64% of them had to resign from their previous permanent work places and have to engage in other means of earning through self-employment such as private tuition classes, saloons, flower shops, boutiques, communications etc. Interestingly, it can be indicated that even though they are occupied in various sectors, the majority of the female's first preference is to teaching as a career. It is due to their belief that teaching as a career provides more free time to look after the household work while working as a teacher. It is also noted that even though the contemporary females have engaged in many high level careers such as Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, and Administrators etc. they seek more flexibility in their employment than men mainly to balance between household responsibilities and career responsibilities.

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