ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

A STUDY OF UNPAID WORK AMONG THE WOMEN IN ANANTNAG DISTRICT OF KASHMIR VALLEY

Dr. P. Shanmugam[1], Junaid Yasin Shah[2]
[1]*Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Bharathiar University- 641046.*
[2]*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Bharathiar University- 641046.*

ABSTRACT
This study is an attempt to explore diverse issues related to the problem of women's unpaid domestic care work and its impact on gender inequality in professional Settings. Despite its importance to wellbeing, women's unpaid work is overlooked, affecting their economic participation and status in society and the labor market. Understanding this issue is crucial for addressing gender inequality. Therefore, it is warranted to examine the magnitude and factors that influence the unpaid domestic work and the status of women The study examines the impact of women's labor between paid and unpaid care work and its effects on gender equality with respect to decent work outcomes, decision-making power, and its connection to individual and family poverty. Unpaid care work shapes the ability, duration and types of paid work that can be undertaken. This paper concentrated on primary datagenerated through an extensive household survey. Sample has been made using simple random sampling technique. Data was collected and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.
KEY WORDS: *Unpaid Work, Equality, Analysis, Rural Women, Time Spending, Anantnag District.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Analytically, people spend time on paid, unpaid, and no work activities. Unpaid work includes all non-remunerated activities lacking social recognition. The allocation of paid and unpaid time is influenced by various factors such as age, gender, household structure, social class, location, and child presence (Antonopoulos, 2008). Unpaid household work includes various chores like food preparation, shopping, and care for children, the ill, and the elderly, often done by women in all societies. According to prevailing gender norms women undertake the responsibility of the unpaid household work required to sustain the households (Ibid., P. 6). The economic well-being of a country is generally measured by per capita GDP. By 2025, women could contribute $28 trillion to global GDP (Hodges, 2019). Unpaid work, if overlooked, can lead to underreported economic levels, while shifts from unpaid to paid work may falsely inflate GDP growth (Stiglitz et al, 2009). Women's dual roles as paid worker outside and unpaid worker inside the household significantly contribute to a country's productivity, but rural women worldwide are underrepresented in development processes (Goswami and Bordoloi, 2013). India's agricultural economy is predominantly rural, with 70% of the population residing in rural areas (Census of India, 2011) and 50% relying on agriculture as their main income source (NSSO 68th Round). India's women significantly contribute to the agricultural sector (Op. Cit. Stiglitz et al, 2009). Women often face a "double burden" of unpaid care work and paid activities, resulting in a disproportionate amount of time spent on these tasks (Farrant, et al, 2014), violates women's rights (UN, 2013) and hinders economic empowerment, while household care is crucial for family unity and nurturing human and social values (Hirway, 2015). UN studies reveal men earn the majority of income and recognition for their economic contributions, while women's work remains unpaid, undervalued, and unrecognized (UNDP, 1995). This is not some inherent trait which causes some activities to be paid or unpaid but rather influenced by social context. The UNDP's 1995 Human Development Report emphasizes women's significant role in their family, community, and nation's economic and social development (United Nations HDR, 1995).

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Unpaid care work, predominantly performed by women in all societies, leads to economic invisibility and statistical underestimation, affecting their status, opportunities, and policy recognition. It plays a crucial role in well-being, benefiting recipients while imposing costs on caregivers. This study aims to explore the nature, characteristics, and extent of unpaid care work, particularly in Kashmir, contributing to a deeper understanding and awareness of its impact on women. The findings will provide critical insights into the issue, highlighting the need for greater recognition and policy attention.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the socio-economic status of women in household.
- To identify the different domestic activities and their time allocation undertaken by women.

4. SAMPLING

The universe of the present study constitutes Anantnag district of Kashmir valley. The study is based on a sample of 150 respondents selected from two tehsils of district Anantnag. A simple random sampling technique was used to collect the data

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

from respondents. Data collection was done with the help of a well-designed and structured interview schedule and observation technique in order to get reliable and objective information.

5. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Age of the Respondents

Age is one of the important indicators of socio- economic status of an individual in society.

Table; 1. Age wise Distribution of Respondents

Age (In Years)	15-25	26-35	36-45	46 and above	Total
Frequency	15	35	30	70	**150**
Percentage	10.00	23.33	20.00	46.66	**100.00**

Source: Field data, 2025

The sample of 150 respondents was categorized into four age groups to understand variations in unpaid work patterns. The data revealed that 46.66% of respondents were in the 46 years and above age group, and they predominantly carried out unpaid care work, indicating that. care responsibilities of women are high at later age than in the Middle Ages.

Educational Status of the Respondents

It is well known fact that education is the harbinger of social change. In fact, education is one of the most essential inputs of the development process and the most important hurdles in the development process are ignorance and illiteracy of the masses.

Table: 2. Educational Status of the Respondents

Response	18-25 Yrs	26-35 Yrs	36-45 Yrs	46 yrs and above	Total
Illiterate	3 (3.75)	10 (12.05)	13 (16.25)	54 (63.52)	80 (53.33)
Primary	00	3 (13.04)	12 (52.17)	8 (34.78)	23 (15.33)
Secondary	00	12 (52.17)	5 (21.73)	6 (26.08)	23 (15.33)
Higher	12 (50.00)	10 (41.66)	00	2 (8.33)	24 (16.00)
Total Percentage					150 (100.00)

Source: Field data, 2025

The data shows that most illiterate women were aged 46 and above, taking on significant unpaid care work. Low female education levels were due to past societal norms, low family income, early marriage, and frequent pregnancies. Social attitudes, especially in rural areas, restricted girls' education, limiting their opportunities.

Marital Status of the Respondents

Marriage is one of the most important social institutions. In a developing country like India, it has undergone many changes.

Table: 3. Marital status of Respondents

Marital Status	Married	Unmarried	Widow	Divorced	Total
Frequency	100	40	7	3	**150**
Percentage	66.67	26.66	4.66	2.00	**100.00**

Source: Field data, 2025

There has been a dramatic increase in age at marriage for women in Kashmir mainly as a result of socio-economic development and advances in education of women.

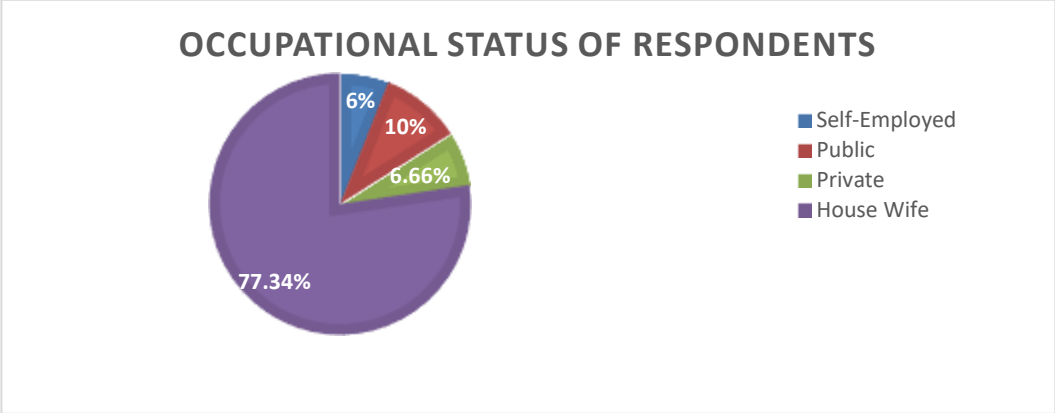
The study found that 66.67% of respondents were married, while 26.66% remained unmarried, indicating a trend of higher marriage age among women. Extended formal education plays a role in delaying marriage, granting women greater control over household decisions and spouse selection. Educated and employed women were more assertive about their rights and better equipped to handle family breakdowns. The study also highlighted that increasing women's economic independence has contributed to rising divorce rates, facilitating separation in cases of conflict and leading to a shift toward single parenthood.

Occupational Status of the Respondents

Occupation is the principal means through which people develop and express their personal identities. The occupation of respondent defines her profession whether they were doing public, private or any other type of work.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Figure: 4. Occupational Status of Respondents



Source: Field data, 2025

In Figure: 4, occupational status of the respondents was analyzed, found that most respondents (116 out of 150) were engaged in casual or domestic work, with low public sector employment due to cultural norms. Women perceived household work as their natural role and avoided outside jobs due to safety concerns and limited educational opportunities. Unpaid domestic work was a key barrier to paid employment. However, women are gradually taking on diverse jobs, sharing family responsibilities, and contributing to society. Similarly, a report by Department of Economics and Social Affairs (2015) indicate progress in women's labor market participation, with more women now working as wage and salaried employees.

Economic Status and Caste of Respondents

Economic status is more commonly used to depict an economic difference in society as a whole.

Table: 5. Economic Status of Respondents

Economic Status	**APL**	**BPL**	**AAY**	**Any other**	**Total**
Frequency	103	28	19	00	150
Percentage	68.67	18.66	12.66	0.00	100.00
Caste Category	**General**	**OBC**	**SC**	**ST**	**Total**
Frequency	96	32	22	0	150
Percentage	64.00	21.34	14.66	0	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In table: 5, While analyzing the economic status of respondents it was revealed that three fourth of respondents belonged to above poverty line and the remaining belonged to below poverty line. The classification has been given in accordance to NFSA 2013. Among the Surveyed women more than two thirds of the women were belonged to general category and about one fifth were OBC category. There was a few in the category of SC.

Family Size of the Respondents

Family is fundamental to socialization, but urbanization has led to a shift from joint to nuclear families. Individuals often separate from parental families after marriage or becoming earners, establishing independent households. The study collected data to understand the predominant family structure in the area.

Table: 6. Family Size of Respondents

Family Size	**1-3 Members**	**4-6 Members**	**7-9 Members**	**10-12 Members**	**Total**
Frequency	8	129	13	0	150
Percentage	5.34	86.00	8.66	0	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The study found that 86% of respondents had nuclear families (4-6 members), while 8.66% belonged to joint families (7-9 members). The decline of the joint family system reflects broader societal changes rather than a new trend. Urbanization, industrialization, migration, and modernization have contributed to the shift toward nuclear family structures in Kashmir.

Time Spending by the Respondents

Respondents allocate their time on activities that can be classified as paid work, unpaid work and no work. Time allocation by women respondents was assessed and only 22.66 percent respondents were contributing to paid employment and 77.34 percent respondents has zero hours contribution in paid employment.

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Table: 7, Allocation of on Different Activities by Respondents

Time Allocation	0 Hours	1-3 Hours	4-6 Hours	7-9 Hours	10-12 Hours	>12	Total
Paid Employment	116 (77.34)	0 (0.00)	34 (22.66)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	150 (100)
Domestic Chores	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	16 (10.66)	80 (53.34)	51 (34.00)	3 (2.00)	150 (100)
Leisure Time	11 (7.34)	100 (66.66)	20 (13.34)	13 (8.66)	6 (4.00)	0 (0.00)	150 (100)
Sleeping	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	80 (53.33)	50 (33.33)	20 (13.34)	0 (0.00)	150 (100)

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Daily Time Allocation to Different Domestic Chores (Unpaid)

The analysis is based on time use variables according to the type and daily frequency of household tasks. Time spending on the below mentioned activities depends upon many factors including age, gender, type of household structure, social class, geographic location and presence of number of children in the homes. So, in this context it is better tried to discuss the time spending of respondents on the domestic activities. The below data clearly reveals that the deep rooted and intensive idea behind the female's gender role responsibility is well expressed by phrases such as ***"house as the woman's natural place or women are meant for housework".***

Table: 8. Time spent in Household Activities by Respondents

Type Of Work	0 hours	1-3 hours	4-6 hours	7-9 hours	10-12 hours	>12	Total (%age)
Child Care	27 (18.00)	39 (26.00)	46 (30.66)	38 (25.34)	0	0	150 (100.00)
Care Of Elders	30 (20.00)	91 (60.66)	21 (14.00)	8 (5.34)	0	0	150 (100.00)
Cooking Food	3 (2.00)	80 (53.34)	50 (33.33)	17 (11.33)	0	0	150 (100.00)
Fetching Water	140 (93.34)	10 (6.66)	0	0	0	0	150 (100.00)
Fetching Fuel	142 (94.66)	8 (5.34)	0	0	0	0	150 (100.00)
Washing Clothes	6 (4.00)	132 (88.00)	12 (8.00)	0	0	0	150 (100.00)
Sweeping	8 (5.34)	133 (88.66)	9 (6.00)	0	0	0	150 (100.00)
Rearing Animals	110 (73.33)	18 (12.00)	22 (14.66)	0	0	0	150 (100.00)
Kitchen Gardening	14 (9.34)	97 (64.66)	36 (24.00)	3 (2.00)	0	0	150 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2025 ***Note: Figures in the parentheses are percentages to total***

Thus, data reveals that women are still, as in former times, expected to be responsible for discharging domestic tasks. It was revealed that on an average, respondents done 8.84 hours on daily basis in domestic work, average leisure time is 3.38 hours and the average sleeping time is 6.8 hours. It means that less the number of leisure and sleeping hours more is the burden in turn decreases the wellbeing of women. In case of older women sleeping hours were more than the young women, educated women's were spend more of their time in personal or leisure activities than the illiterate women's. The average hours spend by the women's in caring of their children's were 4.97 hours, it was analyzed that more the number of children more is time allocated in this. The time allocation of women was 2.92 hours in caring of elders on an average. Time allocation varies due to age factor of their elders, very old needs more care. Means demand for care from elderly and young children were high. In analysis it was found that women on an average spend 3.64 hours in cooking food. Allocation of time in cooking food depends on the size and number of young children in household. The high-income household spends less time in cooking food than low-income household. Reason behind is the high-income households were having all the time saving electric gadgets used in the process of cooking food, but incomes have no such gadgets using simple utensils. Around 6.00 percent of women spend 2 hours on average in fetching water from tube wells or from ponds. Also, it was found 5.00 percent of women spend 2 hours on average in fetching fuels sometimes in a week or in a month. On an average women spend 2.87 hours often in washing clothes while spends 1.48 hours on average in sweeping/laundering. As the study was done in rural area here respondents spend on an average 3.65 hour

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 2| February 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

in rearing of animals and they were contributing 2.65 hours on an average in Kitchen gardening. Some were doing above said work on regularly while others often.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Kashmir follows a patriarchal structure where men are primary earners, while women handle household work. Variations in women's unpaid care work across the region are influenced by socio-economic and demographic factors. Employed women often work longer hours but face barriers to paid employment. Lower-income groups engage more in unpaid care work. Women's decision-making regarding children significantly impacts their well-being. Social norms reinforce women's role in family care, affecting their physical and psychological health, employment, and social activities. Policymakers should recognize unpaid care work, incorporate it into national accounts, and consider local contexts for effective policy measures. Efficient public infrastructure, especially water provision, can reduce burdens on marginalized women. Childcare responsibilities significantly impact women's employment, necessitating government support for family care facilities. Gender inequalities in caregiving persist, highlighting the need for inclusive policies to address disparities.

CONCLUSION

Despite playing a significant role in the workforce, women's contributions to the economy are not fully realized because unpaid domestic activities are overlooked. Therefore, it is imperative to eradicate inequality and the government should cease developing economic and social policies based on insufficient data. Thus, recognizing and measuring unpaid care is a question of justice for those who are engaged in unpaid work "Development is endangered if it is not engendered" (UN HDR, 1995). According to the census in 2011, Even though 159.5 million women reported that their primary occupation was doing household duties, still treated as non-workers. according to a report from the IMF, India's GDP could grow by 27.00 percent if women's economic participation were raised equal to that of men (Samuel, 2019). It is time to bring women back as actors and agents in their lives as paid working women's.

REFERENCES

1. *Antonopoulos, R. (2008). The Unpaid Care Work–Paid Work Connection, Working Paper No.541).*
2. *Census of India (2011). Retrieved from http/www.census 2011.co.in*
3. *Ferrant, G., Pesando, L. M., and Nowacka, K. (2014) Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in theanalysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes, OECD Development Centre.*
4. *Goswami, N. and Bordoloi, K. (2013). Female Participation in Agriculture: A Literature Review.*
5. *Hirway, I. (2015) Unpaid Work and the Economy: Linkages and Their Implications, LevyEconomics Institute of Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504, US, Working Paper No. 838, ISSN 1547-366X.*
6. *Hodges, A. (2019) Business Briefing on Unpaid Care and Domestic Work, Oxfam International, published by Oxfam GB, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2JY, UK ISBN 978-1-78748-440-5 in June 2019. DOI: 10.21201/2019.4405.*
7. *Human Development Report (1995). Gender and Human Development; prepared by HDRO, published by Oxford University Press for United Nations Development Programme, New York.*
8. *NSSO 68th Round (2013). Key Indicators of Employment and Unemployment in India, Ministryof Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.*
9. *Stiglitz, J., A. Sen, and J.-P. Fitoussi (2009). Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress.*
10. *Samuel, V. J. (2019), unpaid work: Women and the burden of unpaid labour, Down to Earth published by Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi.*
11. *UN (2013), Report of Sepulveda Carmona, M., the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty andHuman Rights: Unpaid Care Work and Women's Human Rights. Available at SSRN 2437791.*