MUSLIM WOMEN IN
CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES:
REALITY AND OPPORTUNITIES

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WOMEN, WORK AND ISLAM: A MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE

Rohaiza Rokis

Introduction
An activity when performed by men is often more highly valued than when performed by women [Pahl, 1984, Pearson, 2000]. Therefore, the objective of this chapter is to analyse the experience of female workers in their private lives. The relevant research questions are: Do employed women have a second shift at home? How do they feel at home and at work? What are the measures developed by employed women in setting the boundary between home and the workplace? Consequently, how do religion and tradition influence the life of these professional women?

This chapter demonstrates the attitudes of employed women towards the family, especially the challenge of the dual-role concept. It has been demonstrated that throughout the years most married women who have a career and earn wages feel that the dual-role contradiction was indeed an unresolved dilemma [Barker and Allen. 1976; Kauppinen and Gordon. 1997]. It investigates how women balance the need to be in the labour force while still carrying out their role at home. The social expectation for a woman to be a good mother or/and wife is strong. This chapter discusses the effects of conservative ideas on the familial structure in Malaysia.