CHAPTER - II

Theoretical Debate and Emerging Trends

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2.1 WHY A THEORETICAL DEBATE?

At a time when women are actively seeking more of a choice in their destinies, it is clear that the contemporary challenge is as much to men as it is to women. The changing time has brought more and more women being engaged in paid work. The consequence of which, has been the changing role of women as a member of the family and as a member of the labour force. The resulting role conflicts arising due to the bifurcation of women's duties towards her family and to her career, raises the need for a theoretical debate. The results for women being ambiguous and indeterminate, there arises the necessity of understanding the ambiguities by empirical investigation as well as through theoretical insight.

2.2 A BRIEF OUTLINE ON THE DEBATE:

This study on the role and role conflicts of the middle class employed women, has been supplemented by a review of literature by various authors. Six broad dimensions have been outlined by the researcher, which intend to bring out the views of the various scholars, under some generalised headings. These broad dimensions will help us in understanding the various aspects of the study.

The six broad dimensions are as follows:

1. Woman
2. The perception of class
3. The role of women: past and present
4. Home, work and role conflict
5. The employed mother
6. Women and contours of change

The scholars who have been covered under the first broad dimension of 'woman' are S.S. Shashi, Nita kumar and Sudha Kaldate.
Under the dimension of 'The perception of class' the review of literature includes the studies of Morris Ginsberg, William Robin M. Jr, Kingsley Davis, Robert, Ralf Dahrendorf, Ossowski, Goldthorpe, Vanneman, Pampel, G.S. Ghurye, Hate, Kapur, Sapsford Roger and Gordan Marshall.

The dimension of 'Role of Women : Past and Present' has covered the works of, Anjali Maitra-Sinha, A Synoptic Report of the National Committee on the Status of Women in India, Promila Kapur, Jaya Kumar G. Stanley, Nyrop, Benderly, Cover, Cutter, Parker, Zinkin, Ghadially and Kazi, Mukherjee, Sen Gupta, V.V.P. Rao and V.N. Rao, Ross A.D., Jacobson, Wadley, Mandelbaum, Dube, L., SC. Dube, Altekar, P. Prabhu and Manjula Padmanabhan.


The last dimension 'Women and Contours of Change' compiles the works of Susan Vishwanathan, Inglitzin and Ross, Blood and Wolfe, Haralambos and Heald, Catherine.A. F, Horner, Condry and Dyer, Laws, Coser and Rokoff, Lipman-Blumen and Leavitt, Cross, Tangri, Bernard,
The review of literature has been drawn not only from the works of some well known sociologists and their books, but also from some of the latest articles in magazines and newspapers. The theoretical insights obtained through the review of literature will help the researcher in understanding the problem as well as focus attention on the unsolved areas of the problem.

2.3 REVIEW AND PREVIEW:

2.3.1 WOMAN:

The studies that have been outlined in this section, bring out the position of women since ages.

S.S. Shashi (1989) summarises that, the history of woman is the history of the world. Strait orthodoxy may remind us that man preceded woman in the scheme of creation, and that therefore history does not begin with woman, but this is a specious plea. The first historical information that we gain regarding Adam is concerned with the creation of woman, and there is nothing to show us that prior to that time Adam was more active in mind or even in body than a mollusc. It was not until the coming of woman that history began to exist; and if the first recorded act of the woman was disastrous in its consequences, at least it possesses the distinction of making history. So that it may well be said that all that we are we owe to woman. Whether or not the story of the Garden of Eden is to be implicitly accepted, there can be no doubt that from the moment of the first appearance of mankind on the scene woman has been the ruling cause of all effect.

Nita Kumar (1994) brings out in her study that women are
'historical beings' first and 'women' second. However in particular historical and social contexts women are incontrovertibly part of a system where they are inheritors of certain roles, caught up in a web of symbols that define their being. They perceive the system in certain ways, accept it or challenge it and realign the symbols for themselves. These discoveries are yet very new in the social sciences and partly for that reason give rise to extremist claims. But of course the Truth of Women is not superior or morally more valid that that of men. There is no Truth of 'Women'.

The positon of the Indian woman studied by Sudha Kaldate (1990) states that, there was a time in past in Indian civilisation when women were imparted education, were given socio-political positions and were allowed to choose their life partners.

In course of centuries, this picture changed and women were relegated to the position of home-maker and child-rearers while men have retained control over the means of production. It is evident that because women were deprived of education and individual freedom, they lived a life of drudgery and dependence, of low importance and heavy restrictions for a very long time.

As a result, women had limited responsible roles, where intelligence and initiative was hardly required to be used; where decision-making was done by others, either men or elderly women in the family; where she had not to go alone beyond the doors of home. Her roles were fixed role-expectations by others but within the four walls of the family. As a result women since birth were discriminated and kept in a disadvantageous position until death. Even today, in the 21st century, the position of women in many parts of the world remains the same as described above.
2.3.2 **THE PERCEPTION OF CLASS**: 

A study of the various views on the perception of class, brings out the meaning of who belong to the middle class. A review of literature regarding this area is essential, for understanding the role of the middle class employed women.

According to *Morris Ginsberg (1948)*, classes in modern societies may be described as groups of individuals who through common descent, similarity of occupation, wealth and education have come to have a similar mode of life, a similar stock of ideas, feelings, attitudes and forms of behaviour and who on any or all these grounds meet one another on equal terms and regard themselves, although with varying degrees of explicitness as belonging to one group. The primary determinant of social stratification are without doubt largely economic in character.

Economic conditions determine an individual's occupation and this in turn, is generally a fair index of his model of life and educational attainments from which again may usually be inferred the sort of people whom he would meet on equal terms, the range of individuals from among whom he would normally choose his partner in marriage and so forth.

The concept of class may be more meaningfully be defined with reference to prestige, as postulated by *Robin M. Williams, Jr. (1951)*. Here social classes are defined as aggregate of individuals who occupy broadly similar position in the scale of prestige.

*William* has formulated four relatively discrete social classes while studying the American society. These are: a “lower class” of unskilled workers, a “working class” of manual workers in semi-skilled and skilled occupations, a “middle class” of white collar workers and professionals, and an “elite”, differentiated from the middle class not so much in terms
of occupation as of wealth and lineage.

In "Women and Social Class" a work by Abbott Pamela and Sapsford Roger (1987)\(^6\), it has been observed that, the question of whether class is to be seen as a continuous variable or in terms of bounded groups is more contentious and has been one of the major points of difference between American and European class analysis. Also of interest has been the question of manual / non-manual divide and the extent to which routine non-manual workers are to be seen, is an integral part of the middle class.

Recent researches by Davis (1979)\(^7\) and Robert (1977)\(^8\) suggests that the majority of routine non-manual workers continue to see themselves as middle class.

Studies by Dahrendorf (1959)\(^9\), Ossowski (1963)\(^10\), Goldthorpe (1969)\(^11\), Vanneman and Pampel (1977)\(^12\) reveal that previous research has suggested that the middle class tend to have a 'status' view of class, but that the working class make a clear distinction between a middle and a working class. Analysing American data and specifically testing whether class was seen as a continuous prestige scale or in terms of bounded groups, Vanneman and Pampel (1977)\(^13\) argued that the manual /non-manual divide was of considerable importance for manual workers, but less so for white-collar ones. (However, they also suggest that occupational prestige was more important for women overall).

**Professor G.S. Ghurye (1962)\(^14\)** states "the appellation 'middle class' was first used in 1821. By loose analogy middle class stands for a class that is stable and goes the middle of the road and is the salt of social earth."

**Hate (1969)\(^15\)** adopted the definition of middle class given by central statistical organisation as "All families following intellectual occupation
except agriculture."

Kapur (1970) assumed the middle class working woman as the "white collar" workers.

According to the "Oxford Dictionary of Sociology edited by Gordan Marshall (1998)\(^{16}\), some sociologists (especially those of a Marxist persuasion) would not accept that most routine white-collar workers were middle class, on the grounds that their employment situation is generally equivalent (or even inferior) to that of many working-class people. They prefer to call this group the *new working class*. This is not a view which most white-collar workers themselves share, nor one which is substantiated by sociological evidence.

As with the term *upper class*, distinctions can be made between the 'old' and 'new' middle class. The *former* generally refers to the _petite bourgeoisie and independent professionals_, while the *latter* refers to *all other elements of the middle class*: that is, salaried professionals, administrators and officials, senior managers, and higher-grade technicians who together form the service class, and routine non-manual employees, supervisors, and lower-grade technicians who form a more marginal middle class *(or, in Marxist terms, a new working class)*.

### 2.3.3 ROLE OF WOMEN: PAST AND PRESENT

"Man for the field and women for the hearth
Man for the sword and for the needle she
Man with the head and women with the heart
Man to command and women to obey
Or else confusion."

- Lord Tennyson
Anjali Maitra - Sinha (1993) in her study brings out, how down the ages, the women’s role in society has been constantly changing. In ancient times, when “Adam delved and Eve span” women were confined to the hearth and home, and in bearing and rearing children. However, they enjoyed a high status in society. In vedic times Indian women were looked upon as “Sahadharmini” and equal partner of men in all walks of life.

Gradually with the passage of time, the position of women began to decline in the society. Women came to be relegated to the background and treated as second class citizens. Manu, the first codifier of Hindu law, wrote - “From the cradle to the grave a woman is dependent on a male - in her childhood on her father, in youth on her husband and in old age, her son.”

The woman today is poised to take off. The “voice from the kitchen” is beginning to be heard at national and international fora. Even then she stands at the crossroads, though she has proved her worth in society, at times she is still humiliated, tortured, commodised, abused and discriminated against.

According to Anjali, Women are the gatekeepers of the family and through it the nation. They are the nucleus of the most vital social institutions called the family. No socio-political system can ignore their vital contribution in nation-building. We may recall Subramanya Bharatis’ stirring call -

“The realm of knowledge we shall explore, we shall not lag behind men, knowledge shall be ours as well, we shall join in the making of the laws, we shall grow food for the world, we shall beget Gods for the world.”

The Synopsis of the Report of the National Committee on the
Status of Women (1975)\textsuperscript{19} has brought out that, while the Indian polity recognises equality of rights between men and women, society implicitly accepts a sharp distinction in their roles and spheres of activity. True parity will be possible only when the implications of the constitutional equality are accepted in people’s minds. Even with regional variations, basic notions about male and female roles display some common features.

A woman is primarily associated with the home, is expected to look after domestic chores and her typical roles are those of a housewife and mother. Whether women work in the fields, factories or mines, at construction sites, or in white-collar jobs, all of them are expected to be home-makers in the same manner as women who confine themselves exclusively to home making activities. Their role in the outside world has not yet been accepted in the same manner as men’s.

In the middle class, the spheres of men and women are sharply demarcated. There is a clear distinction between work done for one’s household and that done for others. Women are supposed to do only the former. Where they assist the family business like grocery, tailoring or knitwear, food processing, etc. by preparing things in the home, their contribution is not to be acknowledged, with the result that they are not recorded in the census as workers. It is considered unfortunate for women of these classes, who have no other qualifications and skills to engage in these jobs as a means of earning a livelihood because the prestige of the family suffers when their women have to work for others.

This traditional concept is changing with girls taking up white-collar jobs. Parental inhibitions are breaking down where girls have to earn, sometimes to provide for their dowry and marriage expenses and sometimes to support their parents and younger members of the family. Cases where parents do not want their daughters to marry, out of a fear that this would
deprive them of her earnings, are no longer rare in lower middle class families.

Anjali Maitra-Sinha (1993)\textsuperscript{20} states that women have now taken up professional roles in order to create a meaning for themselves or out of economic necessity. They have risen above socio-cultural traditions, to take serious note of themselves, their potentialities and capabilities. The traditional role of a housewife has gradually evolved into the dual and mere fulfilling role of a working woman and housewife. Some of the factors responsible for this change are better education, changing socio-cultural values, and the need for supplementary income caused by inflation.

Jaya Kumar G. Stanley (1992)\textsuperscript{21} emphasises in her study that the women are supposed to perform many activities in the family. The mother role consists of looking after children and attending to their primary needs. In addition to these activities, related to their family roles some of them are to perform another role, an occupational role, consisting of a number of activities. These two roles might conflict with each other in some respects or other because of two conditions:

\begin{enumerate}
  \item \textit{the need to carry them out in a certain place and at certain time},
  \item \textit{the development of certain attitudes, values and behaviour}
\end{enumerate}

With the participation of a married woman in activities outside the home, certain changes in the respective roles of husband and wife are inevitable. On the otherhand with the gradual breaking up of the joint family system a woman need to participate more in pertaining to family decision making. A woman still assumes a secondary role in which the superiority and dominance of the male is taken for granted.

Studies on the effect of wife's gainful employment on marital harmony have not provided conclusive evidence as to the association
between a wife's participation in work and marital disharmony.

Promila Kapur (1970) in her book "Marriage and the Working Women in India" points out that it is not merely the fact of wife, being employed that affects marital relationship, but the overall change in the attitudes of educated urban women brought about by a variety of factors, which are operating almost simultaneously in contemporary Indian society.

The Report of the National Committee on the Status of Women in India (1975) states that, the emphasis on feminine roles has an inevitable effect on girl's personalities and identities. They learn early in life the need for flexibility, adjustment and submissiveness, and hesitate to develop strong opinions and commitments which they may not be allowed to pursue after marriage. These constrictions and inhibitions affected most women in their later lives, particularly when they have to compete with men in their careers. Among the poorer sections, where girls contribute to the running of the houses as well as the family economy, their education is often sacrificed, while the boys are encouraged to study.

The National Committee on the Status of Women in India saw many cases of this type during their tour, in both urban and rural areas. Apart from the economic reasons, there is also a lurking fear that education may alienate girls from their conventional roles and make them less submissive to the family.

Each culture has a set of institutional structures and practices to teach sex roles, according to Nyrop, Benderly, Cover, Cutter and Parker (1975). Individuals learn to be male or female by learning effective means of communications and social behaviours, which are required for their gender. Such culturally related sex-role behaviours are particularly apparent in such Asian countries as India where, religion, culture and
tradition have deep roots and have significant influence on the individuals personality and behaviour. Parents, siblings and other members of the extended family, along with cultural mores have a significant role in the timing, techniques and emphasis on sex role development and training.

According to Nyrop, Benderly, Cover, Cutter and Parker (1975), Zinkin (1958), currently in India, personal observations suggest that industrialisation and migration have brought about some obvious changes in stereotyped concepts of masculinity and feminity affecting such factors as household composition, residence patterns, sleeping arrangements, specific kinship relationships, male and female attitudes and behaviour.

Ghadially and Kazi (1980) in a recent study of sex role attitudes, marriage and career among Indian college men and women, has provided evidence to suggest that the role played by males and females in Indian society is gradually changing. Findings indicate a significant difference between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' males and females on the above issues.

Studies by Mukherjee (1958), Sen Gupta (1960), Rao V.V.P and Rao V.N. (1982), Ross A.D. (1961), Jacobson (1977), Wadley (1977), Mandelbaum (1970), Dube L. (1978), S.C. Dube (1963), Altekar (1962), Prabhu (1962) suggest that in traditional Indian families the roles of wife and mother are clearly defined and separated from that of the father. The domestic roles of men and women do not overlap and are not interchangeable. Men have always attended to the tasks outside the household. The woman has a complete constellation of roles: managers of the household; caretaker of the children; and distributor of love and affection. She routinely performs such tasks as cleaning, sweeping, decorating the house, washing vessels, cooking and serving food, looking after children and welcoming and entertaining guests.
Despite the rigid differentiation of roles, unqualified generalisations about sex roles would be misleading because of differences in caste, sect, region, language and religion. For example, lower castes and untouchable women not only do household work but also engage in agricultural and non-agricultural work outside the household.

_Rao V.V.P. and Rao V.N._ have also said that although, ideally, a woman plays a submissive and subordinate role in the family, in reality, the woman in India exercises considerable power in family matters in addition to being the sole authority in the household. The traditional dominant role of a woman in the domestic aspects of the family has not recognised as much attention as the subordinate role of women.

_Ross, A.D (1961)_ recognises the woman’s influence and states that, her position as a consultant meant in reality that in most families she shared the responsibility of making the major family decisions with the father. The mother is well qualified to act as advisor to the head of the house, for as she is the _pivot_ around which the family revolves she is in a strategic position in relation to the whole gamut of household intrigue. Through her relationships with the women of the household and larger kin groups she knows all the intimate details of the lives of family members and is thus in a position to advise her husband and later her sons, and so control their decisions. In this way ‘mothers’ may have great power although the traditional picture of the Hindu Women shows her in a state of submission to husband and elders.

_Rao, V.V.P. and Rao, VN (1982)_ in their study ‘Marriage, the Family and Women in India’ found that since the turn of the century, the status of women has been changing because of _industrialisation and urbanisation, the independence movement, spatial mobility, the_
principle of democracy, social legislation and contact with the outside world. Many parents want their daughters to have higher education and equal occupational opportunities. With the expansion of the occupational structure, women are entering the world of paid employment in unprecedented ways.

They note that, a large number of women working outside the home does not necessarily mean that women’s household responsibilities and duties have declined. New roles may be added to the traditional roles increasing women’s burden. Husbands and other relatives may oppose women seeking employment, but unequivocal support that includes sharing the household responsibilities appears to be lacking.

In the process of fulfilling responsibilities at home and at work, some employed women may face role conflict. While in other cases roles of men and women are being redrawn to cope with the changing conditions in the family.

Kapur, P. (1970) captures the ambivalent attitudes of men when she states that husbands ‘like their wives to take up jobs but dislike them to change at all, as their attitude towards their roles and status at home is concerned, and dislikes their traditional responsibilities being neglected which results from their preoccupation with out-of-home vocation.’

“To Hold Up Half The Sky” is an article by Manjula Padmanabhan (2002). According to her, the reality of women’s lives in India today is frankly dismal. Sure, there are a few of us who soar to sudden, unexpected heights: We became pilots and entrepreneurs, models and legislators. But what does this handful mean against the backdrop of the overwhelming majority?
Manjula makes a very pinpointed summary of the role of women in the past and the present. She also very aptly shows how with the changing priorities the role of women has taken a new dimension.

She says, whatever else women aspire to be, their overwhelming biological role so far has been as bearers and nurturers of the next generation. The goddess cults of ancient cultures are proof of the respect and reverence that used to be shown to the life force.

India continues to be world's largest democracy and yes, we have outstripped China in the race to be considered the most fecund. But in today's world, these are negative achievements. As life expectancy rises, and the death rate falls, the domestic values of the traditional world are turned inside out: raw survival and procreation are no longer of paramount concern.

Though we continue to whip our young women into regarding marriage and mother-hood as their primary goal, in reality, our choice of which women we admire reveals where our priorities really lie: by and large, the women who receive the highest public accolades are those who have made a lot of money or who are admired by men or who have excelled in some field of previously all-male endeavour.

In the past when human survival was in doubt, the value placed on women was usually linked directly to their ability to bear healthy off spring. But in today's world, the pressure of population is perhaps the greatest threat facing the planet. Is it possible that one of the factors which has led to a reduction of women's worth in India and elsewhere is that traditional feminine roles are no longer crucial to our species survival?

We may well be at the frontier of a time when women, as bearers and nurturers may simply cease to be necessary. Personally, I believe it's
for the best. Our options lie in the direction of releasing ourselves from the stranglehold of biological imperatives. Just as men today are not exclusively warriors and hunters, women too, can choose not to define themselves exclusively by their reproductive hormones.

2.3.4 HOME, WORK AND ROLE CONFLICT

_Report of the National Committee on The Status of Women in India (1975)_{43} states that the relationship between earning capacity and status and autonomy within the family for the woman depends to a great extent, on the status of her earning activity. Since manual labour has a low status in our society, women employed as wage labourers or unskilled and manual workers do not enjoy a better status, while women in high prestige jobs may do so.

Women of the poorer sections whose days are spent on hard labour (in earning and house work) are extremely over worked and can give little attention to the bringing up of children. Among the middle classes, the lot of women who have to cope with both housework and employment outside the home is not much easier (for instance, she may not have to fetch water, fuel from a distance), she is expected to give greater care and attention to the children and their studies, to keep the home in a better and more attractive manner, provide more varied menues and play hostess to guests and friends of the family more frequently than her counterparts in rural areas.

This overwork explains the persistence of the desire for a leisured life for their daughters among these working women. For this class of women, there has been considerable role expansion since they are called upon to assume many new roles in addition to their traditional ones. The efficiency that is required of them is full time employment with its
consequent professional responsibilities, as well as in running a modern home with its extra familial dimensions, create considerable psychological stress which make their life very difficult.

According to the Report, only few such women have the income as well as understanding and sympathy from the family which can ensure some rest and leisure for their self improvement, or enable them to adjust the patterns of social interactions demanded by their jobs with the demands of the home.

*Milton B. Singer (1972)* points out that, a modern woman tries to strike a compromise by compartmentalising her *modern role* from her *traditional roles*. For example, a female physician may behave very much like a masculine woman *(in the American sense)* in her clinic and swing back to a *feminine wife* or a *daughter-in-law* at home as she changes from her work clothes to her domestic sari.

*Manisha Roy (1973)* suggests that, the roles a woman is socialized into are mostly ascribed role determined by birth or marriage. Thus her self-concept is framed in the context of her roles. She is not a person if she is stripped of her roles. *Her personal gratification or frustration are also connected with her role as daughter, wife, mother or grandmother, rather than as woman.* If she is unhappy, she tries to find explanations in her actions and behaviour, in her roles or in things over which she has little control. She is not encouraged to delve into her own psyche or to have self doubts. This is possible because the Indian culture offers less confusion between role-expectations and the real contexts of behaviour.

Even in somewhat changing socio-economic scene, a woman can count on cues from her traditional roles to help her combine behavioural
and affective contexts. For instance, she can extend the role patterns of behaviour rather than create new ones, as when a woman treats her male office colleagues as she would her male cousins. In Bengali society, cousins cover a range of various emotional components and, since the nature of modern roles themselves is fluid, such extensions are feasible and often necessary.

In her study of the "Concepts of Feminity and Liberation" Manisha Roy states that one must remember that the concept of liberation varies according to the socio-economic, educational and cultural backgrounds. When an upper-middle class housewife is hemmed in by her home and successful husband, her lower class counterpart in the slum aspires for the same comfort which will liberate her from her hand-to-mouth existence. At the same time, the middle class, university educated self-conscious woman is fighting for her liberation against discrimination in a job market on the one hand, and against her own internal conflict regarding her self-image, on the other.

Malvika Karlekar (1984)\textsuperscript{46}, in her 'Perceptions of The Woman as Earners' states that, in the towns and cities women still continue to perform endless household chores, they are more likely to do so in addition to working for a wage. One reason for this is the absence of jajmani relations and agriculture related operations. Where it is more difficult to give a value to various tasks performed, since housework often merges with productive activity.

Role conflict, among the urban working women has been probed in the works of Biddle and Thomas (1966)\textsuperscript{47}, Linton (1963)\textsuperscript{48} and Merton (1968)\textsuperscript{49}. Their study suggests that, in the urban context the greater formality of employer-employee relations, physical distance of place of work from the home and the distinctive nature of occupations which often
have little to do with household oriented tasks, bring into sharp focus the
dichotomy between spheres of activity, hours, labour and effort involved
in both.

Their study have noted at the time factor for causing role conflict.
Since urban work often involves different venues and interactions with a
new set of individuals it introduces several factors into the lives of women,
including the entire issue of opportuning time between different tasks. A
conflict over roles and responsibilities arise over the difficulties in
allocating time and energy. For the middle class working woman, it often
involves conflict over roles, relative responsibilities and commitments.
Thus, Role conflict, an important area of study and analysis in sociology,
is useful in analysing the situation of urban working women.

Similarly Johnson (1960) states that, in an extreme sense role
conflict implies, conflict due to 'incompatible role obligations'. However,
Johnson later states that, it is more common to speak of role conflict
when individuals are under pressure to perform a variety of functions arising
out of several roles, not all of which need to be incompatible-but certainly
are competing - with one another. It is not often possible to find time,
energy and resources for competing demands, a case in point being the
urban middle class working woman, especially if she is married and has
children.

According to Johnson, the need to weigh commitments and
responsibilities often results in giving more preference to one role, namely
that of home-maker, than to another. He analysed that it is more usual for
such women to adopt a non-achieving low-profile, at their place of work,
so as to minimize their tensions and conflicts.

Making an observation on role conflict among the working women,
Neera Desai (1982)\(^{31}\) points out that in the first three decades after independence, the strain of dual roles dominated research on women.

In her study of *“Middle Class Women in Calcutta,”* Chakraborty Krishna (1978)\(^{32}\) found that her respondents were unwilling to waste their educational training; at the same time competing claims worried them.

Noting the relation between marriage and employment leading to familial tensions due to role conflict among the working women, Promila Kapur (1970)\(^{33}\) points out that it has not been unusual to attribute marital disharmony and tension within the home to a working wife. She believes that marital adjustment is not affected by employment; rather lack of adjustment prior to marriage is merely exacerbated by employment.

The above point of view, while important has to be looked at somewhat critically. Hence, the works of Indira Devi (1987)\(^{34}\), Kala Rani (1976)\(^{35}\), Ramu (1989)\(^{36}\); (1990)\(^{37}\), Papanek (1973)\(^{38}\) and Sinha (1987)\(^{39}\), suggest that, while fear of disharmony leads to women playing down their occupational roles, it is also true that husbands are often resentful of their employed wives, particularly if such women have taken to work some years after being full-time housewives. Here disharmony enters after employment, as women are not able to give the same time and attention to their families as before. What emerges from studies of the middle class dual earner families is that it is invariably women who have to make the time, compromise on leisure-time activities and devote themselves to child care and housework.

It is important to note that, there have been some studies with regard to the effects of employment on women.

Nye (1974)\(^{40}\) point out that, limited data suggests that women who hold outside jobs are more satisfied with their work than homemakers are
with theirs. Scores on a general index of satisfaction with life also tended to favour those with outside employment; this relationship seems to be stronger for better-educated women.

Consistent with the above view are the data given by *Bernard (1973)*[^61], that suggests that employed women have better mental health.

*"Sex Roles and Social Patterns"* a work edited by *Frances A. Boudreau, Roger S. Sennatt and Michela Wilson (1986)*[^62] notes that the views given earlier does not suggest that holding an outside job is without its psychological costs.

Similarly, consistent with the above view, *Hoffman (1974)*[^63] brings out that, working women report considerable concern about their ability to do a job in their various roles. They are more likely to be anxious, feel guilty, and so forth.

*Walshok (1981)*[^64] notes that it appears that the psychological costs are not that great or that the satisfactions that come from the work situation and the added income are sufficient, or more than sufficient, to compensate. Walshok points out that, apparently employment out of the home is important for all kinds of women workers.

*Marshall (1984)*[^65] explores the effects of women imbibing masculine traits due to their taking up of the professional role in addition to their role in the house. Marshall expounds that, what seemed the primary goal in the seventies was achieved at a high emotional price. So-called masculine traits such as competitive skills and the commitment to success may not help the professionally successful women to become emotionally satisfied. Commitment and emotional security from caring and loving relationships seem to clash with the commitment to professional success.

He further states that, increasing overlap of man's and woman's roles
both outside and in the home began to create a new confusion regarding the definition of masculinity and feminity. Acquiring so-called masculine traits of aggressiveness and competitiveness is not guaranteeing improved self image in the long run. Feeling good about being a woman has become very complex during this decade.

According to Roy M. (1973), the changes in Indian urban middle class may be comparable to the American situation in the seventies. Indian women in this class are questioning their traditional roles of dependence on men and unsatisfactory social and cultural ideas. Compartmentalization is less successful due to certain structural changes in the family and the increased economic struggle.

Roy states that, the rate of divorce in Indian cities during the last decade indicates among other things, women’s need to be free from the dependence on marriage. Obviously some of the traditional roles are failing to offer a satisfactory self-image for some women.

Jaya Kumar G. Stanley (1992), in the “Status of Women in a Male Dominated Society” says that the children of working mothers tend to become more indisciplined, heading to juvenile crimes, and that the full time housewives tend to be over-protective and dominating. The most decisive factor is the quality of contact between parents and children rather than their quantities. This implies that the working women cannot even build proper parent-child relationships taking into consideration the fact that they will have to deprive their children of their presence with them for sometime on account of their jobs outside.

An important view given by Stanley is that many women at present have adopted professional as well as familial roles without necessary changes in their role relations with other members of the family. In such a situation the employed women are the victims of conflicting role
expectations from professional and domestic sides.

*Report of the National Committee on the Status of Women in India (1975)*[^1] brings to light that, the changes in the attitudes of women working outside the home or participating in public life has been slow and uneven, because they are related to deep-rooted prejudices about a woman’s inherent aptitudes and capacities, her proper sphere of work and man-woman relationships. Thus, the teaching profession or medicine is considered more respectable for women because it does not conflict with traditional norms of femininity. Nursing, on the other hand, though not in conflict with feminine roles, involves contact with impure objects, male patients and doctors, and odd hours of work and has still not attained the same degree of acceptability among the middle classes, except in a few regions and communities. Prejudices against the performing arts are, however, breaking down rapidly because of the chances of high income associated with them.

The society’s view against and for the employment of women has also been an area of study, of the *Report of the National Committee on the Status of Women*. It states, society’s ambivalence regarding the gainful employment and independence of women is demonstrated in many ways. Her income is appreciated because it raises the standard of living and lessens financial burdens, but the freedom of association and movement needed for outdoor work is not approved by many who continue to put a stigma on working woman.

Men may have come late from work, and may take time off from family responsibilities in the interest of their career, but not so women. We received complaints that even men who helped with domestic chores when abroad, do not do so after their return to the country. A few who do are criticized and disparaged by neighbours and relatives.
The Report brings out the fact that, there is a widespread belief in the society that the working women are bad mothers and inefficient housewives. Further, an improvement in the financial conditions of the family often precipitates women having to leave their jobs. Most working women develop a sense of guilt and tend to pamper their children to make up for what they consider to be lack of proper attention on their part.

The area of 'role conflict', studied by the report points out that, the problem of role conflict manifests itself in various ways, particularly where there is a difference between the job status of husband and wives. Husbands who have a lower status job than their wives, find adjustment difficult, because they consider the situation a reversal from the normal, where the husband is the principle bread-winner and enjoys superior authority in the family.

On the other hand, it is also considered demeaning for wives of men in high status occupations to take up low-paid and relatively lower status jobs. An ideal wife attuned to the life patterns of the husband is appreciated more. Many women who continue in employment after marriage in order to support their needy parents and siblings have to face tremendous misunderstandings and lack of sympathy from their husbands and in-laws.

Promila Kapur (1970) in her study of the attitudes of the educated working women of the urban middle class background followed by her more comprehensive studies on marriage and the working women in India, has highlighted their problems ranging from marital adjustment to the increasing achievement motivation and need for self-expression.

Her book "Marriage and the working women" provides for the first time a careful analysis of the situation in India. It involves women
who represent the part of the population that provides a model for million of others. The book brings out many factors in marital adjustment, such as educational level of husband and wife, income level, the discrepancy between their occupational status, the kind of marriage, the age of the couple, number of children and family composition etc.

Kapur acknowledges that wife's being employed does make marital interaction a little more complicated and create more problems in the family and so more efforts on the part of the spouses are required to make adjustment and to achieve marital harmony. With multiplicity of roles her behaviour becomes complex in terms of 'excepted' and 'actual' roles and she faces the major part of confusion with regard to her status and role.

Kapur notes that the employed woman does not receive any extra rights or privileges by virtue of her engaging in paid work outside the home. Attitudes of husbands or in-laws do not change, while the wife's perception undergoes a change, which results in a state of conflict.

She shows that educated working women are being influenced by egalitarian ethos. While the traditional authoritarian and male dominated set up of the Hindu social structure continues to be basically the same. This is bound to produce situations of tension and conflict. These can only be avoided if there is harmony between the pace of changes in the attitudes of women and that of other members of her role-sets.

The eminent sociologist Talcott Parsons (1952) points out, there is a certain endemic potentiality of role conflict inherent in the fact that any actor has a plurality of roles, which involves differences of pattern,... These differences have to be adjusted by an ordering or allocation of the claims of the different role-expectations to which the actor is subject.
This ordering occurs by priority scales, by occasion, eg. time and place, and by distribution among alters. This allocative ordering of any given actor's role-system is often delicately balanced. Any serious alteration in one part of it may encroach on others and thus necessitates a whole series of adjustment.

**Urmila Patel (1988)** shows how the unmarried working women have some special serious problems over and above the common problems of married women at work. According to her most of the women work to help their parents in their economic disparities.

**Patel** notes that at the place of work their employers do not consider them to be serious workers. They are considered to put in less work and come only to pass time. Their efficiency is doubted. In some cases where these women are appreciated for their work by their bosses, they have to become the subject of gossipings. They crack jokes at them and pass cheap remarks. These are the experiences of many young women.

Her study on the married working woman brings out the dual responsibilities of the house and office work. Though the working women are being accepted the in-laws and a majority of the husbands have not accepted the changing life pattern. The house-hold duties are considered to be the exclusive domain of the wives. The woman gets up early in the morning, prepares tea and breakfast, prepares the children for school and goes to the office. In the evening, when she returns the house job is pending for her.

Thus carrying on almost all responsibilities single-handedly the women are over-strained and get exhausted. They get irritated in trivial matters, get angry on children and husband. The family happiness and peace is thus disturbed.
G. N. Ramu (1989)\textsuperscript{72}, has a view similar to that of Patel's. Ramu states that, in short, women in Indian dual earner families seek employment mainly for economic reasons; they experience role conflict, role overload and marital stress, mainly because husbands do not alter their domestic roles. A recurrent theme in these studies is the dilemma that wives / mothers experience by virtue of their employment.

Chakraborty's (1978)\textsuperscript{73} study highlights the ambivalent position of women by placing it in the context of societies that are moving towards modernity or western social pattern. In her words, "This is quite natural because in a society in transition, such as the contemporary Indian society, the tradition undergoes continuous changes but what is modern is not defined, established and accepted fully. Hence a great deal of ambiguity in social values, moral norms and cultural standards is only to be expected. As such the likelihood of conflicts becomes greater."

Chakraborty argues that while many middle-class women with a university education prefer to marry and perform their usual roles as wives and mothers, they also concurrently prefer to seek employment opportunities so that their educational training can be used to enhance the families living standards. A consequence of such competing goals is that many married women at work find it extremely difficult to succeed in their careers as well as their domestic roles.

Ultimately as Chakraborty concludes, most married women employees give low priority to their careers and continue to attach primacy to their domestic roles, and this tendency has serious implications for their self-concept.

Karlekar (1982)\textsuperscript{74} has made a study which gives a view regarding
poor married women employees. This view contrasts the view given by Chakraborty. Karlekar notes that the experiences of poor married women employees suggest that they have to strive hard to escape unemployment by engaging in low-status occupations. For example, the women sweepers of Delhi seldom reported of role conflict or ambivalence. This is because they were more concerned about earning adequate income, so that their families could survive in a hostile economic environment, than with the issues of role conflict.

According to Chakraborty (1978) the conflict in the roles of the working woman occurs from the contrast between a materially changed situation and the simultaneous survival of traditional ideologies and attitudes. Some traits of the cultural pattern have changed more rapidly than others, and there is a cleavage between the material conditions of our life and persisting traditional attitudes which have not yet been adjusted to the new facts.

A working woman's dilemma is brought out by Shobha De (2004) in her article 'The Sexes.' She says, most women sleep later than their family members and awake earlier. The reason being obvious: guilt. Even though I consider myself a reasonably modern woman in most aspects, I feel slightly embarrassed, even ashamed to sleep when the rest of the family is awake. I may not be needed by any of them, but just the off chance that someone may require my intervention effectively, stops me from catching those desperately needed forty winks.

2.3.5 THE EMPLOYED MOTHER:

The employed mother requires a special focus in this study, because of the varied roles and responsibilities she is laden with.

Fox and Hesse-Biber (1984), Hesserbart (1980) have noted that
during recent decades, remarkable and far reaching changes have occurred in women’s participation in work and family roles. Woman’s labour force participation has increased drastically since world war II, so that today, paid employment is part of the lives of most American women.

Fox and Hesse-Biber further go on to state that despite these important changes, there are equally important areas of continuity in women’s lives. Regardless of their employment status, most women retain primary house-hold and child-care responsibilities. Moreover the institutional structures of the economy and the labour force are still built on the assumption of the traditional nuclear family, which includes one full-time worker and one full-time home maker.

Bernard (1975) believes that traditionally women’s primary social roles have been the family roles of wife and mother. Because of the recent large scale entrance of women, especially married mothers into the labour force, however, a thorough understanding of women’s life cycle requires consideration of both family and worker’s roles. Recent research has thus focussed on the ways women combine these roles across the life span.

According to M. Lakshmi Kumari (1997) in her ‘The Role of Women in Society: Sita must live’, with the march of time towards progress through wrong short cuts, our mothers too have lost their ground. In many homes mothers are there physically - but truly mothers are rarely at home.

Lakshmikumari has done an interesting study of the employed mother. She says that today’s mothers fall into interesting categories. A busy mother is commonly seen trying to cope with a very busy schedule of looking after the home (with no domestic help), earning a living with full-time demanding job, socialising, helping and sharing the business interests of the husband so on and so forth. Children get only occasional
glimpses of their busy guardians and the only impact they leave behind on the children is one of hurry, worry, tension, speed and greed.

An aggressive mother inspite of her busy schedule, still finds time to be with the children, but is aggressively possessive, commanding and demanding. She notes that children in such homes live in constant fear and tension; their personality gets stunted and after a while the children look elsewhere for comfort, solace and relaxation. Beware, they may end up as drug addicts or alcoholics.

According to Lakshmi there is also an Indifferent mother. Indifferent mothers do not bother much about their domestic duties and the children grow indifferent to the values and duties of family life. Indulgent mothers have a wrong concept of bringing up their children. They think by indulging the children in all their pursuits, good or bad, they can keep their hold on them. But alas, the children from such families will never realise the value of time, money and also of true love.

Lakshmi Kumari in her work brings out the point that if our society is turning intolerant, corrupt, brutal- if the young man and woman find their homes only as a hotel or lodge, parents as money - spinning machines, the factories that produce them are our homes and not the society. The behaviour of the younger generation is a mirror reflecting the beauty or ugliness of the previous generation. If we want to regenerate our society, mothers have to be more and more ‘at home’, available to their children, all the time when they need them. Does it mean that mothers have to give up their career, interests and so on? Not necessarily. One thing is certain - they must know how to develop the invisible, all prevailing dimension; they should learn to be ‘whole’ all the while, so that the children, the whole family, rests in the wholeness of the family of the mother.
Ann Oakely (1974), an eminent sociologist has noted that a large body of research shows that the employment of the mother has no detrimental effects on the child’s development. Some studies indicate that the children of working mothers are less likely to be delinquent than those of mothers who stay at home. In fact Oakely claims that ‘working mothers’ enjoy their children more and are less irritable with them than ‘full-time mothers’.

Chakraborty (1977), has brought out that the working mother’s role is widely regarded as classic conflict situation in developing countries. Potentially for conflict has been suggested from a variety of sources the diffused nature of role. The role in which there is high commitment to other people is subjected to considerable internal conflicts and insecurities. Since employment of middle class women is a new thing, no fixed pattern or redefinition of role of women in terms of the changed context have yet been achieved.

According to him neither working women nor their husbands or other relatives, nor society in general are clear and definite about their roles. Women’s role and position at present are, therefore, not clearly defined and thus this situation leads to role conflict.

Hoffman (1974) and Bahr (1974) have done a study on the working woman in America. Their work suggests that in recent years increasing number of women have held jobs outside the home - the proportion is now over 50% and the change has produced major adjustments in U.S. family life. For one thing it has altered the power balance for employed mothers who have more control over decisions.

According to Bahr (1974) the above statement hides important details. For example, this increase in power is largely limited to the
economic sphere; in regard to child rearing and the minor decisions associated with running a home, home-makers may have even more control than their employed counterparts.

_Blood and Hamblin (1958)_ in their _"The Effect of Wife's Employment on the Family Power Structure"_ state that, though the husbands of employed women may help more in the home, the responsibility for housework and child care tends to remain with the wife.

Consistent with the above view are the views of _Epstein (1971)_ , _Holmstrom (1972)_ , _Bahr (1974)_ and _Meissnet (1975)_ . They point out that, a husband does not share these tasks, but he just helps his wife more when she is doing her tasks. This is true even when the wife has a career rather than just a job.

In a similar vein _Hoffman (1963)_ and _Bahr (1974)_ state that, in addition, the amount of additional help by the husband is not that great - particularly when the children are older. Thus working wives tend to put in long hours. This is true even though middle class working wives frequently have outside help, and in all classes there is a tendency for some household tasks to be done more quickly, less carefully, or not at all in families with employed mothers.

_"The new-age moms have perfected the art of balancing their career and home without faltering over their list of priorities."_

The above quoted statement has been given by _Neelima Menon (2004)_ in her article _"Viva Motherhood"_.

_Neelima_ goes on to give a sketch of the varied roles that mothers now a days perform. Stop by schools, you get to watch upwardly mobile mothers pick up their toddlers, scan shopping malls, host their children's birthday parties and frequent gyms.
This the modern, liberated India where women are slowly finding their lost identities. No longer are their roles sidelined to being a householder and mother. They have rearranged their list of priorities and are moving ahead with a new-found confidence and courage. But how far has this emancipation broadened? And how comfortable are these new-age divas in their chosen role?

Take Odissi dancer Sujata Mohapatra for instance. Recently she received the prestigious Mahari award, for her contribution to the field of Odissi dance. Daughter-in-law of late Padmavibhushan Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra, she is also an ideal homemaker. Mother of a 5 year old, she has learnt to balance the dual role of motherhood and career with elan. And Mohapatra has an interesting point to make, “My training in dance has given me the skills to manage my work in all the spheres with ease and grace. My mother-in-law has been a constant source of support for me.” She continues in the same vein, “I have given my undivided attention to my daughter. And if I am not there for a certain period of time, I compensate the moment I reach home. My dance and daughter are my priorities in life.”

For those who feel this balancing act is a cakewalk, think again. It requires a great sense of ingenuity to priorities of your life. Agrees Jhansi, an actress, dubbing artist, anchor and mother of one-and-half year old daughter Dhanya. But then she has few regrets in life. “Being a wife and mother comes naturally to me. Because for once I am playing myself with absolute contentment. Of course there are times when all that stress psyches you and I feel terrible to leave her with the maid.”

But in spite of everything she is happy with the path she has chosen, “I want to fulfill my creative pursuits and provide a good future for my
daughter. *Of course things get easy when you have a supportive spouse,* she says.

Neelima Menon's case studies further go on to show that the dual roles of the women have made them more responsible. Moreover, their education and capability to earn a living has ingrained in them the desire to prove their individuality.

For instance, one of Neelima's respondent 'Suma' a Telugu serial actress and mother of four year old Roshan Kartik had this to say - "I think when you do things as your duty, then life becomes easy. You become reasonable once you enter motherhood." There she spills her secret, "I like to be busy and do my own thing. I plan my daily schedule in such a way that I go for my shoots when my son goes to school. I make it a point to spend quality time with my son. Of course, for any woman be it personally / professionally she has to be occupied. You should have your own individuality," she reminds.

Similarly Aditi Gowitrikar is a model who feared that pregnancy would put a stop to her career and was all set to go back to being a doctor. Of course her fears were groundless for she continues to make waves in the modelling world. She even says that "My husband is quite a big support urging me to do my best."

Conclusively Neelima states that sure enough for these women of substance, motherhood adds that much needed depth to their life. But still their voyage towards fulfilling their self continues for, as they say, "You still have to do the things you want to."

2.3.6 WOMEN AND CONTOURS OF CHANGE:

*Susan Vishwanathan (1997)* in her study states, why were women
alienated from the control over productive processes although it was they who sustained the manpower required for the market? She answers this question by stating that women were seen to be objects of egalitarian interaction. They were the bearers of children, they made things grow, they understood the cycles of nature within their own bodies. By excluding women, men centralised that from which they themselves were born, that which had to be a part of them.

*Inglitzin and Ross (1976)* note that, industrialisation, both in the nineteenth century America and in the developing countries today, lowered the status of women.

According to *Inglitzin and Ross*, in peasant societies, women shared with men in primary production. While industrialisation made men the primary breadwinners and women the helpers. But during the later stage of industrialisation and in the post-industrial society, family size shrinks and more wives become employed outside the home.

In the post-industrial society, muscle, grows steadily less important as a job requirement, and husbands find it impractical to keep their wives "barefoot and pregnant", although husbands may appreciate their wives’ paycheck, their control is less complete than it was when husbands received the entire cash income themselves.

Similarly *Blood and Wolfe (1960)* have developed a "resource theory of family power", based upon data showing that the wifes power within the family tends to vary according to how closely her paycheck matches (or exceeds) her husband's. While women have been very slow to gain power comensurate with their economic contribution the economic base for male dominance is steadily eroding.

*Haralambos and Held (1980)* believe that the end of
discrimination against women in the labour market would involve many changes. According to them women must be freed from domestic burdens or share them equally with men if they are to compete for jobs on equal terms. An end to discrimination in the labour market would also involve the abolition of the sexual division of labour, the removal of distinctions between ‘men’s jobs and women’s jobs. The failure of women’s entry into the labour market to end the sexual division of labour there has led some writers to suggest that women as a group must gain control over a significant part of the forces of production in order to remove discrimination.

**Achievement orientation** is change that has been noted by Catherine A.F. (1984) among the employed women. Catherine states that women's traditional roles as wives and mothers have profound effects on the patterning of their lives, and provide the structure on which attitudes and behaviours are built. Women’s achievement orientation is rooted in early experience and stable throughout adulthood. However, *the area in which achievement orientation is expressed... its channelling into the home or paid employment... depends primarily on a woman’s position in the social structure and the social climate of her time.* Further more, her general satisfaction with life is partly dependent on the degree of fitness between her personal achievement values and structural opportunities for their expression.

Women who deviate from their traditional roles are subject to *negative sanctions.* The result of the negative sanctions has been the channeling of women’s achievement strivings, according to Catherine, into tasks and areas that are considered to be “*sex-role-appropriate.*”

*Avoidance of success* by working women has been an area of study, for which various reasons have been provided by various scholars.
As such, Horner's (1972) research on the motive to avoid success was based on the assumption that women associate success in intellectual endeavours with social rejection.

Reassessment of this research by Condry and Dyer (1976), however, suggested that “avoidance of success” was not a motive but, rather a realistic attitude reflecting knowledge of the consequences of deviation from sex-role perception.

According to Catherine A.F. (1984), in addition to the fear of social rejection, women’s achievement orientation is powerfully channeled into traditionally sex-role-appropriate areas by social structure and other cultural factors.

Laws (1978), indicates that women’s employment, behaviour is subject to powerful external constraints, including sex discrimination and family obligations.

According to Coser and Rokoff (1971), women’s traditional family roles are generally associated with vicarious rather than direct, achievement. They note that, the women must attain their social status vicariously since opportunities to achieve status directly have generally been closed to them. As wives and mothers, women may facilitate and obtain vicarious satisfaction from the achievements of their husbands and children.

Furthermore, the type of occupations into which women have been typically directed places them in nurturing supporting roles, resembling their family roles and conducive to vicarious achievements.

Lipman-Blumen and Leavitt (1977) point out that, in preparation for the roles society assigns them, the differential socialisation of girls and boys has encouraged the tendency to adopt vicarious and direct
achievement orientation, respectively. Yet, Lipman-Blumen and Leavitt note that, women may achieve directly, not just vicariously, in both family and occupational roles.

Studies by Cross (1975)\textsuperscript{105}, Tangri (1972)\textsuperscript{106} and Bernard (1975)\textsuperscript{107} bring out that, attitude surveys reveal rapidly increasing career aspirations among successive cohorts of adolescents and college women, accompanied by a decreasing willingness to focus exclusively on the homemakers role.

Consistent with the above view, is the view of Catherine A.F (1984)\textsuperscript{108}. Catherine states that, several trends suggest a decline in the channeling of achievement orientation into the family. Data suggest that women’s involvement in family and maternal roles has declined since 1960.

Woman’s role in the sphere of employment has brought about attitudinal changes in them. The attitudinal changes have affected various aspects of a woman’s life.

As such, Huston-Stein and Higgins-Trenk (1978)\textsuperscript{109} note that “women are more likely to remain single in early adulthood, they marry later, they have fewer children, and they have their children later.” These behavioural trends are supported by attitudinal data, showing a decline in the expected family size of young women and an increase in the proportion of young women who expect to remain childless.

Nevertheless, according to Bernard (1981)\textsuperscript{110}, Cross (1975)\textsuperscript{111} and Komarovsky (1973)\textsuperscript{112}, the importance of the family to women should not be underestimated. Recent data suggest marriage is still a major concern and important goal for many young women.

Bernard, Cross and Komarovsky in their study show that young women in college generally expect to have both marriage and a career, not just marriage or career alone.
Shakuntala Devis' (1999) study revolves around the changes taking place among the women. In her "Women's Status and Social Change" she has brought out, that the educated women have been drawn into the dynamics of the general process of social change that is taking place in India today, and the extent and direction of which cannot be clearly foreseen. However this much is certain: the Indian women do not represent in this process as often maintained, the consecutive and retarding element.

Shakuntala Devi states that the Indian woman is by no means, as Goode generally thought of women, unwilling to avail themselves of the rights that the men have granted them. On the contrary, they demand and attain more rights and more powers than what the most liberal men are prepared to give.

However, the newly won freedom and rights were not in a position to effect an all round and decisive change of structure. Shakuntala feels that, the idea of equality of the sexes has had some effect in the educational sector, but hardly on the marriage and family system. The laws on inheritance rights of daughters and the prohibition of dowry exist on paper only. In fact, dowry has even increased in amount and spread widely. Also the traditional form of mate selection has not changed basically.

According to Shakuntala Devi, the social ideal of women has not undergone any radical change through the influence of western ideas, but has only been polished up and thus made modern. That is why women who by virtue of the fact that they are studying and working necessarily deviate from this ideal, are torn between contradictory expectations.

Vineet Bal (2002) states that, in urban India, especially in metropolises, many women are found to be contributing to the family income by taking up full-time jobs. Their numbers have been on the
increase, outwardly indicating that more women may have financial independence and possibly thereby the society might have progressed towards gender equality.

Vineet Bal in her essay “Gender Science : Women as Practitioners and as Targets of Research” gives reference to a study conducted on junior and senior female faculty members at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) which throws light on the status of women in science. A common finding for most senior women faculty was that, the women were ‘invisible’, excluded from a voice in their departments and from positions of any real power. This ‘marginalisation’ had occurred as the women progressed through their careers at MIT, making their jobs increasingly difficult and less satisfying. In contrast, junior women faculty felt included and supported in their departments. Their most common concern was the extraordinary difficulty of combining family and work.

An article by Charubala Annuncio and Gauri Bhatia (2003) in 'Outlook' (a weekly magazine) refers to the changing situation of the working women executives in India. It goes as follows.... “They are young (if mid 40's can be called that) and they are definitely glamorous, invariably the slimmer among the country's glitterati. But no, they are not models, trophy wives or social butterflies. Meet a crop of business heiresses who party, but also manage their corporate empires. They may be caring at home, but can be equally tough in the boardroom. And if you think they are pushovers in the unequivocally man's world that is corporate India, you are in for a surprise. With their tenacity, ambition and management acumen, these women are tough as nails, and they mean business.”

The lack of seriousness given to womens work is brought out by the
case study of Bharatia, the director on Hindustan Times board. According to the study done by Charubala and Gauri, after Bharatia took over from her father in 1985, she discovered that the paper was a monolith that needed a drastic make over. The usual question, that Bharati said was asked to her was “whether the job was a passtime for me and how long my interest would last.”

Charubala and Gauri note that, unlike in the U.S where husbands of powerful women managers have gladly assumed the role of running the household, their counterparts in India too have been sympathetic. For instance, in the case of Rajshree Pathy of the Rajshree Group, she says that her success can also be attributed to the fact that “my in-laws respect me, my husband has learn’t to do that, and my children are proud of me.”

Renana Jhabvala and Shalini Sinha (2002)116 in their article ‘Liberation and the Women Worker’ published in the Economic and Political weekly write that, in a way, the change in economy has brought about a visibility for the woman worker which did not exist before. The term ‘feminisation of labour’ is now widely used and women are becoming more visible in many areas of work which was traditionally barred to them.

Debapriya Ghosh’s (2003)117 in her article “Single ‘n’ Swinging” published in ‘The Week’ magazine goes on to show how women are remaining single, inorder to excel in their professional roles. Each one of them had different reasons to remain single. But then it was the desire to be economically independent that they had in common. Girish Sanghavi a noted sexologist says here that “Women who choose to be single are normally economically independent and successful.” According to him “It is just a behavioural change where women do not want to give up economic independence.”
One of the cases highlighted in this article was that of Devika Shahani, 31. A television actress, who has been living with her widowed mother since she was one and a half years old, says that “I feel that life today is a constant war of survival and caring for and loving each other have become secondary.” She has chosen to remain single.

Brought up in a close-knit family, Neelima Pitke was taught that being economically independent was her first priority. Similarly Hindustan Lever brand manager Anuradha Sehgal, 29, who is content in the company of her friends. “We still laugh over silly jokes, wear trendy clothes and enjoy ourselves as me used to in college.” ..... “Perhaps, I don’t want things to change in any way because of my marrying someone.”

2.4 THEORETICAL INSIGHTS:

This section on theoretical insights is meant to bring out the views and ideas, suggested and studied by the various authors, in an all-encompassing manner. So that a broad idea can be gained regarding the review of literature.

A thorough examination and reading of the various writings, researches and conclusions drawn from the various writings on the study of women and their role, has enabled a deduction of various issues regarding the role and role conflict among working women for the purpose of this study.

In the present context the educated middle class working women who are the focus of study are seen to have been drawn into the dynamic process of change in the Indian society. The women are today demanding more rights and liberties, than what the men are prepared to give, in fact, it would be better to say, than what the most liberal man would give.
Women have been shown in their traditional roles to have been unable to achieve their status directly. The status of women based on their role has been based more on the achievements of the male members in the family. Achieving status directly has generally been closed to them since ages.

2.4.1 CHANGING ROLE:

Various studies bring out the fact that even in contemporary society, where women are being engaged in paid employment outside the house are being discriminated against, by being employed in sex-typed 'feminine' jobs. While the preconceived 'masculine' jobs are customarily not kept open for women. Inspite of these situations, women are getting engaged in various types of jobs that has resulted in visible changes in the role of women.

The changes in the role of women has brought about subsequent changes in the role of the other members of the society too. The various case studies of eminent authors reveal that lack of support from the male counterparts whether it be husband or father leads to women experiencing stresses and strains as a result of role conflict or vice-versa.

The greater emphasis on feminine roles by the society leads to certain inevitable consequences for the role of women. The feminine values and ideals ingrained in the girls personality by the family and the society leads to women developing a submissive and adjusting personality. They are even studied to be hesitant to develop strong opinions and commitments which may be objected to after their marriage. Even in todays society, where women are engaged in paid employment, women are seen to posses these qualities inspite of the diversification of their roles. As a result of which harmony is maintained in the family.
Studies reveal a formal equality that women have acquired in relation to men because of their induction in the field of paid employment. The problems that have been identified with regard to female employment has been the persistence of sexual division of labour in employment, in which the tasks allocated for the women are less esteemed and less well rewarded. Further there has been a failure on the part of the society to alleviate the burden of house work, as well as a failure to equalise the burden of domestic labour and responsibilities between the sexes.

The **women are observed to be playing double-shifts** as a result of the unchanging role of the men in relation to the changing role of the women. Rather, it would be more apt to say that the women have to synchronise their traditional roles with their occupational roles, which has been demanding certain changes in their traditional role for its efficient functioning.

### 2.4.2 REDEFINING WOMEN’S ROLE:

A **re-definition of men’s role** has been sighted as a necessity with the present situation of redefinition of women’s role. So that even the women become not so much a re-definition as the addition of a new role (*i.e. women’s participation in paid employment*) onto an almost completely unreconstructed older one (mother and housewife).

The role conflict emerging from the dual responsibilities for the employed mother in the long run bring changes in the role of the mother as her role of a provider is more rigidly defined. Further studies reveal that role conflicts which have both psychological and sociological consequences are more likely and prominent in the case of the employed mother, than in the case of the employed unmarried women. *The employed*
mothers tend to reduce the strains from role conflict by reducing their responsibilities at home.

2.4.3 TIME MANAGEMENT AND THE WORKING WOMAN:

Most of the studies reveal that lack of proper time management by the working women brought about role conflict. Time crunch made things difficult for the working women. It is generally the time crunch which decides their priorities and enables them to divide and distribute their work. Working women have been seen to be overloaded with domestic responsibilities in most of the studies. The role-conflict emerged when they did not want to occupy themselves with domestic works as women traditionally have been doing.

2.4.4 CHALLENGES AHEAD:

Women have been looked upon as equal partners of men in all walks of life since the ages. But with the passage of time, the treatment meted out to women became derogatory. It is only in the present day society that women are getting a chance to play roles other than their traditional roles, which has made them achieve a sense of equality with that of their male counterparts.

Though women have proved their worth in society, they have been facing challenges in their day-to-day activities as Anjali Maitra Sinha says, women are still humiliated and discriminated against in the society inspite of the progress she has made in all the spheres of the society.

According to The report of the National Committee on the Status of Women, the traditional concept of women doing only the household activities, while the men were to be the mainbread winners of the family, has changed. Today, the women are taking up white-collar jobs. Parents are also seen to be supportive to their daughters taking up jobs. The positive
aspect of having a job has been responsible for such an attitudinal change among the parents. The result of the changing attitudes in the society has resulted a change in the role of the women. In addition to their traditional roles, women have taken up professional roles in order to create a meaning for themselves.

2.4.5 CHANGING ATTITUDE:

Promila Kapur in her study of married employed women and the effect of their employment on marital disharmony states that, it is not only the employed status of the women that effects marital relationships. It is also the changing attitude of the educated employed women, that is bringing about changes in our society. Another aspect of the educational status of the working women that has been brought out by the Report of the National Committee on the Status of Women is that education may take the girls away from their traditional roles and also reduce control of the family on them.

Some works in the review, reveal that women though they had a subordinate position in the family, yet they enjoyed considerable power in family matters. She played the role of an adviser and had control over decisions taken in the family. Rao and Rao pointed out in their study that urbanisation, industrialisation and independent movement has had considerable impact on the changing status and role of the women of today. But this has not brought about a change or rather decline in the household responsibilities of the women.

In some studies it has been brought out that though the men of today are broad minded and want their wives to be working women, they are usually found to resist change in the role of their working wives. Inspite of this negative view, there are some recent case studies, that reveal that the
husbands of today in many cases are ready to accept their wives as professionals. As such at home they give a helping hand to their wives by sharing their responsibilities in household activities.

2.4.6 IMBALANCES OF THE BALANCING ACT:

The balancing act of the women in managing their familial responsibilities along with their professional responsibilities in many cases lead to conflicting situations. While urban life has made life for the employed women easier, due to automation of most of the household activities, yet as a result of running a modern home with its extra familial dimensions, along with giving full attention to one's professional responsibilities, lead to considerable psychological stress, which strains the life of the working women.

The conflict between the contradictory roles of working women is a result of fighting discrimination in a job market on the one hand and against demanding role expectation in household activities, which involves in many cases, neglecting one's job to satisfy demands at home. Lack of time management between the different tasks of the employed woman leads to role conflict.

Women are living in an environment composed of different persons with varied perceptions and expectations. Making adjustments to such variations in her different roles, leads to a sense of depression and frustration because of being aware of the fact, that she has not been able to give cent percent to either of the roles. Further lack of concern and sympathy shown by the family members towards her frustration, makes matters worse for the employed woman. She is unable to get enough time for leisure and rest due to her dual responsibilities.
2.4.7 ROLE COMPARTMENTALIZATION:

*Milton Singer* has brought out the idea of *compartmentalization* of the modern roles and traditional roles by the women. Such compartmentalization gives the women ample freedom to be their own self in the varying situations. The working/employed women play the role of a professional with full sincerity as any employed man, while at their home, they are equally sincere in playing the role of a mother, daughter or whatever, the situation demands. As such it has been observed in some of the studies that the modern woman is very much in control of her situation.

As this topic is centered on the middle class employed women, one fact that came out regarding the middle class is that, the domestic roles of men and women do not usually overlap. Men attend to tasks outside the house while the women to tasks in the house. Yet, this does not mean that the employed women of this class stay away completely from taking up household activities outside the house.

In the earlier period when agriculture was the main occupation of the people, women's household activities and productive activities were combined and could not be easily separated. But today in the urban setting, when work and home has been separated a conflict over roles and responsibilities becomes evident. *It is not necessary that the conflicting roles are always incompatible in many a cases the conflict between the roles, may be as a result of the competition between the roles. The roles are seen to be competing with each other for time and energy. In such a situation, the victim is the employed woman. She is forced to give preference to either of her roles. In many a cases role conflict leads to stress and strain which has adverse impact on her performance at work and also at home.*
2.4.8 COMPROMISES:

Kapur has brought out the fact that it has not been unusual to attribute marital tension in the house to a working wife. In her attempt to maintain peace in the house the women play down their occupational roles. In other words it means that the requirements of the family is kept ahead of the occupational responsibilities. The occupational role of the woman makes it difficult for her to give enough time and attention to the family. For the unmarried working women the situation is not so problematic as it is for the married women.

One very striving feature that is revealed in the review is that, it is always the women who have to make compromises to balance their dual roles. While the women have taken up the professional role in the changing scenario along with their traditional roles, the men on the other hand do not have any extra responsibilities and do not need to share the traditional roles of the women, in order to relieve them of their increased responsibilities.

Though the women have been shown to be over burdened with their dual roles, Nye, in his study, reveals that women are satisfied and comfortable with their outside job. But then being employed has its psychological costs as pointed out by Hoffman. Hoffman states that the working women are likely to be anxious and feel guilty in their attempt to balance their work and home roles.

The conflicting situations that the working women have to face has in no way acted as a deterrent to leave their jobs. Because of the satisfaction that these women enjoy in earning some money as well as in enjoying independence in their activities.

Some recent studies, for instance, the one done by Charubala and
Gauri bring out that, men today are having a more sympathetic attitude towards their working wives. As such the working men are ready to share a few of the familial responsibilities along with their wives to relieve them of the burden of their dual roles. But yet such instances may be noted to be a rarity.

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No sequence between literature review and appended bibliography.