CHAPTER VI
BALANCING THE WORK AND FAMILY ROLES
Although the respondent's dual roles in the home/family and in the workplace have been treated separately in Chapters IV and V, they cannot be, and are not delinked from each other. Since the respondent is one person performing both roles there is bound to be an overlap, which leads to role conflict and tension.

In this Chapter an attempt has been made to examine the two roles together and, therefore, the conflicting feelings and associated guilt experienced by some of these executives in struggling to maintain a balance between the two roles has been dealt with.

From what has emerged on the issue of role conflict and its containment, it was assumed that if a woman executive has continued to work in her current executive position over a period of time, along with running a home and looking after a family she has been able to cope with her work and family demands. For this purpose, cross tables with length of service as the constant variable and responses to questions depicting her roles as wife, mother and career woman
as the other variable, have been drawn up.

Length of Service vis-a-vis Performance as Wife, Mother and Career Woman

Assumption:

If a woman executive has continued to work in her current executive position over a period of time, taken here to be seven years and above, along with running a home and looking after a family, it is assumed that she has managed to strike a balance between work and family roles.

Of course, the factor of age is very important and cannot be ignored. With age comes experience and, therefore, a greater command or control over the daily situations faced by women with such dual responsibilities. The children too are likely to be older and thus affording more time to the working mother.

Apart from this, "every successful career woman has experienced discrimination and survived it," according to Betty Harragan who is quoted by Collins and her co-authors in their book "Women Leading". Given that the workplace has been in transition for
years, how will things get better? Here again, they have quoted Harragan: "We will have to count on women who have reached age forty-plus for the following reasons: they know about discrimination and have survived. They have passed their child bearing years. They have their personal problems at bay. They understand men and won't take the bullshit." (Harragan, as quoted in Collins, et.al., 1988, p.41).

In this research study, while recognising the above, only the factor of length of service has been assumed since the data does not reveal any significant differences in the responses of the older and younger women executives. Fortunately for women everywhere, younger women coming out of the professional schools are so well trained that they are helping to change the image of women in general. Senior level women have already learned the rules, and junior level women, better trained and in larger numbers, will not face as many of these problems. In this regard, Collins and her fellow-authors have stated: "Our business schools are doing their job of coaching them, and the younger women are doing a better job of networking and asking the questions that get them the
information they need to succeed." (Collins, et. al., 1988, p. 40).

Therefore, the data for tabulation in this section of the chapter, relates to those women executives who have seven years' experience in their current executive positions and who are married. Responses to questions which clearly depict their roles as wives, mothers and career women have been tabulated to test the validity of the above assumption. These are verbal responses to direct questions and are likely to contain an element of subjectivity. They are treated as either positive or negative statements, not numerically or on a scale, but according to the definition of positive and negative statements for the purpose of this study. (See Chapter IV, p. 255).

However, it should not be presumed that the rest of the respondents, i.e., with less than seven years' experience in their current executive positions and married/single have not been able to strike a balance between their work and family roles.
### TABLE 23

**I. WOMAN EXECUTIVE'S ROLE AS WIFE**

#### A. MARITAL HAPPINESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Response No.:</th>
<th>*</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above in current executive position</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 - Extremely happy  
2 - Happy  
3 - Neither happy nor unhappy  
4 - Unhappy  
5 - Extremely unhappy

(Percentages are given in brackets.)

In the above table, the first two responses are taken as positive statements indicating marital happiness, while the remaining three responses are treated as negative statements, where the factor of marital happiness cannot be ascertained.

It is significant to note that of those respondents with length of service of seven years and above in their current executive positions, a large majority,
i.e., twentyfive responded positively, while only two responded negatively.

**TABLE 24**

**B. EFFICIENCY AS WIFE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Response No.: *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above in current executive position</td>
<td>5 16 5 1 -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Percentages are given in brackets.)

A similar division of positive and negative statements have been made to study the efficiency of the executive woman in performing her role as wife. The first three statements here are treated as positive, while the remaining two are negative. Almost all, i.e., twenty, responded positively and only one responded negatively, which indicates that these executive women are not neglecting their role as wives in spite of their demanding careers. This
could possibly be the result of a change in the perception of the role of a wife by the majority of respondents in this study who feel that the emotional and intellectual aspects of the wife's role, such as "being a companion", "supporting", "loving", "sharing his problems - emotional, physical or financial," and "solving problems together" are important, and that "the roles of husband and wife are equal" and "same towards each other". This differs from the traditional perception of wife's role where a great amount of emphasis was laid on the physical aspects of the role, like personally cooking, seeing to his comforts and subordinating her needs to his. Most of these jobs, like cooking and cleaning, are, today, delegated to hired help.
A large number, i.e., twentyfour, responded positively, and only three responded negatively. The first two responses alone are taken as positive ones, as the factor of satisfaction at managing the dual roles cannot be ascertained by response no.3.

The table indicates that the respondents perceived themselves satisfactorily performing their dual burdens of household and career. The most important factor for their satisfactory performance is "husband's support" which has been corroborated by
J.M. Unwalla in her study on women executives in Bombay, (1977) where she has stated that the success of married women executives is, by and large, due to "husband's support". (Unwalla, 1977, p. 308).

Although the three tables on women executives' role as wives indicate that the majority of respondents in this category are content and happy in their relationship with their spouses, it must not be forgotten that coping with the role of wife and career woman is not easy. The responses of all the women executives in this sample of one hundred on whether they experience role conflict, reveal that the majority (56.0%) experience role conflict at some time or other, while 44.0% said they did not experience any role conflict. Apart from "some problems now and then which every person faces," they have not felt any real conflict as such. Of those who felt conflict, only 23.2% said it was "very much" or "quite often", the balance said it happened "sometimes" or "rarely". 21.4% felt the conflict was of a severe nature while 75.0% said it was "little", "not so severe" or "hardly any".

39.3% stated "variability of role demands at
different times/periods" was the cause of their role conflict, while 17.9% felt that conflict arose because their "professional work is more demanding than husband’s". 12.5% found the "absence of sufficient outside help" to be the reason and 8.9% stated that "discrepancy between personal and social norms" created conflict.

Some respondents (6.8%) stated that they suffered feelings of guilt on account of a tremendous shortage of time for themselves; they regretted that they often had to sacrifice their personal needs like reading, writing, or meeting friends, to be able to cope with the demands on them in meeting their multiple responsibilities.

How do these women executives cope with such feelings? The majority (54.5%) tried hard to ignore or take in their stride such feelings; or sleep on it; not worry about it for too long; or at home, forget work.

11.4% said that to compensate for their conflicting feelings or associated guilt, they would work doubly
hard and much longer hours when their husbands were
busy or out of town; try to spend more time at home;
perform better the next time.

Of greatest importance is the support received from
husbands during conflicting times. 75.0% of the
respondents stated that their husbands were extremely
or mostly understanding and helpful. This again
corroborates the finding that most husbands are
supportive of their wives' careers and
conflict/problems arising out of them.

TABLE 26

II. WOMAN EXECUTIVE'S ROLE AS MOTHER

A. EFFICIENCY AS MOTHER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Response No.: *</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in current</td>
<td>(33.3)</td>
<td>(37.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>executive position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 - Very efficiently
2 - Quite efficiently
3 - Satisfactorily
4 - Not so efficiently
5 - Inefficiently
6 - Not applicable

(Percentages are given in brackets.)

327
In the above table on Efficiency as Mother, the same procedure has been followed as earlier with positive responses 1, 2, and 3 being stated by twenty three respondents and negative responses 4 and 5 by two respondents. Response no. 6 is neither positive nor negative, as the respondents did not have any children. Therefore, it appears that women working in their current executive positions for a long period, perceive that they are able to cope quite efficiently with their role as mothers, at least in the sample for this study.
## TABLE 27

### B. SATISFACTION OF THE COUPLE WITH THE WAY CHILDREN ARE BEING BROUGHT UP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Response No.: *</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above in current executive position</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 - Extremely satisfied
2 - Satisfied
3 - Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4 - Dissatisfied
5 - Extremely dissatisfied
6 - It is too early to say anything now
7 - Not applicable

(Percentages are given in brackets.)

Significantly, the data in this table also leads one to believe that the assumption is valid as twenty two women executives responded positively (positive statements 1 and 2) and only three responded negatively (negative statements 3 and 6). The remaining two respondents replied that the question did not apply to them as they were childless.

From the two preceding tables, it appears that although some respondents are hesitant or appear to
be confused about their performance as mothers and their satisfaction at the way the children are being brought up, most respondents, in spite of their demanding schedules, seem to be greatly influenced by the stress or value that society puts upon the role of women as mothers. On both counts, i.e., how they feel they perform as mothers and how satisfied they and their husbands are on the way the children are being brought up, they have responded mostly positively, denoting that they devote attention to their role as mothers and are happy with their performance as well as satisfied with the way the children are being brought up.

While this seems to be true from the data in the tables on women executives role as mother, as far as this category of women executives is concerned, it is important and significant to note from the responses of all the women executives in this sample that the role of mother is particularly viewed very seriously by them and coping with this role along with her other pressing duties, is often difficult and leads to a conflict of priorities. Of those 56.0% who experience role conflict, as mentioned earlier, 30.4% stated that it was because "there are small children
who need care." 44.0% also suffered guilt, mostly due to the feeling that they were neglecting their children.

22.7% stated that the guilt feelings were severe while the balance 77.3% stated that their feelings of guilt were "little" or "hardly", or "not severe". The response most stated by those women executives who suffered guilt, about the type of feelings they experienced, was mentioned by 40.9%. They felt guilt that they were not spending enough time with their children and were not present on the spot to share their experiences or needs; that they were neglecting their children and home to satisfy their own selfish interest in pursuing a career, resulting in the child sometimes throwing tantrums or fretting. 18.2% of the respondents felt it was not so much guilt as "helplessness"; "feel deep down inside that no one and nothing can substitute for the mother;" "feel discomfort at being torn between two roles and having to take a decision of one for the other;" "find it difficult to cope;" "suffer feelings of letting down or not performing either as mother or as working woman." 18.2% suffered guilt feelings if they could not stay back at home when the child was sick or if
the child had particularly asked them to come home early to prepare for a test and they were not able to.

For instance, Armaity stated, "Whenever my daughter, Tanaz, asks me to stay home or to return early to help her prepare for a test or an exam, and I am unable to do so, I suffer guilt and a nagging conscience."

22.7% stated that they coped with these conflicting feelings by being actively with the children when at home and not just present in the house, and that they try to stay at home in the evenings as far as possible to be with them. This has been corroborated by Unwalla in her study on women executives in Bombay (1977), who has stated that "the main target of attack against the working wife is neglect of her children, but this seems to be well refuted by the respondents who state that more than time, the type of company she provides is important." (Unwalla, 1979, p. 325).

In the case of Sneh, whose son had to live in Pune with her mother, she and her husband Rahul drove down
to Pune every weekend. If Rahul could not make it on a particular weekend, Sneh would fly down. "It is very tiring and taxing and leaves us with very little free time, but it is important to be with our son," said Sneh.

13.6% said they tried to rationalise, justify or convince themselves that they were doing the right thing as "in a few years, children grow up and don't need you so much." For example, Sanghamitra, Naina and Daphne all stated that they needed their careers as well in order to feel fulfilled and complete. Some respondents rationalised that, "Nowadays both parents do everything for the child after all," and some said that they have seen women who don't work and their relationship with their children is no different.

From what has preceded above, and particularly cases like Sneh's and Rahul's, it is obvious that these women executives suffer conflicting feelings and guilt in relation to their nonconformity with society's emphasis on their role as wives and mothers, and take their role of mother very seriously. In spite of all the stress and strain
involved and the extra effort it entails, they devote most of their free time to their families providing 'quality' in their interactions with their children, even after a strenuous working day. Eminent sociologist, Robert K. Merton, has termed this 'to overplay' or to 'over conform' to the institutional rules "precisely because they are subject to guilt engendered by previous nonconformity with the rules." (Merton, 1968, p. 206).

**TABLE 28**

III. WOMAN EXECUTIVE'S CAREER ROLE

A. COMMITMENT TO WORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service in current executive position</th>
<th>Response No.: *</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5</td>
<td>21  6  -  -  -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of respondents</td>
<td>(77.8) (22.2) - - -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 - Totally committed
2 - Committed
3 - Somewhat committed
4 - Neither committed nor uncommitted
5 - Uncommitted

(Percentages are given in brackets.)
TABLE 29

B. SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE OF EXECUTIVE ROLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Response No.: *</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in current</td>
<td>(66.7)</td>
<td>(33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>executive position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 - Very Satisfactorily  
2 - Satisfactorily  
3 - Neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily  
4 - Unsatisfactorily  
5 - Very unsatisfactorily

(Percentages are given in brackets.)

The above two tables on the woman executive's career role regarding her commitment to work and her own feelings about how well she performs this role, drew positive responses from all the respondents and, therefore, may be said to corroborate the assumption.
The question on what the respondents themselves felt about their employer's satisfaction regarding the way they performed their executive roles also drew mostly positive responses, as shown in the table above. Response nos. 1 and 2 are treated as positive and were stated by twenty of the sample population, while all the balance responses are taken as negative statements and were made by seven of them. Response nos. 3 and 7, stated by six respondents have been treated as negative since the perceptions of the
respondents on the factor of employers' satisfaction cannot be ascertained from them. It is rather surprising that even after such long service in their current positions, ranging from ten to over twenty-five years, these respondents seemed to be unsure about their employers' satisfaction at their performance, in spite of the fact that they themselves perceived that they are performing satisfactorily, as seen in table 29.

### TABLE 31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service in current executive position</th>
<th>Response No.: *</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(26.7)</td>
<td>(33.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18.5)</td>
<td>(22.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 - Right at the top
2 - A few more rungs up the ladder but not right at the top
3 - Happy where I am
4 - I am already at the top

(Percentages are given in brackets.)

The fact that these executive women aspire to rise
higher in the executive hierarchy and even right to
the top is an indication of their ability to strike a
balance between their dual roles of work and family.
These positive responses 1 and 2 were made by sixteen
of the respondents. Positive response no. 4 was made
by six respondents who are already at the top; while
only five said they were happy where they were.

Since five were content to remain in their current
executive positions, it appears that for some the
sacrifice and struggle involved in balancing two
demanding roles are so high that they are not willing
to take on the additional responsibility and
commitment that go with promotion. For example, Hema
pointed out that, "Being right at the top demands
total commitment, involvement and additional time and
one loses out a lot on family life."
### Table 32

**E. CHANCES TO ACHIEVE GOAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Response No.: *</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 years and above in current executive position</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7.4) (18.5) (22.2) (11.1) - (40.8)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 - Very good
2 - Good
3 - Probable
4 - Slim
5 - Very Slim
6 - Not applicable

(Percentages are given in brackets.)

The table 32 above reveals that thirteen respondents made positive responses about their chances to achieve their goals of rising up the corporate ladder, although it is pertinent to mention here that of these, six rated their chances as only "probable" or "slim". The negative response No. 4 was made by only three respondents. The remaining eleven respondents did not answer as the question was not applicable to them, either because they were already right at the top or happy where they were.

If we look at the two preceding tables, it is significant that although sixteen respondents aspired
to go higher, only seven stated that they felt their chances were either "very good" or "good", while nine felt their chances were only "probable" or "slim". Of those who were confident of their chances, "family support, particularly husband's" was the most important factor contributing to their confidence, along with the knowledge of their own capabilities and the fact that their organisations are "professional", offering them "equal opportunity", "without any discrimination". The majority of those who felt their chances were slim, stated "haphazard or unequal promotional policies" in their organisations to be the reason for their diffidence.

Having analysed the data on each factor concerning the woman executive's role as wife, mother and career woman, it is necessary to examine the combined data of all factors on her respective roles to observe the overall correctness of the assumption mentioned earlier.

Therefore, the data as revealed in the tables 23 to 32 on the woman executive's multiple roles is presented below. Only positive and negative responses have been taken and other responses ignored for this purpose.
### TABLE 33

**WOMAN EXECUTIVE'S ROLE AS WIFE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No.</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Positive responses</th>
<th>Negative responses</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Marital Happiness</td>
<td>25 (92.6)</td>
<td>2 (7.4)</td>
<td>27 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Efficiency as wife</td>
<td>26 (96.3)</td>
<td>1 (3.7)</td>
<td>27 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Satisfaction at managing dual role - household and career woman</td>
<td>24 (88.9)</td>
<td>3 (11.1)</td>
<td>27 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>75 (277.8)</td>
<td>6 (22.2)</td>
<td>81 (300.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages are given in brackets.

### TABLE 34

**WOMAN EXECUTIVE'S ROLE AS MOTHER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No.</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Positive responses</th>
<th>Negative responses</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Efficiency as Mother</td>
<td>23 (92.0)</td>
<td>2 (8.0)</td>
<td>25 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Couple's satisfaction with the way the children are being brought up</td>
<td>22 (88.0)</td>
<td>3 (12.0)</td>
<td>25 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45 (180.0)</td>
<td>6 (20.0)</td>
<td>50 (200.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Percentages are given in brackets.)
From the above tables, it can be stated that the assumption that respondents with a length of service of seven years and above in their current executive positions have achieved a measure of success in balancing their multiple roles, as reflected by the positive and negative statements made by them, has clearly been borne out by the above data.

Tables 33 to 35 reveal that the positive responses
are highest for the career role and lowest for the role of mother. This, again, is an indication that the career woman is more concerned about her role as mother.

Hypotheses

The conclusions based on findings in this research study support the validity of three of the five hypotheses proposed.

Hypothesis (1): There is role conflict in women executives since career demands are high.

Role conflict was experienced by the majority (56.0%) of the respondents at some time or other; while 44.0% had not really felt any conflict, as "off and on, everybody faces some problems and hassles," and the executive woman is no different. Of course, almost everyone (97.0%) in the sample was working out of choice and, hence, conflict is bound to be less than it would be if they were forced to work by circumstance or someone. 23.2% experienced role conflict "quite often" and 21.4% said it was severe in nature.
A factor that creates role conflict in women executives is that working hours were long for most of them. 75.0% of the respondents had long working hours and 77.0% travelled on duty every one or two months for a few days at a time. This does create tension, but with supportive husbands and families, and infrastructure at home and at the workplace, most are able to cope.

Also, the transfer of one spouse is a major factor causing tension and creating role conflict. As mentioned earlier, 13.6% have lived apart from their husbands for one or two years, on account of transfers, with one respondent having lived ten years away from her husband. This kind of situation is bound to be fraught with tension and must call for a great deal of sacrifice and adjustment on the part of the woman executive herself and her husband and family members.

A certain amount of conflict and associated guilt feelings do arise under such circumstances as mentioned above and 44.0% of those who experienced role conflict, also suffered guilt feelings, related mostly to their children. The diversity of their
roles and the strain of caring for small children along with other responsibilities are an ongoing struggle for most working women executives.

To cope with this some respondents (22.7) tried to stay at home as far as possible in the evenings and when at home they were "actively" with the children, instead of just "being present" in the house. After a gruelling day at the office this type of "quality time" with their children, itself calls for a tremendous amount of sacrifice and effort on their part and is a drain on energy.

Sometimes role conflict is created because of the problem of sex-bias in organisations. The majority (55.5%) in the sample had, at some time or other in their careers, faced sex-bias. They have had to work "doubly hard" putting in longer hours and much more effort to prove their worth, resulting in considerable stress and strain. This implies that a woman's struggle to the top is tougher.

It can, therefore, be stated that the validity of hypothesis (1) is supported by the data.
In fact, most literature on the subject of working women states this to be a fact. (Refer to Chapter I). The findings of a study done way back in 1962 on "Women Executives in Bombay City" reveal that the most common problems which a woman holding an executive position faces are outdoor work and general travel, resentment from men, conservative opinion of management and the managing of both a job and a home. (Daver, et.al., 1962, p.33).

Hypothesis (2): Woman's employment as an executive causes a strain on her role as wife.

Since 83.8% of the respondents were working before marriage, and have continued to do so, it does not appear that marriage is a deterrent to career and, yet, 15.4% of the single respondents had chosen to remain so for reasons of career. Although the percentage is small here, it is an indication that for some women executives, the onus involved in pursuing career goals along with the responsibility of caring for husband, home and children, is too difficult to shoulder.
Only 33.3% of the divorced women stated that their divorces were related to their careers. "Professional jealousy" between the couple was the most commonly stated reason. From this, it can be inferred that for a few women, career ambitions are so deep rooted that they are willing to forego the security that marriage offers and opt for a life alone if they feel that their marriage is interfering with their career.

From the data, it can be inferred that for the majority of working women executives, career does not become an impediment to the satisfactory performance of their role as wives, as 80.0% clearly believed in their ability to succeed as career women and wives and 97.0% felt they were performing their role as wives efficiently/satisfactorily. 40.5% stressed that routine household chores could easily be done by someone else, for instance, hired help or supportive relatives. This would naturally leave the woman executive, already hard pressed for time, with more time to provide "quality" in her relationship with her husband and family.

A clear indication that career ambitions do not overtake or overshadow the woman executive's pride
and interest in her family role, is the fact that while 55.4% had equal pride and interest in their wife/mother and career roles, 20.3% had more in their wife/mother role. Only 17.6% had more in their career role.

A few (17.9%) experienced role conflict on account of their professional work being more demanding than their husbands'. Therefore, it appears that for a few women executives, the pressures of their jobs are so taxing that it causes a strain on their relationship with their husbands. 75.0% stated that their husbands were supportive and extremely/mostly understanding and helpful about the demands and pressures on their time, which is extremely important and heartening to note.

Almost all (93.9%) perceived their relationship with their husbands to be on an equal footing and 62.2% felt that their careers never affected their relationship with their husbands. Of these, 6.1% stated that, on the contrary, their careers had a positive effect on the relationship, as they could converse intelligently with their husbands and their husbands' colleagues.
From the findings of the study, it appears that there is no major disagreement between the majority of the women executives and their husbands on most important issues, like values of life, ways of dealing with in-laws, and handling of family income. 74.2% felt that their husbands were satisfied with the arrangements at home for its efficient running; 86.0% of the couples confided in each other; 88.7% of the spouses were satisfied with the affection they received from each other and 96.9% were confident of their marriage and were either extremely happy or happy.

82.4% liked their in-laws a great deal and most received a lot of support and help from them. This again, corroborates the statement that family support is an important factor conducive to the success of these respondents in maintaining a balance between their dual roles.

91.0% chose, as the ideal situation, a combination of career and marriage, although 4.0% of them felt that there should not be any children. 22.0% of them felt that a woman should take a break in her career till
the children are of school going age. Therefore, it does not appear that combining career with wife's role is impossible or too strenuous for the woman executive. The fact that these dual career couples are mostly well educated and from the higher income bracket, probably, facilitates adjustment.

It can, therefore, be stated that the validity of Hypothesis (2) has not been established by the data.

This has also been corroborated by some recent literature on the subject. (Refer Chapter I). For example, Jain has stated that a woman "is now gaining an individual status in her house. Her education, her preoccupation with her economic role, and the comparatively liberal attitude of society have enabled the sharing of many household responsibilities by the husband and wife." (Jain, 1988, p. 328).

In the book, "Women Leading", referred to earlier, the husband of Susan K. Gilbert, co-author of the book, has stated: "There is a certain richness to the marriage that comes with both of us being involved in things that are exciting. And it is
exciting to share satisfactions - this puts a certain 'spice' in the marriage!' (Collins, et al., 1988, p. 96). In the same book, the husband of Nycum, also co-author, finds that his and Susan's relationship works because "we both work consciously to make it work. If we have problems or difficulties, we're fairly prompt to bringing it up to the other and have an early-on discussion of it. One thing that makes our marriage work is that we have a large set of shared interests, and we share some attitudes as well." (Collins, et. al., 1988, p. 103).

Hypothesis (3) : Woman's employment as an executive causes a strain on her role as mother.

On the positive side, factors that favoured women executives in this sample, were: (a) They all had small families; 78.4% had two children; 2.7% had three children, and the balance 18.9% had no children. (b) The majority (56.7%) had children who were eleven years and above and, therefore, not needing child care. However, it does appear that for some women executives, the demands of their careers are so high in their perception, that they are
willing to forego the joys of motherhood. In Chapter I, reference has been made to Smilgis who stated that "careers and indecision are leading many to bypass parenthood." (Smilgis, 1988, p.40). Of those fourteen respondents without children, in 21.4% of the cases, the decision not to have children was jointly taken by the couple, as with both parents in demanding careers, having a child would be unfair to the child and to themselves. In the balance 7.2% cases, the husband (and in-laws) would like a child, but the respondent herself does not want one.

A few (6.3%) of the respondents were of the opinion that the mother should take up a job only after the child was five years of age. This again indicates that meeting career demands, with the demands of childcare, is quite strenuous for some women executives. In fact, 30.4% stated that they experienced role conflict because "there are small children who need childcare." While 59.5% faced problems in bringing up their children, 40.9% suffered guilt because of this as they felt that they might be neglecting their children and homes to satisfy their own selfish interests in pursuing a career. Therefore, it seems that lack of time with
the children is one of the major problems of working women executives, creating in them a sense of guilt. However, most respondents tried to make up for this lack of time by spending their entire weekends and holidays with their children and families; thereby sacrificing some of their personal hobbies or desires, like reading, writing or meeting friends.

Another issue that caused concern to some (15.9%) of the executive mothers was that children were left a little too long in the care of the maids. They feared that this might have repercussions later. The time involved in raising children is always greater than many women expect. A U.S. Department of Labour study in 1986 shows us that over half the American mothers with children below one year old work outside their homes. The study reported "profound" changes in the overall number of employed women, saying that the number of working mothers has more than doubled in the last fifteen years. This has caused a strain on both marriage and child rearing that traditional couples would never have faced a generation ago. (Collins, et.al.,1988,p.116).

22.7% tried hard to be "actively" with the children as
often as possible, instead of just being physically present. For this, they have to constantly draw on their reserves of energy, putting in a great deal of effort to provide "quality" after a tiring day in the office.

As Collins and her co-authors have mentioned, "...all mothers come to realise there is a distinction between simply 'putting in time' with a child and giving quality time." (Collins, et.al.,1988,p.123).

For 22.0% of the respondents, the ideal combination is "job combined with marriage till children are born." Of these, 8.0% would like to resume work when the child reaches five years of age. 4.0% preferred marriage with job and no children. This is clearly indicative that for some women executives the struggle and sacrifice involved in bringing up children along with a demanding career is extremely taxing.

In spite of all these problems faced by women in highly demanding executive careers in caring for their children, the majority (70.3%) felt they were
performing their role as mothers efficiently, because of various factors, like support from husband and other family members, being able to afford the infrastructure, etc., which have been mentioned earlier on page under the section "conducive factors".

The role of mother is extremely important to these women executives; if not more, then at least equally important as their careers. For instance, 20.3% had more pride and interest in their wife/mother role and 55.4% had equally in both roles. Only 17.6% felt that their pride and interest lay more in their career role.

Another factor that applies pressure on the woman executive to maintain an image of self-sufficiency and efficiency at most times, is that she is seen as a role model by the younger generation in the family. 55.0% felt they were looked up to as role models by the youngsters in the family. This is a very important finding as it reveals that children of women executives mostly take pride in their mothers' achievements and view their mothers with positive feelings, thereby indicating that these pioneering
women are path breakers, making the road easier for younger women by their example.

It is pertinent and interesting to note that, in spite of all the strain and stress of combining an executive career with motherhood, almost all (94.0%) would like their daughters and/or nieces to be career women like themselves. It, therefore, appears that the sense of satisfaction, achievement and self-fulfillment that these women executives have experienced, make the extra effort well worth it, so much so that they are willing to continue the struggle not only for themselves but through their daughters and nieces.

In contrast, however, in the study by Jain referred to earlier, 37.0% of the respondents were against employment for women and did not want their daughters to take up a job, while another 23.0% preferred the traditional teaching profession for their daughters. (Jain, 1988, p.232).

It can, therefore, logically be concluded from the above that despite having been successful in combining her roles as career woman and mother, the
path is not an easy one and the woman executive not only faces problems, but goes through psychological feelings of conflict and guilt in bringing up her children. She is able to cope with such feelings primarily because of the tremendous amount of understanding and support, both emotional and physical, that she receives from her husband and other family members.

The data supports the above hypothesis and, therefore, it can be concluded that the validity of hypothesis (3) has been established.

Hypothesis (4): Women executives’ traditional value orientations are not likely to be pronounced.

While undertaking this research it was hypothesised that women who were working in highly exacting careers would not have very deeply rooted traditional values or beliefs. To determine the validity of this hypothesis, the data was reviewed and the conclusions presented below:

Traditionally marriage was the priority for Indian women and, therefore, it is surprising that 15.4% of
the single women had chosen to remain so because they felt that marriage would interfere with their careers. Of the divorcees which, by and large, are still few in our country compared to the West, 33.3% had broken marriages because of their careers. This implies that there is a change in values taking place in our urban society.

Another interesting finding, already mentioned earlier in the study, is that of those women executives without children, 28.6% had opted not to have them as they felt they would not be able to do justice to both roles, career woman and mother. 21.4% took this decision jointly with their husbands, while 7.2% were adamant although the husbands and in-laws would like a child. This has implications of a rather surprising change in the attitude of some working women executives.

27.0% did not like the word "duties" used in relation to the husband and preferred to replace it by the word "role". They also felt that "duties" of husband and wife are same towards each other. This, again, is very different from the traditional concept of the 'dutiful' Indian wife.
Although the numbers are not too high as can be seen from the above figures, it is an indication that some women executives are not too steeped in traditional values and, in these transitional times, the numbers are likely to increase.

Another interesting and important change is that the majority (55.4%) felt their family role to be as important as their career role, not more important or less important. While 17.6% have more pride and interest in their career role, only 20.0% replied that their family role is primary. This is, indeed, significant as the majority of working women executives give equal importance to both roles and do not tend to neglect one for the other.

Quite contrary to the popular belief that sons are preferred, 76.7% of the married respondents have no preference for sons or daughters. In fact, 15.0% prefer daughters as they are more affectionate, caring and family centered, and stay attached to their parents. Only 3.3% prefer sons. This is again different from the traditional view that once a daughter marries she adopts her marital home as the
only home she has. Also, extremely important is the change in attitudes regarding hopes and expectations for sons and daughters, with 98.6% having absolutely the same hopes for both, even regarding a career. A few years ago, in the Indian context, traditionally, a great amount of stress was laid on "marriage" for the girl and "career" for the boy. In this sample, only one respondent wanted "only a good marriage" for her daughter. "I don't care if she doesn't work. I am basically traditional in my thinking," she said. Incidentally, this respondent was a widow. Almost all (94.0%) were quite clear that they would like their daughters/nieces to follow in their footsteps of choosing a career and family life combined.

47.0% stated that they had independent styles of operating within the family, 42.0% interdependent and 5.0% dominating. This is, again, a far cry from the traditionally supportive or dependent role of the Indian wife. Only 14.0% mentioned that they were "supportive" and none of the respondents had dependent styles.

6.0% of the respondents frequently feel superior to their husbands and other family members on account of
their occupational position and economic status. This is a rather surprising finding, but it is heartening to note that the numbers who feel this way are small. However, it is indicative of a change in values.

The data reveals much divergence from the traditional belief in the husband's superiority and the traditional division of male and female roles. 93.9% perceived their relationship with their husbands to be one of equality. Only 3.2% said their husbands were superior and their needs, jobs and careers more important than their own. 48.6% believed that the husband-wife relationship is a "team relationship", sharing tasks, not dividing them.

40.5% stressed that while it was the wife's overall responsibility to see that the home runs smoothly, she should not necessarily have to perform the chores herself. The routine household chores could easily be taken in hand by good domestic help or the support of understanding relatives. The growing tendency among working women executives to rely on others, i.e., hired domestic help, or even supportive relatives, to take over routine chores at home is
certainly implied in this finding and is an important and positive change in the value system of the women executives who can afford such help.

Lastly, only 3.0% preferred the traditional "marriage without job" as an ideal situation for a woman to be in; while 22.0% preferred "job combined with marriage till children are born." The majority (65.0%) preferred "job combined with marriage even after children are born." 5.0% preferred "job without marriage" and 4.0% "marriage with job and no children." This is definitely indicative of a change in values.

A few isolated cases of deeply rooted traditional values were mentioned by a small percentage, (3.0%): (a) One respondent stated that "an Indian woman would never expect her husband to do any work around the house. Housework is her job," said she. Paradoxically, this respondent has lived ten years away from her husband for reasons of her career. She justified this by saying her husband never had to do a single household chore even when she was away as they had "ample and reliable help from good and trusted domestic servants." (b) One respondent
stated that the only problem she sees for Indian working women is the traditional Indian husband who is jealous, not of her career but of her interaction and association with other men, fearing she is indulging in extra-marital affairs. (c) Another isolated response was that when a woman lives with her in-laws, she is expected to do all the housework and the fact that she too is contributing to the family income, working just as hard and as many hours as their son, is completely overlooked.

From the above, it can safely be concluded that the validity of hypothesis (4) that women executives' traditional value orientations are not likely to be pronounced, is borne out by the data.

**Hypothesis (5):** Women executives' needs and aspirations are career oriented.

The validity of hypothesis (5) that women executives' needs and aspirations are career oriented, has not been established by the data, as the majority (56.0%) stated that their needs and aspirations in life are more home and family oriented. Of the balance 43.0%
who replied that their needs and aspirations in life are more career oriented, some clarified that while earlier their needs and aspirations in life had been more home and family oriented, they had changed to career oriented because the children have grown up and because of the satisfaction they have derived from their jobs.

In conclusion, it may be stated that Chapter IV, V and VI on the family and work roles, and the balance between them, reveal that women executives in Bombay have managed to strike a balance between their dual roles at home and at the workplace. Their heavy and demanding responsibilities at the office, which they seem to enjoy, do not detract from the esteem with which they view their family role, which is given equal, if not more, importance than the career role.

One wonders why such high profile women executives give more importance to their family role than to their career role. In India, till just about a decade ago the career woman was viewed in a derogatory way and regarded as deviant. Her work role, particularly in pioneering occupations, hitherto male dominated, was not accepted and there
existed a dichotomy between marriage and career. Slowly, with the increasing numbers of women in the workforce, it was the motherhood role of women that was perceived as threatened by their career. Today, with so many working women even in highly demanding executive careers, urban society has become more tolerant of the career woman and her career is now hardly perceived as an encroachment on her family role. Maintaining a balance between work and family roles, however, does entail a great deal of sacrifice and self-denial for these women.

In spite of this, it was found in this research study, as has already been mentioned, that women executives perceive their family role as more important than their career role. This is, probably, because of the conditioning that society has provided all along in giving priority to the family role, and the change in the attitude of society, towards accepting women in careers, in metropolitan areas at least, is a recent phenomenon in our country.

Maithreyi Krishna Raj in her paper which reviews studies of employed women, ("Research on Women and Career: Issues of Methodology", the Economic and
Political Weekly, Vol. XXI, No.43, dated October 25, 1986), has very succinctly traced the changes in perspective in research in the area of professional women in the West. Till 1960 the career woman was regarded as deviant and her intellectual ability and competitiveness were seen in a "masculine" way and, therefore, she was considered "socially not well adjusted." On the other hand, the homemaker was seen as "tolerant and socially better adjusted." Krishna Raj has stated that "normative priorities which produce conflict were falsely attributed to psychological characteristics." The 1970s, and after, have seen a change in the West in the way the problem is perceived. With the increasing number of women in continuous employment, the marriage - versus - career conflict "has become irrelevant".(Krishna Raj, 1986, p.73).

This is probably due to macro changes in society as well as changes at an individual level: (a) Motherhood no longer occupies as much time as before; there are also more nurseries; (b) With advanced technology, the physical burden of housework has considerably been reduced and does not have the potential for fulfillment and creativity. "(If one
(c) There is a growing concern in society for self-development. As Krishna Raj has pointed out, "The earlier fear of maternal deprivation and its dire consequences for children" yielded to an acceptance of the working mother as "no obvious ill-effects attended this phenomenon." Also, today, there is a more balanced view in society regarding masculine and feminine traits. (Krishna Raj, 1986, p. 73).

It is interesting and relevant to mention here that even though society has all along, until now, given priority to the career role for men and the family role for women, there are some men who in times of crisis, place the family ahead of their careers. For instance, take the case of Vincent, the husband of one of the respondents in this study. Vincent, like his wife, Jennifer, is working in the seniormost position of a large company. Recently their daughter, Susan was critically ill, with a threat to her life. Vincent and Jennifer were both shattered and shared equally the responsibility of being with her and caring for her during this period. Although Vincent was not one of the husbands interviewed in this study, he and Jennifer are personally known to
this researcher, who visited them in the hospital regularly. Both Vincent and Jennifer stayed away from their work, only attending to top priority matters, mostly over the telephone. On one occasion when Susan's condition was uncertain and Vincent and Jennifer were going through a harrowing time, Vincent replied to the question of when he would resume work by saying, "Right now nothing is more important to me than Susan. After all, what is my career if my family is broken up and unhappy by the loss of Susan?"

It may be possible that when both spouses are in senior positions with high incomes, men may not automatically take it for granted that in times of family crisis it is the women alone who should stay away from their work. This is corroborated by some other respondents as well. For instance, in the case of Kalpana and Dinesh, (Refer case 5 in Appendix 1), Dinesh often stays home when the children are ill to take care of them.

Attention is, once again, drawn to the fact that the sample of respondents in this study were only from the city of Bombay where there is a more liberal
atmosphere, and were from the higher income bracket, and are, therefore, not representative of all women; although the findings are indicative of a trend that given certain conditions and facilities, women can and do get a high position and status in society.

There is no doubt, however, that these respondents have had to, and are facing several problems at both places, and maintaining a balance between two such important roles is often exhausting and fraught with stress and strain.

Along with other factors already mentioned, the most crucial to their success in striking a balance between their two roles is the support of family members, particularly the husbands'.

If a working woman executive looks too hard for the single best answer to problems at home and at work, she is likely to become immobilised. By and large, we have been conditioned to look for perfection and single answers in an ever changing world, laden with probability and chance.