CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The present study was an attempt to understand how the mother's work status affected the perception of family characteristics and psychological well being of herself and her adolescent children.

INTER-GROUP DIFFERENCES

Family Characteristics

Hypothesis (Ia): Working and non-working mothers and their adolescents will differ significantly in their perceptions of the existing family characteristics.

Results confirmed the hypothesis partly. There were significant differences observed between working and non-working mothers in their perceptions of some dimensions of family characteristics namely; expressiveness, achievement orientation, conflict, independence and control. A working woman experienced in the family a good opportunity to express oneself, achievement orientation and a feeling of independence. She could express clearly what she felt, make effort to achieve her goals and make her own decision if need be. She thus felt more self-confident than the non-working woman. The perceptions of working and non-working mothers also differed on conflict, possibly because of the higher control within the family experienced by the non-working mothers than the working mothers. Apparently the working mothers resented rigid controls in the family system, as it was not conducive to one's effective functioning. Nye and Hoffman (1970) and Mandelbaum and Sheva (1976) observed similar differences between working and non-working mothers, as the former were found more satisfied in diverse areas of family and life.
Some other studies indicated that as greater percentage of women/mothers entered the work force (Powell 1988, Adler & Izraeli 1988), there were corresponding increases in the frequency and degree of conflicts within the family (Rani, 1976; Sekaran, 1992). It was not found true here. Members felt greater demands on their time and resources and constantly tried to adjust to work and family.

Adolescents of working and non-working mothers differed in their perceptions of some of the existing family characteristics, namely; expressiveness, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation and independence. There were no differences on dimensions, such as cohesiveness, conflict, active recreational orientation, moral religious emphasis, organization, control and physical set up.

Maternal employment did influence children's development and relationship patterns within the family, as mother's working prompted changes in the family roles (Grych and Clark, 1999; Mathur, 1992; Sharma, 1991). The extent to which they were encouraged to act openly and express their feelings directly, were cast into an achievement oriented or competitive framework. They developed interest in political, social, intellectual and cultural activities, and were assertive in making their own decisions. While adolescents of non working mothers were more expressive, adolescents of working mothers had an edge on other dimensions. These characteristics were likely to be inculcated more in the families where mothers were working, as they experienced a wide array of social and intellectual network. These characteristics were greatly valued and nurtured in the boys much more rigidly than girls. In a typical Indian society, development of independence in boys was stressed in the family. Some research studies (Hurlock, 1964; McFadyen-Ketehum, 1996) also revealed that the working mothers had differential effects on boys and girls. Scott (1960) noted the effect of mothers' working, on the amount of punishment, and security under parents. This had been supported by Henry and Wilson (1997). Boys/girls of non-working mothers also differed on expressiveness, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, organization and independence. In case of girls of working and non-working mothers, differences were significant on expressiveness, independence, achievement orientation, organization and control. Girls of working mothers scored higher on all dimensions except organization. Unexpectedly, cohesion (the degree of commitment held and support family
members provided for one another, active recreational orientation and availability of physical infrastructure and facilities in the family showed no relevance. It appeared that most parents now a days were conscious of the need to be with their children, give them some time, share with them information, and provided the necessary infrastructure.

**Hypothesis (1b):** Mothers in different work categories and their adolescents will differ significantly in their perceptions of the existing family characteristics.

Results confirmed the hypothesis partly. There were significant differences between working mothers only in some of the paired work categories in perceiving the existing family characteristics, as only 20 percent of the paired groups showed the difference. Probably it was the working of mothers that affected the family set up rather than the mother’s nature of work. This was corroborated by a study by Daga (1997) on influence of family roles on the quality of life of women working in different categories.

The comparisons between doctors and executive mothers, in business and doctors, university teachers and doctors, and as school teachers and university teachers showed no differences. It was interesting to note that most differences were in favour of clerks/stenos, and school teachers were the next group. The dimensions that showed significant differences were expressiveness, independence, organization and control in the family, characterising the family environment. The possible reasons of difference appeared to be the time that the job type required, the satisfaction derived, the monetary benefits, and how well the mother was able to balance her duties. In general, all categories scored low on conflict probably because of individual efforts to avoid those situations. Moral religious emphasis was low perhaps due to the fact, that working mothers had little time to devote regularly to religious rituals. Physical set up showed no significant difference at any level. It could be deduced that mother’s earning was always an added income readily spent on maintaining the family standards, bringing all of them to comparable levels of facilities.

There were very few dimensions of family characteristics that showed significant differences among children of mothers in different work categories. The most commonly indicated dimensions were: cohesion - indicating significant difference between mothers working as clerks/stenos and executives, clerks/stenos and in business, clerks/stenos and doctors and
clerks/stenos and school teachers; expressiveness - showing significant differences between school teachers and executives, clerks/stenos and executives, university teachers and mothers in business, school teachers and business women, clerks/stenos and business, clerks/stenos and doctors and clerks/stenos and university teachers. Organization was different between school teachers and executives, clerks/stenos and executives, university teachers and business mothers, school teachers and mothers in business, clerks/stenos and mothers in business, school teachers and doctors, clerks/stenos and doctors, clerks/stenos and university teachers and clerks/stenos and school teachers. For a working mother an organized set up was important, and thus her sense of organization influenced children’s perceptions of organization in the family system. On control differences were found between mothers working as university teachers and executive mothers, school teachers and executive mothers, clerks/stenos and executives, university teachers and mothers in business, as school teachers and in business, clerks/stenos and mothers in business, school teachers and doctor mothers, clerks/stenos and doctors, clerks/stenos and university teachers and clerks/stenos and school teachers. It appeared that for clerks/stenos and school teachers their educational background, time spent at work, work demands, salary and job satisfaction helped them significantly. As Choudhury (1999) found the families of mal-competent adolescents were verbally and emotionally expressive, more communicative and demonstrative. Grych and Clark (1999) found that the relationship between the family members determined the family environment and not the work status of the mother. The variety in the nature of job influenced the mother’s understanding and style of discipline which made the children perceive expressiveness differently.

Psychological Well-being (Stress and Adjustment Areas)

Stress Areas

Hypothesis:(2a) Working and non-working mothers and their adolescents will differ significantly in terms of the areas of stress.

The above hypothesis could be accepted partly. Working and non-working mothers did show significant differences (Table 4.4) on stress in home, social and emotional areas. Home was the immediate area affected by the mothers working outside. It was observed from the data
that on an average a working mother was away from home for 9 to 12 hours in a day. Often when she returned home, she was tired and preoccupied with office affairs, and thus was not able to attend to family members and home. In some this developed a feeling of guilt and thus stress and strain. Rani (1976) supported this finding; as she found that women blamed themselves if the things at home went wrong (Mathur 1992), developing in her a feeling of guilt and stress. Studies by Nye and Hoffman (1970), Singh (1972), Bridges (1987), Khanna (1986), Shenoy (1987), Carol (1994) and Housten (1995) indicated the differences between working and non-working mothers in their psychological well being.

Significant differences were observed between children of working and non-working mothers in the areas of home and emotional stress. Results corroborated the findings obtained for the mothers group. When a mother was not able to give time to her home and family, some imbalance occurred in the family system, which created stress. Karyl and Julian (1991) found that the relationship between maternal employment (inter role conflict and satisfaction with maternal employment), and children’s behaviour (attention/immaturity, conduct, disorder and anxiety/withdrawal) was mediated by personal strain (cognitive difficulties and negative mood), and parenting behaviour (punishment/rejection). Galambos and Maggs, (1990); Repetti (1994, 1997; Repetti and Wood, 1997) insisted that the job related stress was one characteristic of employment that had implications for parent-child relations.

Boys and girls of working mothers differed on stress in the domain of home. This was expected. Mothers who were professionals expected much more from their children than the non-professionals (Solomon, 1960). Boys and girls of non-working mothers differed in the areas of home and emotion, with more stress reported by the girls. Generally in Indian society, the son in the family was given importance, while the adolescent girls were expected to perform certain household chores on their own. Discipline was strict for girls than boys. The expectation was more from the adolescent daughters than sons (Rouman, 1956). Girls gradually developed a generalized attitude of antagonism (Brown, 1958; Harris & Tsang, 1957), which contributed to stress in the areas of home and emotion for girls. Boys of working and non-working mothers did not differ in any areas of stress. Boys in general enjoyed more independence than girls right from the childhood, and as they grew up, the
independence was further fostered. They were encouraged to move away from the family and establish a world outside home, proving that mothers’ work status created little stress on boys. This difference was also observed between girls of working and non-working mothers.

**Hypothesis:** Mothers in different work categories and their adolescents will differ significantly in their perceptions of stress in life.

Results confirmed the hypothesis partly. Mother in different work categories did not differ much with regard to the experienced stress. This was particularly so in categories that were highly valued in society, like executives, doctors and university teachers. While her working outside home affected her life, her actual profession affected the experience of positive or negative feelings emanated from the profession. Studies by Surti and Sarupria (1981); Surti (1982); Thakaran (1992); Pareek and Mehta (1997), showed that women in different work categories differed in their experienced stress, when the work categories actually differed in terms of work responsibility, financial rewards, job demands, and prestige value. Pareek and Mehta also found school teachers less stressed than bank employees and other gazetted officers. It could be that the personal traits of a working mother were primary, and only at the secondary level the office set up, job pressure, rapport with colleagues, office atmosphere etc. could be of some concern. Home was the most immediate area to get affected by the mother’s taking up job, as her role had been strictly associated with family care and home management. Her picking up of a new role, that being of a bread winner or at least shared bread winner added to her work responsibilities, but did not change the pattern of demands levied prior to her entry in job market (Rogers, Pearl, Fisher, 1964). Significant differences were found for the mothers working as school teachers as compared to executives and mothers in business in the areas of home and occupation, where as in other work categories significant differences were seen in areas of home, social and occupation. Verma and Gupta (1990) noted the influence of parental pressure on childrens time for school work. Health was the least stress area.

Mother’s work category did not make much difference in the stress of children. Position or designation of mother made impact only if the children had no appropriate substitute (Liddle, 1958), or the job type was not socially valued by the child’s friends, or if lot of tension was associated with the mother’s work. It was found that if the mother’s job
type/nature were highly valued by peers and society, the problems associated with the work had invisible impact. (Liddle, Murphy, Pearl, 1964). Children having mothers working as doctors, executives, business, university teachers and school teachers. School teachers and clerks/steno were able to give more time to their children than executives and doctors and helped them on school matters including studies. Particularly, in the business group, business dealings made the time for children more uncertain, resulting in imbalance in the home, social life and time for studies.

Adjustment Areas

Hypothesis: (3a) Working and non-working mothers and their adolescents will differ significantly in their adjustment patterns.

Results confirmed the hypothesis partly. Significant differences were found in the areas of home, social and emotional adjustment between working and non-working mothers. These were the same areas as noted for stress, indicating the relation between stress and adjustment patterns. If mother’s work status affected the stress level of the children, it was bound to affect their adjustment areas/levels (Crouter, Bumpus, Maguire, McHale, 1999). This was also supported by earlier studies of Orden and Bradburn (1968); Hoffman (1989); Parcel and Menaghan (1994), and Gottfried and Bathurst (1995). There was very little gap between the stress and adjustment scores, and even lesser in case of working mothers, as the later used effective adjustment mechanisms. Effective adjustment mechanisms were often found associated with low or no stress (Felton and Revenson, 1984; Felton, Revenson, and Hinrichen, 1984; O'Neill and Zeichner, 1985; Peacock, Wong, and Reker, 1993).

Adolescents (boys and girls) of working and non-working mothers showed significant differences in their home and emotional adjustment. Even for the mothers the pattern of results was same. Galambos and Maggs (1990), Repetti, (1994, 1997) and Repetti and Wood, (1997) argued that job related stress was one characteristic of employment that had implications for parent-child relations. The areas of difference on stress and adjustment were same for children of working and non-working mothers. Evidences indicated that stress exerted negative pressures on the psychological well being (Baruch, Biener, and Barnett, 1987), but how parental work, particularly mother's work influenced the stress and
corresponding adjustment areas of their children was not clear (Crouter, Bumpas, Maguire and Mc Hale, 1999). Experienced stress and coping strategies were found interlinked (Lazarus, 1981; Folkman et al 1987). Studies by Rouman (1956), and Nye (1958) emphasized the varied behaviour patterns of children of mothers who were working or not working. Along with the mother's work status, a number of demographic variables were associated in influencing the behaviours (Stern and Zevon, 1990; Blanchard-Fields and Irion, 1988; Eisenberg, Fabes, and Gutherie, 1997). It appeared that adjustment difficulty in one area would affect the mental state of the individual, and spill over to other areas, like home affecting the emotional adjustment. In fact, areas of home and emotion showed significant differences between all the comparative groups, except between boys of working and non-working mothers. Boys of working and non-working mothers were comparable, but the girls of working and non-working mothers indicated differences in the areas of home, social and emotional adjustment. For mothers as well as children health and occupational /school adjustment areas did not show any significant differences.

Hypothesis:(3b) Mothers in different work categories and their adolescents will differ significantly in their adjustment patterns.

Results confirmed the hypothesis partly. When mothers in different work categories were compared, they showed significant differences in the areas of home and social adjustment, with only few of them indicating differences in the areas of emotional and occupational adjustments. This could be explained in the context of parameters which govern the adjustment process, like factors at work and home and society, as home and society were intricately related to work status. For instance executives, university teachers, doctors had greater concern for life style at home and their relating to society, and this was in their social adjustment. As mentioned earlier how one managed home was directly related to one's social position. Clerks/stenos differed from executives and university teachers, in home, social, emotional and occupational adjustment areas. Clerks/stenos and school teachers differed in social and occupational adjustment areas, as they had different work environments and time demands.

Children of mothers in different work categories showed interesting results as significant differences were observed in home and school adjustment. Home was the prime mover, and
children coming from different professional homes differed in adjustment. Children of university teachers and executives showed differences in emotional and school adjustment, because of the limited time available for children. Children of clerks/stenos showed better home, social and school adjustment. Children showed significant differences in home and social adjustment areas in general because the status and background were directly related to home and society. Children of doctors, executives, business, and school teachers and university teachers showed little difference in adjustment, indicating similar time and role demands on them.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS, STRESS AND ADJUSTMENT

Hypothesis (4): Different dimensions of family characteristics, stress and adjustment will relate to each other differently for working and non-working mothers and their adolescents.

Working Mothers

The hypothesis was partly confirmed. Cohesion in the family was inversely related to stress. Cohesiveness in the family strengthened the feeling of belongingness. More the family interaction and support for each other, the lesser was the experienced stress. Studies by Dhingra (1972); Kapur (1974), Rani (1976) and Melson and Kemp (1977), corroborated this finding. The extent to which mothers were encouraged to act openly and express their feelings was found negatively related to social stress. Geffen and Lange (1978) in one of their studies indicated that the better adjusted perceived increased cohesiveness, expressiveness, independence and recreational orientation and decreased control in the family. They were more social in nature, and enjoyed a good social life. Higher conflict meant higher home, health, emotional and occupational stress, as it was a disturbing factor to varying degrees, particularly to working mothers, for whom some conflict was inevitable because of their dual responsibilities. There was a diffused nature of role, over demand/expectations by others, her concern of status, guilt feelings, existing family relations and attitudes of the family members, help received and so on (Hoffman, 1963; Dohlstrom, 1967; Rapaport and Rapaport, 1969; Kapur, 1970; Bhatti and Bhatti, 1971; Sing, 1972; Satyanand, 1973; Chakraborty, 1977). There was good deal of evidence to validate that
conflict at home could curb one's social life, and a reaction to it could lead to overindulgence in social life. A higher independence within the family was associated with low social and occupational stress. If one could be assertive and self-sufficient, it helped in ones social and occupational life. A high achievement need could lessen stress at home as one might feel emotionally strong at work. Studies by Bhatt and Bhatt (1971); and Chakroverty (1977) emphasised that 'a married women has to manage in terms of both the household and job responsibilities'. Organization was the degree of importance of clear organization and structure in planning family activities and responsibilities, and better the organization, lesser were the experienced stress in home, emotional and work areas. Control at home restricted working mothers' independence in subtle ways. To manage home and office work together, she needed good planning and if not taken care of, it could disturb her mental peace. The intellectual cultural, active recreational and moral religious orientation were not seen as crucial familial attributes and perhaps more as individual interests.

The significant inverse relations between stress and the corresponding adjustment areas i.e. home, health, social, emotional and occupational, seemed to be an obvious finding. The more the stress, lesser would be the adjustment in the respective area and vise versa. Stress meant anxiety and strain, making individual often ineffective to think and act, thereby causing maladjustment (Shaffer and Shoben, 1956; Akhtar and Pestonjee, 1963). Home was an important area, and any disturbance at home was bound to adversely affect the emotional adjustment, more so for a working mother. A mother's entry in the job market, widened her role area, and balancing of roles was important in her adjustment patterns. While stress at home forced the working mother to stay away from social life, the stress in social domain made her overindulge in house work and thus not enjoy a good social life. Work places were formal settings and one had to abide by the set rules and regulations. If one remained emotionally disturbed, it affected the health adjustment. Even tensions at work could adversely affect home and emotional adjustment.

The cohesion in the family being a characteristic feature to bind the family members was important for home and emotional adjustment. Home was an important area to derive satisfaction, and reflected on emotional adjustment. (Mathur, 1992; Sinha, 1987). Perceiving conflicts in the family meant the presence of openly expressed anger, aggression and conflict
among family members, influencing on home and emotional adjustment. In a working mother’s life conflict centered mainly around her ability of home management (Gorden and Hall, 1974; Rani, 1976; Chakraborty, 1977; Holahun and Gilbert, 1979). Possibly more independent feeling, of doing what one wanted to do was helpful in having a satisfying social and emotional life. The extent to which they could cast activities (such as school and work) into an achievement oriented or competitive framework, they had satisfaction on emotional and occupational fronts. The extent of participation in social and recreational activities, also helped in social and occupational adjustments. Organization as described by Moos and Moos, was the degree of importance of clear organization and structure in planning family activities and responsibilities, which could be and to better management of work, and thus adjustment both at home and work. Physical dimension was significant only for social adjustment, indicating it to be a social image index.

Non-Working Mothers

For the non-working mothers cohesion, independence, moral religious beliefs, control and physical set up showed no significant relationship with stress. It was interesting that like working mother, even for this group, a good expressiveness in the family lowered the emotional stress for non-working mothers too. Conflict in the family played an important role, as conflicts were disturbing. The higher the conflict, the higher were the stress at home, health, emotion and miscellaneous areas. Home being an immediate area to get affected by the conflicting situations resulted in emotional stress, an excess of which caused health problems. Non-working mothers were often associated with ‘not doing anything’, that gave them a feeling of inadequacy, which often resulted in a feeling of distress. If one had a strong desire to achieve, but was not able to do, it resulted in emotional stress. These mothers when involved in activities of social services, kitty parties, home tuitions etc, they had low stress in miscellaneous area. The interest in political, social, intellectual and cultural areas helped them in numerous intellectual pursuits. More the interest in intellectual activities, lesser was the experienced stress in miscellaneous area. More the interest in socio-cultural activities they had, lesser was the stress in miscellaneous area followed by emotional stress. Organization in the family system seemed to be significantly related to the
miscellaneous area of stress and for the non-working mothers. The better their organizing ability, lower was the stress in miscellaneous areas.

As expected there were inverse significant relations between the areas of stress and the corresponding adjustment areas, except the miscellaneous area. This area included activities that were not formal, undertaken primarily to utilize one's time, inclination to do something or even to stay away from house for some time. Possibly for this reason there was no significant relationship between the two. Experiencing stress at home caused emotional disturbance and influenced health only when the degree of stress was quite high. The data showed low scores on health stress for the non-working mothers. The non-working mothers also scored low on social stress, but higher on social adjustment indicating a good social life. Also, significant percentage of those showing low social involvement did not crib. A significant relationship between emotional stress and adjustment at home showed that home played an important role in the life of all.

A significant relationship existed between cohesion in the family and home adjustment. The presence of cohesiveness in the family was significant, as it helped them to have better home adjustment. For non-working mothers, expressiveness in the family system played an important role in their psychological well being, as it showed significant relationship with emotional adjustment. The non-working mothers showed low scores on conflict and yet it did affect the stress and emotional adjustment. Similarly, more the independence for them the lower was the emotional adjustment, probably due to their strong urge to do something, and not able to act. Emotional adjustment here depended a lot on the personality type of the mother and its acceptance by the family members. Some studies revealed that working mothers were more independent, assertive and their decisions were more easily accepted than of the non-working mothers (Heer, 1963). Being able to decide, assert or make own decisions indicated maturity, smartness and positive dominance, expression of which gave a positive feeling. Achievement orientation showed significant relationship with miscellaneous adjustment area only. These activities represented special interest areas, justifying the relationship. Similar pattern was observed for intellectual cultural orientation, and active recreational orientation. The non-working mothers, were at home for a major part of the day and had time in their hand, so they did not have to strictly plan their daily work, and did not
show a significant relationship. They had low control in the family system. Unlike the working mothers, the non-working mothers had to be discreet in the choice of physical assets, and thus family set up was not important.

The findings on non working mothers were somewhat different than the working mothers, as Lopata observed (1971) the non-working mothers were becoming increasingly competent and creative in their social roles, and they found their roles and responsibilities extending, creative and many faceted. Contrary to this Wetzel (1976, 1978) observed that a woman will be vulnerable to dependency if her tendency towards independency or dependency was not supported by the environment. Burke and Tamara (1976); Verbrugge (1982); Waldron and Herold (1984) and Merikangas (1985) indicated that working and non-working women differed in mental and physical health.

**Adolescents**

The results partly confirmed the hypothesis for children of working and non working mothers. This result could be more age specific as commented by a number of researchers (Blyth & Traeger, 1983; Youniss & Smollar, 1985; Collins & Collins 1990; Collins & Russels 1991). Even though the traditional views maintained that independence to be was an important feature of adolescent development, evidences suggested that family cohesiveness served an important function for adolescents by providing a sense of stability and connectedness for their further development (Barnes and Olson, 1985; Noller and Callen, 1986; Henry, 1994). Even though adolescence was the period demanding to be independent of parental domination, adolescents enjoyed having support and protection as shown by the significant inverse relationship of cohesion with emotional stress. Conflict was found an important dimension of family by Drapper (1977), and Steinbock (1978), and it had significant relationship with home, health and emotional areas of stress for the children of working and the non-working mother. If conflict in the family was intense, children’s home life got disturbed and the resultant stress. Kaplan (1990) debated about the effect of life stress on illness, as evidence pointed to serious health outcomes related to the inability to cope with stress. Eysenck (1990) showed that inability to cope with stress, often resulted in feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and desperation, and predicted serious diseases. A
higher achievement orientation of adolescents was reflected in the stress at school, and additionally in emotional stress for the non working group. (Marjoribanks, 1978; Biddle, Banks and Marlin, 1980; Song and Hattie, 1984; Schibeci, 1989). Tabachman (1976) noted that the families of high achievers were cohesive, structured and free of conflict than low achievers. It appeared that mothers in touch with variety of professions and a career-oriented group in the competitive world, could inculcate in their children a competitive bent of mind.

If the family did not encourage recreational activities for adolescents, it added to the stress in social life. Family environment was found indicative of adolescents social competence (Gecas and Seff, 1990; Peterson and Leigh, 1990; Steinberg, 1990; Baumrind, 1991). Adolescent age was a period of vulnerability full of emotional upheavals. Any excitement or disturbance surcharged the emotional area, while the involvement in intellectual and cultural activities lowered the stress. This age group had a wide variety of interest areas and need encouragement from the family to develop their interests. Interest in social life and recreational activities were a dominant feature of adolescent age group. Unlike the children of working mothers this group showed significant relationship with social as well as emotional stress area. If children sensed better organization in the family, they showed lower stress at home. Non-working mothers had enough time to carry out their responsibilities and supervise, and the less burden of sharing the responsibility affecting their stress in the area of home. Adolescence being the age of drifting away from parental protection, a greater control led to greater emotional stress, as at this age they simply did not want to abide by the parental rules and regulations. Probably, expressiveness, independence and intellectual cultural orientation were considered as given by the adolescents in general who enjoyed immense exposure to the world outside. Moral religious emphasis was not desired/valued by this age group, and they were not to confine to the parental norms and values. Mother's income being an added income for the family, children of working mothers had the physical infrastructure more than the minimum requirements, but even those in non working group showed no deficits.

Except the social area, all other areas of stress had an inverse significant relationship with the corresponding adjustment areas. The lower the stress better was the adjustment, in the areas of home, health, emotional and school. Sarason and Sarason (1980) argued that stress was a response to situations that involved demands, constraints or opportunities and had
three components: frustration, conflict and pressure. Frustration occurred when the attainment of goal was blocked, conflict when a choice must be made between two or more important goals, and pressure when one had to speed up activities. This was also supported by Elliot, Huizinga and Ageton (1985); Silbereisen and Noack (1988) and Allison, Leone and Sepro (1990). Home stress was not related to social adjustment, as the adolescents were independent by nature and looked for alternative sources of adjustment in their social life. Stress in home and health areas showed inverse significant relationship with emotional adjustment, which also corroborated the relation of home and health adjustments. The correlations of emotional stress to adjustment in the area of home, health and emotion were inverse and significant. Simmons and Blyth (1987) had noted that the early adolescent adjustments during the transition from junior to higher grades were most problematic for those children who experienced other stressful changes at the same time. Emotional stress had no significant relationship with either social or school adjustment for the working group, but relationships were significant for the non working group. It seemed that stress at home was indeed crucial, as it had significant relationship with emotional adjustment, and this in turn was related to stress in health area. Stress in the area of school was associated with low emotional and school adjustments for the working group and with home and school achievement for the non working group. While non-working mothers had little stress at home, their children indicated higher stress and lower home adjustment. This occurred possibly because there was some tension in the family, not seriously taken by the parents, but it affected the adjustment of adolescents, like the mothers feeling bad that they were not working/or that they left the job. Adolescence known to be the period of extended social life, any check a social life created tension, stress and adjustment problem. If the school situation was disturbing and there was no support from home, adolescents moved away from home all the more and showed increased emotional disturbances (Crow and Crow, 1956), further affecting the adjustment.

Like stress, cohesion in the family was significantly, but positively related to home and emotional adjustment for adolescents of working and non working mothers. Although adolescents had higher inclination towards peer support and interaction, and the strong family domination loosened, yet the family continued to be a source of social security. Home was the only place, that gave immense feeling of emotional support. It was also observed by
Melson, Inman and Kemp (1977), that cohesion, religious orientation and organization were related to positive perception of the home environment. Also, Nowiki and Schneewind (1977) indicated that adolescents who saw their families as cohesive, expressive, independent, oriented towards cultural and recreational activities and as showing little evidence of conflict or control tended to have high internal control. This was supported by the study of Geffen and Lange (1978). The conflict among family members was significantly but negatively related to home, health and emotional adjustments for the working groups and health and emotional adjustment for the non working group. An increased frequency of life stressors were related to more negative family environment, and more effective coping responses to life stressors promoted positive interactions among family members, resulting in more positive family environment (Cronhite and Moos 1980). As they grew up experiencing competition everywhere, they developed a competitive bent of mind, showing immediate effect in their school adjustment. Adolescents were quite occupied with their educational and vocational future plans, and thus the achievement orientation in the family showed significant relationship. The more the achievement orientation in the family, better was the emotional and school adjustment. Organization was an important dimension of family that influenced the activities of children. It was indicated by the adolescent girls that the better the organization in the family system, lower were their work responsibilities vis a vis household chores. The fact that non-working mothers possibly gave enough time to family and home, the thrust of the degree of household responsibilities on adolescents was less, resulting in better emotional adjustment. Open expression, if unchecked did not influence the adjustment pattern of working group, but was related to emotional adjustment in the non working group. It was observed that adolescents if not given the freedom of expression, they anyhow would defy and might also become defiant in their action. On the other, when children enjoyed freedom of expression at home they learnt to express themselves clearly and showed fewer misunderstandings, and had a better adjusted life. It was strange indeed that independence in the family did not relate to any of the areas of adjustment for the working group, but related to social and emotional adjustment in the non working mothers. Independence if thwarted could create havoc. In situations where parents tried to curb the independence, it resulted in withdrawal symptoms from very mild to severe, and where parents were relaxed type and tried to check on the independence, they were not listened to. In either of the situations it did influence the adjustment. Intellectual cultural
orientation was found significantly related to social and emotional adjustment areas. The interest in political, social, intellectual, and cultural activities, were quite a dominant feature of the adolescent age group. A similar pattern was observed for active recreational orientation. Irrespective of the mother’s work status, adolescent’s interests played a role in influencing such relationships. This dimension showed significant relationship with home, social and emotional adjustment areas. For the adolescents, the intellectual cultural orientation seemed to be more of a peer group activity rather than familial. Adolescents of working mothers indicated low perception of control and good physical set up in the family, which was quite satisfying to them. But the more the control at home of non working mothers the poorer was the adjustment in the areas of home, social and emotional. This age group enjoyed freedom and often demanded it. Any obstruction affected their adjustment. Home became the immediate target area as the control begins from home, followed by social area because this was the area to be constantly negotiated, leading to stress and anxiety affecting the emotional adjustment. Moral religious emphasis and physical dimension in the family showed adjustments in the children of non-working mothers.

RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Hypothesis (5): Family characteristics dimensions will have varied impact on psychological well-being of working and non-working mothers and their adolescents.

Working and Non-Working Mothers

The hypothesis was partly accepted. It was interesting to note that a good number of family characteristic dimensions showed significant impact on the psychological well being (stress and adjustment) of mothers (working as well as non-working).

For the working mothers, the family characteristic dimensions explained highest variance in the emotional stress, followed by occupational, social and health, and least in the area of home. In the adjustment areas, the highest variance was explained in home, followed by health, social and emotional and least in the area of occupational adjustment.
Cohesion in the family was a significant negative predictor of home and emotional stress. It also predicted significantly home, social, emotional and occupational adjustment areas. The more the presence of cohesiveness in the family, the lower was the stress at home. A supportive feeling and/or a feeling of belongingness gave immense security making for good adjustment. Wetzel and Redmond (1980) emphasized the importance of family support for men as well as women. Indian women emphasized the importance of a career in their life, and the need of support from family members particularly the husbands for it. Expressiveness had significant negative impact only on social stress, and positive impact on occupational adjustment. At the place of work, the ability to express oneself played an important role, which continuously developed and reinforced within the home. Conflict was found as a significant positive predictor of home, health, emotional and occupational stress, and a negative predictor for home, social and emotional adjustment. More the conflict, more was the stress. Kapur (1974), Rani (1976), Sinha (1987) and Mathur (1992) observed that if the women were hanging between traditionality and modernity, they experienced more stress and less adjustment. Khanna (1986), Crouter, Bumpas, Maguire and McHale (1999) reported that normally to avoid disturbing situation one was inclined towards social enjoyment, but when conflict at home became disturbing, it forced the working mothers to avoid social situations and stay at home. Independence in the family had negative impact on social stress, but positive impact on occupational stress. It had positive impact as social, emotional and occupational adjustment. The working mothers if independent, did not like many restrictions at work place, but their assertiveness and decision-making helped them in effective social life, emotional and occupational adjustment. Their achievement orientation and interest in work encouraged them to make innovations, try to better manage the work, achieve greater efficiency and adjustment. Their job satisfaction had impact on home life, and thus no stress at home. Achievement need was found higher in case of working women (Lalitha, 1991) and if this was supported by the families it reduced the stress and contributed positively to the adjustment. Active recreational orientation reduced the social stress and helped in social and occupational adjustment. Organization showed significant negative contribution to home, social and occupational stress, but positive contribution to home and occupational adjustment. Organization in the family system was essential to be able to balance home and office responsibilities. Organization, expressiveness and achievement orientation together were significant negative predictors of stress at home. Good communication skills, clear
expression, being assertive, self-sufficient in decision-making and participation in social and recreational activities made impact on social life. Control added to emotional and occupational stress, as working mothers did not like the set rules and procedures to run the family. Observational data showed that mothers whether working or not did not opt for strictness at home. Probably the degree of control caused some stress, working women resented it, but their careful handling helped in adjustment. Intellectual cultural orientation and moral religious emphasis were preferred on individual basis only. The physical infrastructure did not exert significance influence as all working mothers belonged to upper middle class and well off families. Their total family income was enough to have satisfying physical set up in the house.

It was observed that family characteristic explained most variance in areas of social stress followed by emotional stress for non-working mothers, and highest variance for health, followed by miscellaneous adjustment.

The regression coefficients indicated that cohesiveness had significant negative impact on stress at home and emotion, but positive impact on home and emotional adjustment. More cohesion led to lower stress and high adjustment in the area of home followed by emotion. Less expressiveness led to significantly higher stress in home, social, emotional and miscellaneous areas, whereas more of it contributed positively for home, social and emotional adjustment areas. Expressiveness was not so evident among non-working mothers, who had a traditional and stereotypic image of a home maker, but those who had it, made good adjustment in home, social and emotional areas. Lack of independence added to social stress. Wetzel (1976, 1978) observed that a woman would be vulnerable to dependency if her tendency towards independency or dependency were not supported by the environment. Conflict showed significant positive impact on home, emotion and miscellaneous stress and negative impact on home, health and emotional adjustment. More conflict led to higher stress and lower adjustment. Achievement orientation showed negative significant impact on emotional and miscellaneous stress, and positive impact on adjustment. There were however paucity of studies on the dynamics of mothers’ work. As mothers often changed their job type to suit their family system (McHale and Crouter, 1993). Crouter, Hawkins and Hostetler (1993) found that a sizeable number of mothers made special
arrangements to reduce their workload, and they even picked up part time, irregular, or ad-hoc jobs. Miscellaneous area covered activities that were neither the routine household activities, nor the set office work. High intellectual cultural orientation significantly reduced home, social and miscellaneous stress, and facilitated social and emotional adjustment. Higher active recreational orientation, lowered social stress, and added to both social and miscellaneous adjustment. A clear organization and structure in planning family activities and responsibilities were found important even for non-working mothers. Moral religious emphasis, control and physical set-up did not have any significant impact on either stress or the corresponding adjustment areas, as the mothers also belonged to the families that were quite well off.

Expressive and conflict predominantly showed significant impact on the stress and adjustment of the non-working mothers. The family characteristics dimensions influenced more the stress areas than the adjustment. Geffen and Lange (1978), Melson, Immen and Kemp (1977) also found on impact of family environment dimensions on the adjustment mechanisms.

**Adolescents**

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis for children of working and non-working mothers. Adolescence as a developmental period had many myths associated with it like, ‘a period of turmoil, stress and strain, of mood swings, rebelliousness, emotional or as a stable and harmonious period (Bandura and Walters, 1955; Steinberg, 1990; Thornton, Orbuch and Axinn, 1995). Influence of family characteristics was not confined to the parental influence, but also included significant others in the family, particularly the siblings, and the characteristic features of the individual. Parental influence played a dominant role in the family environment (Rice, 1990), in the development of identity (Allen, Hauser, Belland O’Conner, 1994), a positive self-image (Wenk, Hardesty, Morgan and Blair, 1994), life satisfaction (Leung and Leung, 1992), social competence and other skills (Peterson and Leigh, 1990), or emotional problems (Lasko, Field, Gonzalez, Hardling, Yando and Bendell, 1996; Nada Raja, McGee and Staton, 1992; Siddique and D’ Arcy, 1984; Whitebeck, Conger and Kao, 1993), and problem behaviours (Windle and Miller-Tutzauer, 1992).
It was observed that for boys of working mothers, family characteristics explained the highest variance in area of emotional followed by social, school and health stress. The least variance was explained for home stress. Also for the adjustment areas highest variance was accounted for emotional adjustment, followed by school, home and social and the least by in health adjustment.

Cohesion in the family had significant inverse impact on stress at home, but positive on home adjustment. Growing up in a cohesive family led to better psychological well being (Compass, 1987; Broderick, 1993). It was stated by Garrison, Jackson, Cuffe and Waller (1997), that the effect of family structure was compounded by emotional bonding or cohesion on the well being of adolescents. Although adolescents showed inclination for strong independence, they still desired belongingness in the family. The feeling of independence in the family showed significant negative impact on social stress, and positive on social adjustment. Controlling (emotional) expression was high at this age, particularly with the parents because of expectations of negative instrumental consequences and decreased emotional support (Buhrmester and Furman, 1987; Papini, 1990). Conflict showed significant positive impact on home and emotional stress, and negative for adjustment in boys of working mothers. Though boys were known to be less affected by home, conflict impacted them as well. Also working mothers showed impact of conflict at home. Emotions were not displayed, as they did not prefer to express their (negative) emotions outwardly, (Fuchs and Thelan, 1988; Zeman and Garber, 1996). Lower achievement orientation at school led to higher impact in stress areas of emotion and school, and positive impact on school and social adjustment for boys. A low intellectual cultural orientation showed significantly higher impact on school stress, and lower school adjustment. Higher active participation in social and recreational activities was a natural feature of the adolescent boys, which lowered down their social and school stresses, and facilitated adjustment. Boys were also more involved in leisure time activities such as play, media watching, than girls (Verma and Saraswathi, 1992; Bianchi and Robinson, 1997; Whiting and Edwards, 1988). Control at home contributed significantly to home, social and emotional stress, and lowered adjustment in corresponding areas. Moral religious emphasis, organization and physical dimension did not have any significant impact on any of the stress or the adjustment areas. Compas (1987) identified three broad stressors in adolescence, a) major life changes, b) chronically stressful
situations, c) day to day hassles. For majority of adolescents it was the day-to-day hassles that evoked stress (Lazarus and De Longis, 1983; Goldberg and Comstock, 1980), such as problems of family relationships, school achievement, peer relationships (Compas, 1987). Further, grade transitions, pubertal changes, pressure to confirm, heightened temptations towards drugs and sexual experimentations were potentially stressful challenges for the adolescents (Hauser and Bowlds, 1990). How well the adolescents coped up with these stressors determined their coping ability.

In case of girls of working mothers, highest variance was accounted by family characteristics in emotional school, social and health stress, and the least variance in home. For the adjustment areas, the highest variance was accounted for home, followed by social and emotional adjustment, and least in health adjustment. Cohesiveness showed significant inverse impact on home and emotional stress, and positive in the same adjustment areas. At this age the feeling of independence was strong, but at the same time the desire to have a strong family affinity was visible. For girls particularly, sharing of thoughts and feelings was common, with sister or mother figure. Expressiveness showed negative impact on home and emotional stress areas, but positive for emotional adjustment. Conflict made significant positive contribution to home, health and emotional stress areas, and negative to home, social and emotional areas of adjustment. Girls of working mothers experienced more conflicts in comparison to girls of non-working mothers. They had to share more household responsibilities. Mother’s absence commonly affected the mental state of the daughters having its impact on the health area. Independence showed significant negative impact on social and emotional stress, and positive on adjustment. Parents were aware of the need of independence, but their acceptance or rejection mattered. Achievement orientation contributed negatively to school stress, and positively to adjustment. The daughters of working mothers had stronger need for achievement orientation. The low participation in social and recreational activities, a characteristic feature of the adolescent age group had significant negative impact on social stress, and positive on adjustment. Organization in the family system played an important role in life of working mothers and their daughters as expected, and took away their personal time, often to the cause for their resentment. Thus organization had no significant impact in emotional area (stress and adjustment). In an Indian home, the control was more on girls than boys, contributing to social and emotional
stress, but not to any of the adjustment areas. Intellectual cultural orientation, moral religious emphasis and physical dimension in the family had no significant impact on either stress or adjustment areas.

For the girls of working mothers, it was the perceived conflict in the family, expressiveness and organization that contributed significantly in their psychological well being. (home and emotional areas of stress and adjustment)

For the boys of non-working mothers, the family characteristics explained highest variance in emotional, home, social, school and health stress, whereas in adjustment the highest variance explained was for emotional and the least for home adjustment. A feeling of belongingness within the family was desired by the adolescents. Conflict had significant positive impact on home and emotional stress and negative on emotional adjustment. Boys of non-working mothers scored low on conflict and were lower on home stress, higher on home adjustment and low on conflict, possibly because there was little experienced conflict and better emotional adjustment. Higher achievement orientation led to low social and emotional stress and better social and school adjustment. Higher intellectual cultural orientation led to lower school stress, but had no impact on adjustment. Control in the family led to social and emotional stress and lowered down social adjustment. Expressiveness, moral religious emphasis, organization and physical dimension in the family showed no impact on stress and adjustment thus, for this group, conflict and achievement orientation followed by active recreational orientation and control contributed to their psychological well being.

In case of girls of non-working mothers, family characteristics explained highest variance in school followed by health, and the least variance in social stress. For the adjustment, the highest variance was explained in school and the least in social adjustment. Cohesion showed significant negative impact on home and emotional stress, and positive in the same adjustment areas. Expressiveness was an important feature in the development of Indian adolescent girls, as traditionally they were often deprived of it. Girls scored low on this dimension as compared to boys and girls of working mothers, which added to their school stress but helped in social, emotional adjustment. Conflict in the family was significant for home and emotional stress, whereas in the adjustment, it made an impact on home,
emotional and social areas. Independence had significant negative impact on social and emotional stress and positive in adjustment areas. More often than not adolescent age restricted their social activities, part of which was carried out in the school itself. Achievement orientation showed significant negative impact only on school stress, but positive emotional and school adjustment. It meant that the participation of the adolescent girls of the non-working mothers in social and recreational activities, contributed significantly to positive emotional state. Organization within the family had significant negative contribution to home and emotional stress, and positively to home adjustment. Control in the family had significant positive impact on social and emotional stress areas, but negative impact on emotional adjustment, as it was always detested by the adolescents. These girls scored higher than their counterparts, because the mother was at home. Intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, moral religious emphasis and physical dimension made no significant contribution. For the girls of non-working mothers, predominantly the conflict at home followed by cohesion, expressiveness, independence, achievement orientation, organization and control made significant impact on their psychological well being.

SPAN OF WORK AND PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS, STRESS AND ADJUSTMENT

Hypothesis (6): Perceptions of family characteristics and psychological well-being of the working mothers and their adolescents will differ by the span of mother’s work.

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. It was observed (Table 4.34 and Figures 4.1-4.3) that the mothers’ perception of the family characteristics varied and the psychological well being varied with the span of work. Mothers who had been working for or more than 15 years perceived more cohesiveness, intellectual cultural orientation, expressiveness, moral religious emphasis, control and physical infrastructure in the family, than mothers working for 10 and 5 years. Cohesiveness was an important dimension in influencing working mothers’ life. Working mothers had significant impact on the family and vice versa (Singh, 1972; Kapur, 1974; Mathur, 1992). In a study by Eiswirth and Hodal (1978) it was indicated that mother's occupation did influence the family set up. Parental influence played a dominant role in creating and maintaining the family environment and children’s roles were
only second. With age and maturity, there was an expected increase in the sense of belongingness, in the quality and level of expressiveness and control, and appropriate emphasis on ethical and religious issues and values. More than 95% of mothers had chosen career at their own. They achieved good control with age, probably because of the wide network relationships. A study by Melson, Inman and Kemp (1977) indicated that cohesion, religious orientation and organization were related to positive perceptions of home environment. Geffen and Lange (1978) observed that increase in family cohesion, expressiveness, independence, recreational activities and perceived control of their environment led to better psychological well being. The conflict in the family was perceived more by mothers who had worked for a shorter period, as they still could not fully balance home and office responsibilities. Mothers working for 10 years or more perceived most independence in the family, probably because they had children in the age group of 14+, who were very independent. Mothers working for only 5 years had highest achievement orientation, followed by 15 and 10 years. Perhaps five years was not long enough, for a decline to set in their interests while those working for 15 years, had already reached a good level and wanted to move to new and different goals. Intellectual cultural orientation proved to be a more of personal variable, as not much difference was noted with the passage of time. The participation in social and recreational activities was often a consequence of better management of responsibilities and better adjustment, the highest being the mothers working for 10 years.

The mothers working for longer period (15 years) showed minimum stress at home, as with experience they were able to resolve and balance things better than others. Health stress was experienced most by the mothers working for 15 years, followed by mothers working for 10 and 5 years. Mothers falling in this category were all above 45 years. Schmalo and Engle (1967), Homes and Rahe (1967), Grant and Kyla (1974) observed a positive relationship between stressful life events and subsequent illnesses. In another study, Shenoy (1987) indicated that there was a positive and significant relationship between role stress and psychological stress. Perhaps working for 5 years or more was not enough time to achieve one’s goal. Mother’s working for a period of 5 years or more (but less than 10 years) showed maximum level of stress in home, social, emotional and occupational areas followed by mothers work period as 15 years and then 10 years. Shorter the period in job, little was the
experience to manage effective role balancing, and to manage time efficiently, thereby making her to curb social life. Level of emotional stress decreased with the length of the work period. Kumari and Prakash (1986) noted significant difference in the number of life events experienced by the various age groups. Despite their participation in the work force, women continued to bear the brunt of family responsibilities, such as house work and child care (Stein, 1984; Pleck, 1985; Hochschild, 1989; Gray, Lovejoy, Piotrkowski, and Bond, 1990). Even when they had combined work and familial roles, many experienced inter-role conflicts and role overload as they attempted to juggle between the demands of work and family spheres (Pleck, 1977; Lewis and Cooper, 1983; Jick and Mitz, 1985).

Kaur and Murthy (1986) indicated that individuals in different work categories differed in their coping styles. Mothers working for 15 years showed better home and emotional adjustment, followed by mothers working for 10 and 5 years. Studies by Maynard, Mary, McCubli and Shao (1980) illustrated a relationship between coping patterns and characteristics of family environment. Mothers working for 5 years had best health and thus health adjustment, followed by mothers working for 10 and 15 years or above. The highest percentage of mothers working for 10 years or more but less than 15 years showed social adjustment. Mothers in job for 15 years or more showed highest emotional adjustment and least was shown by mothers working for 5 years. Wherever stress was less, adjustment was better. Occupational adjustment was least for mothers in job for 5 years. It was emphasized that close social relationships helped to cope with stress. In such relationships people could disclose and discuss problems, share concerns, and receive advice that were keyed to their needs (Solomon and Rothblum, 1986). Also, Greenglass, Pantony, Burke, (1988) observed that amount of social support received at the place of work influenced working mothers' adjustment process.

**Adolescents**

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis in case of adolescents. Though studies indicated that maternal employment had a significant bearing on the parent/mother-child relationship (Erel and Burman, 1995; Grych and Clark, 1999), it was observed that there were not many differences on perceived family characteristics and psychological well being among children.
of mothers having work span of 5yrs 10yrs and 15yrs (Table 4.35). Consequential effects of women’s/mother’s working on the children, on their school activities (Crouter, 1990; Patterson and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984), on their emotion learning (Gorden, 1989), as well as social learning, their personality building (Allport, 1969), other family interaction patterns (Baruch, 1987, type of family environment (Crouter, Bumpas, Maguire and Mc Hale, 1999) and many other study areas but there had been no such study on the span of her work and its effect on the family characteristics and psychological well being of either herself or her adolescent children. It was presumed that as a woman’s work outside home had changed her life pattern, her work period or that the duration that she had been working would have possible repercussions on herself as well as her family, particularly her children.

It was observed that children of mothers working for 15 years or more perceived more cohesion and expressiveness than those working for 10 and 5 years. The probable reason being that with time both the mother and children learnt to adjust. The mother could manage her home and place of work quite efficiently, and children grew up more understanding and cooperative. Mothers of this category had grown up children, who liked to express themselves without any fear (Buhrmester & Furman, 1987; Papini, 1990). Children of mothers working for 5 years perceived more conflict at home, though conflict varied due to personality type, maturity, and how well mother was able to manage. They also perceived greater independence at home, followed by 15 and 10 years. In the initial work period, mothers had the feeling of assertiveness, urge to make firm decisions, and to do something independently; which even percolated down to children. Perceptions of achievement orientation, moral religious emphasis, organization, control and physical dimension was lowest for groups working for 5, 10 and 15 years. Children in all categories, perceived organization in the family quite high, possibly a close observation of their mother and imbibing the same. Intellectual cultural orientation was found least among children of mothers in job for 15 years, but they had highest control. This was inbuilt in it as the sample were mainly grown up adolescents. Maternal influence on children, irrespective of the work span, depended on her work load and overall stress, that predicted lower acceptance leading to more problem areas (Crouter, Bumpas, Maguire and McHale, 1999). It was observed by Galambos, Maggs (1990); Repetti and Wood (1997) that mother’s work related stress had negative implications for parent-child relationships. Also a lower level of parental
supervision and monitoring, which was common in families where mother was working, was found linked to a variety of negative child-adolescent outcomes.

The stress at home was highest for children of mothers’ working for 10 years, followed by 5 and 15, and an inverse pattern was observed for adjustment areas. With a longer work period the daily household activities fell into a system, with greater degree of planning and management of the daily work, that led the adolescents feel less stressful and admire their mothers. The children having mothers with work period of 10 years experienced greater stress and lowest adjustment, as for them satisfaction from job and management of home/family reached a saturation point. Mother’s working was seen positively if it did not affect the child negatively (Helper, 1955), if she spent quality time with family (Pearl, 1950), and if her job was valued by his friends (Hurlock, 1964), and vice versa. The mean scores on health stress as well as adjustment were not really different for 5-10-15 years. Health was least influenced by mother's work span. Similar pattern was observed for emotional stress. Children having mothers with work span of 10 years showed maximum social stress, followed by 15 and 5 years. An inverse pattern was observed in case of social adjustment. Studies on precursors of children's social development and adjustment (Farrington, 1989; Magnusson, 1988; Rutter, 1988; Loeber, 1985; Caprara and Pastorelli, 1993a; Cairns and Cairns, 1994) identified aggressive behaviours and emotional instability as important risk factors, and pro-social behaviour as a protective factor in the development of individual psychosocial adjustment. Adolescent being the age for greater social involvement, mothers tried to exercise control over them. Mothers working for 5 years showed the least mean, as they remained busy and occupied with their job, those in 15 years group had enough experience of checking and handling adolescents. The situation appeared to be problematic for mothers having 10 years. As they had to deal with the mid adolescents, particularly their budding social relationships. Mean on school stress was least and on adjustment highest for children of mothers working for 15 years, followed by 10 and 5 years or little more. It showed that with longer period of work adolescents adjusted well with the existing school structure. Draper (1977) observed that the academically unsuccessful group had higher conflict in family than those experiencing no academic problems, and/or experiencing academic problems.
Hypothesis (7): Perceptions of family characteristics and psychological well-being of the adolescents (boys and girls) of working mothers will differ by the adolescent age category.

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. Coleman (1988, 1990) suggested that the influence of family background on children could be visualized in terms of two components, namely, a) human capital, the potential for a cognitive environment in the home that could be measured by the family social status, b) social capital, the relation between children and parents. A primary goal of parenting was to make efforts to develop social competence in their adolescents (Peterson and Leigh, 1990; Small and Eastman, 1991), though the family influenced adolescents in the different age group differently (Maccoby and Martin, 1983; Grotevant and Cooper, 1986; Steinberg, 1993), and the parent-child relationship underwent significant changes (Collins and Russell, 1991; Hill, Holmbeck, Marlow, Green and Lynch, 1985a, 1985b). The mean (Table 4.36) cohesion in the family was highest for the late adolescents and least for early adolescents. Early adolescents were more affected by mothers’ working outside. They being young in age and less mature had a strong urge to drift away from parental domination. Possibly, they did not understand the degree of commitment and support family members provided to one another, and thus had lower perception of cohesiveness in the family. Researchers put importance on the cohesion in the family (Grotevant and Cooper, 1986; Steinberg, 1993), as adolescents whose family environment were warm, caring, communicative, understanding and supportive had more positive influence on them. As expected, late adolescents showed the highest mean on expressiveness, followed by middle and finally by early adolescents. Children in early adolescence were learning to express their feelings independently, and often faced rejection or domination by elders, thus scoring low on perceiving expressiveness. The early adolescents had least conflict in the family and late adolescents the highest. The older one were resentful of restrictions on their social life. Also they were career conscious, and desired help/ suggestions or guidance of parents, particularly the mother. Further, their disagreements with parents over career and other issues led to the experience of conflict at home (Cole and McPherson, 1993; Weng and Montemayor, 1997). It was interesting to note that even though there was a strong need for independence among all adolescents, the late
adolescents scored lowest followed by middle adolescents and early adolescents. Possibly they experienced more restrictions and discipline at home justifying higher conflict at home (Coleman, 1961, Grotevant, 1997). Score on achievement orientation was very high for late adolescents as expected. Late adolescents being in the age group of 15+ and in class between IX-X had already thought of a possible career, and decided on future plans. Similar was the pattern for perception of intellectual cultural orientation. Active recreational orientation had highest mean for the early adolescents followed by the late and the middle adolescents. Adolescence represented the age of social life and involvement in extra curricular activities to a great extent, (Roff and Sells, 1967; Cowen, Pederson, Izzo, 1973; Ladd, 1999). Moral religious emphasis in the family was perceived low. Not that the families did not indicate religious values, but these were not the focus of the life of adolescents. Similar patterns were observed on organization, control and physical dimension in the family. In a typical Indian family, where adolescents and particularly adolescent girls were expected to share in the household responsibilities, a well-organized working system in the family automatically reduced their workload. As the working mothers indicated higher organization in the family, the scores of the late adolescents validated the results. The scores showed a gradual decline from middle adolescents to early adolescents, where the household responsibility was not high. Control was perceived highest by the late adolescents, followed by the middle and the early adolescents, even though the overall perception of control was at the lower side. Physical dimension was perceived important by the late adolescents, and least by the early adolescents. The status feeling was more prevalent in the late adolescent stage than others, as they moved into wider social circle and had a better understanding of living standards. Forman and Forman (1977) found at the relationship dimensions of family environment scale were significantly related to adolescent personality functioning. Nowiki and Schneewind (1977) indicated that adolescents who saw their families as cohesive, expressive, independent, oriented towards cultural and recreational activities, and showed little evidence of conflict or control tended to be high on internal control. Perceived stress at home was highest for middle adolescents, followed by late and early adolescents, while the middle adolescents scored lowest on adjustment. The burden on the middle adolescents seemed to be more, presumably because of the fact that early adolescents were still considered ‘little adolescents’, and the late adolescents were understood to have learnt quite a lot. Means on the health stress and adjustment showed a similar pattern. The middle
adolescents showed good achievement in health, social and school areas stress but lower adjustment than other groups. The physical and physiological changes at mid adolescence were more pronounced needing a careful handling, this being the age of immense social involvement, elder’s often put restrictions on their social life. Other than own capabilities, home atmosphere was an important factor in influencing stress at school and adjustment. This adolescent group was burdened with various responsibilities and had to encounter more varied expectations. The middle adolescents showed highest mean on the emotional stress and lowest on adjustment, next being the early and last the late adolescents. Possibly, the younger ones experienced more difficulty and thus indicated high stress and low adjustment; whereas the late adolescents could handle the disturbing situations in a more understanding manner and, thus show little stress and better adjustment. An important attribute of this age group that might have contributed to their psychological health and behaviour was their ability to cope with stress (Compas, 1987; Stern and Zevon, 1990).

PERCEPTIONS OF WORKING AND NON-WORKING MOTHERS AND THEIR ADOLESCENTS ABOUT ROLE OF HUSBAND/FATHER IN FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Hypothesis (8a): Working mothers and their adolescents will differ from non-working mothers in their perceptions of the role of husband/father in family involvement.

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. It was observed (Table 4.37) that working and non-working mothers differed significantly on almost 50% of role characteristics attributed their husband’s family involvement. It was observed that between 74% (at minimum) to more than 90% mothers indicated that their husbands were concerned, farsighted, understanding, affectionate, helpful, calm/cool, encouraging, balanced. Further, they were adjustable, attentive, sharing, ideal, liberal, whereas only between 58% to 70% of non-working mothers indicated these characteristics in their husbands. A survey on women's wishes regarding their husband's/men's role sharing at home indicated that "What women wanted was not a world without man, but a situation where the man would not only understand their problems but strive to meet them halfway" (Times of India of March 25, 1984), this seemed to be true as a high percentage of working mothers here perceived their husbands positively. The percentage of non-working mothers perceiving husbands more positively was lower. With
working wives, husbands had learnt to share and adjust, but with the non-working wives the domination was still carried on. The negative characteristics, such as not being social, over expectation from the family members, self centered, irritable temperament, disagreeable in nature, dominating and critical in nature, the percentages ranged between 51 to 55% for being self-centered and having expectations 76 to 77%, whereas for non-working women the percentages were 62 to 67% and 80 to 82%. Studies indicated that dual or single earner fathers did not differ much in their participation in family work (Meissner, Humphreys, Meisd and Scheu, 1975; Walker and Woods, 1976; Robinson, 1977; Pleck, 1981). Studies by Russell and Radin (1983) and Hoffman (1983) found marital conflict associated with husband's increased involvement in family work. In fact, the husband for the love of his wife would want to help her (Huston and Ashmore, 1987).

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. It was evident from Table 4.40 that there were differences on some characteristics between children of working and non-working mothers in perceiving their father. The differences were on perceiving fathers on positive characteristics of adjustable, sharing and organized, and social: and on negative characteristics of expecting more from the family and being dominating. These characteristics were perceived differently by mothers. Children of working mothers had less negative perceptions of fathers than children of non-working mothers. There were not many studies on how adolescent boys and girls perceived father's role in family involvement. Fathers' acceptance of wifes' taking up career was of positive value for the adolescents, particularly adolescent girls. In the families where mothers worked, girls were valued more (Greenberger, Goldberg, Crawford and Granger, 1972). Pleck (1983) indicated that fathers' work hours and workload influenced involvement in the family affairs. Also, fathers' sex role attitudes (Baruch and Barnett, 1981), the extent of their perceived skills, and the non-traditional attitudes (McHale and Huston, 1984) affected their involvement.

It was observed, that differences were not significant on many dimensions when (boys and girls of working and non-working mothers were compared (Tables 4.41 and 4.42). Boys and girls of working mothers differed on perceiving father as disagreeable only. A higher percentage of boys indicated father as concerned, farsighted, affectionate, helpful, possibly because fathers compensated the sons well for the absence of mother, whereas more girls
perceived fathers as calm/cool, adjustable, attentive, sharing, encouraging, liberal and organized.

Also, the boys and girls of non-working mothers did not differ much on perceiving their father either positively or negatively. There were significant differences on perceiving fathers as sharing, encouraging, organized, and having expectations from the family members and being critical. More boys perceived their father to be encouraging than girls, but self centered, irritable and critical in nature, while more girls found them disagreeable, and dominating, but not critical. Possibly fathers’ expected more from boys than girls which was expected.

Boys of working and non-working mothers showed no significant differences on any of the characteristics, but girls showed significant differences on being attentive, sharing, encouraging, organized, social, and having expectations. The girls of working mothers perceived their father more positively.

**Hypothesis (8b):** Mothers in different work categories and their adolescents will differ in their perceptions of the role of husband/father in family involvement.

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. Results of the Table 4.38 and 4.39 showed that there weren’t many significant differences between the mothers in different work categories in perceiving their husband’s role in family involvement. All category mothers, other than the school teachers and clerks/stenos, rated their husbands high on positive characteristics (concerned, farsighted, understanding, affectionate, helpful, calm/cool, adjustable, attentive, sharing, balanced, encouraging, ideal and liberal) and low on negative characteristics (over expectations, being self-centered, irritable, disagreeable, dominating and critical). The educational background of mothers thus emerged important in developing mature outlook towards family and husband. Their satisfaction with the job and social status helped them in appreciating the role of husband in helping them. A good percentage of school teachers and clerks/stenos also perceived their husbands positively, but the percentages were lower in comparison to the other work categories. Doctors and business women required more help from husbands in balancing responsibilities at home and outside, because of odd duty hours. Highest percentage of mothers in these two categories perceived their husband as
dominating, irritable and bringing office work at home, as they had husbands in the same profession. A very low percent of working mothers perceived their husband to be critical type.

Nearly 30 percent of paired comparisons showed significant differences, for executives as one base category as 17.3 percent, for business 13 percent, for doctors 14 percent, for school teachers 17.3 percent, for university teachers 12 percent and for clerks/stenos nearly 23 percent. The percent of significant differences were highest for clerks/stenos, followed by executives and university teachers. The relevant positive dimensions of differences were helpful, adjustable, attentive, sharing, organized, social, and the negative having over expectation and bringing office work to home. Thus having over expectations and bringing office work home were resented by all, as they all desired their work demands to be realistically accepted and spend time together or help them when at home.

In case of children of working mothers in different work categories, it was found that mother’s professional category influenced children’s perceptions of fathers’ role in home and family care to some extent. On the characteristics of farsighted, understanding, helpful, calm/cool, adjustable, attentive, sharing, liberal, organized, social and self-centered differences were found between categories. A good percentage of children perceived fathers positively. In the total number of paired comparisons, nearly 23% were found significant. Most differences were observed when children of clerks/stenos were compared with children of other work categories as 44% of the paired comparisons were significant. Next were doctors (36%), school teachers (33%), executives (31%) and university teachers (23%). Categories, which had high social value and monetary gains saw fathers more organized and social in nature, probably in an attempt to compensate the absence of the mother.

TIME DISTRIBUTION

Hypothesis (9a): Time distribution on daily activities will differ for the working and non-working mothers and their adolescents.

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. It was observed that non-working mothers had at their disposal roughly 8 to 10 hours more than the working mothers to adjust to their daily
work schedule in the family, as the latter invariably had to cut short the time here and there and make adjustments. The working mothers often bore the burden of "time crunch" as they continue to have the primarily responsibility of managing and caring for the home and family (Chakraborty, 1977; Rapoport and Rapoport, 1976; Bhatti and Bhatti, 1971). Their extra 8-10 hours went into their actual work and travel to work. Working mothers often experienced inter role conflict and role overload, as they attempted to juggle with the demands of work and family spheres (Jick and Mitz, 1985; Lewis and Cooper, 1983; Pleck, 1977). They had less time to sleep as compared to non-working mothers and less time for personal work and leisure at home irrespective of workday or holiday. On household chores, non-working mothers spent almost double the time of working mothers, and yet did not have household workload. Many of the non-working mothers had a domestic help and thus supervisory role than total involvement, whereas for working mothers even supervision was not found possible. The working mothers often preplanned the social engagements, else cancelled or postponed and much of the holiday time was used to compensate for the backlogs. The differences constituted different family contexts for their cognitive and affective functioning.

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. Children of working and non-working mothers indicated differences over spending time on daily activities, particularly sleeping, personal work and household chores. The differences in time distribution between the comparable groups were more pronounced on holidays on these activities. Time spent on sleeping was particularly low for children of working mothers, as they enjoyed being with parents once they were back home. Children of working mothers spent more time on school work at home than non-working mothers, there being the possibility for the former to be more career minded, and achievement oriented, and having access to more reading materials. Some studies showed significant effect of time distribution on psychological growth of children (Bronfenbrener, 1979; Silbereisen, Noack and Eyferth, 1986) as the contexts of time spent could be conceptualized as learning environments (Whiting, 1980), emphasis was more on the content of activities rather than the amount of time spent. Some studies indicated that time distribution made little impact on the well being of the individual (Verma, 1995). Larson and Verma (1999) observed that spending more time on a particular activity made the adolescents experience different set of socialization.
Time distribution pattern for boys and girls of working (Table 4.49) and non-working (Table 4.50) mothers indicated the most obvious differences. The girls of working mothers had less time to sleep, as the adolescents and particularly the adolescent girls needed to have more interactions with mothers. Studies by Evenson, Popkin, Quizon (1980); Zuzanek (1980); Timmer, Eccles, O'Brien (1985); Verma and Saraswathi (1992); Robinson and Bianchi (1997); Hofferth and Sandberg (1998); Alasker and Flammer (1999), indicated the time spent on sleeping in the range of 8-9 hours across most populations. Girls of non-working mothers spent most time on personal work followed by girls of working mothers. There was little difference between boys of working and non-working mothers. Larson and Verma (1999) did not find much variation on the time spent on personal care across cultures. As household chores fell into girls' domain, they spent more time than boys. This finding was corroborated by Larson and Verma's and Cain (1980); Whiting and Edwards (1988); Hollos and Leis (1989). Also the time spent on household chores varied by age groups (Timmer, Eccles and O'Brien, 1985). It was interesting to note that girls in both categories spent more time on schoolwork at home than boys, unlike the result by Nag, White and Peet (1980); Acharya (1982); and Skoufias (1994), where the emphasis was more on boys involvement in school work. At this age boys were more outgoing and social than girls. The better balanced, could maintain well their education and social life. Leisure at home was maximum for children of working mothers than non-working mothers, as the later were more organized and had discipline in life; but boys spent more time than girls. The difference was much more for boys and girls of non-working mothers, indicating that non-working mothers maintained a good check over their children's activities. Adolescents were found to differ in the type of leisure time activities by Larson and Richards (1989); and Verma and Saraswathi (1992). As a part of leisure activities, use of T.V. was main concern (Alsaker and Flammer, 1999), where boys watched more TV than girls (Lee, 1994; Frederick, 1995; Bianchi and Robinson, 1997; Larson, Richards, Sims, Dworkin, 1998). Watching TV declined by early followed by middle adolescence (Timmer, 1985; Anderson, 1986; Wartella, 1995). They spent roughly an hour on reading (Stevenson and Lee, 1990; Juster and Stafford, 1991; Flammer and Alsaker, 1995). Play time varied from culture to culture, but boys played more than girls, and that play as a leisure activity was relatively low in case of adolescents (Whiting and Edwards, 1988; Larson and Verma, 1999). For older adolescents Alsaker and Flammer (1999) indicated more social interaction mainly talking. Children of working
mothers and more girls consciously helped in household responsibilities, as their mother were often not available to carry out market work. Other studies also indicated that boys spent more time than girls on outdoor errands (Medrich, Rozen, Rubin and Buckley, 1982; Cogle, Tasker and Morton, 1983; Duckett, Raffaelli, Richards, 1989). Researchers attributed these gender differences in time and type of tasks to parental attitudes and their differential preparation of girls and boys for the adult roles (Goodnow, 1988; Whiting and Edwards, 1988; Duckett, Raffaelli, Richards, 1989).

**Hypothesis (9b):** Time distribution on daily activities will be different for the mothers in different work categories and their adolescents.

Results partly confirmed the hypothesis. Table 4.46 indicated that for mothers working as doctors and in business the daily work hours were little more fluctuating, sometimes as long as 10 to 15 hours, involving night duties or traveling. Overall, there was little difference between the mothers in different work categories. The distribution of time over household chores was nearly same for all work categories, with little less for mothers in business, as these families had more help available and spent more time on office work even at home. There was a paucity of studies on working mothers and their time management, few available studies indicated that working and non-working women differed in time management (Sinha, 1987; Mathur, 1992; Crouter, Bumpas, Maguire and McHale, 1999).

Generally children of mothers in different work categories did not reveal much variations in distribution of time vis-à-vis daily activities (Table 4.48). Perhaps, for a child in the family it was not important that what was the mothers' job type or the way time was spent outside home, but the fact that the mother was out of the house for work. The mean time distributions for the activities indicated in each category were very close to each other, whether on holidays or workdays.

**SUMMARY**

To sum up, there were significant differences between working and non-working mothers; between the children of working and non-working mothers, on family characteristic
dimensions as well as in different areas of psychological well being. They also differed in perceiving husband's/father's role in family involvement and time spent on daily activities.

It was evident that not all but some of the family characteristic dimensions indicated differences. The dimensions that commonly showed differences were expressiveness, independence, achievement orientation and control. Though mothers also showed difference on conflict, children showed differences on organization. The dimensions were interestingly common for mothers as well as children, and even to some extent when boys/girls of working/non-working mothers were compared. It was probably because mothers could successfully inculcate in their children the characteristics they had. When mothers and children in different work categories were compared the differences were observed on cohesiveness, expressiveness, independence, organization and control. This substantiated Moos conceptualization of family environment.

Significant differences were observed on the psychological well being (stress and adjustment) as well, between working/non-working mother and between their children. It was observed that mothers as well as children differed on home, social and emotional stress and the corresponding adjustment areas. There were no significant differences observed on either health or occupational/school areas. For the areas of psychological well being the differences were more predominant between boys/girls of non-working mothers and girls of working and non-working mothers, indicating different orientations of mothers to well being.

There were significant relationships between some family characteristic dimensions and the areas of psychological well being. Emotional area seemed to be the most affected by family characteristics. Family characteristic dimensions showed significant relationship more with the stress areas than adjustment. Regression analysis indicated significant impact of family characteristic dimensions on the psychological well being, particularly the social and emotional stress as well as adjustment areas.

Mothers as well as children differed on perception of family characteristic dimensions and psychological well being, when categorized by her/mother's span of work. Mothers working for longer period showed less stress and better adjustment, whereas mothers working for 10
years showed more stress, but did not differ much with mothers working for 5 years on adjustment. Children on the other hand did not differ much in perceiving family characteristic dimension, but differed on stress and adjustment areas. Children of mothers working for 5 years showed more stress than 10 and 15 years. Children in the late adolescent age group perceived family characteristic dimensions more favourably, followed by middle and early age group. Children in the middle adolescence perceived more stress than other two groups, but on adjustment, all varied from area to area. In terms of the stress and adjustment models used, there seemed to be good deal of support.

There were significant differences between working and non-working mothers in perceiving husband’s role in family environment. Working mothers perceived their husbands more positively, but there were not many significant differences between the mothers in different work categories. Among the children of working and non-working mothers there were not many significant differences, though very few characteristics showed the difference. When children of mothers in different work categories were compared, significant differences were observed particularly in perceiving fathers as understanding, helpful, calm/cool, attentive, sharing organized, social and office work at home.

Working mothers enjoyed less time on sleeping and personal work than non-working mothers. Working mothers got very little time to spend in leisure, market, and household chores on working days. When mothers in different work categories were compared, the mean hour difference was visible only in case of doctors and business mothers. Children of non-working mothers enjoyed more relaxed time than children of working mothers. These children even spent less time on studies and household chores. The differences were not many, when children of mothers in different work categories were compared. Boys enjoyed more sleeping hours, more leisure time, whereas girls spent more time on household chores and school work at home, indicating different contexts of socialization and thus their cognitive and affective functioning.