CHAPTER IV

CASE STUDIES OF THE MARRIED WOMEN TEACHERS
1. THE URBAN PROFILE

Case No. A 11

Mrs. BB was a young Matriculate teacher without training who joined teaching one year after her marriage. She stayed in a joint family with her widow mother-in-law and her only brother-in-law and his family. She was married while she was studying in a high school and passed Matriculation examination after her marriage. She was the only daughter of her father's family. Her two brothers were employed. Her father's occupation was petty trade. In short, she came of a lower-middle class Brahmin family. Her husband was in a non-gazetted government job, her brother-in-law was also employed.

The first cause of her joining the profession was, as stated by her, love for the profession, the second one was to utilise her education. Financial causes received the third preference in order of priority. Her mother-in-law was not in favour of her taking-up the job. But she did not create troubles for Mrs. BB, she rather helped Mrs. BB in household works and looked after her children. On the consideration that Mrs. BB was earning for the family, other members of the family had no explicit disfavour of her professional career. Though of course, the sister-in-law envied the independent life of Mrs. BB. Though Mrs. BB's first cause of joining the profession was love for teaching the
same cause did not receive any place so far as her causes of satisfaction of the job were concerned. She was satisfied because of the independent life she was able to lead and secondly the relief she enjoyed from the household chores during the day and thirdly the social status she had because of the paid job. As a teacher she was successful. She had interest in her class and the subjects she taught. She also tried to find out the causes of backwardness among her pupils. Language difficulty was the most important cause of backwardness in her pupils, she said. She also stated that specialised training should be there to enable a teacher to teach language to non-Assamese children.

She had a happy family life. Her husband was helpful and considerate. She had no friction with her husband on money matters. Her mother-in-law and sister-in-law though not very happy about her professional life, were pacified by Mrs. BB with presents and gifts on festivals and in times of need. Her neighbours were not encouraging. Some of them envied her professional life, her independent career and the social and financial status she enjoyed on account of her job. But outwardly they were friendly with her. Mrs. BB had been busy at home so she did not come out of home for social works.

Case No. A 06

Mrs. UB who joined teaching after marriage,
had been serving in good schools all through. In fact, she changed only two schools. She had permanent residence in an urban area though her father's family and in-law's family were in rural areas. Her parents-in-law were dead before she married. Her mother was alive but she lost her father few years after her marriage. She was the youngest child of a big family of four sons and two daughters and she was brought up in a tea garden in which her parents stayed. Her father was a big land owner and cultivation had been the main source of income of her father's family. Economically they were well-off. Her in-laws family was equally well-off and equally a big family of eight children, four sons and four daughters. Her husband was well placed in an office in the town close to her in-laws place. Unfortunately the husband fell seriously ill and became permanently invalid. It was after the birth of their only child, Mrs. UB started her half-done education. She passed Matriculation Examination and join teaching. Her in-laws and brothers helped her to procure a plot of land in the town in which she was working as a teacher. She stayed with her small family in the town and offered boards to children of her brothers and brothers-in-law. Her invalid husband earned a little by giving tuition to high school students.

Mrs. UB promptly replied that the main purpose of her being in the job was to supplement family income.
She loved teaching, which was her third reason for joining the profession which enabled her to serve her society in her humble way. She was very much satisfied with her job. Because her job kept her busy in a pleasant way. She was glad to be able to teach young children. Her profession enabled her to expand her own limited knowledge. Mathematics and Geography were two main subjects she taught in the school. She knew the brilliant as well as the backward children of her class and took special measures to help both the brilliant and the backward children. She tried to know the home background of the backward children. She was trained and attended several short-term in-service training courses organised by State Institute of Education, Assam. She wrote papers in connection with the seminar reading programme organised by S.I.E., Assam.

She had keen interest in her profession. All the information regarding her class, pupils and their general level of achievement, their family background were prompt in her mind. She had at the same time problems regarding the children of indifferent guardians. She was shy to visit guardians to discuss matters relating to achievement of their children, lest they would not appreciate her genuine intentions.

She had a small happy family. Because of the incapacitated husband who could not help her very much in her
household duties, she was over worked at home but the husband was never demanding and he created no troubles for her. Regarding money matters both the husband and wife had happy understanding. Her relationship with her neighbour had been cordial, though the locality with high professional families had no high respect for her primary school job. Mrs. UB very fondly recollected her early working life. She was very much indebted to her first headmaster who in fact gave her all guidance and support during the first year of her career. At present, she was a successful teacher and had happy relationship with her colleagues. Her favourite pastime had been weaving and gardening, these added to her family income as well.

Case No. A 12

Mrs. TS belonged to the cluster of Urban-Nucleus-Aged- Joined the profession after marriage. Though her father was a lower-middle class rural cultivator, he had a broad outlook on the education of his children. He admitted his eldest daughter Mrs. TS into a teacher training school after she completed her M.V school course. After her training Mrs. TS was married and did not get any chance to join teaching. She joined teaching only after her youngest child was five years old. By that time Mrs. TS was relieved from this part of her responsibility of looking after children, when all her children were in school. She was looking for a
job which would have supplement her husband's limited income. Her family budget went up along with the growing age of the children. She said that she was glad to receive an offer from the Deputy Inspector of Schools who happened to be a friend of the family. She was also happy because she was able to utilise her training which remained unutilised for such a long period. She was satisfied with her job because she had been able to have an independent income. She was happy to be able to carry on her dual role, the role of a mother and wife and of a teacher. She was happy because she was not confined within the four walls of the family. Her job gave her opportunity to meet people of different aptitude and interest and to spend her day in an educational atmosphere with young children.

Mrs. TS was interested in her profession. She knew every pupil of her class, their level of achievement and family background. She took extra class to help both the brilliant and the backward children. Though she did not visit guardians, she sent for them to the school whenever occasion arose. She was proud that she attended short-term training courses organised by the S.I.E., Assam. But she was rather embarrassed to say that she was not a Matriculate.

Her family life was happy. Her husband expected that she should give him all attention as a dutiful traditional wife would give. She was happy because she had
been able play her dual role successfully by adjusting her time in such a way that her duties outside home did not hamper her duties at home. She was happy that she had been able to satisfy her husband who was demanding but did not create trouble for her. Her children were all well educated. Being the only working daughter-in-law of the family she had to face criticism from the family members at the beginning of her career. But her success both as a wife and a teacher ultimately changed the outlook of the family. Regarding money matters she was very frank to remark that on her earnings nobody had any say. She was interested in social work and took active part in such activities.

As a teacher Mrs. TS was successful. The headmaster gave her higher responsibilities for which she was envied by her colleagues.

Case No. A 02

Young smart looking HS had been in school before marriage. She took up the job after the retirement of her father to have an independent living, and at the same time to supplement her father's income. Her brothers' were moderately educated and employed. But she did not want to be dependant on them. After she had been in school for about four years she was married to a non-gazetted government officer. Her husband wanted her to give up the job because he did not want a primary
school teacher as his wife. But she had the support of her father-in-law who encouraged her to be in the job inspite of her husband's resistance. She did not want to resign her post because she wanted an independent living and at the same time to supplement her husband's income. Gradually the husband accepted her working status because of two important reasons, (i) she had been able to perform her roles successfully, (ii) she gave him financial assistance. Mrs. HS stayed with her husband away from her in-laws' joint family, in her husband's place of work and coincidently she was also posted in the same place. Other members of her in-laws family held her in a high esteem because she had been an earning member of the family. Though she was away from the ancestral family her father-in-law stayed with her before his death. Mrs. HS was satisfied with her job. Because it enabled her to widen her limited knowledge. She had been able to spend her days with young children. Thirdly, she had been able to take herself away from the four walls of the family and to meet people.

She was a successful teacher. She knew her pupils well. She engaged the brilliant pupils of her class as monitors which she felt encouraged the brilliant as well as others to show better performance. She was very much eager to meet guardians but she was reluctant to do so. As she was not sure whether the guardian would appreciate such an approach or not. She had good relationship with her colleagues and the headmaster.
Case No. A 22

Mrs. RK typified a profile of its own. She being the only child of her parents decided to remain with them even after her marriage away from her husband. Mrs. RK aged about 48 years had been serving as a teacher since 1943. Her parents had limited means, her father being a petty shop keeper. To be a Matriculate at that time for a girl of Caste Hindu family was a great achievement for her. She had her teacher training in a Mission Teacher training School, the only teacher training school for girls at that time. Mrs. RK got into a school with the objective of looking after her parents at their old age and decided not to marry. After few years, she realised that she would need a companion and began to look for a match for life. After about ten years of service, Mrs. RK married a person who lost his first wife having four children, three daughters and one son. She married at the age of about 30 years which was late for a girl at that time. It was difficult for her to get a more suitable person because of her age and of her employment. Her husband was in a paid job with a moderate salary and posted permanently in his place of birth which was about 50 K.M. from her own place. Mrs. RK decided to marry for a companion in life at a late age, but she did not want to leave her job, her old parents and at the same time the meagre property of her parents. Her husband also wanted her to stay at her place.
to continue in her job, but did not try to get her transferred to his own place. A person with four children who married again did not want his second wife to stay with him. On week days she went to her husband's place and spent the holidays there. Alternately, her husband came to stay with her. Mrs. RK lost her parents after about a year of her marriage. She began to stay alone in her parents' home, The taste of an independent income and the sentiment attached to her parental home overpowered Mrs. RK which separated her husband. She had two children, one girl, one boy. The boy was taken away by his father to his place when the boy was about 10 years old. The mother stayed alone with her grown up daughter.

This is a case in which the teacher had been suffering from unhappy family relationship. Poor Mrs. RK did not remember the year in which she was married, the post her husband was holding, though she explained the nature of his duties. She wanted to resign the post after marriage but her own sentiment and the wishes of her husband did not permit it. Her main objective of joining the post was to support her old parents but the parents were no more, still she continued in the job at the instance of her husband. She had a plan to give up the job after the marriage of her daughter, if only her husband permitted. Her husband had been telling that her income was necessary for the education
of her son. Mrs. RK was unhappy to be separated from her husband and from her son.

Mrs. RK was a qualified teacher and fairly senior. But she did not want to be a headmistress of a school. Though qualified she was not a successful teacher. She was posted at a school in which the mother tongue of the children was not the same as her own. She could speak that language but the children came from an educationally disadvantaged section which was a great handicap for her. Still she did not want to go to a better school because, as she herself stated, in a better school responsibilities would be stricter. Here in the present school, whenever she wanted she could take a half-day off to take a bus to her husband's place. On Mondays she was generally late by one hour or so because the first bus from her husband's place reached her place of work after 10 o'clock in the morning. It is unfortunate that a qualified teacher had been wasting her professional capacity in this manner. This was all due to her unhappy married life. She had a plan to give up the job after her daughter got married. She was unhappy that her husband was not keen in getting her grown up daughter married. But her husband did not like her idea to give up her job and asked her to continue till her son became fully grown up and settle down in life. She said that by that time she
would retire from service. She was in some what unbalanced state of mind. It was rather strange to know that she did not remember the year in which she was married though she married at a late age. She was not interested in teaching either. She did not know the number of pupils in her class and the names of the pupils whom she taught for about nine months. She frankly admitted that she would be pleased to lead a life of housewife alone than to be away from her son and husband to earn money for the family.

2. THE RURAL PROFILE

Case No. R 66

Mrs. PD came of a family of moderate means but with respectable cultural background. After her middle school education which was considered to be sufficient for a girl at that time, she had her training at a Mission School. But she did not go for teaching before her marriage and almost forgot her education and training after marriage. After about six years of her marriage she was requested by the local people of her in-laws' village to take charge of a newly set up girls' primary school. She came back to her in-laws' joint family from her husband's place of work to comply with the request. Her husband though earning enough for his small family allowed her to join teaching because he wanted that her education might not go waste. Since 1950
she had been staying with her in-laws' and her husband had been alone in his place of work. They adjusted their family life in that way. Other members of the joint family were all away from the ancestral home. Only Mrs. PD remained as the custodian of the family property. Other members came to stay with her during holidays and festivals. The husband came on every weekend. She had four children all grown up and well educated.

Mrs. PD was satisfied with her job which enabled her to pursue a cultural and an academic life. These two very terms she used while expressing her reasons for satisfaction. She was also happy to be able to spend her days in the midst of young children.

She was interested in her job. She arranged special classes for children with different levels of achievement. But her main difficulties were the wicked boys she had in her class. They were not very dull boys but never followed the minimum discipline of the school. Mrs PD did not know the methods of dealing with problem children. She needed some guidance on this. She started her career as a headmistress. But now her school had been amalgamated with the boys' L.P, and the headmaster of the boys' L.P school took over as the head of the amalgamated school. Since then she had been serving as an assistant teacher with no regrets.
Mrs. PD was a teacher in a girls primary school in a rural area. She joined teaching after marriage. Both her parents were dead, and so also her parents-in-law. Her father's family resided in a rural area about 20 K.M. from her in-laws' place. She was the fifth child of a family of eight children, four boys and four daughters. The first daughter was born to her mother after four sons and naturally Mrs. PD's elder sister received all the affection of her parents. Unfortunately this first daughter of the family died after she was married. Mrs. PD was the second daughter of the family. The third daughter died in her teens. Out of four two daughters remained. The family was brought up in a tea garden of very good standard in which the father was in the clerical staff. The family lost two daughters and Mrs. PD and her youngest sister survived, the brothers and the father had been unusually affectionate to the girls. A middle-income group of family with not much extra expenditure, could afford to lead a life of vanity and show. In a tea garden cost of living for the clerical staff is very low. As she narrated, she had a life of luxury in her parent's place, judged from their own standard of course. The fair looking daughter of a tea garden 'Babu' did not prosecute her studies for long. Her statement regarding her educational qualifications was not very reliable. She told
that she had been brought up at a tea garden about 250 K.M. from her present place of residence how could she read up to class IX in a school near to her in-laws' place? She did not have any training. She could not tell name of the S.I. of Schools under whom she served. She was married to a person who had not passed high school final examination. He spent his time in petty village politics. He was sometimes the president of the village council which was not a paid office but commanded power. This middle-aged man had no brothers and sisters. His only brother died long before and his sister-in-law lived alone with her children. Mrs. PD had a big family of six children: four daughters and two sons. The first two were daughters aged 15 and 13, the next two were boys aged 12 and 9, the last two were again daughters aged five and two. They had cultivable land but harvest was not sufficient for the year. The only permanent source of monthly income was the job of the wife. The wife joined teaching after her marriage when the first daughter was about a year old. As stated earlier (Chapter I) non-Matriculates were eligible for appointment in a primary school prior to 1960. Mrs. PD joined school in 1960 on a permanent basis.

This wife from a lower middle class family promptly responded that she loved teaching and liked to be away from household chores as such she was in service.
She also admitted that but for her earnings her children had been receiving education. Mrs. PD though so much interested in teaching and loved to teach young children could not tell the total number of pupils of the class of which she was the class teacher. She had no recollection of the group of the brilliant or the backward pupils of the class. She of course, visited guardians occasionally in connection with the educational problems of the children. Hers was a two-teacher school with all girls. But she failed to tell it explicitely. She had not heard the name of the State Institute of Education, Assam, Jorhat from which she had been only 15 K.M. away.

An over bearing wife received all helps from the husband in all household chores even in cooking, and child care. The husband engaged maid-servants to help her whenever necessary, which was rather uncommon in a rural lower-middle class family. Very proudly she said that her husband was dependant on her and was found to be co-operative because she had the permanent means of livelihood of the family. Education and welfare of the children were her proud privilege. Mrs. PD seldom went out to visit her neighbours but as she stated she had no difference of opinion with any body. But she had no good relationship with the widow sister-in-law of her husband. Mrs. PD's children were all healthy and as per the standard of the locality well looked after.
Mrs. KD was a young teacher who was in the profession before marriage. Her husband did not have a permanent source of income though he was qualified. So Mrs. KD could not give up her job after marriage, nor could she get herself transferred to her in-laws' place. Her husband was away in his place of work and Mrs. KD stayed alone with the children near the school in a rented house. She came from a lower-middle class family. She happened to be a qualified girl of the locality and the present post was offered to her by the local people and she became the teacher of the local school. Now she loved to teach the young children and was able to earn for the family. After marriage her parents-in-law and her husband wanted her to continue in her job which was a source of income for her family. But the parents-in-law did not expect financial help from the daughter-in-law. They were helpful and considerate. Her husband was also helpful and considerate. Mrs. KD had no friction with her husband regarding money matters and other family matters. But her sisters-in-law were sometimes demanding.

Mrs. KD was satisfied with her job because she was able to spend her day in a better atmosphere teaching young children. She was much interested in teaching which could be ascertained from the clear observation she made on the progress of the pupils of her class. She was unhappy
for not getting better facilities to teach the young children. She was a popular teacher in the school who enjoyed much confidence of her headmaster.

Mrs. KD lived in a locality in which almost all encouraged her professional life. She enjoyed a better social status. She had interest in social activities but she had no time. For the heavy burden of her family and the anxiety on account of her unemployed husband, Mrs. KD looked much older than her actual age. Her smiling appearance failed to cover up her anxiety from which she had been suffering.

Case No.R 25

Mrs. GB was a case which represented a common profile of a working woman. Aged, not fair looking Mrs. GB came from a low-income group of family. After she passed M.V. examination in 1945 she joined teaching in her own village to support her father's family and as well as to utilise her education. After serving about four years in the school she married a person who was employed in a private farm with high reputation. Her husband was drawing a handsome salary. Mrs. GB and her parents did not know that her husband had the habit of drinking. Since her marriage his drinking habit accentuated, he never cared to spend any thing on the family. The entire maintenance of the family eventually fell on Mrs. GB. Her family started growing, finally she had five children, three sons and two
daughters. The unbecoming habits of her husband multiplied year after year which included all vices like drinking, malpractices, bad temper, irregular attendance in the office. The company authorities put him under suspension for two or three times but he never corrected himself. Finally he received a discharge notice from his company authorities. The able and qualified man did not try for any other job, or if he did at all Mrs. GB did not know. He decided to keep himself in. Mrs. GB's pay was the only money income of the big family. The cultivable land they owned did not yield enough for the family.

"Why should I give up my job", said Mrs. GB. "It is the only means of livelihood for my children and for me. It is as well a source of solace for me. To be away from the unhappy atmosphere of the family I feel relieved in the school. I have all the sympathy and help from my colleagues and the headmaster."

Case No. R 18

Mrs. AB was a headmistress of a rural primary school and joined service after she was married. She was a non-Matriculate but trained. She was in a nucleus family close to her ancestral residence. Mrs. AB and her husband separated themselves from the ancestral joint family after the death of her father-in-law to facilitate better living.
But they maintained good relationship with the original home. She had the opportunity to attend very good schools which had some lasting effect on her outlook on life and education. She got married at a young age before she could complete her high school education. She joined her profession about ten years after her marriage. The main reason for joining the profession was to supplement her husband’s income, who did not have a stable income out of his business. Her second reason for joining the profession was to utilise her education in a respectable manner. Moreover her in-laws encouraged her very much to join teaching. Her husband’s family was directly connected with the independence movement of the country and as such had broad outlook on girls’ education and emancipation of women. She was from a rich family both economically and culturally and married to a family with moderate means but culturally advanced. Though Mrs. AB joined teaching long before, she received resistance at the beginning from her in-law’s family but they gradually accepted her professional career and now a working wife had been considered as an economic asset to the family. She was happy with her profession because she was able to teach young children. Her job kept her away from household troubles. Financial causes were no less important than these two reasons as stated.
She had been a headmistress since a long time which she had been performing with competence. She had prompt information of her school. She welcome visits from the guardian. She herself visited or tried to meet the guardians of backward children. She found it difficult to maintain a uniform standard of the school because of the heterogeneous populaton which her school had been serving, heterogeneous culturally, economically and socially.

She frankly replied that she had friction with her husband in family matters but such friction were of temporary nature. Her husband had been considerate and helpful. He was in no way demanding. Her neighbours were also cooperating and helpful. She took active part in social work. Sometimes back she had been the president of the local panchayat but she had to resign the office because of the pressure of work of the school. She felt that her social status had been very much raised by her professional career.

Being the only educated woman of the locality during the early period of her married life she was encouraged by some local persons to hold charge of a newly set up middle school. She served that school for sometimes. From that school she came over to the present school 22 years back. It was in this school she had been serving since then. The members of the staff had been cooperating though at the beginning she had resistance from the man teachers.
Mrs. SD represented a case who had been in service before marriage and had been staying in a joint family. She came from a low-income group of family and was married to a family of the same standard. Her husband was the second son of a big family of eight sons of which all were unemployed and on account of which they were unmarried. Mrs. SD's husband was in a clerical staff of a government farm which was at a distance of about 6 K.M. from their home. Mrs. SD was a Matriculate and trained. After she passed Matriculation examination she had been looking for a job to have an independent income of her own. It took five years before she was able to get an appointment in a primary school. She had her teacher training course while she was in service. She waited long six years before she was married to a person of the village to which she belonged. After her marriage she did not want to resign her post because of economic reasons. Her in-laws were very much in favour of her being in the job. Rather they welcome a working woman as their daughter-in-law. In fact she was the second earning member of the big family of unemployed youths. The family did not own any cultivable land either.

Mrs. SD was satisfied with her job because she loved teaching. But it was interesting to note that a person who loved teaching failed to tell the number of pupils
in her class. Her class was not big, only 22 pupils of which 12 were girls. She had to consult the pupil's attendance register to give this bit of information. Though a trained Matriculate teacher she appeared to be dull and unimpressive.

She enjoyed a very enviable position in her family as she was earning. The eldest brother of the husband looked after her children while she was away in school. The stepmother of the family though tried to be overbearing, failed to do so because Mrs. SD had the source of income of the family. Her husband had been planning to separate themselves from the joint family as soon as they were able to build a house of their own. Mrs. SD was posted in their own village. But the husband had to cycle down 6 K.M. daily to his place of work.

3. THE PROFILE OF WIDOWS

Case No. A 10

Mrs. AD was a childless widow who stayed with her parents. Her parents' original home was in a rural area and she was married to an urban area. She was married at an early age but lost her husband within a year. Her parents and uncles did not allow her to go for a paid job out-of-home. She stayed at their village home for about ten years doing nothing. Meanwhile her maternal uncle arranged a primary
school job for her in the town and brought her to his home. She joined the school and continued to stay with her maternal uncle's family. After the death of her father, her brother put up a house in the town in which Mrs. AD was working, for his family. And Mrs. AD shifted to her brother's house. Her brother was away in a tea estate serving as an office clerk. His children stayed with Mrs. AD studying in the town. Her mother, her nephews and the small family of her young brother lived together in the town. Her brothers were not in well paid jobs as such her earnings supplemented the income of the family.

Mrs. AD was not satisfied to be in a job. Her dissatisfaction was not due to any academic, social or financial causes. This was purely personal. She very pathetically said that because she was a widow she had to earn for herself, and looked after others children because she had no family of her own. She would prefer a life of a housewife. "But that is out of question now," she said, "if I compare my lot with other widows of our society I see myself in an enviable position. I am able to look after the children of my brother. I spend my day in the midst of young children. The headmaster has been good to me, he trusts me, gives me responsibilities. " On further enquiry it was revealed that her in-laws family had been rude to her. Their economic condition was not good. They were not in a position to maintain the widow sister-in-law of the family.
Even then they did not like her to go for a paid job. She was deprived of the property of her husband. The brothers-in-law disdained her working status. "He is no more but his remembrance is there in that house, I never see it, I am totally cut off from it." Yes unfortunate Mrs. AD is not the only case of such pathetic lives in Indian society. Had her husband alived she would have been a different woman. But now she had to represent a case of dissatisfied widow teacher.

Case No. A 13

Mrs. MH was a young widow of an urban area who lived with her parents. She was married to a rural area, a family with good academic background. Her father was of limited means with a big family of six children, four daughters and two sons. Her in-laws family was comparatively better off than her parent's. She passed Matriculation examination before she was married to a businessman of considerable means. She lost her husband after four years she was married. She had three children two sons and one daughter, the daughter was born posthumously. Her relations in her father's family encouraged her to join the primary school in the town for her independent living. She joined the school within six months of the death of her husband. Her parents-in-law were dead. Her only surviving brother-in-law was happy that Mrs. MH was not dependant on him.
She need not spend on her in-laws family. The in-laws family as well not concerned about her. Rather they enjoyed the vast landed property of the family alone. She almost lost claim to that property. Her father died, her brothers were young. So she was rather helpless in establishing her claim over her in-laws property. She had casual relationship with her in-laws family. Her children had grown up now. Her father gave her support, her mother took care of her children and she engrossed herself in teaching young children. After the death of her father, she became the guardian of her young brothers. Unlike Mrs. AD (case No. A 10) she was calm and quite and avoiding type, avoided company as far as possible. "But she never avoids her duties," the headmaster said. There must be lots of untold tales in the bottom of her mind which she did not like to tell to any body except to herself. So she kept herself away from company as far as practicable. "I lost the best company of my life in an accident," said Mrs. MH. Yes no body could compensate that loss.

Case No. A 04

Mrs. DD was a widow who lost her husband at a very young age. She came of a low-income group of family with two brothers who were, though employed, not well off financially. Her husband's only brother was of the same financial status. After the death of her husband she went
back to her father's place and began to live alone in a house built for her by her father. Her only daughter was educated and married to an officer with considerable income. Poor Mrs. DD did not remember the date of her marriage and the year in which she lost her husband. She did not even remember the date of birth of her only daughter. If she had been suffering from any kind of date-phobia was not known. Her case history revealed that she had no body to lean upon after the death of her husband. She joined a primary school and tried to earn for herself, that was the first reason for joining the profession. Though Mrs. DD had not received any financial help from her brother-in-law she had not received any obstruction from him. She had to give support to them occasionally. Inspite of all the financial handicaps she had good relationship with her brother-in-law.

Mrs. DD was satisfied with her job which enabled her to lead an independent life. Her job kept her busy all day and she was able to forget all her sorrows of her lonely life. Because of her simple nature she had been endeared among her colleagues. She did not have a good academic career and as a teacher she had not been successful. Her neighbours were all sympathetic towards her. They were considerate and helpful. But Mrs. DD was not interested in social work. She confined herself in her own small home.

Case No. A 09

Mrs. GB was a childless middle aged widow. Her
parents belonged to a rural area. But Mrs. GB was married to a town about 45 K.K. away from her parents' home. She lost her husband after about a year of her marriage. She came back to her parents and did her Matriculation. In the meantime she got an appointment in the village in which her parents stayed. She served in that school for about a year but the atmosphere was not congenial for her. She managed to get a transfer to a town school about 6 K.K. from her father's home. In this school she had been working for the last several years. She stayed in a rented house in the town with her young nephews and nieces who attended schools in the town. Her parents belonged to a low-income group of family, but her in-laws family was in the middle-income group. She had very distant connection with her in-laws. Her in-laws encouraged her working career or did not disturb her in any way. They were happy because the widow daughet-in-law of the family was not a burden to them. Her working career relieved her parents of their financial burden and at the same time offered broader facilities in the town to the children of the family. She seemed to be satisfied with her present way of living inspite of her deep seated sorrow which was writ large in her lovely looking face.
Mrs. DB belonged to a lower-middle class rural family. She was the only daughter of a big family of several sons. She had a brilliant student career for which she had the opportunity to go for higher studies which was unthinkable for girls during her time. After her graduation she joined a government girls' high school to give financial support to her father. After four years of service she married a person from another district. She resigned her post to stay with her husband. Both of them served another girls' high school at her husband's place. Her husband got a good appointment at some other place to which both of them shifted. Mrs. DB resigned her post again. After some times she got an appointment in the girls' school of that town in which she served for a long period. Subsequently she joined as a gazetted class II officer in the Education Department of the state and retired as a class I officer.

Mrs. DB's reason's for joining the profession was financial. She was very much satisfied with her job at the beginning but towards the end of her service career she lost her satisfaction of her job, the reason for which she declined to say. She said that the primary reasons for joining the profession by a woman was financial and secondly love for the profession. During her days teaching and nursing
were the two professions considered suitable for a woman. But nursing did not get much response from Assamese women. That was why Assamese women went for teaching only. Out of these women there were mostly Christians and Muslims and very few Hindus. These teachers were either married women or widows. The status of a working woman at that time was not high in society nor in the family. The husband though pleased to have an earning wife was never a changed man; he was still in the traditional role-set. In a joint family a working wife was envied because of her independent financial status. If the working woman was in a nucleus family children were not well looked after as the mother was away from home whole day unless she had some body from her mother's side to help her. There was encouragement from government side to pick-up educated women from within the family for out-of-home jobs. But necessary facilities at the place of work such as creche, prompt medical benefit were lacking.

Mrs. DB had a name as a good teacher. She was not successful as an administrator. Besides her working status she enjoyed a status as a good social worker. She had a happy family life with two children both well educated and well employed. She proved that a woman with good education can combine her two roles successfully.
Case No. PL 1

Mrs. RK belonged to the profile of very successful teachers of the older group. A recipient of President's Award for teachers, Mrs. RK started her career in 1932, after the death of her husband. Her father had cultivation as his means of livelihood with a big family of five children of which Mrs. RK was the eldest. Though he himself did not attend a school her father was very much keen on the education of his children. Mrs. RK read up to M.V. school though she did not complete the course before she was married. After the birth of her two sons she lost her husband in 1931. She took up teaching in a rural school in her father's village with the aim of earning for herself. She was not happy in a rural school. Society was not accommodating to her. Even her own people ridiculed her working status. She left that school and joined a primary school for girls in a town which was about 8 K.M. from her rural home. She served in two schools in the town and the second school she served for 22 years as a successful head-mistress which brought her the national honour.

She was alone on the staff in the rural school but there were many women teachers in the urban school. The school being a girls' school all the teachers were women of which a large number were married but very few widows. At the beginning Mrs. RK was not satisfied with her job because of the uncongenial atmosphere. But
gradually she began to love her profession. Social attitude, though not friendly during her early period of teaching career, changed gradually. People realised that an educated woman need not be dependant on thers, even if she was a widow. A section of her society became jealous and contemptuous of her working status and the independent role she was playing. A married woman to be out of home in search of a livelihood was rather unthinkable for some people. But Mrs. RK was just unconcerned about all these.

"But now", said Mrs. RK, "I am surprised to see the rush of married women in the school in search of a job." These women want to supplement husband's income which is very much necessary in the days of rising prices. There are some who want to utilise their high education. But irrespective of the reasons for which a married woman comes out for paid jobs a working woman must be given a social status on account of the service she renders to society.

Case No. PL 3

Mrs. BB was another instance of a widow who joined teaching after the death of her husband. She was only a primary school child when she was married. Her two daughters were very young when her husband died. She did her middle level education after she joined teaching. Her brilliant school career and good family background helped
her in getting a job in the local primary school after the death of her husband. But for confirmation of the appointment and future promotion she had to pass M.V. examination. Her father was an educated highly paid government official. Her brothers were all educated and well established. Mrs. BB inherited the family's knack for music. She was given instructions on music by her eldest brother which had stood in good stead during her professional career. Because of her aptitude for music she was endeared by her school children. The management of the school also preferred her as a teacher inspite of her low academic qualifications. She had her training in the Mission Training School for girls. "It was a great ordeal for me to undergo this training. You know the social taboos on the Hindu widow. We have to observe so many restrictions on our way of living. I had a separate cookshed for myself in the training school. I cooked my vegetarian food and attended classes. But now the social taboos have been mostly withdrawn. There are not so much restrictions on the poor widow now. It is a very good sign for our society," said Mrs. BB.

Mrs. BB also served only in the town. She joined a primary school for girls in 1937 and remained in the same school all through and retired from the school as the headmistress in 1969. In her school most of her colleagues were widows as teachers they, including herself
did not receive a social status. "But now social outlook has changed. A primary school teacher is not looked down upon by the present society. A woman now can aspire to go high in the professional ladder. There is no bar on her. But during our time we were ridiculed," said Mrs. BR.

Case No. PL 2

Mrs. LC represented a case of dedicated teacher. She inspite of her age and illness clearly remembered her early professional career. She came of a cultured, middle-income group of family. She had the spirit of dedication to her profession in her blood. Her father was a renowned teacher of a government school. Her brothers were all highly educated, her sister was also a graduate teacher of a government girls' school.

Mrs. LC joined teaching in 1912 after she passed her Middle English school final examination in 1911. It was rather a great thing for a girl from an upper class Hindu family to pass that examination. She was approached by the then secretary of a girls' lower primary school in an area predominantly inhabited by scheduled caste people. Mrs. LC was the first upper class Hindu teacher of that school. On her being appointed as a teacher in that school girls from other communities began to come to the school which increased the enrolment of the school, and eventually
the school was upgraded to a Middle English School. After few years the school became a full fledged girls' high school which is at present a big Government Girls' High School of the state. Mrs. LC was very much proud of the achievement of her early days in teaching. She joined Independence Movement in 1921 and imprisoned for few months. As a result she had to give up her job. She was married to a government officer with a good salary in 1924. Her husband died in 1931 leaving behind him three daughters and one son. After the death of her husband she again got into a primary school for the maintenance of her family.

Mrs. LC recollected her early days in teaching. There were very few girls from the upper class Hindu family who prosecuted their studies beyond the lower primary school. As such women teachers were not available. Her colleagues in her first school were all unmarried scheduled caste women one of whom married afterwards. At the beginning she was little bit unhappy because of the atmosphere of the school, a school which was put up in a culturally and educationally backward area with the children all from educationally most unconscious guardians. She had hard time to teach such a group of children. But her missionary zeal helped her to overcome all the handicaps and she came out successful. In the school which she joined after the death of her husband she was in a favourable atmosphere. The school
was situated in a culturally and educationally advanced locality and the headmistress was a competent teacher. The school was upgraded to an M.E. school of which Mrs. LC became the headmistress. Like the first one she served, this school also became a girls' high school in course of time. Mrs. LC had the credit of upgrading two primary schools to middle schools which eventually became big girls' high schools.

Mrs. LC stayed alone with her children away from her in-laws family. Her children were not good at studies as such were not well educated and well placed. With much difficulties she had to bring up her children because there was no body to look after them. She did not receive any opposition or criticism from any corner on her being employed after the death of her husband, rather society held her in high esteem because of her self supported life. But in 1912 she was looked down upon by her neighbours which she tried to overlook. The attitude of her neighbours changed after she was able to show her competence. It was very difficult to get a teacher for new schools at that time. Mrs. LC narrated how she had to go from family to family to request the educated women to take up teaching in the newly upgraded middle school. Some girls came but did not continue after their marriage. Married women did not like to come out of their homes. "Now, there is such a rush of candidates even in a newly put up school," said Mrs. LC.
Case No. PS 2

Mrs. SD a childless widow, came from a middle-class family. She was a Matriculate when she lost her husband and joined the school. She tried to get a degree after she entered the profession. She sat for B.A. examination as a private candidate several times but could not get through. She remained an undergraduate teacher of a local girls' high school. She had a fine cultural background which helped her to develop aptitude for fine arts and music and literary activities.

She served in three girls schools all situated in a town and finally confirmed in a big school close to her home. She did not try to get in any school in rural areas. She looked after her young sisters, brothers and her widow mother. Her mother died, her sisters were all married and her brother was well placed and settled down. Now Mrs. SD lived alone in a house put up by herself so as to live an independent life. She was very much happy to be employed in a school. Teaching gave her celestial pleasure as she stated, she would not leave her teaching job to go to any other better job. Her job earned her a living, it earned her a kind of pleasure which was inexplicable. Her neighbours and relations greatly admired her independent professional career which was considered to be a very honourable profession.
Mrs. SD was almost a votary of emancipation of women. A married woman should go for a paid job if she is qualified. Her job will increase family finance which in its turn will enhance the standard of living of a family. A family with a qualified mother prepares children for a better way of life, prepares better citizen for the country. A woman is equal to a man in all respects. Given all facilities a woman will be able to show her worth in all walks of life. Mrs. SD said in a sad tone, "We did not get scope in our days. I could not get myself admitted into a college for higher studies. I studied as a private student but failed to get the degree. Now I am off from the school. I have no pension, no benefit but I have seen my success in my students who have succeeded in their lives." She spent her retired life in social service and literary activities, both unpaid jobs, of course.

Case No. PS 1

Mrs. DD is was a child widow who was married at the age of 11 and lost her husband at the age of 12. She started her student career anew right from class VI in a girls' high school. She graduated in 1933 and get her B.T. degree in 1934. She started her professional career in 1935 as a headmistress in a girls' high school and continued as such for long 32 years with great success.

She was happy with the profession which enabled
her to stand on her own feet and which was a great solace in her deep sorrow and in her great deprivation in life. She was satisfied in her own success. She herself realised and made others realised that widowhood was no bar to anybody's success in life. She came of an Upper class Hindu family with moderate means. Her father's family had a good cultural background. Therefore she received encouragement to build up her career. But in society she faced criticism because of her widowhood. Situation has changed and along with it the outlook of society has been changing since independence, the impact of which may be felt in the onrush of women workers for paid jobs. More schools for girls have been set up. She felt very much satisfied that she was able to prepare large number of educated girls for these schools. Some of her students are now pioneers of girls education in Assam.

Case No. PE 1

Mrs. KM came of an educationally and culturally advanced family. Her father was a government officer who could afford to give education to his children in good schools and colleges. Mrs. KM had a brilliant career as such she attended very good institutions for higher education. After her graduation in 1932 she was requested by the local people to join a girls' high school. She served that school till she married. After her marriage she left her job. She
again joined teaching after the death of her husband. The primary aim of joining teaching for Mrs. KM was to have an independent living to support her own family. She stayed alone with her children in her place of work away from her in-laws. She retired as a well known successful teacher in Assam.

Mrs. KM did not receive any criticism from any corner on account of her working status. It may be due to the fact that she was in the capital city of the state. Her colleagues in the school were almost all married. Though towards the end of her career she met large number of unmarried women working in the school.

As stated by Mrs. KM, a married woman generally comes out of home for a paid job to earn a living. There are of course, some who go for a paid job to utilise their time in a better way. Again there are some who love to work, who love the teaching profession. Mrs. KM said that a woman may become a successful teacher if she has good academic background and if the husband is also employed. According to her, if the woman happens to be the sole bread winner of the family, she will not be a successful working wife.
5. THE PROFILE OF DISSATISFIED WORKING WIVES

Case No. A 15

Mrs. SD belonged to a rural area but had been serving in an urban school about three K.M. away from her residence. She was a non-Matriculate trained teacher, with an academic home background. Her parents family belonged to an urban area. Her husband was a headmaster of an M.V. school and her brother-in-law was a headmaster of a high school. Other members of her in-laws family were all educated. She had been in school before marriage. By caste she was Brahmin. She was in a joint family. Her parents-in-law were dead. But the brothers-in-law stayed together. The eldest brother died leaving a young widow with a son. By now the son had grown up and was in a good job. Mrs. SD had a small family of three children - two sons and one daughter. The second brother of the family who was a headmaster of a high school owned a small family of three children. They had cultivable lands which produced them enough paddy for the year. In fact Mrs. SD's family was middle class, educated joint family who had no financial problem of serious nature. Inspite of these favourable factors, Mrs. SD had friction on money matters. After much persuasion she confessed that the source of friction was her widow sister-in-law. The widow sister-in-law, in fact, occupied the position of a mother-in-law in the family but not an accommodating type. The brothers held her in high esteem,
as such did not utter a word of protest against her. Mrs. SD said that the widow sister-in-law did not demand money from any body. But she demanded that any expenditure in the family must be made known to her. Even small articles like cosmetics should be placed before her if any body bought these even for personal use. She had no other demands. Mrs. SD said that sometimes she forgot to show the articles she bought for her personal use and the widow became annoyed. The brothers in the family supported the aged widow. Mrs. SD said with much dissatisfaction, "It has now become a compulsory habit for me to take anything I buy to her before I use it. She never raises any objection on my spending my own money. But this particular nature of my sister-in-law I cannot always tolerate. The mother-in-law died long before. I did not see her. But our sister-in-law is the defecto mother-in-law of the family." Her husband also expected her to keep an account of her expenditure. She used to keep accounts at the beginning. But now she stopped keeping accounts. Out of her own money she met her own expenses but she sometimes felt because her husband never enquired if she wanted to have anything, he had not given her any present what so ever during the long ten years of their married life.
Case No. A 03

Mrs. CB, a descendant of a renown freedom fighter, had all the spirit of independence and broad outlook in her blood but unfortunately her blood had been cooled down after she married Mr. HB and now she became a very subservient wife. A wrong union indeed. She came of a well-to-do family and the involvement of her parents' family in the independence movement earned her many facilities. She was appointed as a primary school teacher though she was not a Matriculate. She was able to get a district transfer after she was married. Her husband belonged to a well-to-do rural family but none had education beyond middle school level except himself. He was employed in an office as the head cashier. Mrs. CB had nothing to say against her parents-in-law. They were affectionate and very much proud of their employed daughter-in-law. Her brothers-in-law though envied their urban life, were not trouble-shooters. They occasionally came to Mrs. CB family and enjoyed urban life for few days. Mrs. CB tried to play the part of a very accommodating hostess. But her husband did not like her attitude. He was a demanding husband. He wanted his wife to be subservient to him and without any independent will.

"We put up a house for which we had to spend a large amount of money," said Mrs. CB. "To meet the expenses I handover my salary to my husband. He manages the family finance, I do not know anything about the family expenditure."
He used to say, 'you get your food and clothings, what more do you want'? You know I cannot even buy woolen clothes for me if I need. He gives presents to his mother but mother-in-law gives the presents to her daughters. I cannot give presents to my mother and to my only sister. My sister is lucky. Her husband whenever visits my widow mother brings lots of things, I feel small before them. My sister is also earning, I am also earning but there is the difference."

A profound dissatisfaction writ large in her face, the bright small eyes of Mrs. CB had been overshadowed by the grim looks forced on her by the unforeseen circumstances she had been put to. Her parents could not foresee that an educated son of a well-to-do rural family would be so miserly in money matters and in family relationship.

Case No. A 99

Mrs. SD was another case who had friction on money matters with her husband. She was the eldest daughter-in-law of a big family of six sons of which only the eldest one was employed. The old father of the family was a petty business man who married his second wife very late. The sons of the family were not well educated and not earning. The two sons of the step-mother were still in the school. Mrs. SD's husband was an office assistant earning Rs.340.00 P.M. Her own salary was Rs.340.00 P.M. They had
no other sources of income. She had two children both of whom were in the primary school. "We now live in a separate house built in my father-in-law's compound. Father-in-law is old now and cannot earn enough for the family. The family has very little cultivable land, two big sons are engaged in cultivation but the output is not sufficient for the whole year. He is very much demanding, he wants all our money for himself. Step-mother is also not affectionate. I earn for the family but I do not like to give up my privilege to spend my own earnings," Mrs. SD narrated in details. Her husband was also in no way better than the old father-in-law. She gave her salary to the husband. She could not spend anything on her person without her husband's permission. She had not remember any occasion in which she received a present from him. He wanted her to spend her salary on his father but was very much displeased if she spent anything on her widow mother.

She was the second daughter of her widow mother who had no sons. "I am very much displeased at his apathy towards my mother. I cannot spend anything on my poor mother. Why must I spend on my in-laws? I never receive any present from my husband nor from my father-in-law. Why must I give present to his father and brothers? He manages the family budget. I cannot spend anything on my own will. On money matters we have friction and friction with the parents-in-law. So we have not yet been able to put up
a house in our own plot of land we bought recently. We will be staying in the temporary house till we built our house," said Mrs. SD with all bitterness.

Case No. R 35

Mrs. GD had been serving in a primary school situated in a village in which all the inhabitants belonged to scheduled caste. But she herself was not a scheduled caste. The school building, its surroundings, its pupils all gave a grim look. The headteacher, of course, was a jolly person whose presence brightened the grim look of the total atmosphere to a great extent.

Mrs. GD too, borne some what an unhappy look. She came from a poor family. She lost her father in her childhood and her mother laboured hard to bring up her two children, Mrs. GD and the son. Mrs. GD married before she completed her high school course. Her husband was a matriculate teacher of an M.E.school. The financial status of her in-laws family was also not good. Her husband had no good relationship with his brothers and sisters. He separated himself from his parents' family and lived in a nucleus family. Mrs. GD's family was big with five children, all in their school going age. The paid jobs of the husband and the wife were the sources of income of Mrs. GD's family.

Mrs. GD had friction on money matters with her husband. She had to hand over her salary to her husband. She
had no say on the ways the husband handled their family accounts. The husband asked her to be content with the food and clothe she received regularly. Mrs. GD wanted to help her mother who was in great distress. Mrs. GD's only brother left his mother and his whereabouts was not known to Mrs. G.D. She was unhappy because the husband did not allow her to spend on her widow, helpless mother. Mrs. GD entered teaching after marriage for which her husband had to take much troubles. So the husband used to say that her paid job did not come to her as a part of her dowry. So the mother had no claim on her earnings. (It may be stated here that dowry system is not prevalent in Assam, so the in-laws never claim anything from the bride's side. Even then, people use the word 'dowry' in a loose sense of the term). Mrs. GD was sad for not being able to help her mother in times of need.

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