The present study is concerned with the understanding of the marital and family lives of a selected group of husbands and wives working at white-collar jobs -- a study undertaken with a view to finding out the changing roles, behaviour and attitudes of such matrimonial unions. The type of information required for the study precluded any attempt to seek a representative sample. As the sample studied is statistically, not absolutely representative, the findings of this study cannot be taken as conclusively established, and because of the size and nature of the sample broad generalizations cannot be drawn either. Nevertheless, it is hoped that it will provide an insight into some of the aspects of the lives of working couples and their attitudes.

The employment of the wife is certain to bring about changes in various aspects of and their attitudes to marriage and family life. The roles, behaviours, and attitudes of the educated working women have been changing towards a modern social outlook. However, a change in the roles and values of women cannot be effective unless a change also comes in the roles and attitudes of men. If the husbands fail to recognize the changing roles and
attitudes among women, disharmony is bound to crop up in the family, and husbands and wives may fail to understand each other.

Hence our modest effort in the present study was to see the changing behaviour and attitudes of both husbands and wives in families where both husband and wife work.

The interview schedule which was administered to 200 respondents consisted of five main sections and has yielded significant results in the various areas of investigation. The findings of the enquiry have been analysed, discussed and tentative conclusions drawn, as stated in the preceding chapters.

The universe of the present study consisted of the dual working couples in the city of Dharwad. The city of Dharwad is passing through a transitional phase. In the last two decades it has been developing rapidly in all spheres -- educational, cultural, administrative and in other ways, too. Consequently, its population is assuming a heterogeneous form, consisting as it does of people of various communities, castes and creeds. The establishment of the Karnatak University in 1950 brought Dharwad on the academic map of India by making it a centre of higher learning. Urban and educational growth in Dharwad has had a significant impact on the people of this region in all fields - economic, industrial,
political and social. One of the most noticeable developments resulting from these changes is perhaps, the emergence of the married white collar working woman. Though the married white collar working woman had not been non-existent earlier, she has become a prominent feature of our society in recent years. Accordingly, an exploratory-cum-descriptive design was planned for the study in order to arrive at an objective understanding of the changing marital and family lives of white collar educated couples.

Our investigation begins with the profiles of the field and the sample. The profile of the field included an account of social, religious, educational, demographic and occupational composition of the field 'Dharwad'. The explanation of these compositions is based on the facts obtained through secondary sources.

According to our findings, the formation of Hubli-Dharwad Corporation in March 1962 has played a vital role in the growth of population of Dharwad. At present, Hubli-Dharwad is the second largest city in the State, its population being 5,27,108. The population of Dharwad city is 1,74,101.

As regards the caste composition of the city, we have found that highest percentage is that of Lingayats and Low-caste
Hindus (28.37 per cent), followed by Brahmins (27.02 per cent), and Harijans (13.51 per cent) and so on. Even though Hindus constitute the majority (74 per cent) the population of Muslims is not negligible (22 per cent), but that of Christians is only 4 per cent. As Dharwad is an educational and administrative centre, most of the working population is engaged in 'Other Services'. Working women are also found to be concentrated in the service sector.

The profile of the respondents (sample) included mainly their age, education, occupation, religion, caste, family type, monthly income, rural-urban background and status. The data relating to the age group revealed that a majority of the respondents were of a comparatively mature age, i.e., in the age group of 31-50.

Regarding the educational status of the respondents, it is found that a majority of the respondents (52 per cent of husbands and 47 per cent of wives) are well educated i.e., they have a Master's or a Professional degree which incidently shows that middle class women in Dharwad do not lag behind in higher education.

The occupational composition of the respondents shows that a majority of husbands (51 per cent) are office workers and
a majority of wives (47 per cent) are teachers. Next comes the occupation of office workers (41 per cent) among women. The occupation which claims the smallest number is that of doctors (11 per cent of husbands and 12 per cent of wives).

Religion-wise distribution of the sample indicates that more than 3/4th of the respondents are Hindus (88 per cent). As regards caste composition, it is to be noted that Brahmins are in significant majority (54.87 per cent), Lingayats occupy the second place (29.26 per cent).

As regards the family type of the respondents, we find that a majority of them (90 per cent) belong to nuclear family group and the rest are members of joint families.

As regards the rural-urban background of the respondents, it is noticed that while a majority of wives (63 per cent) belong to urban areas, the husbands seem to be equitably drawn from rural and urban areas. And since facilities for higher education are more easily available in cities than in villages, the number of educated women is higher in urban than in rural areas. It is therefore natural that urban-urban combination of partners should be the most numerous, followed by the rural-rural and rural-urban.
The class composition of the respondents was measured on the basis of objective as well as subjective factors. The socio-economic scale based on education, occupation and income which was adopted to measure the class composition of the dual-earner families, shows that 54 per cent of the couples belong to upper-middle class, while 46 per cent belong to middle-middle class. Apart from this, their status was measured on the basis of ownership of house, vehicles, modern gadgets and household appliances. Doctors, post-graduate teachers, managers and other highly paid officials came under upper-middle class group; secondary school teachers, clerks, typists and stenographers belong to middle-middle class. But subjectively, while the majority of couples (66 per cent) identified themselves as belonging to the middle-middle class, 44 per cent felt that they belonged to upper-middle class.

The present study has analysed the changing marital and family lives of the dual-earner couples and their attitudes from mainly four points of view, namely, marriage, husband-wife relationship, work and small-family norm.

**Marriage**

Marriage and family are the oldest and the most basic and fundamental institutions for the existence, organization and
functioning not only of social life in a society but also for the creation, sustenance and continuance of human life without which there can be no society. Marriage occupies a pivotal position in the organization of the family. One cannot conceive of a family without a married couple and children. Hence an approach and attitude towards these basic units of society namely marriage, family and kinship can serve as an indication to the present as well as future trends in marriage and family relationships. Views on the various aspects of the matrimonial system have been changing in most of the traditional societies now caught in the sweep of modernization. India is no exception. Only the rate and range of change seem to have been greatly increased. The views of the educated people in this case, of the white-collar-job-holding couples, on the question of the right age for marriage, priorities in mate-selection, pre and extra-marital sex and divorce and re-marriage are therefore very significant in knowing the trends and patterns of these changes.

Our respondents are unanimous in their opposition to child marriages. A majority of wives (60 per cent) preferred and married between the age group of 21 - 25 years, whereas in case of husbands the highly preferred and actual period of marriage was between 26 - 30 years. In the case of the others, there was a slight difference between their ideal and actual age at marriage.
On the whole there is a definite tendency towards late marriages, which augurs well for the ambitious Family Planning Programme in India.

Regarding the mode of selecting marital partners also changes are noticed. A majority of wives in our sample preferred the type of marriage where the consent of the partners is taken. They do not any more seem to meekly submit to the decision of the parents or elders in the house. In case of husbands the most preferred mode of selecting marital partners is the one where the partners make independent choice and then seek the consent of the parents. However, the important factor to be noted is that even though educated men and women seem to lay their claim to have a say in the matter of selecting their marital partner, still they insisted that their choice should have consent and blessings of their parents.

While both husbands and wives were agreed about the postponement of marriage to a later age, there was a slight difference in their attitudes to the way of selecting a mate. Apart from a few adventurous 'rebels' who chose their partners (usually from other castes) without the consent of their parents, the young men and women did not want to choose partners whom the parents did not approve of. But with a slight difference, the women
wanted their parents to choose their partners but their own consent was necessary. The men choose their partners, but their parents' consent was essential. In either case, they showed a certain amount of faith in the wisdom of their parents. This reveals the filial loyalty of the Indians, who are reluctant to sever their attachment to parents and elders without good reason. In this context it is significant to note that in the eight 'rebel' marriages in our sample the marital partners belong to different castes which means that the 'rebel' marriages are also inter-caste marriages. Not surprisingly these 'rebel' alliances have left behind them a trail of strained relations between parents and children. Our respondents gave educational attainment as one of the main criteria of selecting marital partner. This is significant because educational attainment was till recently considered more a grace than an important consideration in the selection of a bride or bridegroom.

It is almost ironical that in the land of Vatsayana's 'Kamasutra', even talk of pre-marital and post-marital sex has become taboo. The men and women in our sample appeared to hold pre and extra-marital sex so prohibitive that indulging in it in any form was something unthinkable.
As there is an inhibition against talking of sex, there is also an inhibition in the Hindu ethos against the very idea of divorce. Though there are laws providing for divorce in certain circumstances, the Hindu women who have been brought up in the tradition of fealty to their husbands and the sacredness of their marriage vows are repelled by the very idea of divorce. Though 85 per cent of the husbands and 75 per cent of the wives in our sample favoured divorce as a way out of intolerable situations, we came across cases where wives have put up with their husbands even in excruciating circumstances.

In Indian society, there are fewer divorces, than in the West and not because there is perfect harmony between husband and wife. One reason of course is the influence of the old traditional idea that the wife should obey her husband in all matters. The second reason is persuasive advice of the elderly relatives who always counsel against such a step. With the wisdom that goes with age and the traditional respect they get from the younger generation, the elders usually patch up the differences of opinions that may crop up between husband and wife, and an unhappy breaking up of the family is avoided.

One of the reasons why the elders counsel forbearance and oppose divorce is the hazards that a divorced wife is subjected
to after the separation. While remarriage for a divorced man, especially when he is young, is almost certain, for a woman it is a remote possibility. Besides the social censure that comes down heavily on a divorced woman the social situations so conspire that her efforts to lead a normal life are frustrated at every step. These dark prospects that stare in the face of a wife contemplating divorce forbid her from taking any step of annulling the marriages through divorce. Therefore she either decides to continue staying with her husband despite the torments of an unhappy married life or quietly starts living away from her husband without going through the legal formalities of a divorce.

But there is one institution that has come in for active opposition of the wives with the tacit connivance of the husbands. It is the joint family system. Family sociologists in India have long noticed the incompatibility of the modern values and the joint family system. Educated wives have been campaigning against the system since long. The traditional forces that had till recently successfully held back and contained the anti-joint-family upsurge now seem to have weakened considerably. Employment of educated women outside the family seems to have hastened the process of the break up of the joint family system. Break up of joint family which is very often described as one of the pillars of
Indian society could not have been possible but for the tacit support of the husbands. There are enough evidence to prove that in all cases of break up of joint families the husbands have "conspired" with their wives indicating the incompatibility of modern values and the ancient institution. In this context the observations made by sociologists that the physical disintegration of the joint family need not necessarily lead to psychological balkanization, should be noted. Our findings on this issue are in agreement with the findings of Chekki and others. The joint family sentiment, though eroded and weakened still persists. The parents and elders, though not constituting a physical part of the various units of a joint family, continue to wield considerable influence on them.

Husband-Wife Relationships

Complexity in husband-wife relationship is the consequent result of the employment of wife. The roles of both in the wife-working families change and this requires readjustment on the part of both the spouses. These changes may bring role reversals or renewed vitality to the marital relation and their domestic roles, specially in the areas of division of household work, balance of power and decision-making pattern. These are the crucial indicators of the status of men and women in marriage and family. Hence a study of their marital relations was considered
The employment of wife has helped or hindered the normative pattern of behaviour, regarding their marital relations.

Our study found that the traditional norms that guided the family and marital relations have drastically changed if not disappeared completely. The wife's taking up a job has led, according to 82 per cent of husbands and 85 per cent of wives, to greater harmony in the husband-wife relationship. But the traditional chauvinistic hang over still seems to have its influence on husbands. Though the husbands admitted the economic advantage of their wives' working, they did not relish the idea of their wives staying away from home leading to neglect of children and house. It sometimes may, however, lead to a psychological strain. The old division of work—man is to work and woman is to cook—has undergone a change. Even as the economic burden of the family is shared, household chores have to be shared. Shopping, coaching children in their studies, looking after their other needs are being increasingly looked after by the husband, while cooking and washing clothes still remain the domain of the wife primarily. Sometimes the burden of these chores too is shared. On the whole the harmonious sharing of the work is to be found in 90 per cent of the families. In fact a number of wives (nearly 70 per cent) said that the main reason why the husbands should participate
in the household work is not so much that they lighten the burden of their wives but that it makes the husbands fully involved in the family life. "I don't demand much from him. I do not want him to share my burden. All that I want is that he should spend more of his time at home. That gives me a feeling that he cares for me and for our children" said a working wife.

The wife's taking up a job has also given her, according to 95 per cent of women, a sense of confidence and self-respect. Besides, it has given her as well as the whole family, an economic status which in turn has earned her and her family social status.

Even more important, the function of taking decisions which formerly used to be more or less the sole privilege of the master of the house, is now shared--something which has given a psychological fillip to the wife. The matters in which decisions are taken after discussion may range from the school to which the children should be sent to the purchasing of a house. But even in such families the cultural norm that the husband as the head of the family is the decision-maker prevails.

But the detailed study of 22 cases where wives took up jobs after marriage, shows that employment of wives seems to have definite impact of transforming the power enjoyed by women
from derived to intrinsic, and from secondary to primary. Formal power is now added to personal or 'charismatic' power. Job has strengthened their hands to carry out their will in the face of opposition. But with all this, conditioned as the women are to the traditional ethos, they would still prefer to wield their powers discreetly from behind the scene rather than wield it openly. It is noted that working women in our sample are willing to wield power but are reluctant to don the mantle of leadership of the house.

Attitude Towards Work:

A man's work is one of the more important parts of his social identity. It is one of the things by which he is judged and certainly one of the more important things by which he judges himself. People have different attitudes towards their work. For some people, it is a career which is central concern of their lives. For some others, it is just a job, where money plays an important role.

In dual-earner families, there are significant differences in the way husband and wife look at work. Because it is largely in the context of working women that the issue of conflict between home and work or home and career is considered. For a married
woman's career is viewed differently from a man's because there are many barriers for woman on the way to achievement in her career. Therefore this section highlights how the demands of work or career are accommodated within the domestic duties.

An analysis of the data collected shows that there is a distinct difference in the approaches of husbands and wives to their work. With 81 per cent of husbands, their careers come first, and everything else second; with only 26 per cent of wives their careers take the primary place in their lives. With these men their work is their career; with 74 per cent of women their work is a job which only brings them income. The men are absorbed in their work to the exclusion of everything else; with women it is their home with all that it stands for that is nearest their heart. With men the job is the end, with women it is only the means.

Then what about 19 per cent of the men to whom the jobs do not come first and 26 per cent of women with whom jobs come first? These men come from well-to-do families from rural areas for whom a white-collar job is a matter of social status (particularly back at home in their native villages) and for whom promotion (and the money which goes with it) is not important. But to go back to his village to work in his farm would, in
his own eyes, tarnish his image of respectability. Hence, he hangs on to his white-collar job, but with no genuine interest in the work he does.

As for the women who are primarily interested in their careers, it is to be noted that they are to be found more among university and college teachers, highly paid officials and doctors than among school-teachers and clerks. In other words, it is only when the work becomes more remunerative and challenging that they evince greater interest in their jobs and become career-oriented.

It is significant that most women take up a job because it is a source of second income for the family, most men take up jobs so that they can make a career for themselves.

It is not suggested here that the white-collar husbands from the well-to-do background are in general 'drifters'. There are, in our own sample, a large majority of them who are second to none so far as their dedication to work is concerned. They look at their work not only as a career but have also dedicated themselves to their career and excelled in their chosen fields.

The study also showed that the wives of such non-careerist
husbands have taken up white-collar jobs because they are urban born, fairly well educated, and were employed before they got married.

Most of the dual-worker dyads in our sample at the first sight seem to fit into the traditional category of the three fold classification given by Berger. In such families wife is prepared to subordinate, even sacrifice her interests and career to those of her husband's. But a deeper probe showed that the actual situation is different. The forces of job market, the fear of unemployment, the threat of losing an important source of steady income, forced these traditional couples to become 'egalitarian'. There are many cases which show that husband and wife lived away from each other for years and put up with excruciating circumstances, yet continued to have a 'family life' just to retain their jobs.

Small-Family Norm :

Since the respondents in our sample were all educated people, they were aware of national problem of over population and the necessity of family planning. Family planning programme has not been very successful in rural areas due to ignorance and illiteracy and, therefore, it is all the more important that it be popularised in urban areas. The couples whom we interviewed
were quite knowledgeable about—in theory at least. 82 per cent of the respondents said they preferred a two-child family, but only 59 families had two children. The others, had more probably because they become aware of the importance of family planning only after they had more than two children. Or because the first two children were girls and they wanted to have a son, or because the couples spent their early years after marriage as members of a joint family where child-rearing is a kind of co-operative effort and no individual burden or responsibility is felt.

As regards the interval between marriage and the first child, even educated couples appear to be more sentimental than practical, traditional rather than rational. A majority of them (59 per cent of husbands and 58 per cent of wives) wanted to have their first child within one year of marriage. Some felt that they had married late and so they wanted to have a child early; they wanted to be sure they could have a child, children early in life meant that they could be educated and settled in life early.

As regards spacing between child-births, the wives preferred a short gap of two to three years – they thought that child-birth after the age of thirty was risky.

Even more powerful was the desire for a son. They
wanted to have a male child irrespective of the number of daughters they had. Hindu ethos is probably responsible for this - the blind belief that only a son can send the souls of the parents to heaven after death.

It is interesting to note that the hang over effect of the parents' early childhood experiences on the matters of disciplining of children. Each parent seems to think that the training that he or she got is the ideal one. Each one desires that his/her children should also be brought up in the same manner. If fortuitously both the parents come from similar family backgrounds with more or less identical child rearing practices there will not be much of a difference of opinion as to how their children should be reared. But, if on the other hand both the parents come from different family backgrounds with different child rearing practices there is likely to be conflict and tension between the two regarding the ideal way of bringing up their children.

In the course of our study we found that this conflict gets resolved in three ways. First, the fathers who think that child rearing is mainly the concern of mothers, step aside leaving the mothers a free hand. This happens especially in the case of daughters. Second, there are more assertive fathers who think that upbringing of children (especially of sons) is more the responsi-
bility of fathers than of mothers. Such fathers seem to take over the charge of rearing their male offsprings from the time they grow out of infancy. Third, the uncalled for contention between the parents on this issue is wisely avoided. The parents study the aptitude of the children, and the one who is good at nurturing those aptitudes takes up the responsibility of bringing up the child no matter to which sex the child belongs. "Very soon we found that our two daughters were good in sports. I never participated in sports, but my husband was a sportsman of known repute in his college days. Therefore our decision as to who should take the lead in guiding our daughters was quickly taken without much ado. It was to be my husband and not me" said a lady college teacher.

The ever increasing ambitions that go with modernization are there for every one to see among dual earner couples in Dharwad. The doctrines of "Kshanabhangura Samsara" (This world is a temporary field of action), the world is a 'Maya' (an illusion), that man should not develop any lasting attachment to this world and the things of this world because he is like traveller who comes from elsewhere and goes elsewhere, do not seem to hold the minds of the white collar workers with the same tenacity as they did in the past. Though such feelings and sentiments do surface when the family is struck by a great tragedy in the
form of sudden death or serious calamities, during the other normal days, it is the usual rat race to go higher and faster. The noble ideals by and large are given a go by. Almost all the white collar couples in our sample are engaged in the relentless efforts of vacarious fulfillment of their own ambitions through their children. Those who wanted to be doctors and engineers themselves but could not, are now stretching themselves to the maximum to see that their sons and daughters become doctors and engineers. Almost a fanatical rush to get their children admitted to good English medium schools is an indication.

The efforts that the parents put in to get their children admitted to these schools should be seen to be believed. By the time the child is four years old the ground work begins. They spend hours forcing the toddlers to learn the English, alphabets, numericals, names of animals, birds, toys etc. so that they do well in the interview. Then starts the game of wire pulling. They contact the "people that matter" in a handful of English medium schools in Dharwad. Through these persons, some times, they even pay donations and other hush money to the tune of 5 to 10 thousand rupees per child to make sure that their child gets a seat in the school. Once a child gets admitted to a English medium school that takes care of his education upto the secondary stage. The next important stage comes at the end of the Secondary
School examination stage. The first preference of most of the white collar parents is the science subject, next come commerce, social sciences and arts in that order. Most of the children are admitted to Science courses. However, the most crucial stage comes when the children complete the Pre-University course - a stage when students enter into Engineering or Medical colleges. So great is the craze for these courses that the parents are not only prepared to spend their life-time earning but are prepared to sell their property or incur huge debts to collect money to pay as donations to get a seat in these colleges.

This has serious repercussions. Only four of them can be mentioned here. Firstly, education especially English medium and professional education is fast getting commercialized. Only a small per cent of seats in the professional colleges are filled on the basis of merit. The rest are virtually auctioned - the highest bidder, whether he has merit or not, gets the seat. This is one of the reasons for the restiveness among educated youths and middle class in India. Secondly, the gulf between the rural and urban societies is widening. Students with the English education and money are more likely to get the seats in the professional colleges than those who come from the mofussil areas with vernacular background. Some feeble steps are initiated by the Government to bridge this gap. For instance, students from the rural background
are given 10 per cent weightage to their score at the time of admission. But this does not seem to be adequate enough. Thirdly, a cleavage seems to be developing between the various sections of the backward castes/classes themselves. The urban white-collar sections among these groups tend to corner the lion's share of the concessions and facilities extended to these groups leaving the rural poorer sections with very little or nothing. Fourthly, the havoc that the dowry system is causing among the educated middle classes. Though our respondents seemed to be ambivalent regarding the dowry system, the practice is gaining strength day by day. Sky seems to be the limit for the dowry demands of a boy who has a medical or engineering degree. The victims of this menace are mainly the middle class urbanites. Not a day passes without a news item appearing in the press reporting the 'burning of brides', 'self immolation', 'suicide' of the girls mainly from the middle classes, for having failed to meet the dowry demands.

Lastly a few observations have to be made with regard to the caste system and its practice among the white collar workers in Dharwad. In the original plan of this thesis though provision was made to collect some basic information on the caste and caste affiliation of our respondents, caste and caste dynamics were kept out of the focus of attention. But caste system in India has
an uncanny propensity of suddenly propping up to the centre of
the stage pushing every thing else into the shadow. This happened
in the course of our study also. When the researcher was in the
midst of preparing the draft of the thesis, the Mandal Commission
Report recommending reservation of seats in educational institutions
and Government/Public sector jobs for the backward classes erupted
like a volcano on the Indian scene. The middle classes were in
the very epicentre of this social upheaval. This unexpected development
sent me scurrying back to my respondents to gauge their opinion
on this important issue.

The all pervasive caste system influences the behaviour
of Indians in a very unique manner. While there are areas where
its influence is obvious and overtly seen there are other areas
where it requires considerable tact, acumen and perseverance
to measure its influence. This is all the more true of the middle
classes who seem to have mastered the art of practicing it without
the slightest signs of overt manifestation. For instance, open and
public discussion of caste is a taboo among educated middle classes.
In the routine daily interaction they behave as if caste does
not exist or does not matter. But caste is there. It is there
like the pressure of atmosphere. You cannot see it but all the
same it is there six pounds to the square Inch. Only in situations
like the one created by Mandal Commission Report that the latent
nuances of caste find expression in manifest group dynamics.

The cutting edge of the Mandal Report is caste based reservation. It is an attempt to break the monopoly of higher castes in the Government and public sector jobs. The caste monopoly which has arisen out of the heritage caste reservation in India in which the backward castes were kept out of economic, political and social power is now being challenged by reserving 27 per cent of Government jobs for the backward classes.

The reaction of our respondents to the Mandal Report was of a piece with the All India pattern. The Brahmins and other upper castes vehemently opposed the report while the backward castes fully supported it. The Lingayats who constitute a dominant caste in this part of the State seemed to be ambivalent. This was so because some sub-castes among them are included in the list. Therefore they seemed to be in a dilemma whether to oppose Mandal or fight for inclusion in the list of backward classes. Opposition to Mandal Report brings them closer to the Brahmins and other twice-born castes with whom they have not vibed well over centuries. Fighting for inclusion in the list aligns them with low castes, which according to many of them, tantamounts to social sinking.
Another interesting development is reaction of the Scheduled Caste respondents in our sample. They vociferously pleaded in support of the Mandal Report. In fact they seemed to be more militant than the backward castes for whom the Mandal Report is meant. Their open and strident support was based on the argument that opposition of the twice born castes to Mandal Report is a thin end of thick wedge. They considered that the opposition to Mandal is not simply to the reservation to the backward castes, but to the principle of reservation itself. Therefore they felt that if the top most castes succeeded in this move the next attack would be on them.

A closer study of the findings of the research investigations of working middle class women in India reveals significant differences in the metropolitan cities. Kapur (1970, 1973) in her study of educated working women in Delhi found that the employment of women outside the family has had a liberating influence on the middle class women. She writes (1974) "It has made them more self-confident ... made them more satisfied with their economic independence, more conscious of their rights and privileges and of their self respect, and has brought about changes in their attitudes towards their own worth and position in the family, towards interpersonal relationships at home and towards their own roles and duties as well as that of their husbands or other
But Ramu's findings based on the data collected in Bangalore on the middle class working women do not concur with the findings of Kapur. Instead Ramu found that unlike in Delhi the employment of women outside the house has not had any liberating influence on them. The middle class woman's paid work has resulted neither in a universal change of attitudes toward gender related issues nor in an unqualified acceptance of her contribution to domestic economy. On the contrary earning an income has become part of the wife's obligations, thereby nullifying the power of economic contribution as an instrument of change in her status. In fact he observes that the meek acceptance of traditional gender based roles by the middle class working women in Bangalore has led to the compromising of their power to renegotiate their domestic order.

Hence it appears that employment of women outside the family though important cannot be said to be the sole factor that influences the world view - Weltanschuaang - of these women. There are other socio-economic and cultural factors which seem to exercise a crucial influence on the attitudes and behaviour of the working middle class women. If employment outside the family were to be the only factor to affect change in the world view of working
middle classes, then the liberating influence that is noticed in Delhi should have also been present in Bangalore.

Another noteworthy finding of Ramu's study is that the middle class working women of Bangalore, instead of assimilating the modernizing and liberating traits of their counterparts in Delhi, manifest the values of the working women of the lower classes for whom employment outside the family is an obligation and nothing more.

There could be several reasons for this differential impact of work outside the family on the outlook of middle class women of Bangalore. We would like to highlight only three of them.

1) Middle class is a wide and nebulous category which contains a number of strata within itself thereby rendering generalization extremely hazardous. For instance, Kapur's sample consists of upper middle class women working in more prestigious and lucrative occupations like medical doctors, office workers, managers, administrators and teachers, whereas the sample of Ramu mostly consists of women working in low profile and less lucrative jobs of assembly line workers in Telephone and Watch factories.
2) Women in Kapur's sample who belong to the middle-middle and upper-middle regions, took up jobs not so much for the economic reason of supplementing the family income as for other socio-psychological motivations. But the women in Ramu's sample who are drawn from the poorer segments of society and who took up employment mainly for economic reasons, do not seem to have come out of the cocoon of culture of poverty. Their employment as assembly line workers might have to certain extent eliminated their objective poverty leaving untouched the subjective values associated with the culture of poverty. They have not evinced vision or ideology to see the similarities between their problems and those of their counterparts elsewhere. The fact that they live in a metropolitan city like Bangalore has made them aware of the middle class values, but they do not live by them.

3) A third possible reason for the inability of these middle class women of Bangalore to assimilate the traits of their Delhi counterparts and emerge into the modern developed stage could be attributed to the resistance offered by various traditional institutions, beliefs and values of the recipient society namely Bangalore. May be the cultural setting of the city is not as propitious as Delhi for the scale and magnitude of change. For, in the ultimate analysis, the life ways cannot be adopted, they have to be adapted. This calls for many uneasy compromises between tradition and
modernity. The middle class women of Ramu's study seem as yet unprepared for this compromise.

The respondents in our study have both similarities and dissimilarities with Kapur's Delhi sample and Ramu's Bangalore sample. They are similar to Delhi working wives in the sense that like them they also belong to the upper zones of the middle class. They are well educated and a number of them took up jobs for reasons other than economic compulsions. But they differ from their Delhi counterparts in socio-cultural setting in which they live and work. The socio-cultural setting of Dharwad is significantly different from the socio-cultural setting of Delhi.

Our respondents are akin to Ramu's Bangalore sample in so far as they live and work in socio-cultural settings which are relatively similar. It cannot for obvious reasons, be said that the socio-cultural setting of metropolitan city of Bangalore is the same as that of a small town of Dharwad. But what is indicated here is the fact that geographical proximity and linguistic and cultural affinity put them nearer to one another. But they are different in the sense that unlike Ramu's respondents who belong to lower middle class, are less educated and are essentially assembly line workers, the wives in our sample are drawn from the upper reaches of the middle class, are well educated and
occupy relatively superior jobs ranging from office assistants to officers, professors and doctors. Therefore, our findings neither concur completely with those of Kapur nor with those of Ramu.

Our findings indicate that the employment of wives outside the family has to a certain extent unleashed the forces of liberation. But we should be wary of reading too much into this liberating influence. We found that the white collar wives in our sample facing the Shylockian dilemma. They would like to cash in on the new found economic power but are at the same time extremely reluctant to violate the traditional norms that regulate their relationships with their husbands and other members of the family, kins group and the society at large. In view of these facts they seem to be probing for a via-media solution. This solution involves tempering the economic power with the time honoured norms. They are now at the task of synthesizing tradition with modernity.

This modest work will have served its purpose if it provides a glimpse into the changes that are taking place among the dual earner dyads of Dharwad -- a town with the reputation of being the culture centre of North Karnataka.