CHAPTER 7

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7.1 Traditionally women are expected to work at home performing various roles within the family. These roles could be described as follows: for an unmarried girl, the role of daughter and sister and for a married woman, the role of "wife", "Mother" and "Daughter-in-law". Every role assigns certain duties and responsibilities which are to be performed by women. Common responsibilities of women are: looking after the house, taking care of younger brother or sister, helping mother, meeting the demands of husband and in-laws, looking after children and attending to their primary needs such as feeding and looking after their health and finally, washing, cleaning and cooking etc.

"In addition to these, activities associated with their family roles; women perform another role; an occupational role. These two roles might remain in conflict with each other because.

(1) family role and occupational role are performed at different places and in certain time
(2) both are unavoidable
(3) duties and responsibilities of both roles are' different."^1

It could be easily seen that women are coming out to work without the accompaniment of the necessary adaptive changes in their domestic roles. The net result is that many women at present have to perform the new professional role as well as domestic one. In such a situation employed women especially housewives are the victims of their conflicting roles: domestic roles vs professional roles.

It has been evident from the study that employment in industries is different from other types of employment (Banks, Government Office, Teaching and so on) in respect of hours of work, timings and in many cases job location also. It has been noted that because of long hours of work, odd timings and long distance. Women are found to be busy almost for the whole day, in duties at home and outside. Married women work for 15 to 17 hours a day. This is no doubt over-strenuous for the women employees concerned.

In this Chapter an attempt has been made to examine:

(1) Total exertion and extent of strain on women employees due to their dual responsibilities, viz those at home and in the work place.
(2) Status and role of women in the domestic sphere i.e. in the family.
(3) Attitude of family members.
(4) Division of work and financial independence.

7.2 STRAIN FROM DUAL RESPONSIBILITY:

The women who work in industrial concerns, however seem to a certain extent to have lost their house-pride. They live in a Mechanical World which takes them to work, after work returning home and wearily going through their household chores. It is easily seen that number of working hours in the organisation where they work coupled with hours of work spent on domestic duties would cause excessive strain to women, and affect their health adversely. Respondents opinions about the feeling of overstrain resulting from work at home and in the workplace are represented in the table that follows:

Table No.7.1
Perception of Women Employees regarding strain from Total Work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overstrain from Total work</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those saying 'Yes'</td>
<td>Those saying 'No'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage to Total</td>
<td>93.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table reveals that an overwhelming proportion of respondents (93.33 percent) state that they are overstrained. Only about 7 percent of them agree that their total work does not cause them overstrain. The reasons pointed out are as:-

(1) **Nature of the job:**
A large majority of women employees (70 percent), are doing production jobs such as those of packing, assembling, and machine operators etc., whereas 18.67 percent women are doing relatively higher clerical and administrative jobs. Those who are doing production jobs said that they have to work like machines, their jobs are monotonous and laborious, these jobs cause a lot of physical exertion. They have a rest pause of 45 minutes and they work for almost more than 8 hours in a day. Compared to the production job, clerical and administrative jobs are found to be less laborious and monotonous. An overwhelming majority of women being on explains to a significant extent the kind of response on strain from total work that we have reported.

(2) **House of work:**
Women in industries work for eight hours in a day, along with these married. So for those
women they have to perform domestic duties means they work for 15 to 17 hours in a day which is no doubt overstraining.

(3) **Timings:**

Industrial timings have been observed to be in between 7.30 to 5.00 p.m. This means from early in the morning to evening women employees are on the job. Before going to the job they have to complete their domestic duties. Majority of women employees said that they have to get up at 5.00 a.m. to complete cooking, washing, before going to the job. This shows that their day starts before the sun rise and ends after the sun sets.

(4) **Non-availability of transport and creche facilities:**

Inconveniences due to non-availability of transport and creche facilities are mentioned in the Chapter V.

(5) **Family system:**

We have noted in a previous chapter that 71 percent women are staying in the nuclear type of family system. This means they have to
manage everything including marketing, shopping, cooking, cleaning, washing. Thus when they work outside, their total exertion increases.

(6) Absence of elder members in the family:

Only 16 percent women are living with elder members of the family. So when they go to work their house is looked after by the elder members. However, a majority of women are leaving the house with the tensions of their children being left behind as also of the house-hold duties remaining.

(7) Unable to employ servants:

It has been noticed that 90 (60 percent) women respondents have employed servants, 12 (6 percent) women respondents had employed servants for cooking. Women who do not employ servants even for cleaning and other house-hold work said that they could not afford to employ servants.

(8) House-hold labour-saving Gadgets:

It has been observed that 60 percent families are making use of labour-saving gadgets such as mixer, fridge, cooker, cooking gas, washing
machines, but the remaining 40 percent women are not in position to make use of labour-saving gadgets. The consequent physical exertion leads to overstrain in their case.

(9) Social Customs, Traditions:
Of the respondents, 40 percent said and they strictly follow old customs and traditions followed from generation to generation (e.g. fasts, shravan, Ganapati, Navaratra, Wada-Puja, Chaturmas). They manage all the things, job routine, domestic work, as well as observance of customs and traditions.

Women employees in general are found to be undergoing excessive strain because of Social, economical and psychological factors. Actually changing socio-economic conditions have allowed them to work outside the house, so that psychologically they feel secured. Economic emancipation in a way has raised their status in the family and in the society. Socio-economic and psychological factors have been conclusive to their doing gainful work. The same factors have also added to their burden resulting in excessive strain. They are socially emancipated but still they have to attend to household Chores. They also gained some amount of economic independance but this has also meant additional work outside home. All this results in psychological tensions.
These pressures from all sides have been observed to be felt not only by some of the women employees but by all.

Women even when they are in highly skilled and technical jobs and holding very responsible posts cannot get out of their over consciousness about their duties and obligations at home—duties towards parents, husband and children, cannot avoid thinking that they have not been able to do justice to their family, household duties and specially towards children. This creates a problem of inner-conflict and tension which they experience particularly if they are keen to run both their homes and career extremely efficiently and are
desirous of paying equal attention to their home and work, Tensions are felt more when women are away from home for more hours and feel that parents, husband, children are neglected because of their jobs.

All these factors have been responsible for creating conflicts and tensions. Consequently working women feel overstrained physically as well as mentally.

7.3 STATUS WITHIN THE FAMILY:

"The word "Status" is used so arbitrarily in ordinary language that it naturally connotes different things to different persons. In recent times with the growth of sociology, attempts have been made to study the social phenomenon known as "Status" alongwith its social dimension and determinants. The status is associated with various factors as wealth, birth, sex, occupations as a result of which are created various diverse status of "Status phenomenon" as caste, class, occupational structure and relative positions of males and females."

2. N.S.Seri; Progress of Women's education in Free India, Published by New Book Society, of India 67/53 Pusa Road, New Delhi, 1969 P. 202.
Status means "Esteem" or subjective feeling of being respected. A great deal of the content of "Status" today is evaluated in terms of development indicators such as income, property or opportunities and use of training skills that open up chances of employment, possibilities of improved health level etc.

Today's world by and large is comparatively a rapidly changing one, and changes have been in a variety of directions. Socially one of the most fundamental and remarkable change brought about since India's independance has been the comparative emancipation of womankind. Its emergence from the exclusive seclusion of the home into the activities of the world has been a hallmark of this change. The changed socio-economic conditions particularly after independance have widened opportunities of women's education and employment, which have provided them with new avenues of expression and for asserting their equality.

An attempt was made in the survey to find out the status of women in the family after the acceptance of an industrial job in the industry. The following table brings out the perceptions of the respondents in this regard.
Table No. 7.2

Perception on Status within the Family:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status has risen</th>
<th>Status gone down</th>
<th>No Change in Status</th>
<th>Total No. of Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage to Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tabulated statement leads to the conclusion that in the perception of half of the population surveyed the status of women within the family has gone up visibly. They feel that they are held in high respect by other members of the family.

The respondents felt that their status has changed from non-earning to earning member of the family. Financially they have become independent. This state of independence itself indicates that their status in the family has changed for the better. Respondents have also said that financial independance increases their confidence, changes their personality and this may be one of the reasons for an improvement in their status within the family. Economic Status of the family increases
because of the additional income brought to the family by working women members. So the outlook woman is considered as an asset to the family.

One-fifth of the women respondents said that status has actually gone down. Members in the family have been observed to be dissatisfied because for long hours working, women are away from the house. Husband, children and in-laws are unhappy. This absence many times causes conflicts between husband and wife on occasions they are even asked to "leave the job for taking care of home properly". The dislike of family members towards women's jobs may be the reason, why these respondents felt that their status in the family had gone down.

Thirty percent of respondents have expressed the opinion that there was no change in their status. This is because in their case,

(1) family has been giving them due respect from the beginning.
(2) basically they did not work out of an economic need

(3) and it is their educational qualifications which enable them to work outside the home.

From the above information it may be concluded, that "Status" of women within family is related rather to the family to which they belong. Attitude of family is one of the essential factor determining the status of working women in the family.

7.4 ATTITUDE OF FAMILY MEMBERS:

Researcher has also tried to find out attitude of family members towards women members working in industries. We find that 60 percent of the respondents reported that their family members have sympathetic attitude towards the working woman. Respondents have said that elder members, in-laws, husband, all of them are co-operative and understanding. They are ready to share work, they look after the house in their absence, they are free to employ servants and when they are tired the family goes out for lunch or dinner. This sympathy creates for the working woman a favourable and encouraging environment.
Two-fifth of respondents said that family members were not co-operative and did not have a sympathetic attitude. Some of the respondents stated that parents and in-laws were orthodox and did not like their daughters/daughters in-law working outside the house. They were reluctant to share the work, to look after the house. Antipathy of family members towards women employment creates unfavourable and discouraging atmosphere. These factors increase only the tensions and physical exertion of working women.

Positive attitude of family members towards women employment and presence of the co-operative elder member in the family have been observed to be very essential for working women. Women employees staying in joint families said that when they went out for work someone of the family members (grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousin brothers), were present in the house and this enabled women-employees to go to work without tension, being reassured that in their absence the house would be looked after by the other members in the family, so that they did not have to worry about their children. On the other hand, women employees
staying in nuclear families said that they had to manage all the house-hold jobs; they had to keep their children in creche or had to employ servants, which meant that everyday they left house under tension.

Elder members in the family could be considered as a boon to working mother. It was observed that 16 percent families have elder members in the house. Respondents said that they did not expect elder members to work in the house, but they felt that they got moral support and assurance of safety and security. Women staying in the nuclear families said, on the other hand, that they really longed for the presence of elder members who would affectionately look after the children.

7.5 EMPLOYMENT OF SERVANTS:

Many women employees employ servants for cleaning, washing and performing other domestic duties. Data on this matter thrown up by the survey are as follows:

Of the 150 respondents 90 (i.e. 60 percent) reported that they employed servants for domestic work, whereas the remaining 60 (i.e. 40 percent of the total), stated that they did not employ any servants.
It is true that modernisation and development have opened up new avenues of employment for women, and women have responded to these by accepting jobs in different fields in an increasing number. When women work outside the house they do not entirely escape from the household chores; they have to manage both the house and the job. To get some relief from domestic work, they find it helpful to employ servant's for doing the house-hold jobs like cleaning, washing, and looking after the house. We find that 60 percent have employed servants for cleaning and washing and of these 8 percent women employees have also servants for cooking. The following points were also brought out by our data:

(1) Women belonging to higher income groups employ servants.

(2) A few women employ servants as a status symbol.

(3) Family members willingly allow them to employ servants.

(4) Servants were easily available (to all who wanted).

We have noted that 40 percent women donot employ servants. Respondents said that they did not afford to employ servants as they belonged to low income group. With the result that all types of domestic duties were done by women employees themselves.
From the above information it is significant to note that changes have to be brought about both in the situation at home and at work so as to make environment, both in the house and in the work place congenial for the efficient and successful working of an employed women. At home efforts must be made to relieve or liberate women from the dull routine of household work, which at present occupies most of their time and gives them hardly any time to develop outside interests, to enjoy social life. One way of doing this is to enable women-employees to have domestic labour saving devices (employment of servants, labour minimizing gadgets) to make household chores less time and energy-consuming. There is, however an income constraint in this respect for many women-employees. More sympathetic and adaptive attitude on the part of family members would be helpful in this context.

It is significant to note that industrialisation has given local employment opportunities to women, and has absorbed minimum as well as highly qualified women in employment. Employment opportunities have increased in Nashik because of industrialisation, giving a chance to women to earn monthly income. Particularly in small units it is rather easy to get employment without written test, interview, or any type of formalities.
However transition from mere work at home to work in a factory was not smooth for women, although they could eventually adapt themselves to changing conditions. Industrialisation has indeed brought about a tremendous change in their social and economic life.

We witness today that because of social change taking place all around entry of women in various fields has become possible. Social change here means a change in the outlook of the people and in customs and traditions, rise in educational levels a change in attitude towards equality between men and women, growing acceptance of the principle of equal pay for equal work, availability of equal opportunities of education and employment, a change in family size and the establishment of nuclear family. Changing social conditions have created conditions conducive to giving equal rights and privileges to women. This is making women leave homes to work outside.

Similarly, economic pressures arising out of rising prices and expectation of higher standard of living also have forced women to accept employment in various fields. Thus socio-economic
changes have both allowed and forced women to seek gainful employment. As indicated in preceding paragraphs a number of changes at home would be necessary to enable women-employees to take the maximum advantage of growing opportunities, without being subject to overstrains and excessive tension.

7.6 **ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE:**

The accrual of monthly income have given women some measure of economic independence. However, some of the women employees reported that they had to maintain monthly record of expenditures and that for certain items of expenditure they had to take permission from husband or from father. All the same, very few among the respondents said that they had to give salary to their husbands. Almost all of them agreed that their monthly earning capacity has increased the economic status of the family.

Women agree that their total family income has increased enabling the family to spend more liberally for attaining a better quality of life.
Thus now the family can:

(i) employ servants,

(ii) Spend more for various needs of children,

(iii) Undertake long journeys

(iv) purchase residential accommodation for itself,

and

(v) purchase labour saving household gadgets,

vehicles etc.

The supplementary income earned by working women has made this possible.

Among the respondents 30 percent reported that basically they were not working out of economic need. In fact, they save entirely whatever they earn. It is, however, observed that this saving propensity has not developed among 70 percent women because they work mainly either to improve their living or to meet the daily needs of the family.

Industrialisation in the industrially backwards areas of the State has provided additional employment opportunity to local people. Women are availing themselves of this opportunity. They are found to be working at different levels, from unskilled to highly skilled. It has been evident from the study that women are employed as ordinary workers, clerks, typists, personal assistants,
accountants, stenographers, doctors, executives, managers. While doing the job in industries they have to face several problems such as managing the house, looking after the children, husband, in-laws, parents, making adjustment with timing, hours of work, unfavourable working conditions, limited facilities and unsatisfactory level of earnings yet overcoming all these problems women continue to work in the industries. Their sincerity, hard work patience facilitates their participation in the productive activities of the nation.

Women have to discharge the household duties and look after children. In very few cases it has been observed that male members and elders in the family share the burden of work at home. The work at home is considered to be exclusively that of women though both men and women work outside working for long hours in the industries keeps women away from home for a longer time. Although they are working for the betterment of the family their children, husband, and in-laws are not always satisfied. Some of the respondents said that they themselves felt guilty that house and family members are neglected. All these factors keep women in a confused state of mind without being able to find any solutions. The work they do outside the house
and at home makes them tense and affects their physical and mental health to a considerable extent. Women seem to have been born to suffer and sacrifice. Formerly, a woman's role graduated from than of a daughter, to that of a daughter-in-law, then of a wife and mother. Conditions are now changing. In the case of more and more women, the status of being gainfully applied is added to these different roles, without the accompaniment of the necessary adaptive changes on the part of other members of the family, society.