

CHAPTER-IV  
HOME-ROLE

ROLE OF WOMEN : ROLE IN THE FAMILY :

The majority of Indian women think that the primary role of a woman is to bear children, develop them and look after the home. The husband is the bread winner and it is the wife who has to devote herself exclusively to her home. According to tradition bound people's opinion an ideal woman is an ideal housewife. The greatness and goodness of an Indian woman lie in maintaining a happy home.

According to Dr. A.S. Altekar, the household management is primarily the duty of the housewife in Hindu society. She has to discharge her duties in consultation with her husband. She has to be co-operative and open hearted to her husband, should have to be respectful with her brothers and sisters in laws, parents-in-laws and other members of the family including servants she has to be a Gruhini, a perfect woman.

In the present day life, the traditional picture of the ideal housewife and the notion about the functions of a housewife are undergoing a change. There has been a change in her roles within and outside the home.

ROLES PERFORMED IN THE HOME :

1) Cooking of the food is the primary function of a housewife. In spite of the fact that in the modern period, women have to impart remunerative jobs and works outside the family sheering equal responsibility, it is expected from the woman that she should cook for all the members.

**TABLE-No. 14**  
**HOUSEHOLD-ROLES-PERFORMED-BY**  
**THE-WOMEN UNDER STUDY**

Sr. No.	Household Role	Number of Respondents	% to the N = 110
1.	Cooking	95	86.36
2.	Cleaning of the house	75	68.18
3.	Washing cloths and utensils	65	59.09
4.	Looking after children	26	23.63
5.	Looking after parents- in-laws	34	30.90
6.	Marketing for the house- hold consumption	90	81.81

The information given in the above table reveals about the household roles performed by the respondents under study.

The respondents under study have shown that 95 respondents (86.36%) are engaged in cooking, the remaining 15 respondents have their mother-in-laws capable to handle the kitchen. There is understanding between the members of the family <sup>as</sup> far as the division of work is concerned.

Cleaning of the house is done by 75 respondents (68.18%) and washing of the cloths by 65 respondents (59.09%). Only 26 have to look after their children (23.63%) as the group under study is comprised of middle age group and their children have become capable to look after themselves. The parents-in-laws of 34 (30.90%) need care. The marketing for the household consumption is done by 90 respondents (81.81%). This

means that, it is the responsibility of the wife of regulate the daily expenditure and control the economic position of the house.

Though the woman has to work outside her home she is engaged in the household duties. The division of labour among the members is seen in the table given above. It is seen that still today cooking and maintenance are taken as the important activities of the womenfolk.

Apart from the duties mentioned above, the information collected from the respondents gives us further insight to know household roles of the wife.

i) It is expected from her that she should decorate the home and keep it clean and tidy.

ii) She should receive the guests and should look after their comforts. If the guests are from husband's side then they expect that a daughter-in-law should bear their services and should oblige them by her performances for their comfort.

iii) It is the function of the housewife to take care of the health of the family members. She has to attend the patient and take medical care of her relatives.

In the modern age, there has been an extension of co-operation among the members of the family and especially among the husband and wife. This has made the respondents under study to handover their responsibilities to their counterparts and other members of the family.

The husband and other members co-operation is seen at many instances.

In the Indian society here are general impressions and expectations about the roles of the housewife in the home. Ideally she has to devote herself exclusively to her home as her children need security and care from the mother.

It is strainious to maitain the balance between the home role and the role outside the home for working women. At one end she has to preserve the traditional responsibilities in the home and at the other hand she is expected to devote fully forthe role outside the home which is economically beneficial one.

In the present study, more than half working women are petty traders and majority of them are not literate and very few have received primary level education. The economic nêd forced them to accept the job requiring physical strains and contineous attention to the vegetable market. The roles they perform at home include cooking as the primary job and inspite of their work outside the home is strainious one. The role of mother is equally important in case of working women. The age group of children requiring atmost care from the mother is between 0 to10 in the group under study the number of dependent children is less ~~←————→~~ and the reason being the more number of the middle aged women in the respondents group. However, it was revealed from the respondents that their children though grown up and can manage themselves in many respects in their dally life require attention of the mother. The petty traders are helped by their offsprings in their trading

work, such as packing of the vegetables, allowing the mother for lunch and tea break. It is found that, though the sons and daughters are helping her they expect that she as a mother should have to perform specific functions like cooking and looking after them.

The nurses and teachers and the clerks in various organizations have been able to impart their home role efficiently as they get more time to devote themselves to home. They have to perform their duties as mothers and wives to the satisfaction of their husbands and offsprings inspite they earn.

Thus, it is seen that the home role performances are an important aspect of the life of the working women under study.

#### HUSBANDS - CO-OPERATION AND HOME ROLE :

Husband's co-operation in the work at home plays an important part as far as happiness in the home is concerned. It gives moral support to working woman.

The working woman is unable to pay full attention to her husband and may be that she is not able to gratify her physically and psychologically at many times. Since she has been unable to attend her husband's calls, it is likely that she faces difficulties.

As a mother she is also not able to fulfil the expectations of her children and may feel guilty for not doing these roles properly.

As she is unable to look after the parents-in-laws due to jobs outside home, the conservative husband may curse her.



In all these situations, if the husband is co-operative she can give justice to her position in the home. The husband can look after children and his parents in the absence of his wife and also when she is tired. The unwritten division of labour between husband and wife leads to a happy environment in the home.

**TABLE No. 15**

**HUSBAND'S CO-OPERATION IN THE HOUSE-ROLE**

Sr. No.	Nature of co-operation	Number of husbands
1.	Fully co-operative	75 (68.18%)
2.	Neutral	25 (22.72%)
3.	Non-cooperative	10 (09.09%)
Total :		110

The table No. 15 given above shows that the co-operative given to the working women by their husbands is significantly more in the group under study.

In the group under study we notice that 75 husbands (68.18%) are co-operative and help their wives in their home roles. They get their tea prepared by themselves and even help their wives in their home roles in one or the other way. There are these 75 husbands extending co-operation to their wives working for the family.

The number of husbands who are not fully co-operative but who also do not have the non-cooperation to their wives in the home is 25 (22.72%). They expect that the traditionally sanctioned roles like

cooking, cleaning of the house, washing cloths and utensils and attending the quests are to be performed by the women only. It is below the status of the man to perform such faminic duties.

There are 10 husbands, who are non-cooperative and they are not ready to accept the fact that, their women have to undergo strain in imparting home roles along with their jobs outside the family.

Thus, it is noticed here that the husband's co-operation plays important role in the home atmosphere. A woman if supported by and extended co-operation by her husband can perform her roles in a better manner.

CO-OPERATION FROM OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY :

Table No. 16 given below shows the nature of co-operation extended by the children and other members of the family to the group of working women under study.

TABLE No. 16  
CO-OPERATION FROM OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY  
TO THE RESPONDENTS UNDER STUDY

Sr. No.	Name of co-operation	Children	Other members	Total
1.	Fully co-operative	30	112	142 (57.4%)
2.	Nutral	15	58	73 (29.55%)
3.	Non-co-operative	10	22	32 (12.95%)
Total :				247

The table given above shows that 142 members (57.4%) from the group of non-respondents are fully co-operative in the home roles of the respondents. 73 members (29.55%) are natural, in the sense, they are neither co-operative nor unhappy about the performance of mother's role or wife's role. They just tolerate the role performed by their mothers or wives in case of children and husband respectively. There are 32 (12.95%) members who are non-cooperative and are not happy with their mothers and wives respectively. This signifies that more persons in the group under study have accepted the roles performed by the respondents.

**REASONS-FOR-ACCEPTING JOB  
OUTSIDE-HOME :**

The factors responsible for a woman's decision to work for income outside her home are important from the sociological point of view, as they influence the family structure and life within the family and in the outside world.

The important reasons which are motivating the married woman to work outside the family are of three major types.

- 1) Economic necessity or monetary benefits.
- 2) Social role, and
- 3) Personality.

1) Economic necessity is the major reason for most of the working women under study. The petty traders are engaged in their work because their husband's income is not sufficient to meet the basic requirements of their families. This section of the sample comes from



educationally and economically backward class and thus the male earners in the family are not able to feed their families properly.

The nurses, teachers and clerks are also in need of economic support as they come from the class which is economically not able to provide better life conditions to their family members.

There are some clerks, who as they have the educational qualification and want to utilize it to develop their personality and social status before they are involved in their family activities and responsibilities have accepted the job. There are parents and parents-in-laws to take care of their young children, which has facilitated them to earn and develop their careers.

The nurses have chosen their jobs with a motive to earn and at the same time to develop their careers.

In this regard, it is seen that, the respondents under study have developed self-respect and are aspiring for better life for themselves and especially for their children. If by working outside the home money comes we can develop our children in a better manner, is the common saying of the respondents under study.

As a woman, the average respondent faces changes in her life-cycle and as most of our respondents are in the middle-age group, their household responsibilities have been less and hence they can devote themselves for the jobs or work outside the family.

The income level of husbands signify that majority of them having income upto 3000 and only two, one serviceman and one medical practioner, are having income more than Rs. 3000,00 per month.

Taking into cosideration the incomes of both the respondent and her counterpart it is seen that the group under study is earning just sufficient for the family's maintenance.

The socio-economic conditions of the respondents group under study gives an idea about their position in the social setting.