



## WOMEN IN DUAL ROLE; A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

**Dr. Nidhi Tyagi**, Associate Professor, College of Law & Legal Studies, TMU Moradabad

**Dr. Radhey Shyam Jha**, Associate Professor, Law College Dehradun, Uttarakhand University Dehradun

**Abhinav Chaudhary**, Assistant Professor, College of Law & Legal Studies, TMU Moradabad

**Sourabh Batar**, Assistant Professor, College of Law & Legal Studies, TMU Moradabad

---

**ABSTRACT-** This study is conducted with the purpose to study the dual role of women in advanced contemporary societies. At present they are performing dual roles of a housewife and a professional. This dual role on one side is helping women to enter into a wider life and liberating her from the exclusiveness of domesticity but on other side is taking away her intimate primary relations with her. Not only this, they are facing numerous problems at workplace. For instance when they switch outside for job they face the problem of transportation, often looked down with suspicion by family members, gender inequality at work place, sexual demands made by colleagues or senior co-workers, discrimination in terms of salaries, increments, promotions, sexual harassment etc. This not only results in frustration but in order to beat competition with her counterparts she gradually isolates her from social gathering so that she could give her hundred percent in professional role. This situation results in role conflict and hence she sacrifices one role at the cost of other which is not only shattering her marital, family life but also resulting in her personality disorganization.

**Key Words:** Gender roles, Role Conflict, Personality disorganization, gender inequality, sexual harassment.

### I. INTRODUCTION:

A general perception about human species in Indian society is that both males and females are incomplete with each other. Their inter-dependency, mutual understanding, love and cooperation make the survival of life going. One cannot survive in the absence of other. However religion has played a prominent role in distributing roles and responsibilities among the both which maintains a balance between the gender roles. Women in traditional society were expected to maintain home whereas men were supposed to make efforts for physical labor for the economic subsistence of families. This approach is sexist so far as advanced society is concerned. Gender roles in modern societies are totally reversed. In traditional societies they were required to be virgin. Not only this, but virginity was also expected in their mindsets and thoughts. It was believed that husbands draw their supremacy from Almighty and hence women were required to remain subordinate to him. She was expected to learn weaving, preparing the food, fulfilling the marital obligations. Though in traditional societies also she used to economically support the husband especially in farming activities but when her economic activities intervened with family affairs she used to leave the roles for the sake of family and children. Hence gender roles in traditional societies were rigidly defined. But as a result of industrial revolution domestic production came to an end and women also started coming out of their houses to economically assist the families. This economic independence altered their roles in society. Today women do not withdraw from her economic engagements for the sake of family and children rather she continues the same till the age of retirement which has added to new problem i.e. gender differences in labor market. This spread of individualism, more emphasis on self growth, self realization, increased aspiration for salaries, jobs are some of the prominent reasons behind postponement of institution of family, marriage and increase in fragile relationships between husband and wife in advanced societies.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:** The objective of this paper is to assess the impact of changed gender role of women on Indian society and institution of family and to examine the conditions under which the patterns of change emerged.

## II. SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN MODERN SOCIETY

Women are found in a large number of forces today. The great industrial revolution and the consequent industrialization opened the doors of employment for women. Women started availing themselves of employment opportunities in almost all the civilized countries including India. Adult women today are no more associated with solely with the role of homemaker especially in urban areas. Millions of women – married and single, with and without children-are working outside home. A greater proportion of women are seeking and obtaining paid employment more than ever before. In America for instance more than 55% of adult American women held jobs outside the home, as compared with only 43% in India. Women's increasing involvement in paid labor force led to a number of social consequences of which the following may be noted:

### 1. INCREASING INSTANCES OF DIVORCES AND SEPARATIONS

Gainful jobs outside the family have boosted the morale of women. Thus, for married women income from employment can be effective security in case of separation or divorce. The separated and divorced women can lead economically a comfortable living provided they do not have a gainful job. Studies clearly reveal the fact that in Western societies, the rate of divorce is relatively higher at the level of employed women than at the level of women without jobs. In past many full time homemakers or housewives had little confidence in their ability to make a living. As a result, some remained in unsatisfying marriages, thinking that they had no other alternative way to survive. This is still the case for a considerable number of women in most of the developing countries of the world. India is also not an exception.

### 2. WOMEN TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF DOUBLE BURDEN

As women are increasingly involved in employment outside the home, men have an opportunity to become more involved in the care and socialization of children. But social surveys conducted in the same fields clearly indicates that men find little time to devote for either socialization of children or to share the family burden of their wives. For instance a) Freda Reblsky and Cheryl Hanks (1973) studies conducted in USA have revealed that "The average period of verbal interactions between father and baby and baby was only 38 seconds per day) Psychologist Wade Mackey conducted in 1987 a cross-cultural study of 17 societies including those in Morocco, Hongkong, Ireland, And Mexico found that limited father-child interactions were typical of all the societies surveyed.<sup>1</sup> Many other studies<sup>2</sup> too confirmed the same result as mentioned above. Hence Longway (1981) stated, 'It remains difficult for men in two –parent households to deviate from their traditional occupational roles in order to become more involved in child rearing.' The studies clearly reveal that employed women have been largely unable to get their husbands to assume a greater role in needed homemaking duties, including child care. As a result increasing number of wives become subject to a double-burden long week works at home and outside the home. Thus, women's growing participation in the paid labor-force is not bringing them together freedom and power as it was expected.

## III. CONSEQUENCES ON SOCIETY

Employment of women outside the family is considered as a phenomenon of no less importance. It has influenced wide range of societal activities.

a) Employment of women has been a big boon to many of the entrepreneurs for female labor is found to be much cheaper. Easy availability of female labor has also led to the exploitation and harassment of women.

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard Schaefer's 'Sociology' –Page 286-287

<sup>2</sup> The New York State Study: Karthya Walker and Margaret Woods (1976) studied 1296 dual career families in New York State and found that, on an average, wives account for about 70 percent of the total family time spent on housework. Husbands provide about 15 percent, and children about 15 percent. In terms of the actual time involved, the full time home maker spends a minimum of 40 hours per week on housework, whereas the wife who work for wages spends a minimum of 30 hours each week." –Richard Schaefer –Page 287.

- b) Pre-occupation of women with jobs outside the family has its adverse consequences on the maintenance and continuance of family traditions and religious customs.
- c) Employed parents are no longer able to give cultural training to their children in family traditions and religious observances.
- d) Though employment of women outside the family has contributed to the economic betterment of the family as such but simultaneously the inability of the women to spare enough time for their children has often resulted in emotional and psychic problems.
- e) Working parents takes the children off from the view of parents. According to Neumeyer, "Those fathers who work on a nightshift those mothers who work on a dayshift their children work on a street shift."
- f) In a family when a husband expects good food from her wife, her precious time to spend with his better half irrespective of knowing the fact that the wife is working, but when the expectations are not fulfilled the situation brings an inconsistency between expectations and achievement. It further breeds aggression and frustration which further promotes family squabbles resulting in a state of family disorganization and a host of psychological and psychosomatic disorders in the life of both husband and wife.
- g) The dual role of women promotes a situation of role conflict in society for each role demanding 100% but genuinely it is not possible to give the same in every role. Hence they are required to sacrifice one at the cost of other which not only has an adverse effect upon family, profession but result in personality disorganization too.
- h) Social problem of working women, one of the most prominent problems of women at workplace is sexual exploitation of women. Some men express their retaliation with their female counterparts by trying to dominate them especially when they view them as their competitors. Another factor is the ration of single parenthood headed by women is gaining ground. In such cases men consider women employees as a threat to them and hence they are either given less incentives, lesser promotions or sexually exploited by male counterparts or employers to cause humiliation. Also sex discrimination pushes women to lower paid jobs which are further accorded by sexually harassing them. Such people or co-workers reminds her of her weak gender, causing more of tensions which she perceives are far more than pursuing a better salary.

#### IV. SEX DISCRIMINATION IN INDIAN SOCIETY

This dual role of women is affecting the society in various ways be it a part of neither the family nor any economic organization are facing challenges in every sphere. This discrimination on the basis of sex is creating a big hurdle in the well being and upliftment of women. Sex discrimination in Indian society is embedded in our Indian culture. For instance, "Men should be competitive; women be cooperative. Men be patient and women full of patience, Men are expected to express their anger but women should never be angry, Men can be loud but women be polite and humble. Men are supposed to gain gratification from self-recognition of a job well done but women are not."<sup>3</sup> Thus much of this perspective is due to culture expectations of a male and female.

#### V. CONSEQUENCES OF SEXISM

**1. Pressures of Role Conflict for Women:** Since women are to bear the brunt of womanhood, they are forced to forego many educational, political, cultural and economic opportunities and are made to accept the feminine ideal-a thing of beauty and perfect housewife. They accept these stereotypes and give up the idea of exploring their talents. If they dare to reject them, then they risk severe role-conflicts. They are even being accused of unfeminine.

**2. Women being treated as objects rather than subjects:** Sexism psychologically affects women. Human beings are said to possess greater ability, the capacity to act and shape the external environment. But in fact this basic human experience is restricted to men only. Women experience it only second hand, that is through the supportive role of men who act and shape the world. Women's experience becomes passive rather than active. They are merely treated as thoughtless objects rather than subjects.

<sup>3</sup> 3.N.J.Smelser in "Sociology" (1993) Page 204-205

3. ***Strains and Pressures Experienced by Men as a result of the practice of sexism:*** Due to vast socio-economic and technological changes the male is undergoing heavy stresses and strains. Some of the alarming facts about these outcomes are mentioned below<sup>4</sup>:

- a) The available data revealed that men are 5 times likely than women to commit suicide.
- b) Men are three times more likely to suffer from severe mental disorders.
- c) Men are fourteen times more likely to become alcoholics and the majority of narcotics addicts are found to be males.
- d) Men are more likely to suffer more than women from all stress-related diseases such as hypertension, and heart disease.
- e) It is generally observed that men are generally more frequently involved in acts of violence than women.

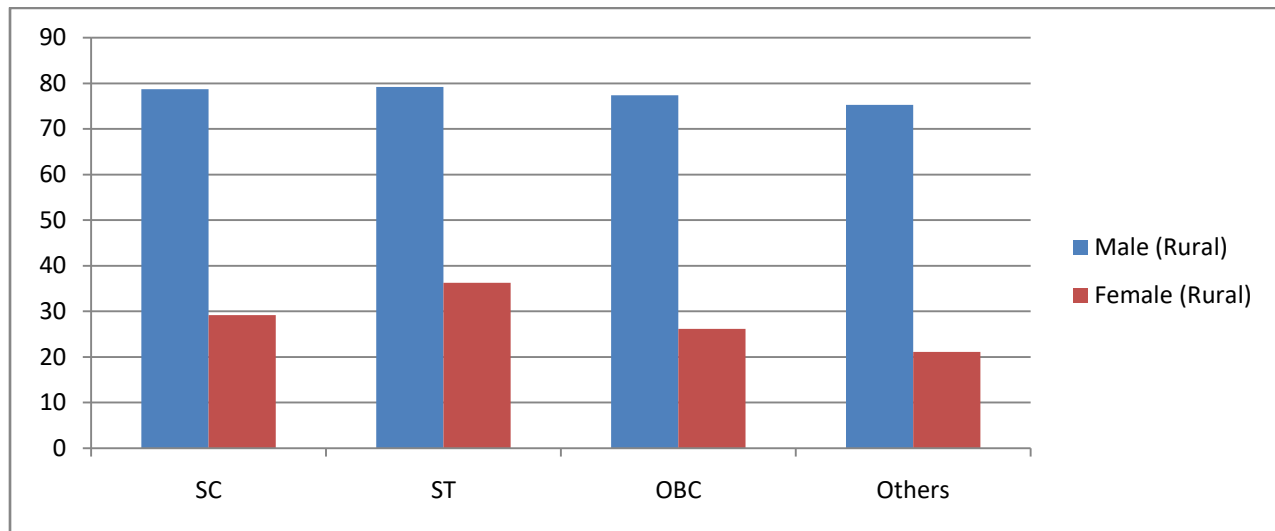
#### VI. ECONOMIC COST OF SEXISM:

The economic costs to women are greater if we compare them with men. Even though women have equal qualifications on par with men, in many business establishments they are paid less than what men in the same profession in both rural and urban sectors. According to Indian Labor bureau the ratio of participation of women in labor market is lesser in comparison to their male counterparts in last few years. In fact there are legislations like Equal Remuneration Act 1976 which remove wage discrimination between male and female workers. But the fact is that these legislations remain in majority of instances as dead letters. Studies have proved that families rely on female breadwinners are found to be poorer than the ones which have male breadwinners. Any society that ascribes low status to some of its members on the ground of race, sex is artificially restricting the economic contribution of part of the population.

<b>Labor Market Participation by Different Social Group in Rural &amp; Urban Areas</b>				
	<b>Male (Rural)</b>	<b>Female (Rural)</b>	<b>Male (Urban)</b>	<b>Female (Urban)</b>
<b>SC</b>	78.7	29.2	71.5	20.8
<b>ST</b>	79.2	36.3	70.8	19.3
<b>OBC</b>	77.4	26.2	69.7	17.1
<b>Others</b>	75.3	21.1	67.6	13.6

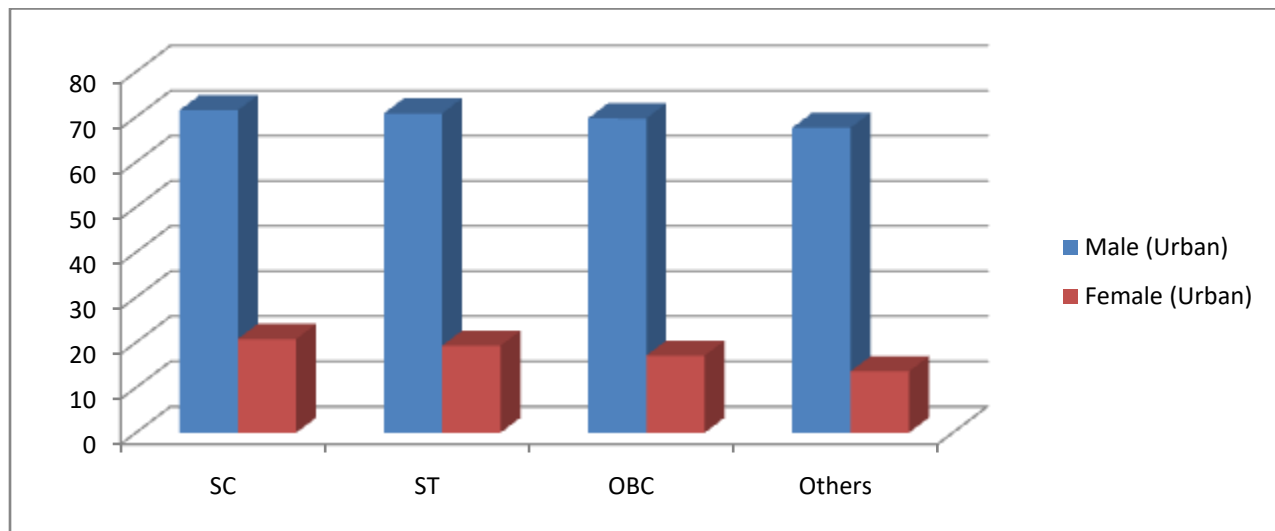
<sup>4</sup> Ian Robertson –Page 306-307

**Figure: 1 - Labor Market Participation by Different Social Groups in Rural area**



Source: Labor Bureau 2015

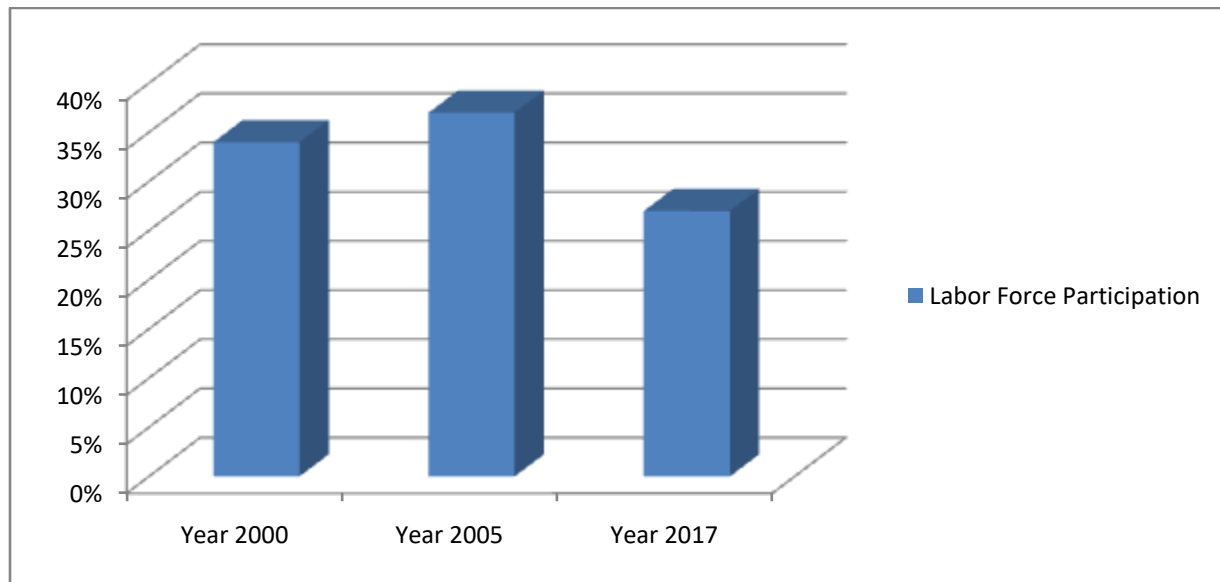
**Figure: 2 - Labor Market Participation by Different Social Groups in Urban Area**



Source: Labor Bureau 2015

Labor Force Participation		
Base Year	2000	34%
Base Year	2005	37%
Base Year	2017	27%

**Figure: 3 – Decline in Labor Force Participation Ratio in India**



Source: PTI New Delhi, March 08, 2019 12:34

#### VII. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

A big Nation like India which consists of more than 50 crore of women cannot afford to ignore the role of women in the national development. It is in this context that the process of women empowerment can assume its importance. Women cannot be empowered in a magical manner. It cannot be an spontaneous process but requires deliberate and conscious efforts. It is through the combined and coordinated efforts of the Government, people and the women the task can be fulfilled. Women cannot be effectively empowered by statutory powers or by governmental efforts alone. They can be empowered through emancipation of women, women movements, education, communication, men be taught to respect the women and general awakening.

There may be various factors which may facilitate and improve the status of women:

- 1. Access to Education and Employment:** Women can become stronger only with educational and economic power. Mere expectations cannot help. Conditions must be created in such a way that women can get easy access to education and later on become employed. Sufficient economic freedom is a must for women to lessen their dependence on men.
- 2. Change in Conservative Cultural Approach:** There is a need to change the fatalistic cultural approach which somewhere still believes that women must not be given equal representation in in jobs as their main task is confined to kitchen instead of bread winners.
- 3. Access to Education and Employment:** Women can become stronger only with educational and economic power. Mere expectations cannot help. Conditions must be created in such a way that women get easy access to education and later on become employed. Sufficient economic freedom is a must for women to lessen their dependence on men.
- 4. Freedom to take decisions and to make choices:** Women should have the freedom to decide whether to marry or not and after marriage whether they would like to pursue the job or not.
- 5. Active Participation in politics:** If women's voice is to be given moiré weight age she must be given active representation in politics.

6. **Education and Literacy:** Still in comparison to other countries Indian has highest amount of literacy rate specially in rural areas. Giving them education means empowering them to enjoy the benefits of development which in return enables them to contribute further to the national progress.

7. **Support and Cooperation from Primary Groups:** Primary group members can play a crucial role in boosting the morale of a woman and extending their cooperation to her as a husband, as a father, as a friend and as a son. Thus is possible only when marriage moves from an institution to companionship.

#### REFERENCES:

1. Jayachandran, S., "The roots of gender inequality in developing countries" Annual Review of Economics".
2. Bloom, D.E. Canning. W, Flink, G. & Finaly, J.E (2009) Fertility, Female Labour participation and demographic dividend. Journal of Economic Growth 14 (2), 79-101.
3. Helse, L(1998)- Violence against women, an integrated ecological framework, 4(4), 2622-2690
4. Walby, S.(2005) Gender Mainstreaming; Productive Tensions in Theory & Practice, Social Politics, 12(3), 3213-3243
5. Singh, Ajit & Ann Zammit (2007), "International Capital Flows: Identifying the Gender Dimension. World Development, Vol.29, No.7pp.
6. Santosh Ranganath N., Kama Raju T.(2009) Gender Development in India: Dimensions and Strategies" Management Trends, Vol.6, No 1&2, ISSN:0973-9203 PP120-12
7. Thompson E.H., Pleck J.H. The Structure of Male Norms, American Behavioral Scientists 1986; 29:531-543(Google Scholar)
8. Anderson, M.L. (1993)-Thinking About Women; Sociological Perspectives on sex & gender, New York, Macmillan
9. Beal, C (1994) Boys & Girls: The Development of Gender Roles, New York, McGraw Hills
10. Giddens, A. (1993): Sociology, Cambridge University, Polity Press
11. Morris, C.G.(1988) Psychology, An Introduction, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
12. Miller, D.T., Taylor B., & Buck, M.L.(1991) Gender Gaps: Who needs to be explained? Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61, 5-12
13. Basow, S.A. (1980) Sex Role Stereo types; Traditions & Alternatives. Monterey
14. Rao. Shankar. N.C. "Sociology", S. Chand and Publications Limited, New Delhi (1990) pg. (814-816)