



# “A Comparative Study Of Working And Non-Working Women On General Adjustment And Attitudes Towards ELUTED Social Issues In Muzaffarpur District, Bihar

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## ABSTRACT

The study was designed to compare the general adjustment and social attitudes of working and non-working women, for this 100 working and 100 non-working urban married women of Muzaffarpur District comparable in age, education and family income were interviewed. The responses of the two groups of women were recorded by the investigator using a General Adjustment Inventory and an opinion Poll schedule. The analysis of the data revealed that working women are less adjusted in life but are more liberal than non-working women with respect to some social issues related to women.

**Keywords :-** Working & Non-Working women, Adjustment, Attitudes, Social Issues.

## INTRODUCTION

Women in general may be classified as working and non-working. A working woman is one who goes out of home to work. But the term ‘non-working women’ does not imply that she does not work. She works inside her home as housewife and is fully involved in the management of her home affairs. A working woman, however, is different from a woman worker who works outside the home as labor. A working woman is one who has certain amount of education and is in gainful employment in some office or institutions.

A working woman has to face many problems. Her problems increase enormously on account of the prevailing age-old belief that a woman is meant for home and a man is for outside work. Her problems become more complex when she aspires for some measure of personal freedom and a say in family expenditure as also for a balanced and respectful life. Her other problems vary with the nature or category to which the working woman belongs as also with her personality structure and her capacity to work and adjust herself to family conditions.

Movbray, Lanir and Hulce (1982) posited that if woman opt for an occupational role, they are trust into a conflict between family, child care and work. Andarson – Kulman and Paludi (1986) assessed the degree of role strain and perception of work, child care and family environment among working mothers and found role strain to be related to factors in their work and home environment. Ramanamma and Bambawala (1984) in an interview of a large number of working women of seven occupations found that most of them frequently faced criticism and opposition from family members. Gupta and Ganguli (1982) in another Indian study on married women working as clerks found greater negative affects of work on marriage than these of marriage on work. Gerson (1986) in a study on 27-37 yrs old American woman has opined that woman are likely to become more diverse as they attempt to reconcile the conflict between work and domestic responsibilities. Koninck (1984) noted that a high percentage of mothers and wives who have paid employment outside the home experience cumulative stress of too many physical and emotional demands to meet, too many hours of work and a continued struggles to reconciles the two settings.

As the life conditions of working and non-working woman and the problems faced by them are different, their general adjustment and their opinions regarding different social issues are bound to vary. Working woman have to perform two roles, one in the office and the other in the family and as a consequence of greater role strain they are likely to display improper general adjustment as compared to non-working women, further, despite equal level of education and family income, working woman are likely to hold more liberal views on some social issues such as working woman co-education, sex education, intercaste marriage, legalized abortion, divorce, equal rights for woman, widow-marriage, premarital love and sexual freedom. The present research was designed to test these propositions.

## **METHOD**

### **Sample :**

The sample consisted of 100 working women (employed as clerks, stenographers and school teachers) and 100 non-working women (house-wives) who were comparable in respect of age, education and family income. Their age ranged between 25 and 40 yrs, education from matriculation to graduation and family income from Rs. 5000 to Rs. 10000 p.m.

### **Tools :**

1. Adjustment Inventory: As a measure of general life adjustment a yes-no type 40-item Adjustment Inventory by Sinha (1981) was used. Higher score on the test indicated better adjustment and lower score signified poor adjustment. Its split half and test retest reliabilities determined on a sample of 50 randomly selected woman were 75 and 71 respectively.
2. Opinion Poll Schedule Question : A schedule was constructed which included questions about the ten social issues referred to above. Each question having three options Yes, and No ‘Yes’ Indicated favorable, “?” undecided and “No” unfavorable opinion.

**Procedure :**

The selected working and non-working women were personally interviewed by the investigator and their responses were tabulated and scored. Before interviewing, a proper report was established with each subject to elicit their genuine responses. Unwilling and non cooperative subject were excluded from the sample.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

For Comparing working woman with non-workin g woman mean scores of the two groups on General Adjustment Inventory were computed and their significance of difference was determined by test. The data are given in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Adjustment scores of working and non-working women and significance of difference.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t
Working women	100	27.10	8.24	
Non-working women	100	29.17	5.97	2.03 *

- $P < .05$

From table 1 it is obvious that mean general adjustment score of working women is lower than that of non-working women and the difference is significant ( $t = 2.03, p \leq .05$ ). The result is consistent with our expectations. The life of working women is tense. They have to face various hazards of life. The burden of work in home and in the office makes them physically tired and amotionally upset. These working women have to face the criticism in home as well as in society because our traditional norm expects them to perform the role of a wife or a mother. The working women rarely get support of their husband in our male dominated society. On the other hand the life of the non-working women or house-wives is quite safe and comfortable. They get the love of their household affairs. The prestige and status of their husband is their own. In this kind of situation there is less likelihood of difference between a wife and a husband. Because of such situations housewives are more adjusted as compared to working women.

There were 10 social issues to which opinions were sought and tabulated. On the basic of frequency of responses on each issue the two groups were compared. The significance of difference in the opinion on each issue was determined by chisquare tast. Table 2 provides the data.

Table -2

Comparison of working and non-working women with respect to opinion to different social issue.

Social Issues		Working women Yes (N=100)			Non Working women Yes (N=100)			
		?	No		?	No		x2
1.	Working women	92	0	8	40	12	48	61.06*
2.	Co-education	92	2	6	80	1	19	7.92*
3	Sex-education	82	6	12	65	9	26	7.22*
4	Inter-caste marriage	81	3	16	63	3	34	8.73*
5	Legalized abortion	30	7	63	22	2	76	5.22
6	Divorce	44	7	49	43	3	54	1.85
7	Equal rights for women	68	2	30	66	5	23	1.33
8	Widow-marriage	92	2	06	78	6	16	7.70*
9	Premarital love	42	8	50	23	12	65	8.31*
10	Sexual freedom	10	4	86	07	05	86	0.66

- $P < .01 + p < .05$

The positive response ('Yes') on any of the ten social issues indicates liberal outlook while negative response ('No') signifies conservative opinion. It may be observed from Table 2 that on each of the social issues the number of working women experience favourable opinion is greater than that of non-working women. However significant differences in the two groups occur only in respect of 6 issues viz. working woman ( $x^2 = 61.06$ ,  $P < .01$ .) co-education ( $x^2 = 7.92$ ,  $P < .05$ ) sex education ( $x^2 = 7.72$ ,  $P < .05$ ) intercaste marriage ( $x^2 = 8.72$ ,  $P < .05$ ) widow marriage ( $x^2 = 7.70$ ,  $P < .05$ ) and premarital love ( $x^2 = 8.31$ ,  $P < .05$ ). But as regards legalized abortion divorce, equal rights for women and sexual freedom the opinions of working and non-working women are not found to differ significantly. Hence we may conclude that working women have more liberal attitude towards social issues concerning women. However both working and non-working women are found to adhere to conventional norms of society in respect of legalized abortion divorce, premarital love and sexual freedom. In both groups the number expressing negative opinions to these issues is greater than the number expressing positive opinions the more liberal opinion of working women might result from their different life situations. Working women got more exposure to modern values as they frequently come in direct contact with both men and women of different walks of life. These women are more susceptible to changes in outlook caused because of the wave of modernity. It is because of this that tend to deviate from the prevailing customs and conventions. Non-working women, on the other hand are more conscious about traditions and they cling to the prevailing conventions and women are equally conscious and as such reflect more or less identical reactions.

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