

**WORKING MOTHERS  
IN  
WHITE-COLLAR OCCUPATIONS**

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## PREFACE

The question of working mothers and the impact of their work on family life was taken up for study because an increasing number of mothers are found in the labour force ; hence the information how mothers reconcile the work inside and outside the home, what factors help and hinder this task, what their views are on employment in relation to home-making, and how attitude to the one affects attitude to the other should be of importance and interest to the society. For many reasons, misgivings are likely to arise in the minds of people about the consequences of mothers' taking up employment in terms of effects on children, household management and other aspects of family life. A research study should be able to provide objective answers to many of these questions. No research study on these lines was known to have been done anywhere in India when the Madras School of Social Work chose this topic for its study.

The study was started in August, 1964. Interviewing working mothers was done during March—August, 1965 ; non-working mothers in March, 1966 ; and husbands of working and non-working mothers during July—August, 1966.

The study has been made possible through the financial assistance of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and we place on record our deep gratitude to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. To Dr. Dorothy Lally, Dr. Genevieve W. Carter and Miss Marjorie M. Farley of the Health, Education and Welfare Department, and Dr. Ruby Pernell, formerly Social Welfare Attache of the American Embassy in India, we are very much indebted for their encouragement and technical guidance at various stages of the study. Our thanks are also due to the Ministry of Social Welfare, Government of India for approving our research proposal and recommending it for financial assistance from the U. S. Government.

Mr. P. Ramachandran, Lecturer, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, has been a very friendly critic through the various phases of the study. He went through our draft interview schedules for non-working mothers and for husbands of working and non-working mothers, and gave valuable suggestions for their modification. He also commented usefully on the first draft of our report, and the final draft has incorporated, with profit, the modifications suggested by him. We most gratefully acknowledge Mr. Ramachandran's valuable help and criticism.

We are singularly fortunate in having Dr. Sheldon D. Rose, formerly Assistant Professor of Social Work of the University of Michigan (United States) as our consultant. To him we owe a great deal.

Dr. (Mrs.) H. M. Sharma, Dr. N. Vasudeva Rao and other members of the Advisory Committee have been of immense help to us and we are deeply indebted to them. Mrs. Mary Clubwala Jadhav has always been a source of encouragement and we cannot adequately thank her.

Mr. M. Bhakthavatsalam, the then Chief Minister of Madras State, has been very enthusiastic about the research study. His letter of introduction to the employing agencies was of great help in eliciting their co-operation. And we are extremely thankful to him.

Our thanks are due to Mr. V. Ramamurthy for his efficient secretarial assistance, and Miss Mariamma Markose for cheerfully typing and retyping the manuscript.

Our grateful thanks go to the respondents—working and non-working mothers, and their husbands—for their patience and co-operation. We also express our sincere appreciation of the co-operation extended to us by all Government departments and private agencies in supplying us with addresses of working mothers, and husbands of working and non-working mothers, and in permitting us to contact the respondents during office hours.

Though this report is the outcome of team work, I appreciate, in particular, the significant contribution of Dr. B. Gnanadoss, Mr. T. Krishnan Nair and Mr. P. K. Visvesvaran.

Finally, we take this opportunity to express our thanks to all those who helped the research study in different ways.

Madras  
May, 1970

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