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A STUDY ON FACTORS CAUSING CAREER BREAK AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN REENTRANTS IN DAKSHIN KANNADA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The research paper investigates the vital factors leading to career breaks in women and the resurgence of women wanting to make a comeback to the organizational set up. The study adopts probability sampling with emphasis on stratified sampling technique to identify women reentry into workforce followed by convenience sampling technique under non probability sampling with n=62 thereby limiting itself to non-parametric data analysis of Kruskal – Wallis test. The mean rank was highest at 60.00 for outcome of (11) due to cumulative effect of marriage (1) and awaiting better prospects (5) while also (15) due to cumulative effect of child bearing (2), relocation of spouse (4), dependent care (6) and other detrimental factors (7) responsible for career break contributing to a significant difference with 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$) in managing career work balance among women. Public policy intervention is quint essential in labour markets with the need for organizations to be more agile to support specific needs of women career reentrants.

KEYWORDS: Women, Career, Reentry, Workforce, Public Policy

INTRODUCTION

Women form an integral part of the Indian workforce. The total number of female workers in India is 149.9 million and female workers in rural and urban areas are 121.9 and 28.0 million respectively (source: census, 2011). Out of total 149.9 million female workers, 35.9 million females are working as cultivators and another 61.5 million are agricultural labourers". Of the

remaining female's workers, 8.5 million are in household Industry and 43.7 million are classified as other workers. 11.2 As per census 2011, the Work Participation Rate for women is 25.51 per cent as compared to 25.63 per cent in 2001. The Worker Population Rate (WPR) for women in rural areas is 35.1 per cent as compared to 17.5 per cent in urban areas based on 4th Annual Employment-Unemployment Survey (2013-14) and same is 30.2 per cent in rural area and 14.8 per cent in urban area under 5th Annual Employment-Unemployment Survey (2015-16) under Usual Principal & Subsidiary Status (UPSS) Approach. As per 4th and 5th Annual Employment Unemployment Survey launched by Labour Bureau in December 2013 and April 2015, the overall Female Labour Force Participation Rate under Usual Principal & Subsidiary Status (UPSS) Approach has been decreased from 31.1 per cent to 27.4 per cent. As per the results of Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) conducted by National Sample Survey Office, Ministry of Statistics and programme Implementation during 2017-18, the overall Worker Population Ratio for women in the age group 15 & above was 22% and it was 23.7% in rural areas as compared to 18.2% in urban areas based on usual status (Principal status+ subsidiary status) basis. The overall female Labour Force Participation Rate for the age group 15 & above status (Principal status + subsidiary status) basis was 23.3% which was 24.6% in rural areas as compared to 20.4% in urban areas. The overall unemployment rate for the female was 5.6% and the unemployment rate of female in rural areas was 3.8% and 10.8% in urban areas. [*annual survey report – ministry of labour and employment 2019 – 20.*] However, data on women re- entry into workforce is glaringly unavailable and needs to be investigated. This research paper ponders into re-entry reasons and characteristics of women into workforce.

Research Objectives

- (1) To identify the factors responsible for women re-entering into workforce
- (2) To examine the specific needs of women re- entering into workforce.

LITERATURE REVIEW: -

At times of COVID-19, labour market has remained a concern for policymakers (Borland and Coelli 2020). In a recent study conducted it was found that the societal expectations from Indian women to work was a bare minimum of around 4% which proves the fact that Indian society doesn't have any kind of expectation from women to contribute to the expenses (Rajesh S., 2013). However, women have remained a larger part of workforce and their re-entry to work after a career break requires undaunting attention.

The term re-entry of women into workforce has been a topic of concern ever since 1960's and it was first studied in U.S.A in late 1970's (Geber, 2000). 'Re-entry women' used here is defined as women returning to work after a career break; voluntarily or involuntarily of more than six months, and now desires to once again engage in full-time employment. The women seeking re-entry are with abundance work experience, well qualified and all motivated with wanting to make a "comeback". However, the length of their career break appears to play a key role in the re-entry process. (Gwal, 2016)

The Theoretical Perspectives on Women's careers are kaleidoscope career model of Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) argue that women in early careers focus on challenge, during their mid-career, focus on balance and in the later career look for authenticity. Career scape model of

McKie et al. (2013) proposes that women's career choices are driven by willingness to have greater control on work content, time and need for autonomy.

There are literature support for reasons for women's reentry with prime being financial independence, career identity and work centrality (Singh & Vanka, 2021). However, in our study we choose to split up women re- entry into workforce as internal factors and external factors.

Women reentry into workforce: - Internal factors

Reentry women on life planning have been found to have more career indecision (Slaney, tafford, & Russell, 1981) similar to traditional college students (Slaney, 1986). The effects of career indecision (Slaney & Dickson, 1985; Slaney & Lewis, 1986) have succeeded in producing change in career-undecided women i.e reentry women have been found to be relatively career decided and use a rational career decision-making style (MacKinnon-Slaney et al., 1988; Read et al., 1988) with significantly higher expectations of their careers' providing more future life satisfaction (Read et al., 1988) alongside desirability to have a new career (Sewall, 1984) and new work (Pickering & Galvin-Schaefer, 1988; Read et al., 1988). Hence most reentry women were employed full time, had higher salaries, performed more volunteer work, were more satisfied with their jobs, and placed more emphasis on intrinsic work factors including being autonomous and experiencing a sense of accomplishment (Erdwins and Mellinger 1985). In brief reentry women chose sober jobs like social service, education, and health occupations than management and scientific occupations (Malin et al., 1980).

However, with changing times, when leaving the workforce, women are encouraged to develop a long-range plan for reentry (Greer, 2013; Ronzio, 2012; Zimmerman & Clark, 2016). They aspire for a career re-entry to engage in paid work (Harman & Sealy, 2017), with a compromised yet a better fit paid workin sync with their non-work roles (Hakim, 2000). Hence, women's decision to restart a career after a break with presumptions of the unavailability of a flexible work arrangement, part-time work and lack of training (Panteli, 2006) has been studied as re-entry irrespective of shifts in career or field (McKie et al., 2013) while women who identify strongly with their careers and possess a sense of affiliation with their profession return to the same career after the career break (Herman, 2015) (Stanley, 2018). Overall, most women returnees feel welcomed and included, they tend to have a positive outlook towards their career and feel satisfied with their jobs (Bharathi Ravindran, Rupashree Baral, 2012). But brutally sexism persists in organizations as gendered workplace culture (Herman, 2009) observes sexist behavior or formal discrimination, the interpersonal bias among employers perceptions of women employees being too emotional, less committed, being incapable of finishing tasks, and not planning to return to work after childbirth are observed (Hebl and Kleck, 2002) (Hoobler et al., 2009) (Koeber et al., 2006) (Koch et al., 2015). Further few studies have examined the desire to work after career break (Pickering & Galvin-Schaefer, 1988; Read et al., 1988) that is the liminal period between staying home and workforce re-entry (Smith, Jarman, & Osborn, 1999; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) are usually determined by less committed or incompetent at reentry thereby persuading women to usually pursue alternative careers (Lovejoy and Stone, 2012). Thus organizations need to work on cost efficiency of refreshing a re- entry compared to preparing a 'new recruit' from scratch (Roberts 2002; Quant 2001) that could have prelude tendency that career breaks result in downward mobility in salary and employment status (Gwal, 2016). This take us to focus on the notion that reentry women often underrate their actual abilities (Ekstrom et al., 1981) as they

possess excellent retention rates on re- entry (Blankenship et al 2003; Williams et al 2002; Templeman 2001; Nottingham and Foreman 2000; Alden and Carrozza 1997; Kalnins et al 1994). and that career reentry after a career break (Diekman et al., 2019) among women professionals' merits attention (Singh & Vanka, 2021).

Reentry women have been found to be more concerned with independent activity (Gough, 1975), with conflicts and emotional distress for beliefs about their roles, beliefs about self, and interpersonal dissatisfaction (Gilbert, Manning, & Ponder, 1980) exhibiting a less internalized locus of control (Erdwins & Mellinger, 1984; Mellinger & Erdwins, 1985). Therefore, reentry women may have problems in self-concept and self - perception (King & Bauer, 1988). Although women in reentry relate themselves to achievement motivation (Farmer & Fyans, 1983) (Erdwins et al., 1982; Pickering & Galvin-Schaefer, 1988) exhibit less fear of success (Freilino & Hummel, 1985) as they have found to exhibit less ambivalent attitudes toward achievement (Freilino & Hummel, 1985). Further women of re- entry have urge for increasing knowledge (Clayton & Smith, 1987; MacKinnon-Slaney et al., 1988; Sewall, 1984), self-actualization, self-improvement, and social and humanitarian motives (Clayton & Smith, 1987) in order to become self-supporting (Clayton & Smith, 1987) with extrinsic job satisfaction (Smart & Pascarella, 1987) that satiates job dissatisfaction, better employment, or changing jobs (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980; MacKinnon-Slaney, Barber, & Slaney, 1988; Read, Elliott, Escobar, & Slaney, 1988).

To this a step further, re- entry is influenced by age or time of reentry (Healy's, 1999). women returners', have focused on women's choices and career orientations (Doorewaard et al 2004; Houston and Marks 2003) with deep love of the profession, and the enthusiasm (Durand and Randhawa 2002; Stark et al 2001; Pett 2001; Wilcock, 2000). Women returners have a perception of their own skills (Ruth Mason, 2002) as they feel out of touch and fearful of changes in new technology and methods (Hitchcock 2003; Quant 2002; Waibel 2002; Wilcock 2000). Further using career assessment tools, finding a mentor, and focusing on self-care facilitate the re-entry process (Ericksen et al., 2008) requires taking assertiveness training prior to re-entry can also help female professionals (Ericksen et al., 2008). Ronzio (2012) maintains that seeing a career counselor before reentry can help with career transitions, where employers such as consulting firms, have specific programs targeted at re-entrants (Lovejoy & Stone, 2012). This could help solve unrealistic expectations of highly qualified women who often report feeling frustrated and depressed because of their reentry experiences (Lovejoy & Stone, 2012). Thus, women workforce reentry requires some type of intervention (Ericksen et al., 2008; Greer, 2013) as women often fail to maintain professional networks or keep job skills current, and very few create any type of plan for reentry (Greer, 2013). Therefore, Zimmerman and Clark (2016, p.626) argue that "from the day that women opt-out of the workplace, they should be planning for their reentry with a specific focus on maintaining and continuing to develop their skills."

Women re-entry into workforce: - external factors

Family is a strong reason for women to re- enter workforce (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980). However, a women's vocational role is delayed till 35 years until her family role is established (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987) and that career versus family values conflict (Kinnier & Townley, 1986) role conflict and emotional distress (Gilbert et al., 1980) leading to a prime non motivational factor for career re- entry (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980). Further with mounting

family difficulties like availability of financial resources (Sewall, 1984) women reentering the workforce has increased the ability to contribute to the family, both financially and experientially (Clayton & Smith, 1987). Thus, most women reenters are middle class with marriage and children at home, single heads of households, displaced homemakers, or empty-nesters. (Benokraitis, 1987; Christian & Wilson, 1985; Dabrowski, 1983; King & Bauer, 1988; Radloff, 1980). On a personal forefront, reentry women valued freedom and independence over conflicts and intimate relationships (Kinnier & Townley, 1986) which showcased that reentry women and their partners had increased confidence, reduced anxiety, and better relationships with their children and partners (Kelly, 1982). Thereby the vital role of partners (Blossfeld et al., 2001; Hoherz, 2014; Jacob & Kleinert, 2014) as a social support (Höhne, 2007) with emotional and child care support is the most efficient means of assisting women's re-entry into the work force (Brockel, 2018).

External factors such as education and access to childcare would also directly influence women's reentry ability (Nakamura and Ueda, 1999). Children and the time necessary to devote to them are viewed by reentry women as a major obstacle to finishing education (Badenhoop & Johansen, 1980). Read et al. (1988) also found that women with children believe family, as well as finances and limitations of time, are obstacles to their goals with majority time spent in appropriation of the child seen entering school or growing up (MacKinnon-Slaney et al., 1988; Pickering & Galvin-Schaefer, 1988; Sewall, 1984). In two studies (MacKinnon-Slaney et al., 1988; Read et al., 1988) married reentry women were found to be more likely to see themselves as having more family emotional support as compared with separated and divorced women. In these same studies, divorced reentry women placed a significantly higher value on better employment and financial need than did married reentry women. Reentry women with children have also been found to place a higher value on better jobs and income than have women without children (Read et al., 1988). Ericksen et al. (2008), focuses specifically on mothers' reentry experiences into the workforce through conceptual framework highlights multiple forces driving women back to work, such as financial, environmental and self-image. Motherhood unseeingly bears a penalty (Abend Roth, van der Lippe, & Maas, 2012; Aisenbrey et al., 2009) with the number and age of children playing a obnoxious role in reentry (Drasch, 2013). In short the transition from staying home with children to workforce reentry can result in personal changes such as decreased self-esteem, lack of confidence, or depression, which may require some type of intervention (Ericksen et al., 2008; Greer, 2013) with job demands (Bharathi and Baral, 2012) thus helping assure the well-being of the re-entry of women who appear are caught between being a good employee and a good mother (for exception, see Maheshwari, 2014; Ravindran and Baral, 2013). Therefore, returners should be offered flexible work arrangements and programs for women returners needs to be readily available in practice (Mishra 2016).

Methodology: -The study adopts probability sampling with emphasis on stratified sampling technique to identify women reentry into workforce followed by convenience sampling technique under non probability sampling with $n=63$ thereby limiting itself to non-parametric data analysis of Kruskal – Wallis test.

Hypothesis: -

H₀: - There is no significant difference among factors hindering women reentrants progress across different types of career breaks.

H₁: - There is significant difference among factors hindering women reentrants progress across different types of career breaks.

Data Analysis and Interpretation using Kruskal -Wallis Test: -

Descriptive Statistics: -

Factors▶	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	sig
Outcome	n=6	n=19	n=2	n=1	n=11	n=1	n=8	n=6	n=1	n=2	n=1	n=1	n=1	n=1	n=1	p≤0.05
Lower salary	33.0	37.34	15.75	51.00	29.86	39.00	25.50	47.00	7.50	24.00	24.00	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	0.106
Lower position and authority	35.75	34.97	21.50	20.50	35.00	38.00	31.69	36.08	5.00	20.50	20.50	5.00	20.50	20.50	5.00	0.599
Lower job role	31.17	32.84	21.25	12.50	39.86	30.00	29.81	42.08	3.50	12.50	58.00	12.50	12.50	12.50	3.50	0.125
Lower assessment of performance	33.83	32.32	11.00	53.00	35.64	40.00	42.50	28.17	3.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00	3.00	0.215
managing work-life balance	33.33	26.42	19.50	51.50	43.23	38.50	36.44	24.53	19.50	19.50	60.00	4.00	19.50	4.00	60.00	0.05*
Knowledge outdated	32.33	34.24	23.25	33.5	35.45	33.5	34.19	34.75	2.00	13.00	13.00	33.5	2.00	13.00	33.5	0.576
Lack of support from superiors	28.17	35.89	6.25	59.00	33.41	27.50	35.38	37.33	2.00	10.50	10.50	27.50	10.50	10.50	46.50	0.119
Work culture policies	34.83	31.03	17.00	49.50	35.27	36.00	41.75	31.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	3.00	17.00	3.00	36.00	0.376
Learn new skills	44.83	35.63	28.00	49.50	23.91	28.00	32.00	25.50	6.00	28.00	28.00	28.00	6.00	28.00	49.50	0.332
Talent and expertise not fully	30.67	33.66	21.75	48.5	33.14	31.5	36.06	30.25	12.00	12.00	59.50	31.50	1.00	12.00	31.50	0.494

utilized																	
Job dissatisfaction	30.67	33.82	19.00	45.00	36.77	27.00	35.13	36.33	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00	11.00	2.00	45.00	0.338	
Slow career growth	40.83	26.82	23.50	48.00	37.23	32.00	38.75	39.83	3.00	15.00	15.00	32.00	15.00	15.00	3.00	0.200	
Lack of same status and respect	35.83	30.37	7.50	59.00	36.50	30.00	35.06	41.67	12.50	12.50	12.50	30.00	12.50	30.00	2.50	0.177	
Lack of challenging task assigned	31.75	30.63	19.75	47.00	35.09	28.50	33.94	41.00	11.00	11.00	59.00	38.50	11.00	28.50	2.00	0.366	
Lack of credibility	34.92	29.32	11.50	58.00	34.41	30.00	34.69	37.58	11.50	11.50	58.00	30.00	11.50	30.00	30.00	0.416	

Source: - Survey Data SPSS version 23

Note: - the above numerals stand for: 1- marriage, 2 – child bearing, 3- household responsibilities, 4 - relocation of spouse, 5 – awaiting better prospects, 6- dependent care, 7 – any other, 8 – (1&2), 9 – (2&3), 10 – (2&6), 11 – (1&5), 12 – (1&2&3&4), 13 – (5&7), 14 – (2&4&5), 15 – (2&4&6&7)

Inferential statistics: -

The Kruskal – Wallis test relies on mean rank which was highest at 51.00 for outcome of lower salary at reentry due to relocation of spouse (4) , 38.00 for outcome of lower position at reentry due to dependent care (6), 58.00 for outcome of lower job role at reentry(11)due to cumulative effect of marriage (1) and awaiting better prospects (5), 53.00 for outcome of lower assessment performance due to relocation of spouse (4), 35.45 for outcome of knowledge outdated at reentry due to awaiting better career prospects (5), 59.00 for outcome of lack of support from superiors at reentry due to relocation of spouse (4), 49.50 for outcome of ardent work - culture policies at reentry due to relocation of spouse (4), 49.50 for outcome of learning new skills at reentry due to relocation of spouse(4) and (15) due to cumulative effect of child bearing(2), relocation of spouse(4), dependent care(6) and other detrimental factors (7), 59.50 for outcome of talent and expertise not fully utilized at reentry(11) due cumulative effect of marriage(1) and awaiting better prospects (5), 45.00 for outcome of job dissatisfaction at reentry due to relocation of spouse(4) and (15) due to cumulative effect of child bearing (2), relocation of spouse(4), dependent care (6) and other detrimental factors (7), 48.00 for outcome of slow career growth at reentry due to relocation of spouse (4), 59.00 for outcome of lack of same status and respect at reentry due to relocation of spouse(4), 59.00 for outcome of lack of challenging task assigned at reentry (11)due cumulative effect of marriage(1) and awaiting better prospects (5), 58.00 for outcome of lack of credibility at work at reentry due to relocation of spouse (4) and (11)due to cumulative effect of marriage(1) and awaiting better prospects (5).

Overall, the mean rank was highest at 60.00 for outcome of (11) due to cumulative effect of marriage (1) and awaiting better prospects (5); also (15) due to cumulative effect of childbearing (2), relocation of spouse (4), dependent care (6) and other detrimental factors (7), responsible for career break contributing to a significant difference with 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$) in managing career work balance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Scope and limitations: -The current study is one existential part of the pilot study, thereby not covering all aspects in the pilot study undertaken. Further the study is preliminary attempt to understand the nature and work-life aspects of women re-entrants, thus restricting itself to the data collected from Dakshin kannada only. It is a cross sectional study. Future research can be extended to more profound outlook on career breaks and re-entry by ethnic background of women and men. It can also ponder into the frivolous nature of organizations in complying to programs and essentials for women reentrants.

Conclusions: - Women reentering workforce do have varied characteristics and needs which have to be identified and more adequately addressed. Thus, the need to advance the scientific inquiry in the area of reentry women in a more coordinated with stringently controlled research effort is vital. Further labor market structures with employers and government inclusive policies, work practices and cultural traditions play an important role in combining parenthood and employment in post-industrial societies. The labour markets are not only structured by policies, practices, norms, and networks but they also reinforce gender inequality. Thus, labor markets with public policy interventions must reconsider the dearth of research on re-entry women, on which research across sectors is advocated. We hope that the findings of this study will be helpful and kindle scholarly interest in career re-entry of women professionals which is vital to enhance the current understanding of the career restart; more specifically with the aim was to understand the reasons and enablers of re-entry.

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