Career Aspiration of Married Working Women in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

The picture of Women is not the same as it was few years back. Drastic change has been seen. Today’s women are more empowered and focused towards their career. The biggest challenge for today’s women is to balance the demands of family and career. The study identifies the various aspects such as Career Aspiration, Career Development, Work Family Conflict, Child care, societal norms in context with Work Life Balance. This paper reveals the overview of the various challenges and issues faced by Married Working Women.

Keywords: Career Aspiration, Career Development, Work Family Conflict, societal norms.

Introduction

“I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will.”
— Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre

In the history of human development, women have been as vital in the history making as men have been. In fact higher status for women vis-à-vis employment and work performed by them in a society is a significant indicator of a nation’s overall progress. Undoubtedly, without the active participation of women in national activities, the social, economic or political progress of a country will deteriorate and become stagnant. But ironically and tragically, women employees in general, are not taken very seriously by their superiors, colleagues, or society at large. Having a career poses challenges for women due to their family responsibilities. Research has documented barriers that prevent women from advancing in their careers. The existence of male stereotyping around the executive role, lack of support, and exclusion from networks are mentioned by Tharenou (1999). Sara Arber and Nigel Gilbert (1982) in their book stated that women’s working lives are fundamentally influenced by the composition of their family and their stage in life course. Can you have it all? It’s the question that has plague women for decades as they balance the strains of the workplace with the demands of motherhood and has been asked by Kathleen Davis in her article-The Obstacles Facing Women’s Career Success. Vinita Srivastava (1984) conducted a study on “Employment of educated married women in India”. In this study by comparing the occupational prestige of husband and wife, it has been found that at each socio-economic level wife were working in occupations which were consistent or only slightly lower in prestige than that of their husband’s occupational prestige. Jaya Arunachalam (1984) in her report on “Empowering Women for a positive revolution” revealed attitude of families towards women’s domestic responsibilities, the unsympathetic attitude of employers, lack of training, limiting employment opportunities and above all, women’s low perception in the labour market and had provided ample impressions both to employers and the society that women work only to make subsidiary income to the families, whereas the principal breadwinner were still men. In spite of India’s reputation for respecting women, including treating her as Goddess, history tells us that women were also ill-treated. Through the ages there were no equality between men and women.

Traditionally Indian women had been home makers but in the recent decades, proper education and better awareness, in addition to the ever increasing cost of living has made them to go out and choose careers. In a patriarchal society like India it is still believed that a man is the primary bread winner of his family. Although Indian women have started working outside their homes but still they have a long way to go both culturally, socially and economically, to bring in positive attitudinal changes in the mind-set of people.
Role and Status of Northeast Women

Women in tribal society in Northeast are always hard worker. Their sex ratio is always higher in all census records except 1991. Women are an integral part in every society. The status of women in society is directly linked with social and cultural traditions, stages of economic development achieved, educational levels, attitude of the society towards women, social and religious taboos, women's own awareness and political attainments. Such factors affect the national and also regional characteristics of the status of women. The economic status of women is determined by the role played by them in carrying on economic and non-economic activities in society. The nature and type of economic and non-economic role played by women have undergone continued transformation in accordance with the changes in socio-economic factors, education, levels and technological developments and with the changing concepts regarding the extent to which women's contribution is desirable and necessary.

Women in Arunachal Pradesh

Though Arunachal has patriarchal society yet women are the major bread winners. Except in policy making, they have considerable freedom in their day-to-day life. However, very little is written about these simple, hardworking, and beautiful women. The Arunachali women also participate in the endless activities both economic and non-economic sectors. The multidimensional contribution of these women is underestimated; they are mostly treated as just housewives. Several laws and policies have so far been introduced for providing freedom and equal rights to women from time to time but all these efforts have not been successful in case of rural as well as tribal society in particular. Still women are being dominated by males; they are deprived of rights in their household and social life.

Statement of Research Problem

As stated by Muhammad Ali Jinnah in 1944 that “No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you”. But in today's world Women are facing the conflicting roles of family life and career. And they face various challenges as they attempt to balance the family life and career. This study will contribute to the base of knowledge about social oppression among women who are balancing family life and career. It is a juggling task among married working women to maintain a balance between work life and personal life. With the changing dynamics of economic and social factors, women are becoming bread earners and facing the hurdles such as harassment, extended working hours, compromising family norms and working values. Therefore, there is great need to investigate what factors cause’s hurdles in maintaining work life balance among married working women.

Significance of the study

The findings of this research will help to reveal some interesting implications for future practitioners and researchers whose aim is to study on women and career in general. The research in this area will extends the knowledge base that currently exists in this field. This topic has relative importance in research field as very little work has been done on problems of married working women in India. This research is extremely significant as women are as important in the society as men, so study like this will highlight the problems of working women in different sectors in A.P in particular and the country and the world in general which in turn help to reduce those problem.

Research Design

In order to arrive at a valid conclusion regarding the career aspiration of married working women of Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, the descriptive research design has been followed.

Location of the Study

Arunachal Pradesh is one of the 29 states of India. Located in northeast India, it holds the most northeaster position among the other states in the north-east region of India. Arunachal Pradesh borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the south, and shares international borders with Bhutan in the west, Myanmar in the east and China in the north. Itanagar is the capital of the state. Arunachal Pradesh, which translates to “land of the dawn-lit mountains”, is also known as the Orchid State of India or the Paradise of the Botanists. Geographically, it is the largest among the North-east Indian states commonly known as the Seven Sister States. As in other parts of Northeast India, the people native to the state trace their origins from the Tibeto-Burman people. Arunachal Pradesh has the highest number of regional languages in South Asia enriched with diverse culture and traditions.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

• To identify the career aspirations of married working women.
To examine the hindrances faced by working women in their career development

To examine how working women balance their work and family.

**Research questions**

This study will examine the following research question: What challenges do working women face when taking on multiple strenuous social roles? Specifically, what barriers do women face while balancing family life and career?

**Sampling method and Size**

For the present study the researcher used simple random sampling method for 50 respondents.

**Tools of Data Collection**

The structured interview schedule was used as a tool for data collection.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Table No.-1: Career Aspiration of married working women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Aspiration Scale</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Avg.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above Avg.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, we can say that 40 percent of the women possess Above Avg. Career Aspiration, 26 percent possess high career aspiration and 34 percent are having below avg. career aspiration whereas the percent for low career aspiration is 0. One of the reasons for that is education, as most of the women are educated; their career aspiration also becomes high. Family and community’s support also plays a vital role here.

**Hindrances faced by working women towards career development.**

Figure No.-1: problems for working women

The above table reveals that 56 percent of the women think that there are problem for working women and 44 percent agreed that sometimes. The reason behind this is they find it difficult to handle the office work and the problems at home. The other possible reason is the acceptance of them working, by their husband or their family members.

Figure No.-2: Freedom to talk to your male co-workers

The above table indicates that, 60 percent of the women said that they feel free to talk to their male co-workers, 30 percent said sometimes whereas only 4 percent said never. This implies at present, the stereotypical thinking of the society is undergoing change and women are independent and feel free to talk to their male co-workers.

Table No.-2: Husband/in laws often quarrel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husband/in laws often quarrel</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the above table sometimes category has the majority in this question again with 56 percent as quarrels takes place in between the family which is not be of big issues and quite normal.

Table No.-3: Environment is less conducive for working women than working men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment is less conducive for working women than working men</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data reveals that 76 percent said sometimes. The answers which falls in the sometimes category are either because they are confused or not sure.

Figure No.-3: Moral values of the society a big hurdle

The above table explains 66 percent of the women feel that the moral values of the society is a big hurdle in their way sometimes, 18 percent said always and 16 percent said never. It is because the women are still confused with the society.

Table No.-4: Children’s are neglected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children’s are usually neglected</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data shows that majority of the women feels that most of the time the children of working women are neglected. As they are busy with their career they are not able to give their full time to the children.

Table No.-5: Problems in managing time between personal & professional matters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>problems in managing time between personal &amp; professional matters</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above data express that most of the respondents feels that they face problems in managing time between personal and professional matters. One individual cannot do so many activities at a time and when they try to attempt, there would be problems definitely.

Figure No.-4: Time for yourself

Again the same 70 percent, 30 percent ratio is maintained, which again implies that because of the work-family balance, they don’t have time for themselves. They have to do household work, office work and managing these two is a challenging job then how they will get time for themselves.
Motivational factors in women career development

Figure No.-5: feel empowered because of your career

Here the response revealed that empowerment and work are positively related. Women feel more empowered because of their work. When they work they feel that they are capable of doing anything and when they get income they feel that it is my money, and when I am capable to do work and earn money, No one can dominate me.

Table No.-6: career gives you self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>career give you self-esteem</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Same positive relation pattern follows here also, women feel that their career give them self-esteem and may be for the same reason.

Figure No.-5: feel independent because of your career

Again sometimes and always dominates by 50 and 46 percent respectively whereas for never it is only 2 percent. Thus it is very clear that working women feel independent because of their career. When they are able to do work and earn money, they become independent.

Figure No.-6: confidence in working women

Again when it comes about confidence, there is positive relation. Majority of the women believe that confidence in working women is higher than of non-working women may be for the same reasons mentioned above.

Figure No.-7: status of working women

The above table reveals that 58 percent of the women said that the status of working women is better than of non-working women and 42 percent said sometimes. This means career plays a vital role in up bringing the status of the women in the society.

Figure No.-8: presence is valued by the society because you are working women
The table shows that 74 percent of the women sometimes feel that their presence is valued by the society as they are working. And 26 percent of the women always feel that their presence is valued by the society as they are working. To get a status in society also women has to work.

Figure No.-9: family and community support

The percentage according to the question came positive as only 2 percent of them said never. This is because at present scenario people have started to accept the fact that women cannot be stopped from going to offices and work just because of their gender difference, and the people are starting to look at this perspective in a more positive manner.

Challenges face by them while balancing work and family.

Figure No.-10: feel guilty

The above table reveals that 78 percent said sometimes and 16 percent said they always feel guilty that they are unable to give time to their family. Because of too much work pressure and career oriented mind they often end up with the guilty of neglecting their family.

Figure No.-11: Difficult to look after your family

Here the response to the above question is 70 percent sometimes, 30 percent always and no response for never. This implies that working women find it difficult to look after their family because of their work. It is because of the strenuous role played by them.

Figure No.-12: Domestic help

In overall, domestic help is available to the women sometimes only as 76 percent of them agreed for it. 20 percent of them said it is available to them always and 4 percent said it is not available to them. Which implies though they are working still they have to do all the household work.

Table No.-7: Husband/in-laws shares responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Husband/in-laws shares responsibility</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above table shows that 82 percent of the women feels that their husband/in-laws shares their responsibility sometimes and 12 percent said always and 6 percent said that their responsibility is never
shared by their husbands/in-laws. It means their responsibility is shared sometimes only and not always.

**Socio-Economic profile**

Table No.-8: Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education qualification</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hr.sec</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate n above</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table says that around half of the women are graduates and above followed by matriculation and higher secondary. So in overall majority of the women are educated.

Table No.-9: Reason for occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for occupation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal interest</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Problem</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the women choose their present career because of financial problem only 34 percent women are having the present career of their own interest.

Table No.-10: Head of the family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head of the family</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father in law</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother in law</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though women are working yet most of the families are headed by the husbands or father-in-laws. Female headed families are rare case to find. Which implies stereotypical mindset is prevailing.

Figure No.-13: Who controls the income

And when it is about their income, 40 percent of the women are having full control over it whereas for 54 percent of the women it is manage by their husbands and for 6 percent, In laws. It is their money they must have the full control over it.

Table No.-11: Own Savings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Savings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows that maximum women have savings. 78 percent of women have savings and 22 percent does not have savings. As they are earning themselves they are able to save at least a little part of it.

Figure No.-14: Assets in their name

Though they have savings yet most of them don’t have any assets in their name. Only 28 percent have assets in their name. In spite of working and earning money they are unable to acquire assets in their name as most of the families are male headed.
Table No.-12: Your decisions are being accepted at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decisions are being accepted at home</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

64 percent said sometimes and 32 percent said always to the above question. Women are now taken as a strong part of the decision making body anywhere and hence their voices are being listened too.

Findings, Suggestions and Conclusions

Findings

Career Aspiration of married working women

1. Study reveals that 40% of the women possess Above Avg. Career Aspiration, 26% possess high career aspiration and 34% are having below avg. career aspiration whereas the percentage for low career aspiration is 0. One of the reasons for that is education as most of the women are educated; their career aspiration also becomes high. Family and community’s support also plays a vital role here.

Socio-Economic profile

2. The study reveals that majority of the women are educated.
3. Most of the women choose their present career because of financial problem only 34% women have the present career of their own interest.
4. Though women are working yet most of the families are headed by the husbands or father-in-laws. Which implies stereotypical mindset is prevailing.
5. Though they are earning still they don’t have full control over their income.
6. The data shows that maximum women have savings. As they are earning themselves they are able to save at least a little part of it.
7. Though they have savings yet most of them don’t have any assets in their name.
8. Women are now taken as a strong part of the decision making body anywhere and hence their voices are being listened too.

9. Study reveals that 56% percent of the women think that there are problem for working women and 44% agreed that sometimes.
10. Study shows that at present, the stereotypical thinking of the society is undergoing change and women are independent and feel free to talk to their male co-workers.
11. Most of the women feel that the moral values of the society is a big hurdle in their way.
12. Because of their busy schedule majority of the women feels that their children are neglected most of the time.
13. Most of the respondents face problems in managing time between personal and professional matters and they don’t have time for themselves.

To study the motivational factors in women career development

14. Here the response revealed that empowerment and work are positively related. And women feel that their career give them self-esteem, confidence and they feel independent.
15. Career plays a vital role in up bringing the status of the women in the society.
16. Most of the women agree that their career give them job satisfaction.
17. Women’s presence is valued by the society as they are working.
18. At present, people have started to accept the fact that women cannot be stopped from going to offices and work just because of their gender difference, and the people are starting to look at this perspective in a more positive manner.

Challenges face by them while balancing work and family.

19. Majority of the women feel guilty that they are unable to give time to their family because of their work pressure.
20. Half of the women are still confused whether they should choose one or both as there is great need for both.
21. In overall, domestic help is available to the women sometimes only. Which implies though they are working still they have to do all the household work.
22. 82% of the women feel that their husband/in-laws shares their responsibility sometimes and 12% said always and 6% said that their responsibility is never shared by their husbands/in-laws. It means their responsibility is shared sometimes only and not always.
23. More than half of the working women never maintain timetable for themselves.
Suggestions

1. Partners can be more sensitive to women’s needs, and counter tradition by helping their wives perform daily tasks and take care of children.
2. Child care facilities and Child care leave for working women should be provided by every organization.
3. Flexible timing and Possibility to work from home are required for working women.
4. Stereotypical mindset should be change.
5. Steps are needed to provide the women a sense of security.
6. Additional research is also needed to compare the both men and women because experiences may be differ with regard to work and family balances and also helps to find out more consequences of work and family conflict.
7. In order to attain in-depth understanding of one’s work and family life, researchers has to study multiple perspectives such as job stress, quality of life, mental health and work demand.
8. Strong policy statements are needed ensuring women’s security.

Conclusion

In a patriarchal society like India, a particular boundary exists only for women, and if they try to cross that boundary then people start maligning them. The general perception is that if some women are doing things differently, beyond people’s limited imagination, and out of sync with traditional thinking, like going out for jobs, wearing different type of fashionable clothes, talking freely with male members etc., immediately they are branded as loose women. But Female workers must work to avoid the individual barriers such, lack of self-confidence, lack of self-esteem, dependency and hesitation to talk to their male co-workers. The study reveals that women are generally unable to give proper and quality time to households, kids and family. Child rearing problems are always faced by working women. Female workers who identified having difficulties balancing work and family indicated that they had too many work and family responsibilities and sometimes they did not have time to accomplish everything effectively. To them, time management was the biggest challenge. One type of stereotyped thinking that still persists is whether women, who are crossing the four walls of their homes for jobs, are capable enough to compete with others, and at the same time appropriately balance between family and professional life. So the question arises as to why only women have to balance both lives, and why women have all these burdens thrust on them. To avoid the family barriers, organization can help with the female workers by offering day care centers; leave them in the weekends, giving same flexible office hours and home office. From this research it is understand that women faced several challenges to balances work and family. Both private and public sector has to reframe the policies in order to help the women to balance family and work life.

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