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## CAREER CHOICE OF GIRLS

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### ABSTRACT:

Today, careers for women have emerged as one of the most significant area of concern for those who advocate education for women equality and nurturing human resources for national goal. Woman is a case of underdeveloped human potential in our country. The dramatic increase in interest to develop this potential through education and work has taken place since the declaration of the year 1975 as the International Women's Year, United Nation Decade for Woman (1975-1985) and 1990's as SAARC Decade of the Girl Child (1991- 2000) A.D. and submission of National Perspective Plan for Women 1988-2000 A.D. to Government of India.



**KEYWORDS :** *advocate education , women equality and nurturing human resources.*

### INTRODUCTION:

#### CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF GIRLS

The career development is a part of all round individual development. It has always been studied with reference to men, ignoring its concern for women, even in the developed countries where participation of women in labour force is significant. One reason may be that it is difficult to study career development in women. The traditional theories of career development I have not taken into consideration the important elements of women's career development such as marriage, family and spouses' attitudes towards wives work, etc. in traditional cultures. The vocational and career studies have also largely been focused on male population, ignoring the female population, or just assuming that they "fit" the male behaviour patterns. With women opting for higher education and having high career ambitions, perhaps more research is required to study what they are, what do they want from life as individuals, and as women.

#### MAKER ROLE FOR WOMEN

Traditionhally, women have been home makers and not the bread winners. Even today. most women are home makers and this role is exclusive. In career planning women are supposed to think of marriage and home making along with career, which is not demanded of men. The home maker role affect women's interest in joining the labour force, performance at work, and even stay in it. Thus career does not occupy a major

position in the lives of women as it is in case of men. That is why the career development processes in both the sexes differ. There may not be significant sex differences in abilities and interests but differences are there in career aspirations and goals.

### **WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN WORK**

Our constitution grants the right of equal opportunity with regard to employment to men and women without distinction. However, a large number of women are still without work. According to census data, the work participation of women has improved during the past decades: from 14.22% in 1971 to 19.67% in 1981 and to 22.27% in 1991. The figures are not impressive in comparison to men who comprise 51.56% of the labour force. The type of work performed by women workers is one of the most important aspects to be considered from the point of view of their career development. The following could be said about women's work participation:

- i) Women are behind men in work participation.
- ii) Participation of rural women in work is more in comparison to urban women.
- iii) Women are generally engaged in unskilled work as agricultural or other labour. Their percentage is, however, more than men. Some of them are also engaged in home based industries, small business activities and services.
- iv) Public sector employs more women than private sector.
- v) Women are concentrated in community, social and personal services, which is the direct extension of their feminine role at home.

### **Factors Influencing the Work Participation of Women**

By tradition and necessity, men have been bread winners and women have tended to attend to their household duties including care of all the family members. The small number of women who participate in the work do so because of the following reasons:

- 1) To Meet Domestic Needs: Generally women work outside the home to earn money to meet the domestic needs. These women belong to the lower class and lower middle class categories. They are generally employed in unskilled and semi-skilled occupations or traditional occupations like clerical, teaching, nursing etc.
- 2) To Utilise the Higher Education: Some of the educated women in the cities, who belong to middle class, do not like to waste their education and, therefore, join the white-collar jobs. Among these women some become career conscious and continue working. Moreover, rising aspirations towards a higher standard of living and a higher level of education also motivate women to take up some job.
- 3) To Prove Self-worth : There are a few women who have the desire to achieve and prove their worth. They pursue higher education, excel in performance, have increased occupational aspirations and join the careers not the jobs. Most of these women are found in non-traditional careers. They also work hard to reach the top positions in hierarchy.
- 4) Status and Empowerment: In any society money is the way in which the work is rewarded and is recognised as important means of status and empowerment. A housewife may not be economically in need of work but she undermines her status as unpaid person, holds low esteem in household work and therefore prefers to work outside home. These women, many a times, begin their careers quite late in life.

### **EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN**

The higher education is known to influence the work participation of women and it continues to facilitate women's development of potential. Since independence, literacy rate of women have continuously improved although it is still very low in comparison to men. The number of women enrolled in the institutions of higher education has also increased considerably. The participation of women in technical and professional stream has

shown a marked increase. There has also been an increase in number of women students in Engineering and Technology streams.

### VALUES AND MOTIVATION

The level of education attained is directly related to occupational opportunity in case of boys, but not for the girls. Mostly girls are not motivated for higher studies. They go to college but not motivated enough to compete with boys on choice of subject or to develop themselves. The major importance of college education is marriage than long term occupational choice and career commitments.

Meaning of college education is an end to itself. That is, education promises a better life, greater capacity to meet the challenges of adulthood or eventualities, to find a better match, to be a better mother and not as a preparation for career. This kind of value attached to education leaves hardly any scope for motivation among girls to reach at higher level of education or career.

### CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

The career development in girl is also largely determined by parental attitudes, economic conditions at home and the cultural opportunities. It has been found in various research studies that girls from the better socio-economic backgrounds and especially having educated parents (at least father) relatively opt for higher education. Working mothers who derive satisfaction from their work and home are also known to be acting as source of inspiration for their daughters. The girls who are exposed to strong role models at home or in their near environment have positive attitude towards their career.

### CAREER VS. NON-CAREER WOMEN

With respect to career development, women can be broadly classified into career women and non-career women, the latter being either totally devoted to marriage and family life, or holding some non-career type jobs as and when required. The career women could be further divided into two categories: one who plan to work but in feminine occupations and the other who aspire to enter traditionally masculine occupations. The first type of career women work outside their homes but in the female dominated occupations or in accepted work settings. They seem to have favourable attitude towards home and family and integrated home, family and career. This group is generally successful and characterised by feminine personality traits. The women opting for non-traditional careers or masculine careers and work settings seem to be more career committed than the first group, have influence of non-traditional role models, have personality traits usually identified as masculine and have interests different from non-career or traditional career type women. These women are also known as "pioneer career women". Studies indicate that career development among women who have orientation towards career is a function of their achievement motivation and satisfaction of mastery than only the economic rewards.

### CAREER PATTERNS OF WOMEN

As the career development of women is different and complex than those of men, their career patterns or sequences too are different. Numerous studies have classified women into two main groups - pioneer women, or those engaged seriously in career activities, and the traditional women who participate in full-time home making activities. They are also known as nontraditional or career women versus traditional women or home makers respectively. One of the classification systems given by Super (1957) is based on western culture.

### CAREER PROBLEMS OF GIRLS

There are a large number of problems that women have to face for developing their career potential. Some of the serious problems are as follows:

- i) **Sewbiases at Home:** The feeling of difference between the boy and the girl is introduced from the start of all in the family. Here the sex-bias begins from conception of a child. The unwanted and unloved girl child who is devoid of proper food, love and care in comparison to the male child; whose education is of secondary importance and who is not allowed to play or participate in any activity except the household chores and sibling care, grows into a female adolescent with expected feminine behaviour and marriage Career Development goals. Hence her physical, personal, social and emotional development is restricted. Her of Girls in India bringing up does not prepare her for higher education or vocational training or employment.
- ii) **Educational Institutions:** After home, the place which affects children's behaviour is school. Here children face sex-bias in almost all the aspects for example, sex-bias in books, curriculum transaction, allocation of subjects, SUPW activities; participation in some of the co-curricular activities etc. Once inculcated, these behaviours become part of children's lives. In colleges and universities also, the biases are further propagated. In this way the quality of girls education does not match with that of educational, vocational and personal development. Even the teacher training programmes both in-service and pre-service seem to ignore desensitisation of teacher against sex-biased behavior
- iii) **Place of Work:** All the employers don't accept women as workers like men. They even hesitate to employ women. A woman seeking employment is viewed as a future wife and mother who will have primary responsibility towards her home and family and not work. In comparison to a man she is less preferred in offering employment and is paid less.
- iv) **In Society:** Many societies are strongly sex-biased. The expectations of family, neighbours and other social groups from a girl is of 'traditional women' who has no sense of Me. She is subservient, committed home maker, obedient wife and daughter-in-law, and a sacrificing mother. She is submissive, soft spoken, reserved, shy, docile, tolerant and does not resist husband and his family for atrocities committed by them. If otherwise, then she is labelled as home breaker and uncultured. All these biases severely hinder the process of career development of girls as the girls prefer to be obedient home makers rather than decision makers and career oriented.

### GIRL'S ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Some of the prominent problems in girls education are:

- i) Social Problem:** Social attitude towards education of girls is generally not positive. Education for the girl is considered as unimportant. Practice of 'Pardah' system and early marriage, parental illiteracy, lack of educational facilities at home, male teachers in the schools and girls' responsibilities at home etc. are the other hindrances in girls access to education.
- ii) Economic Problems:** When there is no one to feed the family and educate the male 'Wanted' child, how can the parent afford to enroll the girl child in school. Who will take care of siblings, perform household chores, earn and contribute to family income? In the families where they can afford education, it is the boys who get this benefit.
- iii) Educational Problems:** The major educational problem is lack of educational institutions especially beyond elementary level areas. According to Sixth All India Educational Survey, for 74% of rural population there are fewer schools than for 26% of the urban population. The schools lack in physical facilities such as furniture, water, blackboard, toilets etc. The unattractive textbooks, male teachers, lack of sports and extra curricular activities, unsuitable school timings are the demotivating factors for girls to attend schools. The girls who are

able to reach the high school level are very few, approximately 2-4 in a Village and they have no access to further education or training in rural areas. There are some institutions for men but they too are far away from the villages. Moreover, they lack in hostel facilities for girls.

The problem is both ways. On one hand the girls are not prepared (socially) to join further education or training and on the other hand there are no institutions and facilities available to them. At places where the institution or training facilities for girls are available, the courses offered to girls are traditional which lack in market value. Sometimes the girls have to opt for such courses due to their earlier educational preparation. It has been found that under universalisation of elementary education, more and more girls are crossing 8th standard and reaching high school. But these girls are weak in science and mathematics, therefore they go for softer options, which don't require science and mathematics, that is, joining home science courses such as tailoring, cooking, bakery, etc. and not the technical and engineering courses.

### PROBLEMS IN MAKING VOCATIONAL CHOICE

In case of woman unexpected personal events such as death of significant one, divorce or financial crisis may influence her decision to take up work but it is not necessary that she gets the work for which she is qualified or which she desires. Thus she may not have career involvement. However, there are other contingency factors and difficulties which women face in making career choices. These are:

- i) The girls receive little orientation towards career choice while the question of career choice is emphasised for boys.
- ii) Parents, teachers and significant others are more likely to emphasize salary and status.
- iii) The options open to girls are considerably more restricted than for men and they are forced to consider their role as a home maker before making career selection.
- iv) Boys are more influenced by what they think men and society in general will accept as a woman's job and vice-versa.
- v) The girls have few opportunities for vocational training and higher education.
- vi) Very often girls wait for marriage before choosing or joining any job as marriage and husband's home takes priority over-career.

### APPROACH TO GIRLS' EDUCATION

The approach of the teachers to girls' education should be to develop a human resource. They should help girls to develop as individuals through encouragement and assistance in identification and nurturing of their talents. Teachers should examine their own biases and sex-stereotyped behaviours which cause hindrances in realisation of career potential in girls. They should also discourage segregation of subjects, skills, activities, hobbies and behaviours etc. by sex which is a major hurdle in the way of girls' development as individuals and their adoption of new roles.

### PROVIDING CAREER INFORMATION AND LITERATURE

The girls are in great need for information. Besides opening their eyes to the world of work, information also motivates them in choosing and preparing for the work. The dissemination of career information should begin at the elementary school stage. Here the teacher should integrate career information inputs into teaching of subject matter. He/she can recommend to the library to procure the career literature. The career literature helps a lot in motivating the girls to plan for a career and make career related decisions.

## ROLE OF PARENTS

Role of in girl's Career development is highly important. It is they who not only have to provide opportunities and facilities but also an environment conducive to their daughter's development. The parents in order to promote career development of girls can do the following:

i) They should consider their daughters as individuals who have also the right to develop and enjoy in this world. They should bring up their daughters in such a way that they are equipped with positive qualities of both the sexes.

ii) It is urgently required that the parents should understand the importance of education for the daughters. They should change their attitude of educating girls only for acquiring suitable grooms or procuring employment in case of eventuality. The parents' interest in daughter's development is must. iii) Parents should change the traditional belief of great economic value of male children in comparison to female children who are considered as economic burden or 'Parayadhan'. Instead of early marriage they should educate their daughters. Now the girls are given free education, uniform, stipends and other benefits by the government to promote their development. The parents should avail detailed information about these schemes which are also publicised on media and use the assistance for the benefit of their daughters.

iv) Rich parents and poor parents are required to understand that the girls should not be used to subsidise their brother's education through work. Rather both boys and girls can pursue education through distance and other alternative modes while earning for the family.

## CONCLUSION:

Career refers to all the activities in which a person is involved throughout his/her life while vocation is the choice of a type of occupation or the choice of a career. The growth stage; the exploratory stage; the establishment stage, the maintenance stage and the decline stage. Preparatory work period, initial work period, the trial work period, the stable work period and the retirement period. The stable career pattern, the conventional career pattern, the unstable career pattern and the multiple-trial career pattern. Individual parental socio-economic level, mental ability, skills, personality characteristics, career maturity and the opportunities to which one is exposed. Vocational success leads to feelings of autonomy, of being somewhat in control of one's present and even of one's future. It also leads to the development of interest in the things in which one has been successful.

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