

Work Role-Motherhood Role Constructions & Conflicts in Workplace Interactions

Mridul Maheshwari & Jerome Joseph

Professional working women face workplace conflicts out of the combined effect of social expectations, pressures and career role aspirations. This study focuses on a particular stage in women's career continuity – entry into motherhood roles in their early careers which creates attendant dilemmas and anxieties due to organizational-managerial dispositions and biases. A grounded qualitative research approach was adopted and in-depth conversational, unstructured interviews were conducted with eight professional women subjects holding managerial positions using the snowball technique. The subjects and the geographies have been held anonymous to protect sources. Five frames representing the work role-motherhood role dynamics at the workplace emerged from the study which can become the basis for sensitizing organizations on this issue.

Mridul Maheshwari is Assistant Professor, IIM Kashipur, Kundeshwari, 244713. E-mail: mridul.maeshwari@iimkashipur.ac.in. **Jerome Joseph** is Chair Professor – Industrial Relations, XLRI School of Management, P.Box 222, Circuit House Area (East), Jamshedpur 831001. Email: jerome@xlri.ac.in

Introduction & Literature Review

Professional working women face workplace conflicts arising out of the combined effect of social expectations, pressures and career role aspirations (Kelan, 2009). Many dimensions of this problem have been examined (Pas et al (2011) and the findings suggest that the experiences of women at work are determined by gender constructions and conflicts (Garey, 1999) which in turn have a bearing on career continuities and curtailments (Cleveland, Stockdale & Murphy, 1999; Desai, 1999; Gulati, 1999; Kanter, 1977).

This study focuses on a particular stage in the evolution of women's career continuity – entry into motherhood roles in their early careers which creates attendant dilemmas and anxieties due to organizational-managerial dispositions and biases. Again it must be emphasized here that there is a danger of bias even in discussing issues like work roles and motherhood roles, because such studies reflect “cultural biases that indicate: (a) mothering is a

barrier to paid work and (b) having a (paid) job is more valuable and desirable than staying at home.” (Fung & Heppner, 2015:253-54). This study is sensitive to this bias and it must be clarified that the focus in this study is not to reinforce this bias but to evaluate critically how these biases play out in the lives of ordinary working mothers in balancing work as well as motherhood roles and responsibilities.

It is this early motherhood stage, which Fursman (2002a; 2002b) has termed as the “expecting labor” stage that this study seeks to explore through a grounded exploration into the lived experiences of professional working women. Even on this issue, there are previous studies like the effects of having children on work roles (Van Wel & Knijn, 2006; Vlasblom & Schippers, 2006), the conflict between domestic unpaid care work and professional wage work (Crompton, Brockmann & Lyonette, 2005); attitudes of others at work regarding motherhood and stigmas associated with women who along with mother roles aspire to pursue work and careers (Himmelweit & Sigala, 2004; Marks & Houston, 2002; Nordenmark, 2002) and employers’ attitudes toward working mothers (e.g. Lewis, 2001; Stone, 2007). Social identities evolve from early childhood socialization (Chugh & Sahgal, 2007) which serves the function of orienting the girl child to the discriminatory hierarchical power relations that place men as privileged in both social and work spaces (Swaminathan, 2008). This also reinforces the woman’s role as mother and home maker with less emphasis on

career aspirations (Mehta & Kapadia, 2008). Thus, male dominant social spaces construct mothering role demands as contra indicated with work role demands and expectations (Arendell, 2000) and point towards work-family tensions due to conflicting social space and work space roles demands (Arendell, 2000; Beets et al, 2007; Marks & Houston, 2002).

Male dominant social spaces construct mothering role demands as contra indicated with work role demands and expectations.

However, what is constant across studies is the socially constructed meanings assigned by patriarchal social arrangements to work role aspirations when working women enter the motherhood stage (Parikh & Garg, 1989). Such pressures are experienced more by women in professional roles as mothering roles are perceived as barriers in fulfilling organizational expectations (Ghadially, 2007). As a result, many women are unable to achieve work role aspirations thus compromising the pursuit of careers (Ely & Rhode, 2010). A study in the German context has suggested that, “German women who have accumulated more years of education and longer work experience at the time of marriage delay motherhood more. On the other hand, women with higher labor income and a higher contribution to household income delay motherhood less” (Gordo, 2009:57). And these issues are acute in the early stages of motherhood when they are expecting (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; Fursman, 2002a;

2002b) leading to current withdrawal from formal employment while also facing the prospect of reduced opportunities on re-entry at higher management levels (Mazumdar, 1999; Mehta & Kapadia, 2008). An extract of an interview from a Korean study could not have described the problem better, “I was going to keep my job [after marriage], but I was asked to move to a trivial position. I told them: Why do married women receive this unfair treatment? I can work exactly the same as before I married. Getting married doesn’t mean I can’t work. I want to keep my position.” So they sent me to a very difficult department. I couldn’t bear it. It was so tough. I was pregnant, and the work was difficult. I couldn’t get over it, and finally I submitted a letter of resignation.” (Jung & Heppner, 2015:257)

The motherhood choice is a matter of social, cultural and political choice of a woman but it comes with twin socially reproduced stigmas –first, at work where mothering roles of a woman are seen as incompatible with their working identity (Marks & Houston, 2002); and second, on the social identity front when women delay marriage to pursue careers or when they continue working even after entering motherhood (Mazumdar, 1999). However, problems emerge when social role pressures come into direct conflict with contractually defined work role expectations, (Vijayanthi, 2002) especially in terms of time allocation and priorities (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). This struggle is experienced more by women

The motherhood phase brings changes both at the personal and family levels which in turn eventually influence work role performance.

in professional roles who give priority to professional work to attain a position of significance at work (Marshall, Godfrey & Renfre, 2007). This is so, as Thapan (2001) has concluded, educated urban working women experience that their own work aspirations and opportunities are often in direct conflict with pre-existing social structures within which the motherhood role holds a central place (Krishnaraj, 2008). The motherhood phase brings changes both at the personal and family levels which in turn eventually influence work role performance (Hakim, 2002; Pixey, 2008; Stone & Lovejoy, 2004).

Method of Study

In this study, the researchers attempted to explore work role constructions and conflicts in early motherhood experiences in workplace interactions of professional working women through a grounded qualitative research approach (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994; van Manen, 1998). In-depth interviews were conducted with eight professional women subjects holding managerial positions in organizations using the snowball technique (Patton, 2002). The data for the study was collected through conversational unstructured interviews with an indicative interview guide as suggested

by van Manen (1998). All the precautions required for examining human subjects according to the best practices, protocols and principles as applicable were adhered to strictly. The subjects and the geographies have been held anonymous to the maximum extent feasible to protect sources.

The subjects at the time of interviews were either expecting or had become mothers in the last 1-2 years only and had experienced both pre-delivery and post-delivery stages of motherhood. Some women in the post-delivery stage were also included in this study since it has been observed that women face difficulties in managing child care and work roles in the initial one to two years of motherhood even if they have spousal,

family and organizational support. Some of the women respondents at the time of interviews were still on maternity leave or had just resumed work. Taking a targeted approach provided the researchers opportunities also to capture the experiences related to re-entry to work after maternity leave (Hakim, 2002). Key issues discussed during interviews were related to factors that guided their decisions to start a family while pursuing a career, general orientations of their organization towards women employees especially those in the motherhood phase, the support given by the organization to women employees in this stage and workplace experiences during the motherhood phase. A brief profile of the subjects and the analysis, interpretation and findings are presented here (Table 1).

Table 1 Profile of the Participants Interviewed

S.No	Pseudo-nym	Age	State of motherhood at the time of interview	Qualification	Role/Industry	Family Structure during child birth – Joint/Nuclear
1	A	27	1 year old daughter	MA (Psychology)	HR/ Pharmaceutical	Nuclear
2	B	25	Expecting	MSc (Labour Relations)	HR/Information Technology	Joint
3	C	24	6 months old daughter	MBA (Finance)	Credit cards (Banking)	Joint
4	D	25	3 months old son	MBA (Marketing)	Sales Manager (Electronics)	Nuclear
5	E	27	1.5 year old son	M Tech (Civil)	Deputy Manager (PWD)	Joint
6	F	24	Expecting	MBA (Marketing)	Product Manager (Pharmaceutical)	Nuclear
7	G	28	Expecting	MBA (IT)	Banking	Nuclear with her parents support
8	H	24	2 months old daughter	B Tech (IT)	Project In charge/ Software	Nuclear with her parents support

Experiential Narrative

The general environment in an organization, as observed by one of the subjects of this study, is the stated and unstated orientation of peers as well as managers to the issue of entry into motherhood which induces a numbing effect in exercising the freedom to choose motherhood with career continuity. "I was more worried as I have seen how in my organization pregnant women are generally seendoubts are raised about their ability to work in the future. The team heads start preparations to find someone as replacements and this is done even when there is time for an expecting mother to go on leave. Slowly their involvement is reduced purposely.....Knowing all this happens, I was under immense pressure when we [she and her husband] were deciding to start a family as I never wanted to lose that position and status in my organization where all those who were with me will grow and I will only lose." (H).

The experience of seeing women colleagues, who have disclosed pregnancy being written off as no longer capable of contributing when the opposite is true, is unnerving to say the least. It was even more disturbing to see that questions were raised even about the intention to return to work and ability to perform in the distant post-delivery future. Right before their eyes they see their women colleagues being taken off from their regular duties "purposely". The underlying message is clear – pregnancy is perceived as a performance eroding state for a woman without reference to the

actual reality of past performance as well as current performance capacity and future potential to contribute to the organization. Adding insult to injury, even as the colleague is still active and long before the date of going on maternity leave has arrived, recruitment for a replacement gets initiated, deepening the sense of being a non-performing liability combined with a sense of being left behind. This statement clearly indicates that the sense of loss is linked to the loss of "*position and status*" – which goes against the perception of others that the working woman on the verge of motherhood is a liability. On the contrary, there is a strong sense of one's own capability and a certain drive not only to work but also continue working. The sense of loss is also over the sheer lack of fairness in that this aspiration does not seem to have a place in the way the organization looks at her situation and ultimately seems to be resulting in a situation where "all those who were with me will grow and I will only lose".

The sense of loss is linked to the loss of "*position and status*" – which goes against the perception of others that the working woman on the verge of motherhood is a liability.

The "assertive" formula for a woman in her workspace role is to be able to be "one among the boys" and do "whatever boys in the team can". "I was working like crazy from the time I started my career as a product manager in my company which required me to work 7 days a

week for 12-14 hours daily. For this crazy working style I got a lot of appreciation and recognition too and for this I also always tried to be “one among the boys”. I have always shown that I can do whatever boys in the team can, I travelled almost 20-25 days a month and got appreciated for this too but all this was till the time I was working “as one among the boy’s...but I knew that it cannot go on this way if we [she and her husband] had a baby as traveling will become an issue. So both my husband and I mutually decided to postpone our family decision for the sake of my career.” (F). This translated, in her words, into a working style which involved working 7 days a week, 12-14 hours per day coupled with 20-25 days travel. While “this crazy working style” got “a lot of appreciation and recognition too” from management, any change in the working style on account of motherhood “would become an issue”. The “motherhood zone” and the “one among the boys” zone seem to confront the passionately committed working women professional as a zero sum game.

Even an alleged mistake made by a woman deputy engineer while preparing a technical report based on information provided to her by other team members incurred the wrath of her supervising manager. “I am a deputy engineer and have to prepare tender contract reports based on the information passed on to me by the project requisition teams. One day when I was in the second trimester of pregnancy, I was to prepare a similar such report. I asked for complete information from the project requisition teams as I was

on leave due to my bad health the week before it. Based on the data provided to me I prepared the report. However, later a problem was found out in my report by my boss related to some figures. My boss created a scene and asked me to sit down at home if I am unable to do work properly due to pregnancy problems. I was really shocked and wondered whether it was my mistake” (E) Even an error made by the engineer is attributed to her state of pregnancy with causality being linked to her physical condition with the not so subtle hint that her error prone-ness renders her unfit to come to work and that she would be better off staying back home.

Organizations profess a great deal about the merits of team working and yet when it comes to supporting a woman colleague who was advised one month’s bed rest due to health issues during her first trimester, the supervising manager bares his fangs as he lashes out at this woman team member. In her own words, “There are so many problems that a woman goes through during pregnancy, isn’t it the responsibility of an organization to help employees who have worked really hard for them in their hour of need? In my first trimester my health was really critical and I was asked to have at least one month’s bed rest, only I know how I managed it as my boss created a ruckus about it....according to him I disturbed the whole team” (D). Instead of the team rising to the occasion to cover for a high performing colleague who needs rest under medical advice, the manager accuses her of damaging team working and team prospects.

Even if the supervising manager happens to be a woman, it is managerial authoritarianism that comes to the fore, “At the time when I was expecting, I was posted to another city from my home which was a 2 hour drive from there. Every month I had to visit home to meet my gynaecologist for routine check-up which was essential for me in that state of pregnancy. But my boss who was a lady was never ready to let me to go and see my doctor. Rather she used to ask me to find a doctor at the city where I was working then. All my efforts to explain my condition to her and the need for me to see the same doctor actually were of no use. She never listened to this request but then I tried other ways to do it by taking leave without informing her as she left me with no options” (H). The stresses and strains of shuffling between work roles and early motherhood pressures are further exacerbated by an unsympathetic supervisor, an inconvenient posting, a tiresome commute and what seems like a deliberately insensitive approach to the right of choice of physician for consultation. The intention seems to be a crude attempt to force a resignation from the employee.

Yet another narrative tells a tale which is just the opposite – a case where paternalistic concern for what the subject refers to as her “condition” forces the opposite reaction from the target of the misplaced concern. “I knew that my bosses are not taking me in the same way as they used to some months back. This made me understand that the very fact I am expecting has made them more paternalistic towards me but with the no-

tion of “favor” extended to me on account of my “condition”. I never wanted to take any favors which I was sure I would have to when I will be back after my delivery. So I decided to quit before actually going on my maternity leave as I was just not ready to feel side lined and actually be sidelined considering I used to be among the best some time back” (A). The plea is for upholding her self-respect and professional dignity by recognizing that she “used to be among the best some time back” instead of misplaced paternalistic concern for her “condition”.

Some other organizations have come up with more direct mechanisms to deal with the problem of maternity related “disruptions” - avoid recruiting women – “In my organization, for certain roles the departments themselves do not prefer to recruit women. They specifically ask HR not to look for women candidates as they are not ready to hire a person who would be going on a long leave....so for such roles women have to face rejections at the entry level itself.....” (C).

The other mechanism is the lethal use of the ubiquitous performance review system to rid the organization of “maternity benefit beneficiaries” - “One of my office associates was made to leave just 15 days before she was expected to go on her maternity leave on account of (pretext of) poor performance and being in HR I actually knew what the reality was. Now I am expecting and have to go on leave, I am really feeling a great deal of pressure and I want to save my job. With no option I myself have ap-

proached my boss and said that I would be going on leave for 2 months which would be without pay. I am feeling bad but there is no other option..... in this present state of recession securing my job is also essential for me” (B). The choice is between the devil and the deep sea -holding the job versus maternity leave without pay and benefits. She “proactively” chooses to forego pay and applies for 2 months leave without pay – an offer which is readily accepted in spite of maternity leave statutes being in place and in clear violation of the prevailing legislation.

Discussion

The analysis and interpretation of the narratives has attempted to decode the managerial constructions of women in the motherhood phase while pursuing careers. Previous studies have identified the motherhood stage as the most critical work-life stage when women experience maximum obstacles in job retention and career continuity often leading to the end of work and career forever (Pixey, 2008; Stone & Lovejoy, 2004). As a matter of fact, “The consensus opinion among an expanding and diverse community of scholars maintains that this devalued status manifests itself in the form of a persistent penalty for working mothers, as a ‘penalty of motherhood’ (Mutter & Kaye, 2017: 41).

This devalued status manifests itself in the form of a persistent penalty for working mothers, as a ‘penalty of motherhood’.

The narratives show that most respondents have struggled with the question of when they should start a family considering the influence this decision could have on their current work and future prospects. Respondents indicated that it generally emerges as an issue for women planning to start a family especially when ability to deliver is questioned and doubts are raised about future utility as well as suitability for higher responsibility. This has been a growing issue with most professional women when raising a family is considered inimical to career interests (Stone & Lovejoy, 2004). Due to this, most women even try to postpone motherhood aspirations as workplace ideologies expect women to set family roles aside to aspire for progress in careers. Even a woman respected for her demonstrated capabilities and contributions does not retain the same reputation with colleagues and supervising managers after the news about her entering into motherhood gets to be known. Suddenly, her competence is questioned and her work comes under greater scrutiny and criticism.

The respondents also indicated that though most women themselves do not want to show any change in their commitment after they enter the motherhood phase, sometimes under medical advice they may require leave which is then perceived as weakness further creating negative impressions about their ability to deliver assigned tasks. Women have to face ‘no-excuses’ pressures with supervising managers unfairly dubbing even genuine requests on medical advice as “concessions seeking” behavior. How-

ever, along with the “no-excuses” attitude of supervising managers on the one hand and the patronizing act of sympathy for her “condition”, some subjects also narrated certain extreme actions taken by women like quitting just to avoid to be considered as weak and helpless which has also been noted in previous studies (Wharton, 2005).

Such lack of concern is not the preserve of male managers and is shown even by female managers. Some researchers have drawn attention to bullying and lack of concern shown by women managers towards young women professionals and have termed this as an instance of the ‘negation of gender’ (Ehrich, 2008; Wharton, 2005). It has been argued that such posturing by women is to project themselves as powerful agents and thus avoiding being labeled within the frame of feminine stereotypes, also is perceived as necessary behavior for getting noticed in order to access positions of power in a male dominated organizational environment.

This struggle extends even in getting statutory maternity benefits. Respondents revealed how getting even two months of paid maternity leave became a struggle for them since this is considered as a “cost” to the organization so much that one respondent said she requested for leave without pay just to ensure that she retains her job post-delivery and recovery. For women a significant aspect of their maternity leave experience is that organizations and supervising managers are not comfortable with women who have the responsibility of bringing up a

small child both in the case of women returning from maternity leave and also in the case of women trying to re-enter the employment market after a career break for fulfilling motherhood roles. Interface with such workplace realities creates mental barriers in their minds and a certain hesitation to join such socially deficient organizations. This has also been pointed out by several researchers (Hakim, 2002; Pratto, Sidanius & Levin, 2006) who have also examined the role-conflicts experienced by professional women due to their motherhood roles. These tensions arise due to work role aspirations coming into direct conflict with the prevailing social and cultural constructions at the workplace (Patil, 2001; Thapan, 2001) since “most women have children, and strong social and economic pressure persists for mothers to spend time caring for children (Dechter, 2014:97). This results in negative influences on future career prospects for women professionals (Korvajarvi, 1998; Hakim 2002; Korvajarvi, 1998) because “new mothers are expected to devote their time and energy to the maternal role, their traditionally sanctioned family role, while at the same time wanting or needing to participate in the workforce” (Spector & Cinamon, 2017: 830).

Conclusion

The findings of this study can be expressed in the form of five interconnected “frames” which emerge for a better understanding of the conflicts that arise between organizational-managerial constructions and women’s own representations of their role dilemmas:

Frame 1: It is not the motherhood role-work role conflict or apprehension about fulfilling their social roles as mothers and child care givers as working women, but the reluctant compliance of managements with statutory benefits available under relevant legislations which leads to the curtailment of professional careers of working women

Frame 2: Disrupted careers of women in the pre-motherhood stage are not due to inadequacies in handling social expectations pressures and work role demands but due to the negative experience of workplace marginalization, stigmatization, exclusion from normal work role functioning and the negative attitudes on the part of organizations and their designated authorities towards impending motherhood.

Frame 3: it is not the entry into motherhood roles or concerns related to fulfilling work roles or prospect of pursuing careers post entry into motherhood, but the sudden changes on the part of supervising authorities and colleagues related to the view about their ability to perform and contribute through their roles and responsibilities which result in the intention to quit.

Frame 4: Women choosing motherhood apprehend loss of job, career disruption and the prospect of “falling behind” their peers and cohorts in moving up the responsibility value chain, not due to motherhood roles or work role competency deficits but due to being written off by organizations and managements as non-performing current and future liabilities.

Frame 5: Women choosing to enter motherhood roles also wish to measure up to work role demands and career continuity aspirations but falter because they confront skepticism related to their future value to the organization and doubts related to their ability to undertake higher responsibilities given motherhood responsibilities.

Given the socially determined roles for men and women, in spite of changes which are discernible, it is evident that the main responsibility for children is thrust on women thus affecting their work aspirations and career continuities. This socially determined construction of workplace reality leads to an organizational environment which is systematically advantageous to one gender and manifestly discriminatory to the other. Three responses to the five frames from professional working women to these conflicts are discernible – complete break from pursuit of careers to take up child care roles and responsibilities; postponement or avoidance of motherhood roles in order to pursue careers without disruptions; taking up both motherhood roles as well as work-career roles but with a lowered aspiration level with lesser responsibilities and lower professional status and incomes.

The organizational imperative emerging from these five conclusions and the three responses described above, is the need to make workplaces more conducive during the period of entry of women into motherhood roles and in the early motherhood phase to ensure career continuity which is a clearly discernible aspiration of the subjects of this study. An

inclusive, equitable and proactive approach could be founded on empowering women choosing entry into motherhood roles to design their own work roles, responsibilities in the pre, through and post motherhood phases in consultation with peers and supervising managers to ensure their own career continuities.

References

- Arendell, T. (2000), "Conceiving and Investigating Motherhood: the Decade's Scholarship", *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4): 1192-1207.
- Beets, G.C.N., Liefbroer, A.C. & De Jong, G. J. (1997), "Combining Employment and Parenthood: A Longitudinal Study of Intentions of Dutch Young Adult", *Population Research and Policy Review*, 16(5): 457-74.
- Chugh, S. & Sahgal, P. (2007), "Why Do Few Women Advance to Leadership Positions?" *Global Business Review*, 8(2): 351-65.
- Cleveland, J.N., Stockdale, M. & Murphy, K.R. (1990), *Women and Men in Organizations: Sex and Gender at Work*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Crompton, R., Brockmann, M. & Lyonette, C. (2005), "Attitudes, Women's Employment and the Domestic Division of labor: A Cross-national Analysis in Two Waves", *Work, Employment and Society*, 19(2): 213-33.
- Dechter, E.K. (2014), "Maternity Leave, Effort Allocation and Post-motherhood Earnings", *Journal of Human Capital*, 8(2): 97.
- Desai, P.T. (1999), "The Times That Are a-changing", *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 6(2): 241-59.
- Ely, R. & Rhode, D. (2010), "Women in Leadership: Defining the Challenges", in Nohria, N. & Khurana, R (Eds.), *Advancing Leadership*, Boston: HBS Publishing.
- Fursman, L.J. (2002a), *Expecting Labor? Pregnant Women in the Corporate Workplace*, Berkeley: University of California.
- Fursman, L.J. (2002b), *Ideologies of Motherhood and Experiences at Work: Pregnant Women in Management and Professional Careers*, Working Paper: 34, Center for Working Families, University of California, Berkeley.
- Garey, A. (1999), *Weaving Work and Motherhood*, Philadelphia PA: Temple University Press.
- Ghadially, R. (2007), *Urban Women in Contemporary India*, New Delhi: Sage Publications
- Gordo, L.R. (2009), "Why Are Women Delaying Motherhood in Germany", *Feminist Economics*, 15(4): 57-75
- Gulati, L. (1999), "The Tyranny of Tradition", *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 6(2): 185-201.
- Hakim, C. (2002), "Lifestyle Preferences as Determinants of Women's Differentiated Labor Market Careers", *Work and Occupations*, 29 (4): 428-59.
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1994), *Ethnography: Principles and Practices*. New York, Routledge.
- Himmelweit, S. & Sigala, M. (2004), "Choice and the Relationship between Identities and Behavior for Mothers with Pre-school Children: Some Implications for Policy from a UK Study", *Journal of Social Policy*, 33(3): 455-78.
- Jung, A. & Heppner, M. J. (2015), "Work of Full-time Mothers: Putting Voice to Relational Theory of Working", *The Career Development Quarterly*, 63: 253-67.
- Kanter, R.M. (1977), *Men and Women of the Corporation*, New York, Basic Books.
- Kelan, E.K. (2009), "Gender Fatigue: The Ideological Dilemma of Gender Neutrality and Discrimination in Organizations", *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 26(3): 197-210.

- Korvajarvi, P. (1998), "Reproducing Gendered Hierarchies in Everyday Work: Contradictions in an Employment Office", *Gender, Work and Organization*, 5(1): 54-73.
- Krishnaraj, M. (2008), "Between Public and Private Morality", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43(17): 40-43.
- Mainiero, L.A. & Sullivan, S.E. (2006), *The Opt-out Revolt*, California: Davies-Black Publishing.
- Marks, G. & Houston, D.M. (2002), "Attitudes towards Work and Motherhood Held by Working and Non-working Mothers", *Work, Employment and Society*, 16(3): 523-36.
- Marshall, J.L., Godfrey, M. & Renfrew, M.J. (2007), "Being a Good Mother: Managing Breast Feeding and Merging Identities", *Social Science Medicine*, 65(10): 2147-59.
- Mazumdar, V. (1999), "A Heritage of Heresy within Tradition", *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 6(2): 291-309.
- Mehta, B. & Kapadia, S. (2008), "Experience of Childlessness in an Indian Context: A Gender Perspective", *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 15(3): 437-60.
- Mutter, Joanne. & Thorn, Kaye (2017), "The Enduring Penalty of Motherhood: A Human Capital Perspective", *New Zealand Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17(2): 41-55.
- Nordenmark, M. (2002), "Multiple Social Roles – a Resource or a Burden: Is It Possible for Men and Women to Combine Paid Work with Family Life in a Satisfactory Way"? *Gender, Work and Organization*, 9(2): 125-45.
- Pas, B., Peters, P., Eisinga, R., Doorewaard, H. & Lagro-Janssen (2011), "Explaining Career Motivation among Female Doctors in the Netherlands: The Effects of Children, Views on Motherhood and Work-home Cultures", *Work, Employment and Society*, 25(3): 487-505.
- Patil, V. (2001), "Striving to Break Through the Glass Ceiling", *The Tribune*, 14 October, Chandigarh
- Patton, M. Q. (2002), *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Pixey, J.E. (2008), "Life Course Patterns of Career-prioritizing Decisions and Occupational Attainment in Dual-earner Couples", *Work and Occupations*, 35(2): 127-63.
- Spector, Michal Gross., Cinamon, RachelGali (2017), "Identity Exploration during the Transition to Motherhood: Facilitating Factors and Outcomes", *Career Development International*, 22(7): 829-43
- Stone, P. & Lovejoy, M. (2004), "Fast-track Women and the Choice to Stay Home", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 596: 62- 83.
- Swaminathan, P. (2008), "Exclusions from and Inclusions in 'Development': Implications for 'Engendering Development'", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43(43): 48-56.
- Thapan, M. (2001), "Adolescence, Embodiment and Gender Identity: Elite Women in a Changing Society", *Women's Studies International Forum*, 24(3/4): 359-71.
- Van Manen, M. (1998), *Researching Lived Experience*, Ontario, Canada: Althouse.
- Van Wel, F. & Knijn .T. (2006), "Transitional Phase or a New Balance? Working and Caring by Mothers with Young Children in the Netherlands", *Journal of Family Issues*, 27(4):633-51.
- Vijayanthi, K.N. (2002), "Women's Empowerment through Self-help Groups: A Participatory Approach", *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 9: 263-74.
- Vlasblom, J.D. & Schippers, J. (2006), "Changing Dynamics in Female Employment around Childbirth: Evidence from Germany, the Netherlands and the UK", *Work, Employment and Society*, 20(2): 329-47.
- Wharton, A.S. (2005), *The Sociology of Gender: An Introduction to Theory and Research*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.