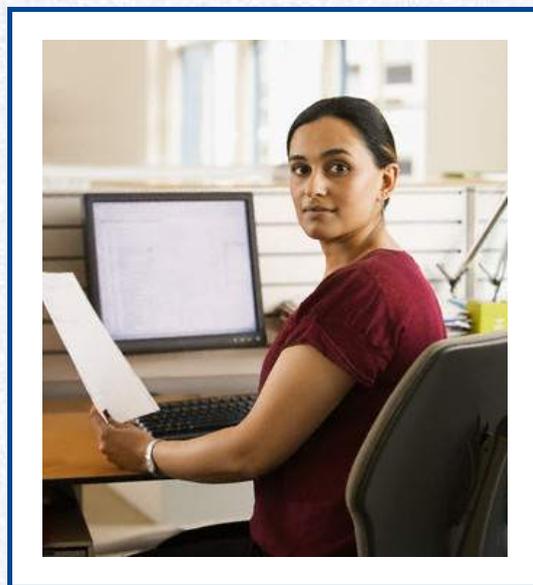


The Impact of
Career Enablers on
Women's workforce
participation
in India



Authored by

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to contribute to the body of research on those aspects of the workplace which serve as career enablers to the Woman Professional. The workforce participation rate of women in India varies between 21-27% and as compared to men, this is at a substantially low level. A UN report states in India, if women's employment rate was raised to 70%, closer to the rate of many developed countries, the country's GDP is estimated to improve by 4 percentage points.

Hence, this study which is built around the qualitative data obtained from a series of Focus Group discussions conducted by the authors in India on the subject of creating sustainable careers for women, views the methods by which the workforce participation of women in India can be improved.

The main conclusions of the study are:

Women rate every career enabler on its impact on the following 4 variables which have a positive correlation to the strength of a career:

- ◆ Potential for growth and leadership
- ◆ Job Satisfaction
- ◆ Work-life balance
- ◆ Career Sustainability

Hence to develop these 4 characteristics in a job, women rely on 2 major sets of enablers Self-initiated and Organization-initiated, which lead to career sustenance. Each of these enablers in turn is a superset of 4-5 sub-factors which assist the women during her career and ensure that her workforce participation is not derailed.

Self-initiated enablers are

1) Re-skilling programs, 2) Appointing a non-family care giver at home, 3) Presence of family-member care giver at home, 4) Usage of Day Care Services.

Organization-initiated enablers are

1) Mentoring, 2) Skill-building programs, 3) Flexi-working options, 4) On-premises crèche and 5) Inspiring/Supportive peer group.

It is also observed that women rank 'Flexible Working' as the single most important contributor to their longevity in the workplace. Hence instituting a flexwork policy and also ensuring that managers are open to the idea of a flexible workforce will ensure that women continue their careers without a break.

Keywords: Career Enablers, Women, Workforce Participation of Women, Flexible Working, Flexwork arrangements, Gender Diversity, Career, Work-life Balance



Introduction

It has often been said that the Indian Woman Professional (IWP) has not fully utilized her talent at the workplace. This is reiterated by the fact that the IWP's workforce participation rate is among the lowest in the world. A few key aspects which complicate career choices for the IWP are the Indian joint Family system, Indian society's collectivist outlook and the fact that the average age at which Indian children leave home is among the highest in the world. The need to be 'dual-centric' is much more evident in the IWP, leading her to seek out ways and means whereby she can stay true to society's expectation from her of being the real Indian mother, while also pursuing career aspirations which education and exposure have ingrained in her.

Many studies point to the fact that despite women's investment in their own education, their commitment to their management career, the shortage of international executives, and equal opportunity legislation, even today women hold no more than a small fraction of management posts. What is more worrying is the fact that in most countries "to think manager is to think male". Organizations still have not developed sufficiently flexible policies to relieve women managers of the tension of having to combine family with work. Opportunities for women to avail of more generous life choices seem to be lacking. And this situation persists despite research both Indian and global - pointing to a link between gender balance in management and corporate profitability.

In the interest of a sustainable society, organizations require to strive for an equitable gender balance. Companies cannot afford to lose highly qualified women merely because they decide to start a family. By investing time and technology in making the IWP a productive and contributing member of the workforce, Corporate India gains in a hugely significant measure. Today, Flexibility at the workplace is a universal need for all men, women, old and young. It is a gender-neutral initiative, the rationale for which is driven powerfully by the changing roles of men and women, of caregivers and of nurturers. However, in the case of women, it is a sustaining force, a panacea which ensures that the pitfalls and speed-breakers in a woman's career journey do not result in permanent damage.

Flexi-careers if implemented successfully can transform not only the career destinies of women in India, but also address very effectively the talent needs of the growing organization.



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Background of the study

Based on a survey conducted by the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST), it is estimated that women's workforce participation in India is at 21% and their labour force participation at 28%. The ILO paper reaffirms the notion that education level and marital status play a critical role in determining if a woman goes out to seek work. At a higher level of education, labour force participation among urban women is nearly as high as 50%. Likewise, participation of women in labour force was more likely among those who were unmarried.

Country % of women in total workforce

India	28.1
China	41.2
Japan	41.2
Singapore	40.1

Reproductive work and domestic roles also prove to be significant variables in influencing female labour force participation. The paper notes that the labour force participation rate was highest for women in the age group of 21-34 at 34% and that it declines sharply to 17% for those in 35-49 age group. This sharp decline could be attributed to marital status, even though it cannot be assumed that the women in 21-34 age group would withdraw from workforce or stop working after marriage.

At the same time, the report states that contrary to general perception, marital status does not impose a direct bar on women's access to a working life. "Rather, marital status and its associated reproductive roles mediate this access and the nature of work life arrangements." It said only 31% of working respondents in the survey has worked prior to marriage. This means that for 69% of the working women, the decision to work follows, and does not precede, marriage. Those who chose to withdraw from the workforce did so due to household workload. On the other hand, education was a significant variable that influenced women's labour force participation.



Obstacles to Women's Career Development

When the workforce participation levels of women are analysed, it assumes the shape of a pyramid with the largest inflow of women at the most junior levels and the lowest presence of women at the highest levels. It is seen that women start off at junior levels in larger numbers, but subsequently the percentages shrink alarmingly to touch a low of 3% at board levels. The factors which contribute to this have been dealt with extensively in management research and literature.

- 01. Primary responsibility in care giving** - The fact that women need to be available to provide time and energy to their careers is often the main reason as to why they are not there in the workplace in large numbers. The burden of care-giving whether to small children or adults, results in women's careers being filled with 'obstacles' to their investing time and energy in their workplace avatars.
- 02. Lack of flexibility policies in companies** - This is seen by most women as a serious career obstacle. According to a study conducted by a diversity consulting firm in India in Sep 2010, executive women are explicitly in favor of policies that allow them to have discretion over how they apportion time.
- 03. Lack of Self Confidence** - It was noticed that one of the prime factors contributing to women dropping off the workforce and also rejoining in small numbers, is the lack of self-confidence.
- 04. Lack of support from superiors and peers** - Unlike men, the move into management is more frequent among women who receive early support from their colleagues and bosses. A survey found that women who had worked closely with an executive woman and who were employed in companies with a high proportion of women managers were more likely to gain promotion than those who worked in male-dominated hierarchies.
- 05. Unfavourable gender stereotype** - The stereotype of the woman as warm, nurturing, and caring and as such not suitable for a corporate role which demands the corresponding stereotype of man as cold, competitive, and authoritarian has contributed to the popular perception that women are less effective than men in leadership positions. Therefore, the problem for women is not just the attitudes they face, but also the discriminatory mindsets being moulded and reinforced all the times. Women in male-dominant areas or fields tend to be seen as less effective as compared to their male counterparts. Many career opportunities are lost to women due to this mindset.



What is a 'Career Enabler'?

A Career Enabler is defined as a factor that provides support to an employee in the workplace and contributes to their professional development. For purposes of this study, Career Enablers are only looked at from a woman employee's standpoint. Career Enablers can be aligned to Maslow's hierarchy of needs and can be segmented as follows:

Career Enablers for Women: A Hierarchy of Requirements in the Workplace

Hygiene & Safety Requirements

1. Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy
2. Workplace Health and Safety Policy
3. Maternity and Extended Leave policy
4. On-Boarding process

Retention and Engagement Requirements

1. Skill building initiatives
2. Flexible working arrangements
3. Day care and crèche arrangements

Growth and Talent development Requirements

1. Cross-functional training and exposure
2. Movements into line/staff role
3. Movements into diverse teams with gender/generational/ethnic/skills diversity

Leadership Requirements

1. Building Executive Presence
2. Coaching
3. Sponsorship
4. Mentoring



Methods

A focus group methodology was adopted. Multiple focus groups were conducted in various locations in India and the number of participants in each group ranged between 15-20. In all, a total number of 448 participants were covered in the focus group studies. The standard Focus Group discussion (FGD) methodology where the participants guided by a facilitator, discuss on the given topic, was followed. The group members were encouraged to talk freely and spontaneously about the career enablers of women. Since the FGD is a qualitative method, the main purpose of the discussion was to obtain in-depth information on concepts, perceptions and ideas of the group, rather than quantitative or numeric data. The FGD conducted on career enablers for women and the role played by flexible working aimed to be more than a question-answer interaction. Group members discussed the topic among themselves, with guidance from the facilitator.

Discussion Questions

The following questions formed the anchor points for discussion during the focus groups:

What are the primary drivers of career strength for a woman?

Are these different for men?

How can the factors be classified as either enablers or inhibitors?

Which factors are self-initiated and which organization-led?

Which 3 factors the presence of which will help you reconsider your decision to quit?

What is the role of the organization in enabling the woman's career?

Which are the key factors that allow women's careers to continue even amidst all the other requirements of her life?

Respondent Profile

The participants were women, in the age group of 28-45, with prior work experience who were either currently pursuing careers or were on a career break. They were randomly selected from the AVTAR I-WIN database and belonged to industries such as FMCG, Consumer Durable, Banking, IT, Telecom, ITES, Financial Services, Manufacturing and Automobiles.



AVTAR I-WIN

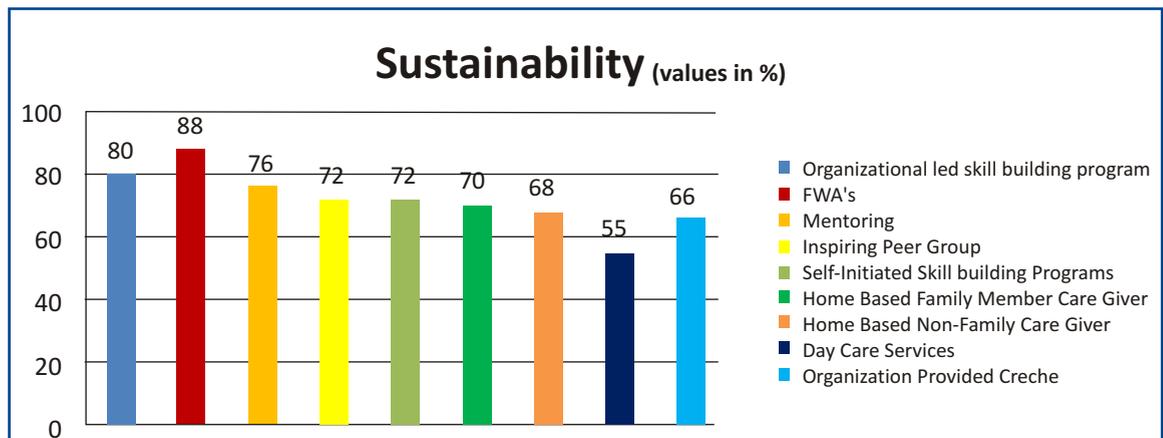
Results

The Focus group was built around finding out which were the major career enablers for women professionals in their lives today. Each career enabler factor was ranked in terms of its value to the following primary career aspects of a woman's career and life.

Strength of the factor in extending the career of the woman professional SUSTAINABILITY ENABLER.

The Sustainability enabler is a factor that allows the woman to continue in her career even if the growth is not very significant. The analogy of a person standing on a travelator while it is moving, can be compared to this. The sustainability enabler helps the woman professional stay on in her career even if her growth is not linear and upwardly mobile. This factor helps the woman professional to manage her time in such a way that her career is on an even track. Factors such as Flexible working, day-care services, family-member care giver's presence etc, were rated as Sustainability enablers. In some instances, a woman's ability to move career tracks and explore a new skill /functional area also serves as a sustainability enabler.

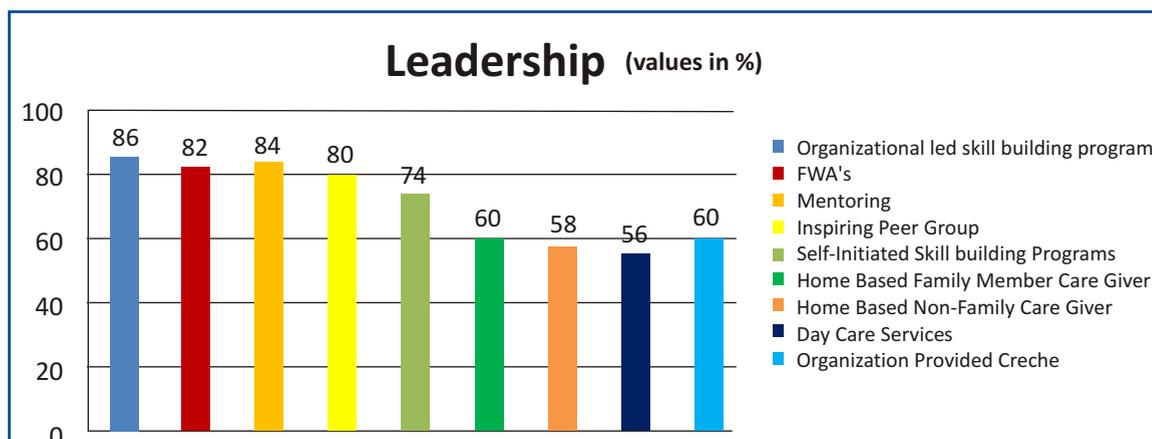
Career enablers	%
Organizational led skill building program	80
FWA's	88
Mentoring	76
Inspiring Peer group	72
Self- Initiated Skill building Programs	72
Home Based Family Member Care Giver	70
Home Based Non-Family Care Giver	68
Day Care Services	55
Organization Provided Creche	66



**Strength of the factor in helping the woman rise to leadership positions
LEADERSHIP ENABLER**

The Leadership enabler helps the woman navigate the workplace effectively so that she can rise in the corporate ladder. This enabler supports the woman by providing her with specific leadership development skills which allow her not only to be present in the workplace but also develop into a leader. This enabler is a critical one since an increase in the workforce participation of women is directly correlated to having more women role models in leadership positions. Factors such as Flexible working, Organization-sponsored skill building programs, Mentoring, Supportive peer group were named as a few of these factors.

Career enablers	%
Organizational led skill building program	86
FWA's	82
Mentoring	84
Inspiring Peer group	80
Self- Initiated Skill building Programs	74
Home Based Family Member Care Giver	60
Home Based Non-Family Care Giver	68
Day Care Services	56
Organization Provided Creche	60

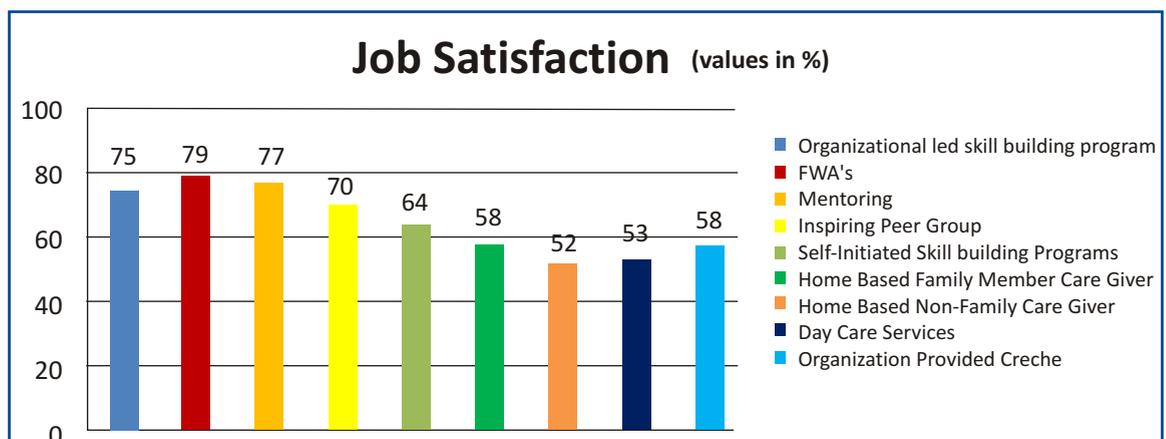


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**Strength of the factor in helping the woman deliver discretionary effort in her career
JOB SATISFACTION ENABLER**

The Job satisfaction enabler helps women to not just add value to her career but demonstrate organizational loyalty as well. By being engaged in her job, the woman delivers that extra output which allows her contribution to be visible and appreciated. Factors such as Organization-provided on premises crèche, Organization-sponsored training programs, Mentoring and provision of flexible working arrangements were some of the factors discussed here.

Career enablers	%
Organizational led skill building program	75
FWA's	79
Mentoring	77
Inspiring Peer group	70
Self- Initiated Skill building Programs	64
Home Based Family Member Care Giver	58
Home Based Non-Family Care Giver	52
Day Care Services	53
Organization Provided Creche	58

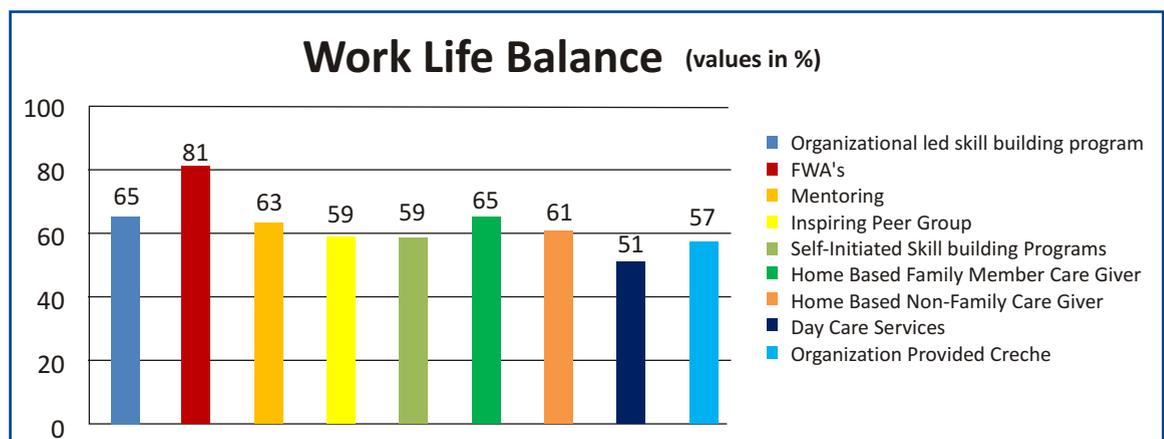


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**Strength of the factor in helping the woman lead a stress-free life
WORK-LIFE BALANCE ENabler**

The Work-Life Balance enabler allows the woman to strike the right work-family balance in her daily life. This includes but is not limited to the presence of a strong infrastructure at home. The presence of a family member who delivers care, flexible working arrangements, a non-family domestic support at home and using a reliable day care service are a few options which provide for the woman to obtain work-family balance.

Career enablers	%
Organizational led skill building program	65
FWA's	81
Mentoring	63
Inspiring Peer group	59
Self- Initiated Skill building Programs	65
Home Based Family Member Care Giver	61
Home Based Non-Family Care Giver	51
Day Care Services	51
Organization Provided Creche	57



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The discussion also deliberated upon the fact that all the above enablers could have the twin aspects of

- a) being initiated by self or
- b) being initiated by the organization.

The Self-initiated enablers are as follows:

Home based non-family care giver - A home based non-family care giver is a domestic support staff who is employed to assist the woman professional in areas such as child care, basic cleaning activities and 'top work' the activity leading up to the preparation of a meal. The domestic support staff also acts as the representative of the home in taking deliveries of packages, letters etc and being the anchor for all home-led activities.

Many women professionals who participated in the discussion mentioned that the presence of a reliable and long-standing domestic staff has been a catalyst in providing career enabling factors such as the sustainability factor and the balance enabling factor.

Home based family member care giver - This is a member of the extended family most often either the mother or the mother-in-law of the woman professional who provides the much-needed support on the home front. The family member care giver either lives in the same home as the woman professional or just a short distance away. Assistance primarily in child-rearing is provided.

It was felt by many members of the FGD that the presence of a supportive extended family member had a very direct and positive correlation to career robustness of the woman professional. Factors such as Sustainability, Balance and even Leadership were a direct result of the presence of a care-giver who was most definitely more reliable and trust-worthy than a domestic support staff.

Day Care Services - The ability of a woman to attend to her career requirement even while being a young mother is enhanced greatly by using day care services. Mothers typically use a day care during the ages when the child is between 1 year and 5 years.

Participants of the FGD mentioned that being yet another factor in the list of initiatives that women took to help themselves, day care services are a key enabler of the woman's careers by affecting aspects such as Work-family balance and longevity. Many participants pointed out that either because of the absence of day care services at a convenient location or the quality of such service being rather poor, most women professionals stepped off the career track, resulting in a service break. Using a reliable day service increased the chances of a woman staying on in her career and contributing to the workforce participation rate.

Self-sponsored Skill building programs -These are programs which greatly help the woman to stay on track, more so after a break. Women who have taken a break of a minimum period of between 12-18 months require a re-orientation to revert to the workplace. In the case of women professionals in the field of IT, these skill building programs are an absolute necessity to ensure that their knowledge does not become obsolete.

Many participants in the FGD pointed out the huge benefits accruing for the woman by attending skill-building programs. Self-sponsored programs are those which are paid for by the women themselves and are typically external programs which the women enrol for in the interest of upgrading their skills or moving into a new career track. These help women to also grow hierarchically in an organization and thereby rise to leadership positions. These are useful in extending the longevity of the woman also.



The Organization-initiated enablers are as follows:

Organizational led skill building programs - These are programs/workshops/seminar or continual learning activities which an organization sponsors for the woman professional. These programs demonstrate the seriousness with which the organization views the career growth of women and also the fact that they are ready to invest in women per se.

Participants of the FGD pointed out that there were instances of many women who have risen to leadership positions via organization sponsored skill building programs. Programs for which women employees are sponsored could include both soft skills and technical skills. Many organizations which have an annual skill building calendar that focuses on specific skills for women to actually survive in a male-dominate workplace, report a higher workforce participation rate of women.

Mentoring - A mentor, according to the dictionary is a teacher, counsellor or a trusted friend who guides. The presence of a mentor is highly recommended for all employees in catalysing their growth. But in the case of women, it becomes a pre-requisite to propel their career and ensure longevity and growth.

Many of the FG participants mentioned how they had been the beneficiaries of expert advice, technical know-how and emotional support, when a mentor was available to them. Many also spoke about the unique aspect of 'organizational navigation' the ability of an employee to know the hidden cultural and communication methods in an organization whereby his/her work is performed more effectively and is also recognized in the proper forums. This organizational navigation skill is enabled by a mentor especially in the case of a woman. This happens quite naturally in the case of a male employee, where merely by demonstrating adequate engagement or loyalty to a senior leader, the young entrant immediately is 'adopted' by default. This is a natural outcome of the 'fief' mentality prevalent in male dominated structures. In the case of women, this has to be formalised and introduced into the culture as a must-do, to make sure that what is naturally and normally a benefit awarded to men, is also provided to women.

Inspiring/Supportive Peer Group - A supportive, inspiring set of colleagues is a must-have for women. This is not just about raising the bar in terms of work but also ensuring that the unique career needs of a woman are supported and understood by the colleagues around her. Many a time, women professionals build growth and longevity in an organization simply because they have colleagues who are fellow-travellers and sympathisers.

Women who participated in the FGD opined that on many an occasion, the mere presence of an understanding, emotionally supportive colleague would make all the difference to a woman in being resilient in the workplace versus quitting desperately. The continued presence of highly motivated colleagues was itself a corroboration of the health of an organization's environment. Especially if women saw that their peers/colleagues of both genders were highly motivated and also supporting of one another, it sent out a strong message that the organization was a stable one and also demonstrative of emotional intelligence.



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Flexible Working Arrangements - Flexi-jobs, Flexi-careers or simply, a flexi-style of working is today a massive ongoing area of policy development work for many employers in India and across the world. It involves putting in place a formal procedure for considering employee requests for flexible working.

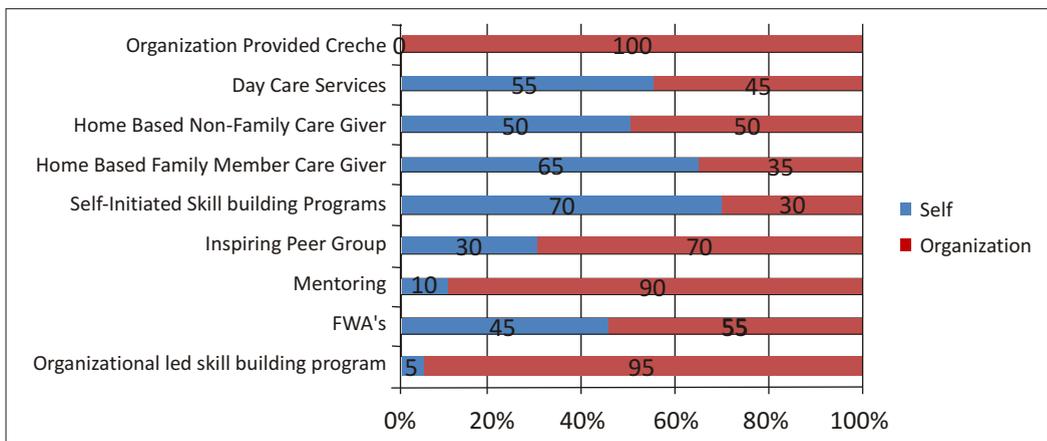
FGD participants mentioned that flexible working policies, while in reality being gender-neutral, actually allow for women to make better use of their time. The off-take of the policy too is by women to a larger extent. The payback for the organization is obviously the heightened morale, improved productivity, greater retention of women professionals and the ability of the organization to engage with diverse pools of talent. Many respondents also mentioned that family-friendly employment practices such as flexible working provide key empirical support to this position.

Organization-provided crèche - The Organization provided crèche is a step up from the day care services engaged independently by the woman professional. Many companies either have on-premises day care or enter into tie-ups with service providers who are located near the premises. This provides the stamp of credibility and quality assurance to the service provider and is also a peace-of-mind enabler for the working woman.

Respondents mentioned that an organization-sponsored crèche was among the biggest pluses that a young mother would be interested in. As a matter of fact, several women mentioned that they had quit the workplace never to return mainly because they did not have access to crèche/day care facilities.

Career enablers under the control of self and organization (% Control)

Career enablers	Self	Organization
Organizational led skill building program	05	95
FWA's	45	55
Mentoring	10	90
Inspiring Peer group	30	70
Self- Initiated Skill building Programs	70	30
Home Based Family Member Care Giver	65	35
Home Based Non-Family Care Giver	50	50
Day Care Services	55	45
Organization Provided Creche	00	100



Conclusions

It is observed that women who have continued to thrive and grow in their careers have used one or a combination of the self-initiated career enablers to ensure that their careers are fully supported. Women who have taken a break in career almost always attest to the absence of one or many of the above factors in ensuring that the infrastructure at home is not accommodating of their career aspirations. Similarly, any organization which seeks to provide sustainable, long-term careers for its women employees should ensure that the organization-initiated enablers are provided in good measure and their usage is promoted aggressively. This will lead to a higher retention rate of women employees as also provide for a culture that celebrates diversity.

Enabling Factor	Self Initiated	Organization Initiated
Leadership Enabler	Skill Development Programs, Family-member care-giver, Flexibility	Mentoring, Skill Building programs
Job Satisfaction Enabler	Flexible Working	Mentoring, Supportive Peer Group, Flexi-working policies
Sustainability Enabler	Day Care Services, Flexible working, Non-family care giver, family-member care giver	Flexi-Working Policies, Organization - sponsored Creche, Skill Building programs, Mentoring, Supportive peer group
Work-Life Balance Enabler	Day Care Services, Flexible Working, Non-family care giver, family-member care giver	Flexi-Workng Policies, Supportive peer group, Organization-sponsored crèche

While different participants of the Focus Group Discussion spoke in detail about different career de-railers and a range of career enablers, the unanimous support of every participant was towards Flexitime.

Top 3 careers enablers

Career Enablers	Ratings
Flexibility	Scored 4.6 out of a maximum score of 5
Mentoring & Sponsorship	Scored 4.4 out of a maximum score of 5
Organization led skill building initiative	Scored 4.2 out of a maximum score of 5

From its characteristic of being both a self-initiated career enabler as well as an organization-led career enabler, Flexiworking was seen as a key propellant of women's careers. In its avatar as a self-initiated career enabler, Flexi-jobs or flexi-careers are negotiated by the woman professional, independent of the existence of policy to support this in an organization. Participants of the FGD mentioned that several of them had negotiated flexi-working, or flexi-time directly with their supervisors and had therefore managed to resurrect their careers. Women who were presently working on flexi-time also spoke about the organizational loyalty which they had developed due to the provisioning of flexiworking. Women who had taken a break in their careers also agreed to the important role played by flexible working. To give women a choice about their actual working hours, usually outside certain agreed core times, whereby employees can vary their starting and finishing times each day at work and sometimes also their break times during the day, is a prime managerial innovation and one that actually determines the workforce participation of women in India.



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Saundarya Rajesh, *Founder Director, FLEXI Careers India*

Saundarya Rajesh, one of the earliest voices to speak on Diversity & Inclusion in India, is a winner of the Standard Chartered SCOPE Woman Exemplar Award 2006, the Yuvashakthi Entrepreneur of the Year award 2007 and the Swadeshi Jagran Manch's Award for Most relevant social contribution to business 2008. The CavinKare Innovation award for creating India's first flexi-career service for women was presented to her for the year 2011. In September 2011, in an All India search for excellence in women entrepreneurship, Saundarya won the highly prestigious TiE Stree Shakti Entrepreneur of the year award for her work in building and creating India's first women careers service. On the 8th of November, she was awarded the India Today's Business Wizards of Tamilnadu award and features in a coffee table book on women entrepreneurs by the same publication.

Saundarya did her MBA from Central University Pondicherry, INDIA and is a gold medalist in English Literature from Madras University, INDIA.

Mother of 2 teenagers and wife to a busy professional, Saundarya identified thousands of Indian women who had to give up their careers mid-way in response to a work-life balancing need. Having spun off AVTAR I-WIN into a social enterprise FLEXI Careers India, Saundarya works with over 23,000 women managers who are part of the AVTAR I-WIN network Interim Women manager's Interface Network. AVTAR I-WIN's vision is to engage with the larger population of over 1.5 million Indian women who have dropped off the career track over the past 2 decades and who can be the real answer to India's talent/skill shortage.

Saundarya firmly believes that for both men and women of all ages, work has to be a part of life and not life itself. This has led to cutting-edge work done by AVTAR in the space of creating flexi-careers. Companies which believe in providing a flexible work environment to their people have used AVTAR's consulting services in 'Flexidizing and Unbundling' jobs concepts which are the brainchild of Saundarya.

Pursuing her PhD in Flexible working methods, Saundarya enjoys Tamil poetry and is a raving fan of the Tamil poet Mahakavi Bharathiyar's works
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Karthik Ekambaram, heads the Consulting Services for FLEXI Careers India. Karthik is an MBA with 16 years of experience in business analysis and consulting. Starting his career in IT business consulting, Karthik moved into HR consulting handling recruitment for a number of IT companies. A deep and abiding interest in business consulting has prompted him to look at Diversity & Inclusion as a business driver for organizations by employing it as a talent, CSR and business strategy tool. He has carried out Job Analysis, Time and Motion studies at several client sites for the purpose of Flexidizing and Unbundling of jobs to create flexi-career tracks in organizations interested in implementing flexible working options for their employees.

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AVTAR I-WIN



About FLEXI Careers India:

FLEXI Careers India (FLEXI), a social enterprise from AVTAR, works extensively in the area of Diversity & Inclusion with a special focus on gender diversity. FLEXI enables high-growth organizations to focus sharply on an inclusive talent strategy to make the workplace more welcoming for women. FLEXI also provides placement services for diversity recruitment, workshops and training programs, creating flexi-career tracks through Flexi career solutions and Flexi-working methods.

'AVTAR I-WIN' is a service from FLEXI Careers India for creating sustainable careers for women professionals. More than 23000 women professionals are registered members on www.avtariwin.com, a unique portal for creation and fulfillment of work-life integrated careers for women. More than 3000 women have been placed on part-time/flexi-time/full-time jobs with organisations across India. This includes organisations from IT, BPO, FMCG, Banking & Financial services, Retail and other industries.

FLEXI conducts workshops and training on Appreciating & Leveraging D&I, Gender Diversity, Gender Sensitisation & Awareness, Work-life balance, Women and Leadership Development programs.

In an India wide study conducted by AVTAR in 2010, 87% of women and 74% of men surveyed wanted flexible job options. The change in society, family structure, work environment, long working and travel hours are pushing the need for a life-work integrated careers and hence the need for flexible working. FLEXICURITY is a product that enables organisations in building flexi-career tracks using proprietary organisation assessment and job analysis tool.

FLEXI conducts periodical research on women's careers, work-life balance and gender diversity. FLEXI's services are based on the findings of these studies.

- Viewport 2007: Country wide study on working women professionals
- Viewport 2009: Survey covering 283 married Indian Males aged between 25 - 65 to understand male perception of working women professionals
- Outlook Business - AVTAR Career Creators nation-wide survey 2010 on Work-life Balance
- Viewport 2010: 'Flexible Careers - Moment of Truth' - Study covering responses of 341 senior women professionals and 45 top organisations.



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