Why are our qualified women reluctant to take up career?

It's been 71 yrs since India got independence and our economy still has less than 30% as women workforce compared to China and Brazil with over 65-70 %. Even though overall job creation has been limited, most of the new ones have been grabbed by men given the social norms, the report said. What is worrisome is the fact that the participation level has been dropping since 2005, despite having 42% women graduates.

And the reason why women quit or in some cases do not even enter the working class, could be attributed to predictable social norms in India: marriage, motherhood, vexed gender relations and biases, and of course patriarchy.

But they may not even be the only reasons!! My interactions and being a “boss” for my girls helped me realize certain characteristics of female employees like the following -

1. Young girls are afraid to perform; they’re held only because of societal expectations

Young girls are equally good at routine tasks as well as creative tasks, provided, they are given such opportunities to showcase their skills. They also possess leadership qualities and can multitask really well, way better than their male counterparts. They are willing to take risks and stretch to attain desired performance levels.
However, they still shy away from roles involving travel or meeting people, the reason being not their personality, but because they are afraid of the society and also because their parents think they cannot take care of themselves.

2. Some girls have wrong job expectations and are not serious about a career.
Educated girls from rural areas are found to have higher aspiration levels and more commitment to the work given irrespective of how small it is. But in most cases, they lack necessary skillsets, mainly soft skills. Whereas girls from affluent families or city dwellers tend to have higher ambitions and, in some cases, unrealistic expectations of a job.
In some cases, I was surprised to note that it was professionally qualified girls from affluent families who had a casual attitude to their job and treated it as a stop-gap arrangement until they got married. A “time-pass” so to say!

3. Place of work is a matter of importance for many girls (and their parents!)
Many times, it’s not the girls, but their parents / spouse who inhibit or lay down unnecessary conditions towards their work/working conditions. It is they who ask the girls to resign the jobs for reasons like - “company is exploiting you”, “company is not providing transport”, “company is not giving perks”, “company is not safe “, “do not travel by bus “, “do not go alone” and so many similar benign and lame reasons. There have been several instances when the girls have been truthful - when they confessed that they had to lie to their parents / husband so that they could do something as part of their work or travel to attend a meeting. My sizeable team of girls quit my company in early 2017 when my company was asked to move out of our office in Infopark - because their parents didn’t want them to work for a company which did not have an office in Infopark.
This led to the downfall of my company; it took me nearly 6 months, as I was starting from the scratch, I had to rebuild a fresh team, and set up a decent office.

4. Societal expectation on a girl’s character based on her job leading to unwanted stress on the girl.

Our society still has certain stereotypical job roles for a girl, despite the fact that a boy and girl are undergoing the same education. For eg: Its completely fine for a boy with an MBA qualification to do a sales job but a girl with the same qualification is ridiculed – “how can a girl from a decent family and well-qualified do sales?” stereotyping like its better for girls to take up a comfortable job with less pressure (Banking, teaching or Government job is a apparently “safe”) and “Good girls” do not travel with male colleagues (“It will affect your reputation and who will marry a girl who travels with men all the time?” such are the benign excuses)

5. Getting married ?– Then quit the job, says the society.

It is disheartening to note that none of my “fresher girls” who joined my company and got married continued after marriage. The moment marriage is fixed, family members asked them to resign their job. And despite me trying to convince them the girls were unable to convince their parents why they would like to continue their job.
These reasons sometimes became impediments and created difficulties for me as a businessperson because I had a high rate of attrition and many times delays in work schedules because the girls had to leave home early. There were occasions when my friends advised me to hire male staff and get things done rather than depending on girls. However, I decided to simply ignore the said advice.

I researched on the matter and found out further reasons why I need to pursue this mission and promote this cause of trying to introduce more women into the workforce. It led me to conceptualize Prayaana in early 2017. Me along with a friend, Keziah Thomas, we did some pilot training and orientation for a small group of girls and helped them with placement. We found that there is a really great difference when a lady trainer trains a girl to create necessary skills and helping in career orientation at an early stage of career than when a male does the same thing.

Understanding all this helped me to launch Prayaana Labs in October of 2017. Our pilot batch girls were all successfully placed or provided internship at renowned firms.

Prayaana Fellowship Program is designed, keeping all these things in mind and aims at shattering the societal gender stereotyping on what type of a career a girl should choose. We are building skillsets and an even more able situation helping the girls to collaborate, innovate and work together successfully.
From January 2018, we are taking this concept to a state wide initiative by setting up Prayaana Lab hubs at various campuses who are ready to support girl students in their employability and thereby lifelong empowerment. Prayaana Labs aims at empowering over 500 girls this year by providing the much needed self-confidence and career orientation along with providing them internship or part time jobs.

Even now, in India, we keep talking about women safety and harassment issues. My take on the topic is that:

Empowerment for a girl is not just about the safety of her body but also about allowing her mind to perform and be productive! And woman empowerment begins when she is financially empowered and strong not physically, but mentally!
OUR CAREER COUNSELING SESSIONS

Our experienced career counselor Ms Sujatha took career counseling sessions using mykensho career assessment tool. If anyone is confused with their career come and contact us: 7902839393

Our prayaana ambassadors at 4Tune

4Tune Factory, NRI- TBI, Thapasya Building, Infopark, Kakkanad, Kochi – 682030
Ph No: 8590739393 / 8590339393
GET READY GIRLS

DISHA 2018
SUMMIT

ONE DAY TO CELEBRATE WOMEN IN CAREER

10 MARCH 2018, 9AM - 6PM
ATHULYA AUDITORIUM, INFOPARK | KOCHI | KERALA

Our DISHA organising Team

DISHA 2018-T WOMEN SUMMIT at Athulya Auditorium on March 10th

Ticket details

Disha Finalists from Campuses: FREE
Other Girl Students: Rs. 300/-
Women Delegates: Rs. 800/-
Men Delegates: Rs. 1500/-

*Prior booking Mandatory. Only 200 seats available. Spot Registration may not guarantee seats. No Cancellation & Refund policy. Price includes Lunch & Kit

The Disha Organising Team

Our Prayaana Ambassadors along with 4Tune Team

A non-profit initiative of

4Tune Factory, NRI- TBI, Thapasya Building, Infopark, Kakkanad, Kochi – 682030
Ph No: 8590739393 / 8590339393
“A girl should be two things fabulous and classy! - But most importantly: She should have a Career”

DISHA 2018 - Hunt for Career Queens - A day to celebrate all those women who make a difference in the world with their talent and professional acumen. Whether you are a college student or a career returner or a successful career holder, Disha 2018, an Event OF women, BY women, FOR women will inspire you to dream more!

In February, DISHA Team travelled to campuses across Kerala, identifying the campus career queens. Witness 10 of these queens battle it out for the ultimate Career Queen title. The day will be jam-packed with inspirational speeches, influential panel discussions, surprise award ceremonies and some peppy music!

Come & Join DISHA 2018 - a trail blazer event for Women Achievers!
INSPIRING CAREER QUEEN
AWARDEES - 2018

Our DISHA inspiring women awardees

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- **MEGA FINALE OF CAMPUS CAREER QUEEN CONTEST**
- **PANEL DISCUSSIONS ON:**
  - Women & Career - The Cultural Parameters
  - Stories of Women entrepreneurs: Workplace diversity and Women Leadership matters
- **AWARDS INSPIRING CAREER QUEEN 5 COMEBACK CAREER QUEENS**

SPECIAL PITCHING SESSION FOR WOMEN STARTUPS

MUSIC AND SPOT ENTERTAINMENTS

ORGANISED BY

Kerala’s First Employability, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Ecosystem for Women

Prayaana Labs is an exclusive finishing school and career support mission for women who wish to make an impact in the world. Prayaana gives wholesome career support services right from Career counseling, training, mentoring and recruitment services under one umbrella.

Prayaana is a social initiative by 4 Tune Factory Foundation, a non-profit organisation based at Kochi, India. We are supported by Kerala Startup Mission, Nasscom 10K Startups, UST Global Infinity labs and various other organisations. For more details visit www.prayaana.org

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Career Queen Contest

4Tune Factory, NRI- TBI, Thapasya Building, Infopark, Kakkanad, Kochi – 682030
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4Tune is featured by Indian Express on Monday 26th February

"If you want something SAID ask a man; If you want something DONE ask a woman."

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