PREFACE

The author belongs to second generation of those who are born in Independent India. Her earlier generation had witnessed freedom struggle. So they had realised the importance of freedom in every sense. They dedicated all their lives in prospering India and now their hopes are with our generation to carry the torch further. In fact all their morals, principles and guidance centered around this.

Thanks to social reformers like Jyotiba Phule, Agarkar, Karve, who saw link between education and women’s emancipation and national progress. Pushing their efforts further, our government in post independance eratook policy measures to improve the position of Indian, women as regards literacy and education. This got reflected in the rise in literacy level of Indian women. Of course, picture is still far from level of satisfaction. As chain effect, slowly women’s employment scenario also changed. Due to early social reforms, situtation as regards women’s employment is much better in Maharashtra compared to rest of India. In the world today women have entered almost every sphere of life, be it medicine, technology, science, politics, administration, business, sports or anything else. India only has produced world class lady politician like Indira Gandhi. Bill Clinton, the president of America has asked one India lady to lead America’s second highest software company. Miss Chawala
an Indian girl was selected by NASA to enter the space, Kiran Bedi is termed as Iron lady in IPS servies. She was awarded with Magassey award. The list is unending. Women have not only entered all the fields, but have also reached at the top.

But the fact needs to be digested with a pinch of salt. What is the percentage of such women? It is really micro-scopic. These ladies look like exception to the rule. They are extra-ordinary mortals. What is happening with the ordinary Indian girl? Whether they are really free to choose a career of their own choice? Basically what is the significance of 'CAREER' in their life? Is it just employment or pursuing own interest freely? Is Indian women really free like her counterparts in other countries to choose the career? Is she really having 'CAREER PREFERENCES' by all means? Is she really free to make decision regarding her economic activity?

The author has been perplexed by these questions. So it was decided to find the truth by own efforts in an organised objective manner. The author thought herself to be doing work of her choice, but it was experienced that even this choice was streamlined by society right from childhood.

Despite all respect and faith in society and family members, the author experiences many contradictions in their preaching and practice. Though she is encouraged to take up any work of her choice and is said to be free to make 'Career' out of it, she is hurt almost at every step by unseen shackles. The situation has stromed many questions in her mind.
as she is now exposed to world outside house. She can see thousands of girls like her sailing in the same boat. All seem to be wearing the same shoe, hence she knows exactly where it pinches.

Girls of this generation are not only free, but are encouraged to take up education. There is no discrimination between a daughter and a son up to a certain extent, but when it comes to higher education and investing money in it, discrimination starts, maybe not very glaring. Main aim and object of education is employment. Most of the girls are taking up employment due to various reasons. On the face of it, it looks like economic necessity, but it's not the sole reason behind it. They are said to be free to make a career. But right from the childhood it is impressed upon her mind that her husband, her family and her children are her priority and they are her prime responsibility. She can pursue her interest, her work, career etc. not overlooking her prime duty. She is brought up accordingly. Her mind naturally gets conditioned in the same manner. To study the situation in a scientific manner and to come out with implementable solutions, this venture was undertaken.

The author is aware of the complexities of finding out a factual position. Hence it was decided to cover a wide range of samples. It was further supplemented by some personal interviews. This was made more reliable by study of available literature. The task of getting filled in questionnaires and observation was quite painstaking, but proved to be very much beneficial. It was noticed that it is not easy to obtain information without inhibitions. Even educated women have their own compulsions in opening up. They can ill afford to annoy the family, the
society of which they are an integral part. Age-old convictions cannot be
given up so easily. The sample has to be assured of anonymity. Known
groups had to be interviewed in relaxed condition. Notes had to be
prepared based on certain observations. The author had to use her own
experiences to find out truth behind spoken words. Of course, care was
taken to base the findings on truth, without imposing own views.

The task was easier said than done. Author found herself to be
small insignificant and weak creature in the ocean of study. The task of
swimming through successfully was possible only with the help of my
Guru Dr. Shivshankar Mishra. He took keen interest in my study. He
satisfied all my queries with patience all the time. His thoughts and
principles expressed in our discussions would prove to be precious
treasure for all my life. The real figure of inspiration for me was Bhabiji
i.e. Dr. Mrs. Vijaya S. Mishra. She understood all my problems and has
been a constant source of my strength.

My husband Advocate Ajay Bajpai has been a great pushing factor
in my endeavour. His desire for me to do the best and timely help,
whenever needed were the reasons due to which the work could be
completed in respectable time. My sons Chi. Kaustubh and Chi. Kunal
also helped me in their own way by bearing with me when I was studying.
Another Guru for me is my father retired Director General of Police Mr.
B. J. Misar. He always wants me to do the work in an outstanding manner.
His accumen, experience reflected in constant teaching and preaching
helped to have a broad outlook, analyse the problem and summarise the
situation.
It would be rather formal to thank my mother Mrs. Kumudini Misar. Hence I express my gratitude towards her who made me capable of withstanding all pressures.

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Yours,

Mrs. Sunita A. Bajpai