

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Career Profile of the women Ph.D. degree holders in Science and Technology of Universities in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu was investigated. A sample of 1000 Ph.D. holders was chosen for the study. Personal interviews were conducted with the educational and employment authorities in the Universities, Governments, Industries and Research and Development Institutions located in the study areas.

The data on the distribution of age indicated that about 44% of the respondents were below 45 years while the rest belonged to age group above 45 years.

About 84% of the respondents are married and have one or two children. Fourteen percent remain single and 2% are separated by the husbands.

The women Ph.D. holders had medium of instruction at school education in both Regional and English language. The percentage of women who had education in English medium was 43% while the rest 57% had the regional language as medium of instruction in their school. Nevertheless, the education in Universities including research studies was in English.

The women who registered for Ph.D. degrees had creditable passes in the post-graduate degree examinations in both Science and Technology areas. One fourth of the sampled respondents had secured less than 60% in aggregate in PG. degree examination .

The driving force and motivation for higher studies to women was from their parents. Also, the husbands of some of the women Ph.Ds encouraged them for pursuing higher studies including Ph.D. degrees.

The major area of study at Ph.D. level appeared to be Life Sciences. The order of preference as observed in the study is as follow:

Biological Sciences > Agriculture > Chemical Sciences > Physical Sciences >

(41%)

(23%)

(13%)

(7.6%)

Medical Sciences > Engineering Sciences > Earth Sciences.

(3.9%)

(4.3%)

(2.1%)

About a tenth (8.8%) of 1000 women Ph.Ds in Science and Technology of the Universities of the South India, took degrees from the Universities of the Northern region. A marginal percentage (2.8%) of women took their degrees from overseas Universities in U.K., USA, Finland, Korea, Japan etc.

The minimum duration of Ph.D. programmes in Indian Universities is three years. The percentage of women Ph.D. in Science and Technology who completed successfully

Ph.D. programmes in 3 to 5 years was 67%. The women who spent in the programme for more than 5 years were either employed and/or occupied at house for personal reasons.

The scholarships of Govt. of India or Educational Trusts or Professional Societies and Fellowships of the University Grant Commission (UGC), Council for Scientific Industrial Research (CSIR), Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR), Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) etc. appeared to have been availed by women Ph.D. scholars. A 61.1% of the 1000 scholars availed financial assistantship from different sources. Others (38.9%) supported themselves in their pursuits for Ph.D. degrees.

The level of employment of the women Ph.D. appeared to be reasonably high. A 96% of the respondents are employed. A negligibly small percentage (4%) remain unemployed. These unemployed women were either waiting for an employment opportunity or engaged in family business.

The lag period between the time of graduation and securing job varies from 2 to 3 years.

The sources of employment for women Ph.Ds appeared primarily Universities, National Laboratories and Institutions of excellence. A two third of sampled population of women Ph.Ds were able to secure jobs at different levels in Universities, Colleges, Schools and Organisations of advanced studies. Another 25% of the women Ph.Ds are found in Research and Development Organisation.

The popular reasons cited by the women Ph.Ds placed in Colleges and Universities are that they have job satisfaction. They could discharge their duties satisfactory to themselves with no influence from others. And the satisfaction expressed by some women in educational institutions includes, a guaranteed stay along with spouses and children at one station. This facilitates education of the children and care taking of the dependants in the family.

The employment to women Ph.Ds in Science and Technology is secure. However, the emolument they receive particularly from educational institutions are non commensurate with their educational attainments A 61% of the respondents received monthly salary of Rs.20,000 and less. A marginal percentage (2.4%) receives monthly salary of Rs.20,000 – Rs.30,000 and, 1% alone out of 1000 sampled in this study earns more than Rs.30,000 per month.

The reasons for themselves being paid low by the management varied from non availability of vacancies at higher level, inordinate delay in the promotion and noncompliance of the criteria in promotion as set by the management to unpreparedness of women to move out of one station on promotion and shift in duties.

The participation of women with Ph.D. degrees in Science and Technology in academic and professional societies and attending conferences and seminars held

nationally and internationally as observed in the study was encouraging. About a third (39%) of the 1000 women partook in international conference at least once during their residence time in Universities and places of employment. And, all of them attended seminars and workshops held at national level within India.

Opportunities for women Ph.Ds in decision-making bodies within the management and welfare to themselves and their infant children are aggressively argued upon by the women.

The opportunity for women in decision-making bodies including Board of Studies, Academic Councils, Senate, Syndicate, Management Boards and Committees Instituted for routine functions are scarcely available. The academic and research activities though fairly represented by them do not qualify them to claim a role in decision-making bodies.

The women Ph.Ds with five to ten years of active employment in education and research institutes encounter typical problems which could be solved by the management of the organisations. Creche for the babies, recreational facilities for the employees, transport between residences and work place for the handicapped women etc. are seldom provided by the management.

Gender discrimination and harassment were not voiced by the respondents. However, the treatment meted to them by men handicapped their career growth.

Besides they add that lack of Creche facilities, inadequate transport facilities and rigid time schedule do not allow them to pay adequate attention to their family requirements. Majority have expressed their agony towards their non involvement in expert committees; decision-making bodies; Management Committees etc. of their Organisations. Eventhough about one fourth of the respondents made a mention about the gender discrimination, three fourths have not stressed that issue.

Majority of the respondents have said that, they do not reach top positions in their career, mainly because, they do not have many ambitions to achieve. Besides, lack of self confidence, lack of competitive spirit, lack of high aspirations and contentment with the present positions etc. are some of the reasons for women scientists not reaching top positions. The respondents suggested that they could be deputed for in-service training, leadership training and other Management training programmes.

The women doctorates want preference in getting post doctoral fellowships, international fellowships and also in promotions. In general, women doctorates are highly motivated, dedicated and sincere in their day today academic activities. With little encouragement and support from the management side, no doubt they would contribute their maximum towards the development of their organisation and to the Nation as a whole.