

**Are ‘Return to Work’ initiatives a solution to increase representation of women in the  
IT workforce?**

Dr. Prathima V G  
Dept. of Business Administration  
BNM Institute of Technology  
Bangalore, India

Dr. Kankana Mukhopadhyay  
OB & HRM  
Praxis Business School  
Kolkata, India

**Abstract**

Talent crisis is a problem faced by many organizations and the IT industry is no exception. Leaking women talent pool especially of women with experience who take a career break in their early careers - mid careers is making the situation worse. IT companies having recognized the business implications of losing this important pool of talent, have implemented a multitude of return-to-work initiatives to improve women’s workplace ability and manage responsibilities they face outside of work especially since many of them have nonlinear careers due to personal responsibilities. Previous literature explained the proposed linkages between Return to work initiatives and the conceptual dimensions undertaken for the study. The research hypothesized and validated that return-to-work initiatives have a positive impact on career return decisions, career progression, efficiency, employability and engagement and skill enhancement of women returners, consistent with the literature review. Managerial implications and scope for further research have been discussed.

Keywords: Women Talent Pool; Career break; Return to work initiatives; Talent management; Talent engagement

## 1. Introduction

Talent shortage is gripping high performing businesses world over and the IT industry is no exception, given its core competency lying in technology enabled services. Some of this talent shortage is attributed to the inadequate practical application-based education and skill training scenario that is faced by companies; however, a major reason for this talent shortage is not having the right skilled, available pool of performance-ready talent who can be deployed to challenging assignments. In addition, the leaking women talent pipeline who take a career break in their early careers - mid careers are making the situation worse, along with general attrition levels of employees being high in the IT industry. These have serious business impacts and consequences on competitiveness, customer reach and impact, relatedness and relevance of business solutions as they affect diversity in the companies.

Companies are trying to fix these talent shortages especially having an impact on gender diversity through various initiatives to attract, manage, develop and retain talented women pool who are resourceful and have the ability to positively impact business results. One of the initiatives which is in the nascent stage but has been relevant in talent attraction, management and retention is the 'Return to Work' initiatives (RTW initiatives) for women who have taken a career break and are willing to join back work and continue their career trajectory. Return to work initiatives are a host of support programs offered by companies around the world to reintegrate its employees who were unavailable for work for a temporary period of time mostly due to injury or illness. Today, the scope of RTW programs has widened to include employees who had taken a temporary break for reasons other than health, like care responsibilities, pursuing higher education, travelling, etc. The goal is to make them job ready by providing

training, motivating them, providing support and giving them certain facilities that will enable their reintegration; coaching and mentoring them to continue in their career. Women working in the IT industry have access to training (catering to both upskilling and reskilling), coaching, mentoring and sponsorship programmes, flexible work arrangements, career counseling, networking forums, employee assistance programmes and childcare facilities offered as RTW initiatives to attract them back into the workforce post a career break. Women returners are being made aware of the multitude opportunities available for them to restart their career, by the companies' employer branding initiatives as well as third party agencies like Sheroes, Jobsforher etc., which are into placement, training, mentoring and support services for women.

Personal factors like age, stage in life stage, education, women's view of themselves in the form of self-identity, achievement orientation and self-efficacy; family related factors like marriage, care and household responsibilities, work life conflict, social class to which the family belongs to etc., are important for workforce return decisions and organizational factors in the form of talent acquisition initiatives like RTW initiatives (also referred to as second career programmes), organizational culture, climate and environment, leadership attitude and support play an important role in the return decision, career commitment and their engagement as well. These factors cannot be separated from their work life and hence their return, transition, development and retention in the organization need to be a carefully crafted and well planned. In addition to this, the support extended by governments in the form of legal frameworks and laws is important to make increase their representation in the workforce.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Benefits of inclusion of women in workforce**

Representation of women across different levels in the organization serves as a classic business case for their inclusion in the workforce even after a career break. Several studies reveal that

having women in the organization made their organizations a better place to work and had more job satisfaction, more organizational commitment, more meaningful work and less burnout (Clerkin, 2017); attract talent, enhances business performance, strengthens brand and reputation, innovate, collaborate internally and externally, enhance customer satisfaction, leverage technology, serve new and existing customer needs and compete in new industries and geographies (PWC, 2015).

## **2.2 Indian Scenario**

In India, employability of women is 45.6%, however, women's participation in the labour workforce is 25% (AICTE, 2019). The proportion of women in private sector companies is 24.5% of the total workforce compared to just 17.9% of the public sector. The percentage of senior level female employees in India is a poor 5% while the global average is about 20% (Nair, 2018).

From the time of evolution, women have occupied gender specific roles, playing the role of a nurturer, leading to strongly held societal belief systems that have led to unequal representation of women in the workplace (Fletcher et al., 2017) which are culturally deep rooted especially in Asian countries (Dyckerhoff, Wang and Chen, 2012; Conner and Wright,2013; Ravindran and Baral,2014). Studies reveal that this scenario has not changed much, especially in the representation in higher ranks of the companies. Indian women take a career break for less than a year. In comparison to their counterparts in the US and Germany, a high proportion (58%) of them who return to work, join back full-time employment and face smaller salary penalties. Telecommuting, flexitime and reduced work hours are some of the arrangements that they use to manage their work-life balance; but like their counterparts around the world, many Indian women feel it impacts their careers adversely (Hewlett et al., 2013).

## **2.3 Reasons for abysmal representation**

Indian women are aspiration deficit- hence they don't mind leaving their jobs when situation arises (Nobel, 2007; Sundari and Sathyanarayana,2012); self-imposed glass ceiling due to societal cultural expectations (Ibarra et al, 2013; rigid gender norms practiced in society influence self-efficacy of women where they believe that they are unable to attain the outcomes they desire or limits opportunities (McKelway, 2018); quitting organizations during their prime age of marriage (Jeon, 2008) as well as the role of spouse support in women's employment after marriage (Chinchilla et al,2006; need to take permission from their family to work (AICTE, 2019; eldercare responsibilities (Hewlett, 2007; Hewlett and Rashid, 2011) have made it very difficult for women to have a linear career without breaks. Among the working mothers, several challenges arise. Importance of work-family balance especially motherhood outweighs leadership opportunity. In India, 36% of women take a career break for 11 months on an average, mostly for childcare or eldercare (Hewlett et al., 2013); economic incentives – childcare costs, financial incentive for joining back the work, additional or supplemental income, spouse's/family member's income, job demands, family demands and the organizational formal and informal support practices. (Russel and Banks, 2011; Ravindran and Baral,2014) affect their careers.

Gender-based discrimination in the labour market as women spend more time unemployed and longer time to find jobs (Fletcher et al., 2017) is evident. Organizational as well as personal barriers affect the talent pipeline of women, especially for senior positions. Lack of opportunities after a career break (Robert Walters, 2015); non-availability of flexible work arrangements (PWC, 2016), barriers in organizational structure, company processes and practices and work environment (MN and Mukulu,2012), and the potential risk of getting lower quality jobs (Razavi, 2012) are detrimental factors for their employment.

Women who return back to workplace after a career break face various issues at the workplace. Women's efficiency is often looked down after they return back from a career break; prolonged

and inflexible work hours, unavailability of or unaffordable childcare support systems-free childcare or affordable child care and their location; inflexible work hours; lack of availability of relevant part time work; lack of training for returners, part time workers; women in low level jobs with no or minimum qualifications; lack of encouragement and support from superiors (Groysberg and Connolly,2013); lack of social support from colleagues; lack of confidence; issues around self-efficacy and expectations; external locus of control with respect to work and career progression; gender stereotypes; ‘womb syndrome’ categorizing mothers as problematic employees; lack of transport to work etc. (Green et al, 2004) create a huge work life imbalance, often discouraging women to continue especially when they lack familial and institutional support. Indirect discrimination at the workplace affecting the organization climate and culture (Michailidis et al.,2012) adds further to the problem and increases psychological stress. This shows that there are not enough opportunities offered for women to reintegrate into their previous jobs or companies either because they lack the strategic intent to provide opportunities to returning women or do not have return to work policies or programmes, leading to a hollow middle since women leave mid-way through their careers. Lack of access to senior managers (Alexis Krivkovich, 2018), absence of role models in the top management who can mentor women to progress in their career, can be a limiting factor (Bukhari and Sharma,2014).

#### **2.4 RTW initiatives**

Several studies reveal that providing flexible work timings, telecommuting, onsite child care, mentoring by women executives in the organizations are helping companies attract and retain women in the companies (Nobel, 2007) and increasing women in leadership positions as well. Work enablers like training, leadership development programs, mentoring support, professional development policies (Chinchilla et al,2006) in addition to pay on parity and good wellbeing initiatives act as motivators for second career women (Devillard et.al, 2016).

These have an impact on their commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour and satisfaction (O'Neil et al., 2008) and self-efficacy (Ballout, 2009) contributing towards engagement (Banihani, Lewis and Syed, 2013).

### **3. Need for the Study**

The representation of women talent pool in the IT workforce is low and falls in a drastic manner at the mid-and senior-level positions. While a lot of companies in the IT industry are offering a basket of initiatives and programmes to attract and retain talented women pool who had left the workforce temporarily or permanently, it is not uniformly followed across the industry and across different levels within the companies. The RTW initiatives are different in each company and the applicability and eligibility clauses differ across companies. Also, these initiatives have not been tracked or published by the companies that use them or by any government or private agencies to reveal the relevance, significance and effectiveness of these initiatives. There is a need to analyze the effectiveness of these initiatives as they involve huge investments by companies so that it presents a clear picture to the companies on the ROI of such initiatives and will help them decide on whether to continue such initiatives or not.

### **4. Research Methodology**

A thorough analysis of the literature review was synthesized into a Return-to-work initiatives framework which impacts second career women. Companies provide various return to work initiatives for women in the form of childcare facilities, mentoring, sponsorship, training for upskilling and reskilling women, employee assistance programmes, career counselling, projects/internships, flexible work options etc.

#### **4.1 Objectives**

The research objectives were outlined to find answer to the question '*How can Return to work initiatives answer the talent shortages faced by IT companies on one hand and add value to the*

*career of women who have nonlinear career trajectory on the other?'. The objectives were to identify organizational factors that affect RTW decisions for women talent pool and study the effect of these RTW initiatives on talent attraction, career progression, skill enhancement, efficiency, employability, employee commitment and employee engagement.*

#### **4.2 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework (see Figure 1) was developed in order to identify the impact of the RTW initiatives on the returning women.

Once the companies implement RTW initiatives, it is imperative to check how effective these initiatives are and the effect they have if any on women's careers thereafter.

Any initiative or programme is successful when the women returners find the initiatives to be beneficial to them. Firstly, if the woman employee does not want to join back her profession, then nothing will work. But, with employee friendly policies the organization can certainly motivate the woman employee to change her perception and she may join back. Second, the woman employee should have the desire to progress in her career and must take conscious decisions to join back her career after taking a break. The RTW initiatives of the companies help the women to join back their career and continue with their career with a desire to move forward. This decision in turn brings career commitment and career engagement.

#### **H1: RTW initiatives do not have a positive effect on talent attraction**

In this journey, 'Job/Career Satisfaction' acts as a trigger to take positive decision as it shows if the woman employee was satisfied during her tenure with the organization before she took the career break. Another parameter is 'Career Commitment' which influences her return decision in second career progression.

The availability, scope and types of RTW initiatives offered to women have a direct impact on their restart decisions, commitment, career progression and engagement. If women get



opportunities to join back work after a career break in the form of RTW initiatives like internships, projects, part time or flextime jobs, reskilling or upskilling training along with handholding and grooming in the form of mentoring and sponsorship as well as support systems, then the chances of them considering a return back to work are high. On the other hand, if they don't see any kind of support or inclusive measures by the companies they worked for earlier or aspire to be a part of, in such cases, they will stay out of the workforce for a very long duration or may quit working completely or compromise on roles, jobs etc.

**H2: RTW initiatives does not increase women's employability**

For women to continue their career journey, upgradation of their skills is necessary as in demand skills may have changed especially of the career gap is huge. If women receive training for upskilling or reskilling, it increases their efficiency and boosts their confidence to work.

**H3: RTW initiatives does not enhance the skills of women**

Proper workplace support systems in the form of training, job support, coaching and mentoring help women work effectively as they are able to prioritize and work efficiently. Efficiency is one of the key ingredients that employees must possess for being considered for career progression opportunities.

**H4: RTW initiatives does not increase the efficiency of women**

When women find that RTW initiatives are helping them in managing their career and personal goals better, they will be satisfied with the company. This affects their job satisfaction and their commitment to the company. When they find the organization to be supportive with inclusive practices, they will be psychologically attached to the organization and may remain loyal to the organization. On the other hand, when women talent pool feel that their organization does not care about their need to balance work life while fulfilling their career aspirations, it can lead to dissatisfaction affecting their commitment to the job and the organization. When they

feel frustrated with the way women are generally treated and the lack of opportunities, they may quit their careers completely.

**H5: RTW initiatives do not have a positive effect on employee commitment**

Women who return back from a career break are driven by psychological, social and economic needs and seek progression in their careers. If the RTW initiatives provide them the opportunity and the guidance to grow in their careers in the form of training and development, mentoring and sponsorship while enriching their jobs, women will be able to occupy positions with greater responsibilities and leadership positions. This has a positive impact on their psychological wellbeing and impacts their satisfaction, commitment and engagement with the organization.

**H6: There is no positive relationship between RTW initiatives and women's career progression**

When women realize that companies care about them and have a genuine intention to include them as a part of the workforce and are interested in their progress, they will stay (commitment) and strive (perform to the best of their abilities) for the organization and also say good things about the organization (act as brand ambassadors) - essential ingredients for employee engagement. When they feel engaged, they will be committed to the organization and develop organizational citizenship behavior.

**H7: There is no positive correlation between RTW initiatives and Employee engagement**

Hence, the outcomes of RTW initiatives are RTW decisions, career progression, employee commitment and employee engagement are the dependent variables in this research.

Career commitment of women are dependent on a lot of factors like individual factors (self-image, intrinsic motivation, confidence and belief in oneself, achievement orientation etc.), family related factors (needs and wants and family demands, support and encouragement and other extrinsic motivation etc.), organization related factors (organizational support, opportunities, practices etc.) and societal factors (support systems, legal provisions etc.).

Satisfaction with job and career are dependent on women's perception, judgement and response towards opportunities, the work environment and nature of work, ability to maintain work life balance along with the availability of support systems. It is also dependent on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. If a woman, is satisfied with her career, she is likely to continue in her career path, however, this is difficult to measure quantitatively, hence, it has been considered as an intervening variable along with career commitment. The effects of both the variables must be inferred from the effects of the independent variables on the observed phenomena.

#### **4.3 Sampling framework and Data collection**

369 respondents took the survey, out of which 234 respondents met all the criteria (had taken a career break for more than three months to several years and had joined back the IT industry through different types of "Return to work" initiatives) leading to a 64% response rate.

The respondents were identified through Judgement sampling and Snowball sampling. Primary data was collected through survey method by administering a structured questionnaire using online tools like SurveyMonkey and Google forms and was circulated.

#### **5. Analysis, Findings and Discussions**

Preliminary descriptive analysis revealed that respondents majorly belonged to 30-40 years (prime years of child bearing and child rearing) and were associated with the company for three to six years with an average overall experience of 15 years. These returning women had taken a career break ranging between three months to one year, with childcare being the primary reason for many of them. Childcare facilities and flexible work options were the common RTW initiatives that were offered as an RTW initiative, while few of them received career counselling, freelance projects or internships, Networking forum/ council, Mentoring, Training

and Employee Assistance programmes. Some companies offered more than one RTW initiative to the women returners.

Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro -Wilk test showed significant departure from normality,  $p=.000$ ; it was concluded that the data was not-normal (does not fit normal distribution).

Exploratory Factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to reduce the variables into manageable factors using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and check their reliability in order to identify and compute composite scores for factors underlying RTW initiatives (Refer table 4.17). The initial Eigen values indicated that the first 7 factors explained 33.4%, 8.8%, 4.7%, 4.3%, 3.8%, 3.3% and 3.2% of the variance respectively. All the remaining factors were not significant (see Table 1).

The seven factors were labelled and internal consistency for each of the scales was examined using Cronbach's alpha (refer table 4.18). The Cronbach's alpha for four factors - Talent Engagement (.89), Talent management through RTW initiatives (.88), Workplace enablers (.68) and Confidence boosters (.63) were above .6 and were retained. The other 3 factors were discarded since the factors named 'Treatment' (Factor 5) and 'Training' (Factor 6) had a very weak reliability score (-.49 and .15 respectively) and the factor named "Confidence" had a moderate reliability score of .51, it was discarded as it did not contribute to a simple factor structure (it had only one item). The factor analysis indicated that the four factors - Talent Engagement, Talent management through RTW initiatives, Workplace enablers and Confidence boosters were underlying the construct - RTW initiatives and these factors were moderately internally consistent.

In the next stage, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was used to test if the constructs identified in EFA were influencing the responses as predicted. The KMO measure was .88 (see Table 2), above the commonly recommended value of .6. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant in this case ( $p =.000$ ).

The communalities were all above .4 further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items. For the final stage, Principal Component Analysis of the 21 items using Varimax rotation was conducted. Factors that had a primary factor loading over .5 were retained and named (see Table 3).

The four factors - Talent Engagement (9 items,  $\alpha = .87$ ), Talent management through RTW initiatives (6 items,  $\alpha = .88$ ), Workplace enablers (3 items,  $\alpha = .68$ ) and Confidence boosters (3 items,  $\alpha = .63$ ) had a reliability score of more than .6 indicating moderate internal consistency. These factors have an impact on returning women and influence their careers and were used for constructing a model using Structural Equation modeling.

The base model was modified and Bootstrapping was used to get a better model fit with the non-normal data (see Figure 2).The model fit indices of the structural model after 4 modifications showed a moderate fit with the data (see Table 4).

The structural model was used for hypotheses testing. The hypothesis testing confirmed that RTW initiatives are effective in restarting women's career after a career break (see Table 5). The four factors showed a moderate fit with the sample data, reiterating that these RTW initiatives have a positive impact on talent attraction, talent management and talent retention. Hypothesis testing led to the confirmation that RTW initiatives had an impact on talent attraction, career progression, skill enhancement, efficiency, employability and employee engagement.

Out of the seven hypotheses that were tested, only one hypothesis that measured the effect of RTW initiatives on employee commitment had a correlation coefficient of  $p < 0.6$  ( $p \text{ value} = .33$ ), hence there was no sufficient evidence to reject the Null hypothesis. It can be iterated that RTW initiatives have less influence on employee commitment. The other hypotheses related to effect of RTW initiatives on talent attraction, career progression, skill enhancement, efficiency,

employability and employee engagement had correlation coefficients of 0.62, 0.72, 0.86, 0.80, 0.84 and 0.58 respectively and hence there was sufficient evidence to reject the Null hypotheses. For the 8th hypothesis wherein the Null hypothesis states that RTW initiatives are not effective in restarting the career of women after a career break, it was deduced from the analysis of the other 7 hypotheses that RTW initiatives are effective in restarting women's career after a career break as six hypotheses had sufficient evidence to show that RTW initiatives had a positive effect on women's career and only one hypothesis had sufficient evidence to show that RTW initiatives did not have a positive effect on women's career.

## **6. Practical implications**

This research serves as a blueprint for companies which are striving towards achieving a balanced diversity and inclusion target and at the same time facing a talent crunch especially at middle management levels, to concentrate their efforts on developing a holistic environment where second career women talent pool can thrive and continue their ascent to the top albeit a non-linear career. This research will also help those companies that are in the nascent stage of attracting second career women through return-to-work initiatives to concentrate on the important variables that will lead to success of the RTW initiatives and can be used to gain a strategic talent advantage.

## **7. Conclusion**

In order to fully utilise the talent of women returners in the IT industry, it was recommended that companies train women returners on in-demand skills and provide them opportunities to work in internships and projects to increase their employability. Fostering an inclusive culture through transformational leadership will ensure a supportive organizational culture and environment where the potential of second career women can be realized. Governmental and institutional support will help in increasing the participation of women in the workforce

especially after a career break by providing the required support for re-entry. With the right support from stakeholders, RTW initiatives can be strategically used to increase the representation of talented women in lateral positions – a primer for increased representation in the top management.

## 8. Scope for Future Research

The paper considers a variety of popular programs as RTW initiatives - childcare, flexible work arrangements, mentoring, and training. The effect of each program on women's career progression post return from a career break can be researched separately. While flexible arrangements and childcare facilities help manage women's familial responsibilities, they have an impact on women's workplace ability which needs to be further explored. The implications of "on-site" work being insisted in a lot of IT companies on women's return decisions especially post COVID can be studied.

## References

- AICTE. (2019). India Skills Report 2019. retrieved from <https://www.aicte-india.org/sites/default/files/India%20Skill%20Report-2019.pdf>
- Alexis Krivkovich, I. S.-C. (2018, October). Women in the Workplace 2018. retrieved from <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/women-in-the-workplace-2018>
- Ballout, H. I (2009). Career Commitment and Career Success: Moderating Role of Self Efficacy. *Career Development International*, 14 (7), 655–669, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/13620430911005708>
- Banihani, M. Lewis, P. Syed, J. (2013). Is work engagement gendered? *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 28 7 pp. 400 - 423, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/GM-01-2013-0005>

- Bukhari, S S. Sharma, B.C. (2014). Workplace Gender Diversity & Inclusive Growth in Public & Private Organizations. *The Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*. 49(3), 551- 563
- Clerkin, C. (2017). What Women Want and Why You Want Women in the Workplace. Research Report. Centre for Creative Leadership.
- Chinchilla,N. Leon, C. Torres, E. Canela, M A. (2006). Career inhibitors and career enablers for executive women. Working paper, No 632. retrieved from [www.iese.edu/research/pdfs/DI-0632-E.pdf](http://www.iese.edu/research/pdfs/DI-0632-E.pdf)
- Devillard,S. Sultan,S.S. Zelicourt, A. Kossoff, C (2016). Women Matter 2016. Reinventing the workplace to unlock the potential of gender diversity. retrieved from [https://www.mckinsey.com/~/\\_media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/women%20matter/reinventing%20the%20workplace%20for%20greater%20gender%20diversity/women-matter-2016-reinventing-the-workplace-to-unlock-the-potential-of-gender-diversity.ashx](https://www.mckinsey.com/~/_media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/women%20matter/reinventing%20the%20workplace%20for%20greater%20gender%20diversity/women-matter-2016-reinventing-the-workplace-to-unlock-the-potential-of-gender-diversity.ashx).
- Dyckerhoff, C.S. Wang, J. Chen. J (2012). Women Matter - An Asian Perspective. retrieved from [http://wfa.ust.hk/women\\_matter\\_asia\\_files/Women\\_Matter\\_Asia.pdf](http://wfa.ust.hk/women_matter_asia_files/Women_Matter_Asia.pdf)
- Fletcher, Erin K., Rohini Pande, and Charity Troyer Moore. "Women and Work in India: Descriptive Evidence and a Review of Potential Policies." HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP18-004, December 2017
- Green, E. Moore, J. Heggie, J. Easton, H (2004). Barriers to women's employment and progression in the labour market in the north east of England. retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291998131\\_Barriers\\_to\\_Women's\\_Employment\\_and\\_Progression\\_in\\_the\\_Labour\\_Market\\_in\\_the\\_North\\_East\\_of\\_England](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291998131_Barriers_to_Women's_Employment_and_Progression_in_the_Labour_Market_in_the_North_East_of_England)



- Groysberg, B and Connolly, K (2013, September). Great Leader who make the mix work. Harvard Business Review, 68-76
- Hewlett, S. A. (2007). Off-ramps and on-ramps: Keeping talented women on the road to success. *Harvard Business Press*.
- Hewlett, S. A., & Rashid, R. (2011). Winning the war for talent in emerging markets: Why women are the solution. *Harvard Business Press*.
- Hewlett, SA. Sherbin, L. Gonsalves, T. Fredman, C (2013). On-ramps and up-ramps India. retrieved from [http://www.talentinnovation.org/assets/On-Ramps\\_Up-Ramps\\_India-KeyFindings-CTI.pdf](http://www.talentinnovation.org/assets/On-Ramps_Up-Ramps_India-KeyFindings-CTI.pdf)Ibarra, H. Et al (2013, September). Women Rising-The unseen barriers. Harvard Business Review, 62-65
- Jeon, S.H. (2008). The impact of Lifecycle events on Women's labour force transition: a panel analysis. *The Economic Record*. 84(S1), 83 –98
- Kirai M N, Mukulu.E.(2012). Perceived organizational barriers to women's career progression in Kenya's civil service. *International Journal of Advances in Management and economics*. 1(6), 203-213
- McKelway, M. (2018). Women's self-efficacy and women's employment: Experimental evidence from India. Working Paper, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- M. P. Michailidis, R. N. Morphetou & I. Theophylatou (2012) Women at workequality versus inequality: barriers for advancing in the workplace, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23:20, 4231-4245, DOI: 10.1080/09585192.2012.665071
- Nair, S (2018, May 02). Employability in India: Talent crunch across industry forces stakeholders to point fingers at a spiritless education system. retrieved from <https://www.firstpost.com/business/employability-in-india-talent-crunch-across-industry-forces-stakeholders-to-point-fingers-at-a-spiritless-education-system-4451127.html>

- Nobel.C (2007, January). Why are women exiting IT? *InfoWorld*, (5), 10
- O'Neil, D. A., Hopkins, M. M., & Bilimoria, D. (2008). Women's careers at the start of the 21st century: Patterns and paradoxes. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 80(4), 727-743.
- PwC. (2015). The female millennial: A new era of talent. retrieved from [https://www.pwc.com/jg/en/publications/the-female-millennial\\_a-new-era-of-talent.pdf](https://www.pwc.com/jg/en/publications/the-female-millennial_a-new-era-of-talent.pdf)
- PwC. (2016, March 15). Making diversity work Key trends and practices in the Indian IT-BPM industry. retrieved from <https://www.pwc.in/assets/pdfs/publications/2016/making-diversity-work-key-trends-and-practices-in-the-indian-it-bpm-industry.pdf>
- Ravindran, B & Baral, R (2013). Factors Influencing the Attitudes, Behaviours and Career Success of Re-entry Women: An Indian Perspective. *Proceedings of 8th Asian business Research Conference 1 - 2 April 2013*, Bangkok, Thailand, 1(978-1-922069-20-7)
- Razavi, S. (2012). World development report 2012: *Gender equality and development—A commentary*. *Development and Change*, 43(1), 423-437.
- Robert Walters. (2015). Diversity and Inclusion in Recruitment. retrieved from <https://www.robertwalters.co.uk/content/dam/robert-walters/country/united-kingdom/files/whitepapers/Diversity-In-Recruitment-Whitepaper-web.pdf>
- Russel, H. Banks, J. (2011). Pregnancy and Employment: A literature review. retrieved from <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/corporate/PregnancyEmploymentLiteratureReview.pdf>
- Sundari, R. Sathyanarayana, P.A. (2012). Challenges of Working Women in India – An Analytical View. *SIES Journal of Management*. 8 (2), 74

**Table 1.** Total Variance

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance		Total	% of Variance		Total	% of Variance	
		Cumulative %			Cumulative %			Cumulative %	
1	11.386	33.487	33.487	11.386	33.487	33.487	5.102	15.006	15.006
2	2.993	8.804	42.291	2.993	8.804	42.291	4.918	14.464	29.470
3	1.631	4.798	47.090	1.631	4.798	47.090	3.214	9.453	38.923
4	1.462	4.301	51.391	1.462	4.301	51.391	2.590	7.618	46.542
5	1.308	3.847	55.238	1.308	3.847	55.238	2.375	6.985	53.527
6	1.149	3.378	58.616	1.149	3.378	58.616	1.474	4.335	57.861
7	1.103	3.244	61.861	1.103	3.244	61.861	1.360	3.999	61.861
8	1.000	2.940	64.801						
9	.935	2.750	67.551						
10	.889	2.614	70.165						
11	.793	2.332	72.497						
12	.770	2.266	74.763						
13	.737	2.168	76.932						
14	.680	2.001	78.933						
15	.656	1.929	80.862						
16	.602	1.771	82.633						
17	.561	1.651	84.284						
18	.512	1.507	85.791						
19	.489	1.438	87.229						
20	.453	1.331	88.560						
21	.409	1.202	89.762						
22	.384	1.129	90.891						
23	.365	1.074	91.965						
24	.344	1.013	92.978						
25	.338	.994	93.972						
26	.310	.910	94.882						
27	.286	.841	95.723						
28	.268	.788	96.511						
29	.240	.707	97.218						
30	.234	.689	97.908						
31	.217	.638	98.546						
32	.198	.582	99.127						

33	.166	.489	99.616
34	.131	.384	100.000

---

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

**Source:** SPSS Output

**Table 2.** KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.887
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2525.908
	Df	210
	Sig.	.000

**Source:** SPSS Output

**Table 3.** Final Factors and their reliability scores

Factor no	Factor name	Description	Labels	Reliability score of factors ( $\alpha$ )
Factor 1	Talent engagement (TE)	I am satisfied with the support extended by my company in charting my career	StsfnsupCarr	0.870
		I am motivated by my company to strive for excellence	Mtvtn	
		My company provides me flexibility of operating my role, considering my need to be available for my family in case of exigencies	Fxlrole	
		The company values my work and is willing to support me in charting my career	SupChrtngCarr	
		The support extended by my company is making me to stay with the company	StywithCo	
		I am aware of the career growth opportunities in my company	AwrcarrGrwOpp	
		I have a clear idea of my career growth in the organization	CrIdcarrGrw	
		Overall satisfaction with company's RTW policies and practices	OvrllStsfRTWPP	
Factor 2	Talent management through RTW initiatives (TMthRTW)	RTW_Enhancing skills	RTWEnSkls	0.885
		RTW_Increasing my employability	RTWIncEmp	
		RTW_Improving Efficiency	RTWImpEff	
		RTW_Progressing in career	RTWProgcarr	
		RTW_Getting promoted	RTWGtProm	
		The "Return to Work" initiatives of the company attracted me to join this company	RTWAtrctJoin	
Factor 3	Workplace enablers (WPEn)	My supervisor/ boss is empathetic and helps me manage my work schedule	EmpSup	0.681
		I feel my opinion counts in the organisation	Opcnts	
		My team members are willing to extend help when I need them	TmHlplful	
Factor 4	Confidence boosters (CB)	Working in my current profession is important to me	CuprImp	0.636
		I feel I am doing a worthwhile job	WoWJob	
		I am in control of my career	ConofCarr	

Source: SPSS Output

**Table 4.** Model fit indices of the Final Structural model

Fit statistic	Acceptable threshold limits	Recommended by	Obtained	Fit
$\chi^2$	--		370.820	-
Df	$P \leq 0.05$		180	-
$\chi^2$ significance	<5	Hooper.et.al., 2008	0.000	-
$\chi^2/df$	>0.95	Fadlelmula, 2011	2.060	Good fit
GFI	>0.95	Hooper.et.al., 2008	0.871	Moderate fit
AGFI	>0.95	Hooper.et.al., 2008	0.835	Moderate fit
NFI	>0.90	Hooper.et.al., 2008	0.858	Moderate fit
RFI	>0.95	Fadlelmula, 2011	0.834	Moderate fit
CFI	>0.95	Hooper.et.al., 2008	0.921	Moderate fit
TLI	<0.07	Hooper.et.al., 2008	0.907	Moderate fit
RMSEA	$\leq .05$	Steiger, 2007	0.067	Good fit
RMR		Hu &Bentler, 1999	0.023	Good fit

**Source:** AMOS Output

**Table 5.** Hypothesis Test Results (based on Standardised Regression weights)

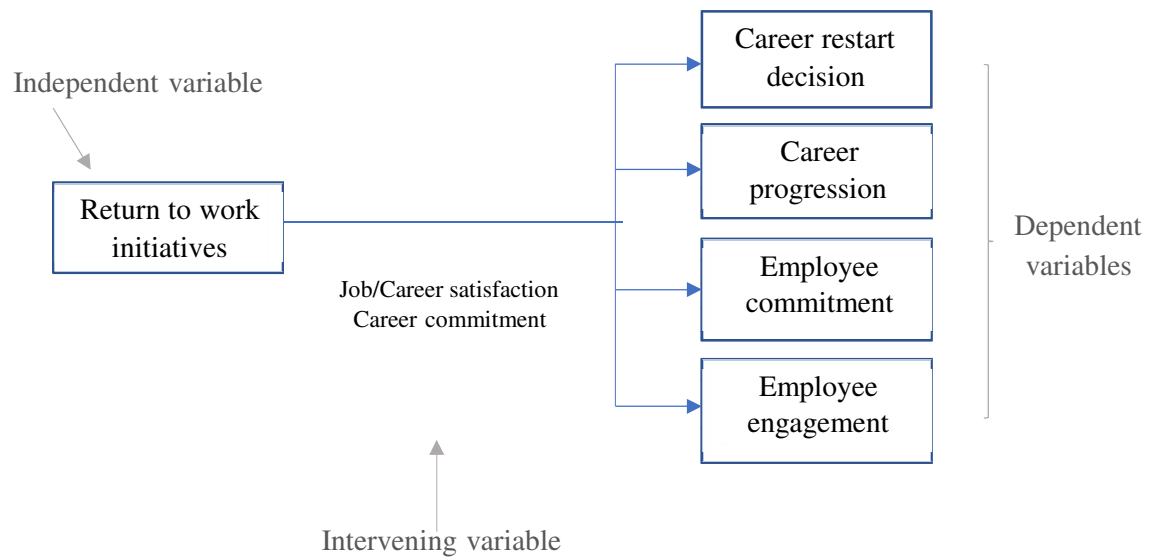
Sl no	Null Hypothesis	Standardised Regression weights	Accept/ Reject Null hypothesis
1	RTW initiatives do not have a positive effect on talent attraction	0.62	Reject
2	RTW initiatives do not have a positive effect on employee commitment	0.33	Do not reject
3	There is no positive relationship between RTW initiatives and women's career progression	0.72	Reject
4	RTW initiatives do not enhance skills of women	0.86	Reject
5	RTW initiatives do not increase the Efficiency of women	0.8	Reject
6	RTW initiatives do not increase women's employability	0.84	Reject
7	There is no positive correlation between RTW initiatives and Employee engagement	0.58	Reject

*Note:*  $p < 0.05$

**Source:** AMOS Output

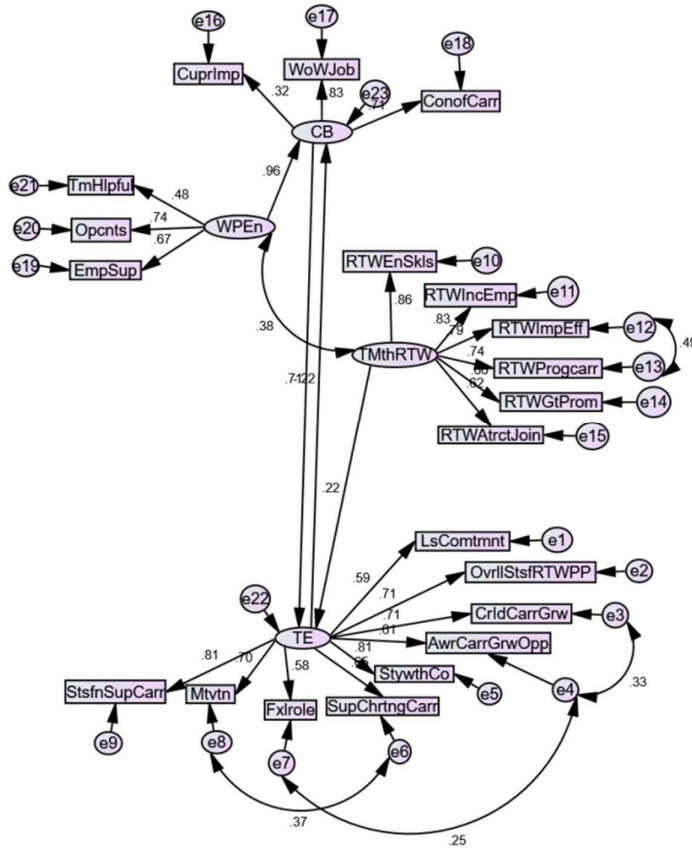


**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework



**Source:** Authors' interpretation

Figure 2. Structural Model



Source: AMOS output