

qualitative analysis was performed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to address the research questions.

The first study examines ions regarding work and family using a social constructionist lens (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). I analysed practices followed by women concerning motherhood and during their re-entry, to interpret norms surrounding professional women as rooted and layered within neoliberalism (Harvey, 2007) and patriarchy. Findings show that the importance given to choice and empowerment; and a revival of the argument of an inherent sexual difference, makes leaving work for home a matter of choice and not obligation. At the same time, women's continual self-evaluation during the period of break highlights the perceived inability of stay-at-home mothers to maximize the utilization of their personal resources which is an important characteristic of the neoliberal woman. Thus the professional woman's need to re-enter and perfect the balance between home and work, can be understood as an aspiration to maintain her empowered status as the new Indian woman.

The second study describes the perceived

evolving means of managing anticipated and experienced incongruities with motherhood and work norms.

Overall the thesis contributes to the understanding of the re-entry phenomenon. The period away from full-time employment alienates women from their previous day-to-day experiences of productivity. Economic productivity can be seen as a central quality aspired by educated, middle-class women. Such qualities are socially constructed in a neoliberal context where entrepreneurial spirit and economic evaluations of success are paramount. The thesis supports and contributes to feminist literature that critiques the neoliberal empowerment discourses by helping researchers grasp self-improvement, choice and economic productivity not as neutral givens but rather as negotiated practices within social and economic domains. By focussing on broader societal structures in neoliberalism and internalization of ensuing norms by women, this thesis supports the call for research in gender diversity and organizational advancement that lie outside the scope of organizations and yet have important implications for gender integration within these organizations (Joshi, Neely, Emrich, Griffiths & George, 2015). In presenting re-entry as a process, and describing the path-

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