

CHAPTER – V

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PROFILES

The 7th objective of the study was to prepare profiles of selected women professionals with outstanding achievements in their respective professions. A semi-structured interview schedule was employed as an instrument to prepare profiles of women professionals with outstanding achievements. The items in the interview schedule were pertaining to the following major dimensions related to their professional careers.

- (1) Personal bio-data and family back-ground
- (2) Pre-planning of the professional careers
- (3) Milestones in their careers
- (4) Influence of Role-models, professional images and mentors in their career choices and in attaining professional success
- (5) Facilitators and barriers encountered by them in attaining professional success
- (6) Involvement in professional organisations and need felt for exclusive women's networks
- (7) Role played by personal attributes in attaining professional success
- (8) Professional success as defined by them
- (9) Future professional goals

The present chapter presents 6 profiles of the women professionals with outstanding achievements, from the five professions selected for the study --viz academics, medicine, administration, law and media. The profiles are followed by the observations made by the investigator on the profiles.

PROFILE - I

Name : Mrs. A
Age : 42 years
Designation : Head, Department of Home-Science,
I/C Principal Mahila College, Jamnagar.
Profession : Academics.

If one asks any citizen of Jamnagar to name a few outstanding women academicians of the city, the list would invariably include the name of Mrs. A. Perhaps the list would begin with her name. This kind of reputation, Mrs. A has earned not only due to her designation but due to her involvement in various social activities of the city. Being very assertive and vocal, her word is always counted in the decisions taken regarding the important affairs of the city.

The reasons for selecting her for the profiles were mainly, her designation, her deep involvement in the academic bodies like Senate, Board of Studies and University Growth Nirman Board and her active participation in the socio-political affairs of the city. She possesses a Charismatic personality.

Born in a small village of Jheda district, she studied in a small village school, her study being interrupted due to family circumstances. Although she studied in a small village which offered limited possibilities for

any kind of future career, she inwardly nurtured a dream of becoming a doctor. Besides this, she also got inspiration for social service and leadership from her father who was actively involved in local politics of the village in which they stayed. But at this stage there was no concrete planning for any future career.

It was only during her college days at Ahmedabad, when she joined Atal Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) that she came into contact with some eminent and competent academicians and started thinking about joining the academic profession. This was mainly because during this period, her leadership qualities and zeal for social service, of which the seeds were sown in her childhood got fully developed. She was convinced that academic profession would give her the opportunities to serve the society and to develop herself fully. But immediately she could not join academic profession as after completing her education, she was married.

Her marriage was a bold step because she did not succumb to the evil tradition of dowry which was prevalent in her community and married a man from a different community. This marriage, in fact proved a turning point in her life. Her husband who was a very liberal minded person gave her full freedom to pursue whatever she wanted. Her ambition of becoming an academicians was now becoming

strong. Fortunately, her own brother-in-law who was an academician, helped her and inspired her to become an academician. She considers him as her mentor and one of her role-models, other role-models being the ADVP university teachers who influenced her by way of their personal attributes and way of functioning.

At this time, Home Science department had just been started in Mahira College of the town. As she was qualified for the discipline, she applied and was selected for the department. She was straightaway made the head of the department at a young age of 24. She was too young to shoulder the responsibilities of the head of the department but she accepted the challenge and to day after 18 years she still continues to be the head and is also made in charge principal of the college. She has proved her merit as an academician and also as an administrator.

It can be seen from her career graph that it has not been a very systematically planned career. According to her, luck and circumstances have played a favourable role in her professional career but she considers planning of one's professional career very crucial for any professional to attain profession success. Here can be considered, as she said, an exceptional case. But all women can not be as fortunate as she has been to get conducive family environment and favourable circumstances. Here, planning definitely gives proper directions to a professional.

Talking about the facilitators to her professional success, she mentioned her continuous reading on various subjects which has broadened her outlook and vision. The family support also is one of the major facilitators. But one single factor which has always motivated her to be very effective and active is a head of the department and in charge principal is, her concern with women's welfare. She expects all her girl students to develop fully and contribute to society.

The major barriers encountered by her on her career path were professional rivalry and complicated official procedures. Professional rivalry has not affected her professional success in any way. As for complicated administrative procedures, she has learnt to cope with them over a period of time. When she joined as a head, she just observed the official procedures and tried to learn. After wards, when she became quite well-versed in the administrative matters of the college, she started actively participating in the administrative affairs of the college. Gradually, she became extra vocal and assertive in the college administration. She was quite disturbed with the plight of women teachers of her college. She found that they were being unnecessarily harassed by the managing authorities. They were so suppressed that they could not protest against this. On the other hand, women teachers themselves were also not as motivated for their professional

roles as the university teachers should be. She resolved at this point, not to be put in such a condition herself and also to rescue her women colleagues from this kind of situation. She did succeed in this mission. Another barrier encountered by her was role-conflict, especially when her children were very young. This conflict also she has been able to resolve successfully by shifting her priorities according to the need of the time. She acknowledges the help and support given by her husband and her brother-in-law in overcoming these barriers.

She is an active member of a professional organisation and feels a need for professional women networks which can support them. Though she has made attempts to mobilize women of her profession not many women have responded.

Defining professional success she stated that it is not only getting higher position in the professional hierarchy, but achieving one's professional goals is real professional success and on these lines she considers herself to be quite successful. She also opined that her personal attributes such as boldness, a sense of direction and her entire life-style too have contributed considerably in her professional success. Apart from this, she has a very strong sense of identity which makes her place her goals quite high in life. One thing she had stressed repeatedly was that she has never allowed anyone to suppress her.

Recalling her professional goals at the time of joining the profession, she stated that it was to be different and better than other women academicians. Her goal being fulfilled, now she has higher goals. She wants to widen her horizon by joining local politics. She has been actually approached by people to take up such leadership positions. Although she has not yet made any final decision, once she decides to join politics, she will leave her present job but will of course continue to participate in the academic affairs in some way or the other. Her main goals, as mentioned explicitly by her, are to propagate her ideology, fight for women's causes and bring more and more women in public life. Here too, she is quite confident that she will definitely achieve her goals.

PROFILE - 2

Name : Mrs. B
Age : 45 years.
Designation : Professor and Head, Department of
Physiology, Medical College, Jamnagar.
Profession : Medicine, Academics.

Mrs. B, the only lady and Head in the department has proved her competence as a professional. It was the admiration and respect which she has earned on campus and her own personal qualities such as sincerity, dignity and thoughtfulness felt by the investigator when she met Mrs. B for the first time at the time of collecting data made the investigator select her for preparing a profile of hers.

Hailing from a traditional Sikh family in Punjab, her childhood was spent in fun and frolic. Being the only daughter among five brothers, she was pampered a lot and was treated exactly like her brothers. Her father always used to address her as Beta.

Till the time she was in VIIIth or IXth standard, she had not thought of any career which she would take up in future, or whether she would have any career at all. Then all of a sudden she decided to join the Medical course. The reason for this decision was very interesting. It so happened that her elder brother, whom her father had wanted to become

a doctor, joined some other profession. The father was greatly disappointed at this, so Mrs. D took it upon herself to fulfill the dream of her father by becoming a doctor. She worked hard and secured admission in medical college. Her joining the profession was, she admits, purely out of personal reasons and not out of any genuine interest in the profession. But once she joined, she has always tried to give best to the profession. She believes that systematic planning definitely goes a long way in shaping the career of a professional. In her case, however, it has not been so as she did not plan her professional career systematically and later on in spite of planning, plans could not materialise on account of family circumstances. She wanted to be on the clinical side but due to family circumstances, was compelled to take up teaching in medical college. As a result of this she does not derive as much job satisfaction as she would have expected.

As stated earlier, her decision to join medical profession was purely to fulfill her father's dream, she did not have any role models, in fact she never looked for them. She did not get inspiration from anyone. The whole family including her father were against her joining the medical profession. After wards, when she got married, even her in-laws opposed. However once she joined the profession, they offered their help whenever she needed it.

She joined the department as a tutor, at the age of 25, became an assistant professor at the age of 30, associate professor at the age of 37 and, Head at the age of 40. According to her, there were hardly any facilitators to smoothen her career path, except the support she has been getting from her husband who also happens to be in the same profession but in the different department. Most of the times she had to face and is still facing barriers in the way of her professional success. In the earlier phase of her career, she had to face opposition from her parental family as well as husband's family. Later on, working in a department where except her, all were males, created problems for her at every step. As they did not want her to become Head, they did everything within their reach to tarnish her image. They wrote anonymous letters to the authorities describing her lack of competence and even indulged in character assassination. But she survived all this with her self-confidence, grit and determination and could succeed in becoming head of the department. Even at present she faces problems in her day-to-day functioning. As all the males in the department are in subordinate positions, they don't like to work under a lady which is quite obvious in their behaviour. She is marginalised by them. To overcome this, whenever she has taken an initiative to mix with them, she has felt alienated. As she described this, "I don't fit in male kind of talk". She also referred to role-conflict as a barrier, which she mainly experienced at psychological level. In her case, it was always her family

which taken precedence but this did not at any time lead her to feel in her professional role.

She recognises the importance of mentors and regrets that she could not find any mentor otherwise, her career would have been in still a better shape. And so, after realising this, she plays the role of a mentor for her students. She also feels need for female professional networks, wherein, the problems specific to women can be voiced and discussed freely. She stated that informal support among the women professional is there but the formal associations and networks could make a difference.

According to her definition, professional success means, "doing one's best in the given professional set-up". To that extent, she considers herself successful and considering the higher position to which she has reached, people too consider her successful, but her unrealized goal of being on the clinical side makes her feel unfulfilled.

While referring to the factors responsible for her professional success, along with hard-work, persistence and self-confidence she also mentioned other attributes of her personality such as assertiveness and competitiveness. As she had to compete with her five brothers, the quality of competitiveness was cultivated in her from the childhood. She also felt importance of so called feminine qualities but on the professional front she opined so-called masculine

qualities such as assertiveness competitiveness are more essential. And she never feels guilty for possessing or even exhibiting these two qualities.

On being asked about her future professional goals, she said that she has bright chances of becoming the dean of medical college but she does not wish to accept it, as this position now-a days has been politicized and is full of hassels.

In stead of that she wants to work on clinical side which was her initial ambition. She is determined to take the training required for it and has actually started making concrete plans for it. This, she is sure, will give her real fulfillment.

PROFILE - III

Name : Mrs. C
Age : 32 years.
Designation : Vitro Retina Surgeon,
Private Practitioner, Baroda.
Profession : Medicine.

The first Vitro Retina Surgeon in Baroda city and the second lady Vitro Retina Surgeon in whole of India to have private practice, Mrs.C can be called a young achiever in real sense of the term. The main reason for selecting her for preparing her profile was her remarkable professional achievements at a very young age.

Here is a success story without much of impediments in her professional path. Fortunately, she was born in a family which had several connections with medical profession. Her own mother had aspired to become a doctor in her student days but her dream was not realized due to early marriage and family commitments. Later, she acquired knowledge of Homeopathy and has been practicing Homeopathy in an informal way. She is quite popular in her circle for effective medicines. One of Mrs. C's mother's close friends who was a Gynecologist also inspired Mrs. C to become a doctor. As a child, she used to fall ill quite often and this aunt used to treat her. On seeing the aunt treating her, she would often imagine herself in the role of

the aunt (doctor). There was another eye surgeon, who also was a family friend, inspired her to join medical profession. Apart from this, she recalls that while in school the lesson on "Florence Nightingale - The Lady with a Lamp" inspired in her, the moral lessons of compassion and social service. With such kind of upbringing, the choice of medicine as a career came quite naturally to her. Yet she was cautious and wanted to confirm whether Medicine would be the right profession for her. Subsequently she approached a 'Career Guidance Bureau' at Bombay and took an 'Aptitude and Interest Test'. On the basis of the results of this test, the consultants suggested 'Fine Arts' as the most suitable career and Medical Science as the second most suitable career for her. Fine Arts awarding to her cannot guarantee steady economic returns hence she finally decided to join Medical Profession. Fine Arts she decided to pursue as hobbies later in life.

Getting admission in Medical College was not difficult as she was among the first 10 toppers in the city. Even while studying M. B. B. S., she remained a topper throughout. After completion of M. B. B. S. she had to make a choice regarding her specialization for post graduation. Here also she was cautious not to make a wrong choice so she visited different hospitals, observed various specialists functioning, and then ultimately settled for Ophthalmology. Thus it can be said that here is a very well-planned

professional career. Pre-planning one's career definitely helps a professional in achieving professional success, believes Mrs. C, but according to her planning need not be necessarily from a very early stages because she knows quite a few doctors who planned their careers systematically quite late but still they are successful.

She decided to go in for private practice straightaway at the age of 27. After some time, she was awarded a merit fellowship by Arvind Eye Hospital to study Vitro Retina Surgery in Tamilnadu. Meanwhile she had two best book publications and two journal publications to her credit. She accepted the fellowship and went to study for super specialization in Tamilnadu. Her child was put under the care of her parents, and husband. After returning to Baroda she decided to practice independently as Vitro-Retina Surgeon at which people laughed, and even called her "foolish". Many of them discouraged her saying that she would not succeed in such a male dominated field. But nothing deterred her. Confident of herself, she proceeded in her plan. The building for the hospital was given to her by the family. She took loan from government to buy the necessary equipments. Today she practices Vitro-Retina Surgery successfully.

While talking about facilitators and barriers which she encounters in her path of professional success, she counts only upon the facilitators and makes little of the barriers. The main among them, according to her, are her aptitude, knowledge and self-confidence. Even her young age, which people had warned her that it would prove to be a disadvantage, has turned out to be a facilitator in her case. Being a young doctor, people think that she must be employing the latest medical techniques. Many of the seniors and well-known doctors refer cases to her. As for barriers she never allows any barrier to dampen her spirits. On being asked whether she felt marginalized in a male-dominated field, she replied in negative although she recalled that she was marginalized during her student days, especially by male students who envied her as she always topped. Even at present, she said that there were a few contemporary male doctors who label her as "too arrogant" but she pays little attention to such remarks. Such unhealthy criticism cannot do any harm to her because she is sure that ultimately it is the results of her treating the patients which is going to determine her professional success. She remarked here that she has been quite successful in treating her patients, who in turn bring more cases.

On being asked whether there were any mentors in her life who could have shaped her career or moulded her as a professional, she mentioned two names, both males. But their contribution is only to the extent of inspiring

her. She has never emulated them. More than these two mentors, she mentioned the name of one ophthalmologist cum writer from West, who, through his books has influenced her a lot. She considers him as her 'role-model' in true sense.

On opining about professional networks and organisations she stated that they are not serving any purpose. Their main concern should be for more publications and arranging more conferences. They should not act like unions. She mentioned the names of the ophthalmological society and recently the Vitro-Retina society of which she is a member. She however, does not feel any need for exclusive women's professional networks.

Defining professional success, she expressed that if one's profession gives one job-satisfaction and good amount of money to enjoy comforts of life one can be considered successful. On these lines, she considers herself to be successful. Money for her is a great motivator because it is with money that she can buy latest equipment, render good quality of work, and can even do charity for poor patients.

Mrs. L's future goal is to start a Retina centre in Baroda which will be the first of its kind in the city. She has already started buying equipment for it. She is confident that she will be able to achieve her goal very soon.

PROFILE -IV

Name : Mrs. D
Age : 30 years.
Designation : Administrative Officer, L.L.C Tennagar.
Profession : Administration.

Mrs.D is an example of a multifaceted, resourceful and practical young woman, who was initially qualified and trained for an academic career but had to switch over to altogether a different profession of administration due to marriage. In spite of this, she has made her mark in this profession. She has no regrets whatsoever for leaving her initial career as she has been successful in transferring the same training to this profession. Such an adaptability, resourcefulness and multifacetedness are rare to be found in a single individual. This exactly was the reason why the investigator selected Mrs.D, for preparing her profile.

Born in Uttar Pradesh, she studied up to post-graduation in her home town. Her parents though very simple and not very highly qualified, were quite liberal in their outlook. There were 4 Ph.Ds in her family. Thus, she was brought up in an academic environment. During her college days, one of her teachers inspired her to do research. This required her to go to Delhi. This was the first time that she was stepped out of her hometown. Her parents were quite

enthusiastic about her but did not oppose her decision. There, at Delhi University, she spent 4 years doing research in Chemistry. She was awarded her Ph.D degree in 1985. During this period she also published two articles in international journals.

After completion of her Ph.D, she got married to a person who was an officer in Life Insurance Corporation of India. Their marriage was followed by birth of a child. At this juncture, they both jointly decided that she should switch over to a career which is transferable, so that they can be together. As her husband was in LIC, he inspired her to join the same profession. Subsequently, she passed the competitive examination and was selected as an Assistant Administrative Officer in 1990. Later on she was promoted as an Administrative Officer in 1993. On the basis of her own experience, she opined regarding pre-planning of a career that it is definitely helpful to a professional but considering the Indian social set-up, a women's pre-planning may not yield results in the desired direction. But she agreed all the same that if she had planned her present career in advance she would have been a manager by this time.

Talking about the facilitators and barriers to her professional success, she referred to her determination as one of the major facilitators. The training which she received under her research guide, who was a very disciplined

and a methodical person has also helped her a lot. Apart from this, she is an avid reader and this knowledge of various fields helps her. As compared to facilitators, barriers are many. The working conditions in her office are not conducive. Secondly, she has not worked under any competent boss so far from whom she could learn or receive some guidance. She has always been considered as a threat to them and so harassed by them. The reason why she is deliberately harassed by her bosses is that her husband is in a managerial position, in a different branch. Her husband and her bosses are usually in competition for higher position. As a result, they take it out on her. Moreover, her present job is not challenging and does not exploit her capacities to the fullest. She likes to be involved in decision-making but she does not get opportunities for the same. On being asked whether she was marginalized in the male dominated field of administration, her reply was in affirmative but this, she was sure, not deliberate but more on account of cultural differences and linguistic barriers. To overcome this she has started learning Gujarati language. The common barrier or Role-conflict faced by most of the women, she too faces, internally as well as externally. Sometimes it is very difficult to cope with professional duties as well as domestic duties, especially because she has a small child to look after and her way of resolving this conflict is to compromise usually in favour of her family.

Referring to Mentors, she mentioned the name of the director who had trained her when she was inducted in the profession. She stressed the importance of mentoring as it can shape a professional's career in the right direction and mould the personality required for the profession.

She did not give a very favourable opinion about professional organisations. According to her they are less like federations, and more like trade unions and are usually concerned with the redressal of their grievances. Regarding exclusive women's networks, she did not see much possibility as there were not many women officers in I.L.C. and from those who are there, not many are willing to actively participate.

Defining professional success she stated that it does not mean only good results in day-to-day functioning of a professional but equally important are long term results in terms of contribution of a professional to the profession. Moreover, in a profession like her which deals with public service to people also should be considered as an important factor to assess professional success. She further added that a professional should not aim at only one's own professional growth and development but should take his/her people around. His/her staff-members should also grow simultaneously. This is professional success in real sense. This sort of individual and corporate and collective definition of professional success was really remarkable. She is trying to achieve this kind of

SUCCESS.

The future goal of Mrs.D is to switch over to marketing side of her own profession because it will be a challenging career and will exploit her potential to the fullest. At present on account to her small child she does not want to go for marketing which involves lot of traveling. Once her child grows up, she is determined to accept the challenges and is quite confident that here also she will be able to make her mark.

PROFILE -V

Name : Mrs. E
Age : 44 years.
Designation : Lawyer (Matrimonial and Criminal law)
Baroda.
Profession : Law.

Committed to the cause of women and eroding a kind of awe even among the males in a male-dominated profession like Law, Mrs. E is one of the few leading women lawyers of Baroda city. She is in this profession, primarily to serve people. She is affiliated to several women's organisations such as 'Nari-Samraksha Greh' and 'Nari Suraksha Cell'. She considers it as her duty to help the destitute women who have been wronged by the society and to create awareness among them.

Mrs. E was born in a middle class Maharashtraian family in Baroda. Education and social service were valued greatly in her family. She got enough freedom in the family for self-development. There were also facilities to read a lot. Her father who believed in the ancient Hindu philosophy taught all the children the concept of '3 debts' (ऋण) i.e. meaning that in return of what the society has offered, one must repay it in some field or the other. In this kind of idealistic environment, she started nurturing a dream of

doing M.B.A. Course and thereby serve the society. But soon her dream changed and she decided to join Law. The reason for this shift was a senior lawyer who also happened to be her father's friend, inspired her to become a lawyer. From him she received lot of information about law as a profession and was convinced that this profession too would offer her avenues to serve humanity.

Subsequently, she joined law college. She studied very sincerely, securing highest marks in Drafting. As she had joined this course with definite plans for becoming a successful lawyer, she started planning for her career very systematically from the day she joined law college. She started increasing her public contacts as she knew that this was very essential for a lawyer. Moreover, from the second year LLB, she started attending the court regularly to gain experience. She is happy to-day that her planning has yielded results in the desired direction. That's why she believes that pre-planning of a career is very essential for a professional.

Her path to professional success has not been without impediments. In a male-dominated profession like Law, it is indeed a challenge to get established as a lawyer, especially to practice criminal law. There were times when her male colleagues tried to defame her regarding her competence. When her first senior expired, they influenced the clients not to approach her, telling them that she would

not able to fight their cases competently. In the course of fighting matrimonial cases, several times she received threats of being killed but she continued even amidst such threats. In her own words she "maintained her dignity" and was indifferent to such people. Her adherence to professional ethics evokes a feeling of resentment among many other lawyers as they don't follow it. Such people try to put hurdles in her way. As for her, she is a firm believer in professional ethics. When any client approaches her and if she finds that the client is wrong, she straight away tells the client frankly and does not accept the case. She stated that 30% of her services, are offered as charity and volunteers to fight the cause of people who have been wronged and tries to get justice for them. At the same time she does not mind charging higher fees from the rich people.

The main facilitators mentioned by her were her personal qualities. She has determination, self-confidence, sincerity and a righting spirit. She also has the knack of dealing with criminals. She can become rough with them and can use their vocabulary. Besides, even to-day she works very hard. She studies each case deeply and prepares the cases meticulously. She also acknowledged her family support and luck as facilitators which helped her in achieving professional success.

With regard to Role-models, she stated that there were none so note-worthy. Although her father's friend mentioned earlier had inspired her to join the profession, he could not influence more than that. She stressed that she has evolved on her own, independently. She however referred to one of her seniors from whom she learnt how to fight legal cases with a smiling face. The same senior also played the role of a mentor for her. He provided very valuable guidance and training to all his juniors. Unlike some other seniors, who make the juniors only carry the books, he took pains to train the juniors. Not only this but he gave them opportunities to learn by assigning responsibilities. During his absence, he made them appear in the court so that they could gain confidence and function independently. Mrs. E feels highly indebted to this senior, though her style of functioning is quite different from him. She considers it very essential to have mentors in her profession. She herself performs the role of a mentor for the upcoming lawyers. She has prepared 6 lady lawyers so far. On being asked why she doesn't prefer to mentor men lawyers, she, in a matter of fact manner replied that she did not want to create scandals for herself.

Referring to her involvement in the professional organisations, she expressed that she was not satisfied with the Bar. They do not always try to solve the genuine problems of the professionals and take up trivial issues. In the past, there have been incidences when they had

behaved in quite an unbecoming and undignified manner. At such times, she had dared to differ from them. She had openly criticized them and she along with some other lawyers had formed another parallel Bar. She has also attempted to mobilise women lawyers and form a special women's wing in the Bar, but not many women have come forward. According to her, women lawyers still fall behind in decision making.

To her, professional success for a lawyer means "going beyond the law-books" and "fight injustice in the society". And specially for her it is to "rescue damsels in distress". Here she also remarked that she is very cautious not to help women blindly. She stated with concern that as the law was favourably biased against women in India, some women are misusing it to their advantages. She does not hesitate in lashing out against such women.

Quite satisfied with her work and success, Ms. B's future goal is to continue serving people till her health permits.

PROFILE - VI

Name : Ms. F
Age : 39 years.
Designation : Programme Producer, EMRC, Gujarat.
Profession : Medical University, Ahmedabad.

One of the pioneers of EMRC, Ms.F is a programme producer in the same institution. Her commitment to her profession and her zeal for pursuit of excellence not only for herself but for the development of the institution and the society were reflected in her speech, facial expressions and behaviour when the investigator met her for the first time while collecting data for the present study. That very time the investigator had decided to prepare her profile which would inspire many.

Born in an upper middle class family in Ahmedabad, Ms. F had a very disciplined and proper upbringing. Two major influences moulded her personality. Her father who was in judiciary insisted upon democratic values like equality, justice and fairness. Her mother was a staunch believer in Jainism hence insisted upon moral values like kindness, and faith in God. She was not actually pampered as a child but received lot of importance in the family and was treated equally on par with her brothers. She was assigned responsibilities in the family and was also consulted for her opinion in the crucial family matters. This developed a sense

of responsibility and self confidence in her.

She studied in one of the good schools of Ahmedabad and later on post-graduated with political science from Gujarat University, 1976. She was brilliant and sincere as a student. After completion of her post graduation, she was not in a hurry to seek employment as there was no economic necessity in the family. In fact, she was not sure as to what kind of career she would have in future. On the other hand, she desired to still learn more and more was intense. This led her to exploring various channels to discover which channel would give her the utmost satisfaction and meaning of life. Among the channels she explored were IAS Training, Research Projects at IIM, Journalistic writing, Conducting readership surveys and copy-writing for an advertising agency. Ultimately in 1980, when a new course on Development Communication was introduced by Gujarat University, she decided to explore that. The family members, especially her elder brother opposed this as according to him, "I.V. was not the right field for a woman". But she succeeded in convincing the family members about its importance and scope and finally enrolled herself for the same.

Subsequently, when Gujarat University started Educational Media Research Centre in 1982, she joined as a production Assistant and after 3 years, was promoted as a

programme producer. Thus it can be seen that she started her career quite late because the field itself was new at that time. Here is not a pre-planned career but she does say that pre-planning of a career can make all the difference. And that is why after joining, she has taken care to plan her career properly. She has continuously attempted to add to her knowledge and to improve her professional skills. She has also experimented with different types of educational programmes.

In the course of her professional career, she has encountered both facilitators as well as barriers. Among the facilitators are the valuable guidance and constructive feed-back from her director and other senior media professionals. Her personal qualities like tolerance, sensitivity, tenderness, delicacy, team spirit, sincerity and tendency to accept challenges also have proved to be assets in her professional career. Moreover, she had a lot of exposure to various media. She has attended and even organised Video festivals and visited several media centres. She was also given an opportunity to go England to learn communication skills from B.B.C.

The major barriers which she has been facing is professional rivalry and gender-bias among the male fellow professionals. Whenever she is given an opportunity for professional development, she is criticised as being favoured as a woman. She also expressed that people

are not ready to give recognition to a woman. But she confidently added that as she is perfect in her knowledge and skills, no body has been able to challenge her openly so far.

Ms. P also acknowledges the contribution made by the role-models and mentors to her professional success. Among the Role-models who influenced her were the Director of EMRC who also was a University teacher. There were other senior programme producers also from whom she learnt considerably. From among these, she mentioned one producer who effectively used the medium of T.V. for imparting messages. But the men who really inculcated professional values in her were her university teachers whom she consider her mentors in true sense. Apart from this, she fondly mentioned one of her neighbours, who recognised her talents from early childhood and helped her to mould her personality. As Pt. Nehru had written letters to Priyadarshini Indira, this neighbour also wrote letters to her wherein he tried to impart her knowledge about various subjects and also to inculcates human values in her. She till to-day feels grateful to him as he was the person who made her aware about her own self. She also mentioned a few other role-models such as Mrs. Gandhi, film star Hemamalini and Bharat Natyam exponent Mrinalini Sarabhai. She tries to emulate the quality of courage from Mrs. Gandhi's character and qualities of creativity and devotion to art from Hemamalini and Mrinalini Sarabhai. Some literary images such as the female

characters of Kalhana and Amrita from the novels written by Gujarati writers Shivkumar Joshi and Raghuvir Chaudhari have also impressed her.

Ms. F is also a secretary of Television Production Staff Association. Although most of the members are males in the organisation, she does not feel marginalised. She stated that their association has been successful in solving 99% of the problems of staff. She does not feel any need for separate women's professional organisations as it would marginalise women. She believes that on the contrary men should be involved in women's issues. Moreover, the organisation should concentrate also on broader issues and not only on specific issues of a particular group.

Defining professional success, she said that if her programmes are received and liked by people it is success to her. To be able to use media effectively for educational purposes also means success to her. Finally, as she is in a superior position in the centre, to function smoothly without creating any kind of conflict among the staff also is no less a professional success, according to her.

Continuously engaged in pursuit of excellence, Ms.F's future goals are many. Among her future goals are to continue using T. V. more effectively for educational purposes, to utilise soft-ware for educational media, create interest groups of students and then later to their

educational needs and reaching out to educational institutions by way of mobile vans so that more and more students can have access to educational Media. She also wants to conduct experiments with educational media. One such innovation she wants to bring about is combining education and entertainment, something like 'Edutainment' because she believes that educational programmes need not be necessarily drab and uninteresting. She has received many offers from Zee T.V. and other entertainment channels but she doesn't want to deviate. Her main commitment is and will always remain Educational Media.

Observations :

On the basis of the above profiles, following observations can be made regarding the important dimensions of the professional careers of the professional women selected for the profiles.

1. Family Back-ground

All the 6 women professionals come from middle or upper middle class families. In all the families, the level of education is quite high. There is also a higher level of general awareness in their families. All of them have had enough freedom to study and to pursue other activities. They were treated equally on par with their male siblings. Except

in case of Mrs. B, there has not been opposition from the family for joining the professions of their choice.

2. Pre-planning of Professional Careers

It emerges from the above profiles that in cases of Mrs. A, Mrs. B, Mrs. D and Mrs. F, their careers have not been planned from the early stages of their lives. However, once they joined, they carefully planned the subsequent stages of their professional careers. In case of Mrs. C and Mrs. E, they had made their career choice quite early so they could plan their careers from early stages. All of them agree to the importance of planning of a career for a professional and accept that the careful and systematic planning has given desired result in their professional careers.

3. Milestones in the professional Careers

The age at which they have started their professional careers is between 24 to 30. Mrs. A, Mrs. B, Mrs. D and Mrs. E, who are working in government institutions have achieved higher positions after joining the professions. In cases of Mrs. C and Mrs. F who are working independently also there is gradual success in fields.

4. Contribution of Role-models, Professional Images and Mentors in their choice of the profession as well as in their Professional success.

It emerges from the above profiles that in five out of six cases, role-models have played an important role in selecting the professions and also in the initial period of their professional careers. Their influence has been more in terms of their (role-models') personal attributes and ideologies. The role models are mainly from the same profession but sometimes from the related professions also. The role-models have been connected with their families in some way or the other or have been their teachers or senior professionals. In one case, the role-models are famous personalities. One important remark which can be made there is that the role-models have been more males than females. In case of two women professionals, professional images have also played an important role. These professional images are either literary characters or characters from the text-books. Contrary to the role-models, the professional images are all females.

Mentors also have contributed considerably to their professional careers, mainly at the initial stages. But ultimately they have evolved their own styles of functioning. The mentors also have been mainly males. This may not be out of choice but due to less number of women in

senior positions. All the professional women accept the importance of mentors in shaping the professional careers of upcoming professionals. 2 out of 6 women professionals from the profiles (Mrs. D and Mrs. E) who are in senior positions play the role of mentors for the upcoming professional in their professionals.

5. Facilitators and Barriers

Among the facilitators which have contributed to their professional success are their academic excellence and training received during the student days or during the initial period of their careers which they have been able to apply to their professional roles, their personality attributes, family support and their extensive reading related to their own subjects as well as other subjects.

The major barriers encountered by them are gender-bias, professional rivalry and lack of conducive working conditions. All of them have overcome the barriers successfully or are trying to overcome them with courage and determination.

6. Personality Attributes

Their personality attributes have played an important role in their professional achievements. The personality attributes which according to them help in professional achievements are self-confidence, determination, courage, fighting spirit, assertiveness, sincerity, persistence and inter-personal relational skills. Only in case of Ms. E, the attributes like sensitivity, tenderness and delicacy have been mentioned.

7. Involvement in Professional Organisations

All of them are involved in the professional organisations to a varied degree. Except one, others feel that the professional organisations are not actually doing what they should be doing. They are more like unions, concerned only with grievances of the professionals rather than with activities related to professional growth and advancement of the professionals. Out of 6, 4 professional women, expressed a need for special women's professional organisations and networks in addition to the common ones, in order to solve, women specific problems and to provide support to professional women.

8. Professional Success

Professional success has been defined differently by all the professional women and they all consider themselves successful according to their definitions. However 2 of them feel that their present positions do not offer them desired satisfaction so they do see a possibility of change in their professional careers.

9. Professional Goals

All the women professionals selected for the profiles are goal-oriented. In case of Mrs. B and Mrs. D. as they joined their professions without prior planning, their professional goals were not very clear. But in course of their professional careers, they could perceive their goals clearly. All of them are very clear regarding their future professional goals and are putting in efforts for achieving them.