

# GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN IT AND OTHER WORKSPACES

## Group L

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### 1. Abstract

India is globally recognised as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, making global strides in everyday fields, But for a country with a booming population of 1.35 billion, one would have expected such accomplishments way back in time.

As per the Indian express (2021)<sup>[1]</sup>, female participation in workforce in India is only 21%, which is one of the lowest rates in the world.

It is surprising to see that India's labour force participation rate (LFPR), which accounts for the women who are working or looking for a job, has not only stagnated below the global average of 47 but has seen a steep decline in recent years. As per World Bank estimates<sup>[2]</sup>, it fell to 20.3% in 2019 from 26% in 2005 even countries like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have higher values.

Through this presentation we aim to critically analyse the problem at hand, why women fail to participate in the workforce, what is stopping them, its impact, and to find possible solutions that could be implemented for a more equitable distribution of resources and equality.

### 2. Introduction

We have specifically studied gender discrimination in IT workspaces.

It has been almost three years into the pandemic, and women across fields in IT, banking and other spaces feel more burned out than ever before, the conflict of roles, the expectations from society and work have put them under massive pressure.

LinkedIn Opportunity Index 2021<sup>[4]</sup> says that around 22% of working women in India have said their companies exhibit favourable bias towards men, and around 85% of women claim to have missed out on a promotion because of their gender.

#### Methodology

Some of the most harmful gender inequalities are enacted within human resources (HRs) practices. This is because HR practices (i.e., policies, decision-making, and enactment) affect hiring, training, pay, and promotion.

We rolled out a survey that questioned people on their knowledge of and experience with gendered discrimination. The survey was divided into two parts, an objective section and subjective section. We followed the procedure of cold emailing and circulated the forms among our acquaintances and other colleagues. We carried out a couple of interviews with some of the surveyees, this phase helped us to “interpret the real world problems rather than just exploring them,” which is key to social anthropology.

### **3. Data and Analysis**

#### **4.1 Analysing Gender Discrimination in workplace:**

Nature of economic growth in the country has meant that jobs were not created in sectors favourable to women, despite lack of jobs, the household income did rise <sup>[21]</sup>, which potentially reduced women's participation in subsidiary activities, because the general mentality of the people especially the men is that “Am I so incapable that my wife needs to work” or that the income is not enough? The old thought still believes that women should perform care-giving activities at home and not step outside.

#### **4.2 Sticky Floor and Glass Ceiling at workplaces:**

These concepts reveal trends of red-tapism, corruption and favouritism.

Sticky floors refer to the phenomenon that despite working hard, showing progress and having the quality and resources, women are not promoted up to higher managerial or C-suite positions. On the contrary, glass ceiling occurs when employees, especially women, are able to see their goals, for example an expected promotion or an increment but miss out on one just because of their gender; they feel like they are trapped in an invisible glass cage, where despite the goal being visible is difficult to grab. Glass ceiling related to motherhood penalty accounts for about 60% of the pay gap.

#### **4.3 Analysing Gender Wage Gap**

The Global Gender Gap Report 2021 reported that while India has an almost equal ratio of men and women in the work force, men earn about a staggering 82% of the labour income while women earn 18%<sup>[13]</sup>. Gendered stratification is consequential in marginalization and exploitation of the groups supposedly ranked lower in the hierarchy.

#### **4.4 Role of Human Resources Department**

It is commonly seen that HRs and interviewers favor men instead of women while hiring. Also, it is observed that men get promotions and salary hikes faster and higher than women. Employers favor men, because they are often prejudiced against women, and have the perception that women do not perform as well as men. It is also observed that women interviewers favor other women due to an “in-group” bias. However, it becomes a vicious cycle <sup>[14]</sup> because hiring less women leads to lesser women reaching the positions where they can hire other people, and thus, gender discrimination continues to exist.

One must realize that even unknowingly, we all carry our biases and it must be kept aside in such professional domains. <sup>[15]</sup>

#### **4.5 Policies:**

In order to encourage women employment and involvement in the industry, the government organizations and public sectors have enforced laws and regulations that provide safety, opportunities, and growth of women in the workforce. The Indian government<sup>[18]</sup> has established laws for paid maternity leave, protection against sexual harassment, etc. Companies these days also have well-being cells and authority to address such issues. Sadly many times these laws are not enforced and implemented thus rules regulations and checks need to be put in place to ensure proper implementation.

#### **4.6 Women's Perspective- A Humanist Approach**

The subjective section of our survey received various stories of individual women describing their own bout with gendered discrimination at workplace. Most of them had their own version of stories where men were picked before them for promotion and other preferential treatment even when women had more experience than their male counterparts at the current workplace, with the experience gap sometimes amounting to 10 years.

Some female respondents also mentioned that the discrimination made them less ambitious as the existence of an unmovable barrier before success made them less interested in climbing the corporate ladder.

### **4. Conclusion**

From the Data and Analysis presented here (point to slide) , and subsequent intensive discussions revealed to following conclusions.

1. The analysis reveals that since past the females were prone to gender discrimination in workplace in both urban and rural, formal and informal sectors.
2. Gender discrimination has resulted in low job satisfaction and motivation, women feel that if they are placed lower in the stratification and are not paid enough, then there is no point to work.
3. Despite having the qualification and resources they are unable to reach at higher roles.
4. Society still has the mentality that women belong at home.

While we observe a significant bridging in the pay gap over the past few years, a substantial change is needed in the workplace and mindset to close disparities. An aggravating factor is the lack of political representation for women and a deep-rooted unconscious gender bias. Passing

women-centric laws would certainly improve pay equality and reduce blatant discrimination. However, the underlying issues and hidden gender bias necessitate social reform. We as social scientists are pretty optimistic to see a positive trend with regard to this topic.