



## A Study on Impact of Gender Discrimination At Workplace

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### Abstract

Gender discrimination has been the major practice around the world and specially in India. Right from birth, women have to fight their battle whether that is for education, jobs, marriage whereas a man can do whatever he wants to do. In this paper, we will discuss about the gender discrimination in the workplace, the challenges women have to face and how gender discrimination effects the person and the organization. The paper also explains the law and acts enacted for the purpose of safety of women from any discrimination and harassment at the workplace.

**Keywords:** Gender discrimination, challenges, organization, harassment, women, prohibition , working females, working males

### I. INTRODUCTION

From hundreds of years, women have been taught to stay at home, do household work, take care of their families but now situation has changed, women have started going out, they are getting educated , they are working and they are giving tough competition to men in every field. Talking only about India, women have been discriminated right from her birth till the time she dies, she has to fight her battle each and every day in the men dominating society.

Workplace gender discrimination basically means that a person is treated unfairly in an organization because of his/her sex. For example, a woman is paid less than men even if they both are doing same work, they are evaluated harshly etc. This practice is also followed in the organizations as HRs prefer male employees over female employees. This gender gap in increasing day by day in the organizations. At workplace, the gap between the women and men population has decreased from past years but still, it is huge and it will take another century to fill this gap. As a citizen of the country, it is each and every person's responsibility to take action against gender discrimination whenever they face it and to support for the victim.

### A. GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN INDIA

India is a country where being born as a girl is treated as "bojh"(burden), a girl from start of her life till death has to fight many battles whether that battle is for education, to go out with friends, to go out and work. This discrimination effects the mental health of the women, their education and mainly effects their life whereas men enjoy each and every right given to them without any barrier.

Women have proved themselves in every field whether that is sports, entertainment or business but still girl discrimination can be seen in any house of India.

The Constitution of India has laid down the rights of men and women but still men enjoy all the rights whereas majority of women doesn't get the privilege of enjoying those rights.

The main reasons behind this are:

- **Poverty**- This is a very big issue in Indian society. About 30 percent of India's population is below the poverty line and 70 percent out of that 30 percent are women. The condition of women is worst than that of men because of lack of access to economic resources.
- **Illiteracy**- In India, the gap between the male and female literacy rate is 17 percent i.e. the



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male literacy rate is more by 17 percent. Poor people doesn't want their girls to go school instead they want them to stay at home and help their wife or mother in household works.

- **Social practices and beliefs-** In Indian families, men are always treated as an asset whereas a girl is always treated as liability. From the beginning men has been dominating women in the family or in the society. It is believed that men are the ones to earn and women are the ones to support them. This social belief is one of the main causes behind gender discrimination.
- **Women are not aware about their rights-** It is illegal to discriminate anyone on the basis of their sex but many women are not aware about their rights and thus they tolerate all the discrimination against them.

Women are competing with men in every field even when they are not given equal opportunities and in the areas where they lack is also the fault of the society and their beliefs.

## B. GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN WORKPLACE

Workplace gender discrimination means that a person is treated unfairly because of his/her gender at the workplace.

For example, a woman is paid less than men even if they both are doing same work, they are evaluated harshly etc.

According to the study, 72% women feels gender discrimination in their organizations and in the last 25 years, there has been decline in female working population.



Fig 1: Gender discrimination at workplace

## TYPES OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION AT WORKPLACE

- **Disparate treatment:** This type of discrimination means that an employee is treated unfairly because of their sex or we can say based on their personal characteristics. For example, difference in payroll, promotion, hiring practices etc.
- **Sexual Harassment:** This type of discrimination includes any verbal or physical kind of behavior. For example, sexual jokes, physical unwanted touch etc.

## EXAMPLES OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Gender discrimination in the workplace can happen in many forms from biasness in hiring the employee, paying salary, promotion or many other. Below are some of the examples of gender discrimination forms:

- **Discrimination in employment-** In a survey conducted, results shown that around 71% of the male are in the workforce whereas only 21% of the women are engaged in workplace. The survey showed that only Meghalaya is the only state with 50% of female population in the workforce whereas only 4% on female population of Bihar are engaged in the workforce.
- **Pay-roll gap-** There is a difference between the payroll of male and female employees in the workplace. According to a survey, male workers earn Rs 46.19 more than the female workers.
- **Sexual harassment-** Sexual harassment is a major problem faced by women at the workplace. Because of this issue, parents worry to send their daughters, wife outside to work. It is violation of laws.
- **Difficulty in managing family and work-** Married women or women with child and family finds it difficult to manage their personal and professional life at the same time. Thus, most of the married women ends up being housewives in order to manage their family.



- **Glass ceiling**- It simple means that women as compared to men are less on the higher level of the hierarchy. According to BBC report, only 12% women are there at upper level positions in Indian organizations.



**Fig 2: Challenges for women**

### EFFECTS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION

It is the responsibility of the manager or the leader to make sure that there is no discrimination against any employee of their company. This kind of treatment or behavior affects the health of an individual.

- **Mental Health Issues**- If a person is treated unfairly in the organization then the victim might face mental health issues. It promotes more anxiety issues, depression or other sever problems. This is the responsibility of the organization to make sure that none of their employees go through this kind of issues.
- **More conflicts between the employees**- When people focus more discriminating rather than their works then definitely conflicts will happen. It will hamper the team spirit and focus of the employees, people will be busy dominating each other.
- **Low morale**- Conflicts between the people and negative vibes will lead to low morale of the employees.
- **Low productivity**- With all the conflicts, low morale the productivity of the company will reduce. People who are not happy, positive, comfortable in their environment will not be able to give their hundred percent leading to decline in the productivity.
  - **Legal actions against company**- If there is any kind of discrimination in the company and if managers doesn't deal with the issue then victim employee could file a suit against the company

### C. PROTECTION AND PREVENTION OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION

#### LAWS TO PROTECT GENDER DISCRIMINATION AT WORKPLACE

##### Equal Remuneration Act,1976

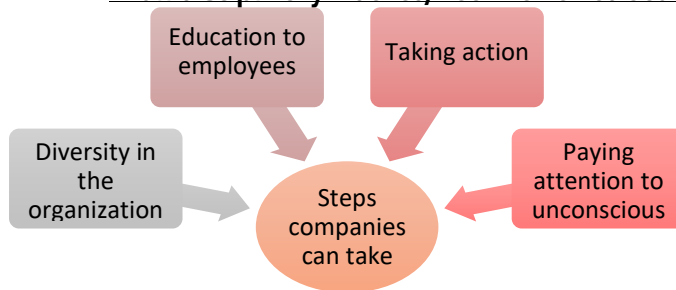
This act states that workers working in the same field should get equal remuneration. The act also states that in order to pay equal remuneration , the employers cannot lower the rate of remuneration. This act prevents gender description on the basis of wages, promotion, training etc.

##### Sexual Harassment Of Women At Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition And Redressal) Rules, 2013

This act came into existence to prevent and protect the female working population against any exploitation, specifically against any sexual harassment at workplace. According to this act, sexual harassment is an unwelcome situation where physical contact or request for sexual favors, making any sexual remarks or any other such physical or sexual nature is not acceptable.

#### STEPS COMPANIES CAN TAKE TO PREVENT GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Following are steps that companies should take in order to prevent gender discrimination;



**Fig 3: Steps companies can take to prevent gender discrimination**

- Diversity in the organization- Companies should create equal opportunities for both the gender and should hire them on the basis of merit instead of gender women preference. Equal opportunity policy will also help organizations to improve their image and will ensure that and men will get equal benefits, positions and other perks.
- Education to employees- Providing necessary education to employees regarding discrimination is important. Organizing events and workshop to promote gender equality can done.
- Taking action- Companies should immediately put policies into action for the women safety clarifying all the actions which will be taken against the person for inappropriate behavior or action. If any complaint comes against any person for discrimination, immediate action should be taken against hem without waiting for the situation to escalate.
- Pay attention to unconscious bias- Managers should pay attention to the way they and their employees treat each. Having unconscious bias is not a problem but make sure that you treat each other equally and try to avoid it.

These are some steps which companies can take to avoid gender discrimination and these steps will improve the working environment for every employee.



**Fig 4: campaigns started by women**

### WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

A person who has faced any kind of gender discrimination has the following rights:

- Right to work in an environment which is safe and not discriminating- Every individual has the right to work in a safe environment and it is the duty of the employer to provide a safe and non-discriminating environment to the employees.
- Right to speak against any injustice- We should raise our voices against any injustice with our coworkers or with the employer and employer cannot retaliate against you.
- Reporting to senior authorities- If your employer doesn't listen to your problem then you have the right to report the problem with the higher authorities. The best way to report the problem is by writing an e-mail or a letter.

### MOVEMENTS STARTED BY WOMEN ACROSS THE WORLD AGAINST GENDER DISCRIMINATION

HeForShe- This movement was started by the UN women. . The main aim of this movement is to remove gender discrimination with the involvement of men and boys. This movement also represent LGBTQ community.



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- Me too campaign-Me too campaign is a social movement which is an initiative to raise voices and stand in solidarity against sexual violence. This movement was started by Tarana Burke in US. The gender inequalities and women empowerment goal also includes the issue of violence against women especially domestic violence was regarded as a private issue.
- Timesup Movement- This movement is started to provide financial aid to sexual harassment victims and was started by the women who faced sexual harassment at workplace. The aim of this movement is to create a society free of gender discrimination at workplace and everywhere else. Women around the world spoke about the discrimination they fought in their workplace on the social media on a large scale.

#### D. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we've mentioned regarding the gender discrimination in India and in workplace. The paper also describes about the issues women face at the workplace like sexual harassment, pay-roll gap, glass ceiling etc. Mainly there are two types of discrimination in workplace i.e. disparate and sexual harassment. Many laws have been implemented to protect and prevent the right of women like Equal remuneration Act 1976 and POSH act. Gender discrimination also have effects on individual as well as on the company like individual face depression, anxiety issues, low morale whereas company's production gets affected, the working environment of the company also affects. But the company can take some measures to avoid all these problems, which this paper discuss. Apart from all this, the paper also explain the rights which an individual has. Movements like HeForShe, Me too movement, Times up are some of the movements started by the women across the nation to fight for the women equality and women empowerment.

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