



A STUDY ON WOMEN GENDER ISSUES AND INEQUALITY IN WORK PLACE

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Abstract

Gender differences in the workplace typically stem from social factors, which influence the behaviors of men and women. Some organizations welcome gender diversity and encourage the inclusion of both sexes when making company decisions and offering promotional opportunities. Other organizations discourage gender inclusion and promote bias in the workplace. With most companies, gender differences add value and varying perspectives to an organization. The aim of this research is to analyze the gender issues and gender inequality of women employees in the workplace. The study used structured questionnaire to collect data among 150 women employees in the organization. The objectives of the study include gender inequality factors, problems of women employees and the satisfaction level of employees with their working environment. The data was analyzed using percentage analysis and Chi-square test.

Key Words: *Gender Inequality Factors, Level of Satisfaction in Working Condition, Problems of Women Employees, Suggesting Measures.*

Introduction

Gender equality is achieved when people are able to access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of whether they are a woman or a man. Many countries worldwide have made significant progress towards gender equality in recent decades, particularly in areas such as education. However, women continue to earn less than men, are less likely to advance their careers as far as men, and are more likely to spend their final years in poverty. At the same time, some men find it more difficult to access family-friendly policies or flexible working arrangements than women.

Importance of Gender Equality

Gender Equality Attracts Top Talent

A workplace that is equally appealing for women and men will provide businesses access to the entire talent pool. As women are increasingly more highly educated than men, a workplace which is not attractive to women risks losing the best talents to competitors.

Gender Equality can Reduce Expenses

Replacing a departing employee can cost 75% or more of their annual wage. As both women and men are more likely to remain with an organisation they view as fair, employee turnover for an organisation offering gender equality can be reduced, thereby decreasing the high expense of recruitment.

Companies with Gender Equality Perform Better

A considerable body of research suggests a link between gender equality and better organisational performance. While there are a range of reasons to explain this link, one factor is that diversity brings together varied perspectives, produces a more holistic analysis of the issues an organisation faces and spurs greater effort, leading to improved decision-making.

Gender Equality Improves National Productivity and Competitiveness

The World Economic Forum has found a strong correlation between a country's competitiveness and how it educates and uses its female talent. It states: "empowering women means a more efficient use of a nation's



human talent endowment and reducing gender inequality enhances productivity and economic growth. Over time, therefore, a nation's competitiveness depends, among other things, on whether and how it educates and utilizes its female talent.

Causes of Gender Inequality in Work Place

Some issues may be related to getting raises, better performance, better ranking system, etc. Hence, politics plays a key role in pulling down women and bring about this gender discrimination in the workplace. Men might be jealous of women, so they are more concentrating on how to pull down women than trying to improve their skill set to come up in the profession by doing better performance. Women are also responsible for maintaining their families along with work. They will definitely expect certain amount of flexibility in their job. This may not be supported at all in most of the workplaces, thus women will have to face serious setback on their job front. This is one of the causes of gender inequality in the workplace that woman has to balance both professional and personal front.

Necessity of Gender Equality

Worldwide, most countries recognize that equal rights should exist between men and women. Many have produced regulations intended to fight discrimination and programs granting women access to health, education, and economic rights such as land ownership. However, the fact remains that women have fewer opportunities than men to benefit from economic development, with lower participation in the labor force.

Even in the most advanced countries, their wages average 73 percent of those of men. International programs such as the Millennium Development Goals point out the benefits of addressing gender inequality and the positive impact this can have on poverty reduction.

While the principle of gender equity in the workplace is generally accepted, discriminatory practices persist in many organizations despite regulations to the contrary. It is important to create an open and friendly atmosphere to address gender discrimination issues; therefore it is critical to involve men and women rather than only women. Because gender biases are embedded in culture, it is very difficult to eliminate them without having a holistic view and involving men as a part of the solution.

Promoting Gender Equality Make Good Organization

The following results can be identified in firms.

1. Improves labor environment within the firm.
2. Better communication between management and workers.
3. An increased number of women in managerial positions.
4. Increased productivity.
5. Reduction in salary gap.
6. Reduction in maternity-related discrimination.

Effects of Gender Discrimination in the Work Place

It has been age old belief in our culture that women are weak and fit to be sitting at home, nurturing children, etc. This is the greatest prejudice in our society. Moreover, businesses and office environment is nothing less for women.

Productivity may be low when there is lot of partiality. Women are always beaten (not physically) but professionally, and men concentrate more on how to pull down other female colleagues than trying to climb the ladder themselves. Also, when a woman is hurt emotionally, the motivation and morale is highly reduced. This is very bad for any work environment. Therefore, they shall not be able to perform well at their job that makes productivity lower. Promotions for women employees are also hindered when there are so much of gender inequalities in the workplace. The effects of this may not seem very serious on the first hand, but they will gradually affect both professional and personal life, thus harming a lady's morale.



Review of Literature

Gender Inequality refers to unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. This is an area of study in sociology. Sociology can be defined as the systematic study of human society (Macionis and Plummer, 2005).

Gender roles refers to expectations regarding the proper behaviour, attitudes and activities of males and females (Schaeter, 2007) for example toughness is thought of as masculine while tenderness as feminine.

According to (Fulcher and Scott 2007) a person's gender is not simply an aspect of what one is but more fundamentally, it is something that one does, and does recurrently in interaction with others.

A poll on discrimination conducted for the Scottish Civic Forum in spring 2002 (**Scottish Civic Forum 2002**) found that almost one in five adults had experienced discrimination of some kind or had someone close to them who had done so in the past year. Over 60% said that they had frequently experienced discrimination. The main reported reasons were age (youth or old age), disability and religious belief, although skin colour and sexual orientation were also common reasons. Gender was less frequently named. Only 4% of respondents said that they had treated someone unfairly.

Different studies indicated the low status of women in developing countries in general and in Ethiopia in particular (Almaz, 1991; Hirut, 2004; Mukuria et al., 2005). Lack of access to productive resources such as land; lack of access to education, employment opportunities, basic health services, and protection of basic human rights; low decision making; violence and harmful traditional practices are some of the indicators of the socioeconomic marginalization of women in the country.

Such gender gap between men and women in socio-economic indicators has negative impact on the overall development of the country in general and on demographic and health outcomes of individuals in particular. According to Kishor (2005), gender differences in power, roles and rights affect health, fertility control, survival and nutrition through women's access to health care, lower control over their bodies and sexuality, and restrictions in material and non-material resources.

The process of correcting gender disparity in a society leads us to improving the condition and status of women in all spheres (household as well as community level) which is also termed as women's empowerment. By way of defining this concept, Kishor (2005), cited the works of Dixon (1978) and Mason (1986) who defined women's status operationally as the degree of women's access to and control over material resources (including food, income, land and other forms of wealth) and social resources (including knowledge, power and prestige) within the family, in the community, and in the society at large. It is a multidimensional concept, which purports to measure a woman's ability to control resources, her ability to choose and control different outcomes, and above all to enhance her self-esteem. It can be examined based on different indicators.

Women's low decision making power, particularly in developing countries, is more pronounced at household level. In the study conducted by (Visaria, 1993 cited in Desai et al., 2005) in Gujarat, Western India, about 50% of the women stated that they do not feel free to take a sick child to a doctor without the approval of their husband, and 70% of the women do not make decisions regarding the purchase of their own or their children's clothing. Similarly, DHS data of Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi analyzed by Hindin (2005) show low decision making power of women, though women in Zimbabwe have better autonomy than women in Zambia and Malawi. In Zambia, men are more likely to have the sole final say over women's own health care, large household purchases, visiting relatives, and number of children to have and when to have them. In Malawi, men are more likely to have the sole final say over large household purchases and women's own health care. In Zimbabwe, however, women have the sole final say than their partners over their own health care, household purchases, and what food to cook; and the decisions concerning large purchases and visiting relatives are primarily made jointly.



Objectives of the Study

1. To study the theoretical background about gender inequality.
2. To identify the problems faced by the women employees at work place.
3. To find out the factors that improves to be more equal in gender issues.
4. To determine the level of satisfaction of women employees towards their job.

Data Collection

Data can be divided into 1. Primary data 2.Secondary data.

Methods of Collecting Secondary Data

Secondary data for this study was taken from research articles published in magazines, books, periodicals, newspaper etc.

Methods of Collecting Primary Data

There is various method of collecting data. Such as interview method, questionnaire method, preparing schedules, observation method etc.

Limitations of the Study

Following are the few limitation of the study

1. Time availability for the study is limited.
2. The very difficult thing is to meet the people concern and get the information.
3. Data available is not sufficient to cover all aspect.
4. The present study was conducted in the month only.

Analysis and Interpretation

Percentage Analysis

Table No.1, Level of Satisfaction in Working Condition

S.No	Satisfaction of working Condition	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Highly Satisfied	12	8
2	Satisfied	66	44
3	Dissatisfied	60	40
4	Highly Dissatisfied	12	8
	Total	150	100

From the above percentage analysis it is inferred that most (44%) of the respondents states that the level of job satisfaction is moderate.

Table No.2, Problems Faced by the Women Employees

S.No	Inequality Factors	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Gender Discrimination	30	20
2	Esteemed	80	53.3
3	Low Salary	36	24
4	Lower chance of promotion	4	2.7
	Total	150	100

The above table shows that 53.3% of the respondents are expressed their view about factors of esteemed are de-motivating inequality in the work place followed by low salary.

Table No.3, Facilities to be provided to avoid the Gender Issues in Work Place

S.No	Facilities to be provided	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Pay equity	31	20.7
2	Better maternity benefits	13	8.7
3	Participation in decision making	60	40
4	Career development training	46	30.6
	Total	150	100

From the above percentage analysis it is inferred that most (40%) of the respondents participation in decision making supports to avoid gender issues in the work place.

Chi – Square Tests

Chi – Square Analysis

Age of the respondents and level of job satisfaction

Null Hypothesis: There is no association between age of the respondent and level of job satisfaction.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is association between age of the respondent and level of job satisfaction.

Table No.4

Age of the Respondents	Level of job satisfaction					Total
	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderate	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	
20-30	8	30	29	9	4	80
30-40	6	12	9	20	9	56
40-50	2	3	3	0	0	8
Above 50	4	0	0	2	0	6
Total	20	45	41	31	13	150

Chi – Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2- sided)
Pearson Chi- Square	43.945a	12	.000
LikelihoodRatio	43.091	12	.000
Linear- by- Linear Association	.012	1	.913
No of valid cases	150		

Since the calculated value of Chi-square is lesser than the table value, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the age of the respondents and the level of job satisfaction.

Findings

1. It is inferred that some of the respondents are satisfied with the working environment in work place.
2. Most of the respondents are in the age group of 20 years to 30years.
3. Majority of the respondents are dissatisfied with their pay scale.
4. 32% of the respondents are highly dissatisfied in the social security provided by the organization.
5. It is inferred that 66% of the respondents expressed that their management not supports for personal obligation.



6. Most 67% of the respondents are Post graduate.
7. Equal treatment influence respondents to retain in their job.
8. Age discrimination outlaws unfair treatment of individuals who are age forty or older.
9. There is an association between the age of the respondents and the level of job satisfaction.
10. Equal pay and compensation policies to be followed to employees.
11. Providing men and women in the same workplace equal pay (this includes all types of salary) for equal work.

Suggestions

The researcher has suggested the following tools of gender equality.

1. The overall job satisfaction of the respondents is fair, so the researcher suggests certain measures to improve the level of satisfaction of the employees in the organization.
2. Women Employees should be given equal treatment in work place.
3. Gender equality can be improved equalize the number of female and male staff.
4. Better maternity benefits.
5. Salary to the employees can be raised.
6. Women employees should be given opportunity in participative the decision making.
7. Policies require the employer to provide “reasonable accommodation”.
8. Despite the anti-discrimination legislative measures taken, discrimination in the workplace is still a prevalent issue.

Conclusion

The aim of gender equality in the workplace is to achieve broadly equal outcomes for women and men, not exactly the same outcome for all individuals. To achieve this it requires workplaces to provide equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal or comparable value the removal of barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce full and genuine access to all occupations and industries, including to leadership roles for women and men elimination of discrimination on the basis of gender particularly in relation to family and caring responsibilities for both women and men.

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