# GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION FACED BY FEMALES AT WORKPLACE: A PERCEPTUAL STUDY OF WORKING FEMALES

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## ABSTRACT

*The presence of discriminatory problems has remained same especially when it comes to working females. This study aims to study about the different factors contributing to discriminatory problems which females are facing. Many studies have been conducted for understanding the discriminatory issues related to females at different sectors but this study evaluated the underlying factors which contribute more in discriminatory problems faced by working females when it comes to promotion, work allocation etc. This study includes the working females from Gwalior city. The measures for this were used as Factor analysis, Cronbach's Alpha. The results show that on actual ground discrimination is still exists in the workplace for females & major contributing factors are gender-based stereotype & prejudices, gender orientation, workload participation & work & family.*

**Keywords:** Gender-Based Discrimination, Working Females, Gender Stereotype, Gender Orientation, Work-Family.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1950's the issues related to gender discrimination were highlighted but considered as the most important issue around 1980's & 1990's. Importance was given to female issues in that organization where males were dominating according to researchers. Gender discrimination is existing in various areas of management which includes differences in wages, salary, promotion, participation, decision making etc. Many of the employees are affected by the discriminatory issues & problems on gender bases. Therefore this study is conducted to study issues which contribute to gender discrimination in the workplace. This study is helpful for those companies where females are working & being discriminated against on the ground of lack of gender sensitivity & orientation & how it also affects their performance. An organization must accept the importance of females & should follow fair representation in every functioning of the organization when it comes to distribution of salary or wages, promotion, leadership, power etc. The top management should avoid such discrimination as it may affect their survival.

If we talk about our country, then India is the country who is a witness of discrimination from its early history until today which is due to so many practices like political, social & religious also. It has not been stopped even after the enforcement equality law. People discriminate against females on the ground of work, allocation of food, healthcare & fertility choices. Only making of law & enforcing it is not the solution but there should be some practices

adopted by organizations for social awakening & attitude change in the mind-set of male counterparts. This will not only reduce gender discrimination but also helps in women empowerment. The most of the researches show different factors that stuck women's involvement & participation in managerial leadership and in positions where decision making is important. It has been observed that these factors are interrelated. These include: lack of adequate educational facilities required for women, absence of commitment by the superiors (top management decision making) body, backward socio-cultural attitudes, lack of insufficient experiences to women for holding & controlling the leading top positions, overburden or excessive household obligations, as well as negative predispositions of men towards women, and last but not the least the weak confidence in women themselves. All these factors understood as major hurdle considered as the barrier to senior position & leadership.

In many of the organization it has been seen that females are entertained in terms of hiring, selection, wages due to the awareness among the females & also as per the norms in terms of policies for women in employment. But still, that has been seen that leadership & power allocation is also influenced by gender. Many researchers tried to study the relationship between leadership & gender.

It should be understood like both man & women have their importance in every field. So that made us study about even after so many changes in our social status regarding gender still there is discrimination. This discrimination not only affects the employee's productivity but mental peace, quality of work life, relationships at home & at workplace too.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

As per the study conducted by Gberevbie et al. (2014) shows that there is an effect of cultural belief where female child is taken as second fiddle & does not have the cultural right to compete with male counterparts. t means that males are enjoying the birth right of females as per the cultural & family norms of our Indian society. A family gives primary focus to male instead of female. The institutes should have gender inclusive in recruitment as per the survey findings. Similarly, Shastri (2014) also stated that female role is to look after the household & the major factor behind this is our society & its beliefs which were also influenced by lack of education. One of the studies Barahmand & Nafs (2013) shows that working woman & non-working woman both significantly reported poor adjustments with their spouses.

According to Ross (2008), discrimination is somewhere is simple to identify &, and there could be so many different hypothetical analysis in the way of dealing treatment of one individual with another individual towards different sex. The main focus for the working woman is to be able & to show that a man was always in fact dealt with more favourably than the females which are highly visible & observable in giving promotion & recruitment & selection also. Likewise one of the thesis explained that there is an influence of gender discrimination on job satisfaction & job performance by Tesfaye (2011). This study revealed about the despite many advances & improvement gender discrimination still persists at workplaces, and it continues to be experienced by working women in the professional workspace. Similarly, Hora (2014) said that women not only denied for superior leadership positions, but also stopped from availing to higher education which will make them more developed in terms of skills, and also gives them with lot of experience in learning & applying managerial decision-making methods, help them in enhancing their self-confidence in holding & controlling leadership positions. Sikdar (2008) examined the role of socially constructed gender stereotypes in leadership and their influence on leadership behaviour of people. Hypotheses are tested by creating measures of

congruence- self-made, self-female, male leader and female leader based on respondents rating of self, males or females and leaders. Correlation between four types of congruence and leadership, intention and behaviour would be used to test the hypothesis. Shikha & Yuvika (2014) in their study shows that there is a variation which could be seen in between characteristics of male and female leaders. Many respondents believe women have the right stuff to be leaders on basis of emotions, creativity, intelligence, hard work and honesty. But when we talk about decisiveness and arrogance male leaders have upper hand. In one of the study, the researcher states that how management can be studied on the bases of gender in different ways. Broadbridge and Hearn (2008) mentioned the new directions in the context of gender & management.

Rehman & Azam (2012) stated that increased participation of women in the labour force creates challenges for them to balance work and family obligations. The situation becomes more complicated in patriarchal societies such as Pakistan due to women's stereotypical domestic roles, religious prescriptions as well as cultural norms and values. Lack of sufficient time, gender bias, social and cultural norms as well as family responsibilities are the most significant challenges women face to achieve balance in a patriarchal Islamic society. This study is based on women entrepreneurs in Pakistan.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To find out the underlying factors responsible for gender-based discriminatory problems faced by working females.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### The Researcher's Role

In this study, the role of researcher includes as an observer, as a collector of the data by distributing the questionnaire & as an analyzer. Having work experience as an assistant professor in the academic profession the researcher were easily got an opportunity to approach the respondents for data collection. As a self-experience holder also got a chance to eliminate the biases which could cause hurdles while analyzing the data. Moreover, researchers acted as the instrument of the investigation as their presence in the lived experiences of respondents are central.

### Theoretical Perspective

To gain an effective understanding of all those females who work in professional institutions are being discriminated & to find it or to analyze it on the ground of relativism is taken seriously into consideration. To achieve moral & ethical stands on which how working female experience discrimination & how they differently face this issue at their respective workplace due to various factors as every female relate to the different factor.

In addition to this, a phenomenological approach is used to collect and analyze the data to provide an effective description in which respondents make understanding of their working environment & how they are being discriminated at home or at their workplace. This approach allows us in understanding which helped the objective of this particular study.

The Sample–This study is an exploratory research in nature where working female related gender discriminatory factors are identified. In this study, authors used a quantitative study to answer about what discriminatory factors are responsible behind the gender discrimination especially which female's face. The semi-structured questionnaire was distributed to 160 working females of institutions out of which only 120 responded which were taken as the sample size for further analysis. The selection of the instructions is based on convenience of the researcher. The questionnaire includes around 20 questions to stimulate the complete information. The standards used were:

1.   Working female's working in any of the institution.

2.   They are hurdles while working in the organization.

A tool is self-designed questionnaire was used which were also forwarded to the panel of experts for the content validity of the questions & approved by the experts of respective filed. For conducting this research primary method of data collection was adopted in this study. 120 is the sample size. The method of sampling was used purposive sampling method through which data is collected by using questionnaire where 20 item was there & which were to be responded on five-point Likert's Scale in regard to gender-based discriminatory situations faced by working females especially in the field of education. Cronbach's Alpha has been used to check the reliability. Underlying factors for the discrimination have been analyzed by using factor analysis.

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### Reliability

It has been calculated by using SPSS software. The results of reliability through Cronbach's alpha have been shown in Table 1. The reliability value is 0.902 which is more than 0.7 is considered to be good & it can be seen that the reliability value is at par with the standard. So, the questionnaire is considered to be highly reliable.

| Table 1 RELIABILITY STATISTICS | |
|---|---|
| **Cronbach's Alpha** | **N of Items** |
| 0.902 | 20 |

For further to check the adequacy of sample size the KMO & Bartlett's Test has been used which is shown in Table 2. The finding shows that the value of KMO is 0.779 which means that sample size is also adequate.

| Table 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy | | 0.779 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 2526.177 |
| | df | 190 |
| | Sig. | 0 |

## Factor Analysis

Factor analysis for gender discrimination has been applied separately & the following factors are underlined pertaining to gender-based discrimination (Table 3).

| Sl. No | Factor Name | Item No | Statement | Factor Loading | Total Eigen Value | Variance Explained |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Discrimination based on Gender stereotypes & prejudices | 5 | *"Promotion is done on favouritism"* | 0.811 | 7.086 | 35.428 |
| | | 19 | *"Male colleagues feel jealous from female & play politics"* | 0.801 | | |
| | | 14 | *"Lot of anxiety, tension & panic attack because of workplace problems & discrimination"* | 0.755 | | |
| | | 16 | *"More leadership opportunities for male over female employees"* | 0.735 | | |
| | | 10 | *"Male employees enjoy more credit over female employees"* | 0.734 | | |
| | | 01 | *"Feel being discriminated at the workplace because I am female"* | 0.713 | | |
| | | 09 | *"Ignored when it comes to appreciation or reward"* | 0.683 | | |
| | | 06 | *"Males are allocated with more powers & authority"* | 0.682 | | |
| | | 04 | *"Males get more promotional opportunities"* | 0.654 | | |
| | | 17 | *"Management think male as a manager not female as manager"* | 0.650 | | |
| | | 08 | *"Male employees are getting more salary than females"* | 0.625 | | |
| | | 20 | *"Males employees enjoy more stress-free job than females"* | 0.606 | | |
| 2 | Gender orientation | 11 | *"Imbalances in work & personal life"* | 0.660 | 3.664 | 53.748 |
| | | 18 | *"Female perceived by their male colleagues as an incompetent employee who is made for housework only"* | 0.581 | | |
| 3 | Workload & participation | 2 | *"I think I work less than my male colleagues"* | 0.845 | 2.657 | 67.031 |
| | | 3 | *"I think I am doing easy jobs as compared to my male colleagues"* | 0.829 | | |
| | | 7 | *"Female are given fewer opportunities than males"* | 0.681 | | |
| 4 | Work-family | 13 | *"Family support for work"* | 0.839 | 1.480 | 74.432 |

**Table 3**
**FACTORS RELATED TO GENDER DISCRIMINATION**

## Discussion on Factors Identified

First factor *'Discrimination based on gender stereotypes & prejudices'* contributes highest towards discriminatory problems faced by working females which includes sub factors

like "*promotion is done on favouritism*" with factor loading as (0.811), "*male colleagues jealous from females & play politics*" with factor loading as (0.801), "*Lot of anxiety, tension & panic attack because of workplace problems & discrimination*" with factor loading as (0.755), "*More leadership opportunities to male over female* employees" with factor loading as (0.735), "*Male employees enjoy more credit for female employees*" with factor loading as (0.734), "*Feel being discriminated at work place because I am female*" with factor loading as (0.713), "*Ignored when it comes to appreciation or reward*" with factor loading as (0.683), "*Males are allocated with more powers & authority*" with factor loading as (0.682), "*Males get more promotional opportunities*" with factor loading as (0.654), "*Management think male as manager not female as manager*" with factor loading as (0.650), "*Male employees are getting more salary than females*" with factor loading as (0.625), "*Males employees enjoy more stress free job than females*" with factor loading as (0.606).

The second important factor *'Gender orientation'* is considered as another most important contributing factor for discriminatory issues for working females which includes sub factors as "*Imbalances in work & personal life*" with factor loading as (0.660), "*Female perceived by their male colleagues as an incompetent employee*" who is made for housework only with factor loading as (0.581).

*'Workload & Participation'* is another important factor which contributes to discriminatory problems for working females which includes sub factors like "*I think I work less than my male colleagues*" with factor loading as (0.845), "*I think I am doing easy jobs as compared to my male colleagues*" with factor loading as (0.829), the third sub factor is "*Female are given fewer opportunities than males*" with factor loading as (0.681).

*'Work & family'* factor has come out as the last important factor for discriminatory problems for working females. This factor includes only one sub factor i.e. "*Family support for work*" with the factor loading as (0.839).

In conducting the principal factor analysis Eigenvalues>1.00 for all the four contributing factors like (7.086, 3.664, 2.657 & 1.480) were obtained for discriminatory problems faced by working females (Table 3). The EFA values for all the factors were ranged from 0.581 to 0.845. The percentage variance was from 35.428 to 74.432 (Table 3).

All the factors identified as a result of this study is also being supported by various researchers in their respective researches. These researchers also supported that there are factors like gender stereotype, gender orientation, work & family-related factors & workload allocation in the workplace.

## CONCLUSION

The study aims to identify the factors underlying the discriminatory issues for working females. Due to changes in environment although females are coming in huge number almost in every field for jobs & also prefer working as professionals. As per the sample was taken & results after the application of the test are supporting that there is discrimination which females are facing in their day to day work life. At workplace there are factors identified as some gender stereotype is existing in the mind of other colleagues or management. Another thing which has been seen that male counterparts perceive females as a weak employee who cannot contribute effectively & that made them to allocate clerical work more in comparison to decision making role. Work & family balance is important where females are getting increased support day by day from the side of their families but at the same time, employers have been seen by not supporting their female manpower in balancing their family with work specifically in education

institutions. This study reveals that there are discriminatory issues which have to be deal on priority as females are also as equal as male which means to enhance employee's orientation towards gender sensitivity for females. The above research is also supported in terms of factors identified by various researchers in their respective researches.

## LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

As this study contributed significantly to the lack of participation on the part of working female respondents in revealing the actual issues faced by them at the workplace, there are few limitations. This study focuses only on the experiences & perspective of working female's only. That's why future research needs to be seen from the perspective of male employee's also & the implementation of similar research in the future for confirming and refining the results of this study.

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