

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Experiences and perspectives on gender quality among working women

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ABSTRACT

Background: The workplace has sometimes been referred to as an inhospitable place for women due to the multiple forms of gender inequalities present. The present study was conducted to assess experiences and perspectives on gender quality among working women. **Material & Methods:** The present study was an observational, cross-sectional study conducted among working or professional women over a period of 3 months. All study participants after enrollment were interviewed using a set questionnaire. Data was recorded and analyzed to assess their perspectives on gender equality. **Results:** 40.2% working women agree on that gender discrimination, 34.7% agree on that boss considers gender in delivering job, 51.5% agree on that gender influence the profession and 35.1% agree on that their peers treat them differently because of their profession. 42.9% working women agree on that they were satisfied with job and salary. 42.6% working women disagree on that there was salary gaps among the same level in their organization and 41.9% disagree on that they were unfairly denied salary raise in their organization, 48.5% disagree on that sexual misconduct or violence occurs at work place. 39.2% working women works for 40-50hrs/week. 93.9% working women were married and 90.6% spouses of working women were working and 81.8% spouses of working women support them, 33.3% working women had parents for their child care. **Conclusion:** The study concluded that maximum working women agree on that gender discrimination occurs and their boss considers gender in delivering job. The experiences that gender influence the profession and their peers treat them differently because of their profession.

Keywords: Working women, perspective, gender equality.

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INTRODUCTION

Many gender-related barriers and biases have declined over the years but gender stereotypes continue to create problems in the progress of women's careers.¹ The World Economic Forum (2017) suggested that an average gender gap of 32.0 per cent existed in four areas, namely, 'Economic Participation and Opportunity', 'Educational Attainment', 'Health and Survival' and 'Political Empowerment'. This shows an increase from an average gender gap of 31.7 per cent since previous years.² Systemic indicators of inequality include disparities in levels of education, economic participation, and poverty; social indicators of inequality include restrictive gender norms and gender-based violence. These systemic and social factors intersect to cause adverse health outcomes and inequalities for women.³ In other words, workplace discrimination contributes to women's lower socio-economic status. Importantly, such discrimination against women largely can be attributed to human resources (HR) policies and HR-related decision-

making. Furthermore, when employees interact with organizational decision makers during HR practices, or when they are told the outcomes of HR-related decisions, they may experience personal discrimination in the form of sexist comments. Both the objective disadvantages of lower pay, status, and opportunities at work, and the subjective experiences of being stigmatized, affect women's psychological and physical stress, mental and physical health, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and ultimately, their performance.⁴ The present study was conducted to assess experiences and perspectives on gender quality among working women.

MATERIAL & METHODS

The present study was an observational, cross-sectional study conducted among working or professional women over a period of 3 months. Before the commencement of the study ethical clearance was taken from the Ethical committee of the institute. All working or professional women irrespective of age

who offered voluntary participation were included in the study. Women who don't want to participate in study were excluded from the study. All study

participants after enrollment were interviewed using a set questionnaire. Data was recorded and analyzed to assess their perspectives on gender equality.

RESULTS

Table 1: Education status of working women

Education status	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
High school	8	2.1%
Diploma	16	4.3%
Bachelor degree	92	26.8%
Masters degree	206	56.7%
Doctorate	38	10.3%
Total	360	100

Out of 360 working women, maximum women had masters degree (56.7%) followed by bachelor degree (26.8%). Only 2.1% working women were high school pass.

Table 2: Profession of working women

Profession	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage(%)
Medical	130	36.5%
Teaching	60	16.7%
Engineer	57	15.6%
Housewife	37	10.4%
Entrepreneur	9	2.5%
Business	4	1%
Government services	4	1%
Saleswoman	4	1%
HR professional	10	3%
Automobile sector	4	1%
Banker	4	1%
Student	18	5%
others	19	5.3%
Total	360	100

Maximum women belongs to medical profession (36.5%) followed by teaching profession (16.7%).

Table 3: Perspectives on Gender discrimination

Gender discrimination	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	26	7.2%
Disagree	89	24.7%
Neutral	75	20.6%
Agree	144	40.2%
Strongly agree	26	7.2%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (40.2%) agree on that gender discrimination occurs followed by disagreement (24.7%) that gender discrimination occurs.

Table 4: Perspectives on Boss considers gender in delivering job

Boss considers gender in delivering job	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	42	11.6%
Disagree	109	30.5%
Neutral	74	20%
Agree	123	34.7%
Strongly agree	12	3.2%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (34.7%) agree on that boss considers gender in delivering job. Minimum no. of working women (3.2%) strongly agree on that boss considers gender in delivering job.

Table 5: Gender influence on profession

Gender influence profession	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	23	6.1%
Disagree	71	19.2%
Neutral	60	16.2%
Agree	181	51.5%
Strongly agree	25	7.1%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (51.5%) agree on that gender influence the profession and minimum no. of working women (6.1%) strongly disagree on that.

Table 6: Treatment of my peer with me because of my profession

Peers treat me differently because of my profession	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	23	6.2%
Disagree	107	29.9%
Neutral	100	26.8%
Agree	122	35.1%
Strongly agree	8	2.1%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (35.1%) agree on that their peers treat them differently because of their profession and minimum no. of working women (2.1%) strongly agree on that.

Table 7: Salary gaps among the same level in my organization

Salary gaps among the same level in my organization	Frequency(n= 360)	Percentage(%)
Strongly disagree	31	8.5%
Disagree	153	42.6%
Neutral	69	19.1%
Agree	73	21.6%
Strongly agree	34	9.6%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (42.6%) disagree on that there was salary gaps among the same level in their organization and minimum no. of working women (8.5%) strongly disagree on that.

Table 8: Satisfied with job and salary

Satisfied with job and salary	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	3	1%
Disagree	81	24.5%
Neutral	97	25.5%
Agree	156	42.9%
Strongly agree	23	6.1%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (42.9%) agree on that they were satisfied with job and salary and minimum no. of working women (1%) strongly disagree on that.

Table 9: Unfairly denied salary raise in my organization

Unfairly denied salary raise in my organization	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	32	8.6%
Disagree	155	41.9%
Neutral	72	19.4%
Agree	80	24.7%
Strongly agree	21	5.4%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (41.9%) disagree on that they were unfairly denied salary raise in their organization and minimum no. of working women (5.4%) strongly agree on that.

Table 10: Working hours/ Week

Working Hours/week	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
<30hours	54	14.4%
30-40hours	92	24.7%
40-50hours	134	39.2%
50-60hours	50	13.4%
>60hours	30	8.2%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (39.2%) works for 40-50hrs/week and minimum no. of working women (8.2%) works for >60hours.

Table 11: Marriage status

Married	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Yes	341	93.9%
No	19	6.1%
Total	360	100

93.9% working women were married and 6.1% working women were unmarried.

Table 12: Working status of spouse

Spouse working	Frequency (n=341)	Percentage (%)
Yes	308	90.6%
No	33	9.4%
Total	341	100

90.6% spouses of working women were working and 9.4% spouses of working women were jobless.

Table 13: Support of Spouse

Spouse actively support	Frequency (n= 341)	Percentage (%)
Yes	279	81.8%
No	62	18.1%
Total	341	100

81.8% spouses of working women supports them and 18.1% spouses doesn't support them.

Table 14: Mode of child care

Mode of child care	Frequency (n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Parents	119	33.3%
Partner	59	16%
Maid	33	8.6%
Daycare	17	4.9%
Babysitter	9	2.5%
No kids	4	1.2%
Live by own	9	2.4%
At school	71	19.8%
Not applicable	39	11.3%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (33.3%) had parents for their child care and minimum no. of working women (1.2%) had no kids.

Table 15: Sexual misconduct or violence at work place

Sexual misconduct or violence at work place	Frequency(n= 360)	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	53	16%
Disagree	172	48.5%
Neutral	57	15.5%
Agree	59	16.5%
Strongly agree	16	4.1%
Total	360	100

Maximum working women (48.5%) disagree on that sexual misconduct or violence occurs at work place and

minimum no. of working women (4.1%) strongly agree on that.

DISCUSSION

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2020, it will take another 100 years to achieve gender equality based on the current rate of progress.⁵ In 2020, 73% of CEOs at the most influential health organizations were men, yet only 5% of CEOs were women from low- and middle-income countries, spotlighting the disparities and continued marginalization of women from developing countries.⁶

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Men are preferred over women for masculine jobs and women are preferred over men for feminine jobs.⁷

Because women are associated with lower status, and men with higher status, women experience backlash for pursuing high status roles (e.g., leadership) in the workplace.⁸ Men who more strongly believe that women are men's adversaries tell more sexist jokes to a woman.⁹

As an institutional barrier, gender discrimination can take different forms such as harassment, unequal pay, fewer professional development opportunities for women, and represent gender disparities related to salary increases and unfair performance evaluations.^{10,11}

Additionally, women in social and domestic health care settings are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment.¹⁰

Girls and boys are likely to be treated differently by parents who implicitly make gender-stereotypical associations, and in this way, children learn about gender stereotyping at an early age and reproduce it in their own behaviours.¹²

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that maximum working women agree on that gender discrimination occurs and their boss considers gender in delivering job. The

experiences that gender influence the profession and their peers treat them differently because of their profession.

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