

# **MAINTAINING GENDER EQUALITY IN MODERN ORGANIZATIONS**



## Introduction

In the current day, there are increasing instances where women are disadvantaged at work as compared to men. Women occupying men's position at work breaks stereotypes within the modern work sphere. The issue pertaining to gender policy and gender equality has now gained much traction and warrants the need to be addressed. Though it is well-known within society about how a system of gender equality should function, but that's often not the case as far as practical application is concerned. Several challenges in gender equality arises from the system that we are raised in, attitudes that we acquire, existing stereotypes and perception of situations that only has a single viewpoint (Garg, 2020). In the current globalization era, there is a need to perceive things differently and widen our viewpoints. The crux of diversity management would involve incorporating the process and principle of diversity in day-to-day life managerial practices and how learning takes place within an organization (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015).

Organizational managers require results. Many a time, they are seldom focused on aesthetically appeasing general theories. With a view to realize organizational objectives and acquire an edge over competitors, it is imperative that they comprehend what kind of diversity would offer a strategic advantage, or restrict their capability while realizing their objectives (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). Competitiveness within an organization largely hinges on performance, quality, productivity and other abilities from human initiatives. The approach here would be rather strategically and logically thought about while managing human resources within an organization (Shrivastav et al., 2021). The key function of human resources is to create a balance between structure and number of jobs and job seekers, given that jobs would not only adhere to regulation but also to the capability of an employee too.

Getting an idea about the association among employee performance and motivation is a crucial step for ensuring success in an organization (Cera & Kusaku, 2020). Managers are instrumental in influencing the capabilities, performance or motivation of employees. However, the actual performance of the personnel function is driven by an understanding about personal activities without any disparity, advantage or disadvantage of the employee. This paper intends to examine how gender equality can be maintained within modern day organizations.

### **Gendered Labour Division**

Gender division at work which might appear to be natural to a common observer is an outcome of historical procedures, and associated with the industrial revolution and contemporary work organization (Cunha & Atalaia, 2019). Before the industrial revolution, women as well as men took part in small level manufacturing work that was largely managed by a family. Work prior to the industrial era was split in terms of gender, where a few of such divisions continue to exist in the current day, for instance, the predominance of women in the textile sector. Nonetheless, both women and men executed their activities with some overlapping and women's work was scanty or in certain instances not devalued at all. Hardly any division of labour existed within enslaved African men and women (Cailin O Connor, 2019). Industrial revolution within the United States and Europe swapped slave and family production with market based production. To a large extent, the newly paid labour force driving mines and factories were made up of men, while the women would do unpaid work within households like caring for the family (Kalev & Deutsch, 2018).

### **Manifestation of Gender Inequalities**

According to women, the antecedents of gender discrimination can be traced to childhood socialization, and cultural pressure but not biology (Hoominfar, 2019). Women are of the opinion that are the same as the opposite gender and should thus be given the same treatment that men receive. Though, certain scientific communities are of the view that biological variations mark the distinction between men and women (Ceci et al., 2021). Previously, women found it challenging to acquire a proper job within an organization that was predominated by men. They also had to confront resistance from their supervisors and peers, while being restricted to certain tasks. However, over the past few years, there has been much development and progress of women in the workplace. Though resistance to women has witnessed a drop but gaps in rank and pay within an organization continue to exist (Macis, 2017). In the United Kingdom alone, there has been an increase in women employment with around 71% of women occupying the workforce as compared to 80% of men. The sector where women are known to dominate is the social and health sector that has accounted for around 21% of total jobs held by women. On the other hand, retail and wholesale is the second highest sector with 14% and the third being education where women occupy 12% of the jobs. On the whole, women also dominate the sector of health where they hold around 79% of jobs, and the sector of education is an emergent field for monetary emoluments as women occupy around 70% of the positions (Parikh & Anjenaya, 2012).

Studies have revealed that the style of living life among women and work culture varies in comparison with men, it is challenging for women to develop or advance in their careers as the onus of looking after the family and child rearing lies on them (Kapur, 2019).

It has been posited by Mussida and Patimo (2021), women are prone to experience psychological strain and symptoms of depression when they have to juggle between family and work. Career of women generally take a backseat when they have a baby. Gender inequality across certain organization is a phenomenon that is highly complicated and the manner of such inequalities is commonly observed in organizational structure, practice and process. Gender inequality can be witnessed across an organization's topmost department (human resources – HR) practices. Decisions related to hiring, training and remuneration are taken by the HR department which is dominated by men mostly. Here, institutional inequalities come to the fore through practices which impact women in terms of stepping into a higher rank, which tends to increase the variation in pay (McElhaney & Smith, 2017).

Gender inequality is known to exist across most organizations the world over which is largely founded on gender, race and class too. The difference here is social constructed among two genders and beliefs which support inequality. A majority of managerial roles go to men, while low ranking jobs go to the women. A large number of jobs have been categorized on the basis of physical traits, historical domination and culture, where it is believed by people that men possess more leadership capabilities and robust physical traits. Gender inequality within certain organizations in the US can be witnessed in the form of race as menial or low rank jobs always go to people of colour (Verniers & Vala, 2018).

### **Strategies to Eliminate Gender Inequality**

Women in future are poised to take on higher roles as private organizations as well as governments are taking several steps to bring in equality within jobs and pay.

A large number of nations within the Middle East and North America (MENA) region where high instances of gender gap have been observed have initiated steps by closing gap in human development, augmenting economic opportunities for women by eliminating restrictions in taking part in higher roles and entrepreneurship (Dandan & Marques, 2017). Over the course of the past several years, there has been massive increase in jobs within the healthcare sector, especially for aging individuals, and investments in energy and infrastructure. Women foresee a tremendous opportunity in these domains where they can acquire jobs. As per a survey, it has been revealed that by 2030 women would be able to acquire 20% more jobs than what they now get. Akin to how the industrial revolution 3.0 has transformed the manner in which work is being carried out and spawned a techno-wave across the world, industrial revolution 4.0 would also concentrate on associating people with technology. Technology could be a great way for men and women to acquire information and skill which will help them to gain more jobs (Madgavkar et al., 2019). Women need to make more investments in education while gaining new skills that would be instrumental in taking up senior roles within organizations.

Furthermore, performance evaluation periodically carried out tends to pave the way for a large number of professionals. Though such procedures typically comprise of certain degree of formality (rubrics, review periods, evaluation, calibration meetings), eventually managers are known to utilize their judgment in deciding how the tools for evaluation are applied. As a result, what mainly influence their outcome are their beliefs on how women should act or behave (Groysberg, 2021). The process of performance evaluation can undergo a de-biasing by focusing exclusively on measurable qualities.

As per recent research, it has been indicated that women do not promote their achievements as much as their male counterparts working at the same level. This implies that depending on self-assessment of employees for informing performance rating tends to favour men. In terms of compensation, the playing field can be leveled by organization by offering clarity in information. The gender pay gap can be reduced when organizations clearly list out the median salary for a position on their website. Women are also known to undervalue themselves therefore, mentioning the median salary would help women to decide on how much they can demand from a particular job (Groysberg, 2021).

## **Conclusion**

Gender roles are gradually changing with hardly any difference being observed between men and women. In fact, women in the present day are capable of executing the same tasks that a man can execute. Therefore, being biased against women employees and ignoring them for senior positions or challenging tasks only undermines their abilities. Given the era of globalization where women are making great in roads across diverse sectors, it is high time that the gender disparity within organizations be entirely eliminated. Gender disparity will only create discord and disharmony while impacting the overall performance of an organization.

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