

# **Gender Bias in Career with Special Reference to Media and Advertising Agencies**

R.Balaji

Associate Professor, Bharath School of Business, Bharath University, Chennai – 600073, India

**ABSTRACT:** Equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State (Article 16). Gender bias is mostly prevalent in all types of industries, but it is found apparently and to some extent in disguised form in the glaring Media and galloping Advertisement Agencies. Though we, in India claim to have achieved Gender Equality in the various spheres of the society and in work place, it is still the stunning reality that proves the prevalence of Gender Bias in every nerve of Indian Society reflected in the work establishments and job, as justified by the startling statistics and reports of the aggrieved women.

**KEYWORDS:** Male Chauvinism, Gender Bias, Gender Discrimination, Abusive behaviour, Stereotyping

## **I.DEFINITION**

The Gender Bias is the conscious or unconscious discrimination between men and women, particularly against women for the benefit of the other sex in various aspects of administrative machinery and career growth, Attitudes, conditions, or behaviours that promote stereotyping of social roles based on gender.

Discriminatory or abusive behaviour towards members of the opposite sex. – un fair treatment of a person or group on the basis of prejudice ,male chauvinism, activity indicative of belief in the superiority of men over women.

Society is much more tolerant of women engaging in activities previously reserved for men than it is of men who exhibit behavior that has historically been deemed to be feminine. Having said that, women in Saudi Arabia are still unable to drive or vote. Not appointing a woman to a position of authority on the basis of fearing that she won't be respected by her subordinates.

Gender discrimination is the unfair treatment of a person because of gender. Gender discrimination affects both men and women. It is apparent in work situations where one gender is given preferential treatment or one gender receives less pay or job responsibilities because of gender bias and unfair stereotypes. Gender discrimination also exists in sports, educational institutions and political organizations. Genders also experience sex discrimination when applying for housing or applying for credit.

## **II.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To Focus on the various dimensions of Gender Bias in workplace
2. To analyse the aspects of gender bias prevailing in Media and Advertisement Agencies
3. To Study the causes for and consequences of gender bias
4. To suggest remedies

## **RELEVANCE/SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The changing demographic and psychographic dimensions of women at work, particularly in Media and Advertisement agencies coupled with the fundamental changes in the roles, responsibilities, caliber and expectations of women have made the issue of gender bias more explicit and felt, emphasizing the pressing need for addressing the intricacies of this issue, and evolving suitable strategies to ensure its redress so as to ensure equitable and transparent career development and growth process for women especially in Media and Advertisement Agencies where the women become more vulnerable to such issues.

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The long history of inequality among the sexes is the basis for gender discrimination and the foundation for efforts to decrease inequality among the sexes. Historically, women were underrepresented in the workplace, athletics and academics. The residual effects of favoritism towards men and unfair treatment of women is the primary cause of gender discrimination. Even as this year's Fortune 500 list included a record number of female CEOs, and urban, single women in their 20s are out earning their male peers, women still face distinct gender barriers in the workplace. The wage gap persists in much of the country, and that record-breaking number of female CEOs was only 3.6 percent. Now a new study shows that employed men's marriages may be partly to blame for stalling the march toward gender equality at work. The research studies explore the relationship between the type of marriages that employed men have and their attitudes toward working women, the Harvard Business Review reported<sup>2</sup>. The researchers found that employed men who are in more traditionally-structured marriages (i.e. their wives stay at home or work part-time outside the home) tend to:

1. Feel less positive about the presence of women in the workplace.
2. Believe that female-dominated organizations operate "less smoothly."
3. See organizations where women are in leadership roles as "unattractive."
4. Promote qualified female employees less.

This may explain why so many women find themselves trapped in what's been called "the marzipan layer" in the corporate hierarchy -- the group of jobs just below senior management. The new study also found that these men who have negative views of working women tend to be the same men who held influential positions of power, which doesn't bode so well for women trying to advance in male-dominated industries or companies. It stands to reason that these men are also probably less likely to offer sponsorship or mentorship to female employees, which has been shown to be an extremely important factor in career advancement. The researchers concluded that marriage structure has an impact "beyond the four walls of the house" and that attitudes toward women are determined by the social role that a guy plays in his own life. If a man is the primary breadwinner, he may -- even subconsciously -- believe that that's how it "should be" in all marriages.

Identifying the source of these attitudes doesn't mean that they'll be easy to alter, Desai and her colleagues concluded.<sup>1</sup> Men who believe unfavorable things about working women are unlikely to change their mind unless their marital structures change, the researchers wrote, which would be "an exceedingly improbable event on a large scale." This means that women will have to work around these attitudes -- at least for the time being.

In Media and Advertisement Agencies, the women are engaged in handling the FMCG Client Accounts in a stereotype manner and as far as the client accounts in service sector, Telecom and Consumer Durables, the role and contribution of women employees and executives is minimum. The career growth prospects and opportunities for women in Media and Advertisement Agencies have also not been promising. The role of women has been confined to modelling and the executing positions and they are not given an active role in areas of creativity and innovation like Copy Writing, Formulation of the Advertising content, Finalising the terms with the clients etc which has been the regular feature in most of the Media Organisations and Advertisement Agencies including the Leading International Agencies.

There are many legislations in India which provide for severe punishment and action against those involved in sexual harassment and gender bias in workplace and industries. But still, this menace has been continuing on a large scale because the mind set and attitude of the people towards women has still not changed totally.

The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 and many other similar legislations in India insist upon equality in treatment for men and women in workplace in their career.

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Gender discrimination occurs when sexes are treated unequally. Gender discrimination is not based solely on gender differences but on how people are treated differently because of their sex. Employers who provide different working conditions and promotional opportunities for men and women violate anti-discrimination laws. Lenders who offer better terms to one gender over another are in violation of anti-discrimination laws. Gender discrimination is illegal and several laws are in place to prevent and eliminate discriminatory practices. It would appear that women are guaranteed equality, equal protection of laws, equality of status and opportunity, thus redeeming the preambulatory promise of Justice: social, economic and political. The mainstream Indian society continues to fall short in the realization of full equality for the marginalized groups, particularly women. According to 2001 census report, the sex ratio stands at 933 females per 1000 males.<sup>3</sup> Out of the total population, 120 million are women who live in abject poverty. The maternal mortality rate in rural areas is among the highest in the world. India accounts for 19% of all live births and 27% of all maternal deaths. The post neonatal mortality rate (number of deaths of children age 1-11 months per 1000 live births) for females is 21, compared with only 15 for boys.<sup>4</sup> The total female labor force participation rate is estimated to be only 28% in 2008, and this data does not take into account the hours spent by women on household activities.<sup>5</sup> In urban areas, female labor force participation rate is estimated to be at only 7.8% in 2005-06.<sup>6</sup> Only 36% of the female populations in the age group 15-64 years are participating in the labor force.<sup>7</sup> These statistics present a dismal picture of women's lives across both, public as well as private spheres. Even when women engage in paid work, their daily income is only 53 paise per rupee earned by men in rural areas and 68 paise in urban areas. Women's economic vulnerability is compounded by their social vulnerability.<sup>8</sup>

The Gender Inequality Index Value for India is 0.61 with a rank of 136 in the world. Data for all indicators of the 2010 Gender Inequality Index were available for 138 countries. The world average score on the Gender Inequality Index is 0.56, reflecting a percentage loss in achievement across the three dimensions due to gender inequality of 56 percent. Regional averages range from 32 percent in developed OECD countries, to 74 percent in South Asia. At the country level losses due to gender inequality range from 17 percent in the Netherlands, to 85 percent in Yemen. Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Arab States suffer the largest losses due to gender inequality. Regional patterns reveal that reproductive health is the largest contributor to gender inequality around the world – women in sub-Saharan Africa, with a massive 99 percent loss, suffer the most in this dimension, followed by South Asia (98 percent) and the Arab States and Latin America and the Caribbean (each with 96 percent loss). The Arab States and South Asia are both also characterized by relatively weak female empowerment. The 10 least gender-equal countries (in descending order) are Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Central African Republic, Papua New Guinea, Afghanistan, Mali, Niger, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Yemen, with an average Gender Inequality Index of 0.79. The most gender-balanced societies under the Gender Inequality Index are the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden. Countries with unequal distribution of human development also experience high inequality between women and men, and countries with high gender inequality experience unequal distribution of human development. Countries doing very poorly in both categories include the Central African Republic, Haiti and Mozambique. India ranks 134 in 2009 among 178 countries in terms of the UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) and 114 in terms of Gender Development Index (GDI). India's Global Gender Gap Index rating for 2011 is 0.6190, placing it in 113rd place (out of a total of 135 countries).

### III. CONSEQUENCES

There are several effects and consequences of gender discrimination, especially in employment. Gender discrimination in the workplace leads to an increase in employee turnover and creates a hostile work environment. Gender discrimination also promotes harassment and possible workplace violence. Victims of gender discrimination have the right to file lawsuits to recover damages suffered as a result of discriminatory practices.

### REMEDIES

Several state and federal laws prohibit gender discrimination and offer remedies for such behavior in employment as well as in education and financial institutions. The Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. The Equal Pay Act

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promotes equality between men and women who perform the same job duties in the same workplace. Diversity and inclusion policies also help to remedy gender discrimination by promoting equality between the sexes. In India, there are some important legislations like Minimum Wages Act, 1948, Factories Act, 1948, The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 ("**Sexual Harassment Act**"), Maternity Benefits Act, 1961, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 and the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 attempt to address the existent systemic discrimination towards women in employment. Based on the guarantee of equality, laws have been enacted to address violence against women under civil and criminal laws. The Protection of Domestic Violence Act, 2005 is an example of the civil law to address violence within the home. On the other hand, the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 is an example of criminal law to counter acts of violence against SC/ST women. In the absence of an anti-discrimination code, there is no comprehensive statutory definition of discrimination that takes into account different manifestations of discrimination and its impact. The Sachar Committee Report in 2006 first put forth the idea of setting up a new legal framework for tackling grievances of the minority population. Following up on that, the Menon Committee Report in 2008 proposed a new framework in the form of Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC). The EOC has been visualized as one with extensive authority to investigate, gather data, conduct audits, advocate and render advice. However, the proposed legislation does not visualize an authority which can redress grievances and grant relief to individuals and/or groups. Amongst other things, the consultation will look at this proposed legal framework in a critical light

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Thus, Gender Bias has been a common phenomenon in work place in all the industries, of course with the intensity and dimensions being different, but it has permeated severely into media and advertisement agencies in terms of inequitable policies, procedures and treatment discriminating against women mostly in disguised form and sometimes more apparent, notwithstanding the legislations which intend to curb this and deal with this menace with iron hand. Gender equality in workplace will become a reality only when the implementation mechanism for the legislations becomes aggressive and there is an attitudinal change in the society leading to such a transformation.

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