

IMPACT OF WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION ON EMPLOYEE WELLBEING**V. Brar¹, A. Kumar² and V. Wadajkar³**¹S.N.G. Institute of Management & Research, Pune, MH, India²Siddhant Institute of Business Management, Pune, MH, India³Dr. D. Y. Patil B-School, Pune, MH, India¹vinaydeep1983@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

Discrimination in the workplace is not uncommon anywhere in the world, but thanks to a governmental system that targets minorities and marginalized groups like never, discrimination in India is particularly endemic and brutal. The current study focusses on the impact of workplace discrimination against women employees in nationalized banks. The study makes a genuine attempt to find out if workplace discrimination exists against women employees in nationalized banks in Pune City. It also analyzes the impact of the existing discrimination on the overall wellbeing of the women employees. The results of the study indicate that workplace discrimination has the ability to take a toll on the psychological well-being of women employees in banks. The results also indicate that the instances of discrimination are not very frequent, but when they happen, they indeed take a toll on the psychological wellbeing of women employees working in nationalized banks.

Keywords: Workplace discrimination, psychological wellbeing, women employees, nationalized banks.

1. Introduction

Workplace discrimination against women bank employees is prevalent in India. Women are discriminated against because of their gender, marital status, and caste. There are no laws to stop this discrimination which leads to women bank employees not getting promotions they deserve, getting less salary than male counterparts, and not being considered for big projects.

In India, women make up nearly half of the population and almost 40% of them are illiterate. But the number is growing every year as women seek opportunities for economic independence and better quality of life for their families.

Women in the labor force make up 11% of the total workforce but only 6% of women work in managerial positions (19% globally). Women also face challenges like unequal pay rates and lack of training opportunities which contribute to high levels of unemployment for females. This is in particular difficult for Indian women who generally work in the informal sector, which make up 65% of all workers in India. The standards of living at home also affect the decision to continue working after marriage and to forego education.

Indian women make up 16% of India's workforce but hold less than 1% of managerial positions, despite the fact that 53% work for

employers with 10 or more employees and 79% women between 18- and 39-years old work outside the home.

Women who work outside the home often do so because there is no family member to take care of relatives or elderly parents. Some women decided to work after a divorce, a move that can put a woman in a vulnerable position as she tries to figure out how to make ends meet.

Workplace discrimination is often harder to combat than overt gender discrimination because it is not as visible. Also, because workplace discrimination often falls under the realm of employment law, employers have more leeway in terms of what could be considered discriminatory behavior. This makes it hard to prove for both the employee and the employer. Not only do women face discrimination because they are women but also because they are seen as temporary workers until marriage or availing family responsibilities. Women with family responsibilities are often seen as temporary workers and do not get any benefits like maternity leave.

Gender-related workplace discrimination is present in all sectors and labor market contexts in India. An estimated 70% of women workers experience gender-based workplace inequalities. The challenges that women face in the labor force include unequal pay rates, lack

of safe and decent working conditions, and little or no protection from domestic violence. The current study focusses on the impact of workplace discrimination against women employees in nationalized banks. The study makes a genuine attempt to find out if workplace discrimination exists against women employees in nationalized banks in Pune City. It also analyzes the impact of the existing discrimination on the overall wellbeing of the women employees.

2. Literature review

Although overt, public displays of prejudice are uncommon nowadays, vulnerable groups are nevertheless discriminated against in subtle ways (Carter and Murphy, 2015). Individuals who believe they have been treated unfairly because of their age, gender, race/ethnicity, or disability may be accused of perceived discrimination. These views may have a big impact on people's life. Yen et al., 1999; Martin et al., 2003; Bennett et al., 2005) and worse health management (Yoshikawa et al., 2004). Discriminatory events might lead to greater systolic blood pressure throughout the day (Pascoe and Smart Richman, 2009).

According to social identity theory, individuals associate with those who are like them emotionally (Tajfel et al., 1979). Gender and race are social identities, therefore people tend to identify and prefer those of the same gender or race. When people feel unjustly or hostilely treated, they commonly blame these social identification categories. Gender and racial discrimination persists in the workplace (e.g., personnel selection; Graves and Powell, 2008). Some experts claim that although overt prejudice has decreased as societal norms and legislation alter, covert bias has grown (Carter and Murphy, 2015). Modern kinds of discrimination may be particularly unpleasant for vulnerable groups in the workplace. Perceived racism is linked to rage and anger repression. Its effects throughout the day may cause folks to stay distressed (Brondolo et al., 2008). Previous study has linked racial prejudice to high blood pressure, corroborating this claim (Steffen et al., 2003). Stress-induced physiological reactions may enhance an individual's vulnerability to physical sickness (Pascoe and Smart Richman, 2009).

Workplaces are typically varied, not just in terms of colour and gender, but also in terms of age. Perceived workplace discrimination, particularly towards senior workers, is frequent. Older workers are generally perceived as lacking innovation, performing poorly, being rigid with norms and standards, and resistant to change (Marchiondo et al., 2017). Their bosses' skewed appraisals of their work performance and economic value might lead to less employment prospects for training and advancement. Older persons suffer more from unpleasant encounters, causing more wear and tear (Charles, 2010). Discrimination (and other stressors) exceed an individual's capacity to control stress, triggering detrimental physiological reactions in older individuals (SAVI; Charles, 2010). In an empirical test of the SAVI model, Marchiondo et al. (2017) found that older persons who perceived greater discrimination had higher levels of depression, job satisfaction, and health.

These findings, along with many others, demonstrate that perceived prejudice might harm people's mental and physical health (Yen et al., 1999; Martin et al., 2003; Steffen et al., 2003; Yoshikawa et al., 2004; Bennett et al., 2005; Pascoe and Smart Richman, 2009; Marchiondo et al., 2017).

3. Methodology

1. The study focused on the effects of gender discrimination on the women employees working in nationalized banks in Pune City.
2. 5 Nationalized banks were chosen (Bank of Maharashtra, Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank, State Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank)
3. 100 women employees were chosen for the purpose of the study (20 from each bank), using convenience sampling.
4. The researcher designed and validated a 10-point each questionnaire for assessing the impact of communication strategies on:
 - a. Prevalence of Discrimination
 - b. Impact of Discrimination on psychological wellbeing
5. Checked the questionnaire for validity using Cronbach's Alpha.
 - a. Sought responses on a 5 point Likert scale (from Strongly Disagree to

- Strongly Agree for questions related to Prevalence of Discrimination
- c. Seek responses on a 5-point Likert Scale to gauge the level of Impact of Discrimination on psychological wellbeing (From “no impact at all” to “maximum impact”)
- 6. Conducted the survey
- 7. Summarized the responses, and analysed the results

Hypothesis:

H1: Gender discrimination at the workplace is rare in nationalized banks in India.

H2: Gender discrimination has a high impact on the psychological wellbeing of women employees in nationalized banks.

The study was conducted across 5 Nationalized banks across Pune City.

Scheme formed for testing of hypotheses

- a. Responses were collected under 3 sections:

- 1. Profile information
- 2. Prevalence of Discrimination
- 3. Impact of Discrimination on psychological wellbeing
- b. The Likert responses were considered for calculating the mean values and an One sample T Test was used to compare the actual mean with the hypothesized mean.
- c. Since the researcher has used non-parametric data for a parametric test (One Sample T test), a more stringent alpha level of 0.01 was chosen (Murray, 2013).
- d. In order to check the internal validity of the questionnaires, Cronbach alpha values were calculated.

4. Results

- 1. Firstly, the Cronbach’s Alpha values were calculated for the 3 items under consideration. Following were the results:

Table 1.		Reliability Statistics	
Item	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	
Prevalence of Discrimination	.799	10	
Impact of Discrimination on psychological wellbeing	.894	10	

It can be seen in the above table that in all the cases the value of Cronbach’s Alpha was greater than 0.7. This shows that the questionnaire holds good as far as reliability is concerned.

Table 2. One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Prevalence of Discrimination	100	2.1835	1.07388	.08049
Impact of Discrimination on psychological wellbeing	100	4.1135	1.01108	.07578

The above table shows the mean impact score. (4 meant “High Impact”). In all the cases the mean value is higher than 4. However, the standard deviation is above 1 which is noteworthy.

Table 3. One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 4					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% CI of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Prevalence of Discrimination	-28.443	99	.000	-1.8165	-1.9118	-1.6682
Impact of Discrimination on psychological wellbeing	2.114	99	.027	.16854	.0190	.3181

For prevalence of discrimination, the respondents disagreed, which shows that the prevalence of discrimination is not frequent. The one sample T test was conducted with a Test Value (hypothesized mean of 4, as 4 was for “High Impact” & “Agree”). The mean difference is negative for the prevalence of discrimination & P value is lesser than 0.01.

For the impact of discrimination, the mean difference is positive and the P values is higher than 0.01. The table shows that the assumed mean and actual mean are not statistically different. i.e. the actual mean is statistically equal to the assumed mean or the test value. This shows that:

- Gender discrimination at the workplace is rare in nationalized banks in India.
- Gender discrimination has a high impact on the psychological wellbeing of women employees in nationalized banks.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that gender discrimination is rare. However, whenever it happens, it has the potential of creating a deep negative impact on the psychological wellbeing of the women employees who work in Banks. There is a

perception among the woman employees that men are more privileged, but instances of the same are rare. This shows that the society is changing. The data shows that though discrimination is generally perceived as rare phenomenon, it does happen often, but whenever it happens, its impact on the psychological wellbeing of the woman employees is significant. The negative effects of discrimination can manifest themselves in different ways.

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