

Women Remain on the losing Side in Professional Life

A) Introduction

B) Understanding Gender Discrimination in Professional Life

C) Manifestations of Gender Disparity in Professional Life.

1) Working women are still paid lower wages

2) Women face insecure workplace environment

3) Women face discrimination in leadership roles

4) Women have lesser access to digital equipments

5) Women have lesser representation in politics

D) Causes of Gender Disparity in Professional Life

1) Depiction of women as a weaker gender by gender-specific stereotypes

2) Historical culture of patriarchy

3) Lack of gender sensitization in workplaces

E) Recommendation to Diminish Gender Disparity in Professional Life

- 1) Promotion of gender-friendly education at primary and secondary levels
- 2) Promotion of gender-friendly workplace environment
- 3) Provision of just say of women in policy formation
- 4) Furthering gender-friendly and inclusive environment through media

F) Conclusion

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Women are still facing widespread gender disparity in their professional lives. They have certainly made some progress; however, gender disparity is still visible in many areas of professional life. Its stark manifestation can be seen through wage differences ^{between} of both the genders. Other indicators of this gloomy picture lie in insecure workplace environment for women, a widespread discrimination in leadership roles, lesser access to digital equipments and underrepresentation in political spheres. There are many causes that supplement the persistence of gender disparity in professional life, including gender-specific stereotypes that depict women as a weak gender, historical culture of patriarchy, and lack of gender sensitization in workplaces. However, women can be empowered in their professional lives by taking certain measures, including promotion of gender-sensitive education in primary and secondary levels, promotion of

gender-friendly workplace environment, giving women more say in policy formation, and furthering gender-friendly and inclusive environment through mass media.

Hence, various indicators show that women are still on the losing side in professional life. There are some basic causes of the persistence of gender disparity in professional. However, the ill of gender disparity can be tackled by taking some appropriate measures.

It is a common observation that there is a significant gender disparity in the professional life between both genders.

Even a layman can point out many areas where he/she can commonly observe a visible disparity. However, the facts and figures paint a more gloomy picture. They often build a picture where, despite making great efforts towards gender equality, the deepened patriarchal culture still persists. Some common traits of the members of the society are perpetual that often supplement the persistence of gender

stereotypes, segregation, and divide.. Gabriel Garcia Marquez in her novel "One Hundred Years of Solitude" argues that inherent characteristics of the people of Macondo ~~are~~ reflect in successive generations.

These inherent characteristics compel ~~them~~ their every generation to repeat the same mistakes. This analogue can be best suited here, because of the fact that despite persistent struggle and providing a ~~unif~~ united front against gender disparity, the world is still grappling with widespread gender inequality.

A stark manifestation of gender disparity can be seen by wage disparity ~~to~~ between both genders. Working women are still getting lower wages than their counterparts. A prevalent patriarchal culture values the work of men more than the work of men. Female workforce, despite having the same jobs as men, ~~and~~ as well as, equal productivity, get less recognition than male workforce. It is evidenced not

only in under-developed countries but also in developing and developed countries. Various independent news agencies and United Nations reports present a gloomy picture of wage disparity between both genders. In United States, women get proportionally lesser wages than their counterparts. Likewise, Pakistan's working women is ^{less} not only ~~not~~ in numbers but also in wages. Hence, provision of lesser wages keeps women on the losing side in professional life.

Apart from getting lower salaries or wages, women also face insecure workplace environment. The deeper social fault-lines in the society, including persistence of gender stereotypes, patriarchal family culture, and prevalent domestic violence adds to their insecurities in workplaces. Moreover, ~~is~~ insecure work environment not only limits their productivity but also inhibits their career growth options. There are number of instances where women have filed cases against workplace harrassments.

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There are number of organizations and corporate companies that have special committees or ombudsman that listen to voices of women. However, these are either politicized or work against the dignity of women. There are some committees that are, surely, working for women empowerment. Numerous registered cases of women facing insecurities in workplaces manifest the reality of gender disparity in professional life.

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Insecure workplace environment is not the only ill women face; they also face hindrances in their transition to ascending hierarchies of power. Women are ~~often~~ not often accepted as a leaders. The prevalent male dominance in institutions do not support women in their leadership roles. They are mostly accepted as subordinates. For instance, many third world countries including Pakistan have lower ratio of women in leadership roles. In Pakistan, only 4.6% of women are serving managerial roles, while only 4.1 are serving as senior managers. Hence, women are ^{on the} losing

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side in professional because of the many hindrances they face in achieving leadership roles.

Apart from difficulties in achieving leadership roles, they also face hardships in accessing various digital equipment. Lesser access to digital equipments, including information technology (IT) tools hinders their progress in professional life. Majority of women in patriarchal societies are dependent on the permission of their male heads in order get a digital device: mobile phone or computer. Moreover, they are dependent on their male heads. Various surveys show that women have lesser access to digital technologies. With their limited access, gender digital divide also increases; limiting their progress in professional life. According to United Nations Women, only 31% of Pakistani women have cell phones and only 4% have computers. Hence, ~~a~~ limited access to digital tools is a stark manifestation of their lagging ^{behind} in professional life.

Furthermore, women also lag behind in political spheres relative to their counterparts. Perpetuating male-friendly societal norms are ~~not~~ prevalent not only in social structures but also in political spheres. Political parties of countries throughout the globe, with few exceptions, support patriarchal politics. Serving under women leadership is not accepted easily. For example, United States' Republican and the Democrats have seen male political party's heads numerous times; however, females got the positions a fewer times. Likewise, third world countries, including Pakistan, ~~see~~ ~~not~~ political party's elect female leadership once in decades. According to United Nations, only 20% of Pakistan's parliamentarians are women. Likewise, only 16.2% occupy the seats of local bodies. Hence, females are on the losing side in professional life.

The above made arguments present a stark manifestation of gender disparity in professional. One might think

about the widespread gender disparity in professional life. So, it is important to shed some light on the causes of gender disparity in professional life.

One of the deep-rooted causes of gender disparity in professional life is the historical culture of patriarchy. The deepened notions of patriarchy are often perpetuating: inherent from parent to offsprings. Sigmund Freud psychoanalytic theory describes the formation of behaviors with the impact of childhood experiences. When a child see dominant patriarchy, dependence of females on males, and domestic violence, it produces a conducive effect on a child. Hence, a perpetuating cycle of patriarchal attitudes is one of the cause of persistent gender disparity.

Apart from historical reasons, certain gender-specific stereotypes also promote gender divide in professional life. Some stereotypes, including girls cannot

play games that involve physical exertion, gender-specific toys etc supplements gender divide on primary level that eventually diffuses into secondary and tertiary levels. ~~near~~ Arundhati Roy in her book "Azadi: Freedom, Fascism, Fiction" argues that in South-Asian cultures women are projected as a weaker gender. The notion is primarily at the basic but eventually spreads out to every sphere as the children become adults. Hence, a depiction of women as a weaker gender is also a cause behind gender disparity in professional life.

Furthermore, lack of gender sensitization adds fuel to the already hostile environment against women. Lack of gender friendly institutions in organizations or weak implementation of go harassment laws turn the workplace environment unfavorable to women.

The above made arguments shed light on the causes of gender disparity in professional life. It is important to shed light on its solutions.

Gender disparity in professional life can be lessened by promoting gender-sensitive education. Syllabus of primary and secondary educate should inculcate gender-sensitive topics. Moreover it should teach children the value of inclusiveness, and equality. It should also discourage children to discriminate against human beings on the basis of gender. Hence, promotion of gender-sensitive education at primary and secondary levels will eventually reflect positively at all societal levels.

Moreover, gender-friendly workplace environment should be promoted in order to combat discrimination at professional life.