

# Gender Diversity and a Spectacle of Women in the Workplace

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## Abstract

Today education among youth provides better understanding towards gender roles in an individual's life. Gender roles and gender diversity are considered to be an important aspect for a better society. Gender diversity doesn't imply the meaning that a company needs a fifty/fifty mix of men and women in every job in the company. It does imply, however, that every level in the company should have a fair representation of both sexes. This paper attempts to demonstrate the need of equal representation and contribution of women for the positive and productive effects in the workplace. To identify the workforce participation of women at various levels secondary data from Census report 2011 and US Census Bureau 2017 is considered. To understand the gender gap and to explain the need of gender diversity in the workplace secondary sources and reports of World Economic Forum were considered for the study. This paper attempts to convey the importance of equal contribution and representation of women in the workplace. The work place must foster a respectful and inclusive culture, benefitting both the sexes resulting in positive and productive growth of the companies.

**Keywords:** Gender diversity, Women in Workplace, Gender roles.

## Introduction

Earlier women in the workplace were automatically assigned to temporary or part-time or low responsibility jobs with a stereotypic notion that their first priority is to take care of their families. Unmarried women were likely to resign as soon as they married. Women with children were understood to prioritize children than work. In addition, there was a widespread belief that women were not as capable as men in terms of strength either physically or mentally or emotionally.

Today education among youth provides better understanding towards gender roles in an individual's life. Gender roles and gender diversity are considered to be an important aspect for the better society. Today there is a widespread understanding that in the course of a person's life the genitals, interests, clothing, school, profession, products, gym, sports, toys, family background, locker rooms, spa, parlors and activities, and the like, tends to determine the gender of an individual right from their birth. Women are not generally seen as inferior to men and there are women who prioritize work than family.

Organizations are slowly adjusting to these changes, learning to treat women as the equals of men and not as a pool of potential dates. Sytsma (2006) defines gender diversity is equitable or fair representation of people of different genders. It most commonly refers to an equitable ratio of men and

women, but may also include people of non-binary genders. Gender diversity plays a vital role in every aspect of day-to-day life, especially in the workplace. Management with greater gender diversity trends to perform better than that dominated by one gender (Darwin, Selvaraj, Palanisamy, 2015).

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## Review of Literature

On a global perspective women are also closing the higher education gap and gender pay gap. The report of Monster Salary Index (2016) states that, "The gender pay gap is shrinking in India". The Global Gender Gap report in 2017 states that approximately, 27% of women (compared to 27% of men) are enrolled in tertiary education. Despite educational gains, the labor force participation rate for women in 2017 was 28.5% (compared to 82% for men). Women earn 62% of what their male colleagues earn for performing the same work. But yet Shagun (2019) reported that the gender pay gap was 34 per cent in India, that is, women get 34 per cent less compared to men for performing the same job with same qualifications, says the report, which based its estimates on employment and unemployment survey (EUS) 2011-12, done by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), International Labour Organization (ILO) studies, and also builds on the first inequality report launched by Oxfam in 2018.

## Methodology

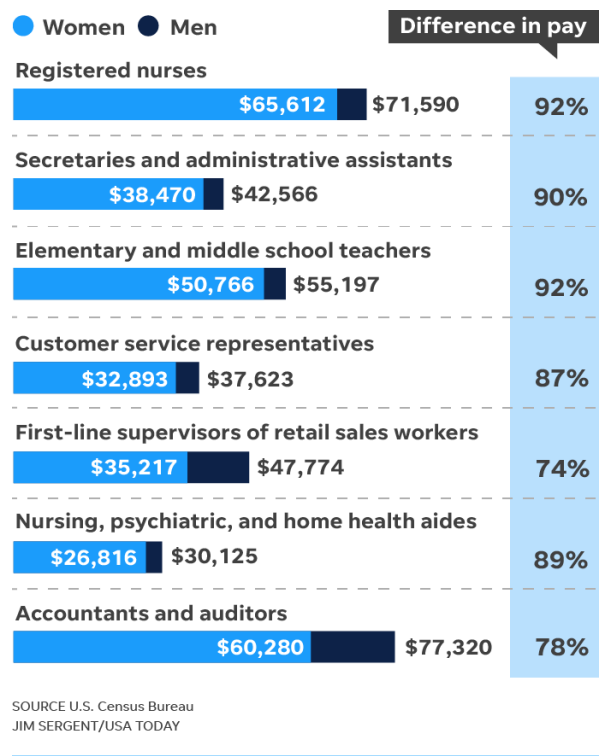
To identify the workforce participation of women at various levels, secondary data from Census report 2011 and US Census Bureau 2017 is considered. To understand the gender gap and to explain the need of gender diversity in the workplace secondary sources and reports of World Economic Forum 2018 were considered for the study.

## Global Scenario of Work force Participation and Gender Pay Gap

Women workforce participated and pay gap is a great global concern. Women are rarely found at the very top levels of US business organizations and comprise only 15.2% of the corporate boards of Fortune-500, about four-in-ten working women (42%) said they have experienced gender discrimination at work, compared with about two-in-ten men (22%) who said the same (Claire, 2018). One of the most commonly reported forms of discrimination is earnings inequality. One-in-four employed women said they have earned less than a man who was doing the same job; just 5% of men said they have earned less than a woman doing the same job. On an average, women in the United States earn 80 cents for every male dollar. And the gap is even greater for women of color with black women and Latinas earning 38% and 46% less, respectively, than white men. (Charisse, 2018).

Beyond that the US Census Bureau 2017 (Table1) reported that there is a difference in pay for men and women which evidence the gender gap in various professions. The registered nurses and the elementary school teachers are paid less and it stands the highest as 92 per cent, followed by secretaries and assistants (90%). The wage payment difference among accountants and auditors are less comprised of 78 per cent and 74 per cent respectively.

**Table1 Gender Gap Varies by Profession Median, Weekly Pay of Full Time Workers in 2017**



Source: US Census Bureau, 2017 / USA Today/ Jim Sergent

World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report of 2018 states that the gender parity is fundamental to whether and how economies and societies thrive. Ensuring the full development and appropriate deployment of half of the world's total talent pool has a vast bearing on the growth, competitiveness and future-readiness of economies and businesses worldwide. The Global Gender Gap Report benchmarks 149 countries on their progress towards gender parity across four thematic dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment. Today, the Global Gender Gap score stands at 68%. On an average, there is still a 32% gap to close. The report highlights how the gap is still large across most of the 149 countries. To date, no country has achieved parity, and only the top seven countries in the rankings have closed at least 80% of the gap. Among them, the top four are Nordic countries (Iceland, Norway, Sweden and Finland), one is from Latin American (Nicaragua, 5th), one is from Sub-Saharan Africa (Rwanda, 6th) and two are from the East Asia and the Pacific region (New Zealand, 7th, and Philippines, 8th). The top ten is completed by Ireland (9th) and Namibia (10th).

## Work Force Participation and Pay Gap in India

Work force participation in India as per the report of National Sample Survey 2011 (Table 2) shows the rural urban difference in States. In rural India women self employment is higher in north and north eastern states like Jammu & Kashmir (90.3%), Nagaland (94.9%), Sikkim (90.2%) than the employed women due to the poor literacy and agriculture as their major occupation. In the southern states female self employment is comparatively low as are employed in various sectors due to the increase in literacy rate. In urban India it is observed in vice versa where salaried women are higher and found large in southern states. When the workforce participation among male and female were considered it is observed that overall percentage (59.3%) self employment of women is higher than men (54.5%). Whereas in urban it is 42.8 per cent of women and 41.7 per cent. Employed women in rural India shows that it is 5.6 percent for 10.0 per cent men. Whereas, urban India shows the percentage of women employment is high (42.8%) but low when compared to men (41.7%).

Thus workforce participation of women in India shows the gender gap.

Table 2 State-wise Percentage Distribution of Workers According to Broad Employment  
Status: 2011-12

State/ Union Territory	Rural						Urban					
	Self-employed		Regular wage/ Salaried Employee		Casual Labour		Self-employed		Regular wage/ Salaried Employee		Casual Labour	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
A & N Islands	55.6	41.8	35.0	41.1	9.4	17.1	11.5	21.0	58.2	58.3	30.3	20.7
Andhra Pradesh	44.7	48.4	3.2	11.8	52.1	39.8	44.4	35.4	37.4	49.4	18.1	15.2
Arunachal Pradesh	89.5	78.0	5.6	15.4	4.8	6.7	49.1	32.1	38.8	56.7	12.1	11.1
Assam	64.3	71.1	17.5	10.4	18.2	18.5	46.9	54.9	44.9	35.3	8.2	9.8
Bihar	41.7	52.9	6.6	3.9	51.7	43.2	53.6	61.0	27.7	21.8	18.7	17.2
Chandigarh	25.0	20.0	75.0	58.5	0	21.5	40.1	36.7	59.9	55.1	0.0	8.3
Chhattisgarh	58.2	58.0	2.0	5.7	39.8	36.3	33.4	35.8	35.9	36.3	30.7	27.8
D & N Haveli	53.0	34.4	40.3	50.6	6.7	15.0	7.0	18.2	88.7	80.2	4.2	1.7
Daman & Diu	0.0	10.1	88.9	89.0	11.1	1.0	43.5	33.1	34.8	59.2	21.7	7.6
Delhi	0.0	23.8	99.7	75.3	0.3	0.9	23.2	36.7	74.6	59.4	2.2	3.9
Goa	20.2	31.4	48.9	58.1	30.8	10.5	12.9	32.4	82.8	60.1	4.3	7.5
Gujarat	58.3	56.5	5.2	12.4	36.5	31.1	48.3	40.3	37.0	52	14.7	7.7
Haryana	75.2	58.2	4.2	16.5	20.6	25.3	27.8	42.7	67.5	46.3	4.7	11.0
Himachal Pradesh	87.9	54.7	6.0	22.1	6.1	23.2	36.0	28.4	59.0	61.1	5.0	10.5
Jammu & Kashmir	90.3	51.0	5.7	19.5	3.9	29.4	43.0	49.9	50.8	39.1	6.2	11.1
Jharkhand	82.8	63.6	2.6	4.7	14.5	31.6	33.5	45.1	45.1	37.2	21.5	17.8
Karnataka	49.6	53.0	8.2	13.4	42.1	33.6	30.1	41.6	53.3	42.7	16.6	15.7
Kerala	36.4	38.9	23.0	15.5	40.5	45.6	36.3	36.3	46.6	31.6	17.1	32.1
Lakshadweep	7.1	18.6	35.7	44.3	57.1	37.1	38.5	34.7	61.5	38.9	0.0	26.4
Madhya Pradesh	57.6	61.0	2.7	5.8	39.7	33.2	48.6	48.1	35.6	34.6	15.9	17.2

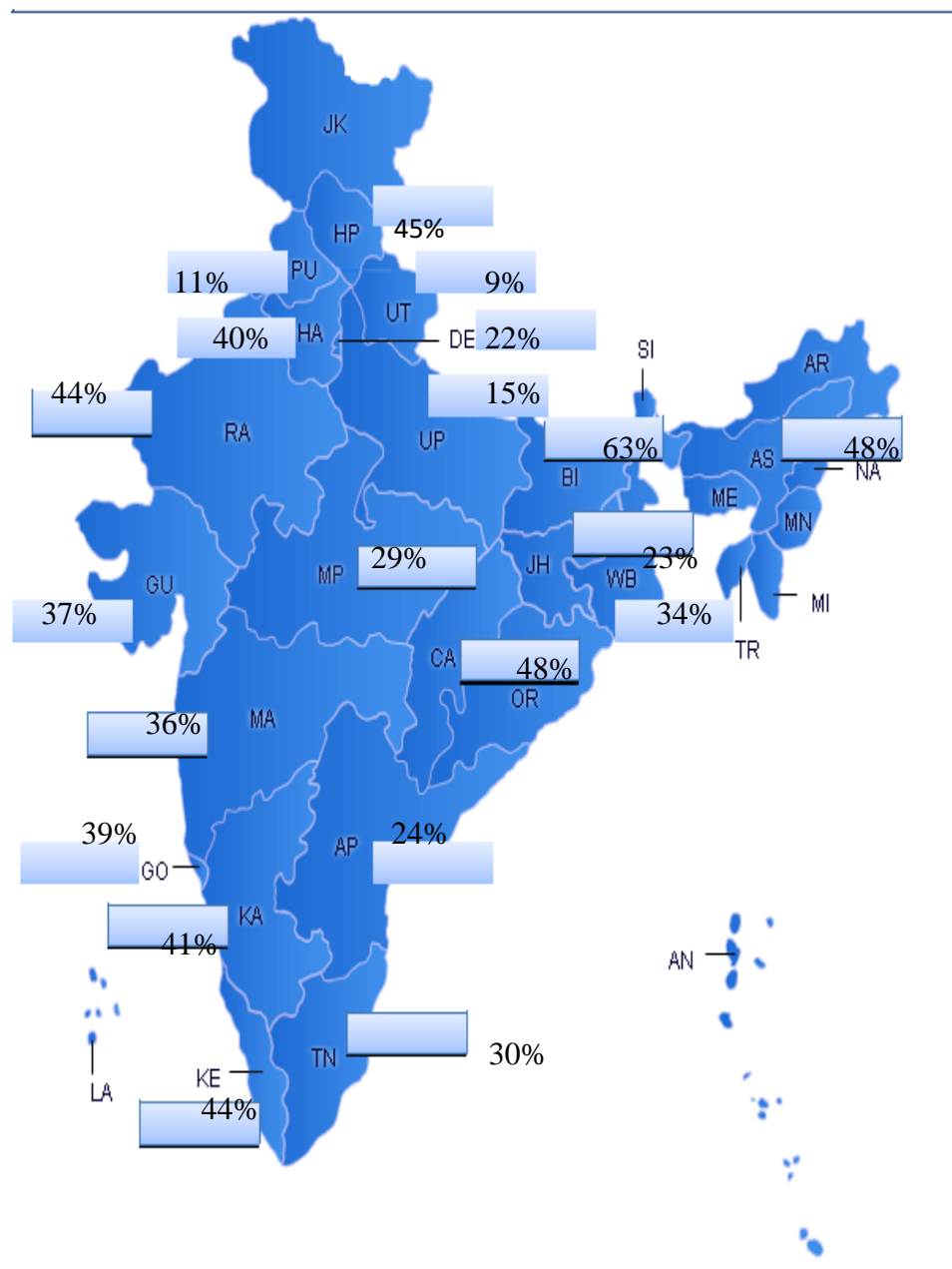
Maharashtra	53.5	53.8	3.1	12.3	43.3	33.9	33.4	36.8	54.2	54.7	12.3	8.5
Manipur	50.3	73.1	4.6	15.7	45.1	11.2	84.6	68.6	13.9	25.2	1.5	6.2
Meghalaya	75.6	67.6	8.9	11.4	15.6		43.3	32.2	48.4	50.7	8.4	17.0
Mizoram	81.3	83.2	4.3	12.5	14.4	4.3	72.3	42.0	25.7	47.2	2.0	10.7
Nagaland	94.9	80.1	2.9	18.9	2.2	1.1	64.5	36.2	35.5	59.9	0.0	3.9
Odisha	66.1	60.6	3.4	8.2	30.5	31.2	58.0	49.6	27.1	36.4	14.9	14.0
Puducherry	24.3	28.4	24.1	33.0	51.6	38.6	19.7	24.8	66.5	52	13.8	23.2
Punjab	77.8	46.0	8.6	20.1	13.6	33.9	41.1	45.2	54.3	46.5	4.6	8.3
Rajasthan	76.5	61.7	2.6	9.6	21	28.6	60.2	41.8	26.9	41.7	12.9	16.5
Sikkim	90.2	70.9	6.7	22.5	3	6.6	46.3	35.1	53.7	59.7	0.0	5.2
Tamil Nadu	27.8	31.5	9.5	17.0	62.8	51.5	39.8	32.4	41.8	43.7	18.4	23.9
Tripura	27.2	46.5	8.2	8.0	64.5	45.5	20.1	43.4	66.7	39.8	13.3	16.7
Uttar Pradesh	80.7	62.4	3.8	6.7	15.5	30.9	67.5	52.1	21.7	29.9	10.8	18.0
Uttarakhand	92.2	61.9	3.2	16.6	4.5	21.6	53.4	51.1	42.5	39.4	4.1	9.5
West Bengal	57.5	43.1	10.3	8.2	32.2	48.6	46.2	44.8	40.4	37.5	13.5	17.7
<b>India</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>35.5</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>43.4</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>14.9</b>

Source: National Sample Survey Office, 68<sup>th</sup> Round, July 2011 - June 2012.

Notes: Figures relate to usual status principal and subsidiary (all) workers. The figures represent size of workforce as percentage of population.

The gender pay gap measures the earning differences between women and men in paid employment in the labour market. “It is one of the many indicators of gender inequality in a country that emerge on examining the labour market participation in terms of gender” (Education International, 2011). The gender pay gap has become a universal issue. The gender pay gap varies across Indian states. Wage Indicator Data Report, Report Series 003, 2013 (Figure 1) depicts the gender pay gap varies across Indian states. Women in Uttarakhand earned 9% less than men, whereas women in Bihar earned 63% less than men. Uttarakhand on the other hand is the state with the lowest percentage of gender pay gap, with females earning only 9% less than men. Punjab and Uttar Pradesh are also states with a lower gender pay gap, following with 10% and 15%, respectively (Varkkey et al., 2013).

Figure1 Pictorial Depiction of the Gender Pay Gap Across Indian States.



Women are not generally seen as inferior to men and most women in the workforce do not treat job on temporary basis but as one of the basic needs for survival. The legislation in many countries including India is supportive of women in terms of providing the well-deserved break due to maternity.

Anitha (2018) in her study observed that India Development Report 2017 from the World Bank ranked India 120th out of 131 countries in the world on female labour-force participation, across the world too, the share of women in the formal workforce, especially in senior positions, has continued to remain low. Quartz analyzed that out of 1,500 large public companies listed across 27 countries, 95 percent of companies are led by a significantly male-dominated management, with this phenomenon particularly evident across management levels at Asian companies. In India, women account for approximately 17 percent of senior management.



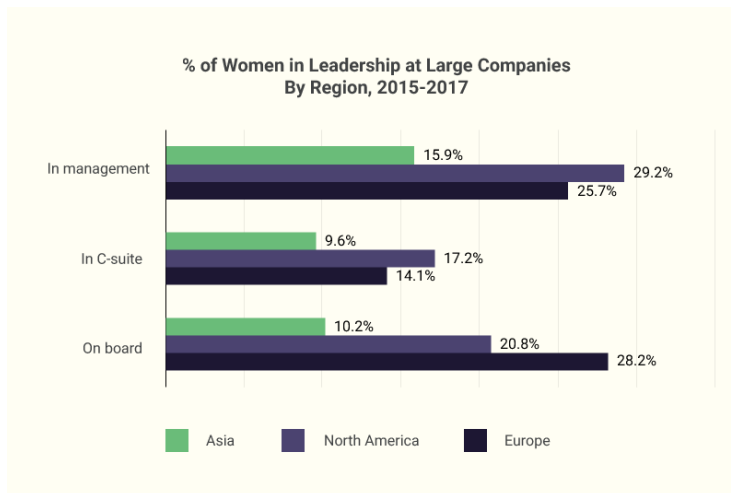
It is evidenced from the report that gender is the backbone of the financial and value chain systems of the companies. Working in collaboration irrespective of gender could improve team processes and boost group collaboration. Chances of multiplicity of ideas and different point of view between men and women will benefit the organization to eradicate gender stereotypes. Groups with more women are better at taking turns in conversation, which culminates most of the groups combined knowledge and skills.

Inclusive workplaces tend to have lower employee rates representing big savings in terms of time and money spent on recruitment. It results in developing teams to have a diversity of genders, including backgrounds and ethnicities. Having an inclusive workplace is a powerful recruiting tool as it determines the reputation of the organization. An inclusive employer will also demonstrate positive company values and as an output it will enhance the reputation of the company. Promoting an inclusive culture in workplace boosts morale and opportunity. In the field of business and companies gender role must ensure smooth operational functioning of the companies through a mix of leadership dynamics to withhold the company's standard.

### **Need of Gender Diversity in Work Place**

Gender diversity relates to more productive companies, as measured by market value and revenue, only in contexts where gender diversity is viewed as “normatively” accepted. By normative acceptance-mean a widespread cultural belief that gender diversity is important. In other words, beliefs about gender diversity create a self-fulfilling cycle. Countries and industries that view gender diversity as important capture benefits from it. (Zhang et al. 2019). Women are contributing to the world's economy through various fields. Women had proved their excellence in every field possible beginning from being a home maker to contributing their potential in scientific field.

Women are still enormously under-represented on corporate boards globally, despite continued measures to improvise boardroom gender diversity. In most companies' men enroll themselves in the technical field and women enroll themselves in service-based field. Women's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is simply overlooked in farming, manufacturing, construction and small-scale activities. The estimation of the proportion of female workers in the female population is unrealistically low. Figure 2 shows the global scenario of women in leadership at large companies. In Asia only 15.9 per cent of women are in management compared to North America and Europe which is 29.2 per cent and 25.7 per cent respectively. Similar observation is found in the C suite position and on board where women's representation is comparatively low in Asian countries.

**Figure 2 Women in Leadership at Large Companies**

Source: Quartz; Data: Gender Diversity Exchange management

In a macro-level study on cross-national and cross-industrial variations in the effect of gender diversity Zhang et al (2019) found that across most models, normative legitimacy of gender diversity there is a significant and positive moderating influence on how gender diversity affects firm performance, suggesting that social norms play an important role in shaping how investors, workers, and managers' approach gender diversity. For instance, in some countries and industries, people see gender diversity as a valuable asset that can improve productivity and decision making, so investors may prefer gender-diverse firms and workers and managers may approach gender diversity positively. But in those countries and industries where gender diversity is not valued, investors may see gender diversity as detrimental to firms' future performance and women workers and managers may experience more stereotyping and discrimination in the workplace. Thus, the institutional environment determines people's attitudes and approaches toward gender diversity and shapes its consequences. In investigating the effect of institutional context, this study differentiates between normative and regulatory environments.

Companies need to change the way they hire and promote entry and manager-level employees to make real progress. Every company must hire its employees without assumptions and prejudices. Companies and organizations that do not encourage employment of women might lose the talents and the potential women possess. As an individual to progress within organizations, especially in a high-performance culture, women are in need to identify and capitalize on every opportunity to prove their excellence.

## Summary and Conclusion

Workplaces need to prepare to accommodate and accept women in the present and in the future. It is important to create an inclusive environment for everyone to be their true and authentic self. As stated by Gupta (2019) Diversity & Inclusion is a team sport in business and its leaders must believe in the immense power of a diverse workforce that brings together different backgrounds, generations, and groups with their unique take on challenges and their solutions. This cannot be an HR- driven set of programs, but an organization driven culture, where leaders and managers role model inclusive behaviors, value diverse



perspectives and create an environment that empowers everyone to do their best work, irrespective of their gender, generation, preferences, abilities, or any other factor.

Thus, organizations must ensure to provide an individual's space without being judgmental and gender biased. Educating the customers, service providers, clients and suppliers about the gender roles could help in exchange of thoughts and ideas to make workplace better. Support policies at the workplace could brighten the aspect of helping women in uncertain circumstances. Stringent laws and awareness regarding gender diversity could support in better understanding of gender roles in the society. The employers must ensure that hiring and promotions are fair by making senior leaders and managers the champions of gender diversity. The companies must offer women flexibility in their work reducing both stress factor and work pressure. This will not only create greater inclusion for individuals who challenge the norms of gender, it will also create space for every woman to explore and excel in the workplace. Henceforth, through equal contribution and representation of women in the workplace the companies must foster a respectful and inclusive culture, benefitting both the sexes resulting in positive and productive growth of the companies.

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