



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIAL
SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

e-ISSN:2455-5142; p-ISSN: 2455-7730

Gender Discrimination in Hiring

Kartika Solanki

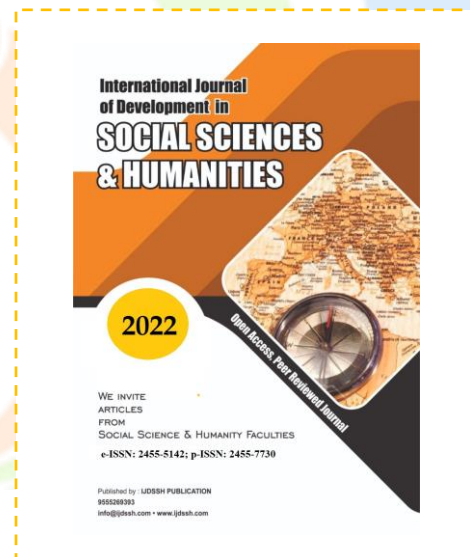
Student, Department of Psychology, Kamla Nehru College
Delhi University, New Delhi, India

Paper Received: 07th September, 2022; **Paper Accepted:** 04th November, 2022;

Paper Published: 04th November, 2022

How to cite the article:

Kartika S. (2022), Gender
Discrimination in Hiring, IJDSSH, July-
December 2022, Vol 14, 71-83



ABSTRACT

Gender discrimination affects hiring choices and is prevalent in organisations and the workplace, resulting in disparities across the entire employment cycle. This paper reviews different forms of gender discrimination found in workplace, including different job stereotypes associated with gender, job language in job description, the easier access to promotion opportunities for men than women and inconsistent retirement age and salary for men and women, which can have negative consequences for employees, companies, and society. Women careers are highly affected by it, which created inequality throughout women's careers, from recruiting to selection to promotion. Finally, this paper also discusses how to solve these problems, including Blind evaluation, Structured recruitment and performance evaluation, training and increasing gender diversity in talent acquisition team.

Keywords: *Gender, Gender discrimination, Stereotypes, Recruitment, Hiring, Selection*

INTRODUCTION

Gender refers to social or learned characteristics that are associated with being male or female. Although many people use the terms sex and gender to mean the same thing, there is actually a difference between them. The term sex refers to the biological distinction of being male or female, whereas the term gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. Gender, unlike sex, is the result of sociocultural influences throughout an individual's development. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. Behaviors that match these expectations are often associated with rewards (Robinson & Howard-Hamilton, 2000) while behaviors that violate these expectations are often associated with costs (Good & Sanchez, 2010).

Gender discrimination affects hiring choices and is prevalent in organisations and the workplace, resulting in disparities across the entire employment cycle. It affects how managers give their employees feedback, how salaries are negotiated, and which workers get encouragement and career development opportunities, and which do not. They also have an impact on which candidates are hired for specific roles. Each of these elements contributes to gender inequity throughout women's careers, from recruiting to selection to promotion. However, it is illegal in many countries to discriminate in hiring practice on the basis of gender and can result in a lawsuit against an offending employer.

Almost 90% of men and women hold some sort of bias against women. Whilst some countries are doing better than others, there are no countries in the world with true gender equality, the study found. (United Nations Development Programme, 2020)

It is very important to study gender inequality in the workplace. It helps us, raise our awareness of the risks posed by gender disparity in the workplace (Zhu, 2022) According to Molyneux, the reason why women's organisations come together is because they have a desire to overthrow the authority that places restrictions on their power. For instance, employment discrimination based on gender might reduce productivity.¹ It can also raise awareness among the general public and enhance the position of women in the workforce. It can also help us realise that much more effort needs to be done to reduce gender imbalance at work and foster a positive, happy office environment. Instead of disregarding workplace discrimination against women. However, focus more on issues of this nature. Moreover, people that are not equal can be made aware of the unequal treatment they are subjected to (Zhu, 2022). Additionally, it could give more unequal individuals the courage to speak up and protect their legal rights.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are several perspectives for why companies discriminate against women. The fundamental theoretical approaches have

been divided into two main categories by us: (i) the economic-rational perspective addressing statistical discrimination, and: (ii) cultural perspectives focusing on gender stereotypes, patriarchy and social norms

Economic Perspective

As stated by economic rational perspective, we can anticipate that employers will evaluate job applicants' productive productivity based on their observable qualities, such as their human capital, and will assign them average group traits in order to evaluate their unobservable qualities (Fang and Moro, 2011). The theory of the statistical discrimination hypothesis is the presumption that employers evaluate costs and benefits (Arrow, 1972; Phelps, 1972). It also explains why there is different gender discrimination in jobs with a male- and female-dominated workforce. Employers should anticipate seeking for dependable employees due to productivity gains and the expense of acquiring new employees. All other things being equal, employers would judge men's productivity as being higher and discriminate against women since women are more likely to miss work owing to childcare commitments. The majority of employers are looking for stable and reliable workers, and studies have shown that workers' employment duration is sensitive to the sex typing of the job,

indicating that men who enter female dominated job and women who enter male dominated job, have disproportionately higher exit risks. (Torre, 2014, 2018).

Cultural Perspective

Patriarchy. Women face many barriers and inequalities in workplace due to patriarchal society. Men are the primary authority figure in this sort of civilization, which has existed for ages on both a micro and global level. Patriarchy literally means to "ruling of the father" (Ferguson, 1999). Historically, the term "patriarchy" was used to describe the father's autocratic rule over his family, but it has come to apply to all social structures in which adult males are in positions of authority (Meagher, Michelle). In terms of this authority, males are viewed as the head and centre of the home at the micro level, and they play a key role in political leadership and decision-making at the macro level. This mainly male-dominated culture contributes to our political philosophy, which holds that all choices and priorities should be made on behalf of all people, primarily fulfilling the demands of males, according to the ideas of those in authority. The continuation of these customs and the inequality between men and women favours the masculine sector of society. This kind of government is viewed by feminists as "an unfair social system that oppresses

women" and "often contains all the social processes that reproduce and exert male control over women...characterizing patriarchy as a social construction" (Tickner, 2001).

Sexism. Women are treated differently at work mainly due of sexism. Women are sometimes exposed to stricter standards at work, such as age, height, and appearance, which are not essential for the job. Moreover, there is a persistent perception that women are less competent than males. Women frequently enter lower-level occupations more frequently as a result of this discrimination. Women are not treated equally in the workplace as a result of this gender discrimination.

Stereotypes. The stereotype content model, states that individuals typically view males as competent but not warm and females as warm but not competent (Glick and Fiske, 1996). People also consider that male dominance jobs require more competence whereas jobs that are female dominated require more warmth (Cuddy, Fiske and Glick, 2008). Given that these stereotypes are connected to both people and occupations, it is very likely that employers discriminate against applicants of the "wrong" gender (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011). As a result, "if a caregiving work is perceived to demand warmth and males are thought to not

possess much warmth, people may predict that a man will not be successful at a caregiving job" (Halper, Cowgill and Rios, 2019: p. 2). According to the same reasoning, employers would have low performance expectations for women working in, say, technical positions. Thus, the process of matching jobs and job candidates may be influenced by the gender prejudices of employers. Theoretically, this argument is captured by the concept of sex typing of jobs (Bielby and Baron, 1986; Glick, Zion and Nelson, 1988; Reskin and Roos, 1990), the role congruity model (Cejka and Eagly, 1999), and the theory of gender categorization within work organizations (Ridgeway, 1997).

This leads to unconscious gender bias that people often make. It is an automatic and unintentional mental association based on gender, originating from cultures, values, norms, traditions, and experience. Automatic associations feed into decision-making, enabling a quick assessment of an individual according to gender and gender stereotypes. This isn't something intentional. We do this without even realising.

Recruitment

Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of qualified candidates for a particular job. The firm must announce the

job's availability to the market and attract qualified candidates to apply. It is the first step in hiring process. It is possible that female job candidates will be excluded due to indirect gender discrimination, which may not even be a conscious effort to discriminate.

Use of words

It has long been unlawful to advertise positions specifically for women or men or to discriminate on the basis of sex. (Sex Discrimination Act 1984).

The language used in job advertisements, however, has been found to subtly separate women and men into different professions and industries. Even in the absence of overt sexism, a job description may promote gender stereotypes in subliminal ways. Certain keywords might indicate unconscious gender bias since they are linked to prevalent gender stereotypes. Women are associated with adjectives like "emotional," "gentle," "pleasant," "sensitive," "warm," "affectionate," and "friendly," but males are associated with words like "dominant," "achievement-oriented," "ambitious," "self-confident," "rational," "tough," and "aggressive." Male applicants may gain from an unconscious bias in their favour if executives and job descriptions for leadership jobs in a company use terms like

"dominant" and "ambitious" that are often associated with men. In contrast to women, males would be seen as having a natural aptitude for the position due to unconscious prejudice.

Job stereotypes

Men and women may be sorted into different occupations because of their various educational and career choices, as well as their distinct preferences and limits regarding work-life balance, which can lead to differing employment pathways and results. Women choose careers and jobs that put them in disadvantageous positions (Skyt Nielsen et al., 2004; Sahni and Paul, 2010). While these choices may also respond to the same stereotypes and prejudices affecting employers, or anticipate these attitudes, they can generally only indirectly be attributed to discrimination (Lundberg and Startz, 1983). One of the key presumptions is that women choose careers with greater flexibility because they weigh the time commitment required for job roles vs non-work responsibilities more heavily than males do. These professions are frequently reported to be lower paid and to need less skill update. Employers also discriminate women, particularly in the best-paid jobs, this leads for women's labour- market disadvantage.

A candidate is penalized if a job is dominated by the opposite sex. Some of the male dominated industry are the tech, Finance, Construction, Transport and Manufacturing, male candidates are more likely to come to mind when individuals consider candidates who might be a good fit for those occupations than that are equally competent female candidates. Simply because males come to mind first, an informal shortlist may contain more men than women who are equally qualified. According to research, males are also at a disadvantage when seeking for jobs in fields with a high female employment rate. (Booth and Leigh, 2010).

Moreover, the lack of confidence in women's job results from the general cultural perception that they are unable to perform highly skilled work or apply their abilities outside of the home. This perception that women's labour was less valued than men's has a significant impact on how they are treated as workers, the opportunities available to them, and the income that follows. Although it is manifested in less overt ways now, this socially acceptable worldview was publicly stated throughout most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Evaluation of credits

Women's qualifications are evaluated more harshly during the first hiring stage. (Bohnet, 2016; Fine, 2011). In a research, 238 academic psychologists in the United States were entrusted with evaluating one of two identical resumes for an applicant looking for an academic position (either "Karen Miller" or "Brian Miller") (Steinpreis et al., 1999). Despite the fact that participants preferred the female candidate over the male candidate, they were more inclined to suggest the male applicant for the position. It's interesting to note that participants were likely four times more to add cautionary notes to the female candidate's application, casting doubt on the legitimacy and independence of her accomplishments, such as: "I would need to see evidence that she had gotten these grants and publications on her own."

Cole et al. (2004) examined if the gender of the recruiter and the applicant affected the recruiter's evaluation of the applicant's resume, which is a form of preference-based discrimination. Gorman (2005) looked at the hiring practices of major US law firms and found evidence that decision-makers favour applicants of their own gender. In general, female decision-makers hire more women than do male decision-makers to fill open positions.

In terms of the corporation, conflicting information has been found about the size of the company. On the one hand, major enterprises frequently recruit more individuals of all genders (Bygren and Kumlin, 2005). On the other hand, in their experimental study of gender discrimination in hiring for highly skilled occupations in Belgium, Baert et al. (2018) could not discover any evidence of a link between firm size and discrimination. Their data does, however, give some indications that discrimination could be less prevalent in public and nonprofit organisations than that in for-profit, private ones. According to their research, there is no connection between the company's financial success and the tendency for discrimination among recruiters. . However, one may speculate that when hiring during tough economic times, recruiters are more likely to statistically discriminate because they are more risk averse (Baert et al. 2015).

Selection

Selection criteria are widely used by evaluators to choose which applicant to hire or promote. Studies show that when women apply for jobs, they are less likely than equally qualified men to receive interview invitations. Women with children, older women, and women from particular racial and ethnic origins are more severely affected

by this effect. (Abrams et al., 2016; Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004; Correll et al., 2007; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012; Neumark, 2010; Riach and Rich, 2006; Weichselbaumer, 2016).

Other kinds of discrimination can include minimum height or weight standards that are excessively demanding for most women even if they have no impact on work performance. Women with children might not be able to attend training or interview sessions because they are scheduled late in a day.

Research have shown over time that women who appear to be assertive or overly confident are judged often to be less 'likeable' than women who conform to a more traditional feminine stereotype (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Rudman and Glick, 2001). In Rutgers University, research was conducted, where male and female actors were videotaped, during interviewing for a role of a computer lab manager (Phelan et al., 2008). In one experiment condition, the actors candidates displayed competitiveness, ambition, and self-confidence, while in the other condition, the actors displayed as competent, but modest and cooperative. Then, a sample of 428 participants—who thought they were evaluating actual job candidates—were asked to rank the applicants' competence, social

skills, and employability. When evaluating employability, the participants ranked competence above social skills for all candidates in exception for female candidates who presented as self- confident, ambitious and competitive. Social skills were considered to be the most crucial employability characteristic for "agentic" women. Thus, in comparison to other applicants, confident women were penalised for violating traditional feminine stereotypes (Phelan et al., 2008).

The study found that only men perceived as higher class had an advantage when applying to the most elite jobs. (Rivera, L. A., & Tilcsik, A. (2016). Class Advantage, Commitment Penalty: The Gendered Effect of Social Class Signals in an Elite Labor Market. *American Sociological Review*, 81(6), 1097–1131. For women, a higher-class background actually led to a “commitment penalty.” According to interviews with the employers, they believed that higher-class women were less dedicated to their jobs and more likely to quit after having children. (Rivera & Tilcsik, 2016)

Salary Negotiations

In same employment, men and women are treated differently in the same employment. Women and men are assigned to separate tasks, with lower pay and fewer promotion opportunities in roles that are generally held by women. If women try to

negotiate for an increase in income, they also suffer from a "likeability" penalty. Researchers at the universities of and Carnegie Mellon and Harvard discovered in a series of controlled trials that female applicants who advocated for greater pay on their own behalf were evaluated less favourably than males who did the same, especially if the evaluator was male (Bowles et al., 2007). Women were found to be much less likely than males to contemplate requesting a male boss for a higher wage package when researchers looked at applicant behaviour. This finding suggests that women are aware of the social consequences of attempting to negotiate for a better deal. Women may have less possibilities to improve their chances of promotion and pay raises if they are "justifiably less likely than males to commence talks with men" (Bowles et al., 2007, p. 99).

Parenthood

There is a Normative discrimination and the motherhood penalty (Gender & Society, 24(5), 616-646). When it comes to hiring, starting salary, and perceived competence, mothers suffer while husbands gain from having children. For example, among otherwise equal applicants, mothers with children competency evaluations were 10% lower than those of non-mothers. (Correll, S. J., Benard, S., & Paik, I. (2007).

'Highly successful mothers are viewed as less warm, less likeable and more interpersonally hostile, therefore, they are discriminated in hiring and promoting decisions. (Benard, S., & Correll, S. J. (2010).

Patriarchal nature of organisational life contributes to the belief that being a "good mother" and a "perfect worker" are mutually incompatible goals (Fuegen et al., 2004; Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Benard and Correll, 2010; Glass and Fodor, 2011; Byron and Roscigno, 2014). Therefore, under the "motherhood mandate," women are predicted to be less engaged to employment and more focused on their families, which will make them less productive than to comparably qualified male employees (Russo, 1976; Hays, 1996). Additionally, businesses anticipate that they will exhibit increased absence rates, which will eventually have an impact on their productivity at work (Correll et al., 2007).

Leadership

On a global scale, women are underrepresented in firms, and their percentage gets less as one moves up the corporate ladder. This is because men have better promotion opportunities than women. Women also struggle to get position of top managers. Many businesses have demonstrated their dedication to gender

equality by enacting policies that support families and that promote women's professional networks and careers. However, unconscious gender bias still affects women in the workplace, and more has to be done to help highly qualified women rise into leadership roles. This is due to the persistent belief that women are better at home and men are better suited for outdoor work. Finally, the retirement-aged for men and women around the world is different.

One of the most popular and well-known metaphors for examining gender inequality in the workplace is the "glass ceiling." According to the "glass ceiling" theory, women find it more challenging to promote in their careers once they have a job. Women also plateau after they reach a certain level and are prevented from progressing on in their organisations. It also claims that as long as women hold positions of greater responsibility, they would continue to encounter proportionally more challenges than men. Women managers are more likely to be promoted into roles when a higher percentage of women already work there, underscoring the challenge in getting hired for these jobs in the first place (McLaughlin, 2009). These barriers produce a revolving door that makes it challenging for women to develop within their companies.

However, some women have been successful in shattering the glass ceiling. It's interesting to note that research has shown that Fortune 500 businesses with the highest levels of female participation on their boards do much better financially than those with the lowest levels of female involvement (Blau and Kahn 1994). According to research, these businesses are more successful because their boards reflect a more diversified viewpoint from women in leadership (Brown, Brown, Anastasopoulos, 2002)

Rules and Regulations

Regulations that forbid discrimination in job postings and other hiring practises are in place in many counties. For instance, it is unlawful for an employer to post a job advertisement in the United States that favours or dissuades a candidate based on that candidate's race, colour, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, or genetic information (US Employment Opportunity Commission, 2021). It is prohibited in the United Kingdom for employment adverts to express or indicate that an employer will discriminate against applicants (GOV.UK, 2021). Employers must be required by law to conduct recruitment processes free of all forms of discrimination in all of the

European Union's member states (Romeis and Kessinich, 2018).

In India, the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976 mandates that men and women receive equal compensation for equal work. According to the Same Remuneration Act, regardless of gender, equal remuneration must be given for identical labour of a similar type. "Same work or work of a similar nature" refers to work for which the skill, effort, and responsibility required are the same, when carried out under comparable working conditions, by a man or a woman, and where any differences, if any, between the skill, effort, and responsibility required of a man and those required of a woman, are not of practical significance in relation to the terms and conditions of employment. When hiring and keeping employees, all companies in India are required to abide by the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976.

Solutions

Blind evaluation

Hide the physical characteristics of job applicants to avoid implicit bias from impacting the hiring decision. Although it's a fairly easy technique to reduce bias, very few businesses really use this strategy. Software is available on a number of online recruitment sites that enables employers to

look beyond outward appearances and enhance the hiring and evaluation process.

There is a method to make applications anonymous and do away with CVs. The names on CVs are used most frequently in research on gender bias in recruiting to gauge the level of bias. Therefore, the simplest way to avoid this prejudice is to completely remove names from apps (as well as date of birth, address etc.). Applications that are anonymous and have had their identifying information deleted are clearly a positive step towards gender equality (in terms of hiring, at least).

Structured recruitment and performance evaluation

To reduce the influence of unconscious gender prejudice on recruiting decisions, a structured recruitment procedure is essential. Structured interviews guarantee that all candidates are assessed using pertinent, previously established standards relating to job performance. Comparative evaluations of the candidates' responses in light of the specific criteria can aid in the reduction of gender bias and make it simpler for hiring managers to choose the applicant who performed the best. In general, training for those in charge of reviewing performance and putting in place processes and procedures that enhance judgments, such as having a few evaluators do independent assessments before coming together, and

clearly listing each metric, could help to mitigate the influence of unconscious bias on intuitive judgments. It may be necessary to ask evaluators how they arrived at their conclusions for each applicant or employee. A watchful eye from human resources can detect any indications of unconscious gender bias.

Training

Companies can receive specialised training on unconscious prejudices from employers' groups, whether these biases are directly related to gender or to other issues. The typical structure of training programmes includes identifying implicit and structural biases in the organisation, illustrating the consequences of the prejudice, and providing training participants with the knowledge and tools they need to identify and combat their own unconscious biases. For instance, in February 2016, the National Women's Council of Ireland released an unconscious bias training pack that outlines the drawbacks of failing to address unconscious gender bias in hiring, promoting, and retaining policies as well as the advantages of greater gender parity in decision-making roles for organisations.

Gender diversity in talent acquisition teams

You should try to put together a gender varied panel if specifically trying to enhance gender diversity. It's crucial to remember that depending only on this to lessen gender prejudice in the recruiting process will have little effect. However, when combined with other useful tools like AI-powered skills tests and organised interviews, it helps to make the hiring process even fairer and more inclusive. This goes beyond ensuring that men and women are represented equally. It entails taking into account the many viewpoints and experiences of all forms of variety, including those related to race, culture, age, sexual orientation, disability, and other factors.

CONCLUSION

In order to undermine equity for women in the recruiting and selection process, this study has outlined the main aspects of gender prejudice. Through the gendered "coding" of job adverts, the gendered appraisal of performance, and the skewed manner in which applications are recorded and credentials are compared in ways that advantage male applicants, this bias can be publicly and covertly reinforced. Because gender bias has restricted women's opportunities to take on difficult job assignments and because workplace culture

has either directly or indirectly discouraged women from adopting leadership styles that differ from those of men, women can also encounter significant barriers to career development and leadership.

REFERENCES

1. Bertogg, A., Imdorf, C., Hyggen, C., Parsanoglou, D., & Stoilova, R. (2020). Gender discrimination in the hiring of skilled professionals in two male-dominated occupational fields: A factorial survey experiment with real-world vacancies and recruiters in four European countries. *KZfSS Kölner Zeitschrift Für Soziologie Und Sozialpsychologie*, 72(S1), 261–289. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-020-00671-6>
2. Birkelund, G. E., Lancee, B., Larsen, E. N., Polavieja, J. G., Radl, J., & Yemane, R. (2021). Gender discrimination in hiring: Evidence from a cross-national harmonized field experiment. *European Sociological Review*, 38(3), 337–354. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcab043>
3. Foley, M; Cooper, R; and Mosseri S (2019). Gender equitable recruitment and promotion: Leading practice guide, WGEA Commissioned Research Paper, The Australian Women's Working Futures (AWWF) Project, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia.
4. Ganji, F. A., & Joshi, D. B. P. (2020). Impact of Gender Discrimination on the Employees (Ghalib Private University in Herat, Afghanistan as a Case Study). *European Journal of Molecular & Clinical Medicine*, 07(06), 1976–1980. Retrieved from https://ejmcm.com/article_4006_3bc4cd62cefd0f562ae4281d1438bd0c.pdf.
5. González, M. J., Cortina, C., & Rodríguez, J. (2019). The role of gender stereotypes in hiring: A field experiment. *European Sociological Review*, 35(2), 187–204. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcy055>
6. Hays, N., Morrow, K. (2013). Gender Discrimination in the Workforce
7. International Labour Organization. (2017, August). *Breaking barriers: Unconscious gender bias in the workplace*. Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_601276.pdf
8. Liebkind, K., Larja, L., & Brylka, A. (2016). Ethnic and gender discrimination in recruitment: Experimental evidence from Finland. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 4(1), 403–426. <https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v4i1.433>
9. Muradova, S., & Seitz, W. (2021, September). *Gender discrimination in hiring: Evidence from an Audit Experiment in Uzbekistan*. Retrieved from <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/395981632487281231/pdf/Gender-Discrimination-in-Hiring-Evidence-from-an-Audit-Experiment-in-Uzbekistan.pdf>
10. Rivera, L. A., & Tilcsik, A. (2016). Class Advantage, Commitment Penalty. *American Sociological Review*, 81(6), 1097–1131. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416668154>
11. Zhu, Z. (2022). The causes and solutions of gender inequality in the Workplace. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211220.118>