



Discovering Gender Bias in Indian IT Industry

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Abstract: *The rise of the information technology sector in India has opened the doors of employment for many Indian women. Undoubtedly, these rapid technological developments in this industry have a massive impact on the way the information technology sector performs its work, thus giving rise to many employment issues. Indian women, who were mostly found in traditional jobs, are now actively participating in the information technology sector. Most of the time, this electrically transferable work has forced many millennial women to start their work even before the sun rises, which is invigorating their family life. Even though the official work hours may vary from 8–9 hours, the time taken to reach a work destination can act as a constraint for individuals working in this sector. The immediate consequences of work-life complexities blur the boundaries between work and family life, and this will have a significant impact on the physical and psychological health of these millennial female employees in the long run.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Information Technology (IT) industry of India has grown by leaps and bounds and has acquired a brand name in the IT and ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) sector in the global scenario. The major hubs for the IT export sector are Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Kolkata.

Men and women are burdened by stereotyped roles — girls are taught to be meek and pleasant from a young age. Activities that develop logical thinking, math skills, and interest in computer science or technology in general are not included in the toys and pastimes we recommend to children. Stereotypical gender capabilities continue to be used to promote career trajectories. Add in the fact that many women are wary of working in the IT industry since it is perceived to be male-dominated and misogynistic.

The nature of the information technology industry and the nature of work of women professionals in the age group of 20–35 years are crucial as they are drawn towards marriage and motherhood, furthering their career aspirations to remain successful in their jobs with dynamic work environments. The new generations of millennial female employees are put



under increasing pressure to achieve work-life compatibility at various stages of their employment.

This article attempts to analyze the issues of opportunities and constraints that women employees face in the Information Technology industry in India with secondary data. The IT sector, through its employment, contributes substantially to women's empowerment.

GENDER DISPARITIES IN THE INDIAN IT INDUSTRY

India earned the reputation of being an IT hub only in the decade of the nineties. The earlier decade, marked by the setting up of giant IT organizations and the liberalization of government policies with respect to the software industry, laid a strong foundation for this growth. The IT industry has opened several opportunities for middle-class educated citizens, both men and women. In its wake, the so-called sunshine industry, which has a reputation for being one of the most inclusive industries in modern times, has thrown up several challenges for its employees, which are even more severe for female employees.

According to the CEO, *Tech Mahindra* boosted its gender diversity ratio by 5 percent in the last two quarters. Women currently make up 34.2 percent of the company's 150,000 employees. *Wipro's* employment base of 231,000 included 36.3 percent of women. Throughout its recruitment, the company is now attempting to hire 50 percent of women. It shows they have increased ethnic diversity in our senior leadership by 20 percentage points in the previous 18 months, and gender diversity has nearly doubled. Over the last four years, *TCS*, India's largest IT services company, has regularly hired between 34 percent and 40 percent of women. More than 20,000 women work there now, accounting for 36.5 percent of the total workforce. "TCS is committed to being an equal opportunity employer, developing platforms and pathways to welcome more women into our workforce," a spokesman for Infosys said in an emailed statement. At the end of the December quarter, *Infosys* had close to 40 percent of the women in its workforce. The workforce of *Mphasis* is currently 65:35 men to women. To inspire and integrate more women into the workplace through our flagship projects and programs.

Gender prejudices exist in the technology business, just as they do in any other area. This is evident in the way the tech industry is characterized as male-dominated. According to a survey conducted by Jobs for Her, 82 percent of women in IT feel unheard at work. With already-existing gender biases that women must contend with on a daily basis, this unconscious bias prevents women from improving their abilities and experience. Women are generally less driven to perform better or engage in teams since their abilities and contributions are not appreciated. In the absence of equal chances, experts have recognized females acquiring mental health disorders as one of the most critical challenges.

Women in IT have higher qualifications than men and are well-represented at entry levels, but as seen below, the number of women in senior management and the C-Suite drops dramatically. Understanding the disparity in career paths between equally qualified men and women in the IT business necessitates an examination of recruitment both at the graduate level and as employees progress through the ranks to more senior positions. The great majority of businesses questioned (80%) use online job boards and marketing to seek employees. Public and private job agencies are the second most common way to find work (67%). Men outnumber women in both of these categories. Internal referrals and university recruitment, on the other hand, show a balanced gender divide.



The duality of home/work and private/public life is another common dichotomy. This dualism is strengthened by women's decisions to delay or avoid having children, as well as their desire to balance their professional and personal lives. Although this is not unique to the IT business, the women interviewed believe it creates particular challenges because the majority of the workforce is male and does not face this dilemma. The workload connected with the need to keep up with the rapid rate of technological development and innovation is perceived as difficult to balance with family duties, making women wary of taking even brief professional pauses, such as maternity leave.

Unequal representation of gender is a problem in many industries. IT seems to be one of the most masculine sectors – but it's slowly changing. With the present shortage of competent computer professionals, companies can no longer afford to overlook the unique resource of female expertise. Working toward equality is the first step toward attracting these capable experts and driving forward progress within their organizations and the industry as a whole, with a third of respondents citing the glass ceiling as a difficulty they confront.

Women working in technology, a typically male-dominated field, are no strangers to such discussions, with imbalance in terms of pay, advancement chances, and workplace culture continuing a problem.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF WOMEN IN THE IT INDUSTRY

Working in the information technology industry encourages your body to operate on a timetable that is counter to its natural circadian rhythms.

1. *Interferes with Natural Sleep Rhythms:* Sleep is critical to entire health. Generally, body eliminates pollutants, heals injuries, and relieves stress as sleep. Working the night shift disrupts these critical processes.
2. *Increases Risk of Breast Cancer:* Women who work overnight have a significantly higher risk of breast cancer than those who solely work during the day. It makes no difference whether work the night shift every night or only once a week.
3. *Increases Risk of Heart Attack:* According to a 2012 study published in the British Medical Journal working the night shift increased the risk of having a heart attack.
4. *Increases Risk of Depression:* According to numerous research working the night shift increases chances of depression and mood disorders.
5. *Changes your Metabolism:* Working the night shift interferes with the production and circulation of this vital hormone. That can lead to the next set of disorders on this list.
6. *Increases Risk of Obesity and Diabetes:* Obesity and diabetes are increased when you sleep during the day and work at night. These problems are caused by an imbalance in hormone production in night-shift employees. The true danger is that hormone imbalance can lead to obesity and diabetes even if you consume a balanced diet.
7. *Suppresses Melatonin:* A decrease in melatonin levels means that when we try to sleep during the day, we won't sleep deeply or get enough sleep for our body to repair itself. As a result, it may suffer from long-term sleep deprivation, which is incredibly bad for our health.

Information technology is going to be the next big revolution that will transform the world. IT, like any other revolution that has reshaped the world's perspective, will be a sweeping force that will enable new frontier possibilities. But just like any other revolution, the possibility of the contribution made by women in this tech world being either forgotten or not acknowledged is definite.



SUGGESTIONS

The problem will likely resolve itself when more women enter IT and the workplace is rebuilt to fit women's preferred working patterns, including family life, as the number of women entering IT rises. Despite a wide range of programs aimed at encouraging and supporting women in IT, the participation rate has remained stagnant. Mentoring, offering role models in the form of seminars, support groups in schools and colleges, and the supply of more precise information via vocational guidance officers are examples of such programs. To evaluate the efficacy of these tactics, more empirical study is needed.

2. CONCLUSION

Families and careers compete for time in today's fast-paced world for professionals across industries. It's no surprise that women working in the IT industry want a company with a flexible work schedule and part-time management opportunities. Technology industries should hire women and help them succeed. The IT industry must provide alternative office hours and work to improve their company culture to eliminate the stigma associated with flexible working hours, ensuring that female employees feel empowered to achieve their professional and personal goals.

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