A RESEARCH PROPOSAL ON WOMEN FACING DISCRIMINATION AT THE WORKPLACE

BY: DARSHIL CHIRANTAN SHAH
INTRODUCTION

The problem of discrimination of women in the workplace was traditionally one of the most significant issues, which affected the position of women in the workplace. In this regard, women are particularly weak to the discrimination in the workplace. At this point, it is worth mentioning the fact that the discrimination of women in the workplace has various appearances, including the discrimination based on career promotion and opportunities, wage, child birth and care, race, and religion, even though the frequency of cases of discrimination against women decreases.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of this research is to:

1. Study gender bias in the workplace and focus on the distinction made between a man and woman in a working environment based on professionalism, integrity, and respect.
2. Study the problems which female employees go through in their job due to society, family pressure and work environment.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Some of the research questions are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between the organizational climate and gender discrimination? In addition, how does it affect the performance, salary, benefits and recruitment of women?
2. How the society, prohibits women to work outside, affect their personal and professional lives, and result in gender discrimination?
3. How women works and are treated in male dominated society?
4. How the peer pressures effect the women’s professional life?
LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand the aspects in this research, it is essential to know what discrimination means, it is unfair treatment given because of race, sex (male, female), color (white, black), the person back ground, place of origin, ethnic origin, marital status (single, married), sexual orientation, age, disability, citizenship, family status or religion.

The following literature review provides insights and key findings of available literature relating to career promotion discrimination, the differentiation of salary between men and women, religious discrimination and the society affecting the women to work.

Career Promotion Discrimination

One of the major causes of discrimination was traditionally the wide gap in the career development between men and women. To put it more precisely, women were in a disadvantageous position compared to men because women did not have career opportunities as men did. At the same time, the development of anti-discriminatory law focused on closing the gap between men and women concerning their promotion to allow women to get access to the career development.

In almost every industry, women occupy a very small proportion of the higher-level positions. For example, a 1998 study found that only three CEOs among the Fortune 1000 were women, and only 1.7% of the COOs, CFOs and executive VPs were women (White, 2000). Business Week did a report in 1999 in which they tracked 100 women executives who were on the fast track from as far back as 1993. They found that none of those 100 women had made it to the top position in a public corporation unless they started the business or inherited the position (White, 2000).

The problem is not that larger proportions of trained women are not available. Women are not represented at the highest ranks of companies and academia because, for some reason, their rate of progression is halted somewhere along the way to the top.
On the other hand, the trend to the decrease of career promotion discrimination can be explained from the theoretical point of view. In this regard, specialists argue that when competition increases, firms appear to be forced to improve the occupational status of women to cut costs (Black, 1999). At this point, it is possible to refer to the Economic Theory, which holds that competition forces companies to eliminate the practice of discrimination. In the short term, employers with a “taste for discrimination” will ignore cost-effective practices in order to indulge their desire to employ specific workers. Over the long run, theory predicts that these companies will be outstripped by their non-discriminating competitors and forced out of the market (Black, 1999).

However, specialists (Reuter, 2006) warn that the economic trends cannot prevent women discrimination without ongoing legislative changes. The legislation is essential to create conditions for the elimination of discrimination in the workplace. In addition, the legislation helps to expose cultural myths and stereotypes. For instance, traditionally men were in an advantageous position in terms of the career promotion because employers viewed them as more reliable and effective. However, the ban of discrimination at the legislative level was essential to prevent the discrimination of women in the workplace.

**Salary Comparison**

The salary picture for women is even more unbalanced than that for promotion. Women consistently make less money than men do in almost every industry, even when they first start their jobs (Schwartz, 1998, Mahar, 1993). An American Demographics study found that women working full time with two or fewer years of experience earn 72% of men with the same experience (Schwartz, 1998).

As women get older, they make less as a proportion of men's salaries. Although the gap has narrowed somewhat in the past 14 years, this trend is due to a drop in men's inflation-adjusted salaries, not a rise in women's (Pennar, 1991, Rigdon, 1993). In addition, the gap has not been steadily decreasing. In 1955, women earned more of a
percentage of men's salaries than they did in 1987, 63.9 cents vs. 63.7 cents (Mahar, 1993).

Part of the reason for the wage gap is that women are not promoted as quickly as men are. However, even when equating for rank, a gap appears. A 1993 Computer World survey of IS managers salaries showed that the wage gap widened as the management level increased (Dwyer, 1993). For example, among “programming managers,” women made 98% of men's salaries, but among IS directors or managers, women made 82% of men's salaries.

Other common explanations for the increasing wage gap are that women choose professions that pay less and that they have less experience than men of the same age do because they take time off to raise children. However, Business Week reported on a study that compared the salaries of single white men and women between the ages of 20 and 40 (Koretz, 1990). When they factored out schooling, industry, skill level and work experience, the women still earned 91% of men's salaries. (Without factoring these out, women earned 86% of men's salaries.)

(Ridgon, 1993) analyzed the credentials of 194 corporate managers randomly chosen from 800 people who took a leadership course. He found that "if women were men with the same credentials, they would earn about 18 percent more" And the 1992 edition of The Economics of Women, Men and Work found that less than 50 percent of the pay gap between men and women can be explained by differences in schooling and experience (Gries and Marsh, 1992). These figures are the closest estimate we have of the wage gap that can be explained only by discrimination.

Women are almost half of the workforce. They are the equal, if not main, breadwinner in four out of ten families. They receive more college and graduate degrees than men do. Yet, on average, women continue to earn considerably less than men do. In 2010, female full-time workers made only 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, a gender wage gap of 23 percent. Women, on average, earn less than men in virtually every
single occupation for which there is sufficient earnings data for both men and women to calculate an earnings ratio. (*The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

**Religious Discrimination**

Religious discrimination claims in the workplace are on the rise and expected to be a growing problem for employers, which experts say reflects a rise in religious style and better employee knowledge of their rights.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission says there were 4,151 religious discrimination claims filed with the agency during fiscal 2011, a 9.5% increase from the previous year. Such claims have increased steadily since 2005.

Religious discrimination against Muslims in the workplace has included harassment and discharge. For example, on December 6, 2003 *The Washington Post* reported on an Arab American waiter in Baltimore who was sent home from work because his name is Mohamed. For some Muslim women, the wearing of a religious headscarf (*hijab*) has brought upshot in the workplace. It is likely that women who apply for employment wearing the headscarf face discrimination in hiring, much of which may go undocumented. Some removed hijabs worn for religious reasons, while others attempted to sound more “English” by adapting their names. (*The Telegraph, Hannah Furness*)

The report suggested some employers believed Muslim women would stop working after having children, according to the (*Guardian newspaper*). Many complained to researchers about being asked about their marital status and family plans during interviews.

In addition to Muslims, members of the Sikh tradition have been particularly impacted by religious intolerance in the workplace, due to increased discrimination and the outward visibility of religious attire. Many workplace cases have revolved around the men's turbans and untrimmed beards. Sikh women may also cover their heads or wear a form
of turban. A long-standing court case involving Sikh Traffic Enforcement Agents in New York City was recently resolved so that Sikh officers will not be fired for violations of dress code. Sikhs struggling for their right to wear the turban have been subway drivers, cab drivers, police officers, and attorneys wearing the turban while visiting clients. The Sikh Coalition, a group formed to educate and protect the civil and religious rights of Sikhs, documents many of these efforts online.

Society
The norms and expectations a community has regarding a women role in a society as a home worker is taken as an independent variable as it directly results in gender discrimination at work place. In some countries like India and Pakistan and many other Asian countries, social importances are taken and women are seen in a bad way. Women are not allowed to work outside their homes as it has been taken against their family law. Women are given less importance in the society as well as there is a great discrimination in families too. Girls are given less value and importance in some families, which ultimately effect their education, and results in less experienced and uneducated women. Culture also plays a significant role in gender discrimination. This result in less economic growth, less talent and less opportunities for women.

Deeply rooted discrimination against women in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres weakens society as a whole, (United Nations human rights chief- 2009) said on International Women’s Day. (Navi Pillay, the UN chief) noted that the negative effects of discrimination are magnified by conflict, as well as natural or man-made disasters, such as the current economic crisis. The meltdown in global markets and financial institutions and ensuing recession is likely to have a disproportionate impact on millions women, who already formed the majority of the poor and disenfranchised before the crisis developed.

(Ms. Pillay) noted, however, that there is a new generation of powerful women growing up around the world with a strong sense of their identity and strength.”They say ‘no’ to harmful practices such as early marriage, female genital mutilation and sexual harassment. They want to go to school and get an education. They want to be lawyers,
doctors, judges and members of parliament. They want to change the world. I celebrate these girls on International Women's Day. They are our future.”

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Research Design**

The term "research design" refers to how a researcher puts a research study together to answer a question or a set of questions. Research design works as a systematic plan outlining the study, the researchers' methods of compilation, details on how the study will arrive at its conclusions and the limitations of the research. Research design is not limited to a particular type of research and may incorporate both quantitative and qualitative analysis. When defining research design to an audience, there are a few things you will need to make clear, while avoiding the use of scientific terms that may lose your audience. (Kenneth W. Michael Wills).

- Explain to your audience the two types of research questions---descriptive and explanatory. Descriptive research seeks to answer the question of "what;" explanatory research looks at "why" something is taking place. A research design's fundamental purpose is to ensure the validity of research gathered and accurately answer the original question.
- Tell to your audience that research design is not method. Design is independent of method---design incorporates the research methods most suitable to gather the required data and answer the original research question. It is important to express to your audience that while often confused, research design is not a method of data collection.
- Explain that research design is a logical structure that ensures that all collected evidence helps eliminate bias when evaluating theories and arriving at conclusion. Design your research to utilize the best methods to collect and analyze data required to answer the original question.
A quantitative research design is chosen for this research project. The target audience will be customary, the sample frame and size will be estimated and the methods of data collection methods will be taken into account.

**Primary Research:**

Primary research is very important as it give different perspective of people on one single issue that is gender discrimination at workplace in my case. I will interview from senior executives of the organization and frontline employees. Then I will also distribute questionnaires among the employees of the selected organization to know the further information they have regarding the topic.

**Secondary Research:**

Secondary research is also very important in doing a research project, as it gives the supporting knowledge about the respective topic and helps one to correct what has been done wrong previously. The research papers, which are taken into consideration mostly, have either research done by scholars by themselves or they have based their research or theories done by special departments like world statistic bureau and world census bureau.

**Population**

In my research project, my population will be around 500-800 people.

**Sampling frame**

For carrying out the research, my sampling frame will be employees from IDEAL CERAMICS.

**Sampling size**

At Ideal Ceramics, there are around 800 employees. However, I will select 10 people as my sampling size.
Sampling design

I will select the 10 people out of the 800 employees. Mostly being women to get results that are more precise. I will be taking two men to answer my questions as well so that I can know their opinions as well. I will be sampling employees from senior executives, to cashiers, to the frontline.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- At the end of the research, we cannot conclude saying that all women are being discriminated. Some might be happy with their job and that should be noted.

- Information on the websites had views of different authors and their opinions, I have chose what I felt was the best.

- During the questionnaire filling session, certain members just ignored it.

CODE OF ETHICS

- The questions set will be short and simple, for the respondents to fill the questionnaire correctly and they do not get bored.

- The information collected will be kept personally and will not be given it to anybody, unless authorized by the owner.

- Permission has been granted by the company management of Ideal Ceramics to carry out the survey in their company.

- A full-concluded report should be given to the management of Ideal Ceramics once the report is complete.
REFERENCES