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Employment of Women, Gender Diversity and Gender Sensitisation in Indian Economy: A Critical Review

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ABSTRACT

The workforce participation rate has been increasing across all nations contributing to the growth of the economy. The **aim** of this research was to analyse the status of women's employment in India. It also examines the extent to which organisations in India have adapted gender diversity and created a friendly work environment for both male and female employees. The author employed a **method** of collecting secondary data with the help of available official statistics and research reviews to analyse the current trend of women's employment in the Indian economy. The analysis revealed certain surprising **results**. It was observed that the participation of women in the workforce was lower in urban areas than in rural areas. The critical review also revealed that there is still a need to promote diversity at the workplace in the Indian economy across the nation. The **key conclusion** is that there is an ardent need for gender sensitisation among individuals at an earlier age to bring all genders at par in India. The research also proposes suggestions that can help in promote women's workforce participation. This analysis can contribute to enhancing the economic growth rate of the country.

Keywords: women employment; gender diversity; gender sensitisation; workforce participation rate

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ОРИГИНАЛЬНАЯ СТАТЬЯ

Занятость женщин, гендерное разнообразие и повышение осведомленности о гендерной проблематике в индийской экономике: критический обзор

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Уровень участия рабочей силы растет во всех странах, способствуя росту экономики. **Цель** этого исследования состояла в том, чтобы проанализировать положение с занятостью женщин в Индии. В нем также рассматривается, в какой степени организации в Индии адаптировали гендерное разнообразие и создали благоприятную рабочую среду как для мужчин, так и для женщин. Автор использовал **метод** сбора вторичных данных, включая официальную статистику и опубликованные обзорные материалы, для анализа тенденций занятости женщин в индийской экономике. Анализ выявил некоторые неожиданные **результаты**. Было отмечено, что доля женщин в рабочей силе в городских районах была ниже, чем в сельской местности. Критический обзор также показал, что по-прежнему существует необходимость поощрять разнообразие на рабочих местах в индийской экономике по всей стране. **Ключевой вывод** заключается в том, что существует острая необходимость в повышении гендерной осведомленности среди людей

в более раннем возрасте, чтобы уравнивать все гендеры в Индии. В исследовании также предлагаются рекомендации, которые могут помочь в расширении участия женщин в рабочей силе. Проведенный анализ может способствовать повышению темпов экономического роста страны.

Ключевые слова: занятость женщин; гендерное разнообразие; гендерная осведомленность; уровень участия рабочей силы

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1. Introduction

The Indian government has been introducing several policies, rules and regulations (such as the Beti-Bachao, Beti-Padhao¹ and Sukanya Samridhi Yojana² schemes, and mandatory maternity leave rules) to promote girls' education, women's empowerment and women's employment. However, the national-level surveys reflect a deterioration in women's employment in India. In such a situation, first it is necessary to understand the present status of women employment in India and then to reflect upon the impact that gender diversity and gender sensitisation can create towards enhancing the women's recruitment as well as their promotions to higher management levels in organisations. With the use of official statistics and research reviews, the current study analyses various aspects of gender issues and the employment of women in an Indian context. According to a 2018 World Economic Forum report, the labour force participation rate (LFPR) among females in India was 26.97 percent, while the world average stood at 48.47 percent in 2018.³ The report of the Forum stated that the basic challenge of the Indian economy is to provide women empowerment through education and economic agency. The rate of women participation in India has been falling since 2005, when it was as high as 36.78.⁴ One of the studies concluded that "the national characteristics of the economy, the social sphere and the environmental situation drive any country to adapt individual indicators to national specifics" [1]. Such specific indicators need to be looked at in the Indian context as well. Certain indicators such as health and education

have been found to be neglected among girls (especially in rural regions), which has led to deterioration in the health and education of women and ultimately to their economic productivity and capacity to contribute or earn an income. Gender equality leads to women empowerment and an empowered woman can significantly contribute towards the development of health conditions, status of education and productivity of whole families as well as communities [2].

When an individual needs to make decisions with reference to repayment of the debt taken for investment, the rationality of those individuals is bounded (e.g., they may decide to pay it in the next instalment) [3]. Such conditions might also influence the decision making, risk taking, competition and earning capacity of individuals as well as nations. It will ultimately influence economic growth and corporate potency and therefore, it must dovetail to increase workforce participation among all families and societies. The Economic Survey 2017–2018 shows that in the past 15 years, the challenge of gender has been long-standing, and therefore, it is the responsibility of all stakeholders to find a solution. It further reflects that gender equality is not a unidimensional issue in India.⁵

Researchers have indicated limited women employment in private organisations as well as in the public sphere. The causal factors are the persistence of gender stereotypes [4], biases in recruitment and selection processes at other places as well [5]. Several studies have indicated the lack of female role models and training opportunities as the reasons behind the low rate of women's employment [6].

2. Methods

With an aim to critically analyse the current status of employment of women in India and to examine the extent to which organisations have

¹ URL: <https://wcd.nic.in/schemes/beti-bachao-beti-padhao-scheme>

² URL: <https://groww.in/p/savings-schemes/sukanya-samridhi-yojana>

³ World Economic Forum. *The Global Gender Gap Report 2018*. (accessed on 25.4.2023).

⁴ International Labour Organisation, ILOSTAT database. <https://ilostat ilo.org/data/> (accessed on 15.03.2023).

⁵ World Economic Forum. *The Global Gender Gap Report 2018* (2018). WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf (weforum.org) (accessed on 25.04.2023).

Table 1

Key labour force estimates according to usual principal status (UPS)

	2nd EUS (2011–12)				3rd EUS (2013–14)				4th EUS (2015–16)				5th EUS (2016–17)			
Parameter	M	F	T	P	M	F	T	P	M	F	T	P	M	F	T	P
LPFR	77.4	25.4	–	52.9	76.6	22.6	–	50.9	74.4	25.8	–	52.5	75.0	23.7	48.0	50.4
WPR	75.1	23.6	–	50.8	73.5	20.9	–	48.5	71.4	23.8	–	49.9	72.1	21.7	45.9	47.8
UR	2.9	6.9	–	3.8	4.0	7.2	–	4.7	4.1	7.7	–	4.9	4.0	8.7	4.3	5.0

Note: M – Male; F – Female; T – Transgender; P – Person.*

Source: Annual Report 2018–19, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India. https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/Final_AR_English_21–7–19.pdf

* Key Labour Force Estimates According to Usual Principal Status (UPS) Approach Based On 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Employment-Unemployment Survey (In Percent).

adapted gender diversity in the country, secondary data were collected from governmental websites.⁶ These websites were specifically used to acquire official statistics. They were analysed to reflect the trend of the workforce participation rate of the country, especially in the women section. Further, literature reviews were also collected from several research journals to analyse the current trend of women's employment in India. Also, the author examined the significance of gender diversity and gender sensitisation at organisational level. Certain findings were surprising, for example, urban areas had lower female workforce participation in comparison to rural areas. The research critically analysed the reasons behind such findings and suggested certain recommendations to encourage balanced workforce participation throughout the country.

3. Results and discussion

The present research tried to analyse the workforce participation rate of women in the country from the available official records and research reviews, with an emphasis on the gender diversity and gender sensitisation in the Indian economy. The findings and interpretation have been mentioned in this section accordingly.

3.1. Status of women employment in India

Table 1 reflects the Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR) and Unemployment Rate (UR) for persons aged 15 years and above according to Usual Principal Status

Approach (UPS) based on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Employment-Unemployment Survey in India. The unemployment rate in India has shown an increasing rate in comparison to the available women labor force. Further, the speakers of the 108th session of International Labor Conference⁷ emphasised the lower female labor force participation rates that remained a concern in many countries. They stressed the need to focus on the role and participation of women in the labor market. Such findings increase a concern about the reasons for gender discrimination as well as the lower participation rate of women workforce in the Indian context.

3.1.1. Decline of women workforce participation rate in India

Surveys have shown that most Indian females work primarily as domestic help and then secondarily as textile workers. With an increase in girls' education rates, a decline in the employment rate among women in India has been an interesting field of academic enquiry. There has been a J- or U-shaped relationship between women's education and their labor force participation [7–11].

The employment of men largely depends upon “economic factors”, while the same among women depends upon “reproductive, demographic, social, religious and cultural factors” [12]. Casteism is still found to have a relevant impact on the employment status of Indian women. Studies show that women of lower castes are accepted socially to be in the labour market [13], whereas women belonging to

⁶ URL: https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/Final_AR_English_21–7–19.pdf; URL: <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/country/india> and data.gov.in

⁷ International Labour Organisation, ILOSTAT database. URL: <https://ilostat ilo.org/data/> (accessed on 15.05.2023).

higher castes have greater restrictions on their mobility [14]. One of the studies also revealed that many organisational decisions such as: recruitment, job allocation, transfer, promotion and termination are influenced by a number of factors such as gender, region of origin, education, caste, age and marital status [15]. Such findings emphasize the influence of gender bias at the stage of recruitment as one of the reasons behind the lower employment of women in Indian organisations.

It has been assumed that the family models and perceptions of developing economies are different, at least to some extent [16]. Also, studies reflect family income as a factor responsible for women not going out for work. It has further been revealed that if the income of the family is high, the women of the family would have less incentive to work [17]. Studies of the 1960s have shown that most Indian labour forces have been participating in the field of agriculture [18]. Recent trends have still shown higher women's labour force participation in the rural than urban areas, while very few educated women are working in the industries. India is one of the exceptional countries where the modern sector has experienced a fall in women's work force participation despite women's rising education⁸ [19]. In a similar context, it has been emphasised that the government and policymakers should "focus on financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behaviour as determinants for strengthening financial literacy". It was suggested that there is a strong association between these determinants of financial literacy [20]. These determinants might inspire women in urban areas to work and contribute to the nation's economy.

In the case of women who can get a salary on a monthly basis, the probability of being employed steadily increases as their education increases, whereas for casual wage labour and for work in family farms and businesses, the Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) of women decreases with an increase in education. Also, if the women attain a moderate level of education, they no longer get involved in jobs requiring manual labour [21]. The trend reflects a decline in women's LFPR with an increase in education among agricultural and non-agricultural women workers, who tend to be the daily wagers. Therefore, if there is a lower par-

ticipation rate of women in the workforce, then lesser are the chances of gender diversity in Indian organisations. At this juncture, we need to understand that a more diverse workforce might yield more innovation, creativity and productivity for the organisations. Furthermore, the intention to engage in work participation is also an important factor. Collective efforts on the part of women themselves, their families, supervisors, colleagues and organisations are required to enhance working women's propensity to aspire and realise their aspirations for advancement in their careers [22].

3.2. Gender diversity in organisations

With a need to understand the present position of gender diversity in Indian organisations, it is necessary to primarily understand the role and significance of a gender diverse workforce.

3.2.1. Women and gender diversity

Management, HRM and IHRM are gendered in many ways. Most obviously, there is the continuing dominance of men in management, especially at the very top and highest pay levels. Yet despite, or perhaps because of this, management has been and continues to be represented as strangely gender-neutral, whether as part of supposedly non-gendered bureaucracy or taken-for-granted managerial imperative. There are many aspects to the gendering of men in management [23]. There has been a historical transformation of management from male near-monopoly to dominant traditional managerial masculinities and to more modern forms of gendering [24]. Furthermore, gender diversity has been found to be related to the corporate social responsibility rating and reputation of an organisation [25].

An organisation that promotes a diverse workforce is likely to value gender diversity. Further, such organisations believe that the role, relevance, performance and dedication of women can influence the productivity of the organisation. Research suggests that women can provide a significant positive input when placed as members of the board if there is gender diversity in organisations [26]. If women are appointed as board members, they are more sincere and serious in their role and attend meetings with full preparation than male board members [27]. The reason behind the positive performance of certain companies is few of the leadership qualities found more frequently among

⁸ World Bank. (1991). *Gender and Poverty in India*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

Table 2
Gender data portal of India

Featured indicators	2000	2018
Employment in agriculture, female (% of female employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	74.4	57.1
Employment in agriculture, male (% of male employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	54.5	40.2
Employment in industry, female (% of female employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	11.7	18.7
Employment in industry, male (% of male employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	17.9	26.3
Employment in services, female (% of female employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	14.0	24.2
Employment in services, male (% of male employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	27.5	33.5
Unemployment, female (% of female employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	2.4	3.6
Unemployment, male (% of male employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	2.8	2.3
Wage and salaried workers, female (% of female employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	9.1	19.2
Wage and salaried workers, male (% of male employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	17.4	22.4
Contributing workers, female (% of female employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	33.8	26.3
Contributing workers, male (% of male employment) (modelled ILO Estimate)	12.5	7.9

Note: Data available at the World Bank.*

Source: The World Bank. URL: <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/country/india>

* World Bank. Gender Data Portal in India. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank. URL: <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/country/india> (accessed on 24.04.2023).

women.⁹ It has also been found that there is an increased tendency towards governance-related controversies if the organisations do not have gender diversity at the level of board members [28].

Further, the presence of female members has been found to be significantly associated with the financial performance of the organisations [29] and led to increased effectiveness [30]. It is undeniable that, heterogeneous work force supplements the potency and competencies of each other, yet studies show that women earn 65% of the total amount that men earn for the same job.¹⁰

3.2.2. Gender diversity in Indian organisations

The workforce participation rate shows differences in gender diversity among different kinds of industries, firms and organisations in India. Predominantly, the trend shows that males are more

employed than females in similar kinds of organisations. The salary being paid is also different for both males and females working under similar work environments (Table 2). On the contrary, the percentage of contributing family members is higher among women than men in India. Not much significant difference has been observed in the trend, even within a time span of ten years in the Indian context with regards to diversity and their contributions. It has been argued that gender diversity at higher positions can enhance the effectiveness of the board [26].

The above data (Table 2) reflect gender bias in terms of recruitment, employment and salary in the Indian context. The statistics of the GDP rate show a fair increase in employment, while a decreased trend of the women's participation rate is reflected in the data. The patriarchal society might be one of the reasons for the lower work participation rate of women in India. In a similar trend, it was found that, patriarchal beliefs and practises de-power women [31]. According to the findings, whenever the women's section is unable to cope with the physical and social demands of the environment, they feel powerless. It has been further suggested that governmental and non-governmental organi-

⁹ Women Matter (2008), Female Leadership, a competitive edge for the future, September, McKinsey and Company, Paris. URL: https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/business%20functions/people%20and%20organizational%20performance/our%20insights/women%20matter/women_matter_oct2008_english.pdf

¹⁰ World Economic Forum. *The Global Gender Gap Report*. (accessed on 25.04.2023).

Table 3

Workforce participation rate by gender (in percentage) in India

Category	2004–05 Male	2004–05 Female	2009–10 Male	2009–10 Female
Rural	84.6	48.5	81.1	37.2
Urban	76.3	22.7	74.0	18.3

*Note: Data available at the Government of India.**

Source: data.gov.in

* URL: https://data.gov.in/catalog/workforce-participation-rate-gender-percentage?filters%5Bfield_catalog_reference%5D=94739&format=json&offset=0&limit=6&sort%5Bcreated%5D=desc (accessed on 24.04.2023).

sations can promote women empowerment through the feminist movements and may create conditions favouring women's empowerment (lessening of the belief and practise of patriarchy). But the women still may not necessarily feel empowered. Further, providing employment opportunities to women might not ensure their autonomy and having control over their income. It is usually controlled by the patriarchs in the family.

Comparing the involvement of women in the workforce among rural and urban regions of India, a very peculiar and interesting pattern has been observed (refer to *Table 3*). The table reveals that women residing in rural areas are more engaged than urban women in the workforce. The reason behind such differences in female workforce participation among rural and urban areas might be due to the education that is comparatively better imparted through better resources in urban areas. Wherein, educated urban women understand the relevance of the ideal age of marriage, childbirth, self-dependency, urge to be self-employed, empowered and being less submissive to domestic violence. Since they are comparatively more independent and less compliant, they are more interested in entrepreneurship, running their own businesses instead of working under superiors in organisations. Such reasons might contribute to lesser women's engagement in organisation of urban areas. According to the Census report of 2011,¹¹ the literacy rate of girls was 39.89% in 1991, increased to 54.16% in 2001 and further increased to 65.5% in 2011 in India. The education that a society provides to its women is closely related to their social position, which leads to an increase in social status of women [32]. Studies further show that

the tendency of women's empowerment in India is heavily dependent upon many variables, including geographical location (urban/rural), educational status, social status (caste and class) and age [33].

Although the trend of women in rural and urban areas shows as half of the working population, yet women trail men in pay, promotion, benefits and other economic rewards [34–36]. The identity of women is molded through life's "hidden curriculum". This curriculum teaches females to be submissive in the dominant patriarchal system of power. It teaches women to be silent, invisible, accept male power and accept role contradictions [37]. Similar findings are reflected in the above statistics (*Table 3*). This shows that the under-participation of women in employment is not due to their own will, in fact, more than one third of Indian women (both urban and rural) primarily engaged in housework have reported that they want to work for pay if a job was available [38]. If the financial inclusion of women section is increased, then it enhances the economic growth of any country.¹² In a similar context, it was found that countries having larger gender gaps in financial inclusion are found to have higher inequality in income.¹³ The findings therefore necessitate greater inclusion of women in the workforce for economic growth and income equality. Researchers have reported a new normative framework and mentioned how these norms can help include women section in the Indian workforce to a larger extent. Those men-

¹¹ Census Data. Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner. India (2011). URL: http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/census_2011.htm (accessed on 24.04.2023).

¹² Sahay R., Cihak M., and other IMF staff. 2015. Financial inclusion: can it meet multiple macroeconomic goals. IMF Staff Discussion Note 15/17. Washington: International Monetary Fund. URL: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gender/IMFWomensEmpowerment.pdf> (accessed on 03.05.2023).

¹³ Aslan G., Deléchat C., Newiak M., Yang F. Inequality in financial inclusion and income inequality. IMF Working Paper 2017. No. 17/236. Washington: International Monetary Fund. URL: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/gender/IMFWomensEmpowerment.pdf> (accessed on 03.05.2023).

tioned norms need to be implied in order to give an opportunity for both men and women to work at same level. They also mentioned that there is a need to prioritise the social security of the women workforce and create new social safety nets that account for the needs of workers engaged in new forms of work [39].

A complex set of structures in male-dominated society and organisations prevents women from accessing senior positions. In this context, a dearth of women in leadership was found which may be due to the discrimination in the workplace [40].

Further, aspects such as socio-cultural, legal, personal, and organisational hinder the women's rise to higher positions [41]. Consequently, there also exists a phenomenon of the glass elevator, which is an additional component of the glass ceiling, as it has been pointed out that "there is no reason to assume that increasing the number of women in an organisation will necessarily improve their conditions of employment. It may even be the case that increasing the number of women, without addressing the sexist attitudes imbedded in male-dominated organisations, may exacerbate women's occupational problems" [42]. Further, there exists a similar type of barrier that women leaders face in both developed and developing countries throughout their careers. Women leaders have to overcome the issues like the gender gap and the glass ceiling being experienced by women in any organisation. Organisational bias, a lack of assertiveness and poor networking also pose barriers to Women's Leadership [43].

There has been a tradition that "a woman's place is at home", which has been consciously maintained by society.¹⁴ There are some barriers, e.g., psychological barriers, societal-related barriers, organisational barriers against which women are still fighting to strengthen their presence at the higher level of management of organisations [44].

The existing statistics show a doubt whether India will be able to achieve gender diversity among board members by 2027, as projected on an international basis [28]. So, a tremendous effort is still required to be done to promote women employment at par with male employment and to judge female employees on the basis of performance and not on the basis of various other related aspects

(e.g., marital status, age of their child and family members). If Indian companies are to be at par with global corporate trends with respect to diversity, lots need to be done.

Apart from that, there may be several other factors that may lead to a decline in women workforce participation, for example, sexual harassment at the workplace, which can lead to an increment in employee turnover [45–47]. Although there can be many influencing factors that result in job switching or shifting of the employees, studies reflect that it is the victim or harassed employees who tend to quit or change the job. While analyzing the relationship between sexual harassment and career attainment among women, it was found that the victims of harassment were 6.5 times more likely to change their jobs compared to non-victims [48]. Further, an average loss of \$ 22,500 has been estimated in the productivity in terms of each person who was working in a team and left their job after being affected by harassment [49]. The trend shows that violence against women at the workplace hampers productivity of the organisations as well as the motivation level of employees. These findings may be considered as one of the determining factors of decline in women workforce participation.

The factors contributing to violence against women can be the immediate environment (e.g., family) or the community [50], which might also be one of the reasons behind the willingness of women not to get involved in occupation.

3.3. Gender sensitisation in Indian organisations

The above discussed statistics and literature review show that there is an ardent need to sensitise individuals towards the relevance, role, contributions, efforts and implications of both female as well as male in Indian organisations. Gender sensitisation might possibly help the Indian patriarchal society reframe the traditional gender roles and contribute towards increasing women employment in organisations. This can possibly be done with continuous training, framing government policies, promotional schemes at the occupational level. Efforts need to be made so that gender roles do not hamper the promotion and motivation of women employees.

A large gender gap has been observed in the employment of the labour force and all the types of work in which women are engaged. There are

¹⁴ Jadesimi A. Female leadership: the glass ceiling is cracked not broken. Forbescom. 2016.

two types of gendered norms in the culture of Indian society: one type of norm favours men, and the other type of socio-cultural norm devalues women in public spaces, which help to maintain masculinity in the workplace [51]. Thus, there still exists gender bias and discrimination in society, which ultimately might influence the contribution of women workforce to the organisations' productivity. There is a requirement for efforts to decrease negative stereotypes and traditional gender roles. It has been opined that there is an ardent need to execute a gender mainstreaming strategy, introducing transparent mechanisms, gender sensitisation in processes of recruitment, the formulation of organisational norms and guidelines towards equal career policies, stakeholder awareness of gender training programmes and affirmative action plans, which may also contribute to decreasing the glass ceiling and glass elevator [52]. Although women have equal legal rights as men in India, evidence shows women's discrimination in a societal context. This necessitates a requirement of sensitizing the society on gender issues so that there would be no discrimination on the basis of gender, primarily through women empowerment [53]. Sessions should be conducted at schools, colleges and workplaces to sensitize the younger generation and create awareness of gender sensitisation among them [54].

The Census survey report of 2011¹⁵ has also emphasized the importance of creating awareness among the general masses about gender issues to facilitate correct reporting of information about each member, especially women. Steps are to be taken to reach out to respondents through gender sensitive publicity campaigns and outreach programmes. Such campaigns might create an environment that will sensitize both enumerators and respondents.

To redress the existing imbalances between the positions of males and females, it is necessary to take gender-specific measures. Such measures can help ensure equal participation and development of females and males [55]. It is further emphasized that the education sector can significantly contribute by starting educational programmes and helping to bring about an attitudinal change

towards gender equity among individuals. Thus, evidence reflects the requirement for change in the perception of individuals of all generation, so that both men and women can be seen at par in terms of their liabilities, competencies, status, roles and functions in Indian society. Therefore, if gender sensitisation and empowerment programmes aim at young people precisely at the time when they are forming their gender attitudes, then there exists a potential to diminish gender inequity in the short and long term. Construction of gender attitudes and perceptions of gender norms occurs during ages 10–19 years and during this time, adolescents engage with and construct their own gender-based understanding of what it means to be a boy or a girl [56]. During early adolescence, generally, individual perceptions about gender norms begin to form, and if awareness of gender equality as well as issues related to gender discrimination is created at this stage, then the adolescents might have a more sensitive gender attitude. Further, it has been stated that “inequality slows economic growth”, so such inequalities might decline the growth rate of the economy and it need to be avoided [57].

Therefore, to eradicate or lessen the propensity for gender discrimination in India, it is necessary to create awareness among individuals since childhood. In one of the Girl Rising Gender-sensitisation programme among school going adolescents, it was found that both genders reported more positive outcomes at follow-up with reference to gender attitudes, perceptions of gender norms, and locus of control. After the sensitisation programme, the adolescents were found to have more equitable attitudes towards gender roles/privileges/restrictions, gender attributes, and gender violence [58].

4. Conclusions and recommendations

With the help of available statistical data and research reviews, the author tried to determine the present status of women in the field of occupation in India. The author also aimed to examine the extent to which organisations in India have adapted gender diversity and created a friendly work environment for both male and female employees. The statistical data taken from official sources (e.g., Ministry surveys, World Bank reports) revealed not much improvement in the status of women employment in the past years. Although the Indian Government has been launching several campaigns and schemes to pro-

¹⁵ Census Data. Govt. of India. Ministry of Home Affairs Office of Registrar, General and Census Commissioner. India. 2011. URL: http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/census_2011.htm (accessed on 24.04.2023).

mote the betterment of girls in the male-dominated society, the status of women progress lags far behind. Although the literacy rate among girls has increased, a trend of decline in women employment participation rate has been observed.

The author also emphasizes the requirement of gender diversity for more different ideas, concepts, innovation and creativity in decision making in Indian organisations. It is suggested that education can play a significant role in creating a platform for potent employees, irrespective of their gender. Such awareness can be embedded in the curriculum itself. Some researchers, on the basis of their interviews, emphasised the importance and advancement of HRM, its amalgamation, academia and industry liaison in the development of the HRM curriculum and local contextualisation. The interviews also emphasised the factors necessary to achieve HRM optimal growth, concerns to oversee, creation of opportunities, and future challenges and prospects for HRM learners [59].

On the basis of the above-mentioned facts and findings, it can be concluded that there is an ardent requirement for gender sensitisation in Indian society. The author further opines that gender sensitisation campaigns and training sessions should be imparted to individuals of the society at a very early age; this would help in barring traditional gender roles and enhancing women's participation in the workforce. According to the National Commission for Women and Children,¹⁶ if the gender sensitisation and legal awareness programmes are introduced among children at the school level, it can eminently contribute towards developing values of equality, inclusivity and diversity among them. These aspects can further help in making a healthy society for adolescent boys and girls. Moreover, knowledge of laws relating to women is important for the development of young minds as well as to inculcate correct values, self-discipline and national spirit among individuals at a very early age, irrespective of their gender. Awareness programmes towards the changing trends, acceptance, reworking upon the existing thoughts and mental rigidity, unlearning the learned facts and importance of all genders should be promoted in Indian society.

Media platforms should come with advertisement campaigns, contests, quizzes and competi-

tions that can help women of both rural and urban areas participate independently and come up with more innovative, liberal and creative ideas. Organisations need to understand that providing an equal platform to all the employees of the organisation may help them increase productivity and recognition.

The author further proposes that, the organisations and workplaces should give equal importance to the safety and security of women. With an uncertain increase in crime rates against women, they feel less ready to work. The occurrence of criminal acts not only hampers one's own progress, but it also influences the progress of the community and country [60]. Women can therefore contribute significantly to economic growth if they are provided a safer work environment. Organisations should promote gender diversity, and efforts should be made to minimise gender bias in the recruitment, selection or promotion of women employees. Preferably, gender sensitivity and related training programmes can be imparted to existing employees. It was suggested in one of the studies that the organisational leaders should ensure HR effectiveness in terms of HR practices like recruitment, training and compensation for the development of learning capabilities across employees. Further, the managers should adopt transformational leadership for utilising HR effectiveness in order to improve learning at an organisational level [61].

The policymakers of Asian countries including India should take more initiatives to improvise the tools that might influence the growth and development of their economies [62]. Therefore, it is suggested that, if the country needs to increase its economic growth rate and productivity, it needs to work on redesigning the existing gender roles as well. Stress should be placed on their contribution and not on the gender of the individual. This can be started at a very early stage such as late childhood or adolescence and help contribute to a stronger economy. The concept of gender equality needs to be emphasized in society, which means that all individuals should have full rights to live with dignity, status, position and liberty. As research indicates, gender equality is not only a precondition for the all-round development of society, but it also can contribute towards reducing poverty [2].

The above suggestions indicate the necessity of bringing about a change in the existing gender norms of the society. Gender equality can act as

¹⁶ URL: http://www.ncw.nic.in/sites/default/files/Module-%20Gender%20Sensitisation_0.pdf (accessed on 31.05.2023).

a buffer towards growth rate of productivity and economy. Therefore, the employees of the organisation need to be sensitized towards gender equity. They need to give importance to the potential and competency skills of employees. The

government is already trying out ways to promote women employment, now it is our responsibility to bring about a change in thought process and help in contributing towards a more productive economy.

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