

Gender discrimination at workplace

Why in news?

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Internet giant Google has recently sacked a male employee for his internal memo which perpetuated gender stereotypes.

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How distributed are women in Indian workforce?

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- Women entrepreneurs in India are mostly concentrated in low-paying industries.

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- Manufacturing sector, tobacco products, apparel and textiles attract the largest share of women entrepreneurs.

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- This is perhaps because these industries are known to have lower physical labour requirements.

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- There is also a strong negative relationship between average industry wages and the share of female-led plants in the manufacturing sector.

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- The overall participation of women in corporate India is only of 20-22%.

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- This sharply falls to 12-13% at senior and top levels.

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- The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index placed India in the 101st position among 136 countries.

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What are the challenges in the work place?

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- Women employees in India are still fighting for an **equal pay for equal**

work.

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- **Sexual harassment** exists at workplace.
- Frequently, managements pressurize the victims of harassment to withdraw the complaints.
- Indian companies are **reluctant to employ women** for reasons of brake/relieves after marriage and motherhood.
- **Inadequate infrastructure** affects women entrepreneurs more than men, because women often bear a larger share of the time and responsibility for household activities.
- Women face greater constraints in geographic **mobility** imposed by safety concerns and social norms.

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What should be done?

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- Improving **gender balance** is an important first step for India's development and its achievement of greater economic growth and gender equality.
- Imposing a **mandatory women quota** in the boardroom — something that countries such as Norway, France, Sweden and Spain have done can ensure a place for women.
- Procedural acceptance of sharing the burden of parental care by both men and women with the measures like paternity leave will ensure the gender balance in hiring process.
- **Sensitisation** of society and co-workers to gender understandings can be of help.

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Source: Business Standard, Livemint

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