

Women in Corporate roles

Why in news?

A recent report highlights that while there has been an increase in women joining the workforce, leadership positions still lack gender parity.

What are the key highlights of the report?

- **Title-** Women in Leadership in Corporate India
- **Released by-** LinkedIn and The Quantum Hub
- **Decline in workforce-** There has been an overall increase in the representation of women across the workforce to 26.8% in 2024 from 23.9% in 2016, but there has been a decline of 0.5% points between 2022 and 2024.
- **Senior leadership role-** The % of women in senior leadership roles has dipped to 18.3% in 2024 from 18.7% in 2023, after increasing from 16.6% in 2016, but it may go up by the end of the year.
- There is relatively **strong representation at the entry level at 28.7%** and senior independent contributor levels at 29.53%.
- **Significant drop-** There is a significant drop (18.59%) as women advance to managerial positions, followed by a continuous decline in women's representation in leadership positions, with 20.1% at director roles, 17.4% at vice president roles and 15.3% at C-suite positions.

Sector wise assessment

- **Highest representation-** Industries such as education (30%) and government administration (29%) of women in leadership roles.
- This is followed by administrative and support services and hospitals and health care, each 23%.
- **Moderate representation-** Sectors such as technology, information, and media and financial services each have 19% of women in leadership.
- **Lowest representation-** It is found in construction, oil, gas, mining and utilities, each with 11% women leaders, while wholesale and manufacturing have 12%, and accommodation and food services have 15%.
- **Overall improvements-** Some industries have seen overall improvements in the % of women leaders hired, such as consumer services, which experienced a significant increase to 37% in 2024 from 30% in 2016.

What are the major challenges faced by women in the workplace?

- **Gender bias**-Preconceived notions about gender roles can affect hiring, promotions, and performance evaluations.
- **Gender pay gap**- As per the International Labour (ILO) Organization, on average, women globally are paid about 20 per cent less than men.
- **Glass ceiling**- An invisible barrier that prevents women from reaching top executive positions.
- **Glass cliff**- Women are more likely to be placed in leadership roles during times of crisis or downturn, making these roles more precarious and high-risk.
- **Lack of flexible work option**- Insufficient support for flexible work arrangements can make it difficult for women to balance career and personal life.
- **Career gap**-Insufficient programs to help women transition back to work after a career break (pregnancy, childbirth, child care etc.,) can hinder their re-entry into the workforce.
- **Sexual harassment**- The MeToo movement brought to notice the horrifying episodes of sexual violence, harassment, and abuse across professional spheres.
- **Imposter syndrome**- It is a self-doubting tendency that leads an individual to feel skeptical and underserving of their accomplishments.

A 2020 KPMG study revealed that almost 75% of female executives across industries have faced imposter syndrome.

What should be done?

- **Equal pay advocacy**- Organizations and policymakers must prioritize advocating for equal pay, ensuring that women receive remuneration commensurate with their skills and contributions.
- **Strengthening legal enforcement**- While legislative frameworks exist, there's a need to reinforce their implementation to ensure swift and stringent action against perpetrators.
- **Promoting confidence building**- Mentorship programs, leadership training, and networking opportunities can play a crucial role in fostering self-assurance.
- **Boosting women's leadership**- It should be done in Indian businesses which is crucial for better outcomes.
- **Establishing standardized interview protocols**-Implementing standardized interview protocols that strictly prohibit invasive inquiries helps ensure a fair and respectful hiring process for everyone.

References

1. [The Economic Times- Women in Leadership in Corporate](#)
2. [Live Mint- LinkedIn and Quantum Hub report](#)



SHANKAR
IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering