

# EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN THE IT DEPARTMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Iraj Hashmi

## ABSTRACT

*Diverse demographics such as gender, age, and cultural origin, as well as characteristics directly relevant to the job, including tenure, education, and functional background, present a challenge as well as an opportunity for organizations. A company's competitive advantage is significantly derived from its workforce diversity. Numerous studies have shown that inclusiveness produces more creative, innovative, profitable, and flexible teams that can satisfy the rapidly shifting global client demands. The study focuses on Pakistani women's equal employment opportunities. The precise goals of this study are to ascertain the existing status of women in IT departments, evaluate their roles, and identify the reasons as to why women are not considered equally while recruiting for IT departments. Pakistan offers a distinctive research framework for examining equal opportunities because of the confluence of religious, cultural, social, and historical factors that are frequently at odds with one another. In order to assess the possibility of equal employment opportunities, a total of 8 interviews were conducted, 4 of which were with working women from various IT departments located in Karachi. The other 4 interviews were with women who do not work in IT departments. The qualitative data will reveal a lot about the existing situation of Pakistani women working in IT departments who may or may not be pursuing their professions in patriarchal cultural settings.*

**Keywords:** *Equal Employment Opportunity, Pakistani Working Women, IT Departments, Karachi, Pakistan, Recruiting, Employment*

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Women's professional disparities negatively impact not only women,

but also families and communities (Kossek et al., 2016). According to studies, it is problematic to speculate about and limited equal opportunity within the context of organizational structure because it ignores crucial societal and personal traits that exist outside the organization but still have an impact on organizational approaches, experiences, and diversity management outcomes. In their theoretical approach of a relational structure of international transmission of diversity management implications, (Syed & O'zbilgin, 2009) claim that the mainstream single-level conceptions of managing diversity within the realm of legitimate or organizational policy struggle to understand the relational interaction of fundamental roles and assertive issues of equality.

Inequality along with bias based on gender is now a reality in our society; however, this may differ depending on the culture of Pakistan (Delavande, 2013). According to the Pakistan Economic Survey girls have a literacy rate of 22%, while boys have a literacy rate of 47% (Pakistan Economic Survey, 2012). In Pakistan's conservative communities, the majority of women do not contribute to family income or household expenses. Males in patriarchal families are frequently opposed to women working to earn money, and most of these people are uneducated and conservative. In comparison to the private sector, the public sector wields enormous power and influence over gender discrimination.

In the field of postsecondary education, women face more bias than men. Equal treatment and tasks pertain to both men and women, according to the Quran, the Muslim holy book. Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a significant role in any organization because it is distinct from the other departments in that it deals with people. As we all know, the HRM department's main focus is hiring, developing, and retaining an organization's employees' skills and talents. Discrimination can be classified into two categories: fair and unjust. Discrimination against employees based on their skills, talents, and distinctions is based on fair discrimination, but discrimination against employees on the basis of their race is based on unfair discrimination. Pakistani female's workforce participation was (13.4% in 1990; 24.5% in 2016), a significant Islamic state, has climbed in tandem with GDP, it remains much lower than in other countries with comparable incomes (World Bank, 2016). In terms of gender equality, Pakistan ranks second bottom (143rd out of 144 nations) in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI, 2017).

Every country's constitution protects the right of every individual to assert their liberties, regardless of gender, caste, colour, nationality and social origin, political and religious convictions, possessions, or economic class. The legislation, now known as the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act of 1999, pertains to private companies with more than 100 staff members and calls for each recruiter to submit annual and, as of recently, biannual status update on their compliance with the Equal Employment Opportunity Amendment (EEO) and policy implementation, including the number of employed men and women in each job position. Diverse management is a method of equalizing employment chances. In 1972, Congress passed EEO, prohibiting discrimination in the workplace based on gender, caste, colour, or religious beliefs.

The progress toward workplace equality has come to a halt due to the apparent discrepancy among leaders. A shift in emphasis from equal opportunities to diversity training has resulted in a shift away from addressing historical and institutional mistreatment of groups, particularly women, and toward career-family balance laws that emphasize differences (Strachan , Burgess, & Henderson, 2007). Females constitute below 8% of Pakistan's full-time permanent workforce.

According to Pio and Syed (2013), nearly four out of every five Pakistani adult females do not work. The situation is similar for educated and competent women, since just approximately 25% of Pakistani women with a graduate degree work outside the house (Tanaka and Muzones, 2016). A lack of women in the work force leads in a considerable potential loss of economic growth productivity. It is now time to begin recognizing and eradicating the core causes of female career inequity and to focus our efforts on a thorough evaluation of the problem in Pakistan.

Females constitute below 8% of Pakistan's full-time permanent workforce. Women account for less than 1% of permanent full-time production employees and 1.5 percent of permanent full-time non-production workers in the country's manufacturing and associated industries. In addition, women conduct the majority of unpaid work—64 percent of female employment is unpaid, which is twice the South Asian average (International Finance Corporation, 2018). In order to enhance GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth, Pakistan would need to take substantial measures to overcome gender inequities in economic participation. Pakistan's GDP might increase

by 30% as a result of this (International Finance Corporation, 2018). Women's engagement in IT departments of related industries would be crucial in this context. Pakistan will contribute to commercial and economic prosperity by utilizing its untapped resources (World Bank Group, 2015).

### **Geographical Study**

The geographical focus of this research where the research was decided to be conducted was chosen to be Karachi, where we explored perceptions of people within Karachi, Pakistan.

### **Scope of the Study**

This research focused on Pakistani women's equal employment opportunities in Information Technology departments. The purpose of this study was to see if the current Pakistani enterprises adhere to gender equality when it comes to filling IT unit roles with women.

### **Research Purpose**

The central purpose of this research was to assess several approaches for maximizing female representation and inclusion in IT departments by building on existing successes and strengthening policies, collaborations, and initiatives for women.

### **Statement of Problem**

Equal opportunities and their management have been a hot topic in both academic and corporate circles for the past 30 years. Despite this, scholars from the United States and Europe, particularly Spain, conduct the majority of research on gender diversity however, there is little research on equal opportunities concerns and administration in third-world countries, despite the fact that these countries are particularly exciting for research due to their elevated levels of multiculturalism and the influence of planned economies on women's standing (Amorelli & Garcia-Sanchez, 2020). Our study's main objective was to determine the causes of the lack of female representation and inclusion in IT departments by building on the successes of women already in the field and expanding the policies, partnerships, and efforts already in place to give women equal chances.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions have been explored and answered through the current study conducted by us:

1. Is the equal opportunity concept correctly understood and used by manufacturing organizations having strong Informational Technology (IT) departments operating in Pakistan?
2. What is the situation of Gender Equality in concerns to IT units in the workplaces in Pakistan?
3. What impact does inclusion of females and appointing of females play in IT departments of manufacturing companies?

### **Significance of the Study**

This research is important because it has identified and addressed all the barriers that may prevent women from breaking through stereotypically male-dominated IT units, and this study has also contributed to helping people get awareness and development in the industry by teaching them about workplace gender discrimination.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The current paper's literature review discusses the topic of equal employment opportunities in organizational IT departments. It begins by defining the term "diversity," then goes on to address the benefits and cons of organizational gender policy and female inclusion in the workplace, as well as different methods to workforce management. Despite the fact that the proportion of women working in the technology sector has increased over the previous years, there is still a worrying gender imbalance in the sector. According to data from 2015, women made up fewer than 30% of the workforce at the major tech firms, and they held only 15.6% of the positions that were expressly related to Information Technology. It is challenging for women to break into this field. But when they do, it is advantageous if they can offer assistance to those who are just starting out in their careers. The conclusions are based on studies published in academic journals in the fields of diversity, social inclusion, and organizational and human resource management.

### **Diversity Concept**

Diverse perspectives are often discussed in current literature and corporate activities (Cox, 1994). The strong globalization processes are one of the key factors for the diversity of interest. Globalization's development and its impact on our daily and business lives is a fact, not a theory or a

projection. Increasing market connectivity, liberalizing country borders, and eliminating tariffs and tax levies are all contributing to the existing progressive globalization phenomena. “Global competitiveness is the single most significant economic truth of life in the 1990s, and there is no going back,” it was said in 1990 (Thomas, 2004).

The results of diversity have soared to business practices, and diversity management has advanced toward the strategic goal of the enterprises. It has become essential to promote and preserve diversity in the workplace because it is clear that the workforce, customer base, and general culture are becoming increasingly diverse. In the late 1950s, campaigns for equitable employment opportunities in the United States started to receive more attention from research and varied scholars. Before the late 1980s, diversity was not considered to be a chance and a benefit for the organization. Cox (2012) in his writings famously referred to it as a double-edged sword. He has been studying the impact of diversity on group performance for the last 40 years.

### **Importance of Diversity at Workplace**

Given how highly appreciated a varied workplace culture is by employees, the value of diversity in the workplace is more important than ever. The advantages of diversity in a workplace are obvious; not only does it raise employee morale and productivity, but it also improves financial results for firms that embrace it. What exactly do we mean by “diversity” when we talk about how a business can succeed by utilising the distinctive skill set of a varied team? Definition of Diversity at Work the Oxford English Dictionary defines diversity as “the practice of including or involving persons from a range of various social and ethnic origins.” It also applies to things like gender, colour, age, and disabilities.

### **Equal Employment Opportunities**

Equal opportunity has been proposed as a means of achieving parity at work, both in terms of the number of women working and in – anti fields of work, including management, using regulated and, more recently, non-legislated measures. Equal Employment Opportunity, on the other hand, is only a part of the remedy to inequities caused by institutional bias and disadvantages (Poiner & Wills, 1991). According to the authors, fair and equitable management is difficult to define and even more difficult to

implement and measure (Strachan , Burgess, & Henderson, 2007). Equal employment opportunity principles are implemented in three areas: structures, procedures, and policies.

It is also crucial to acknowledge Pakistani women’s internal heterogeneity because of their several and overlapping identities, such as those based on their familial status, education, religion, ethnicity, and so on. Women’s status in Pakistan is inconsistent since gender intersects with numerous types of identity (Syed & O’zibilgin, 2009). Due to uneven socioeconomic development, the effects of tribal, feudal, and capitalist structures on women’s life, and the disparities in status between castes, geographies, and the rural/urban gap, there are considerable differences in the status of women across these dimensions. Pakistan has ratified or recognized a number of international accords that support women’s growth in the workplace in addition to their constitutional rights.

It is investigated how inequality based on gender impacts employee happiness, motivation, devotion, and excitement, as well as stress levels, (Neschen and Hugelschafer, 2021). They came to the conclusion that women face more discrimination in the commercial sector than in the public sector. Workplace dedication and job satisfaction are negatively impacted by gender discrimination. When they experience gender discrimination, women are less engaged and excited about their jobs. Gender inequality and stress levels are strongly associated. Women are more prone to experience stress at work when there is gender discrimination. Employee loyalty to the organization suffers greatly when there is discrimination in terms of pay, advancement, and recognition.

### **Theoretical Perspective**

Some gender diversity initiatives have a bad name for promoting meritocracy or serving as a pretext for discrimination against dominant groups. The fundamental differences between men and women’s occupational roles are utilized to substantiate these views (Fine, 2019).

At the 1978 Women’s Exposition in New York, Marilyn Loden used the term “glass ceiling” for the first time when she was speaking on a panel. The term “glass ceiling effect” describes the pervasive opposition to minorities and women obtaining senior management positions in major organizations. The name gained popularity in the middle of the 1980s, but nobody is certain

who came up with it. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many women entered the job, but they were restricted from rising over a particular managerial level.

Categorization theory presents a way for categorizing people based on observable features. It is a social construct that helps the brain categorize people and allocate them to groups based on characteristics or features (Turner, 1987).

Legitimacy theory, as articulated by (Adams and Harte, 1999), posits that businesses will try to depict themselves in a socially acceptable light and justify their business decisions through disclosures.

The glass ceiling theory and the social categorization theory will be used in this research. The glass ceiling was first used to describe the experiences of women in the workplace but has since been expanded to include the experiences of professional minorities whereas in the social categorization theory. People who belong to one group, the in group, usually overestimate the advantages of that group while underplaying the drawbacks of another group, the out group. Being a part of the best or superior group helps people feel more confident in them.

### **Industry Perspective**

Gender disparity in the workplace remains in the modern world, both laterally (across industries) and vertically (corporate hierarchy). Some gender diversity efforts have a negative reputation for propagating a meritocracy or a basis for discrimination against dominant groups. The natural variation created by the types of vocational positions between men and women is used to justify these notions (Fine, 2019).

Various justifications for increasing gender diversity in the workplace can be found in the literature. In terms of cognitive and emotional processes, or how men and women behave, feel, and think, there is a significant difference between men and women. (Eagly, 2016) elaborates on the second most frequently cited advantage of gender diversity, which is based on the business benefits of involving women in the company's decision-making process.

Even though the most of researchers look at the link between gender diversity on companies and organizational performance, other studies have found that female presence improves non-financial outcomes such as corporate social responsibility and governance (Nadeem, 2017). The current



business environment and today's culture emphasize corporate involvement in societal goals and support for charitable causes and other forms of philanthropy.

### **Encourage women to get involved**

The absence of ladies and minorities in innovation professions, (Brown, 2001) to some extent, to absence of access and suggested that schools guarantee that PC labs are available to every orientation, ethnic and financial gathering; use programming that is liberated from orientation and ethnic predisposition; and survey and change value approaches occasionally. As per (Pamela, 1999), orientation holes in experience with and mentalities toward PC innovation in K-12 homerooms resonate into postsecondary training and the work market. In taking a gander at how to enlist women into science, designing, and innovation majors (al., 1999) noticed that the low cooperation of women in these majors does not start at the place of admittance to advanced education, however, relates to authentic and social factors that originate before the choice to enter school. Getting females intrigued. Crombie, (Abarbanel, 2001) investigated the requirement for proactive enlistment procedures designated at potential female software engineering majors.

Innovation, as it is right now introduced, is not extremely interesting to females, and it very well may be made more to intriguing to ladies by accentuating the more human interchanges angle as opposed to only the recovery of data, (Bennett, 1998). (Olsen, 2000) recommended effort to adolescent young women which centers around cooperation, inventiveness and applying IT ideas to social issues. Taking into account that enlistment endeavors start when understudies are in secondary school, (Clark, 1999) suggested summer science and math programs for young kids, (Smith, 2000) recommended supporting vocation fairs that incorporate math, science, and innovation experts. (Brown, 2001) recommended associating innovation to the interests of females and minority students.

Innovation in center schools, utilizing agreeable and cooperative procedures to advance learning through friendly communication, attempting to change social perspectives, and giving promising female understudies coaches are good examples. A few creators referred to the requirement for single-sex classes (Bowden, Crombie et al., & Thom, 2001) suggested that the certainty of young women studying customarily male-overwhelmed fields can be upgraded by individual classes and review conditions. (Crombie

et al., 2001) suggested that such courses be presented as soon as secondary school, particularly in software engineering. (Bowden, 2001) noticed that one method for enlisting more young women in software engineering classes is offer single-sex classes yet recommended such a training to be cost-restrictive.

### **Career Decision**

Additionally, noticed that the disappointment of young women to take elective computer science courses in secondary school might restrict their vocation choices, both in IT and in other profession fields (al. C. e., 2001). Since positive encounters with computers are great indicators of uplifting outlooks toward computers, which are great indicators of future enlistment in computer science classes, Crombie et al. recommended that rising female enlistment to having a basic number of females in computer science courses will assist with building uplifting outlooks toward computer science. One more variable influencing the enlistment of women into technology vocations is the discernment that easily the smartest understudies ought to seek after such professions.

Concentrates on show that while men with normal grades sign up for school computer science programs, women with normal grades are substantially less prone to seek after such a significant. The specialist proposed that notwithstanding having reliably higher grades than males in anything they examined, females need trust in their capacities and may exit to try not to shame themselves. Understudies could likewise be put off by the requirements for taking processing courses (Neuman, 1991) with pointlessly high essentials for computer courses denying normal and more slow understudies of computer amazing open doors the discernments that simply the smartest understudies ought to seek after computer vocations and that guys will improve in these fields starts in secondary schools. Around 15% of school-destined seniors select to take no less than one Advanced Placement (AP) test, yet men are more probable than females to take AP tests in computer science and bound to score “3” or higher, qualifying them for school credit or fitting position (“Girls Math/Science Education,” 1998). As per (Pamela, 1999) in 1999 just 17% of secondary school understudies taking the high-level position test in computer science were female.

Absence of vocation information was referred to by (Brown, 2001) as one motivation behind why women do not seek after professions in technology.

(Crombie et al., 2001) additionally referred to the need to give vocation information about computer science to women, as did (Kahle, 1989). Different creators have recommended that making females mindful of the great pay rates in the IT field might urge more females to seek after such vocations. (Bowden, 2001) noticed that IT professions are among the most ideal paying vocations that anyone could hope to find, and (Sciannamea, 1997) noticed that females presently bring in the same amount of cash as the guys. (Bowen, 1999) Brought up that women might favor fields in which their abilities are probably not going to become out of date, as numerous women require quite a while off work to bring up their youngsters. On the other hand, a woman in the computer science field requires a five-year time away, her computer science abilities will be obsolete when she gets back to the work force, which might be the reason women who seek after vocations in science incline toward the existence sciences (Larsen, 2001) noticed that women who seek after vocations in technology, specifically, should be deep-rooted students, and training value can at this point not be addressed exclusively concerning what occurs in schools and universities, yet all through women's lives.

(Woodka, 2001) had a problem with ideas that extended periods and absence of adaptability are frightening young ladies off from the IT field and directed out that women go on toward be drawn to professions in regulation and medication which are similarly as tedious. Woodka noted, in any case, that vocations in regulation and medication are seen as aiding callings portrayed by a lot of individual connection, while IT professions are not.

(Post, Stewart and Smith, 1991) concentrated on vocation dynamic variables for Pakistan men and females. A math/science self-viability poll was directed to an example of 82 female and 29 male first-semester newcomers who were signed up for a scholastic help course for minority understudies. Understudies evaluated themselves regarding instructive self-viability, instructive certainty, work viability, work certainty, interest, and thought for 24 vocations, a big part of which had a math/science direction. The scientists' discoveries proposed that interests play love significant job in vocation decision making for women, with men finding self-adequacy and certainty more significant. Men pick professions they feel certain about while women pick vocations, they are keen. Post et al. recommended that orientation as opposed to race might be the explanation African American females are presented in math and science professions.

Different creators venture to such an extreme as to offer a fair warning about empowering more women to seek after such vocations on the grounds that not every person is appropriate for them (Farmer, 1995). These specialists concentrated on 173 members, 97 women and 76 men, who had sought to a science, math, or technology vocation when they were in secondary school in 1980. The specialists saw that as by 1990, just 36% of women and 46% of men had continued in a science-related profession. As a matter of fact, their discoveries demonstrated that women who had high vocation responsibility were significantly bound to switch away from professions in science, math, and technology. One recommended clarification for this was that women's profession advancement is more perplexing to such an extent that vocation interests take shape later in women. These creators observed that vocation constancy among women was most connected with self-adequacy by implication-affected determination, which was interceded by math science utility.

### **Critical Review of Literature**

According to (Thomas, 2004) and (Cox, 1994) diverse perspectives have become important and globalization has encouraged increased global competitiveness which is the truth and reality which cannot be ignored. Diversity management has grown into a company's strategic objective, with the outcomes of diversity rising to business practices. Because of the clear rising variety in the workforce, existing customers, and culture at large, it has become critical to promote and sustain workplace diversity.

(Poiner & Wills, 1991) believed that Equal opportunity is recommended as a strategy of reaching equality at work, both in terms of the quantity of women working and in – anti areas of work, such as management and in IT, via the use of regulated and, more lately, non-legislated initiatives. According to them Equal Employment Opportunity, on the other hand, is merely one component of addressing disparities created by institutional prejudice and disadvantages.

It is also critical to recognize Pakistani women's inherent diversity and the distinct roles they play as a result of their numerous and diverse personalities, such as those based on family situation, religion, culture, education and so forth. As per (Syed & O'zibilgin, 2009) Women's status in Pakistan is inconsistent since gender intersects with numerous types of identity. In Pakistan women's status and the category of responsibilities differ depending

on what social class, region, or area they belong to, this may be linked to imbalanced career progression as well as the influence of ethnic, feudal, and capitalist institutions on the lives of women aside from constitutional rights and freedom.

As stated by (Neschen & Hugelschafer, 2021) Gender imbalance affects employee satisfaction, motivation, commitment, and enthusiasm, as well as psychological stress. They determined that in the private sector, women encounter more discrimination than in the government sector. Discrimination based on gender has an adverse impact on job satisfaction and dedication. When women are discriminated against because of their gender, they are less interested and enthusiastic about their jobs. Stress levels and gender disparities are intricately bound. Women are more prone to work under stress if there is gender discrimination. Employee loyalty to the organization suffers greatly when there is discrimination in terms of pay, advancement, and recognition.

In the theoretical perception of the literature review, (Fine, 2019) some gender diversity efforts have a negative reputation for encouraging meritocracy or discriminating against dominant groups as an excuse. The inherent distinctions in men's and women's employment responsibilities are used to support these claims. the concept of glass ceiling has been mentioned which has been attributed to widespread opposition to women and minorities rising to positions of senior management in major organizations. Even though no one knows who coined the phrase, it became popular in the mid-1980s. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a large number of women entered the labour field, but no matter how hard they worked, they were unable to advance beyond a certain level of management.

As far as the industry perceptible is concerned the IT departments in Pakistani manufacturing industry prefer males in senior management and that pattern can be seen in different organizations across Pakistan. (Eagly, 2016) elaborated that the second most identified benefit of gender diversity is based on the business benefits of incorporating women in company decision-making process, women are better at making immediate decisions and giving relevant solutions based on the criticality of a situation.

The present competitive landscape, as well as today's society, emphasizes corporate engagement in social goals, as well as increased support for charity initiatives and other types of philanthropy. As mentioned by (Nadeem, 2017)

non-financial outcomes such as corporate social responsibility and governance benefit from the presence of female representation in different industries.

## Research Gap

Author	Year	Topic	Methodology	Research Findings
Faiza Ali	2013	<i>“A multi-level perspective on equal employment opportunity in Pakistan.”</i>	Qualitative Research- The article addresses multi-level challenges of women working in Pakistani companies using in-depth qualitative interviews with 30 working women in Lahore.	The study demonstrates that relying primarily on organizations and holding them entirely accountable for equal opportunity may be insufficient, because organizational hierarchies and equal opportunity practices are influenced by both Macro societal (e.g., legal, sociocultural) and micro individual elements (e.g., intersectionality, agency). The research reveals the distinct sociocultural and structural problems that working women in Pakistan face, as well as the methods in which these women may negotiate and overcome some of these challenges.
Glenda Strachan Lindy Henderson John Burgess	2007	<i>“The Australian experience with equal employment opportunity policy and legislation.”</i>	Qualitative Research- This research focuses on Australia; however, the pattern of multiple methods is shared by other Western countries. Women’s outcomes will differ depending on how businesses choose to execute an equal opportunity program. Value & Originality - The research paper provides information about policies and legislation related to Equal Employment Opportunity in Australia.	Organizations are confronted with a variety of policies from which to adopt, resulting in a wide range of equality initiatives with varying outcomes for working women.

Rana Nadir Idrees Muhammad Waqas Abdus Sattar Abbasi	2013	“ <i>Systemic Study of the literature on Diverse Workforce in Pakistan.</i> ”		The deductive approach was used to get the conclusions. Female employees face greater discrimination in the private sector than male employees do in the public sector. Workgroup heterogeneity is a crucial factor in producing more innovative and effectual decisions. Owners and managers with a solid educational background and a dedication to inclusiveness and diversity work for it.
Siraj Jamal Siddiqui	2014	“ <i>Glass Ceiling in Pakistan: A Myth or Reality.</i> ”	Quantitative Research	Being a female in Pakistani organizations poses no gender-based barriers to women’s career advancement, but women’s techniques and communication styles at job, as well as their decision to quit or choose employment, impact their journey to the top hierarchy in businesses. Both independent variables Self Selection and Women Approaches and Communication Style are substantial, it indicates that if women face difficulties in career advancement, it may be due to their own choice to engage in professions with limited opportunities for advancement and their strategies at work to socialize and interact with others.
Syeda Hoor-Ul-Ain. Khalid M. Iraqi	2022	“ <i>Gender-inclusive corporate boards and business performance in Pakistan.</i> ”	Qualitative Research	The findings of the study highlight an imperative necessity for the establishment of gender parity social changes in order to provide competent women with the legal rights that they deserve.

<p>Marriam Ayub Rao Aamir Khan Muhammad Khushnood</p>	<p>2017</p>	<p><i>“Glass Ceiling or Personal Barriers: A Study of Underrepresentation of Women in Senior Management.”</i></p>	<p>Qualitative Research- The study seeks answers to questions from experienced respondents working in private enterprises to investigate the topic of women’s underrepresentation. The current study used semi-structured interviews to collect data from women at the middle and upper management levels in a variety of industries, including private banks, higher education, multinational corporations, information technology firms, telecommunications companies, and non-governmental institutions.</p>	<p>This study investigates the constraints in women’s advancement to higher positions in private enterprises. The question is whether the glass ceiling is caused by cultural or individual qualities. It was also meant to analyze the relative importance of personal traits of female employees and glass ceiling concerns. The findings are summarized below.</p>
<p>Abdul Rauf. Syed Muhammad Shahid Tirmizi. Iram Sultana. Muhammad Saeed</p>	<p>2021</p>	<p><i>“Gender Equality in Islam and gender biased discrimination in global Muslim societies: Analytical and critical evaluation.”</i></p>	<p>This research investigation was carried out using analytical and critical evaluation methods. Gender discrimination is still prevalent in Muslim countries, as evidenced by published journal papers, news stories, and novels, among other sources. These analytical analyses are then critically reviewed considering primary study resources such as the Holy Quran and Sunnah.</p>	<p>Education and Knowledge enable to shatter the model of gender inequality and makes permanent advances for females in developing countries such as Pakistan, among others. Pakistan has made limited investments in educational fields, particularly in female education. Girls’ education causes significant societal transformation. Educated females are crucial in putting a stop to this quickly spreading idea of gender inequality.</p>



Babak Mahmood	2012	<i>“Gender Specific Barriers to Female Entrepreneurs in Pakistan: A Study in Urban Areas of Pakistan.”</i>	The qualitative methodology was used. This study’s sample focuses on female entrepreneurs chosen by the research team. The information was gathered by native field researchers who are more familiar with the local culture and language.	Many connections in challenges were discovered among Pakistani female entrepreneurs. Pakistani female entrepreneurs were discovered to have numerous challenges in common with other female entrepreneurs in underdeveloped nations. According to the research, factors such as “lack of financing, mobility restrictions, limited decision making, lack of role models and guiders, men’s market dominance, family pressure, and discrimination” are key impediments to entrepreneurship.
Malik Muhammad Sohail				
Salman Khalid				
Iram Babak				
Jawad Syed	2006	<i>“Pakistani model of diversity management: rediscovering Jinnah’s vision.”</i>	The research examines the statements and ideologies to describe his vision of variety and inclusion, Pakistan’s founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, In Pakistani society, there is equality of opportunity.	The research highlights four important characteristics of Jinnah’s vision: first, democracy, which ensures the involvement of all groups of people in socioeconomic and political realms of life; second, development; and third, peace. Second, an egalitarian interpretation of Islam that is seen to be congruent with the concepts of social justice and equal opportunity. Third, stringent rule of law enforcement with no tolerance for favouritism or prejudice. Fourth, additional safeguards for minorities, women, and other vulnerable groups. Overall, the four elements point to a societal instance of diversity management.

Female participation is a significant issue in today's globe. Companies are investing significant financial resources and time to support workplace diversity programs in order to balance the still unequal gender distribution at work. Failure to address the significance of gender diversification may undermine a company's position, expose it to needless lawsuits, and, most critically, hinder it from improving performance through a diversified workforce (Scarborough, 2019).

Several researches have suggested that the soft quota system should be reconsidered due to its inefficiency and lack of success over the last ten years (Menendez & Gonzalez, 2012). Even in the future, 40 percent female representation would be hard to attain given the current rate of development. 767 companies were evaluated on their gender equality growth from 2005 to 2014, Cabo's largest surveys (2019). Companies that solely rely on government contracts have had an annual increase of 4%, with a current boardroom proportion of 60%. These were businesses that would immediately profit from the soft policy's incentives.

On the other hand, little to no research has been done regarding equal employment opportunities in IT departments of firms operating in Pakistan.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Data**

The research method we selected for this study is qualitative research method. This research is a type of exploratory research method that solely focuses on gathering information through open-ended, conversational discussion. This strategy mainly focuses on the participants' experiences while answering their how and whys. In other words, Qualitative research methods allow for a deeper interrogation of respondents based on their answers through which the researcher attempts to understand their feelings and their purpose. It is critical to make certain that the context and story of qualitative work are not lost by attempting to quantify something that is not supposed to be quantifiable. Qualitative data consists of themes and patterns that are quite difficult or impossible to quantify. Which is why for this research topic, a qualitative method has been chosen.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sampling approach will be a Purposive Sampling, observed to be a cost-efficient sample selection method. In this type of method, the researcher

chooses the best-fit participants for the systematic investigation by depending on their own observation and knowledge. It enables you to get the most out of a tiny sample size and provide useful study results.

### **Research Design**

Our study will be based on exploratory research design. In an exploratory design, the researcher's main goal is to investigate research questions that have not been investigated prior to the research. It can also be defined as a research method for exploring an issue that is not well defined. It is based on qualitative research methodology.

### **Population**

The population we will base our study on includes eight female participants among which 4 women are employed in the manufacturing sector from Information Technology department in Karachi and 4 unemployed women with a degree in IT (Information Technology).

### **Instrument**

Interview protocol is our research instrument.

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

Data collection will be done through interviews and thematic analysis will be the method employed in this research which is a type of qualitative data analysis method that deals with searching for repeated patterns in a data collection, as well as analyzes them, and reports on them (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

## **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

### **Thematic Analysis**

The given themes were picked from the interview responses that were collected from the respondents.

### **Responses from Women Not Employed in IT Departments**

#### **Equal Opportunities**

Equal opportunity refers to the principle of giving each person equal opportunities for employment, earnings, and promotion regardless of their background, race, color, or dialect specifically without discriminating against any group of individuals.

## **Traditional Companies**

Traditional businesses frequently make stereotyped hiring decisions, giving men more career options than women. This could involve typical businesses with a staff that is more male dominated than female. This might be a result of employers' traditional viewpoints, which still view women as weak and less qualified for technological positions.

## **Role division of Genders**

Typically, it is seen that certain genders are given distinct roles in either daily life or the job. For example, women are typically not given preference for administrative or audit positions in academic institutions and are typically solely appointed as teachers. Additionally, it is uncommon to see a woman working in a factory or delivering packages on a bike. Women are given options where they can work while considering culture.

## **Gender Equality**

In terms of rewards and requirements, gender equality emphasizes justice and equality for men and women. Equality in education, health, and humanitarian aid refers to the fair distribution of resources based on diverse social groups' demands. Many studies have demonstrated that having more women in the workplace improves employee well-being. Diverse and gender balance in the workplace have frequently been demonstrated to benefit businesses and their bottom lines.

## **Potential Barriers-Social Constraints**

Social limitations are founded on long-held theories of gender discrimination. Due to contextual factors including established social roles, group conflict, and the female power structure, stereotypes are produced by the recipient's ignorance of the situation and reliance on previously learned knowledge (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021).

Some perspectives on the roles of men and women in society have evolved over time. Both male and female behavior are significantly impacted by such social systems. Men are characterized by their masculine characteristics, which often entail a set of duties. It is also linked to a feminine role in society, making it challenging to resist bias based on traditional gender stereotypes. Numerous studies have demonstrated the connection between stereotyping

and discrimination, with the inevitability of discrimination coming from a mismatch between the characteristics associated with women and the requirements necessary to perform the task. For instance, female traits like compassion and sensitivity might clash with top executive positions characterized by a masculine trait like firmness and decisiveness (Neschen & Hugelschafer, 2021).

Consequently, a person who exemplifies male traits would have a better likelihood of advancement. On the other hand, there is a negative connotation associated with female leadership. On average, women are believed to work less than men, and typically in low-paying administrative jobs (Patel & Moonesinghe, 2019). Gender stereotypes persist even when more women are holding executive roles and there is equality in the workplace. However, women are not seen as the natural successor and cannot work for a third party. In these civilizations, women are expected to have male traits in the workplace (Singh & Sebastian, 2018).

### **Potential Barriers-Organizational Constraints**

Organizational challenges include a biased hiring process or a lack of training opportunities. One frequently cited explanation for women's limited progress is their lack of credentials for leadership positions. During the promotion selection process, one reason for not making progress was a lack of management skills and insufficient experience. Elmuti (2009) connects this to the similarity attraction hypothesis, which claims that men in positions of authority are drawn to and more likely to choose others who share their leadership styles and professional aspirations.

### **Recruitment Process**

Due to societal restrictions and a lack of access to the types of referrals from which males might profit, women are at a disadvantage in referral-based employment. Beaman et al. (2015) discovered that qualified women are less likely than men to be referred via networks in their experiment that was built around a recruitment drive for actual positions. According to the study's findings, women are hired more frequently because they filed unsolicited applications than males, and they are hired less frequently through referrals than men. It is possible that companies' aversion to hiring women stems from worries about their conflicting family obligations or from plain old discriminatory inclinations.

**Fig 1 Word Cloud 1**



**Frequency Tables**

**Table 1**

*Word Frequency*

<b>Word</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Weighted Percentage (%)</b>
Women	5	27	3.48
Equal	5	14	1.80
Work	4	12	1.55
Employees	9	11	1.42
Opportunity	11	10	1.29
Also	4	8	1.03
Employment	10	8	1.03
Gender	6	8	1.03
Opportunities	13	8	1.03
Working	7	7	0.90
Organization	12	6	0.77
Pakistan	8	6	0.77
Always	6	5	0.64
Company	7	5	0.64
Equally	7	5	0.64
Everyone	8	5	0.64
Field	5	5	0.64
Good	4	5	0.64
Hiring	6	5	0.64
Software	8	5	0.64
Based	5	4	0.52
Believe	7	4	0.52
Comes	5	4	0.52
Fair	4	4	0.52
Hired	5	4	0.52

**Content Analysis Matrix for Women Not Employed in IT Departments**

## Responses from Women Not Employed in IT Departments

Themes	ER1	ER2	ER3	ER4
1 Potential barriers-Social and Organizational Constraints	<p>When it comes to equality in the workplace, we still have a long way ahead of us. Although we have come a long way, women still face considerable barriers and obstacles in the workplace.</p> <p>Whether it is underrepresentation of women in executive roles, lack of childcare support, harassment or biased and discriminatory behavior, these issues are an ongoing occurrence for women across all industries and organizations around the world.</p> <p>We must first smash the glass ceiling in order to advance professionally and pursue our aspirations, some of the most significant obstacles women encounter in the workplace today.</p> <p>1. Pregnancy-related prejudice 2. sexual harassment 3. Gender pay gap etc.</p>	<p>Women tend to leave without trying it or being focused. The moment they get failed in some tasks they think they are not able to do it, disheartened themselves and leave the path. I think women can be promoted as the same rate as men is they show, what they can do and never give up. I was first under the project manager who instructed me what to do, later based on my work and learning capabilities they promoted me and made me handle all the projects independently, even allowed me to deal clients as well all by myself.</p>	<p>Women have to struggle more in the workplace to prove or justify her skills than men do. They face many issues including harassment, lack of company policies promoting work-life balance, etc. I personally do not think women are promoted at the same rate as men. They are being mentored enough and equally yet they are not moving to higher management positions as easily as men do.</p>	<p>Women frequently face discrimination based on their skills, potential, or past experiences. We live in a society that values variety; therefore, this should not be happening. Due to individual variability, no two individuals can possess the same skill. In order to guarantee that each person is treated equally and fairly, firms must establish equal employment opportunity (EEO) practices. This strengthens a person's dedication, satisfaction, and loyalty to their job. A person may give their all when they feel secure and at ease in every circumstance.</p>
2 Recruitment process	<p>I believe that the concept or effort to recruit women in the IT department is equivalent. We are very flexible about inclusion and diversity in our organization, and the concept of recruiting females in IT department is strongly encouraged.</p>	<p>I worked in a software house, I was the first women hired in that office, though it was multinational company even then they never considered to recruit any woman. But when they hired me, they were quite satisfied with my work performance and the decision they took to hire me. Another girl was hired after a couple of months.</p>	<p>I personally feel like the idea or effort to recruit women in IT department is relative. In our organization, we are very flexible about gender inclusivity and the idea to recruit females in our department is highly encouraged.</p>	<p>Yes, based on your skills and working experience the company recruit women.</p>
3 Equal opportunities	<p>There was equality in opportunities and also in workload. There were no differences. If we got some urgent tasks or got overloaded with work, we had to spend extra hours, like any other male developers. There was a policy to assign similar tasks to female developers like they used to do to male developers no matter the complexity of work. In short there was no gender biasness in terms of work assignments or completing daily tasks.</p>	<p>I worked in a software house, I was the first women hired in that office, and though it was multinational company even then they never considered to recruit any woman. But when they hired me, they were quite satisfied with my work performance and the decision they took to hire me. Another girl was hired after a couple of months.</p>	<p>I would say the views of gender equality according to the company are quite satisfactory in terms of recruitment and taking positive steps to ensure that women are paid and treated equally as men are in the organization. The company has adopted harassment policy, awareness programs and introduced several changes in the company for women comfort as well as seeking to provide equal opportunities by addressing issues, attitudes, and negative practices. Such things should not be looked down upon whether they are coming from a male or a female, highlighting negative behaviour should be highly encouraged and organizations should take serious actions for the comfort of all employees working in the organization.</p>	<p>Yes, the company thinks about having equal opportunities means that everybody is treated fairly during the recruitment and employment process. It is all about ensuring a balanced working environment, where everyone can feel equal and treated justly. Every employee has the right to individual treatment, equal opportunity means no stereotype-based judgments. Employees should feel appreciated, valued, and understood, hence, the need to offer equal and fair opportunities.</p>

4	Traditional Companies	<p>Traditionally, there has been a perception that females are not suited to technology-based roles. Gender-bias is instilled in females from school age in many ways. For example, pioneering female technology innovators are rarely discussed. Most technology roles are already dominated by men, which perpetuates the myth that women are not suited to these roles. Whether consciously or not, many technology workplaces still have the same biases towards women that have existed traditionally; a perception that they will either not be able to contribute to the company in a tech-oriented role or they are not suited for careers in technology. This naturally discourages many women from working in the field and accounts for the relatively low proportion of women in tech roles today.</p>	<p>They think women cannot be productive in IT department, principally in the development sector. Where logics must be made, and they think women are not good at this. Mostly women are also not interested in this logical work due to its complexity which requires higher order level of thinking. Even women also do not show interest in this field, and I witnessed it myself the time when I took admission in Aptech for doing software Engineering there were a lot of girls who enrolled for the same course however after couple of months they started to drop the course one after the another leaving only three girls including me in the class at the end of the course.</p>	<p>The lack of diversity in the tech sector is not a recent situation, one of the main reasons for low rates of female employment in IT is primarily the education and interest factor. Females in Pakistan specifically find it really challenging to study tech because they are unaware of unlocking the creative side of this field and global opportunities that it brings. I am one of the only two females working in coding field from my master's program as well as one of only three females from my bachelors' program. Females are only given options that tend to stick to the more traditionally 'easy-to-go' subjects. Another reason for low rates of female employment is that the industry may have the perception that men are better than women for coding without even giving females a chance for the interview and even if a female is hired, the number of male coders or male colleagues working in the department might create an atmosphere that is discouraging to her. Also, the recruitment process is entirely handed over to the males of the team who in return would want to recruit someone working under them who is a male as well.</p>	<p>Because the women cannot do late sitting and offsite work.</p>
5	Gender equality	<p>It is a "win-win" situation to fund projects that assist women in the workplace because both employees and businesses gain substantial advantages. Women worldwide impact up to 80% of purchasing decisions, therefore hiring more women guarantees that a company's workforce is reflective of its customer base and provides superior knowledge on consumer preference.</p>	<p>Yes, I was satisfied, and they are still doing great!</p>	<p>There is always room for improvement when we talk about gender diversity within the organization. Some best ways to further improve are to hire more females and to provide the different departments with proper gender-based discrimination training, implement fair compensation and promotion opportunities and to learn from female staff exit interviews.</p>	<p>Yes, I am definitely satisfied as they are giving me equal rights. But to the other companies I would like to say that please understand the word equality. It includes building a workplace free from bias and discrimination in addition to focusing on promotion n. Regardless of a company's culture, every employee and individual has the right to be recognized and valued at work.</p>
6	Role division of genders	<p>There are 07 female employees and 15 male employees working in the IT department, including myself.</p>	<p>There are total 26 employees in which male employees are 17 and 9 are women.</p>	<p>Currently, there is a total of 12 permanent male staff and 1 permanent female employee working in organizations' IT department.</p>	<p>There are total 26 employees in which male employees are 17 and 9 are women.</p>



## **Equal Employment**

The idea of equal employment holds that everyone has an equal chance to find employment based on talent, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation.

## **Work Ethics and Performance**

Work ethics is the idea that putting in a lot of effort and being dedicated has an ethical benefit and an innate capacity, quality, or worth to improve one's character and abilities. It is a system of values built on the value of labour and demonstrated by the willingness to put out the effort. Examples include abiding by the company's rules, accepting responsibility for one's conduct, and showing respect to one another.

It may yet take a decade to achieve equal representation of men and women, especially in the tech sector.

## **Gender Biasness in the Workplace**

Every area of our lives is rife with bias. To make sense of the complex world we live in, our brains are programmed to categorize the objects we encounter. However, biases can lead to us developing prejudices against other people, which enable severe disparities to develop between various demographics. The propensity to favour one gender over another is known as gender bias.

When it comes down to it, gender bias can occur during every stage of employee recruitment, employment, and retention. Hiring managers who are both male and female are twice as likely to pick a guy over a woman. There may be signs of gender prejudice all throughout the hiring process, starting with the places and methods you use to find candidates.

## **Equal Opportunity Policy**

An employer's commitment to fairness, fair working conditions, and the efforts they will take to help stop and prevent unfair treatment at work are all outlined in a legal document called as an equal opportunities policy.

## **Career Advancements in IT Departments**

Early in their careers, women in technical professions such as related to emerging technology are less likely than men to receive promotions, and many are leaving the industry. By reversing this trend, businesses may strengthen their workforces and improve performance.

## **Tech-Oriented Roles**

Being the only woman in the room, bro culture, or being aware that you

are one of the only women joining and remaining in the field are all likely to have isolated you as a woman in tech. This is not a brand-new issue in IT; in fact, it has existed for a number of years and may serve as a slight deterrent to more women working in the field.

### **Awareness Programs**

Leaders in the business sector of today understand how crucial it is to empower women at work. It is clearly obvious how powerful women are in the workplace. The advantages are well known, and they include fostering innovation and raising business revenues. Motivate women to take the risk.

By actively encouraging women to take more chances and risks, businesses are actively assisting women in achieving success. Getting outside help is the best approach to increase self-confidence. Create more positions for women so that businesses can advance

The “normal” employment needs to alter because of the passage of time. Women bring a distinctive and original viewpoint to the economic world. We need to acknowledge and incorporate this. We need to focus more on the creation of new jobs and criteria for how the recruitment of intelligent women is developed, rather than encouraging women to assume the roles they have done for decades.

### **Emerging Theme- Gender Pay Gap in IT Departments**

According to studies, women earn less than their male colleagues when it comes to paying for equity capital. It might be difficult to get people to consider gender issues in the workplace and the necessity for these changes.

Women in Pakistan make an average salary that is 34% lower than that of men, according to the ILO’s Global Wage Report 2018/19. In Pakistan, women make up 90% of the bottom 1% of wage earners, according to the same survey.

**Fig 2. Word Cloud 2**



## Frequency Tables

**Table 2**

*Word Frequency*

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage
			(%)
Women	5	80	4.83
Department	10	32	1.93
Company	7	26	1.57
Gender	6	24	1.45
Equal	5	21	1.27
Working	7	20	1.21
Interview	9	17	1.03
Opportunities	13	17	1.03
Think	5	17	1.03
Work	4	17	1.03
Employment	10	16	0.97
Departments	11	15	0.90
Female	6	15	0.90
Females	7	14	0.84
Equality	8	13	0.78
Ways	4	12	0.72
Like	4	11	0.66
Number	6	10	0.60
Policy	6	10	0.60
Recruit	7	10	0.60
Time	4	10	0.60
Education	9	9	0.54
Employees	9	9	0.54
Main	4	9	0.54
Males	5	9	0.54

*Content Analysis Matrix for Women Employed in IT Departments*

### Responses from Women Employed in IT Departments

Themes	R1	R2	R3	R4
1 Equal Employment	Based on your skills and working experience the company recruits women, when one corporation considers equal opportunities, it implies that everyone is treated equitably during the recruiting and employment process. Because of their variances, no two people can have the same ability. As a result, firms must develop equal employment opportunity (EEO) policies to guarantee that every employee is treated equally and fairly.	There was equality in opportunities, and I was the first woman to get hired, even though it was a multinational company they still never considered hiring any female employees. Another girl was hired a few months after they hired me.	I would say the views of gender equality according to the company are quite satisfactory in terms of recruitment and taking positive steps to ensure that women are paid and treated equally as men are in the organization. Also, the recruitment process is entirely handed over to the males in most companies who would want to recruit a male employee.	I believe that the concept or effort to recruit women in the IT department is equivalent. We are very flexible about inclusion and diversity in our organization, and the concept of recruiting females in IT department is strongly encouraged.

2	Work Ethics and Performance	There are no differences between men and women when it comes to carrying their jobs as they both are competing together so there is no difference between their work and productivity.	All men and women are required to perform in the same way, like when we are given urgent tasks and have a huge amount of work pressure and load, women are also required to spend extra hours just like any other man.	Women can prove themselves as effectively as men once given the opportunity and are able to communicate effectively and create a feeling of togetherness within the team.	There are several variables that contribute to gender disparity in the workplace, but one of the most important is women's lack of access to higher education. The more schooling a female gets, the better her work prospects. When women have fewer chances for high-level employment than males, it is natural for them to be paid less. Equal pay for equal labour is what gender equality in the workplace entails. Stereotypes regarding women's talents are another element that leads to gender inequity in the workplace.
3	Gender Biasness in the Workplace	In most cases, women are discriminated on the grounds of their ability, potential or experience. This should not be happening because we live in a society that embraces diversity.	While working in IT (Information Technology) Department I noticed that there were only 2 female employees working in the software house whereas the number of male employees was 40 and above, but when it comes to gender biasness there was no gender biasness in terms of work assignments or completing daily tasks.	The idea or effort to recruit women in IT department is relative. In our organization, we are very flexible about gender inclusivity and the idea to recruit females in our department is highly encouraged.	Traditionally, there is a prevalent belief that women are unsuitable for technology-related jobs. Gender prejudice is fostered in girls from a young age in a variety of ways. Female technological innovators, for example, are seldom discussed. Most technology roles are already dominated by men, which perpetuates the myth that women are not suited to these roles.
4	Equal Opportunity Policy	Fair treatment and equal opportunities include no stereotype-based judgments; every employee has the right to be recognised as an individual. Employees should feel appreciated, respected, and understood, which is why equitable and fair chances must be provided.	As far as equal opportunity policy is concerned all male and female employee developers were given similar tasks no matter what the complexity of work was.	The company has adopted harassment policy, awareness programs and introduced several changes in the company for women comfort as well as seeking to provide equal opportunities by addressing issues, attitudes, and negative practices.	Gender discrimination is a global problem that has existed for generations in most societies and countries. Despite the passing of policies and other efforts to eliminate or reduce gender disparity, the problem remains in many ways today.
5	Career Advancement in IT Departments	Of course, yes, women are given career advancements and promotions based on how they contribute and utilize their skills, education, and training to add value to the organization and growing better day by day	Women have the potential to advance in IT careers and get promoted at the same rate as men if they do not give up on their passion and do not run away from difficulties that arise at workplace. Giving my example, I was working under a project manager whose instructions I was supposed to follow but based on my capabilities, learning and work they promoted me, and I started handling clients on my own.	Women must struggle more in the workplace to prove or justify her skills than men do. They face many issues such as harassment and work-life balance approaches that are lacking in the workplace	I personally do not think women are promoted at the same rate as men. They are being mentored enough and equally yet they are not moving to higher management positions as easily as men do.

6	<p>Tech Oriented Roles</p> <p>Hiring female employees in tech-oriented roles is a positive action for you, your company, the workers within your company, the workers still to come, the women involved, the economy, and the public. Hiring more women means having more dedicated members of staff in your place of work. This in turn easily boosts productivity and staff morale.</p>	<p>People in tech-oriented roles need constant training and updating of information/knowledge because technology changes quickly and sometimes employees are assigned tasks which they might have not attempted before e.g., Whenever I am given a task which I do not know I have to learn new codes etc., in order to do it I need to learn and keep myself updated on the modern technology, software etc.</p>	<p>One of the main reasons for low rates of female employment in IT departments for tech-oriented roles in education and lack of interest, females in Pakistan find it challenging to study tech because they are unaware of the creative side of this field and opportunities it brings.</p>	<p>Whether consciously or not, many technological departments/organization's still have conventional prejudices against women, such as the belief that females are unsuitable for technology employment or will not be able to contribute to the firm in a tech-oriented capacity. Naturally, this discourages many women from working in the field, resulting in the low percentage of women in IT professions relative to males.</p>
7	<p>Awareness Programs</p> <p>I am satisfied as they are giving me equal rights. But to the other companies I would really like to emphasise that the term "equality" refers to more than just promotion or progression; it also refers to creating an atmosphere in which everyone is free from discrimination and prejudice. Regardless of a company's culture, individuals and all employees have the right to be recognised and respected at work.</p>	<p>In IT Departments employees whether males or females are required to stay till late so there are late sittings, and it is termed as "overtime" since it is paid. But for most women it is difficult and next to impossible to sit till late due to the cultural and societal norms as it is considered irresponsible of her, so most women end up going home early leaving the project unfinished and that slows down productivity.</p>	<p>Some of the best ways to further improve the concept of gender equality is to hire more females and to provide different departments with various gender-based discrimination training, implement fair compensation and promotion opportunities and to learn from female staffs exit interviews.</p>	<p>Investing in workplace programmes that help women is a "win-win" scenario since both employees and companies' profit. Hiring more women ensures that a company's workforce is reflective of its customer base and gives greater understanding of consumer preferences: women influence up to 80% of purchasing choices worldwide.</p>

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

Pakistan, as an evolving nation and as a struggling in economy growth, needs its women and men to cooperate to assist with accomplishing the objectives of monetary development and flourishing. For working women to accomplish their maximum capacity, the state and hierarchical policymakers need to perceive and address equivalent open door related issues confronting women at various levels inside and outside the work environment. At the point when approaches informed by staggered bits of knowledge are set up to battle primary and social obstructions, more women will be urged to seek after proper business. State and associations both need to assume their part to accomplish better equivalent open-door results in the work environment likewise considering interior heterogeneity of women in view of their numerous types of character. Through expanded mindfulness, social change and institutional observing at various levels, understanding the elevated long for equivalent open door in Pakistani organization will be conceivable.

## **Comparative Analysis**

In order to draw a conclusion further ahead, let us compare the two interview protocols, one of which sheds light on the perspectives of women working in the manufacturing industry and the other of which includes those of women who do not. In the comparison that follows, women who do not work in the IT sector will be referred to as group A and women who do work in the field as group B.

### Equal employment

According to the perspective of group B, the concept or effort to recruit women in the IT department is equivalent. Many of them were satisfied with their company's EEO policies and believed that their company's views of gender equality were quite satisfactory in terms of recruitment and taking positive steps to ensure that women are paid and treated equally as men are in the organization. Group A's reviews were not so contradictory in this case. They believed there are barriers indeed, but equal employment opportunities still are open for everyone.

### Potential barriers

For this point we will focus on Group A's each and every review thoroughly. When it comes to equality in the workplace, they still have a long way ahead of them. Women still face considerable barriers and obstacles in the workplace. Whether it is underrepresentation of women in executive roles, lack of childcare support, harassment or biased and discriminatory behavior, these issues are an ongoing occurrence for women across all industries and organizations around the world. They must first smash the glass ceiling in order to advance professionally. Some of the most significant obstacles women encounter in the workplace today: 1. Pregnancy-related prejudice 2. sexual harassment 3. Gender pay gap etc. Other than that, women tend to leave without giving it a try or being focused. The moment they get failed in some tasks they think they are not able to do it, disheartened themselves and leave the path. Women can be promoted as the same rate as men is they show, what they can do and never give up. Moreover, women have to struggle more in the workplace to prove or justify her skills than men do. They face many issues including harassment, lack of company policies promoting work-life balance, etc. In group A's perspective, women are not promoted at the same rate as men. They are being mentored enough and equally yet they are not

moving to higher management positions as easily as men do. And lastly, women frequently face discrimination based on their skills, potential, or past experiences. Due to individual variability, no two individuals can possess the same skill. In order to guarantee that each person is treated equally and fairly, firms must establish equal employment opportunity (EEO) practices. This strengthens a person's dedication, satisfaction, and loyalty to their job. A person may give their all when they feel secure and at ease in every circumstance.

On the other hand, Group B's reviews about barriers were slightly contradicting to that of Group A's. However, one female from Group B did agree with Group A regarding their struggles in career advancement where she mentioned; "I personally do not think women are promoted at the same rate as men. They are being mentored enough and equally yet they are not moving to higher management positions as easily as men do." Whereas the responses from other females of group B contradicted as they mentioned that women are given career advancements and promotions based on how they contribute and utilize their skills, education, and training to add value to the organization and growing better day by day. Women have the potential to advance in IT careers and get promoted at the same rate as men if they do not give up on their passion and do not run away from difficulties that arise at workplace. Group B mentioned; "Women must struggle more in the workplace to prove or justify her skills than men do. They face many issues such as harassment and work-life balance approaches that are lacking in the workplace." Which explains their belief that career advancement is possible but only if they break the barriers.

### Gender biasness

Woman of Group A did believe that the gender biasness percentage is rather low when it comes to the tech sector in the workplaces. Their responses were positive regarding this theme. One respondent, however, put forward an interesting recommendation as she said, "There is always room for improvement when we talk about gender diversity within the organization. Some best ways to further improve are to hire more females and to provide the different departments with proper gender-based discrimination training, implement fair compensation and promotion opportunities and **to learn from female staff exit interviews.**" Group B did not contradict the responses of Group A. They also showed satisfactory results from their organizations as

they talked about gender bias in their workplaces. They believed that women could prove themselves as effectively as men once given the opportunity and are able to communicate effectively and create a feeling of togetherness within the team. The idea or effort to recruit women in IT department is relative. Their organizations were very flexible about gender inclusivity and the idea to recruit females in their department was highly encouraged. They were satisfied as there was no gender biasness in terms of work assignments or completing daily tasks.

### Tech-Oriented roles

Group B strongly believes that hiring female employees in tech-oriented roles is a positive action for a company, the workers within the company, the workers still to come, the women involved, the economy, and the public. Hiring more women means having more dedicated members of staff in a place of work. This in turn easily boosts productivity and staff morale.

Group A also agrees with Group B as they mention; “There was equality in opportunities and also in workload. There were no differences. If we got some urgent tasks or got overloaded with work, we had to spend extra hours, like any other male developers. There was a policy to assign similar tasks to female developers like they used to do to male developers no matter the complexity of work. In short there was no gender biasness in terms of work assignments or completing daily tasks.”

### **Limitations**

In the beyond couple of many years, the job of women in our public has been radically changed. Women should be visible as warrior stream pilots, educationists, client administrations head, organization chiefs, administrator heads, and banking, HR (Human Resources) and telecom area. Women are making a gigantic commitment in every area. Men are not thought to be as the main bread worker of the house. Women of the family are currently additionally monetarily supporting their loved ones. However, the quantity of working women is expanding step by step yet there are sure hindrances that they need to cross to substantiate themselves advantageous for the gig market in IT division.

### **Orientation Based Separation**

Generally, men at their workplaces get more favors compared to women. Moreover, to get brownie points at the work settings, they do not even have



to go the extra mile. That is because we live in a male-dominated society with a perception that males are ambitious, driven, and smarter than women. This is the phenomenon of orientation separation that results in elevated levels of stress and occupational disappointment. Gradually, it reduces motivation to perform and take responsibility for the project.

Essentially, the opportunities for women to get quality training are very few, which brings about a lack of information in terms of mechanical headway.

### **Homebound Limitations**

In the past, women were not allowed to leave their homes and their primary responsibility was taking care of the household chores. As family financial strains have increased over time, this restriction has been implemented. Women are now allowed to pursue higher studies and work in paid employment in the great number of families, yet with some restrictions.

The highest level of working women should be apparent as health care workers, teachers, spokespeople, or any other low-paying occupations that are despised by men because of the lack of remarkable learning opportunities and poor salaries. Due to the predominance of women in certain occupations, women are allowed to deliver their work. This has hampered the woman's access to other opportunities and constrained their growth in the preliminary stages. Not only that, but no matter how exhausted they are from working all day at the workplace, they still must fulfill their domestic duties.

### **Harassment at Work**

To support the advancement of women in the workplace, Pakistan ought to ratify and put into practice a wider array of ILO Conventions. Another major concern for working women is badgering because it is seen by the male partners as a clear goal. In Pakistan, most women leave their homes to earn money at a time of extreme deprivation of the basic things needed to survive. Because they lack power, colleagues and higher-ups bother them by making crude remarks, belittling them, or in the most extreme situations, physically bothering them.

Women typically avoid discussing such issues, ignore them, or prepare for such demonstrations out of fear of losing their jobs. They often drop the idea of making charges against the alleged perpetrators. Some of them decide

to get out of the situation because they understand that asking a query about them is futile. Higher professionals and corrupt officials do not support them. When these cases are made public, there are strict regulations in place to support female employees. This is one of the key reasons why families forbid women from working.

### **Lesser Salaries**

The company should ensure that all types of workers receive equal compensation for similar amounts of effort. Since employees are commonly forbidden from discussing their pay rates, no one ever learns whether they are being paid more or less in many workplaces. Accusation, mistreatment, and taunting are stark examples. Lower pay is an unspoken offense, but since no one asks a question, the matter persists.

As a result of the assumption that a woman will leave her job after getting married or giving birth to children, women are mostly paid less than males. Women earn less than males are that they need to choose fewer demanding jobs so they may devote more time to their families. Parenthood harms a woman's career more than it affects a man's life.

The organization should provide some family-friendly provisions. Also, they should guarantee that all representatives receive equal pay without orientation segregation. If we remain silent during such a display of power, it suggests that we are covertly encouraging this wrongdoing.

### **Married Women at Work**

Most married women are not allowed to stay at work over their shifts, and because of their increased liability, it is difficult for them to juggle work and family responsibilities. Men are the primary breadwinners in the household; it is unclear whether women provide financial assistance for the family or, on the other hand, whether it is reasonable to infer that women earn more than men.

Working married women encounter problems at work as well. They cannot afford to put in late hours of labor. Many workplaces lack nurseries or other childcare facilities. So, mothers cannot leave their children anywhere while they complete their office work.

### **Male Coworkers Having Inimical Contentions**

Sometimes it is incredibly awkward and biased to work with male

coworkers. According to their perspective, women are only hired to improve the work atmosphere. Truancy, a low turnover rate, and job dissatisfaction are caused by the absence of a working environment and social support from coworkers and managers. A stable and functional office should be designed by higher specialists to solve such problems.

### **Transportation Problems**

In our country, the automotive structure is in a terrible shape. This presents a significant challenge for women who have to go out and accomplish massive goals. To help women access job possibilities, safe, inexpensive, and conveniently accessible public and private transportation should be made available. The chances for training and employment that women can access are severely constrained by the dearth of secure, dependable, and well-connected public transportation. Women are reluctant to work outside the home for many reasons, especially on the commute to and from work.

The government should decide how to handle this situation based on necessity. This problem can be solved with separate and easily accessible public transportation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To confront difficulties effectively, women should be self-assured and ought to stay up with the latest with the most recent happenings in the realm of innovation in the IT industry. The web has now tackled the issue of restricted open doors, as each web smart individual can admittance to the universe of information and data. So, women ought to continue to ride the web to build their insight. Great correspondence expertise is likewise a need; it helps in building informal organization which thus helps in evaluating whenever there are new open doors free. Complying with time constraints is additionally critical to substantiate yourself commendable. Another most significant thing is to keep up with balance in work and individual life.

Additionally, there is a need to instruct men and advise them to regard different women like they regard women in their loved ones. They ought to show adaptability in their demeanor and ought to acknowledge that women can perform far superior to them.

Proposals under Protection against Workplace Harassment recommend that the public authority ought to present consistency and straightforwardness

in Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cases connected with provocation in accordance with the prescribed procedures; survey WAHW Act, and widen its extension to incorporate independently employed people and others working in similar space, individuals from the casual and farming area; whether or not there is an authoritative business connection between the gatherings; give free lawful guidance to women, men and transsexual people; government commanded sharpening preparation phases to be directed by managers/organizations in Urdu and English; disclose transport more secure; teach about youth badgering; engage women to report provocation and bring issues to light among men.

Under Building Inclusive Workspaces; the suggestions encourage that the public authority ought to order making of childcares in working environments with no less than 50 representatives; increment government maternity paid leave from an absolute minimum of 16 weeks to a half year; to oversee arrangements of maternity and paternity advantages to representatives and in particular reconsider Factories Act 1934 to permit female laborers to work post dusk, to empower women to work at plants in both constantly moves to make more prominent consideration and business potential open doors.

### **Future Research**

Despite their enormous contribution to daily life, women in Pakistan are disproportionately underrepresented in the labor field. Where women work, they encounter other forms of discrimination that restrict their potential in addition to a substantial gender pay gap.

Pay discrimination comes in a variety of direct and indirect forms. Pay rates are sometimes specifically determined by a worker's gender, marital status, age, or ethnicity, which is blatant and direct discrimination. The majority of the time, discrimination is covert and indirect, like paying women less in fields that have historically been associated with them.

The future researchers may look into identifying the key components and barriers of gender pay gap in organizations in Pakistan and the requirement for anti-discrimination legislation, such as equal pay laws and regulations, which forbid discrimination in employment standards such as rank, salary, and entry requirements.

Research on Equity Approach to pay both genders can also help companies enhance their policies regarding equal employment. In order to achieve

gender, pay equity, both men and women must get compensation that is equal or similar for work that is performed in dissimilar roles and in diverse contexts. This calls for non-discriminatory valuation of abilities, obligations, and working conditions. Companies can reduce the gender pay gap and promote pay equity by encouraging pay disclosure openness, establishing objective standards for pay and promotions, and raising public awareness of the obstacles women experience in advancing their careers.

Pay equity seems to be a key factor in fostering gender diversity, maybe because it enhances women's value propositions and can place them on an equal footing with men in the home, increasing the likelihood that they will remain in the labor force.

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