



Gender Inequality in the Workplace: A Comparative Study Across Cultures

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Abstract

This research work looks at the role and extent of gender inequality in the workplace from cross cultural perspective. Women face challenges in employment to the, for and with due respect to promotion and opportunities and equality in wages at the global recourse at the workplace, alas advancement continues to have differentials affecting gender. Through a critical analysis of case of studies drawn from the western world, Eastern world, and third world nations, the study also reveal how the social cultural, economic as well as institutional factors foster gender bias. Adopting survey and interview technique, this research seeks to find out the outstanding practices and effective strategies for implementing gender equity. Consequently, the research evidence indicates that some cultures might afford progressive policies, while others are still rigorously patriarchal. This paper points to a need to regard gender inequality as a cultural issue and to remember that cultures differ, therefore policies and practices reflective of the cultural differences should be developed. Finally, the research seeks to advance the issue of gender equity and present helpful suggestions to companies seeking to establish gender equality at the workplace.

Keywords -Gender Inequality, Workplace Culture, Comparative Study, Gender Bias, Cultural Context, Women's Empowerment, Organizational Policies

Introduction

Discrimination based on gender is a key issue in the world of work and has far reaching consequences for growth, equity and organizational outcomes. Despite these social changes the employment opportunities, wages, and promotional opportunities still remain limited or unequal for women many across different cultures. This study aims to propose analysis of gender inequalities as a complex phenomenon in the context of different cultures and by comparing their differences and similarities, determine how such factors as socio-cultural norms, economic parameters and institutions influence women's employment.

Those disparities can still be explained by cultural norms that still claim that women and men are not equal and that women and girls should not be treated as roughly as boys and men. The widely accepted conventional roles held by women in most cultures, such as being confined to home and family responsibility, act as barriers to promoting women to work, earn salaries,

and assume positions in the workplace. However, cultures that encourage gender differences are likely to gain from such differences, making the overall most creative, innovative and make better decisions in their organizations.

this research will compare combating gender inequality in western countries, eastern societies and in the third world to establish the reasons for the disparities. Consistent with this logic, this research will employ both quantitative survey and qualitative interview methods in order to paint a complete picture of the obstacles that women encounter, as well as the best practices observed in organizations with regard to W&I.

The implications of this research for gender equality policy and practice are expected to aim at strengthening the current literature through identifying best practices as well as providing relevant suggestions for the government and other institutions. Since the global society continues to embrace the importance of diverse and inclusion, it will be critical to understand the cultural effects of gender disparity to develop appropriate solutions to foster appropriate workplace equality. Lastly, this research aims at showing how this can be done to demystify the possibility of eradicating Gender inequalities in the Workplace, so that everybody can be empowered, irrespective of the gender.

Literature review

Past literature reviews of gender inequalities in the place of employment have shown that thought has progressed as the culture, economic factors and legal provisions changed. Before 2008 it was possible to identify several trends in the pioneering scientific discussions of gender employment inequities in terms of their existence, origins and impact.

Gender quality in early research studies was conceived mainly based on the social exclusion and minimum representation of women in the labor market. Gendered Organizations concept was brought by Acker (1990) postulated that organizations are gendered since they are developed to support gender differences. Using institution and culture as the two major vectors, this foundational work demonstrated how women are socially constructed to be disadvantaged in their workplaces. Like the given concept “doing gender”, West and Zimmerman (1987) also study the way in which gender is not just an attribute but a creation done in everyday interactions.

Pre-2008 studies revealed that there remains a dramatic difference in labor force participation rate and wage differentials between male and female employees. According to the World Economic Forum (2006), women were paid about 60% of what men were paid internationally, a fact that called for attention because it had not changed with the progress of other industries. Following the work of Blau and Kahn (2007) an attempt was made to describe the causes of the gender wage differential in the United SU states with the variables considered as being occupational segmentation, work experience and discrimination.

The framing of intersectionality by Crenshaw (1989) was developed during the late twentieth century and started moving to a discussion of gender disparities in the labor market. Academic started to research the ways in which gender relates to race, class and other social divisions and consequently, different forms of subordination are lived. For example, Cho et al (2003) explored the ways in which women of color are doubly disqualified and how this disadvantages them in their careers, and at work.

Other variables that attracted empathy of authors have to do with culture and more specifically gender roles. To understand these cultural aspects regarding gender and work Hofstede (1980) cultural dimensions was used as a theoretical base. Following research used this method to analyze gender relations within different cultures demonstrating how important norms influenced relations in the work environment (Hofstede, 2001).

Another important area of research was concerning the place of organisational policies and practices in reducing gender inequality. Based on the article from Catalyst (2004), it became evident that diversity management measures like the mentorship and/or 'work flex' initiatives contributed immensely to women's career enhancement. Still, changes did not reflect on the organizations and as such the efficacy of put in place policies in an attempt to eradicate disparities in the outcomes between women and men were not well implemented hence the persistence of the issue. Another study by Eagly & Carli (2007) studying gender quotas noted that leaders are instrumental in determining the culture for women's careers noting the significance of inclusive leadership.

The research which existed before 2008 established basic knowledge on gender inequality in the employees whereby various social, cultural as well as organizational factors were involved. Despite progress made in decreasing these concerns, disparities remain that warrant the endurance of exploration and remediation. This literature review serves as a background to the current study, which aims at establishing the various cultural environments in societies whereby women still face certain challenges, and also how women and equal opportunities commissions in certain cultures have managed to adopt and implement measures in women's careers.

Objectives of the study

- To evaluate the extent of wage gaps between men and women in various cultural settings and identify the contributing factors to these disparities.
- To identify the structural and systemic barriers that hinder women's career advancement in different organizational contexts, including discriminatory practices, lack of mentorship, and work-life balance challenges.
- To investigate how intersecting identities, such as race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, impact women's experiences of inequality in the workplace.

Research methodology

This work uses an explanatory sequential mixed-methods framework whereby qualitative and quantitative techniques are used consecutively for collecting, analysing, and interpreting data on cultural variations in gender discrimination in employment environments. Each, the quantitative aspect includes sending out systematically developed generic questionnaires towards a diverse group of the employees working for different organizations of various industries and belonging to different cultures. The survey will include variables such as personal Gender Role Attitudes, Discrimination, Promotion and Opportunities, and Wage Differential. In this case, the application of descriptive statistics and regression ANALYSIS will be used to compare the results and the existence of significant patterns and correlations. The third element of the qualitative aspect includes only the semi-structured interviews with some of the participants, which enable the researcher to get to the point of individual impressions and attitudes toward gender inequality. Such an approach promotes the acquisition of a proper perspective of the culture that may underpin the working environment. The information for the comparison of gender inequality will be gathered from several countries so the results will focus on the similarities and differences. Wherever possible the ethical principles of users' consent and anonymity of the participants will be respected. The proposed mixed method approach will make use of quantitative and qualitative data to add relevancy and depth to the research findings with a view of having a wider understanding of the issue of gender inequality and what can be done to change this negative culture on organizations and in different contexts.

Data analysis and discussion

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender Distribution	Male	120	53.30%
	Female	105	46.67%
Age Distribution	18-24 years	45	20.00%
	25-34 years	80	35.60%
	35-44 years	50	22.20%
	45-54 years	30	13.30%
	55 years and above	20	8.90%
Educational Qualification	High School Diploma	30	13.30%
	Bachelor's Degree	105	46.70%
	Master's Degree	70	31.10%
	Doctorate	20	8.90%
Occupational Categories	Entry-Level Positions	50	22.20%
	Mid-Level Positions	100	44.40%
	Senior-Level Positions	50	22.20%
	Executive/Management Positions	25	11.10%
Cultural Background	Western Cultures	90	40.00%

	Eastern Cultures	85	37.80%
	Developing Nations	50	22.20%
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	30	13.30%
	1-5 years	80	35.60%
	6-10 years	50	22.20%
	11-20 years	40	17.80%
	More than 20 years	25	11.10%

In Table 1, we can see the descriptive statistics that provide a good picture of the 225 people who filled out the survey on gender disparity at work.

The sample is well equal in terms of gender representation, with a small male dominance, since there are more men (53.30%) than females (46.67%). Thanks to this breakdown by gender, we can compare how men and women feel about and react to inequality on the job.

Among the respondents, 35.60 percent are between the ages of 25 and 34, while 22.20 percent are between the ages of 35 and 44. This suggests that the workforce is mostly comprised of younger workers. This indicates that most of the people who took the survey are still relatively young in their professions, which might explain why they have different perspectives on things like gender roles and professional progression.

Academic Credentials—When asked about their level of education, a large percentage of respondents (46.70%) said they had a bachelor's degree and 31.10% said they have a master's. An educated workforce is essential for addressing gender inequity and empowering women in the workplace, and this high level of education is a sign of that.

Occupational Groups - Among the respondents, 44.40 percent hold mid-level employment, while 22.20 percent are either entry-level or senior-level employees. Since many of the women in our sample are well-established in their fields, this distribution sheds insight on the obstacles they may encounter while trying to climb the corporate ladder.

Questionnaire Respondents' Cultural Backgrounds: Forty percent are Westerners, thirty-seven percent are Easterners, and twenty-two percent are from poor countries. Because of this variety, we can investigate how different cultural backgrounds affect our understanding and reaction to gender bias in the workplace.

Experience in the Workplace—A large percentage of the sample is new to the workforce, as 35.60 percent of respondents had 1–5 years of experience. Along with a diverse variety of experiences that may shape the study's results, 11.30% have less than one year of experience and 11.10% have more than 20 years.

In sum, the respondent demographics provide a wealth of background information for studying workplace gender disparities. The study's abilities to draw nuanced findings and

propose suggestions targeted at fostering gender parity across distinct cultural contexts are enhanced by the variety in age, education, profession, cultural background, and work experience. This study lays the framework for future quantitative and qualitative assessments of the causes of gender disparity in the workplace.

Table 2 – Regression Analysis Results

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-Value	p-Value	95% Confidence Interval
Intercept	3.1	0.4	7.75	<0.001	[2.31, 3.89]
Perceived Gender Roles	-0.3	0.06	-5	<0.001	[-0.42, -0.18]
Experiences of Discrimination	0.45	0.08	5.63	<0.001	[0.29, 0.61]
Career Advancement Opportunities	-0.25	0.07	-3.57	<0.001	[-0.39, -0.11]
Wage Disparities	0.5	0.09	5.56	<0.001	[0.32, 0.68]

Perceived gender disparity in the workplace is influenced by several variables, as shown in Table 2's regression analysis findings. With all other factors being equal, the intercept of 3.10 indicates that there is a significant level of preexisting sense of gender disparity.

Stronger adherence to conventional gender norms is connected with a reduction in perceived gender disparity ($r=-0.30$ for the measure Perceived Gender norms). This correlation is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that people's impression of gender disparity decreases when they believe gender roles are more equal. To improve feelings of justice at work, this discovery highlights the need of encouraging progressive ideas on gender roles.

Discrimination Experiences—A positive correlation of 0.45 for the discrimination experiences variable suggests that those who report more discrimination are more likely to perceive more gender disparity. The negative effect of prejudice on views of gender equality is further shown by this association, which is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). In order to reduce the detrimental impact of prejudice on employee attitudes and morale, organizations should take a holistic approach to addressing it.

Opportunities for Professional Growth — Perceptions of gender inequality are adversely connected to Career Advancement Opportunities ($r=-0.25$). This shows that workers had a more positive impression of gender disparity when they believe they have equal opportunity to succeed in their careers. Promoting fair career progression possibilities is crucial for improving views of fairness in the workplace, since this association is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

salary inequalities—Finally, a coefficient of 0.50 for the Wage Disparities variable suggests a robust positive correlation between views of gender inequality and salary inequalities. Perceptions of uneven compensation substantially amplify sentiments of gender inequality, according to this research, which is significant at $p < 0.001$. In order to promote a fair workplace and increase employee happiness and retention rates, it is essential to address salary inequities.

According to the results of the regression analysis, there are many important elements that contribute to the perception of gender disparity in the workplace. These include preconceived notions about gender roles, personal experiences with discrimination, possibilities for professional progress, and salary discrepancies. The fact that these associations are statistically significant means that companies really need to do something about these problems and make the workplace more fair for everyone.

Conclusion

This research proposes a conceptual framework that broken down into gender role perceptions, discrimination, promotion opportunity, and wage differentials, to investigate gender discrimination at the workplace across different cultures. The results indicate that these variables have a profound impact on gender perceptions of inequalities, making gender issue more intricate.

The findings will show that there is negative correlation with the perceived level of gender equity, and the traditional gender roles beliefs hence signifying that there effective ways of changing the mind set of the people to ensure that they respect gender equity in the workplaces. Discrimination experiences appeared as the single strongest daily predictor of perceived gender inequality, highlighting the importance of organisations' awareness of unequal treatment practices and efforts in creating a more inclusive environment. In addition, the focus of the study is drawn to fair promotion policies in the workplace where actual or perceived lack of equality increases the level of perceived gender inequity.

This paper also noted that wages discriminated based on gender provided insights endured by women of gender inequity prompting organization leaders to embrace fair compensation practices. How to reduce and narrow wage disparities is important not only for ensuring that employees would be happy with their wages but also for creating a notion of fairness in wages for all the workers.

Lastly, the forms and reasons of inequality in workplace are discussed and the need for the intervention of such issues is emphasized. When organizational gender norms are progressive, discrimination is reduced, promotion opportunities are equalized for both genders, and wage inequalities are eliminated, organizational structures are made fairer and better for all employees. Subsequent research should also examine these dynamics across various cultures with a view of accentuating knowledge in gender inequality and subsequent organizational implications.

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