

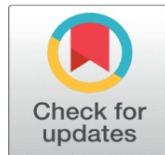
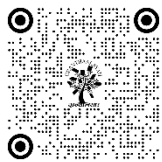
A COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AMONG ACADEMIC FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Anushka Keshari¹, Pooja Singh², Diksha Chaubey³

¹Research Scholar, Faculty of Commerce, BHU

²Research Scholar, Faculty of Commerce, BHU

³Research Scholar, Faculty of Commerce, BHU



Corresponding Author

Anushka Keshari,
kesharia095@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Research conducted within colleges in the Varanasi district highlights the crucial significance of implementing gender-neutral recruitment policies to bolster employee performance, aligning with established scholarly discourse on organizational behavior. Despite persistent challenges posed by gender discrimination across various societal dimensions, this study specifically delves into the impact of gender-based discrimination against women on job performance within government universities situated in a distinct geographic region. Employing a methodological framework tailored to the research context, a dataset comprising 107 meticulously completed questionnaires was assembled from academic personnel within government-affiliated universities and colleges in the specified region. Employing sophisticated statistical methodologies such as Pearson correlation and regression analysis, the study discerns a discernible negative correlation between instances of gender-based discrimination in managerial capacities and subsequent job performance outcomes. These findings underscore the deleterious ramifications of gender bias on organizational effectiveness and advocate ardently for the adoption of meritocratic principles in staffing decisions across university settings. Applying these insights to the collegiate landscape of the Varanasi district accentuates the imperative of addressing gender-based discrimination as a strategic imperative to optimize institutional performance and cultivate inclusive organizational cultures conducive to academic excellence.

Keywords: Academic staff, Employee performance, Gender discrimination, Varanasi Colleges.



1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the discourse surrounding gender equality in the workplace has garnered significant attention across various sectors. Within the realm of academia, where principles of fairness, meritocracy, and knowledge dissemination are championed, the presence of gender discrimination raises profound concerns. Despite concerted efforts to promote diversity and inclusivity, disparities persist, particularly in higher education institutions' recruitment practices and leadership appointments. This study seeks to empirically explore the complex relationship between gender discrimination and employee performance among academic staff in higher education institutions. We specifically analyze how discriminatory practices in recruitment policies and managerial roles affect job performance, thereby enhancing our understanding of the dynamics within academic environments.

Organizations are established to achieve specific objectives that will allow them to maximize profits or improve the standard of living for all members of the populace in any given society.

Competent personnel are needed to accomplish these objectives. Additionally, a company's effectiveness is influenced by high-quality management that prioritizes qualifications, training, and experience while opposing all forms of gender discrimination. From this viewpoint, poor governance, irrespective of gender, leads to inefficiencies within the organization and society as a whole (Okoh, L., Ojoh, J., & Nosegbe, B., 2008).

Although gender inequalities were first noted in the 1950s, it wasn't until the 1980s and 1990s that they became a significant factor in organizational and administrative research. Over these two decades, several studies (Hearn & Parkin, 1987) that concentrated on women in organizations with a male predominance took gender impacts into account.

"Gender comprises a range of differences between men and women, extending from the biological to the social" is the definition of gender. Gender discrimination is defined as "treating differently based on sex or race" (Wordnet online). This leads us to the conclusion that one gender is preferred over another.

This study employs rigorous empirical analysis to explore the subtle manifestations of gender discrimination and its impact on job performance among academic staff. Using regression analysis, we quantitatively evaluate the extent to which gender discrimination in recruitment policies and managerial roles predicts job performance. This approach provides empirical evidence to guide policy interventions and organizational practices.

Following is the delineation of the constructs employed within the study:-

GENDER DISCRIMINATION: - Gender discrimination refers to the unfair and uneven handling of persons and communities based on their gender. Although it predominantly harms women and girls, everyone is harmed since it is founded on discriminatory and constrictive gender stereotypes. A few instances of discrimination against women include the gender pay gap, employment segregation, and gender-based violence.

RECRUITMENT POLICY: - Recruitment policies encompass the strategies and methodologies employed to identify and onboard new employees possessing the requisite skills, experience, and qualifications to enhance organizational productivity.

JOB PERFORMANCE: - Job performance evaluates an individual's ability to execute a task effectively. Human resources management includes job performance, which is researched academically in industrial and organizational psychology. A key factor in determining the success and outcomes of an organization is performance.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Regardless, hiring entails three specific steps. First, there is the recruitment process itself, which may involve using business offices, informal networks, or newspaper ads (Bloch, 1994). The second is the process that determines who is enlisted and who manages to walk away. Selection of candidates for interviews, conduct of interviews and examinations, and selection of job candidates are all included in this (Granovetter M 2018; 1995; 1974).

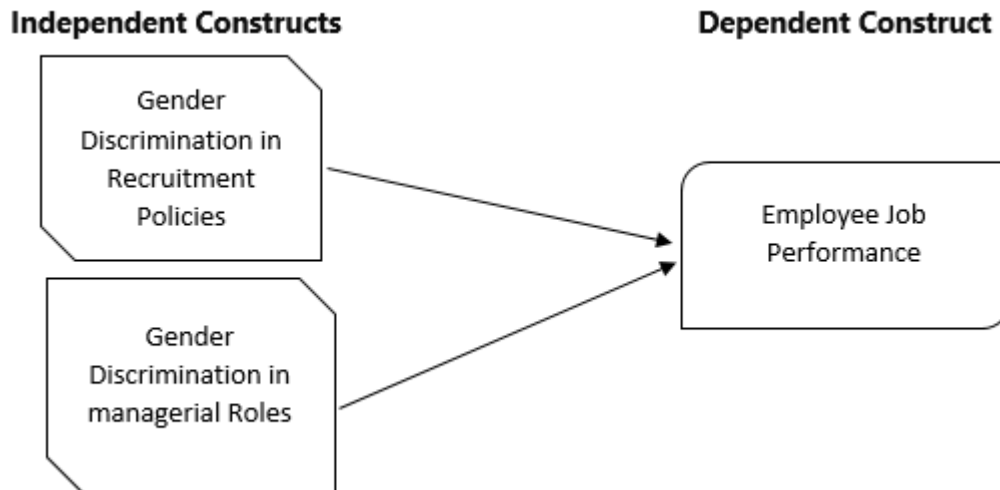
Hiring the wrong candidate due to discriminatory recruitment practices can be costly. Selecting the right person is vital because of the investment of time and money in promotion, office expenses, interviews, and the potential long-term financial and non-financial consequences of hiring an unsuitable candidate. Traditionally, organizations have emphasized identifying and selecting individuals based on their skills and experience. When someone with the right combination of skills and knowledge in a similar field is found, it is encouraging, as they are likely to succeed in other roles. However, gender bias often leads to discrimination against women during the hiring process (Adeniji A.A., 2012). Compared to male employees, female clerical workers experience discrimination when it comes to promotions. The findings show that, in comparison to male employees, female clerks face unique and difficult obstacles to growth. Daniel (2014) discovered that employee productivity is negatively impacted by sex discrimination. Due to discrimination, female employees are less productive since they are not given administrative or advancement opportunities (Swimmer, 1990). According to Yap and Konrad (2009), women from visible minority groups (both white and black) are less likely to move to a higher position at a lower level of the organizational hierarchy. In contrast, males from visible minority groups also experience less advancement at lower and higher levels of the hierarchy.

Compensation between the various labor market workers is the other crucial aspect of segregation. Because of the diversity of the workforce, the gender gap between male and female workers is a notable characteristic of worker markets. Men are occasionally paid more than women in the workplace, despite the association's vital characteristics. This is the overt participation in the many private associations that women employees face when it comes to sex isolation in compensation distribution. Should the work inclination be about equal, female employees will seek lower pay in comparison to their male colleagues (Jackson, 2011).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY: - Based on an exhaustive review of the literature, the subsequent research objectives have been delineated:

1. To assess the extent of gender discrimination against women in higher education institutions regarding appointments.
2. To analyze the impact of gender discrimination in recruitment policies on academic staff performance.
3. To investigate how gender discrimination in managerial roles affects the performance of employees.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:- Figure 1 provides a graphical representation of the survey's conceptual model, depicting the interconnections between the study's dependent construct (employee performance) and the independent constructs (gender discrimination in recruitment policies and gender discrimination in managerial roles).



HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:- The survey underscores the principal hypotheses as follows:

H0₁:- There is no significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Recruitment Policy and employees' job performance.

H0₂:- There is no significant impact of Gender Discrimination in Recruitment policy on employees' job performance.

H0₃:- There is no significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Managerial Roles and employees' job performance.

H0₄:- There is no significant impact of Gender Discrimination in Managerial Roles on employees' job performance.

3. METHODOLOGY

The following research methodology employed in this study aims to fulfill its objectives effectively:-

RESEARCH DESIGN: A quantitative research design was used to systematically analyze the relationship between gender discrimination, managerial roles, and job performance among employees in higher education institutions. This approach enables the collection of numerical data to measure variables and test hypotheses.

SAMPLING: Utilized a convenience sampling technique to select participants from various higher education institutions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data for this study was gathered through the questionnaire. This questionnaire was adapted from a research paper by Daniel E. Gbrevbie et. al., (2014).

The questionnaire comprised two sections: Part A aimed to capture respondents' demographic details, encompassing gender, age, educational attainment, and position within the organization. Part B, on the other hand, consisted of fifteen items, with five items sourced from each construct. These items were designed to elicit respondents' opinions on the subject matter, employing a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree."

The proposed research model was validated using correlation and regression analyses. This survey aimed to add to the existing literature on gender discrimination and its effects on employee performance, particularly in emerging economies. Employee job performance was the dependent variable, while recruitment policies and managerial roles were the independent variables. Each variable was measured using a 5-point Likert scale.

To ensure the reliability of the scale used in this study, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated, and the results are displayed in Table 1

Table 1 analyzes the reliability measures of the research instrument.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.796	3

The number of items on the research instrument is 15 and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is .796, which is above .7. Therefore, the scale used for this study can be considered reliable.

RESPONDENTS' DEMOGRAPHICS: The following are the demographic characteristics of respondents:-

Table 2 gender

	N	%
Female	79	73.8%
Male	28	26.2%

Note: - N= Number of Respondent

Table 2 represents the distribution of the sampled employees including 73.8% (79) females and 26.2% (28) males.

Table 3 age

	N	%
21-30 Years	57	53.3%
31-40 Years	29	27.1%
41-50 Years	4	3.7%
51 and Above	17	15.9%

Note: - N = Number of Respondents

Table 3 represents the employee sample encompassing four age brackets, with the majority falling within the 21-30 years group (53.3%), followed by the 31-40 years group (27.1%). The least represented age group was 41-50 years (3.7%), with 51 and above accounting for 15.9% of respondents.

Table 4 Highest level of education

	N	%
Doctorate	43	40.2%
Master Degree	64	59.8%

Note: - N= Number of Respondent

Table 4 shows that the employee sample predominantly comprises individuals with Doctorate and Master's Degree qualifications.

Table 5 level of position

	N	%
Assistant Professor	34	31.8%
Associate Professor	4	3.7%
Guest Lecturer	4	3.7%
INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL	4	3.7%
Lecturer	8	7.5%
Medical Professional	4	3.7%
Professor	5	4.7%
Research scholar	32	29.8%
Student	12	11.2%

Note: - N- Number of Respondent

Table 5 shows that the majority of respondents are Assistant Professors and Research Scholars, reflecting a significant presence of academic staff and aspiring scholars in the sample. However, other positions such as Lecturer, Professor, and Student are also represented to a lesser extent.

Table 6 correlation

		RP	MR	JP
RP	Pearson Correlation	1		
	N	107		
MR	Pearson Correlation	.601**	1	
	N	107	107	
JP	Pearson Correlation	.509**	.623**	1
	N	107	107	107

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Recruitment Policy and Job Performance of employees.

Pearson product correlation of Gender Discrimination in Recruitment Policy and Job Performance of employees was found moderately positive and statistically significant.

($r = .509$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, **H0₁ is rejected**. This shows that there is a significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Recruitment Policy and Job Performance.

H0₃: There is no significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Managerial Roles and the Job performance of employees.

Pearson product correlation of Gender Discrimination in Managerial Roles and Job Performance of employees was found moderately positive and statistically significant.

($r = .601$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, **H0₃ is rejected**. This shows that there is a significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Managerial Roles and Job Performance.

Table 7 Tests of Normality

Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
.078	107	.110	.979	107	.082

Shapiro-Wilk normality tests show that $p(\text{sig.}) = .082$, which is > 0.05 , suggesting that the data adheres to a normal distribution. Thus, parametric tests will be employed to evaluate the hypotheses.

Table 8 Regression

Hypothesis	Regression Weights	Beta Coefficient	R ²	F	p-value	Hypotheses Supported
H0 ₂	RP	.239	.416	37.081	<.001	Rejected
H0 ₄	MR	.392	.416	37.081	<.001	Rejected

H0₂: There is no significant impact of Gender Discrimination in Recruitment policy on employees' job performance.

The dependent variable JP was regressed on the predicating variable RP to test the hypothesis H₁ RP significantly predicted JP, $F(2, 104) = 37.081$, $p < 0.001$, which indicates that the two factors under study have a significant impact on Job Performance. Moreover, the $R^2 = .416$ depicts that the model explains 41.6% of the variance in Job Performance.

Additionally, coefficients were further assessed to ascertain the influence of each of the factors on the independent variable. H0₂ states that there is no significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Recruitment Policy and Job Performance of employees. The results revealed that Recruitment Policy has a significant impact on Job Performance ($B = .239$, $t = 2.257$, $p = .026$). Hence, H0₂ is rejected.

H0₄: There is no significant impact of Gender Discrimination in Managerial Roles on employees' job performance.

H0₄ states that there is no significant relationship between Gender Discrimination in Managerial Roles and the Job performance of employees. The results show that discrimination in managerial roles has a significant impact on the job performance of the employees ($B = .392$, $t = 5.286$, $p < .001$). Consequently, H0₄ is rejected.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS: -

The study investigated the relationship between gender discrimination in recruitment policies and managerial roles and its impact on job performance among employees.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN RECRUITMENT POLICY: -

The analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between gender discrimination in recruitment policies and job performance. This suggests that discriminatory practices during the hiring process can adversely affect employee performance.

GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN MANAGERIAL ROLES: -

Similarly, a significant positive relationship was found between gender discrimination in managerial roles and job performance. This indicates that biases in leadership positions can have a detrimental effect on employee performance. Regression analysis further supported these findings, showing that both factors significantly predict job performance. Gender discrimination in recruitment policies and managerial roles collectively explained a substantial portion of the variance in job performance.

BASED ON THE ANALYSIS, THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE MADE TO MITIGATE THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION ON JOB PERFORMANCE: -

1. REVIEW AND REVISE RECRUITMENT POLICIES:

Organizations should critically evaluate their recruitment policies to ensure they are free from gender bias. Implementing transparent and merit-based hiring practices can help attract and retain diverse talent.

2. ADDRESS GENDER BIAS IN MANAGERIAL ROLES:

Organizations must promote diversity and inclusion in leadership positions to combat gender discrimination. Providing training on unconscious bias and fostering a culture of equality can help create a more supportive work environment.

3. ENHANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING MECHANISMS:

Establishing robust monitoring and reporting mechanisms can help identify and address instances of gender discrimination effectively. Encouraging employees to report discrimination and implementing swift corrective actions can help uphold fairness and equity in the workplace.

4. FOSTER A CULTURE OF EQUALITY:

Organizations should actively promote a culture of equality and respect, where all employees feel valued and empowered to succeed regardless of gender. Celebrating diversity and recognizing the contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds can help foster a more inclusive workplace culture.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:-

1. SAMPLE SIZE AND GENERALIZABILITY

The study may have limitations in terms of sample size and representativeness. The findings are based on a specific sample of employees, which may not be fully representative of the entire workforce. Therefore, caution should be exercised when generalizing the results to broader populations.

2. Self-Report Bias

The data collected for the study may be subject to self-report bias. Employees may have provided responses based on their perceptions or experiences, which may not accurately reflect the true extent of gender discrimination or its impact on job performance.

3. LACK OF CONTROL FOR CONFOUNDING VARIABLES

The study may not have accounted for all potential confounding variables that could influence the relationship between gender discrimination, managerial roles, and job performance. Factors such as organizational culture, job satisfaction, and individual differences were not explicitly controlled for in the analysis.

4. LIMITED SCOPE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations provided in the study focus primarily on addressing gender discrimination in recruitment policies and managerial roles. However, other forms of discrimination or systemic barriers within the organization may also impact job performance but were not fully explored in the analysis.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES:

While the recommendations offer actionable strategies to mitigate the negative impact of gender discrimination, organizations may face challenges in implementing these interventions effectively. Factors such as resistance to change, resource constraints, and organizational culture may hinder the adoption of proposed solutions.

Acknowledging these limitations is essential for interpreting the study's findings accurately and for informing future research efforts aimed at addressing gender discrimination and its implications for job performance in the workplace.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors contributed equally to the theoretical development, analysis, interpretation, and writing of the manuscript.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author declares that no competing interests exist.

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