

Impact of gender discrimination on employee performance



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Since the independence Pakistan has seen the formation of its banking system with the birth of State Bank of Pakistan in 1948, till 70s the banks were state owned and it was in 70s when they started to get privatized, till the 80s the banks saw the ups and downs but it was in the 90s when banking sector witnessed change. In the 90s the state-owned banks got privatized, first banks to undergo the privatization were Muslim Commercial Bank and Allied Bank, privatized between 1991 and 1993. In 2002 the third largest bank called United Bank got privatized and Habib Bank got privatized in 2004. Currently there are 54 banks operating in Pakistan which include 4 public sector banks, 5 Islamic banks, 20 private banks, 7 foreign banks, 8 DFIs, 4 special banks like IDBP, PPCB, ZTBL and 6 micro finance banks/institution (Banks in Pakistan, 2008). Currently banking sector is the soundest working sector of the country and even when in 2008 world witnessed global crunch the banking sector of Pakistan exhibited sound position due to its policies. The reason for choosing the banking sector as a study field is that it is the most developed institution of Pakistan it is has most developed and most operationalized Human resources system and thousands of people are employed by the banks.

Oxford dictionary defines Discrimination as “ a distinction (made with the mind, or in action)”, discrimination is a phenomenon that is present in any and almost every organization, discrimination simply defined is a biased treatment of a person based on his/her affiliation with a certain group, it is a behavior exhibited to other people. In workplace discrimination the employee or group of employees are made target of prejudice (Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003) and the person that is being discriminated is

not given the opportunities that others are availing or are available to others and furthermore it point to the tools for demonstrating and establishing the social relation of “ dominance” and “ oppression” (Kreiger, 1999) . According to United Nations “ Discriminatory behaviors take many forms, but they all involve some form of exclusion or rejection”, so the discrimination’s eventually affect an individual or group by excluding him/them from privileges that others are enjoying. There are different kinds of discriminations like racial/ethnic, age, gender, identity, cast, employment, disability, reverse, religious discriminations to name a few. Discrimination at a workplace means that the employee or group of employees are not treated fairly as compared to others and the reason for this treatment is not related with the ability of employee’s or group of employee’s to perform their specific job assigned by the organization. For this study direct discrimination is of more interest, direct discrimination is the type in which an employee or group of employees are affected by the decision which is based on an assumption stemming from employee or group of employees belonging to a certain status. In this study the focus would be on form of discrimination that is without legal basis but allowed as a norm and not the other kind which is prohibited by law. The topic aims at studying the effects of discrimination on the performance of an employee of an organization and the kind of discrimination that is being under research is the gender based discrimination which may arise between superiors and subordinates and also between peers. Gender discrimination is attitude and belief of the discriminator of giving or refraining to give rights to the employee due to his/her gender, it also can be behavior, policy, interaction, action and procedure which affects the work of an employee negatively by creating a

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disparate treatment or creation of intimidating work environment or hostile environment which is according to sex (Carr, et al., 2000). In developing countries this practice is prevalent and the main target of this kind of discrimination are women although gender harassment doesn't mean that only women are prone to this type of discrimination but mostly women are the victims of such type of discrimination. Discrimination regardless of its type can cause ill effects of the mental health of an individual for example discrimination causes social disconnection and causes a sense of distress (Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2004), discrimination can be an important kind of a stress which can affect health of an employee badly, stress due to discrimination can trigger psychological reactivity, and it affects the mental health (Williams, 1999). Another effect of discrimination is the trust; discrimination negatively affects the trust between discriminator and the discriminated, trust being a psychological condition covers a state of "perceived" risk that is result of an individual's ambiguity concerning possible actions and intentions of those upon whom that person is depending (Kramer, 1999) and while trusting an individual puts his fate in the "TRUSTED" person's hands hoping/expecting that he will perform his/her duty diligently. Third the organizational commitment is an important issue here, the organizational commitment is a relation between the employer and his employee, organizational commitment creates in an employee responsibility towards the employer which improves the employee's work behavior (Shore & Wayne, 1993). Organizations use the technique of gender mainstreaming to promote the equality among the employees of an organization and it is defined as a process of change that includes how an organization's system and structure is causing discrimination indirectly and to change that structure

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and system to get rid of that discrimination all over the world this technique is used to cater to the specific problem of discrimination. All of the above have their own individual effects which when combined can affect an individual in many different ways by affecting his personal life as well as his professional life.

The objective of this study is to see if there exists a significant relationship between the gender discrimination and the employee performance in an organization. The gender discrimination has many outcomes but for this study the outcomes that are under study include mental health of an individual which is affected by the discrimination regardless of the nature or kind of such discrimination, it is in this study that effect on trust between the employer and the employee is also observed whether it affects the employee performance or not, the discrimination when occur would also affect an employee's commitment towards the organization that he is working with and when this happens the employee would lose interest and that affects the performance of that employee negatively. Of interest to this research is to study the work conditions of the banking sector of Pakistan where equal employment opportunity is provided to both men and women and where both gender are coworkers, with banks having a strong human resource setup it is of interest to observe what is the scenario of discrimination in such a work environment.

The research question for this study include questions such as observing if the gender discrimination exists in the working environment of Pakistani banking sector. The second question would be to observe the significance of such relation which means to observe if that relation is strong or mild or <https://assignbuster.com/impact-of-gender-discrimination-on-employee-performance/>

negligible. The third question that would need answering is that do the outcomes of gender discrimination which have been mentioned above affect the employee performance and how intense their relationship with employee performance is. The next question addresses the gender mainstreaming and to what extent gender mainstreaming moderates the effect of gender discrimination, this would also reveal whether Pakistani banking sector is making any efforts proactively to prevent the problem of workplace gender discrimination or not. And then the question would arise that in current Pakistani culture which is heavily male dominated culture and where discrimination maybe considered a norm then in such conditions what would be the effect of such discrimination on an employee's performance, would the effect be considerable or would the effect be minimal?

The business reason for this study is to observe how well the banking sector of the country is doing as the banking sector actively encourages women through their advertisements to join the banking industry and also because for a few years the banking industry is single most booming industry of the country and because even though women are encouraged to work in the sector it is still mainly a male dominated society where gender discrimination may manifest at some point of time, the business reason would be to identify whether the practice of gender discrimination exists or not and to what extent such phenomenon exist and how it is affecting the workers of the sector. By identifying the prevalence of this phenomenon in the sector the banking companies can take measures to control such issues and that in turn would benefit the employees of those companies by providing them healthy work environment where all the employees regardless of their gender could

achieve the full potential that they are capable of. This study is of interest because it takes about a phenomenon that has been mostly observed in the western work and social environment, to observe this phenomenon in Pakistani cultural settings and work settings is of great interest that would reveal the amount of the phenomenon in existence and its significance and it would also be of interest to see if Pakistani banking sector has acknowledged the existence of this phenomenon and if they are doing anything about it or not.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Gender discrimination is one is an apparent issue in the society of Pakistan, Pakistan got independence in 1947 and since it was once a part of India the Indian influence exists still today that is why equality of genders is an issue and to resolve this issue a culture change would have to be applied still Pakistan is more advanced than its neighbor in terms of female rights. Discrimination itself is a phenomenon that is found worldwide take America for example where inequality is ever more present due to discrimination (Darity Jr & Mason, 1998) and British labor market is no different either there also exist gender discrimination as in UK women's compensation is lower than that of a man (Wright & Ermisch, 1991), simply we can say that discrimination is a biased behavior towards certain individuals. Scholars have identified discrimination as the situation where employee or group of employees are made target of prejudice (Major, Quinton, & Schmader, 2003) and the target is deprived of the opportunities that are available to rest, furthermore it points to the tools for demonstrating and establishing the social relation of "dominance" and "oppression"

(Kreiger, 1999). According to United Nations “ Discriminatory behaviors take many forms, but they all involve some form of exclusion or rejection”, so the discrimination’s eventually affect an individual or group by excluding him/them from privileges that others are enjoying. Among the different kinds of discriminations like racial/ethnic, age, gender, identity, cast, employment, disability, reverse, religious for this study gender discrimination that occurs at the workplace is of interest. Discrimination at a workplace is that when employees as individuals or in groups are not treated fairly as compared to others and the reason is not their professional capability to perform specific task as assigned to them. In this study the focus would be on evaluating keeping in mind the social and cultural differences the extent of existence of gender discrimination in the Pakistani work environment. Gender discrimination is a discrimination which is unbalanced approach towards a person because of his/her gender, furthermore Gender discrimination is attitude and belief of the discriminator of giving or refraining to give rights to the employee due to his/her gender, it also can be behavior, policy, interaction, action and procedure which affects the work of an employee negatively by creating a disparate treatment or creation of intimidating work environment or hostile environment which is according to sex (Carr, et al., 2000). Discrimination on the base of gender hampers performance by affecting the level of professional self-esteem and confidence, career satisfaction and being secluded in a work environment affecting their performance (Carr, Szalacha, Barnett, Caswell, & Inui, 2003). In developing countries this practice is prevalent and the main target of this kind of discrimination are women although gender harassment doesn’t mean that

only women are prone to this type of discrimination but mostly women are the victims of such type of discrimination.

For this study of gender discrimination and its effect on employee's performance the independent variable is Gender discrimination and there are many outcomes of gender discrimination and from those outcomes 3 have been taken to be included in this study. The first outcome is the JOB STRESS; stress can be called an result of a person and that outcome is because of the workplace environment that is for him unsafe (Bashir & Ramay, 2010). Scholars have documented that discrimination causes ill effects on the mental health of an individual and causes social disconnection and a sense of distress (Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2004), stress can affect health of an employee badly, stress due to discrimination can trigger psychological reactivity, and it affects the mental health (Williams, 1999). Job stress is the biggest contributor to the organizational expenditure and when the employee is exposed to job stress for prolonged periods to time it eventually leads to job burnout (Maslach, 2003) and the burn out diminishes an employee's job performance as a result. Stress inducing effects of gender discrimination have been documented also by (Kreiger, 2002) who reported that gender discrimination affected a person's health by significantly elevating the stress levles of the affected. Job Stress occurs from the social relations that are within the confines of an organization (Le Blanc, De Jonge, & Schaufeli, 2000). Further the job stress stemming form gender discrimination directly affects the performance of an employee in an organization. Further (AbdulRub, 2004) also reported that there existed relation between job stress and performance, scholars have found that

gender discrimination affects the career satisfaction, professional self confidence and esteem and seclusiveness. Another study conducted suggested that job stress significantly decreases the performance of an employee (Bashir & Ramay, 2010).

The other outcome for the independent variable of this study is TRUST; the study of trust in an organizational setting has been significant since 1995 and now more and more scholars are looking into the effects of trust in the organizational setting, trust can be defined as a two part process where one has confidence in other's dependability and purity and it should also be mentioned that the trust comes from social interaction and in its absence the level of trust decreases. Through trust between parties affects the important mechanisms of the organization and the results within an organization (Mayer & Davis, 1999) and trust empowers the employee and thus improves his/her performance at work (Gomez & Rosen, 2001). As far as the link between gender discrimination is concerned a study in Finland documented that discrimination leads to low level of trust (Liebkind & Lathi, 2000). In a work setting it is to be noted that there may be trust in existence between employer and the employee or the subordinate and the superior but at some point due to discrimination and specifically gender discrimination this trust turns into distrust which would likely to be psychological incident for the individual who is putting the trust in other (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007). It is evident that there exist a relation between the gender discrimination and trust now and behavior of the management is an important cause in developing the association between the management and the employees (Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, & Werner, 1998) and it is to

be seen that what would be its effect on the employee's performance in an organization when the effect of trust would be accompanying effects of other elements too, this would also reveal about the existence of that relation as well as the significance in case of its existence.

Third the third element in the equation is organizational commitment, organizational commitment is an important issue to discuss it is documented that organizational commitment is affected by discrimination (Ensher, Grant-Vallone, & Donaldson, 2001), as the organizational commitment is a relation between the employer and his employee organizational commitment creates in an employee responsibility towards the employer which improves the employee's work behavior (Shore & Wayne, 1993). Organizational commitment promotes in an employee the sense of organizational citizenship as well as it increases the employee performance, even if at the time the performance of an employee is not increasing at the moment but still commitment increases the expectation regarding their performance and as a result those employees perform positively (Meyer & Allen).

Discrimination affects the organizational outcomes that include organizational commitment (Sancez & Brook, 1998), so the effect of the element of commitment would be observed how it would in combination with other element affect employee's performance in an organization.

In this study the gender mainstreaming is used as a moderator to moderate the effect of gender discrimination on the employee's performance.

Gender mainstreaming is the a concept that suggests that there should be promotion of the equality among the employees of an organization and it is defined as a process of change that includes how an organization's system <https://assignbuster.com/impact-of-gender-discrimination-on-employee-performance/>

and structure is causing discrimination indirectly and to change that structure and system to get rid of that discrimination, “three-legged equality stool” acknowledges the interconnectivity of – equal treatment perspective, women’s perspective, this technique is widely used to cater to the specific problem of discrimination. UNDP has also made an effort in coping with gender discrimination by using the tool of gender mainstreaming.

And for this study the dependent variable is of the employee’s job performance. The performance of an employee is of utmost importance for any organization and employer, any organization that is doing well in the market can easily attribute its performance with performance of its employees and without satisfactory performance in workplace satisfactory organizational performance is not possible. The employee job performance can be defined as a combination of questions as how much an employee is contributing to the overall performance of the work unit? how much task assigned to the employee has been completed by him/her? as compared to his/her unit how good his/her performance is? and does the performance of the employee meet the standard of the employee’s supervisor?. An employee’s job performance is a set of elements that include effort, skill and results which are of importance to an employee as well as the organization (Lusch & Serpkenci, 1990). The aim here is to see how gender discrimination would affect this set of elements and its significance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study for this research work would be a non-intervention study as no intervention would be made and only data would be gathered from the

researchable situation. The study includes an element of both qualitative and quantitative study.

Gender Mainstreaming **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Job Stress

GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Employee performance

Trust

Organizational commitment

In this model Gender discrimination is the independent variable, job stress, trust and organizational commitment are its three outcomes that have been taken into consideration, in the model the gender mainstreaming is playing the role of moderator by moderating the effects of the gender discrimination while employee's job performance is the dependent variable that is being affected by the discrimination.

HYPOTHESES

From the model for the purpose of this study following hypotheses have been drawn.

H1- Job stress negatively affects the employee job performance. It is hypothesized that as the job stress would increase the employee's job performance would decrease.

H2- Low trust between the employer and the employee negatively affects the employee's job performance. The second hypothesis states that as the

trust between employer and the employee decreases the employee's job performance is affected negatively.

H3- Lack of organizational commitment negatively affects the employee job performance. The third hypothesis states that when an employee's organizational commitment would decrease his job performance would also decrease.

H4- The more the gender discrimination at the workplace the lower will be performance of an employee at his/her job. This hypothesis states that as the gender discrimination increases the employee job performance would decrease.

H5- Gender mainstreaming moderates the effect of gender discrimination on to employee's job . performance. Fifth hypothesis states that gender mainstreaming in an organization would moderate the effect of gender discrimination in a work environment.

SAMPLE SIZE

For this study the target sample is the workforce employed at the bank, both man and women would be equally taken into the sample. The type of sampling would be convenience sampling due to the budget and time constraints; the research questionnaire shall be administered to all three designation levels of banking staff which are Officer Grade 1, Officer Grade 2 and Officer Grade 3. The questionnaire shall be administered in all the banks situated in Lahore; the amount of questionnaire per bank would be ten and the questionnaires would be administered women as the gender

discrimination is more specifically a women's issue especially in our region.
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To collect the data, a questionnaire would be used which would consist of questions regarding discriminatory behavior faced by the respondents, questions related to mental health and organizational commitment as well as questions related to trust would be included in the questionnaire and employee's job performance questions would include questions regarding knowledge of principles, facts, ideas about the job and knowing what to do, the procedural knowledge would be covering elements like how to do the work and skill include cognitive, perceptual and interpersonal skill and last but not the least motivation questions and that's how the questionnaire would be complete.

The software used for this study will be SPSS with whose help correlational, regression based analysis would be conducted on the variables. ANOVA would be used for the moderator. SPSS would be used due to its easy availability and also due to its ease of use and data importability and exportability to other MS office packages.

LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The study has some limitations as it is not possible to and beyond the scope of the study to venture into other avenues. The first limitation is that the study setting is of a bank so the results cannot be generalized to other sectors, other studies with different sectors would have to conduct to obtain the generalizability of the outcomes. Second limitation is that other is the sample size; future scholar should take a bigger sample size to observe its effect on the results. The third limitation could be that of the culture,

Pakistan has a unique culture so the result may also be unique to this very <https://assignbuster.com/impact-of-gender-discrimination-on-employee-performance/>

culture, future researcher should replicate this study to see the consistency of the results.

The main benefit of this study would be to the banking sector as the study specifically aimed the banks. This study could allow HR professionals as well as the management officials of the banking companies to look for the opportunities within their workspaces to tackle the practice of gender discrimination which would ultimately benefit the organization as his/her commitment, trust towards the organization would increase he/she would be able to concentrate better to his/her job as a result of improved mental health and hence the job performance of the employee would increase ultimately contributing positively towards the overall organizational productivity.