Workplace Equity and Equality in the Hotel Industry

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Abstract

Gender disparity can be traced and reflected truly by their presence in different sectors. The backlash that women have to face is not hidden from anyone, today women have achieved new heights in Indian industries. Women have taken the lead and created new standards for men to achieve. When we talk about the hotel industry, the ratio of women has increased in India in a large number when compared to other countries. But when we examine how women engage in a particular country while taking into account its population the ratio still seems to be less. The participation of the employment of women in any sector is mainly due to the legislative and constitutional laws that reserve certain seats. Various studies show that the main barrier to equality is the deep-rooted stereotypes and orthodox mentality. We have come a long way yet need to achieve more to bring equality and equity to the workspace. Under this glorious umbrella of progress lies the ugly truth of inequality in our country, India. The chapter aims to highlight the inequality that women have faced down the ages in the industry and are still fighting against them. Therefore, this is my take to analyze the reasons for inequality in the field of management. It is due to the policy or the work culture of the hotel industry. In every aspect of life, women can be found as leaders. They range from the top executive of a major corporation to the homemaker who manages her household and children. Our nation was constructed with the guidance of powerful women, and we will persist in demolishing barriers and challenging the norm.

Introduction

Gender inequality refers to the disparities and discrimination that exist Gender-based discrimination is a widespread problem that impacts many aspects of society, including the economy. Such discrimination creates a divide between people based on their gender opportunities, education, healthcare, social status, and political representation. While both men and women can experience gender inequality, women have historically been more adversely affected by systemic gender biases and discrimination. One of the key areas where gender inequality is evident is in the workplace. It is not uncommon for women to encounter obstacles like unequal pay, restricted opportunities to hold leadership positions, and bias during hiring and promotion procedures. This inequality is not solely due to differences in education or

qualifications but is deeply rooted in social norms, stereotypes, and cultural expectations about gender roles.

People are becoming woke about the gender equality present in today's world they are even working towards sensitization of people towards such important aspects of our life. We have come a long way the number of skilled and well-equipped women has increased considerably in today's scenario but compared to the number the employment provided to them is much less. Not only the number of vacancies but also the work culture needs to be adaptive and supportive of both genders. The disparity can be seen based on wage gaps, higher positions, and decision-making in an industry. Gender inequality is perpetuated by cultural and societal attitudes. Women are often restricted by traditional beliefs about gender roles and stereotypes choices and opportunities, reinforcing inequality in various aspects of life. Efforts to address gender inequality include promoting gender sensitivity and awareness, challenging stereotypes, advocating for policy changes, and ensuring equal opportunities and rights for all individuals regardless of their gender.

The hotel industry stands as a towering pillar in the realm of hospitality, embodying a synthesis of luxury, comfort, and impeccable service. From the opulent chandeliers that grace the grand lobbies to the meticulously folded sheets on each bed, hotels are crafted havens that cater to the diverse needs of travellers around the globe.

Gender equality in the hotel industry, like in many other sectors, has been a topic of significant importance and discussion in recent years. Historically, the hospitality industry, including hotels, has been perceived as a male-dominated field, particularly in leadership positions. However, efforts have been made globally to address this disparity and promote gender equality within the industry. One of the key aspects of promoting gender equality in the hotel industry is ensuring equal opportunities for both men and women in all roles and at all levels. This includes not only leadership positions but also roles in housekeeping, front desk, food service, and other departments within a hotel. Creating an inclusive workplace where individuals are hired, promoted, and compensated based on their skills and qualifications rather than gender is crucial.

Additionally, hotel businesses have started implementing policies and initiatives to support work-life balance, which is especially important for women who often bear the brunt of family responsibilities. Flexible working hours, parental leave policies, and support for childcare which can make it easier for women to pursue careers in the hotel industry. Mentorship and training programs are also valuable tools in promoting gender equality. Women employees can receive assistance and direction from these programs, which can aid in their career growth. These programs also promote women's leadership and offer them the essential training and mentoring needed and create a pipeline of future female leaders in the industry.

Society as a whole is impacted by gender inequality, making it more than just a women's issue. It is essential to acknowledge this fact. Creating a more equal and just society requires the active participation and support of individuals, communities, and governments to challenge discriminatory practices, promote gender equity, and empower individuals of all genders to achieve their full potential.

Hotel workspace, a unique concept, which is also known as spaces of flexible work bases has become popular in recent years. A workplace has provided every individual with an atmosphere where they can work together keeping all the discriminations aside. Though a company offers space it can also contribute to inequality in several ways.

The first thing is occupational segregation. Certain rules are there in hospitality industries such as housekeeping and front desk associated with only a certain gender. This causes a barrier leading to inequality limits career opportunities for women.

Women in the hospitality department receive lower salaries when compared to the salary of a man. A woman is paid less and often offered a lower position. They are often attributed to certain aspects like the lack of skill in negotiation or dominance.

There is a lot of discrimination when it comes to higher or managerial posts. It is considered that men are more efficient and can carry out managerial work better than women. Even though it's not very true the quality of managing an organization depends upon once on skills. Not offering higher posts or managerial posts to women shows the non-acceptance of a man accepting the authority of a woman.

It is very evident that hotel jobs are very irregular and do not have a fixed schedule. Women are not considered fit for the job mostly because they are believed to not have a work-life balance. The atmosphere offered by the hotels leads to women leaving the industry because, in a country like India, a woman has to look after not only a job but also a family. She is not only a manager in a hotel but also a homemaker which makes it difficult for a woman to balance between work and home.

The hospitality industry including hotels has been associated with instances of sexual harassment. A hostile work environment can discourage women from pursuing careers in the industry and can lead to gender inequality in terms of job opportunities and job satisfaction. Due to certain reasons women are not satisfied with the work in such a workplace and are often forced to leave the industry causing the disparity.

To tackle these problems, employers, policymakers, and society must work together. This means advocating for equal opportunities, fostering diversity and inclusion, enforcing policies that ensure fair pay, providing training to prevent harassment, and offering flexible work arrangements are some of the steps that can help mitigate gender inequality in hotel workspaces and the broader hospitality industry.

It can be considered the disparity is not only because of gender but there are several other reasons but it cannot be denied that gender is one of the most significant reasons for the disparity being caused in the industry. According to a study by Galileo El 1992, it was observed in a laboratory that a relationship between the interviewer and interviewee is very important. But a very important aspect that was observed was that one gender always tries to promote or recruit the other one of the same gender leading to gender disparity. For example, if a man is taking an interview, he mostly prefers a candidate who is male and vice versa. This is caused due to deep-rooted stereotypical mindsets that we have in our society. However, in a study by Graves and

Provell it was observed that no such significance was given to the same gender in the interviews but when it comes to important aspects like appreciation making a position, or even observing certain important tasks gender play is very important.

Gender in turn stands for the stereotypical behaviour associated with a certain sex we associate managerial posts with males while females associate with house-making and chores. The difference in pay between men and women has been noted as more than 40% and they are mostly avoided from being given the responsibility of a manager rather they are thought to be better house makers. They are mostly awarded sectors of hospitality that involve cooking food or even the front desk.

Gender stereotypes are the most important aspect of disparities. In society, there are certain preconceived notions or beliefs about how men and women should behave and what attributes and roles are appropriate for them. These beliefs, known as gender stereotypes, can be oversimplified and generalized, ignoring the diversity and complexity of human personalities and abilities. Gender stereotypes can be harmful as they limit the opportunities, choices, and potential of individuals based on their gender.

There is a a lot that we need to do to overcome gender disparity but small steps can be taken for example:

1. Treat men and women the same.
2. Judge the participants based on their skills, not their gender.
3. Try to overcome the deep-rooted stereotypes.
4. Spread awareness in your institution regarding the same.

Let us work together and fight against gender inequality and disparities.

Review of Literature

1. **Anuradha Karmarkar** Gender equality paves way for growth of a company, which considers both economic participation and decision making. The paper aims at highlighting the importance of these factors while framing the HR policies.
2. **Medha Gupta (2015)** studies the working of different hotels in the given sector and to find a mixed picture. It tells that still there are many companies which fail to adapt pro-active policies for the participation of women in a company. The women employs are found mainly at entry level and less at the senior level. Thus, the policies need to be reformed.
3. **Sonal Sharma (2016)** A study of perception of male and female was conducted to see the difference between the perception of male and female on a crucial topic of gender equality.
4. **Thomas Baum (2013)** the study focuses the structural and cultural policies which determine the role and position of women in this esteemed HCT workforce. The discussion revolves around the strategies which can bring out a change in the status and opportunities of women in the industry. Some of the issues taken up are wage gap, sex segregation and opportunity difference.
5. **Vidhya Patwardhan (2016)** through this study, aims to understand the dimensions of mobility pathway that leads to career opportunity. It depicts the circumstances and

experiences that lead to women managers opting for career advancement in hotel industry. Although they are equipped with experience and education qualification, they don't get higher positions in the hotel industry.

6. **D. Krishnan (2014)** studies the impact of gender policies in the hospitality sector and the orthodox HR policies actually lead to the employment in hospitality and tourism department.

7. **Ibrahim Birkan (2009)** gender diversity and women hospitality has been a matter of concern for both management and academicians. The study aims to deliver the gender gap in the managerial posts of a company. It revolved around the issues in the hospitality department mainly in Turkey. It makes connection between four dimensions: employee's job position, their department, education level and age. This study answers all possible questions related to gender disparity and recruitment.

Objectives

1. Provide career development opportunities for all employees through training programs and mentorship initiatives.
2. Investigate the perspective of women working in the hotel industry regarding gender equality.
3. To ensure that individuals in comparable positions receive identical remuneration.

Research Methodology

A comprehensive analytical research methodology was employed to derive conclusions and recommendations in this study. The acquisition of pertinent data involved the implementation of surveys conducted in 10 five-star hotels within Lucknow city, complemented by direct-in with the establishments' personnel.

To scrutinize the outlined objectives, data was sourced from both Primary and Secondary Sources.

Primary Data Sources: The essential primary data for the research was obtained from 10 five-star hotels in Lucknow, utilizing a meticulously crafted structured questionnaire. The HR Managers of these hotels were responsible for completing the questionnaires.

Secondary Data Sources: Relevant secondary data was procured through consultation with research journals, internet resources, books, research articles, and other pertinent print materials.

| Particulars	Male	Female	Ratio (Male To Female)
Entry Level	460	115	04:01
Mid Management	150	50	03:01
Top Management	210	35	06:01

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

Male-to-Female Ratio

Observation

The table highlights a noticeable disparity in the number of male and female employees, with a significant imbalance favoring males. This gender imbalance becomes more pronounced as one ascends the organizational hierarchy, indicating a substantially lower representation of females in higher positions.

Does the hotel implement a specific recruitment policy that includes a special quota for women?
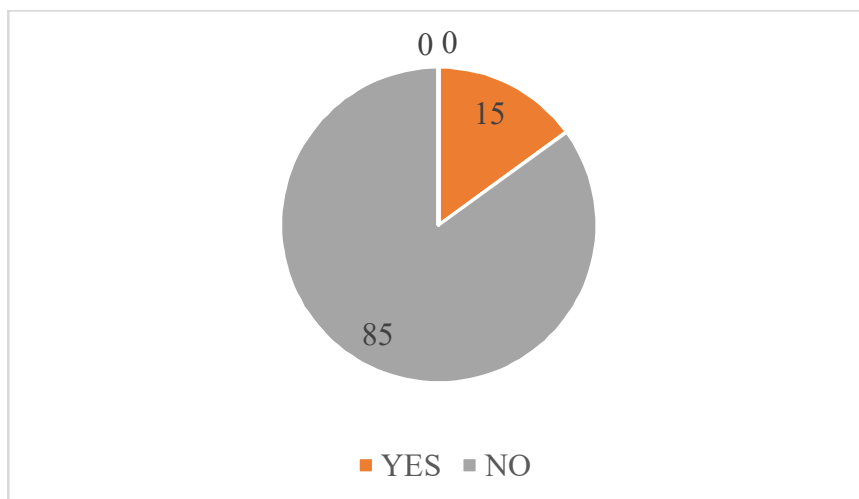
Observation: The majority of HR managers, totalling 85%, disagree with the existence of special quotas for female recruitment. Nevertheless, it is noted that certain roles within hotels, including Guest Relations Executives (GRE), housekeepers, and hostesses, tend to show a preference for female employees.

Grievance from female staff members at any level concerning prejudiced conduct exhibited by their superiors
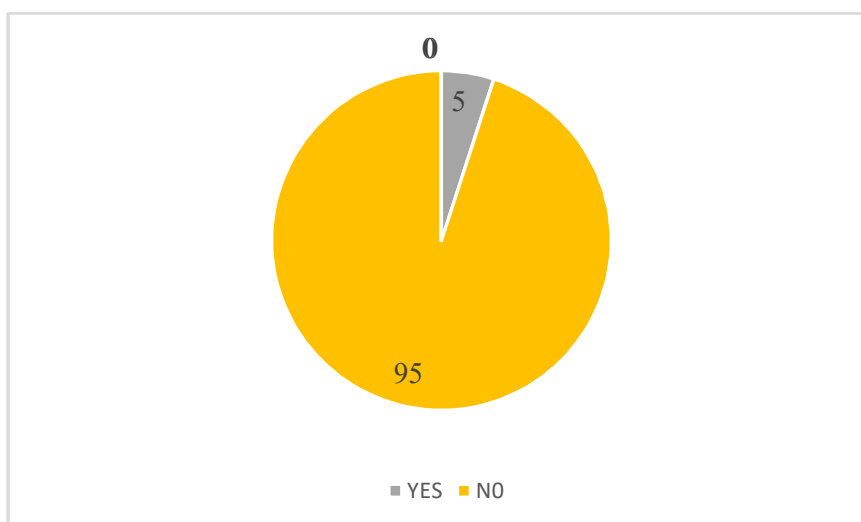
Observation: A substantial 95% of HR Managers surveyed report a lack of complaints from female employees regarding biased behaviour from their superiors. This suggests that female

employees generally do not encounter issues with the relationship between superiors and subordinates, indicating equitable treatment for both male and female employees.

Exclusive promotion policies designed specifically for female employees.
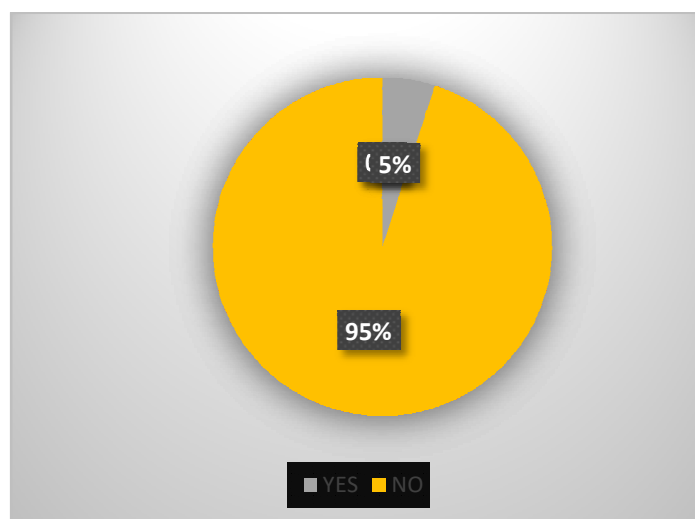
Observation: The majority, or 95% of participants, express a disagreement with the existence of any distinct promotional policies for female employees. Instead, they believe that fair opportunities for advancement are equally accessible to both male and female employees. This suggests that gender does not serve as a hindrance to career progression for individuals of either gender.

The hotel has distinct policies for male and female employees regarding the following matters

Particulars	Yes %	No%
Salary and wages for the same profile	1	99
Leaves	15	85
Facilities	14	86
Flexible timings	35	65
Sexual harassment cell	94	6
Workload	0	15

Observation: Based on the data presented in the table, it can be inferred that the majority of hotels (84-87%) do not implement different policies for male and female employees. However, there appears to be a contrasting perspective regarding the sexual harassment cell. Primarily, these cells are intended for and utilized by female employees, with rare reports of incidents involving male harassment.

Conclusion

The concept of gender equality pertains to treating people fairly, regardless of their gender, through equal opportunities and rights. It involves acknowledging the varied needs and priorities of both men and women, while also respecting the differences among different groups of men and women. Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but it also serves as a crucial basis

for a world that is peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable. Some of the important elements of gender equality are as follows:

1. **Equal Opportunities**

Gender equality means that everyone, regardless of their gender, has equal access to education, employment, healthcare, and other opportunities.

2. **Equal Pay**

It involves ensuring the importance of ensuring that individuals of all genders receive the same compensation for work that is equivalent in value or effort. This is often referred to as closing the gender pay gap.

3. **Challenging Gender Stereotypes**

Gender equality includes challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes Limiting opportunities and potential of individuals based on their gender.

4. **Education**

Promoting gender equality in education by providing equal opportunities for both boys and girls, as well as promoting education that challenges gender stereotypes, is a crucial aspect of gender equality.

5. **Work-Life Balance**

Gender equality also means promoting policies and practices that support work-life balance, allowing both men and women to fulfil their responsibilities at work and home.

6. **Legal Rights**

Guaranteeing equal legal rights for men and women, including property rights, inheritance rights, and protection under the law, is essential for gender equality.

Societies need to recognize and challenge gender stereotypes to create an environment where everyone, regardless of their gender, can pursue their interests, ambitions, and goals without unnecessary limitations or biases. Quality between genders is not simply a basic human entitlement, but also a vital cornerstone for a world that is peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable. In essence, gender equality is not only a matter for women; it is a concern for human rights and society as a whole. It benefits all people, establishing a fairer, more impartial, and more thriving world for everyone. Embracing and advocating for gender equality is indispensable for the progression and welfare of individuals, communities, and nations.

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