

## Study of the Factors Affecting the Selection and Promotion of Women employees at Top Level Management positions with reference to select Service Sector in Pune District

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### Abstract

Even though female workforce is more in service sector when compared to other sectors it is limited only at the junior level, admin level and to some extent middle level management. Women participation in every sector is crucial and will add value to that sector. Certain factors did not allow women or block women from getting selected and promoted to top level management positions in service sector. Even the performance evaluation methods vary as per gender in certain organization. An attempt has been made in this study to find such reasons in selective service sectors namely Tele-communication sector and Hospitality sector.

**Keywords-** Employee Selection, Employee Promotion, Service Sector, Women employees

### INTRODUCTION



By half of us with reference to India it means 0.65 billion (total population 1.30 billion). If we take the entire world's population as around 7 billion, this half of India means 10% of the world's population. Isn't it a sheer madness to hold back 0.65 billion hands or in fact 1.30 billion hands, when they can contribute so much? The dominance of men in the work force in India is clear with only 25% of the total force being women. What is surprising is the fact that there has hardly been any progress over the last 2 decades or so. This problem is more aggravate at the top level. Women participation in every sector is crucial and will add value to that sector. Certain factors did not allow women or block women from getting selected and

promoted to top level management positions in service sector. Even the performance evaluation method vary as per gender in certain organization an attempt is been made in this study to find such reasons in selective service sectors namely Tele-communication sector and Hospitality sector.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Find out the factors that affect the selection of women employees working at top level management position in select service sector in Pune district.
2. Find out the factors that affect the promotion of women employees working at top level management position in select service sector in Pune district.
3. Find out the type of work (operative or non-operative) in which majority of women employees are employed at top level management position in select service sector in Pune district.

### SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Women are just 3% of legislative, management, and senior official positions.

In 2010, women held only 5.3% of board directorships of BSE-100 companies.

22.6% of women are employed in business and they make up 14% of senior management roles.

According to Gender Diversity Benchmark, 2011, India has the lowest national female labour force and the worst leaking pipeline for junior to middle level position women.

28.71% of those at the junior level of the workplace, 14.9% of those at the middle level, 9.32% of those at the senior level.

Out of 323 total executive directorship positions (generally considered to be prerequisites to holding the CEO position) on the Bombay stock exchange 100, just eight (2.5%) are held by women.

54% of companies on the Bombay stock exchange 100 have no women board directors.

Despite occupying small percentages of leadership positions, 97.2% of women (compared to 95.6% of men) aspire to jobs with increased responsibility.

The worker participation rate for women was 21.9 per cent in 2011-12 as per usual status (principal and subsidiary). The proportion of women in the total central government employment has increased from 7.53% in 2001 to 10.04% in 2009.

According to Morrison and her colleagues, just as the overall labor market remains sharply segregated by sex, women executives are concentrated into certain types of jobs - mostly staff and support jobs - that offer little opportunity for getting to the top. A 1986 *Wall Street Journal* survey found "The highest ranking women in most industries are in non-operating areas such as personnel, public relations, or, occasionally, finance specialties that seldom lead to the most powerful top-management posts." Women are locked out of jobs in the "business mainstream," the route taken by CEOs and presidents. But even when women can get a line job, it is not likely to be "in a crucial part of the business" or the type of job that can "mark them as leaders."

More than 80% of the executive women in the *Wall Street Journal* / Gallup study said they believe there are disadvantages to being a woman in the business world. Men, they say, "don't take them seriously." In the same survey, 61% of the women executives reported having been mistaken for a secretary at a business meeting; 25% said they had been thwarted on their way up the ladder by male attitudes toward women. A significant majority - 70% - believed they are paid less than men of equal ability.

**Population, Sample size and technique –**

Population summary –

Sr. No.	Category	Sub-category	No. of units	No. of women employees
1	Telecommunication	---	30	300
2	Hospitality			
2a		5-star Hotels	24	240
2b		4-star Hotels	44	440
	Total		98	980

Thus, roughly there are 100 such organizations in the 2 service sectors and at an average of 10 women employees, the total population is estimated to be 1000. Assuming 1 HR manager per unit, the total population of the HR managers is estimated to be around 100.

Primary data was collected through questionnaire from samples of 50 HR Managers and from 300 women employees. Judgmental sampling was used

along with random sampling.

**Collection of primary data –**

A questionnaire containing questions on different dimensions of the HR strategy was used to collect primary data from the total 350 respondents.

**Summarized data analysis –**

The following table summarizes key parameters and the overall interpretation –

Sr. No.	Parameter	Value(s) – Agreement % - Women employees	Value(s) – Agreement % - HR Managers	Interpretation
1	Agreement on existence of written policy	48%	46%	Majority of the respondents from both the groups have stated that there is no written policy with the company regarding gender equality in employment.
2	Agreement on selection policy being biased towards men	82%	76%	Both the groups overwhelmingly agree that selection policy to top positions is biased towards men
3	Agreement on promotion policy being biased towards men	85%	95%	Both the groups overwhelmingly agree that promotion policy to top positions is biased towards men
4	Agreement that women in higher positions are working only in service areas	85%	84%	Both the groups strongly agree that women in higher positions are working only in service areas

Findings - The summary of responses in terms of agreement on various issues from the 2 groups, namely, women employees and HR Managers is produced below -

(Inter-group data analysis findings)

No.	Aspect	Empl oyees	HR Manager s
1.1	Availability of written policy	48%	46%
1.2	Attempt in publicizing the policy	19%	23%
1.3	Following policy in letter and spirit	22%	15%
1.4	Rationale stated for adoption	36%	47%
1.5	Modifications in the policy	37%	36%
1.6	Checking adherence to the policy	22%	15%
1.7	Comparison of policy	23%	15%
2.1	Selection criteria skewed towards men	82%	73%
2.2	Apprehension in minds of men	81%	71%
2.3	Men believing that women lack toughness	84%	85%
2.4	Men believing that women can't handle dirty things	90%	89%
2.5	Succumbing to pressure	19%	25%
2.6	Better leaders	20%	25%
2.7	Better conceptual and analytical skills	20%	25%
2.8	Better decision makers	17%	24%
2.9	Better equipped with aggression	20%	28%
2.10	Better strategists	18%	20%
2.11	Better adaptability	19%	25%
2.12	Better team players	16%	14%
2.13	Better in taking initiative	18%	25%
2.14	More flexible	18%	25%
2.15	More self-confident	18%	24%
2.16	More disciplined	17%	29%
3.1	Promotion prospects skewed towards men	85%	88%
3.2	Better to promote men because men are in majority	49%	62%
3.3	Men better motivated by promotion	59%	62%
3.4	Men more ambitious	62%	71%
3.5	Men more egoistic	61%	64%
3.6	Men more positive in accepting responsibility	51%	62%
3.7	Men like independence	64%	71%
3.8	Men promote men	84%	88%
3.9	Men's sharp reaction due to non-promotion	61%	71%
3.10	More riskier to promote men	60%	64%
4.1	High ranking jobs mostly in support areas	85%	86%
4.2	Women more suitable for service	37%	51%

1.1 More than 50% of the respondents from both the groups have stated that the organizations don't have a written policy on gender equality.

1.2 As regards implementation of the policy of gender equality, in all the parameters, more than 50% of the respondents have stated that the implementation is poor.

1.3 More than 70% of the respondents agreed that the policy of selection of candidates for top position is skewed towards men.

1.4 Negative thoughts in the mind of the men as far as toughness of women etc. are clearly evident based on the scores to responses to questions 2.2 to 2.4.

1.5 On various aspects like leadership, skills, capability to handle pressure, flexibility etc., women are no lesser than men as is evident from the responses to questions 2.6 to 2.16.

1.6 Yet on a finer note we present the summary and average of these aspects by way of a comparison between the 2 groups –

No.	Aspect	Women employees	HR managers
2.5	Succumbing to pressure	19%	25%
2.6	Better leaders	20%	25%
2.7	Better conceptual and analytical skills	20%	25%
2.8	Better decision makers	17%	24%
2.9	Better equipped with aggression	20%	28%
2.10	Better strategists	18%	20%
2.11	Better adaptability	19%	25%
2.12	Better team players	16%	14%
2.13	Better in taking initiative	18%	25%
2.14	More flexible	18%	25%
2.15	More self-confident	18%	24%
2.16	More disciplined	17%	29%
	<b>Average</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>24%</b>

We find that as compared to 18% of the employee respondents agreeing to superiority of men, 24% of the HR managers believe that men are superior.

1.7 More than 80% of the respondents have stated that promotion to top positions are skewed towards men.

1.8 62% of the HR Managers have opined that it is better to promote men because majority of the employees are men.

1.9 Characteristics of men like being egoistic, being more ambitious etc., have been agreed by a good majority (more than 60% in most of the cases) of the respondents.

1.10 Interestingly more than 60% from both the groups have opined that it is actually riskier to promote men to top as they can at times try to overpower those who have promoted them.

1.11 Around 85% of the respondents from both the groups have agreed that women in higher roles are

working in service areas only.

1.12 51% of the HR managers (that included 28 women managers) have opined that women are more suited for service areas.

1.13 At the same time only 35% of the HR Managers feel that it is difficult for women to take up jobs in Marketing and Production.

1.14 Around 60% from both the groups feel that women should be given more opportunities in the areas of production and marketing

1.15 64% each from both the groups feel that as an alternative women can be accommodated as advisors at the top.

2. The summary of responses in terms of agreement on various issues from within the HR groups classified on the basis of gender is produced below -

(Intra-group1 data analysis findings)

No.	Aspect	Telecom Employees	Hospitality Employees
1.1	Availability of written policy	50%	46%
1.2	Attempt in publicizing the policy	21%	16%
1.3	Following policy in letter and spirit	24%	20%
1.4	Rationale stated for adoption	34%	38%
1.5	Modifications in the policy	39%	36%
1.6	Checking adherence to the policy	24%	20%
1.7	Comparison of policy	24%	21%
2.1	Selection criteria skewed towards men	79%	85%
2.2	Apprehension in minds of men	78%	84%
2.3	Men believing that women lack toughness	82%	87%
2.4	Men believing that women can't handle dirty things	87%	94%
2.5	Succumbing to pressure	19%	19%
2.6	Better leaders	19%	20%
2.7	Better conceptual and analytical skills	20%	20%
2.8	Better decision makers	17%	16%
2.9	Better equipped with aggression	19%	21%
2.10	Better strategists	17%	19%
2.11	Better adaptability	18%	19%
2.12	Better team players	16%	16%
2.13	Better in taking initiative	18%	19%
2.14	More flexible	18%	18%
2.15	More self-confident	18%	18%
2.16	More disciplined	17%	18%

3.1	Promotion prospects skewed towards men	83%	86%
3.2	Better to promote men because men are in majority	47%	50%
3.3	Men better motivated by promotion	56%	63%
3.4	Men more ambitious	65%	59%
3.5	Men more egoistic	59%	62%
3.6	Men more positive in accepting responsibility	49%	52%
3.7	Men like independence	64%	64%
3.8	Men promote men	84%	85%
3.9	Men's sharp reaction due to non-promotion	64%	57%
3.10	More riskier to promote men	58%	63%
4.1	High ranking jobs mostly in support areas	82%	87%
4.2	Women more suitable for service areas	35%	39%
4.3	Top positions filled up from core areas	68%	67%
4.4	Difficult for women to take up production and marketing	54%	39%
4.5	Change in perception in last 10 years	47%	45%
4.6	Women to be given more opportunities in core areas	58%	63%
4.7	Women as advisors	61%	67%

2.1 By and large the two industries didn't show significant differences in their opinion on the various issues. However, the following table highlights the top differences that are more than 5% -

No.	Aspect	Telecom	Hospitality	Diff
2.4	Men believing that women can't handle dirty things	87%	94%	-7%
2.1	Selection criteria skewed towards men	79%	85%	-6%
3.3	Men better motivated by promotion	56%	63%	-6%
4.7	Women as advisors	61%	67%	-6%
2.2	Apprehension in minds of men	78%	84%	-6%
3.4	Men more ambitious	65%	59%	6%
3.9	Men's sharp reaction due to non-promotion	64%	57%	7%
4.4	Difficult for women to take up production and marketing	54%	39%	15%

2.2 One of the major difference is on the issue of agreement over the question as to whether it is difficult for women to take up production and marketing jobs. While 54% of the Telecom employees agree to this, only 39% of the Hospitality employees agree to this.

2.3 While 50% of Telecom employees state that they have a written policy on gender equality, it is only 46% Hospitality employees agree to this claim.

2.4 79% of the Hospitality employees believe that selection policies for top positions are skewed towards men. As against this 85% of Telecom employees think so.

### SUGGESTIONS

Change is not easy to bring about. And the change which we are discussing in this study is a major one. It is a change in attitude, culture, beliefs and social values. Such changes do not happen overnight. Hence the suggestions given are from both a long-term and medium-term point of view.

1. Women should try to venture more in the Finance domain. Production and Marketing are the 2 core operating areas. Presence of women in these areas is limited. But Finance is one area where women can certainly become more active. This domain can be a ladder to the top in 2 ways. One is that they can try and make headways in the Finance function of an organization.

2. Structural changes – These changes are long-term changes that are difficult to bring about. Changing mindsets, culture, beliefs and social values will take time. But the Government can make an attempt to bring about this reform in the society that will pave the way for women employees rising to the top positions. It will have to launch a special and a massive drive to convince both men and women that it is in the interest of the society at large that women rise to top positions in the Corporate world. This will motivate more women to take-up careers and jobs and add more value to their and the life of others.

3. Women should explore new and emerging areas like Corporate Governance to rise to the top in the corporate world. Alexandra Stevenson & Leslie Pickerjan, (2017), reported in the New York Times that at seven out of 10 largest institutional investors in stocks in the US are women. The investments overseen are over \$14 trillion in assets. One Rakhi Kumar, who is working as the Head of Corporate Governance at State Street Global Advisors that manages funds worth \$2.30 trillion.

1. Such avenues particularly in emerging areas like Corporate Governance should be tapped by women to rise to top positions.

### CONCLUSION

The apathy on the part of the industry about women employees occupying top positions is clear in terms of the gender equality policy itself. Most of the organizations have fared poorly in terms of gender equality policy formulation and its implementation. If policy initiative itself is lacking then things to follow would certainly be dark. Clearly it is concluded that in the industry that has been studied in this research, there is a lack of policy initiative for ensuring gender equality. On an overall basis the respondents have strongly stated that women are no less than men when it comes to traits for top positions. This is a good thing. Women have a strong self-belief that they can very well match men when it comes to things like leadership, skills, ability to handle pressure etc. But an interesting twist has been observed in intra-group comparison amongst the views of men and women HR managers. While only 24% of men HR managers believe that men at large are superior to women, 29% of women HR managers believed in the same thing. 29% is not a very high percentage of agreement. Yet this belief of women HR managers points out towards some kind of low self-esteem women have. Finally it is quite clear that women in the higher ranks are actually working in service areas only. Their presence is more visible in areas like HR, Administration etc.

To sum up, it can be concluded on the basis of this study of select service industries, that 2 prominent factors are preventing the progress of women to top positions. One is the negative mindset of men and second one is the fear on the part of women themselves. Further it is clear that women in higher positions are operating mostly in service areas only.

### REFERENCES

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## ABOUT AUTHOR



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