Handling Gender Issues in Corporate Sector: An IT Industry Perspective

Rohini Hande PN *

As long as diversity prevails in an organization issues are bound to crop up. Corporate with special reference to Information Technology organizations, which is also termed as employer of equal opportunity is considering here as a platform for our study purpose to understand the Gender issues and the challenges in handling them. Now the question is so called knowledge base industry where in the higher range of investment is on human capital whether so called gender issues are existing or not? As far as diversity exist in any filed issues arise. So IT industry which is also called as the knowledge industry gender issues are more in common like any other industry. Our studies proved that there are many gender based issues exist in this industry; however the intensity and the nature of issue may differ from the other sectors or from other industries. Higher demand for skilled work force provided lot of job opportunity for female employees. Result of globalization and the need for skilled pool of workforce, demanding financial need at family front and due to the changing mindset of education and employment opportunity for girl child made it easy for women force to move in to the IT and ITES jobs. Nature of challenges faced by HR Managers and Line managers are totally different than the earlier days. Due to diversity in the work force and the culture difference, time zone variations, work place stress, customer demand, peer pressure, competitions has led to gender issues. It has become a real challenge for study and gives wider scope of subject for understanding and to come up with the unique solutions to retain and develop this work force towards individual and organization success.

Overview and scope of the subject:

Our study is purely based on some of the prevailing facts, myths and the views in this regard. As the subject is quite vast and the issues are diversified in its own way, here the scope of the study is limited to the following views and the facts. Also it is an attempt to throw light on the some of the facts proved by the earlier studies in this regard. Subject is more in line with proportion of women across various IT occupations/sectors, working conditions, practical gender needs of women, learning and career path. The actual situation can be evaluated from this study results and already published literatures available.

IT' is one of the best equal opportunity areas - 'that provides wider opportunities for women to enter and succeed in the industry'. Earlier studies (Dr. M Suriya, 2003) supported the idea that IT is one of the best work place where in wider opportunity is provided/ available for the women to enter and succeed in the industry. However, this say is very true in comparison with other traditional industries. As this workspace is more to do with the knowledge power than the masculine power this say goes near to the truth and there is more and more female candidates are opting for the Engineering subjects which will be more inclined towards job opportunity in IT industry.

A well known say rather an emerging fact is that Management has began to bear a new phase that of a women. Deviations from the traditional thinking and also due to the opportunity availability and culture and sociological changes more and more female students are enrolling for the engineering studies especially for the IT related specialization. As a result over a period

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* Director (Consulting), Smartanglers Management & Consultants Pvt Ltd., Bangalore

of time, we have been able to see women managers at the middle and the top level in the IT organizations.

Of late we have been witnessing big number of participation of women in the IT organizations, due to the reason of gender diversity in the workforce in all levels of organization hierarchy, we have seen lot more gender issues are cropping up. These gender related issues are far from gender bias. Nonetheless **gender bias** is also one of the issue which is super facing with lot other issues in the IT corporate world. Most of the studies proved that women managers can perform equally well under the stress; there are not any difficulties in portraying themselves as good leaders in the organizations. Behavioral traits best suites for the leadership roles are not dependent on the particular gender. But in reality studies proved that employees prefer men as their manager in comparison with women managers. (Powell, Gary N. and Laura M. Graves, 2003)

More often, we have interfaced with the dual measurement standards which has croped up with performance issues. The unique question arise is are women expected not to perform as well as men? This question is theoritically proved to be base less and purely a bias on the gender. Practically, we have been facing this issue interfacing with most of our hiring and internal movements decisions at corporate. This is yet another reason interface during the performance review decisions. There are lot of policies and legislative governance is superguarding our decision in this direction. Still we see a element of subjectivity is triggering our decisions in favour of masculine gender.

Corporate is a subsystems of our social, economical, cultural and political systems.

It goes with out say any organization, institutions reflects the social, economical, cultural and political system prevailing in the region. Any culture of the organization is determined by the external factors like socio, economical status of the environment.

When the social, economical, cultural and political systems has got direct influence on the people living in the geographical region and we would see the organization issues are emergent of the external factors. Despite the changes like globalization and the influence of the western culture or the advanced culture it is not so different the situation when it comes to the corporate gender issues. May be due to the demographical reasons the nature and the intensity of the issue may change. However influence of socio, cultural aspects is predominantly depended on the local environment where ever the organizations exist whether it is IT or non – IT set up.

Methodology of the study:

Keeping in mind the existing views, facts and myths on the subject to enhance the knowledge and the facts in this regard qualitative and quantitative study been adopted. A questionnaire which has been administered on the IT work force. Study sample consist HR practitioners, line Managers and Employees; Distribution was equally spread keeping in mind feminine and masculine gender. Earlier studies on the subject of few authors and also structured interview was conducted by the author to substantiate the findings.

Learning and Findings from earlier studies:

Status of Women in the IT Sector In India:

It is reported that (Dr. M Suriya, 2003) the proportion of women into the various IT based industries in India is in the order of 19% in the software industry; 40% in the telecom industry; 80% in the airlines; 45% in the ITES; and 50% in the BPOs. The large number of women employees (45 percent on an average) in the ITES sector is a welcome change from

the low 12.5 percent women being employed in the IT industry. The massive incorporation of women into paid work has marginally increased their bargaining power and undermined the legitimacy of men's domination as providers of the family, while women in positions of authority in the IT industry have improved their social position. The issue to be addressed is which categories of women are benefited through this sector? To which class of women does this help? What also came out quite well in the case studies is that there were different strata of women. There are women who are top software programmers who can go to SiliconValley and there are women who have to rely on Internet kiosks to start self employment.

**Job Opportunities for India women in the sector:**

The IT sector in India has created employment opportunities in areas such as telecommunications, banking, shopping, education, health and business. In addition, the internet has also generated new jobs in areas like the design, maintenance and management of sites on the World Wide Web. There are real possibilities that women may be able to access opportunities they never had before. According to a prediction by National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), by 2008 there will be one-and-a-half million jobs in the IT Enabled services. If 50% to 70% of these jobs were to go to women, the impact will be tremendous. There is going to be such a shortage of skills that women will have to be included in more and more numbers.

Study reveals (Dataquest-IDC survey in October 2002), though women make up about 20% of the IT workforce in India, only a few women reach the position of CEO's. As the seniority rises, the number of women shrinks. In the career pyramid, women are clustered in the bottom hierarchy. Nevertheless, the oxymoron is that while women tend to rise faster up the corporate ladder, few reach the highest levels. Even the few women who have struggled to reach the status of managers, have not been placed in the vital areas of work dealing with hardware and software oriented jobs.

Men not only have superior statuses than women between jobs, but also within the jobs themselves. Women are concentrated into the lower-ranked and lower-paid occupations within a given profession. If women are in management positions, they are more likely to be in personnel than in marketing professions.

Position of Men and Women in the Various Organisational Hierarchy
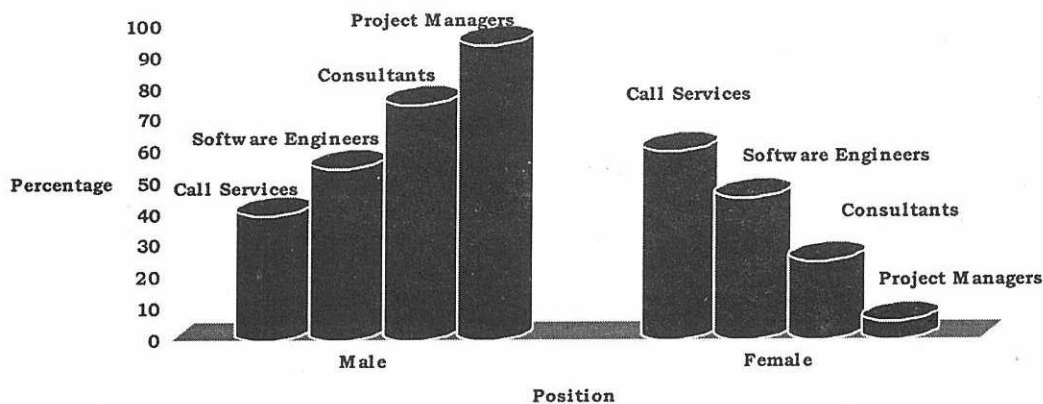
(Source: Dr. M. Suriya, Gender Based digital divide in the IT Sector in India, November 2003)

Gender Segregation in the IT Sector:

The newness and the expanding nature of the computer industry has given an impression that it would be relatively immune to gender typed pattern of occupation and would maintain gender equity in its occupational distribution. However, an examination of the exisiting studies reveals that gender segregation is very much predominant in this industry, and it has absorbed the patriarchal power structure of the traditional industries. For instance, an ILO survey (Ankitha Bhalani, 2008) conducted among the IT professionals in the software industries in India has revealed the prevalence of gender inequality in its various forms. It has also show-cased how women are relegated to the less prestigious and low-paid jobs.

Gender Inequality

Gender Inequality is often embedded within the social hierarchy and this affects how women and men are perceived in leadership roles. Different traits are ascribed to females when compared to males that often color the selection process with unfounded bias. If a female does have other traits aside from the gendered traits that she is believed to possess, then she is viewed negatively. Study results reveal (Thomas-Hunt and Phillips, 2004) that when women possessed expertise they were actually viewed as less influential by others. However, expertise was positive for males. Also, female led groups were less productive than male led groups even though the women held expertise in the area just like males. Therefore, possessing expertise is not viewed as positively as it is for males. This also suggests that lack of skills is not the only reason why women are not deemed worthy of leadership roles.

As cited (Lyness and Thompson in, 1997) one consequence of sex stereotypes is that women's achievements tend to be devalued or attributed to luck or effort rather than ability or skill, and therefore this sterotype has the potential to reduce the organizational awards that they receive.

Gender-Wise Distribution of Professionals in Different Firm Types
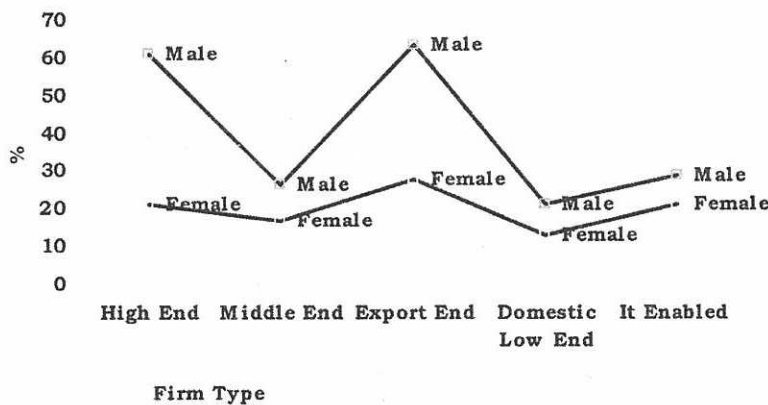
(Source: Dr. M. Suriya, Gender Based digital divide in the IT Sector in India, November 2003)

Segregation of women among the various subsets of IT
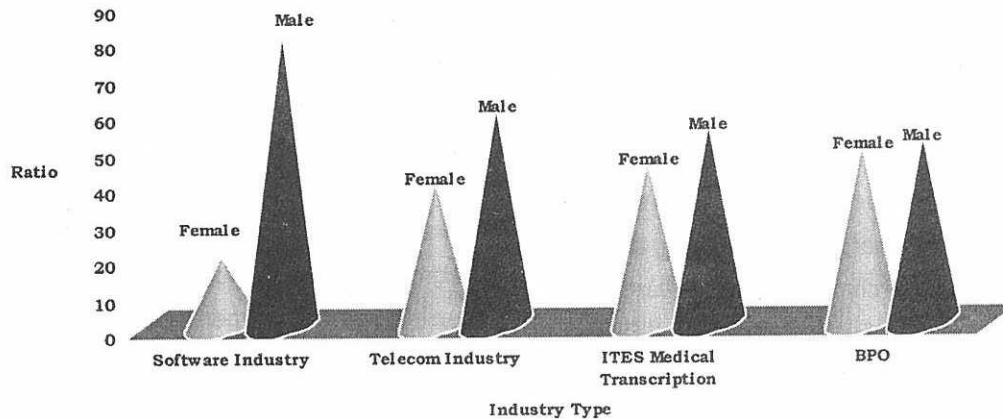
(Source: Dr. M. Suriya, Gender Based digital divide in the IT Sector in India, November 2003)

Response and findings from our studies:

It is generally accepted that sex is biologically determined, societies construct appropriate behavior for each gender, thus producing local gender cultures. Gendered divisions of labor and gendered divisions of spheres exist throughout globe.

"Glass Ceiling effect" – A myth or a fact 'the term **glass ceiling** refers to situations where the advancement of a qualified person within the hierarchy of an organization is stopped at a lower level because of some form of discrimination, most commonly sexism.

This situation is referred to as a "ceiling" as there is a limitation blocking upward advancement, and "glass" (transparent) because the limitation is not immediately apparent and is normally an unwritten and unofficial policy. This invisible barrier continues to exist, even though there are no explicit obstacles keeping minorities from acquiring advanced job positions – there are no advertisements that specifically say "no minorities hired at this establishment", nor are there any formal orders that say "minorities are not qualified" – but they do lie beneath the surface. The "glass ceiling" is distinguished from formal barriers to advancement, such as education or experience requirements.

However, this glass ceiling tends to cripple working women the most. This barrier prevents large numbers of women, ethnic minorities, and sexual minorities from obtaining and securing the most powerful, prestigious, and highest-grossing jobs in the workforce. This barrier makes many women feel as they are not worthy enough to have these high-ranking positions, but also they feel as if their bosses do not take them seriously or actually see them as potential candidates. As it can be more near to the say authority is a masculine position. This goes back to the tradition and the socio cultural impact on the corporate life. Here the 40 % of the study respondents stongly agree with the fact that glass ceiling effect is shadowing the women employees opportunity in IT and ITES sector. Only 10% of the respondents believe that it is just a say and not true and such discrimination purely based on the one's gender.

Attitude towards profession:

It has been proved that women's own attitude towards profession is making situation worse. Influence of our

culture at global or at local level and also the value preposition attached to various roles she is expected to play is influencing her attitude towards the profession. One would have picked up the profession with utmost care and concern, with unlimited passion to become very successful. As women changes the life status from single hood to family hood it is the social pressure which is making her to shift her believes towards the family, commitment towards elders, children etc., It is the automatic shift one sees in the attitude of a working women be it IT or any other sector. It is the expected role as a woman in the family and societal front attitude easily get shifted as the demand increases for time and commitment at other end. This is the serious draw back for both women and to Corporates in terms of expectation reach.

Employer's discrimination:

In reality employer's discrimination is very subtle and unspoken. Even though there are enough and more policies available to safe guard the interests of women work force and also state support in the form of legislation. However, this attitude of Employers and Managers are obviously noticeable the reasons understood by the line managers and the organizations are not so far from the reality, keeping in mind women's own attitude towards the profession as well as the priorities in her life. What she would choose for is more than common factor like family and children Vs corporate commitments. Hence employer is proving to be discriminate. Organizations are safe guarding their risk for drain out of trained resource.

Interaction and influence of Labor market: is yet another factor which is influencing the availability of women work force in the employment market. Even though IT organizations are keen on hiring more and more women for IT and ITES jobs it is always directed by the conditions of the labor market. Availability of women workforce in the requisite domain, labor legislations governing the subject are the factors which also contribute to the hiring decisions of corporate.

Corporate prejudices:

It is already pointed out above that sex is biologically determined, societies construct appropriate behavior for each gender, thus reproducing local *gender cultures. Gendered divisions of labor* and *gendered divisions of spheres* exist throughout globe.

Corporate is not so different from the society in which it operates. One such prejudice more often shooting up is competency against the job. Rather than evaluating the competencies possess by the candidate for the particular job, the evaluation of the gender is taking place when it come to hiring for particular role or for the promotions/lateral movements etc., yet another prejudice often seen is misconceptions about the jobs against gender. It is always believed that particular gender is capable of performing only a set of jobs. For eg.: Hard core embedded and hardware jobs are men's domain and data entry, data related and also jobs which are more of support nature is more to do with female gender.

Based on the nature of issues and also the intensity of the issues interfaced in the IT corporate the issues can be grouped under different heads.

Majority of respondents are of the opinion that gender issues are not statistically structured and defined once for all but are emergent and changeable. So the dynamism of the subject and the issues are proving that the nature of issues and the appearance of the issues need not be same with all time and situation. Hence the volatile nature is one of the core essence of the subject. There is also large scope for handling the issues towards positive enforcement and changes can be in the direction which suites the work place, people and the effected gender.

Classification of the gender issues in corporate IT: Based on the nature of issues and also the intensity of the issues interfaced in the IT corporate the issues can be grouped under different heads.

Traditional & Social:

Gender preference or gender bias. As we look back in to the history, from the civilization time to date it is the notion prevailing that male or masculine gender is more stable and posses the leadership qualities. It is the masculine gender is mostly preferred and believed that is more suitable to occupy the leadership and managerial roles than the feminine gender. Irrespective of the geographical reference, it is understood that the alternative value position which is existing that two genders differ substantially. Women basic attitudes to life that , to serve, to be nurturing and value disposition is best suited for the private sphere, to be emotional, sensitive etc., where as men are to do with socialize to live by the values of public sphere, to deny vulnerability, to compete, to take risks, want to control nature. 50% of our respondents agree that this social or traditional factor like gender preference or gender bias is still in existence even in so called knowledge work category as one of the influencing factor for hiring. Gender of the candidate influences the decision of hiring.

Yet another set of thinking women as weaker gender. However, this goes to the physiological and the biological attributes of this gender. Even though, Leadership studies proved that there are no impact or significance of the physiological attributes of a gender in determining the leadership styles or the roles.

we are under the belief that IT is one of the place which provides equal opportunity for both gender, however, the opportunity path become narrow when you look at the senior positions. Reasons can be several. Our study here says the most prominent is women's predetermined priorities towards family and household is making them to take a back step in occupying the senior positions and grow in the corporate hierarchy. It is prompting them to either move out of the corporate assignments after moving up the organisation ladder for first few years or opt for the roles are less demanding in terms of work pressure, travel and relocation. If they have to priorities all spectrum of life they would opt out of the corporate assignment and take up the family and house hold front. Due to this premature exit from corporate assignments it is individual as well as corporate are loosing out a great means of expertise and productive resource. This could be one of the reasons which triggers corporate to be gender bias when they have to select or move women employees for more critical and demanding jobs.

With regard to the upward movement of women employees towards higher ranks in the organization hierarchy, the influencing reasons been rated on the prominence scale where in 1 as most prominent and 5 as least. The respondents distribution path is as below.

Influncing factors - Upward Movement of women Employees towards higher ranks in the hierarchy of the organization.

	1	2	3	4	5
Choosing Profession	80%	0%	0%	0%	20%
Competency	10%	10%	0%	20%	60%
Relocation	10%	10%	80%	0%	0%
Working Hours	0%	70%	0%	10%	20%
Glass Ceiling Effect	10%	0%	20%	70%	0%

(Source: Findings of the study by Author, Handling Gender Issues in Corporate Sector: An IT Industry Perspective - 2008)

Health and Psychological...

Set of issues also can be categorised under health and psychological. As we are aware compare to men, women physiological and psychological factors are quite different. Hence, the approach, behavior, reaction, sensitivity to the in – side, out - side issues are quite different from that of men employees.

Biological and Emotional:. As we have understood that gender is more to do with the biological out come. There are lot of biological reasons which are also reasons for the peculiar gender issues cropping up at corporate. Biological and emotional substance is unique and different in its own way. Women to bear and rare off springs and whole composition of women including the emotional aspect is totally different from men. There are times when she has to personally dedicate more time with off springs, which may keep her away fully or partially from the work place. Biological and physical demand affect the emotional aspects. Which is the real matter of concern and the real gender issue for an individual and for organization. Unless there are way's and mean's to over come this challenge by the corporate with attractive and sensitive means of alternative solutions in deriving the schemes like work from home, flexi time etc., it become a real matter of complex for both parties.

Burnout Syndrome. Due to the value preposition and also the expected role from women in the family front as well as personal sphere, she is putting up with lot more odds out side the work place too. The whole life style of every day in the house front is more and more demanding when it comes to house hold activities. Most of the activities are dumped on her by default like nurturing the children, medical support and commitment towards elders at house front etc., on the women folks. Over a period of time balancing work and life become real challenge and monotony and the stress factors

bring out the burnout syndrome with women work force. Lack of recreation, demand from all fronts of life, stress full atmosphere is the main reason for the burnout syndrome. Ultimately with an individual it is also become a matter of concern for the organization too.

Economical:

Wage bias.. One of the major indicators that serves to demonstrate a perceived inequality between men and women is the controversy behind a supposed gender wage gap. This gap is the difference in both the wages and earnings between males and females who have equivalent job titles, training, experience, education, and professional background.. In most circumstances women are paid less than men.

Furthermore, the gross national figures conceal the fact that men hold the highest paying, most prestigious, and most powerful jobs in the occupational structure; this accounts for much of the imbalance with men and women's incomes. This is referred to as occupational segregation. Men tend to be highly concentrated in the top professions, such as supervisors, managers, executives, and production operators. On the other hand, women tend to be over-represented in the lowest-ranking and lowest paid professions in the workforce, such as secretaries, sales associates, teachers, nurses, and child care providers. As a result, occupations become "sex typed" as either being specifically male or female jobs. The stereotypically male-characterized occupations in which at least 60-75% of the workers are males, are more highly paid than occupations in which 60-75% of the jobholders are women. This segregation of women into less-prestigious and lower-ranked jobs also decreases a woman's chance of being promoted, as well as the chance of having any type of professional advancement over others. Moreover, occupational

segregation reduces women's access to insurance, benefits, and pensions. Occupational segregation is a vicious cycle that successfully continues to put women down. 40% of our response also proved that gender is one of the influencing factor in determining the pay package.

Males not only have superior status than women among the jobs, but also within the jobs themselves. Women are concentrated into the lower-ranked and lower-paid occupations within a given profession.

For example if women are in management positions, they are more likely to be in personnel than in marketing professions

Another noticeable issue is the influence of the 2nd income attribute. If the women employee who seek an opportunity is treated more of income generator than an individual with professional capabilities. Issue surface more at the juncture of selection and at the time of corporate initiated exits. Decision become more subjective irrespective of the competencies individual possess. However, a segment which is pro thinking in this direction may talk about the humanitarian aspect; more and more subjectivity is piercing in to the corporate Human Resources functional practices. Obviously the employer of equal opportunity concept is at stake and much hyped up HR concepts like about the right person for the right job, candidates/employee competency mapping against role available – all will remain as black and white material good to read and talk about.

Studies proved that most gender issues appear in an organization can be broadly categorized under the following heads. As an employee/ HR manager/ line managers ratings based on the criticality of the area is as follows. In a scale of 1 to 7 rating one being most critical and 7 being the least.

Criticality of the gender issues in an Organization.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Psychological	11%	56%	22%	0%	0%	0%	11%	100%
Technical	0%	20%	10%	10%	10%	10%	40%	100%
Organizational	30%	20%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	100%
Social/ Traditional	67%	11%	0%	0%	11%	11%	0%	100%
Economical	0%	0%	11%	11%	56%	0%	22%	100%
Biological	0%	0%	45%	22%	11%	11%	11%	100%
Physical	0%	0%	7%	36%	36%	7%	14%	100%

Source: Findings of the study by Author, Handling Gender Issues in Corporate Sector: An IT Industry Perspective - 2008

Work Place boundaries: These are reasons which are generally within the boundaries of work place and cropping up as a challenge to handle under the subject.

Lack of confidence: We have been hearing about gender equality and theories emphasis on men and women employees are equally confident and possess similar traits of leadership and managerial attributes. But in reality we have seen women employees as less confident in comparison with their men counterpart when it comes to occupying the role of a leader or to run the institution or organiations. Boundaries are drawn not in favor of women in corporate scenario. One such easily flaunted boundary line is Lack of confidence. Even though all of us argue that women have come long way and there are significant number of "she spirited" women leaders in the global leading roles at corporate. But our study proves that one of the reason women are blocked from the senior level positions as well as roles in the corporate is that they may not be able to do the justice as their level of personal confidence is far more inferior compared to the confidence level of their masculine counter parts.

Performance bias: During performance reviews, women generally receive lower rankings than their male counterparts. "When performance evaluations are conducted, women may receive lower ratings than men for similar levels of performance". What is evident in

this study is that women must work harder to receive a better performance review than men, and that the evaluation system is inherently biased against women. This poses the question, how far is this performance gap between male and female standards are existing. **Differences in the way men and women approach technical subjects**: It is again the human belief that technology and the technical subjects are man's domain. Harder the technology it is always felt that men has got a upper hand in approaching the technical subject. Again goes back to the complexity of the belief masculine and the values around the male gender.

Gender as a yardstick for performance assessment : In continuation to Performance Bias, when it comes to performance assessment, preferences were drawn which is very favorable to a male gender and the subjectivity is more than obvious.

Most commonly heard and faced problem in IT corporate, like any other corporate is **sexual harassment**. Nature and the intensity of issue can be both emotional and physical. Organization policies, practices and state legislation are in favor of women workforce in IT and ITES sector. These supportive policies and practices are welcoming change to an issue.

Peer influence and pressure: Women tend to get hassaled by the collegues and the peer influence. Due to the demanding nature of the industry, women folks get on to the self assessment and performance comparison mode. Negative and pseudo work demand from the peer group as well as work group and due to work place demand individual will take an hasty decision of blocking one's organisational growth and may exit from the work place.

Relocation as an issue: Due to the global nature of work there are demand for travel to various out

locations will crop up. It is inevitalbe for married women or for the women who have the responsibliity and the commitment towards family members will tend to turn off the opportunity than men. Most of the challenging jobs like high end development, custumer interaction, sales and marketing jobs are more of travel oriented for the work pupose.

Others:

　　* **Assignment of Priorities** (family Vs Profession), women tend to priorities her preference in reverse order compare to men. More often they choose the option like nurture children or elderly people in the family. This is the commonly observed tendency when women has to choose between family Vs profession.

　　* **Early exits of women workforce due to several reasons**: Due to Personal and family reasons more often women tend to exit from the corporate assignments at the peak of their career. May be it is another challenge faced by an individual and corporate.

Other dimension to the gender issue: Organisations, legislative support system, work in the field of gender equality with focus on women. 60 % of this study respondents are with openinion that issues are of multidimentional. Most of our Corporate support is uni dimentional and lack of understanding of the subject, over sensitivity to the issues made employees and line managers, HR managers to be more reactive to the subject than proactive. Vast majority of our respondents ie., around 90% of them are also of the same openion as above when it comes to awarness and misconceptions on the existing policies, practices etc., Today in corporate IT scenario, what we need is a system which is above the socio cultural influence of the subject and to be more human and realistic understanding of the physical and psychological status

of the feminin and masculine gender. We need to view the issues which would crop up under the subject need not be limited to any particular gender. The approach to these issues to have the holistic approach than single phased. Hence, we need to have more and more policies and practices as well as state legislative system to be supportive and focused. Some of the extremes which is really become an issue in the IT corporate is misusing the gender status. The approaches adopted by the corporate to tackle the gender issues have created an hostility among the employees. Misinterpretation and misquoting the policies/practices and also legislative support in this regard by the Management or by the employees for their advantage. Yet another reasons where in we face lot of issues is because of "Objectivity against Subjectivity". Here, the whole lot of decisions pertaining to hiring, movement of employees, promotions, fixation of pay package across organisation hierarchy is biased. Decision is more subjective than objective. Some of the extremity of the challenges at IT corporate is women folks collectively associate and act as a change agents and try to bring in changes against the gender issues over night. These kind of task force at timeas bring in more operational problems and make the scene worse. It is time that entire organisation need to understand the gender issues in the true spirit and choose the appropriate path to resolve.

Conclusion:

With all the hue and cry, fact is still there is a scope for improvement to make sure of the say like IT is one of the best equal opportunity areas. Opportunities are there for women to enter the field and perform equally or more than equally better in this sector in comparison with other sectors. With the help of state and corporate as well as all round change in the thinking process it self that women can perform well in the said profession.

Study results also helped to draw the conclusion and the solution to minimize or to reduce the effects of diversity which would result in gender issues can be drawn by implementing the following means...

* Equal employment opportunity by encouraging the equal number of students from both gender to opt in for IT subjects as part of their studies.

* Human resources function and the line Managers should make an attempt to be more objective than subjective to impart a hiring decision.

* To be very focus and objective in every aspect of Employee movements with in organization.

* Companies should develop a definite strategy to curb early exits of women workforce.

* Organisations are to be sensitive to family and social pressures under which women have to work.

* Keeping in mind multiple role women has to play, the policies and practices to be redefined.

* Create an awareness among the workforce to look at female counterparts from Human capital perspective.

* Discourage the negativity of the whole issue either by awareness or by transformational path.

* Awareness programmes to propagate the purpose of policies and practices set in by organisations and also by government through legislation.

* Impart the real knowledge on the issues arise due to gender differentiating and organisations to come up with support mechanisms, re-address mechanisms, reward systems etc.,

* Permeation of an alternate culture, there need to be a process of de-learning and re-learning from the new work environment for both men and women.

* Equal participation and representation of men and women in committees which will decide on the policies, practices, grievance handling.

* Masculinities and Femininities are more influenced

by socio-cultural and historical background of an individual. Hence, to understand the subject in the true spirit of diversification in the gender.

* Advancement, development and empowerment of women in all spheres of life.

"Despite all the good work that HR departments may put in to create truly women-sensitive work environments, it is the individual's own home support system, ambitions, career aspirations & Competencies that determine whether a woman manager is able to balance her career and family"

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India: Growth Outlook for 2009-2010

The growth outlook for 2009-10 needs to be assessed in the context of indications emerging from lead information so far. While indicators such as growth in Index of Industrial Production, the core infrastructure sector, gradual revival in demand for non-food credit, improved business expectations could be viewed as signs of recovery from the slowdown, there are other factors which may dampen the growth outlook such as the delayed progress of monsoon, decline in exports due to the persistence of global recession, lagged impact of the negative growth in manufacturing in the last quarter of 2008-09 on services demand, negative growth in capital goods, decline in the production of commercial vehicles, and an accelerated fall in import growth suggesting dampened demand conditions.

India's structural growth impulses continue to remain strong, given the high domestic saving rate, sound financial system, and growth supportive macroeconomic policy environment. Domestic deceleration in demand and persistent uncertainty in the global conditions, however, operate as the major drag on a faster recovery. Early indications for India, suggest that the revival impulses need to strengthen further to boost the consumer and investor confidence, which could then set off a positive feedback loop to lift the growth momentum over time.

Source: Macroeconomic and Monetary Developments: First Quarter Review 2009-10, Reserve Bank of India, July 2009