

## GENDER DISCRIMINATION: A TERMITE WHICH DESTROYS ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF FEMALE EMPLOYEES

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**Abstract:** “A woman is the full Circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform”. Diane Mariechild Historically women in India were revered and the birth of a girl was widely believed to mark the arrival of Lakshmi – the Goddess of wealth and riches. Women have been considered ‘janani’, i.e., Women is the source of energy and life, she has potential to generate new life, and aradh- angani of male, means without her support there was no existence of male. Therefore, India is symbolized as a Mother India. Despite all these fact women employees are still not getting proper respect from their male counterparts at workplace and facing problem of gender discrimination in the workplace. This rotten mentality of male employees is creating a big challenge in front of Hr Managers in handling women employees and maintain their trust and belief on organization and retaining their organizational commitment.

**Purpose:** So in this paper we are trying to investigate the impact of gender discrimination on work related attitude like organizational commitment of female employees.

**Sample:** consisted of 122 female nursing staff in which 62 nurses were employed in a central government hospital and 60 nurses belonged to a prestigious private hospital of India.

It was hypothesized that perceptions of gender discrimination from male counterparts would be negatively related with organizational commitment. The result of stepwise regression proved the hypothesis correct that in both the sector gender discrimination was negatively associated with organizational commitment.

**Implication and Value:** The study is presenting basic humanitarian solution for Indian hospitals in the private and public sector which are currently facing problems of retaining their nursing staff due to perception of gender discrimination in workplace environment.

**Key Words:** Gender discrimination, Organizational commitment.

**Introduction: Gender- Discrimination- ‘Gender’**, may be defined as how the roles and relations between women and men have been socially constructed (Eldis, 2009). However, gender affiliation and identity is strongly influenced and formed by cultural values, social interaction and family. Gender **discrimination** based on a person's **gender** or sex, which more often affects girls and women. Because of **gender discrimination**, girls and women do not have the same opportunities as boys and men for education, meaningful careers, political influence, and economic advancement. Traditionally, the dos and don'ts of both sexes are assigned by society and culture . This is what is referred to as gender roles. For example, there are more women than men who are nurses and more men than women who are engineers (Lips, 2003). At the same time, successful performance in these jobs is viewed as requiring gendered traits, skills, and attributes. A successful manager, for example, is described as having stereotypically masculine, or agentic, traits (Heilman, Block, Martell & Simon, 1989), while a successful nurse may be expected to exhibit more feminine, or communal, traits (e.g., Glick, Wilk & Perreault, 1995). It follows that male gender-typed jobs are those that are typically male-dominated and are perceived as requiring traditionally masculine characteristics, while female gender-typed ones are primarily staffed by women and thought to require feminine attributes

(Cejka & Eagly, 1999). Heilman & Okimoto (2005) replicated the earlier research by showing that successful women in male gender-typed jobs were rated as interpersonally unpleasant.

Current evidence suggests that gender discrimination have significant consequences for working women. The continued expression of gender discrimination begs for redress within organizations, not only because it may affect the optimal movement of talent between organizational ranks, but also because it affects the quality of employees’ organizational experiences. The presence of gender discrimination causes women to experience less-positive attitudes toward their jobs and less engagement in their work (Ensher, Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). So understanding the underlying dynamics of discrimination is necessary before organizations can take effective action to reduce it.

**Effect of Gender discrimination on Organizational commitment:** Gender discrimination represents an organizational problem that looms larger than the effect it has on individual women who personally feel discriminated against. Women’s perceptions that discrimination occurs within their work environments, regardless of their own personal experiences with it, can lead them to more negatively assess their organizations and organizational experiences than men do. Moreover, while women are less likely to perceive themselves as

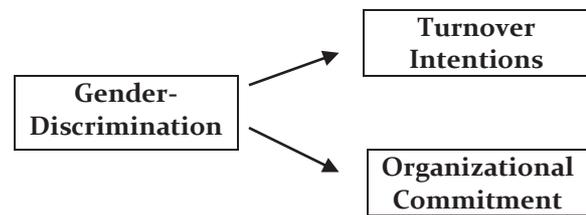
victims of discriminatory treatment than they are to perceive that women as a group face discrimination (Crosby, 1984), they are still affected by its occurrence. Gutek, Cohen & Tsui (1996) found that the belief that women are disadvantaged relative to men within their organizations was associated with women's lowered feelings of power and prestige and reported reluctance to make the same career choices. Many women who believe they have experienced discrimination, or have seen colleagues affected by it, show less engagement in their work. The more strongly participants believed that their supervisors discriminated against them because of their gender or race, or that they had experienced organizational level discrimination (defined as the belief that organizational policies and practices were discriminatory), the less satisfied they were with their jobs and the less committed they were to the organization. Furthermore, women were less likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviours when they reported experiencing coworker discrimination (Ensher, Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001).

**Effect of Gender discrimination on Turnover intentions:** Organisational climate and intention to leave has been found to be an antecedent to turnover (Griffith et al, 2005). A poor organisational climate may motivate workers to leave and at the same time high turnover may negatively affect employees perceptions of organisational climate (Stone, Mooney-Kane, Larson, Pastor, Zwanziger & Dick, 2007). In the same context studies demonstrate that discriminatory work environments can encourage the psychological disengagement of women from their work— they are less satisfied and committed when they believe that they, or other women, have been the target of discrimination. A study by Rosin and Korabik (1991) one sample of female managers, working in a male-dominated environment was significantly related to low satisfaction and commitment and to a high propensity to leave the firm.

A study by Schaffer and colleagues (2000) showed that perceived gender-bias in organizational decision making has negative effects across cultures. The more that women employees in the United States and Asian countries believed they had experienced gender discrimination, the less satisfied they reported being

with their jobs, the less affectively committed they were to their organizations, and the stronger was their intention to leave their jobs.

**Figure 1: The Theoretical Framework of the Study**



**Hypothesis:** From Figure 1, we derive hypotheses as outlined below to test the impact of gender-discrimination on turnover intentions of nurses and their organizational commitment.

**H1.** The greater the experience of gender discrimination at workplace, the greater will be the turnover intentions of Nursing professionals in hospitals.

**H2.** The greater the experience of gender discrimination at workplace the lower will be the organizational commitment of the Nursing professionals in hospitals.

**Method:**

**Sample:** The sample consisted 122 nursing staff. Within the sample 60 participants belonged to a private hospital and 62 belonged to the public hospital.

**Private Hospital:** Apollo, Abdur Razzaque Ansari Memorial Hospital (ARAM) Located on the Ranchi-Hazaribagh National Highway No.33.

**Public Hospital:** Sir Sunderlal hospital, located in the campus of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, was selected as the central government hospital.

**Scales used in the present study:**

1. **Perceived gender discrimination:** Scale constructed by Sanchez and Brock (1996). Coefficient alpha for this scale was .86.
2. **Turn over Intentions:** This scale constructed by Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth (1978). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.97.
3. **Organizational commitment:** The uni-dimensional scale developed by Kalberg (1996). The reliability coefficient of the scale was .75.

**Table 1.a** Stepwise regression of turnover intentions with gender discrimination in private and public hospitals.

Public Hospital (N=60)						
Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	%	Beta	t ratio
Gender- discrimination	.536	.288	.288	29%	.53	7.10**
Private Hospital (N=62)						
Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	%	Beta	t ratio
Gender- discrimination	.472	.223	.223	22%	.47	5.96**

\*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

- In public hospital** (Table 1a)- result showed that perception of gender discrimination at workplace by nursing professionals positively(.53) predicted 29% variance in turnover intentions. Which means that gender discrimination is showing positive correlation with turnover intentions. So when nurses perceive higher gender discrimination in workplace they show higher intentions to quit.
- In private hospital**- result showed that perception of gender discrimination at workplace by nursing professionals positively (.47) predicted 22% variance in turnover intentions. Which means that gender discrimination is showing positive correlation with turnover intentions. Result follow the same trend which was found in public hospital that when nurses perceive higher gender discrimination in workplace they show higher intentions to quit.

**Table 1.b** Stepwise regression of organizational commitment with gender discrimination in private and public hospitals.

Public Hospital (N=60)						
Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	%	Beta	t ratio
Gender discrimination	.345	.119	.119	12%	-.34	4.10**
Private Hospital (N=62)						
Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	%	Beta	t ratio
Gender discrimination	.196	.038	.038	4%	-.196	-2.22*

\*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

- In public hospital** (Table 1b)- result showed that perception of gender discrimination at workplace by nursing professionals negatively(-.34) predicted 12% variance in organizational commitment. Which means that gender discrimination is showing negative correlation with organizational commitment. So when nurses perceive higher gender discrimination in workplace they show lower commitment towards organization.
- In private hospital**- result showed perception of gender discrimination at workplace by nursing professionals negatively (-.19) predicted 4% variance in organizational commitment. Which means that perception of gender discrimination is showing negative correlation with organizational commitment.

**Discussion:** The result of the study proved the hypothesis correct, that inequality or discrimination of any kind will guarantee that employees will be unsatisfied and the resulting performance will be negatively affected (Jake & Lee, 2010). In the present study research suggested that when the workplace environment demonstrates discrimination, the satisfaction of the workers will be influenced

negatively, which will also negatively influence the productivity of the organisation through poorer performance by the workers that are affected by this discrimination (David, 2006).

**Implication and recommendation:** Is that it is the birth right of each and every human being that they should be treated equally, and respectfully by others in the society. So such a sensitive issue need a great concern of society because female nurses are not exceptional so unequal treatment of nurses in the work place will undeniably have a direct effect on the satisfaction of the nurses who are being treated unfairly. The performance level of such employees is also directly challenged, as they are not allowed to fully exploit the resources of the organization. Not only this, they are also barred from climbing the organizational ladder. A combination of these factors will decrease the performance and satisfaction of the women who are half of the work force, thereby influencing productivity.

So the managers need to realize that gender discrimination creates an overall negative work environment for all employees (Ensher et al., 2001); thus, our results should alert managers to the

negative consequences of employees' attributing differences in treatment to their gender. Management decisions and communications with employees

should be carefully shaped to prevent perceptions of differential treatment based on gender.

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