

BMSK4003 Digital Skills & Research Method
Challenges faced Women in Workplace
Assignment Report

Submitted to

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1st May 2018

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1. Objective

While researching on various topics for assignment I found 'Challenges faced Women in Workplace' interesting and captivating for the following reasons.

First of all, it is one of the most talked about and controversial subjects these days. Secondly, from my observation in the last few years in my career I personally believe there is bias towards men in the workplace. I believe, in general, to give women the equal rights as their male colleagues there is still a lot to be done. We as a society need to educate ourselves at the same time women should fight against for their rights.

I believe, as an individual, besides being aware of women's equal rights government and other bodies should introduce new regulations and make sure their strict implementations in every sector of our society.

2. Sources of Information:

• Primary Source: -

As the primary source of information, I have consulted and interviewed few of my ex-colleagues and also some other professional women with the following questions. Some of the individuals I interviewed are my colleagues and ex-colleagues who, while discussing the subject, raised various concerns which initially I was unaware of and then helped me acquiring more depth knowledge in the subject.

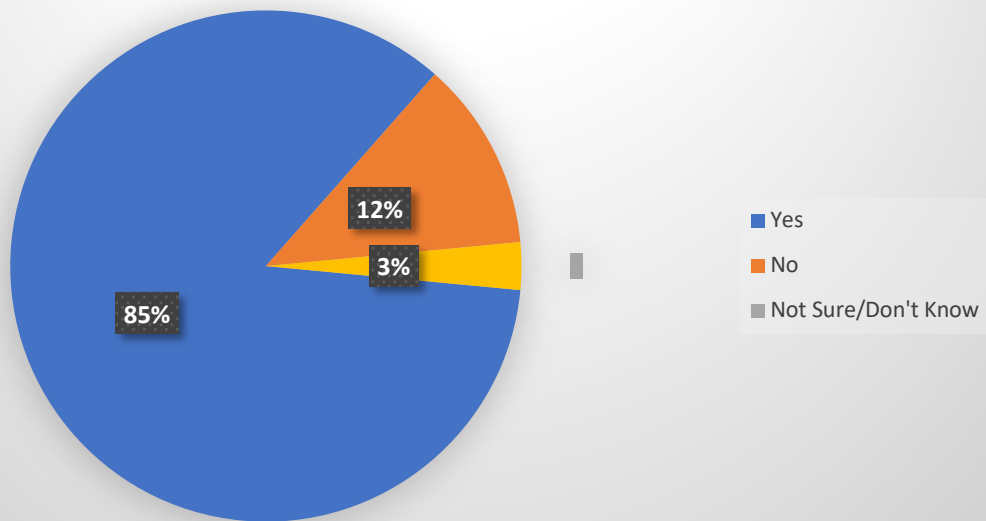
- ✓ *Have you faced any sexual harassment?*
- ✓ *Does maternity leave affect your promotions?*
- ✓ *Have you face gender pay gap?*
- ✓ *What are the most significant cultural obstacles you faced?*
- ✓ *Are you being treated equally?*

• Secondary Source: -

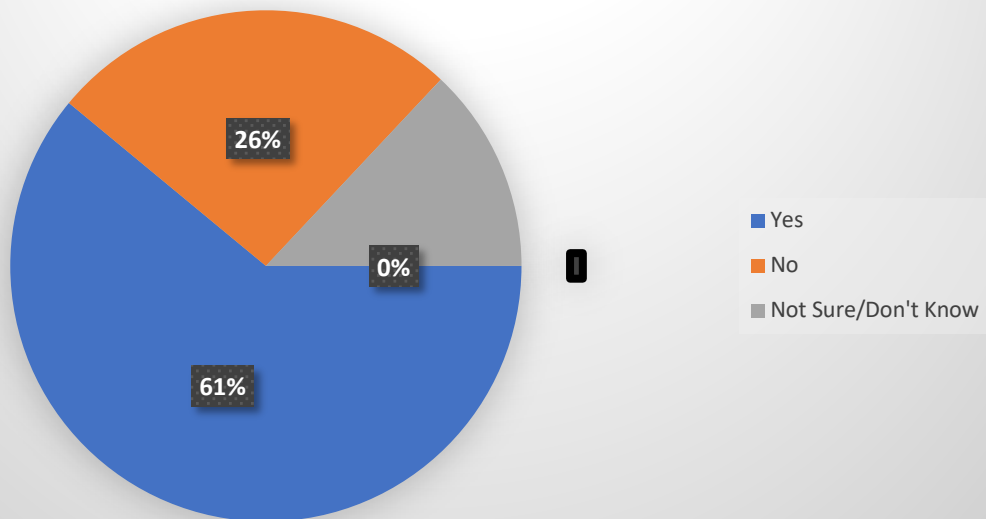
As source of secondary information for the report, besides consulting my colleagues, I also have consulted and studied various types of online resources, such as newspaper journals, reports, blogs, etc. during the study I observed many aspects and issues which I was preliminarily unaware of.

I have gathered the following statistical charts based on the questions asked in the survey.

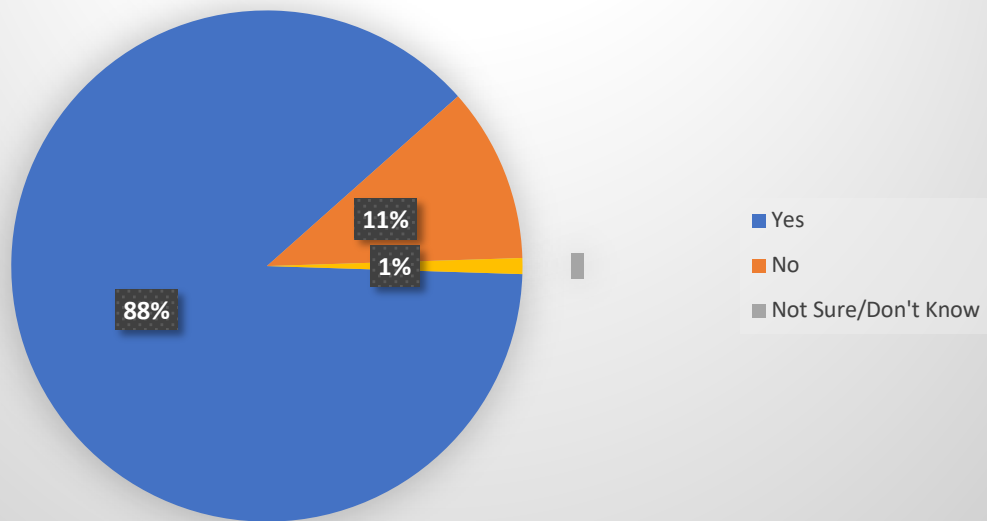
Gender Pay Gap



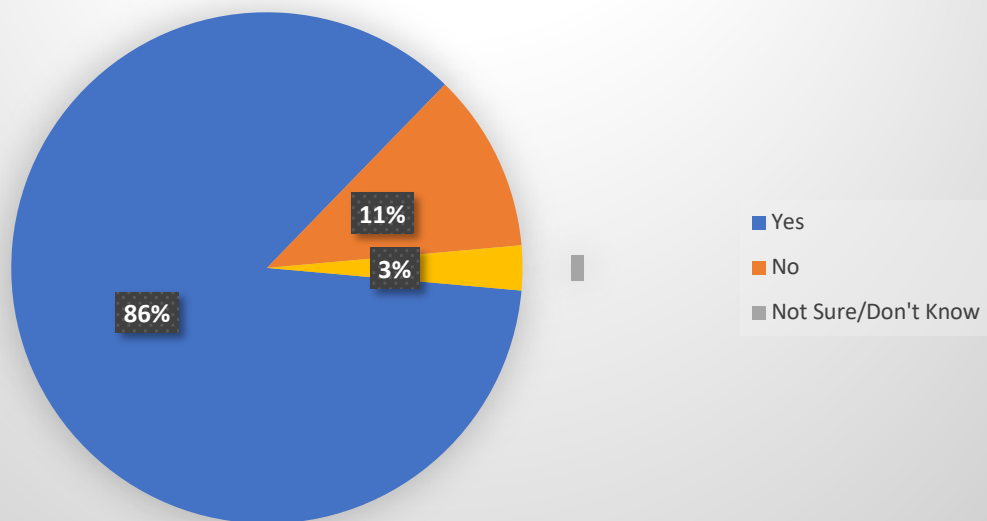
Harassment at Workplace



Biased Treatment



Effect of Motherhood



3. *Overview:*

UK business industry employ nearly 60% female worker of total 28 million workers. Despite this high volume very few women advance through the ranks to fulfil and in most of the places senior positions are dominated by men counterpart.

It is estimated that women are more 70% responsible for household purchasing decisions, the inequality in the sector needs challenging. The UK business and industry offers enormous diverse and rewarding roles and bright and ambitious women should be encouraged to consider taking steps as a career choice for there is huge opportunity to make their mark in every sector. The business sector is arguably one of the best sectors in the UK for career growth both for man and women.

For women workplace offers more flexibility enabling them working in this sector around their family commitments and or studies.

So, what are the most significant challenges women face at work?

According to a new research, by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Thomson Reuters Foundation, where they interviewed 9500 individual women with diverse answers. Another survey by Ipsos MORI revealed the following five major challenges for women in the workplace:

- Unequal pay, gender pay gap
- Harassment at work
- Discrimination in career prospect
- Motherhood VS Career
- Work-Personal life balance

Unequal pay, Gender pay gap:

It was evident in the poll that 4 in every 10 women in the list thinks it is as the most important workplace issue. In The poll found that four in every 10 women in all the participating countries listed pay as the most important workplace issue.

Beside this is due to a wage gap it is far more complex than a single pound figure. For example, coloured, migrant women make even less than white women a study by Institute for Women's Policy Research(IWPR) reveals. The age plays a role as well. In the Ipsos poll, 43% of millennial women shows confidence in earning equally as their counterparts, while older generations and boomers were less sure at 34% in the ages group 50 to 64. American women were the list optimistic in earning equally to their male counterparts. Only 28% believe they earn same wages as men in the same position but this amount drops to 10% in India.

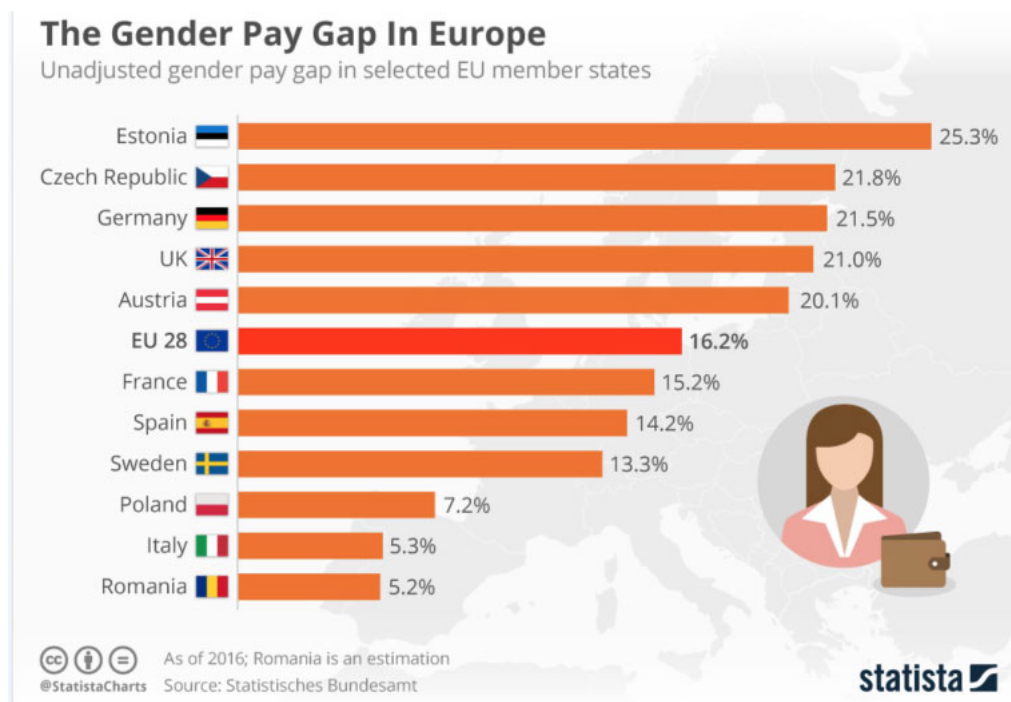


Figure 1 Gender Pay Gap Statistics. Source: <https://www.statista.com/chart/13174/the-gender-pay-gap-in-europe/>

Harassment at work:

Sexual harassment and assault has dominated headlines in recent days and it is a common phenomenon, after years of abuse by Hollywood film producer Harvey Weinstein were uncovered.

Polls show that is not in a particular workplace sector, such as entertainment which in the recent months has a blustery atmosphere over sexual harassment, but in every single sector. the polls reveal workplace's sickened attitude to women.

Opinium Research poll reveals that one in five women said that they have been victims of sexual harassment in the workplace in one or the other way. Around 14% of the UK people at workplace has experienced sexual harassment of which 20% are women and only 7% are men.



Figure 2 Sexual Harassment at Work. Source: <http://www.businessinsider.com/sexual-harrasment-workplace-2011-10?IR=T>

Work-Life Balance:

The most important element among the women participated in the survey was balance between work and personal life. Overall 44% women expressed this is the toughest challenge in the workplace. 43% of women took part in the survey put work-life balance before flexible work hours, access to childcare and insufficient maternity leave.

According to Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development(OEDC) women in China and India, with the highest women employment rates in 2014, 70% and 27% respectively, has to sacrifice caring for their children in order to earn a living.

Motherhood VS Career:

According to studies nearly 43% of highly qualified women with children leave their careers. Many women feel lucky being a woman and giving birth to a child. Women can build their career these days in every sector they wish but building a flourishing career and being entirely devoted to workplace isn't as easy as it is with men. Though some women find it moderately manageable but for some sometimes choosing between work and children is an option while nearly 47% women took part in the survey are confident that motherhood wouldn't stand in the way of a bright career.

In wealthy countries like Germany, France and the UK women are more reliant on day care centres and nurseries which sometimes is costly options not readily available.

Discrimination in Career Prospect:

Nearly half (47%) of the women surveyed believe they are discriminated with the same level of professional opportunity compared to their male counterparts. The U.S. has ranked 10th in the G20 countries where women believe that men have better access to opportunities than them. They also experienced it's comparatively bumpier for women to start a new business with 33% of women reported entrepreneurship is a level playing field and it jumps to 38% in the G20 countries.

Some other figures show women are outranking men more and more in the education sector, university, yet that success does not usually interpret into equal opportunity for women in the workplace.

Followings are the five most important factors contributing to biased career opportunity for women:

a) Discrimination

Whether you've experienced sexual harassment, a corporate outing to a strip club or are called "young lady" in the office, sexism is pretty common in 2017.

b) There was less overt discrimination today than several decades ago, but there was "still plenty around", including when women become pregnant.

c) *Structural Reasons*

Women are more likely to take care of their children, or look after elderly parents. Combined with the rising costs of childcare, there are various barriers which hinder women from reaching the top jobs.

d) *Psychology*

It appears the old adage remains true: a woman will see one skill on a job spec that she does not feel confident about and ditch her application, while a man will apply for the same job based on the one skill that they do have.

e) *Vertical Network*

Because the top levels of most sectors are already dominated by men, there are plenty of people that younger men can relate to and receive a helping hand from as they climb up the ladder. Schuller describes this network as "PLUs" – people like us. Sectors that are dominated by women, such as teaching and nursing, tend to be underpaid relative to other sectors.

f) *Positive Choices*

This is the most controversial point but, as Mr Schuller said, the most interesting one to grapple with.

Men might generally cling onto the greasy pole of higher management, but women are more likely to weigh up their work/life balance.

Women will ask themselves: "Do I need the money? Do I need the status? Am I still developing in the job I'm in?"

"If the answers are no, no and yes, their choice to continue in their current role or move sideways might be sensible and rational," he said. "Men could benefit from some of this thinking too."

That does not quite answer the conundrum of a culture of presentisms: If you take your lunch break every day, you might be less likely to get a promotion. And you're more likely to hang around past 7pm, even if all you're doing is liking your friend's status on Facebook.

If all barriers for women are deconstructed, there will still be many people who choose a lower level job, said Schuller.

"There are lots of women who have careers and want to progress but that doesn't mean they will become CEOs or top judges," he said. "They want to develop in their work, but not necessarily in a vertical sense."

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