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GENDER AND GROWTH

Women Redefining
Professional Boundaries



Dr. Baseerat Fatima | Dr. Sadaf Khan
Dr. Kamini Vishwakarma

Dr. Fatima | Dr. Khan | Dr. Vishwakarma

GENDER AND GROWTH

Women Redefining Professional Boundaries



Gender and Growth: Women Redefining Professional Boundaries

Editors

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Dr. Sadaf Khan

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Gender Inequality in the Workplace-Addressing the Wage Gap and Limited Representation of Women in Leadership Positions

*Ms. Reshma Haya**

ABSTRACT

Despite remarkable progress in education, political participation, and economic involvement, women continue to encounter systemic discrimination in workplaces worldwide. Gender inequality remains deeply embedded in organizational structures, wage systems, leadership pipelines, and workplace culture. Women often earn less than men for similar work, remain concentrated in lower-paying sectors, and face invisible barriers preventing them from reaching leadership roles. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as the gender wage gap and glass ceiling effect, has become a central concern in contemporary discussions on economic justice and workplace equality. This chapter explores the structural causes of workplace gender inequality, particularly focusing on wage disparities and underrepresentation of women in leadership positions. It examines historical roots of discrimination, societal stereotypes, unpaid care responsibilities, workplace harassment, occupational segregation, and legal shortcomings. The chapter also discusses global and Indian perspectives, supported by statistical trends, landmark judicial decisions, policy frameworks, and corporate initiatives. Through a human-centered lens, this chapter highlights not only institutional barriers but also the lived experiences of women balancing ambition, family expectations, motherhood, and workplace discrimination. It argues that true economic growth cannot occur without gender-inclusive workplaces and equitable leadership structures.

KEYWORDS: *Gender inequality, wage gap, leadership representation, workplace discrimination, glass ceiling, women empowerment, equal pay.*

INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality continues to remain one of the most persistent structural challenges in workplaces across the world. Despite decades of feminist movements, constitutional guarantees, international labour standards, and corporate diversity initiatives, women continue to face systemic discrimination in employment opportunities, salary structures, promotions, and leadership representation. While the twenty-first century has witnessed remarkable progress in women's education, entrepreneurship, and workforce participation, the workplace remains far from equal.¹

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