

# TEACHERS PERCEPTION ABOUT GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

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**ABSTRACT:** *The present study aims to explore gender discrimination in special education sector of Lahore, Pakistan. The study explored different factors of gender discrimination. It is a descriptive study in its nature and adopted descriptive means of research to explore different aspects of male and female work discrimination. The data were collected with the help of a questionnaire. The population of the study includes all employees of Special education of Lahore city. The sample of study consists in 100 personnel's of the sectors equally proportionate for both the genders. This study shows that majority of men and women think that they are treated equally with respect to recruitment and selection, remuneration, training opportunities, promotional opportunities, family friendly policies and departmental facilities. It is noteworthy that half of the men think that they are treated less favourably with regard to flexibility of working hours. Wages discrimination with respect to gender bias was found in private sector institutions.*

**Key words:** Gender Discrimination, Biasness, Special Education, Teachers, Inequality

## INTRODUCTION

The present study aimed to explore gender inequality in special education sector in Lahore, Pakistan. The social background of Pakistan is principally patriarchal. Men and women are conceptually separated into two separate worlds. Home is considered as a woman's legitimate area of jurisdiction, while a man dominates the world outside the home Pakistani women lack social status because of negation of their roles as active members outside their homes. The preference for sons due to their productive role depicts the provision of household resources in their favour [1]. Males of the family are provided with better education and are equipped with skills to struggle for resources in the public arena, while female members are imparted domestic skills to be good mothers and wives [2].

Gender is a societal assemble that impacts both sexes. Women are, however, more susceptible because of their secondary status [3]. According to Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 1, 2 in every sphere of life every person should be treated equally as all human beings are born free and equal in rights and dignity. They are gifted with conscience and rationale and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

In the majority of the South Asian countries, women face gender inequality in education sector because of some deeply embedded gender norms. Pakistan is one of the developing South Asian countries with significant gender inequalities. Extensive gender gaps can be seen in education sector of this region [4].

Keeping in view special education sector, gender inequality can be described as the biasness that an individual faces due to his/her sex. Inequality is prejudicial treatment of an individual. Female employees are supposed to be more victim of this malpractice, and conclusions are drawn that their capabilities are underestimated most of the time [5].

This study, therefore, attempts to put forth this phenomenon in the light of observations and analysis that gender does not

affect work performance. If the organization or institute confers equal chances for both genders, then we may abstain from this dilemma of inequality. The researcher hopes that this study will contribute to the existing world of knowledge in the form of findings, results and recommendation so as to eliminate gender inequality and will serve as a mean to flourish gender equality in our society.

## Literature Review

Gender equality in workplace is defined as the stage of human social progression at which the liabilities, rights and opportunities of persons will not be judged by the gender as being male and female in other words, a stage when both genders men and women experience their full potential [6].

In institutional literature, gender issues with reference to male and female were pointed out in decade of 1950s, but highlighted as a major and important issue in management and organizational studies between the period of 1980s & 1990s. The interval between these two eras acknowledged the gender effects in various fields [7].

Peterson & Togstad describe that there are many ways of gender discrimination in organization or employment because of the unfair actions of the employer as discrimination in employment compensation package, hiring discrimination, favoritism related to job promotion, biasness in pay setting for different kinds of jobs. Many analysts agree on the following order with respect to the importance of these factors or issues "hiring is most important; promotion is second; and wages are third." [8]

Hearn & Parkin emphasized on women's issue in those organizations which are dominated by men. Economic Forum of the World depicts gender inequality as no country in the world has yet managed to eliminate the gender gap and gender discrimination [9]. Silva claimed that gender-quake is distressing gender terms and relations noticeably. It seems that western developed countries are well aware of the issue of gender discrimination but don't like to address gender inequality and biasness among male and female employee [10].

A key measure of women's improvement in employment is the availability of good quality jobs for women in legislative, senior official or managerial positions. Although women still represent a distinct minority in such positions throughout the world holding only 28% of these senior jobs. Women are progressing considerably in European Union as they have increased their share of high status position over the past decade by 3.1% to current level of 30.6%. However, women in Europe still earn less than men. Throughout the European Union, the difference in average gross hourly earnings of men and women has remained high at fifteen percent [11].

According to European Commission, the difference in pay between men and women results from disobeying of equal pay legislation and from a number of structural inequalities. Gender discrimination is also seen in United Kingdom. As a report by Equal Opportunities Commission states that each year 30,000 women lose their jobs due to pregnancy, and only 3% who experience a problem, lodge a claim at employment tribunal. The British and European courts launched the Discrimination Law review in February 2005, to achieve a transparent and more streamlined discrimination legislative framework which produces better consequences for those who suffer from discrimination and disadvantages [12].

Women are playing an increasingly active role in economic, political and social life and they make up nearly half (46.4%) of those in employment. The legislations and laws of UK reflect that they tried hard to eliminate discrimination from their society and tried for prevalence of equal rights of both genders [13].

The World Bank Report declared that Pakistan is included in one of the developing South Asian countries having broad range of gender inequality. The Government of Pakistan thrived to achieve the gender equality. Efforts of Government to accomplish the commitments are seen or reflected to some extent in implementing policies on health and population and women's development programmes. Pakistan still ranks low in gender indicators and its measures for gender inequality are deteriorating [14]

According to Global Competitiveness Index (2013), on education issue of competitiveness of Pakistan in comparison with other countries like Malaysia, Sri Lanka, China and India, Pakistan's performance is not so good. In accordance with such circumstances, fewer chances are available for females in workplace due to prevailing gender biases in the society [15].

According to ILO (2005), the labor market is gender discriminated; the rate of employment of women is very low. There are huge gender discriminations in labour market of Pakistan. The employment of women outside the house hold is rare. These gender differences cause underrepresentation of women on labor market as a result of social constrains and gender inequality at workplace by creating hostile environment [16].

Difference between men and women is a natural phenomenon. Women are treated differently everywhere in the world, not only in the public places but also at home. Regrettably, Pakistan is one of few countries where this

discrimination can be witnessed at its heights [17]. Women participation in Pakistan National Assembly is 67 out of total 342 seats. This representation accounts for 19.6% only which staggers behind 48% actual proportion of women in total population of the country. This gender gap confirms unequal treatment of the women even at government level. Women are discriminated in all spheres of life such as socially, economically and culturally particularly in Pakistan [18].

Gender equality is among parameters that point out where a country actually stands and how civilized a nation is. According to the Human Development Index (HDI) 2007-08 Pakistan, at 136 out of 177 countries, comes under the Medium Human Development countries. It is very pity that most of the countries of subcontinent are still at the bottom including Pakistan.

According to the "Global Gender Gap Report 2013", published by the "World Economic Forum" Pakistan comes down at 135, lowest rank in Asia and Pacific region. This report measures the size of the gender inequality gap in four areas, with economic contribution, education, political empowerment, and health. The country ranked 135 (second worst) on equal economic participation and opportunities on the basis of gender in Pakistan. Female economic participation rate of Pakistan is 22.2% in comparison to other South Asian countries 38% that confirms low access of women to job market in the country [19].

ILO explains that 52.6% of women in working age were active worldwide in 2007. The average global female labor participation was 35.6%, much higher than female participation rate in Pakistan [20]. According to the UNDP (2010) report, below than 35% women are engaged in paid work in South Asian countries [21]. According to The Global Gender Gap report (2010), Pakistan is one of the ten worst countries to live for women [22].

When we analyze educational attainment which is second factor of GDI, Pakistan is ranked at 129 on educational attainment and staggering in the report that is among eight worst levels. According to the report entitled "The Education System in Pakistan" published by UNESCO (2007), 14 million girls were enrolled in basic education in 2005, compared to 18.3 million boys in Pakistan. There were 4.3 million more boys than girls in basic education, which results gender gap in education system. But the magnitude of disparities is much smaller in Pakistan when it comes to political empowerment and representation in decision making structures among the two sexes, with a rank of 64 among 136 countries. In fourth category of women's health and survival country ranked 124, which is 13<sup>th</sup> from the bottom. These four categories of socio-economic gender inequalities show that Pakistan stands at the worst stage. According to this report, gap between men and women has narrowed slightly in many countries during the last year. However, Pakistan's ranking has gradually dropped from 132 in 2006 to 135 in 2013[23].

Education as a tool can rupture the current pattern of gender inequality and bring lasting changes for females in developing countries like Pakistan. For decades Pakistan has grossly underinvested in education particularly in female's

education. To eradicate gender biasness, educated females are essential. Education in Pakistan has to suffer many issues including low levels of public investment, poverty, discriminating regional and gender inequalities in budgetary provisions to education. According to Pakistan education statistics 2010-11 there are 270,825 institutes are providing benefits to 40,926,661 pupils with assistance of 1,507,100 teachers. When it is differentiated into public and private, the figures came out 194,151 and 76,674 respectively [24].

economy too [25]. It is very essential to aware the people about influences of gender discrimination so as to eradicate this dilemma from society. The present study will serve as a mean to spread awareness about existence of gender discrimination in education. Through the awareness this study

**Table 1: percentage of male and female teachers serving in different levels**

Level	Male	Female	Total	%	
				M	F
Pre-Primary	476	3119	3595	13	87
Primary	229920	207008	436928	53	47
Middle	114645	220339	334984	34	66
High	173413	222296	395709	44	56
Higher Sec.	36473	34629	71102	51	49
Inter College	5332	4749	10081	53	47
Degree College	20168	16181	36349	55	45
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>580,427</b>	<b>708321</b>	<b>1288748</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>55%</b>

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2010-11

The public sector is an essential player in facilitating the education, while innovative programs and important steps are required to make education high quality and accessible for all. The ratio of male teaching staff up to degree colleges level is 45% and ratio of female is 55% sharing major role in education system in Pakistan. Ratio of primary schools is 58% and universities contribute least to 0.05% as only 135 universities are serving the students in Pakistan. Male primary teacher are 229,920 (53%) and number of female teachers is 207,008(47%).

**Table 2: Percentage of male female teachers by professional qualification in Year 2010-11**

Professional Qualification	Male	Female	Total	Percentage	
				Male	Female
P.T.C	154,105	112,487	266,592	58%	42%
C.T	42,713	29,365	72,078	59%	41%
B.Ed/ B.S.Ed.	60,097	31,802	91,899	65%	35%
M.Ed.	27,003	12,498	39,501	68%	32%
Trained	89,868	65,338	155,206	58%	42%
Un-Trained	3,882	3,403	7,285	53%	47%
Not-Mentioned	26,746	20,522	47,268	56%	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>404,414</b>	<b>275,415</b>	<b>679,829</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>41%</b>

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2010-11

The data show that males are professionally more qualified than females, and differences exist at all levels. About 1,22,795 males are more than female in professional degrees.

### Significance of the Study

The present study is an effort to figure out the major effects of the gender discrimination. All over the world 40 percent of the workforce are women, and if those women feel discomfort and want to quit their jobs to avoid distress and the consequences of gender discrimination that will definitely affect the productivity at workplace and cause loss of

will guide efforts for eradication of this dilemma from society. Majority of society is Muslim and Islam guarantees equal status for both the genders. Many verses from the Holy Quran emphasize the spiritual equality and responsibility of men and women. Creator of human being says:

“I shall not lose sight of the labor of any of you who labors in my way, be it man or woman; each of you is equal to the other (3:195)”.

So in the light of this perspective, the researchers want to diminish this difference and create an environment where the status of both genders is knitted gradually through continuous struggle and sacrifices.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

The present study aims to explore perception of special education employees about gender inequality at workplace.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objectives of the study are to:

1. Explore magnitude of gender inequality in special education sector.
2. Explore the effects of gender on work routine.
3. Enlist the measures for reduction of gender inequality in special education sector.

#### **Methodology and Procedure**

The present study is a descriptive type of research that studies different aspects of male and female work discrimination and level of discrimination on workplace, productivity and employee performance.

#### **Population and Sample of the Study**

The population of the study comprises employees of special education sector. A total number of 200 personnel's i.e. (100 male & 100 female) of the special education sector working in Lahore were approached as the sample of the study by using purposive sampling technique.

#### **Instrumentation and Data Collection**

An instrument was developed and sent to a panel of five experts in the field for validity assurance. Later on, the instrument was pilot tested on a group of 30 respondents for reliability assurance which was calculated .836 using SPSS. The instrument consists in three parts. First part collects demographic information of the respondents whereas second part of the instrument consists in dichotomous questions with yes and no as options for the respondents. The third part of the questionnaire is a five point Likert scale to elicit responses indicating influence of gender discrimination on society. The data were analyzed by applying statistical techniques.

#### **Delimitation of the Study**

The study is delimited to the personnel's working in special education sector in Lahore city which is the capital city of the Punjab Province.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

An effort has been made to tabulate the demographic data and by recording information from respondents findings are brought forward:

**Table 3: Demographic information of respondents**

Variables	Demographic information of respondents		
		f	%
Gender	Male	100	50
	Female	100	50
Age group	25-29	94	47
	30-34	60	30
	35-39	30	15
	Above 40	16	8
Marital status	Married	94	47
	Single	102	51
	Divorced	4	2
Monthly income	Less than 50000	158	79
	50,000-1,00000	36	18
	Above 1,00000	6	3
Education	Graduates	44	22
	Masters	116	58
	MPhil	24	12
	PhD	8	4
	Others	8	4
Job Experience	1-4 years	80	40
	5-8 years	64	32
	9- 12 years	38	19
	More than 12	18	9
Job Status	Private	80	40
	Regular	94	47
	Contract basis	26	13

Table 3 shows that the sample consists of 100 males and 100 female respondents. Participants of the study were from different age groups, researcher categorized them in four groups. Majority of respondents were between the ages of 25 to 29 47% (n=94), and 30% (n=60) of the respondents were between the ages of 30 to 34 years, and 15% respondents (n=30) were between the ages of 35 to 39 years, only 8% (n=16) of the respondent were above 40 years.

In terms of job experience, majority of respondents (40 percent) had between one to four years' experience, 32 percent had between five to nine years of job experience, 19 percent had nine to twelve years of job experience, and 9 percent respondents have more than 12 years job experience.

As for as qualification of the respondents is concerned, majority of them 58% (n=116) have master degree, 12% (n=24) have M.Phil degree, 22% (n=44) respondents were graduates, and only 4% (n=8) have PhD as their highest degree. In terms of marital status, 51 percent respondents were single, 47 percent were married and only 2 percent were divorced.

Equal proportion of the male and female was part of the study with respect to their job sector. With respect to monthly income of respondents, 79% (n=158) had less than fifty thousand per month salary, 18% (n=36) had more than fifty thousand to one lac monthly salary and only 3% (n=6) had more than one lac per month salary.

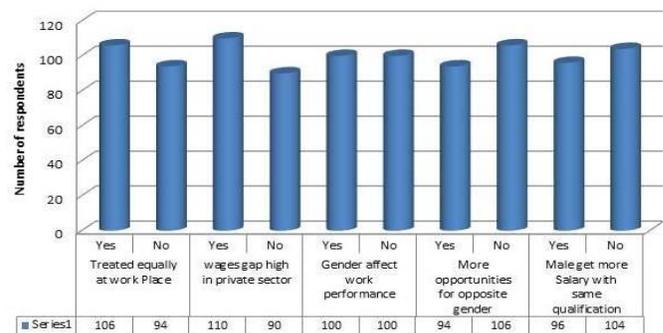
After demographic and basic information about both genders, the responses to second part of the instrument are tabulated in following table.

**Table 4: Responses of special education sector employees at different variables**

Variables	Yes (%)	No (%)
Treated equally at work place	63	37
Wages gap high in private sector	87	13
Supervisor consider gender in job	65	35
Colleagues behavior gender based	67	33
Gender affect work performance	50	50
Lost job because of opposite gender	10	90
More opportunities for opposite gender	47	53
Gender based wages gap exist	55	45
Male get more salary with same qualification	48	52
Organization promoting gender equality	53	47
Discriminated due to your gender	50	50

Table 4 indicates the respondent's perception working in special education sector about gender discrimination at workplace. About 63% (n=126) respondents pointed out that they are treated equally at their work place when compared with the opposite gender, while 37% (n=74) pointed out that they were not treated equally at work place when they compare themselves with opposite gender.

It is noted that majority of the respondents 87% (n=174) feel high wage difference in private sector as compared to government sector. Total 65% (n=130) respondents said that their supervisors remained biased with respect to gender discrimination in delegating job assignments. About 67% (n=134) respondents said that colleagues treat them differently on the basis of gender. Results show that 58% (n=116) respondents preferred a male boss, while 42% (n=84) preferred female boss in their work place. The study indicates that respondents are equally divided on the question number six as half of them consider gender as an element affecting their performance. Again the study shows that 90% (n=180) respondents claim that they never lost their jobs just because of opposite gender, while 10% (n=20) agreed that they lost their job just because of gender bias.

**Perception of Respondents about Gender Discrimination****Figure 1: Perception of Respondents about Gender Discrimination**

Total 47% (n=94) respondents feel that their opposite gender has more opportunities while 53% (n=106) are against this opinion. The results of the study indicates that 55% (n=110) of the respondents think that wages gap on the basis of gender exists whereas 45% (n=90) of them do not agree to

this point of view. And 48% (n=96) respondents feel that with the same qualification and status males get more salary than females, while 52% (n=104) do not agree with this point of view. In terms of gender equality amongst co-workers, 53% (n=106) of the respondents claim that their organization promotes gender equality among workers, while 47% (n=94) of them feel that their organization does not promote any sort of gender equality among workers. The results indicate that respondents are equally divided on the last question as half of them consider that they are discriminated on the basis of their gender whereas half of them do not think so.

On the basis of Likert scale items, following responses are recorded from male and females employees of education system, which are helpful to understand how they experienced different things in their lives.

**Based on your experiences, do you feel men and women are treated equally in your culture?**

**Table 5: Likert scale responses of males& females**

Variables	Both	Men	Women
	Treated Equally	Treated Less Favorably	Treated Less Favorably
Recruitments	53%	12%	35%
Remuneration	55%	13%	32%
Appraisal	47%	38%	15%
Training	58%	17%	25%
Promotion opportunities	65%	8%	27%
Family friendly polices	65%	17%	18%
Flexible working	38%	50%	12%
Departmental facilities	50%	32%	18%
Education sector	65%	7%	28%

Table 5 indicates total 53% (n=106) respondents think that men and women are treated equally in recruitment and selection process, while 35% (n=70) feel that women are treated less favorably and 12% (n=24) respondents claim that men are treated less favorably in the recruitment and selection process in their organizations.

Table also shows that 55% (n=110) of the respondents find equal treatment of men and women with respect to remuneration, while 32% (n=64) of them think that women are treated less favorably and 13% (n=26) respond that men are treated less favorably in their system.

On the response at appraisal by the administration on the basis of performance, 47% (n=94) respondents said that men and women were treated equally, while 38% (n=23) said that men were treated less favourably and 15% (n=30) of them said that women were treated less favourably.

Trainings are very effective in employees' performance. When asked about training opportunity during job, 58% (n=116) of the respondents claimed equal treatment for both genders, 25% (n=50) found treatment of men less favourable and 17% (n=34) thought that women were treated less favorably in trainings from the organizations.

Promotion opportunities play very important role in employees' motivation and job satisfaction. On the basis of responses 65% (n=130) respondents said that men and women were treated equally in promotion opportunities while 27% (n=54) responded that women were treated less

favourably and only 8% (n=16) responded that men were treated less favourably in promotion opportunities.

Family plays very important role in individual life especially empowerment of women. Total 65% (n=130) personnel responded that men and women were favored equally with respect to family friendly policies while 18% (n=36) said that women were treated less favourably. However, 17% (n=34) respondents replied that men were treated less favourably when asked about family friendly policies.

About flexibility in working environment on basis of gender, 38% (n=76) responded that men and women got equal treatment, while 50% (n=100) responded that men were treated less favorably and 12% (n=24) said women were treated less favorably.

Departments provide some facilities on the basis of gender. Total 50% (n=100) of the respondents said that men and women avail equal facilities from their department, while 32% (n=64) said that men were treated less favorably and 18% (n=36) responded that women were treated less favorably.

Education is very important indicator of society development. Gender gap exists in all levels of education system in our society and in special education as well. Total 65% (n=130) respondents said that men and women were treated equally in education system, while 28% (n=56) said that they experienced less favourable treatment for women in their system for education.

## CONCLUSION

In accordance with the findings of this study, it is concluded that gender does not affect work performance if the organization or institute prevails gender equality and confers chances equally to both. Gender influences work performance at different degrees, if the employees are provided with biasness in workplace where head or boss only consider gender for assigning tasks and duties instead of hard work and devotion. The perception of our society is that males are more dynamic and responsible towards administration as compared to female, so mostly males as a boss are preferred.

During the discourse of this study the researcher noted that in government sector of special education most (90%) of respondents never lost their job just because of opposite gender, while in private sector of special education, fewer cases of losing job just because of opposite gender are reported.

It is also concluded that there is remarkable wages gap on the basis of gender in private sector, while respondents that belong to government sector are paid according to their pay scales so wages gap does not exist on the basis of gender. This is sufficient to prove that there is no gender discrimination with respect to pays and allowances in government sector of special education whereas the same exists in the special education organizations other than the government institutions.

On the basis of the findings of the Likert scale, it is easy to conclude that majority of men and women are of the view that they are treated equally with respect to recruitment and

selection, remuneration, training opportunities, promotional opportunities, education sector, family friendly policies and departmental facilities. However, almost half of the men think that they are treated less favourably with regard to flexibility of working hours.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Keeping in view the literature on the topic, findings and conclusion of the present study, the researcher feels it worthwhile to present some recommendations to minimize gender discrimination in the private and public sector organizations of special education in our society. These recommendations include:

Department of special education should carry out regular statistical surveys to eliminate gender inequalities in workplace. Amplified monitoring should be progressed so that gender biasness can be minimized.

A set of policy interventions is requisite that acts simultaneously upon discrimination in remuneration (pay equity) and unequal division of paid and unpaid labor for both genders.

By identifying and quantifying gender gap the researcher hope to provide future researcher with a tool conferring direction and focus to work for removing gender inequality from workplace. Hence, more research with greater population and extended job sectors is need of the hour and should be carried out in the greater interest of the society.

As males are considered more responsible, so appraisal practices are there for males but this practice should be discouraged as both genders have same potential to work. Women are always discriminated by giving them flexible working conditions and fewer responsibilities, difficult task are given to males only. Women are offered less salary but get more relaxed working conditions. Such practices increase gender discrimination and need to be stopped immediately either by policy making or removing gaps in implementation process.

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