

## Women Strategies in Information Technology

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**Abstract:** The materialization of Information Technology sector from 1985 has unveiled a potential employment opportunity for women. The principles and set of laws is more suitable for women and it provides very less gender discrimination when we compare other sectors. This paper attempts to analyze the issues of opportunities and problems of women employees in the Information Technology sector in India. IT sector, through its employment, contributes substantially to women empowerment. Women employees playing a key role and become Game Changer in IT sector with their potentiality. The IT potentiality provides inspiration to female students to take up technical and professional courses with an eye to the job market. Most reviews reveal that, notwithstanding overall satisfactory gender neutral pursuit by this sector, an optimal level of gender inclusivity is still to be achieved, especially to the senior level. The most important purse is workplace of women employee is dominating highly by male employees. This paper is arrived at, the IT women formal workforce is connected with economy and empowerment. The women of IT juxtaposed against the entirety of the system of discrimination, violence and the game changer by women in India.

**Key words:** Potential, IT, Professionals, workplace, Game Changer

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### 1. Introduction

From ages the traditional India women has subjugated by male domination and cultured. Today this traditional woman is playing a key role in not only IT sector but also in other sectors. The globalization has made deep inroads in the Indian scene from 1985s. The Development of Information Technology in recent decades, facilitated by the high-speed data communication links, contributed to improved communicative networks bridging the temporal and spatial boundaries and, correspondingly, widened the scope of opportunities for people seeking paid work.

The Electronic Industries Technologies such as mobile commerce, electronic funds transfer, supply chain management, Internet marketing, online transaction processing, electronic data interchange (EDI), inventory management systems, and automated data collection systems. Modern electronic commerce typically uses the World Wide Web for at least one part of the transaction's life cycle; although it may also use other technologies such as e-mail (Wikipedia, 2014) provide possibilities to improve the lives of women and their families in developing countries. The rapid growth of information technology enabled services in the business has considerably changed the means of access. India is a hub for attracting the foreign software clients by the quality of skilled software professionals (NASSCOM's).

### 2. WOMEN IN TOP ORGANIZATION LEVEL

“Women Matter” is a study conducted by McKinsey & Company as part of its global partnership with the Women’s Forum for the Economy & Society. The study suggests that the companies where women are most strongly represented at board or top-management level are also the companies that perform best. Confirming the existence of the gender gap – most notably in the composition of corporate management bodies – the McKinsey study offers fact-based insights into the importance for companies of fostering the development of women in the business arena, so that a greater number attain positions of high responsibility.

### 3. WHY THE IT INDUSTRY?

In 2012, an international consulting and management firm called Booz & Company released “The Third Billion”, a global ranking of the level of economic empowerment attained by woman on 128 countries. The indicators used included equal pay for equal work, non-discrimination policies, the male-to-female employee ratio, and equality in terms of female managers and senior business leaders. India rated quite poorly at spot 115. Further, the International Labour Force recently reported that the rate of female participation in the total labour force in India has fallen from 37% in 2004-05 to 29% in 2009-10, leaving India at the 11th lowest spot out of 131 countries.

Despite these declining rates, it was estimated in 2010 that approximately 5.5 million Indian women were entering the formal workforce each year at that period in time, and though the aforementioned statistics likely indicate that a larger proportion of men are entering the formal workforce each year than women, this is a significant amount of employees, many of whom will be facing a unique set of challenges in the workplace simply because of their gender. In fact, research done by the Centre for Talent Innovation has found that 55% of female Indian employees routinely encounter such severe bias in the workplace that they disengage from their work or consider dropping out altogether.

#### **4. GENDER GAP**

It has been mystified by the continuing debate on how the ‘supply of qualified women’ on needs to be increased in corporate India, and how there is a continuing shortage of talented and qualified women for top positions in companies and organizations. According to the Report from The Hindu, Business Line, The IT industry in India faces a severe gender gap not only in terms of the number of women in the payroll, but also in terms of remuneration as women employees are getting far less pay than their male counterparts, says a Monster.com report. According to the Monster Salary Index India IT Sector Report 2014, only 30 per cent of the total IT sector workforce in India is comprised of women and the fairer sex also faces a huge gender pay gap of 29 per cent. The gross salary of a male IT worker is Rs. 359.25 per hour while a female receives Rs. 254.04 per hour and this disparity possibly emerges from the fact that men get promoted to supervisory positions more often than women. Only 36 per cent of female employees are promoted to a supervisory position, while 52 per cent of male staff get promoted to a supervisory rank, the report said (This article was published on July 23, 2014).

The promotion and payment process in IT industry from men to women shows a deep variation. The course will damage the women confidant and shows discrimination towards women. But the IT industry in India is such an important source of employment for young Indian professionals, and because an unprecedented amount of those young professionals are women (women made up 42% of India's college graduates in 2010, and that figure was expected to continue to rise), IT companies have the potential to become leading examples of women-friendly employers. However, according to Data Quest's Best Employer Survey 2012, the percentage of women employed in the IT industry in India has actually decreased from 26% in 2010 to 22% in 2012 even though the number of jobs created in this sector continues to increase annually. Again, these statistics most likely point to a larger number of males available for employment than females (and therefore a larger proportion of men being employed), but they also show that the number of women employed in the IT sector is not significantly increasing after 2012.

#### **5. RISK-TAKING IN WOMEN**

Risk-taking carries the day for everything worthwhile. As it has been rightly said, “You miss 100% of the shots you never take!” Taking risks is a fundamental characteristic of top leaders; a key ingredient for professional growth and career success. Yet, gendered connotations come into play here as well. It is perceived that men tend to ignore the rules and take significant risks. The hunger for accolades makes them gamble on riskier options and emerge successful.

On the other hand, survey evidence too upholds an inherent reluctance in women to take risks or enter a competitive environment. The stereotypical risk-averse image labels all women as fearful, pessimistic and overly careful.

Men often say that women colleagues constantly underestimate positive possibilities and let emotional reactions influence their decision-making. Well, another growing contention is that all women are not risk-averse per se. They do not hesitate to take bold risks while accepting personal responsibility for failure. Where they differ is in carefully calculating the risk factors vis-à-vis the time, commitment and efforts required as well as the likely personal and organizational returns. The true barriers to women taking risks lie in the stereotypical management attitudes that deny women the access to risk-bearing.

Women need help to master the company codes. Coaching, network-building or mentoring programs can be highly effective in raising women’s awareness of the limitations they impose on themselves and enabling them to manage their careers in a male-centric environment.

Women also need to be made aware of the vital importance of networking. Setting up women’s networks within the company sensitizes women to this fact, and creates opportunities for broader professional exposure, while also raising the profile of female leaders in the organization, which is essential in helping young women to identify with role models. Women should go ahead and commit to take the risk and initiate action. Eliminate self-doubts, act decisively and don’t let yourself give up. As the Nike slogan goes, ‘Just Do It’. But be prepared to change plans along the way if needed. Finally, analyze the risk taking to glean the lessons learnt.

Gradually, healthy risk taking will come naturally and you will be ready to strike out in new directions with bold, risky ideas.

## **6. A SUCCESS STORY OF VANITHA NARAYANAN, MANAGING DIRECTOR, IBM INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED**

Vanitha Narayanan is the Managing Director of IBM India Private Limited, and the Regional General Manager for India/ South Asia (ISA). Appointed to this leadership position in January, 2013, she is responsible for all of IBM's sales, marketing, services and global delivery operations in the India/South Asia region, including operations in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. India remains one of the fastest growing countries for IBM and has emerged as a strategic location within the company's global services delivery network.

Having joined IBM in the US in 1987, Vanitha has over 25 years of experience working with multiple client sets and in several countries. Since 2009, she has been a part of the IBM ISA business, serving in roles as the Sales & Distribution Leader and recently as the Managing Partner for Global Business Services (GBS). Prior to this, she has served as the Vice President of Communications sector, Asia Pacific, and the Global Vice President for IBM's telecom solutions offerings. She is a member of IBM's Integration & Values Team which is comprised of senior Global Executives who are selected by the IBM Chairman.

In 2012, Vanitha was inducted into the IBM Industry Academy, a select group of experts, designed to advance IBM's industry thought leadership and brand. Vanitha also leads several leadership development & diversity initiatives for ISA and is the executive sponsor for developing the women's leadership pipeline. Vanitha is a member of the National Council of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for 2013-14. She has a Masters in Business Administration in Marketing from the University of Madras and a Masters in Business Administration in Information Systems from University of Houston – Magna Cum Laude. This success story motivates the women to overcome the predicament in workplace and generate innovative thoughts to achieve high max outs in professional occupation.

## **7. MAIN BARRIERS FOR IT PROFESSIONAL**

This dominant model is felt by women to be the main barrier to career advancement and success, because it cannot be reconciled with the double burden. An added final handicap is that it appears harder for women to find a mentor. Everyone man and women alike face obstacles in their careers. It is essential that people, especially women, do not let such things hinder their growth, and learn to develop mechanism that can help them bypass such situations with panache.

In addition to these barriers, there are also psychological obstacles: women's difficulty in identifying with success, and their lesser ambition, which combined with a greater focus on their families, seem to lead many women to opt out of a business career. The absence of female role models – seen as a barrier by 64% of women in the US<sup>11</sup> – is compounded by a heightened perception of the difficulty of achieving success in today's business environment. In France for instance, 77% of women believe their career development faces barriers, a perception shared by 49% of men<sup>12</sup>. Only 15% of highly qualified women aspire to positions of power, against an average of 27% of men.

## **8. FEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IT**

The road to gender balance in the IT sector needs to address the systemic issues that contribute to over-representation of males in the sector. The current imbalance has been shown in the research to diminish Canada's capacity to compete globally and to become a world leader in a sector that will contribute to the economic health of the country. Social and organizational activities in IT should support women from recruitment to retirement.

Few Recommendation Points:

- Converse about “changing the world” through IT
- Position the sector in the everyday
- Highlight team work and social aspects of working in IT
- Speak to the values that guide girls' career decision making and make IT meaningful to them
- Opportunities for communication and collaboration for users

## **9. CONCLUSION**

Women have much to contribute to the field of IT. The sector is poised to make significant in-roads in the recruitment and retention of women. Teachers and parents need to be supported to promote unbiased use of

technology. Pedagogy free of gender-bias and women-friendly workplace policies will help recruit women into IT related disciplines and keep them actively contributing to the sector. The masculine culture should need to reconstruct and contribute the supporting policy to work together. Involve women in research and innovation processes to increase the potential for creativity, new research content and user-centered design and application. The values and beliefs of the nation have a strong influence on women empowerment initiatives.

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### Author Profile

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