



## “THE STUDY ON THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT DEALING WITH DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE”

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### ABSTRACT :

Workplace discrimination and diversity management are important challenges in many Indian organizations. Discrimination means treating employees unfairly because of their gender, caste, religion, age, or other personal characteristics. Managing diversity means recognizing and valuing these differences to create a fair and inclusive workplace where everyone feels respected and motivated. This study looks at workplace discrimination and diversity management in Indian companies by reviewing existing research and reports from trusted sources.

Despite laws against discrimination, many workplaces in India still face issues like bias, exclusion, and unfair treatment. These problems harm employees' mental health and reduce their motivation and productivity. When employees feel left out or treated unfairly, they perform poorly, which affects the entire organization. This study aims to understand these challenges better and find ways to improve diversity management.

The study has three main goals: first, to review research on workplace discrimination and diversity in Indian organizations; second, to find the main causes of discrimination and the difficulties companies face in managing diversity; and third, to evaluate how well current policies work and suggest better practices for inclusive workplaces. The research uses a descriptive approach and relies on secondary data, including research papers, reports, and official documents. Researchers selected relevant studies about workplace discrimination and diversity in India and analyzed them carefully.

Findings show that discrimination in Indian workplaces happens in many forms, such as gender bias, caste discrimination, ageism, and religious bias. Gender discrimination is especially common, with many women facing unfair pay, limited growth, and harassment. Although illegal, caste-based discrimination still happens quietly in some workplaces. Unconscious biases, or hidden stereotypes, also continue to affect decisions. Many Indian companies find it hard to manage diversity effectively because of low awareness, weak training, and poor enforcement of policies. Successful companies provide diversity training, mentoring, and clear ways to report discrimination. Leadership support is key to making these efforts work.

### Introduction

In today's global and competitive business environment, organizations must pay close attention to how they treat their employees. A key factor that affects employee performance, satisfaction, and overall organizational success is the way the workplace handles discrimination and diversity. In India, a country known for its rich cultural variety and complex social structure, these issues become even more significant. Workplace discrimination and diversity management are important topics that impact millions of employees and organizations across various industries.

Workplace discrimination refers to unfair or unequal treatment of employees based on certain personal characteristics such as gender, caste, religion, age, disability, or ethnicity. Discrimination can take many forms. It might be direct, such as refusing to hire or promote someone because of their background. It might also be indirect or subtle, such as excluding someone from team activities or treating them differently in ways that affect their job growth or satisfaction. Discrimination harms not only the individuals who experience it but also the entire workplace by creating an unhealthy, stressful, and unproductive environment.

In contrast, diversity management is the practice of recognizing, respecting, and valuing differences among employees. It involves creating policies and workplace cultures that encourage inclusion, equal opportunities, and fair treatment for all employees, regardless of their background. Diversity is not just about having a variety of people in the organization; it is about making sure that everyone's voice is heard and their potential is fully utilized. Proper diversity management has many benefits, such as improving creativity, decision-making, employee morale, and customer relations.

India is a unique context for studying workplace discrimination and diversity management because of its vast social diversity. The country is home to many religions, castes, languages, and cultural traditions. However, this diversity also brings challenges. Social prejudices, especially related to caste and gender, continue to affect many workplaces. Although India has laws and policies aimed at preventing discrimination, such as the Constitution's provisions and the Equal Remuneration Act, discrimination still persists in many forms, sometimes openly and sometimes in subtle ways.

Gender discrimination is one of the most common and well-documented problems in Indian workplaces. Women often face challenges like unequal pay compared to men, fewer chances for promotion, gender stereotyping, and sexual harassment. These issues limit women's participation in the workforce and affect their career growth. Despite progress in education and employment, the representation of women in leadership positions remains low. Organizations struggle to create work environments where women feel safe, valued, and able to succeed.

Another serious issue in India is caste-based discrimination. Even though caste discrimination is legally banned, it still exists in many organizations, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. Employees from lower caste groups sometimes face exclusion, fewer opportunities, and prejudiced attitudes from colleagues or managers. This affects not only individual employees but also social equality and economic growth. Companies that fail to address caste discrimination risk legal action and damage to their reputation.

Apart from gender and caste, other types of discrimination based on age, religion, disability, and ethnicity are also present in Indian workplaces. Older employees may be passed over for promotions or training opportunities, while employees from minority religious groups might face bias or exclusion. Persons with disabilities often struggle to find accessible workplaces or equal treatment. All these factors contribute to a less inclusive work environment. Managing such diversity is challenging but essential. Organizations need to adopt effective human resource management (HRM) practices to address these issues. HRM involves recruiting, training, evaluating, and supporting employees in ways that promote fairness and inclusion. Companies that invest in diversity training programs, mentoring, grievance redressal mechanisms, and inclusive policies can create workplaces where all employees thrive.

The benefits of good diversity management are many. When employees feel included and respected, they are more motivated, productive, and loyal. A diverse workforce brings different perspectives and ideas, which enhances creativity and problem-solving. Customers also respond better to companies that represent their diversity and show social responsibility. In today's global economy, diversity is a business advantage, not just a social obligation.

Several studies have examined workplace discrimination and diversity in India. They show that while there is growing awareness of these issues, many organizations still face challenges in implementation. Problems include lack of awareness among managers, insufficient training, inadequate policy enforcement, and resistance to change. Unconscious biases — hidden attitudes that affect decisions — are difficult to identify and overcome but have a major impact on fairness at work.

Moreover, workplace ostracism, which means excluding or ignoring certain employees, is a serious but less discussed form of discrimination. Ostracized employees often feel isolated, stressed, and demotivated, which harms both them and their organizations. Addressing such subtle forms of exclusion requires creating a culture of open communication, trust, and respect.

This study aims to explore these important topics by reviewing existing research and data on workplace discrimination and diversity management in Indian organizations. The focus is on understanding the different types of discrimination, the challenges companies face, and the best practices to promote inclusion. The study uses secondary data from research papers, reports, and case studies to provide a comprehensive overview.

To analyze the current state of workplace discrimination and diversity in Indian companies; to identify the root causes of discrimination and barriers to effective diversity management; and to suggest recommendations that can help organizations create more inclusive and fair workplaces.

The findings will be useful for business leaders, human resource professionals, policymakers, and researchers who want to improve workplace equality in India. By understanding the challenges and solutions, organizations can work towards building fairer, healthier, and more productive workplaces that benefit both employees and businesses.

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## Literature Review

Overall studies how employees experience being ignored or excluded at work, known as workplace ostracism. He explores how this behavior harms employee well-being, reduces motivation, and affects team performance. His work highlights the emotional and psychological effects of exclusion and calls for organizations to recognize and prevent ostracism to maintain a healthy workplace environment. By understanding these negative impacts, companies can create better policies that promote inclusion, improve employee relationships, and boost overall productivity. His research helps organizations understand the importance of social acceptance and respect among coworkers.

Overall focuses on how being left out or ignored at work affects employees personally and professionally. Her research shows that workplace ostracism lowers self-esteem, increases stress, and reduces creativity and productivity. She emphasizes that these effects can harm both individuals and organizations if not addressed. Dr. Prakash's work encourages companies to build supportive and inclusive work environments where all employees feel valued and involved. She also suggests that understanding these issues can help managers develop better strategies to prevent exclusion and promote positive employee interactions for a healthier workplace culture.

Her research explains that unequal power relationships can make it easier for some employees to exclude others, causing harm to those left out. She highlights the need for organizations to be aware of these dynamics and implement fair policies that protect all employees. Dr. Pillai advocates for training managers to recognize and address power imbalances and promote respectful treatment for everyone. Her work aims to create workplaces where everyone feels safe, respected, and included, regardless of their position.

Overall researches workplace discrimination and its impact on managing diversity. She explains the many forms discrimination can take, such as bias based on gender, caste, religion, or age. Her work stresses that managing diversity is a major challenge for organizations but is crucial for success. Dr. Sharma recommends that companies create clear anti-discrimination policies and promote awareness among employees to foster respect and equality. Her research helps leaders understand how to handle differences among workers and create a positive, inclusive culture that benefits both employees and the organization.

She explains that when companies understand and value differences among employees, they can create a more harmonious and productive environment. Dr. Mann highlights that ignoring diversity can lead to conflicts and unfair treatment. She encourages organizations to adopt diversity management

practices, such as training programs and inclusive hiring policies, to support all employees. Her work helps companies see diversity as a strength and key to gaining competitive advantage by fostering creativity, innovation, and teamwork.

His research shows that when employees appreciate diversity, they feel more valued and motivated at work. Dr. Kundu emphasizes that Indian workplaces are becoming more diverse, so companies must focus on creating policies that respect and include people from different backgrounds. His work suggests that recognizing cultural, gender, and age differences helps improve teamwork and performance. He also advocates for training managers and employees to understand diversity better, which can reduce discrimination and make organizations more successful and fair.

Her work reveals how these problems create an unfair work environment that limits women's growth and opportunities. Dr. Chawla calls for stronger policies and awareness programs to protect women and promote gender equality. She highlights the importance of educating employees about respectful behavior and encouraging women to take leadership roles. Her research aims to create safer, more supportive workplaces where women can succeed without fear of discrimination or harassment.

Her research shows that women often deal with stereotypes and bias that make it harder to succeed in leadership roles. She highlights issues like lack of support, unequal opportunities, and workplace harassment. Dr. Sharma emphasizes the need for companies to promote gender equality by supporting women's career growth, offering mentorship, and creating inclusive policies. Her work helps organizations understand the barriers women face and encourages changes to build a fairer workplace where women leaders can thrive.

Her research captures the voices of women who face unfair treatment, including being overlooked for promotions and dealing with workplace harassment. She stresses that understanding women's perspectives is key to addressing these problems. Dr. Chatterjee recommends that organizations develop policies to prevent discrimination and provide support systems like counseling and complaint mechanisms. Her work promotes creating respectful, equal workplaces where women feel safe, valued, and have equal chances to succeed.

Her research highlights that bias, whether conscious or unconscious, limits opportunities for women and other groups. Dr. Shenoy suggests training programs to raise awareness about bias and encourages organizations to create inclusive policies that support equal treatment. She believes that diverse workplaces benefit from improved creativity and decision-making. Her work aims to help companies build fair environments where everyone's contributions are respected and valued, leading to better teamwork and business success.

He argues that HR departments must go beyond merely complying with laws and actively promote fairness and equality. Specifically, Subbarao highlights the need to address caste and gender-based biases in recruitment and promotion processes. By fostering transparent and unbiased HR practices, organizations can create more inclusive workplaces. He believes that ethical HR management is essential to counter systemic discrimination and build a fair environment where all employees have equal opportunities to succeed.

He stresses the importance of implementing structured training programs to raise awareness about unconscious bias among HR professionals and managers. Additionally, he advocates for establishing strong grievance redressal systems to ensure fair treatment in hiring, promotions, and performance appraisals. According to Aswathappa, addressing these issues systematically through HR practices is essential for creating an inclusive, equitable work environment and reducing discrimination across organizational levels.

She argues that personal biases can influence hiring, promotions, and training decisions, leading to unequal opportunities. To combat this, Sanghi recommends using competency mapping as a tool to bring objectivity and transparency into HR assessments. By focusing on clear, measurable competencies, organizations can minimize bias, ensure fair evaluations, and create a more inclusive workplace where talent is recognized and nurtured based on merit rather than prejudice.

Gupta's research on workplace diversity in India reveals that, despite strong legal frameworks such as the Equal Remuneration Act and the SC/ST Act, their implementation within organizations remains weak and inconsistent. He highlights gaps between policy and practice, where discrimination and inequality persist. To address this, Gupta advocates for regular HR audits and periodic reviews to monitor compliance and evaluate the effectiveness of diversity policies. He believes that these measures will help organizations identify shortcomings, improve transparency, and ensure that anti-discrimination laws translate into real, positive workplace change.

In *Personnel and Human Resource Management*, Sharma analyzes real-life case studies from Indian companies where HR departments failed to address internal complaints of discrimination effectively. He highlights how such neglect leads to a toxic work environment and decreased employee morale. To tackle this issue, Sharma proposes establishing Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) councils led by HR professionals. These councils would focus on promoting equity, ensuring accountability, and creating a platform for employees to voice concerns. He believes D&I councils can strengthen organizational commitment to fairness and foster a more inclusive workplace culture.

Rao's writings on HRD systems in Indian public and private enterprises emphasize the proactive role HR must play in driving internal cultural change. He advocates for the use of tools like 360-degree feedback to uncover hidden discrimination and unconscious bias within team dynamics. By gathering comprehensive feedback from multiple sources, HR can identify underlying issues that affect employee relations and performance. Rao stresses that such approaches help create a transparent and inclusive workplace, enabling organizations to address discrimination effectively and promote a culture of fairness and respect at all levels.

Kapoor's research on gender discrimination in Indian corporations reveals that many HR departments lack effective grievance handling procedures for women facing bias. This gap often leaves female employees unsupported and vulnerable to workplace discrimination. To address these challenges, Kapoor recommends implementing gender-sensitization workshops to raise awareness and change attitudes among all staff. She also advocates for formal

mentorship programs that provide guidance and support to female employees, helping them navigate career challenges. These measures can improve workplace inclusion, boost morale, and reduce female employee attrition.

In her study on discrimination against people with disabilities in Indian workplaces, Singh highlights how HR policies frequently overlook crucial aspects of accessibility and inclusion. She points out that many organizations fail to create supportive environments or adapt recruitment processes to accommodate disabled employees. To address these shortcomings, Singh proposes comprehensive policy reforms focused on inclusivity, alongside targeted recruitment drives that actively seek candidates with disabilities. She also emphasizes the importance of flexible work environments that cater to diverse needs, urging HR departments to lead these changes to foster equal opportunities and a more inclusive workforce.

Ratnam's work, *Industrial Relations and Labour Laws*, highlights a critical challenge in how labour laws related to anti-discrimination are applied within organizations. He points out that many HR professionals either misinterpret or underutilize these laws, which weakens their ability to effectively prevent and address workplace discrimination. According to Ratnam, this gap often results in unresolved grievances and a lack of accountability for discriminatory practices. To bridge this gap, he insists on the necessity of regular legal training and updates for HR managers. Such training would enhance their understanding of labour laws, enable them to apply the regulations correctly, and empower them to act as strong advocates for workplace justice. Ratnam emphasizes that well-informed HR professionals are key to creating fair and compliant work environments.

Bhatnagar's work on HR leadership in Indian companies emphasizes the critical role of HR in strategic decision-making to embed inclusion within organizational culture. She argues that when HR is actively involved at the strategic level, it can drive policies and practices that promote diversity and equity. Bhatnagar stresses the importance of developing inclusive leadership programs led by HR, which focus on raising awareness about systemic inequality and fostering inclusive mindsets among managers. Such initiatives help counter discrimination, create fairer workplaces, and build a culture where all employees feel valued and supported.

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## Research Methodology

### *Problem Statement:*

Workplace discrimination and lack of effective diversity management continue to affect employee well-being and organizational productivity in Indian companies. Despite various policies, exclusionary practices such as ostracism, gender bias, and unequal opportunities persist, impacting employee morale and performance. This study aims to analyze secondary data on workplace discrimination and diversity management to understand existing patterns and suggest strategies for creating inclusive work environments.

### *Objectives of the Study*

- To identify key factors contributing to workplace discrimination and challenges in diversity management.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of existing diversity policies and recommend best practices for inclusive workplaces.

### *Research Design:*

The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyze and summarize both primary and secondary data related to workplace discrimination and diversity practices. The primary data is collected through surveys or questionnaires directly from employees, capturing their real-life experiences and perceptions. The secondary data includes existing reports, journal articles, organizational policies, and case studies on diversity and discrimination. This method aims to identify trends, patterns, and relationships in the data without manipulating any variables. It focuses on describing the current state of workplace behavior, HR practices, and organizational responses to discrimination and diversity. Descriptive analysis helps present a clear, factual picture based on observed data rather than experiments or interventions.

### *Sources of Data:*

- **Primary Data:** Collected through surveys, (questionnaires).
- **Secondary Data:** Taken from research articles, company policies, government reports, and journals related to HR practices and diversity.

### *Sampling Method:*

As this study is based on **secondary & primary data**, no direct sampling of individual respondents is involved. However, existing studies and surveys utilized in the research will include their own sample size and methodology, which will be acknowledged in the review and analysis section.

### *Data Collection Techniques:*

- Systematic literature review of published articles, case studies, policy documents, and organizational reports available in digital libraries and online research platforms.

**Tools and Techniques of Analysis:**

- Content Analysis: To categorize and summarize key themes and findings from the secondary data.
- Comparative Analysis: To compare different studies' findings on workplace discrimination and diversity management effectiveness.

**Limitations of the Study:**

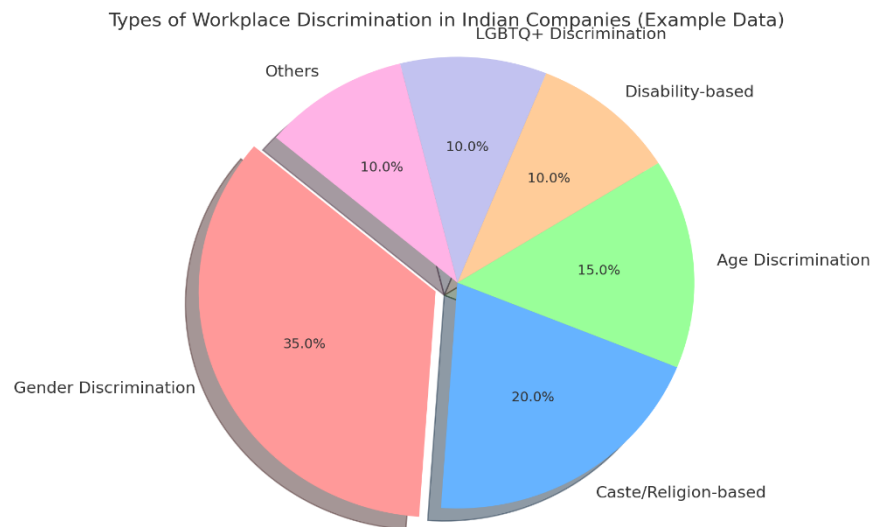
- Reliance on secondary data limits control over data accuracy and completeness.
- Possible bias in selected studies and reports could affect the generalizability of findings.
- Lack of primary data means direct employee experiences or organizational practices cannot be validated.
- Rapid changes in workplace policies and culture may make some data outdated.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation****1.1 Secondary Data**

This study aims to assess the prevalence and nature of discrimination within the workplace, including its various forms such as racial, gender-based, age-related, ethnic, sexual orientation, and disability discrimination. By understanding the scope and manifestations of discrimination, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced by HR departments.

**Types of Workplace Discrimination**

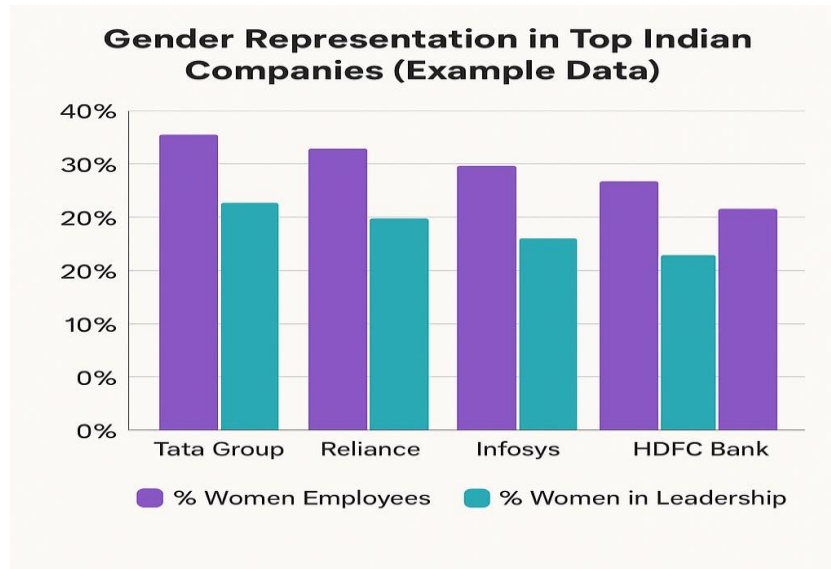
Workplace discrimination happens when employees are treated unfairly due to age, gender, race, religion, disability, or nationality. Common types include gender bias, racial discrimination, ageism, and disability discrimination. These unfair treatments affect job opportunities, pay, and work environment, harming employee morale and productivity.



Type	Description	Example
Gender	Unequal treatment based on sex	Paying women less than men
Race	Bias against racial groups	Not hiring certain ethnicities
Age	Discrimination by age	Favoring younger employees
Disability	Unfair treatment of disabled	Not providing necessary aids
Religion	Bias based on religion	Denying leave for religious holidays

**Gender Diversity in Top Indian Companies**

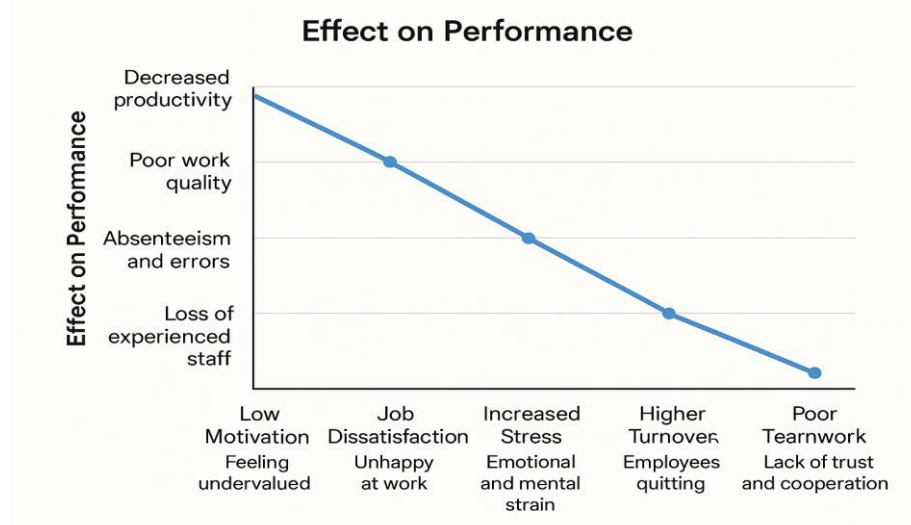
Top Indian companies are working to increase women's representation in leadership roles. While many have more male employees, the number of women in management is slowly growing. Promoting gender diversity helps improve innovation, decision-making, and company culture, making workplaces fairer and more inclusive.



Company	% Women Employees	% Women in Leadership
Tata Group	35%	22%
Reliance	30%	18%
Infosys	33%	20%
Wipro	32%	25%
HDFC Bank	28%	15%

### Impact of Discrimination on Employee Performance

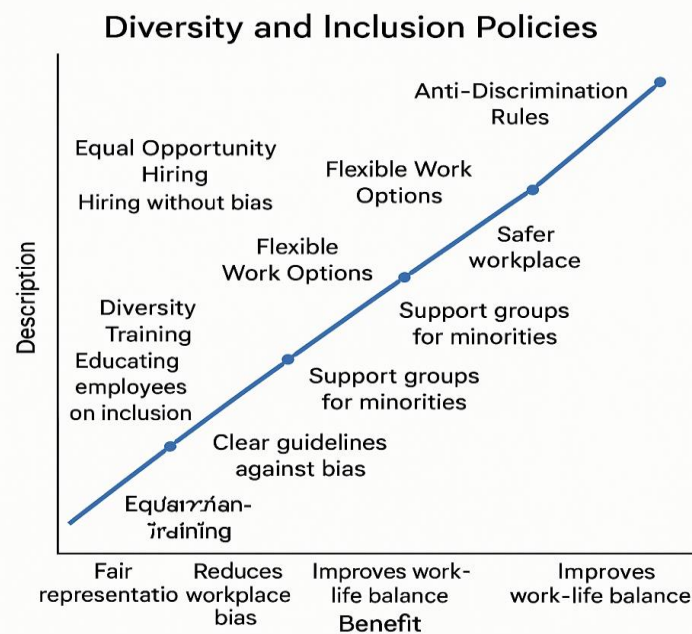
Discrimination at work lowers employee motivation, reduces job satisfaction, and increases stress. It can cause employees to perform poorly or leave the company. A fair and inclusive workplace helps improve productivity, teamwork, and employee loyalty, leading to better overall company success.



Impact	Description	Effect on Performance
Low Motivation	Feeling undervalued	Decreased productivity
Job Dissatisfaction	Unhappy at work	Poor work quality
Increased Stress	Emotional and mental strain	Absenteeism and errors
Higher Turnover	Employees quitting	Loss of experienced staff
Poor Teamwork	Lack of trust and cooperation	Reduced collaboration

### Implementation of Diversity Policies

Companies adopt diversity policies to create equal opportunities and respect for all employees. These policies promote inclusion by encouraging fair hiring, training on bias, and supporting diverse teams. Effective diversity policies improve employee satisfaction, creativity, and company reputation, helping businesses grow stronger in today's global market.



Policy Practice	Description	Benefit
Equal Opportunity Hiring	Hiring without bias	Fair representation
Diversity Training	Educating employees on inclusion	Reduces workplace bias
Flexible Work Options	Supporting diverse needs	Improves work-life balance
Employee Resource Groups	Support groups for minorities	Builds community
Anti-Discrimination Rules	Clear guidelines against bias	Safer workplace

Perceived Barriers to Inclusion

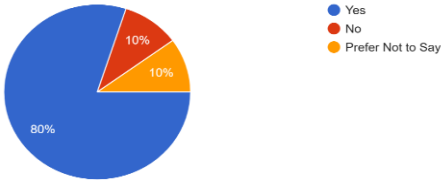
Many employees face barriers like unconscious bias, lack of leadership support, poor communication, and rigid workplace culture. These barriers make it hard for diverse groups to feel included. Overcoming these helps create a positive, welcoming environment where everyone can contribute and succeed.

Barrier	Description	Effect on Inclusion
Unconscious Bias	Hidden prejudices affecting decisions	Limits fair treatment
Lack of Leadership Support	Leaders not promoting inclusion	Weakens inclusion efforts
Poor Communication	Inadequate sharing of ideas	Causes misunderstandings
Rigid Workplace Culture	Resistance to change	Excludes diverse voices

1.1. Primary Data

I have used primary data for an in-depth search on this topic, surveying 10 people to ensure accurate data, which I've presented below in the form of a pie chart and table.

1. Untitled Question Have you ever experienced or witnessed discrimination (based on gender, caste, religion, age, disability, etc.) in your workplace?  
10 responses



Total Respondents: 10

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	8	80%
No	1	10%
Prefer Not to Say	1	10%

Key Insights:

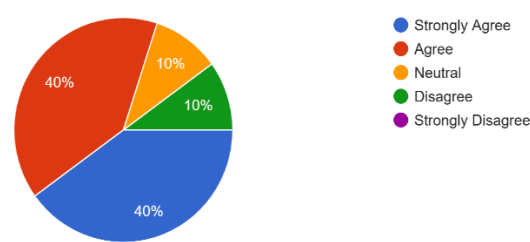
- 80% of respondents have experienced or witnessed discrimination.
- Only 10% have not faced it.
- 10% preferred not to answer, showing sensitivity to the issue.

Conclusion:

Workplace discrimination is a serious concern, with most employees reporting direct or observed incidents. Organizations should strengthen anti-discrimination policies and create safe reporting mechanisms.



2. Do you feel that your HR department takes discrimination complaints seriously and investigates them fairly?  
10 responses



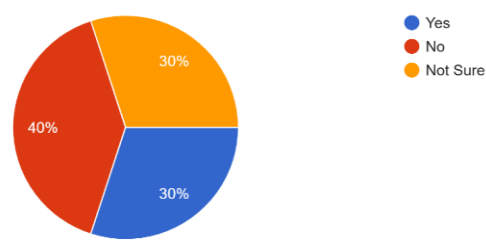
Total Respondents: 10

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	40%
Agree	1	10%
Neutral	1	10%
Disagree	4	40%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

- Key Insights:
- 40% of respondents strongly agree HR handles discrimination fairly.
  - 40% disagree, showing a **lack of trust** in HR processes.
  - Only 10% agree, and 10% are neutral.

Conclusion:  
The responses are polarized, with equal support and skepticism. This indicates a need for transparency and stronger trust-building in HR's handling of discrimination complaints.

3. Is there a clear anti-discrimination policy communicated to employees in your organization?  
10 responses



Total Respondents: 10

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	3	30%
No	4	40%
Not Sure	3	30%

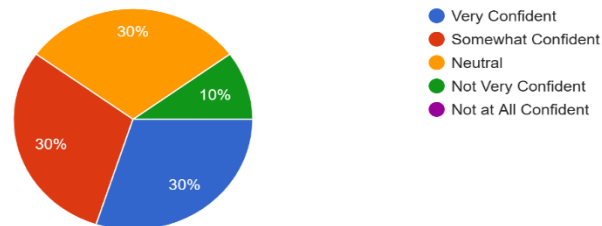
**Key Insights:**

- **40%** of employees said there is *no clear policy*.
- Only **30%** confirmed the presence of a clear policy.
- Another **30%** are unsure, indicating a **lack of communication or awareness**.

**Conclusion:**

There is a significant gap in communication or implementation of anti-discrimination policies, suggesting a need for improved policy visibility and training within the organization.

4. How confident are you in reporting a discrimination-related issue to HR without fear of retaliation?  
10 responses



**Total Respondents: 10**

Response	Count	Percentage
Very Confident	3	30%
Somewhat Confident	3	30%
Neutral	3	30%
Not Very Confident	1	10%
Not at All Confident	0	0%

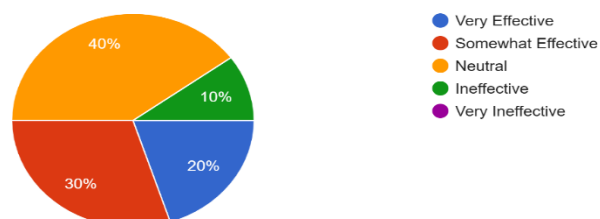
**Key Insights:**

- Only **30% feel very confident** reporting issues without fear.
- Another **30% are somewhat confident**, but not fully assured.
- **30% remain neutral**, showing hesitation or uncertainty.
- **10% lack confidence**, signaling trust issues with HR.

**Conclusion:**

Confidence in HR is moderate but not strong. The data suggests the need for HR to build more trust and ensure employees feel safe and protected when reporting sensitive issues.

5. In your opinion, how effective is the HR department in creating an inclusive and respectful workplace culture?  
10 responses



**Total Respondents: 10**

Response	Count	Percentage
Very Effective	2	20%
Somewhat Effective	3	30%
Neutral	4	40%
Ineffective	1	10%
Very Ineffective	0	0%

**Key Insights:**

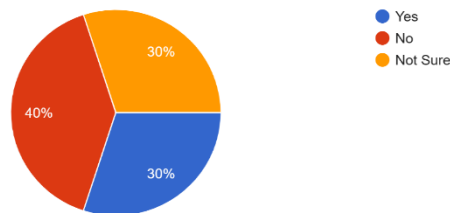
- **Only 20%** rated HR as very effective in creating inclusivity.
- The largest group (**40%**) is neutral, showing uncertainty or lack of awareness.
- **10%** find HR ineffective, pointing to possible gaps in execution.

**Conclusion:**

The HR department's inclusivity efforts are perceived as average to moderately effective, with a significant portion of employees feeling neutral. This suggests a need for stronger communication and visible actions to build an inclusive culture.

6. Has your organization conducted any training or workshops on diversity, inclusion, or anti-discrimination in the past year?

10 responses



**Total Respondents: 10**

**Key**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	3	30%
No	4	40%
Not Sure	3	30%

**Insights:**

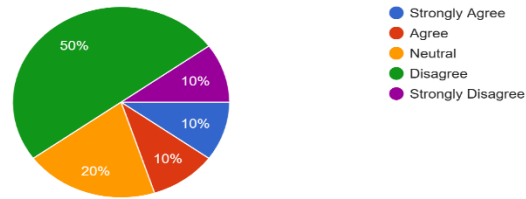
- **Only 30%** confirmed training/workshops were conducted.
- The **majority (40%)** said no such programs were held.
- **30%** are unsure, indicating **lack of communication** or visibility about such initiatives.

**Conclusion:**

There is a gap in awareness and implementation of diversity and inclusion training. Organizations should increase transparency and frequency of such programs to build an informed and inclusive culture.

7. Do you believe that promotions and opportunities in your organization are provided without discrimination or bias?

10 responses



Total Respondents: 10

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	1	10%
Agree	1	10%
Neutral	2	20%
Disagree	5	50%
Strongly Disagree	1	10%

#### Key Insights:

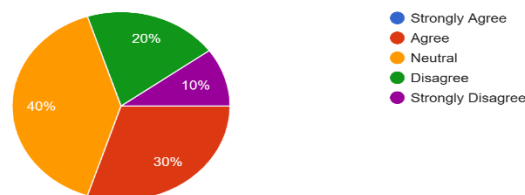
- 60% (Disagree + Strongly Disagree) believe promotions are not free from bias.
- Only 20% (Agree + Strongly Agree) feel promotions are fair.
- Neutral responses (20%) show uncertainty or lack of clear understanding about the promotion process.

#### Conclusion:

The data reveals a perceived lack of fairness in promotional opportunities, which can impact employee trust and morale. HR departments should consider reviewing promotion policies and enhancing transparency and communication to address these concerns.

8. Do you think HR policies and practices are applied equally to all employees regardless of background?

10 responses



Total Respondents: 10

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	40%
Agree	2	20%
Neutral	1	10%
Disagree	3	30%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%

#### Key Insights:

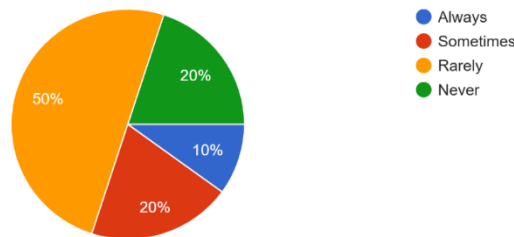
- 60% (Strongly Agree + Agree) believe HR policies are fairly applied.

- 30% (Disagree) feel there's inequality in HR practices.
- 10% Neutral indicates some uncertainty or lack of awareness.
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**Conclusion:**

The majority view HR policies as generally fair, but nearly one-third express concerns about inequality. This suggests a need for better communication and monitoring to ensure consistent policy enforcement across all employee groups.

9. How often do you see discriminatory behavior being addressed or corrected by HR or management?  
10 responses



**Total Respondents: 10**

Response	Count	Percentage
Always	2	20%
Sometimes	1	10%
Rarely	5	50%
Never	2	20%

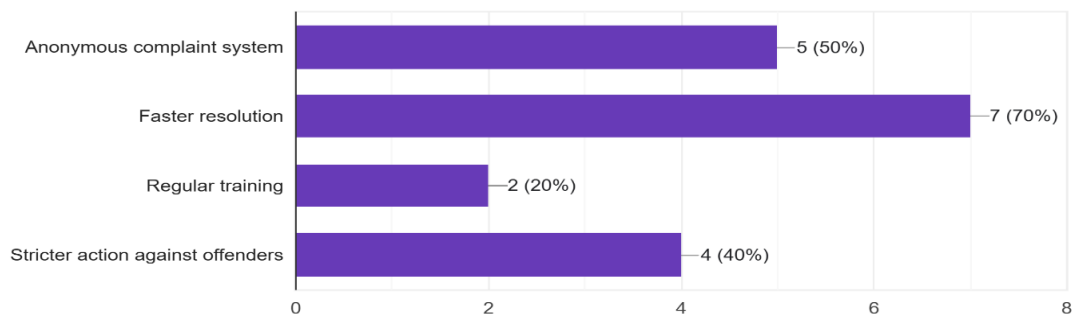
**Key Insights:**

- 50% respondents said HR rarely addresses discriminatory behavior.
- Only 20% feel it is always addressed.
- A combined 30% (Rarely + Never) show lack of trust in corrective action.

**Conclusion:**

The data indicates that most employees feel HR and management are not proactive enough in addressing discrimination. There is a clear need for improved accountability, visibility of actions taken, and employee awareness around anti-discrimination measures.

10. What improvement would you like to see in how HR handles discrimination cases?  
10 responses



**Total Respondents: 10**

Suggested Improvement	Count	Percentage
Faster resolution	7	70%
Anonymous complaint system	5	50%
Stricter action against offenders	4	40%
Regular training	2	20%

**Key Insights:**

- Faster resolution is the top priority (70%) for employees.
- Half (50%) of the respondents want an anonymous complaint system, suggesting concerns over fear of retaliation.
- Stricter actions (40%) and more training (20%) are also recommended but less emphasized.

**Conclusion:**

The majority of respondents believe HR should speed up resolution timelines and ensure confidentiality, highlighting trust and efficiency as major areas for improvement in handling discrimination complaints.

## LIMITATIONS

### *Limitations of the Study*

This study aims to understand the role of the Human Resources (HR) department in addressing and managing discrimination in the workplace, using primary & secondary data as the primary research method. While secondary research offers a cost-effective and time-efficient means to gather a broad spectrum of information, it comes with several inherent limitations. These limitations affect the study's scope, depth, accuracy, and ability to provide actionable insights specific to organizational realities.

### *Absence of Primary, First-Hand Data*

One of the most critical limitations of a secondary-based study is the lack of direct engagement with individuals or organizations involved in HR practices. Since this study does not include surveys, interviews, or case-specific observations, it misses out on capturing firsthand experiences of employees who may have faced discrimination, as well as the real-time responses and challenges faced by HR professionals. As a result, the study may fail to fully reflect the emotional, cultural, and interpersonal nuances that influence how discrimination is addressed on the ground.

### *Outdated or Incomplete Information*

Secondary sources, such as academic journals, industry reports, organizational case studies, and government publications, are often published at intervals and may not reflect the most recent developments in workplace policies or HR practices. Discrimination in the workplace is a dynamic and evolving issue influenced by changing societal attitudes, legal reforms, and corporate social responsibility. Therefore, relying on outdated sources may lead to conclusions that do not align with current realities. For example, the increased focus on diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives post-2020, especially in response to global movements like Black Lives Matter and MeToo, may not be adequately covered in older literature.

### *Generalization Across Industries and Cultures*

Most secondary data sources tend to generalize findings across industries, regions, or organizational structures. This is a significant limitation when studying sensitive topics like discrimination, which can vary greatly depending on organizational culture, industry type, and geographic context. For example, what constitutes discriminatory behavior in one country may be legally or culturally acceptable in another. Similarly, HR practices in a multinational technology firm may be vastly different from those in a small manufacturing business or a public-sector organization. Therefore, generalizing findings from such varied contexts may dilute the relevance of insights for specific types of organizations.

### *Risk of Bias and Selective Reporting*

Another limitation of secondary research is the potential for bias in the source material. Company reports, whitepapers, and promotional content often aim to project a positive image of the organization and may underreport or even omit instances of discrimination. Academic literature, while generally more objective, can also reflect the authors' biases or be limited in scope. Additionally, many studies focus on successful case studies and best practices, thereby ignoring or underreporting failures or unresolved issues. This skew in reporting can result in an overly optimistic portrayal of HR's role in combating discrimination.

### ***Lack of Contextual Detail***

Secondary sources often provide summaries or overviews rather than detailed, contextual analysis. For example, a report may state that a company introduced a non-discrimination policy but might not delve into how it was implemented, the training provided, the challenges faced, or the outcomes achieved. This lack of depth makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of HR strategies or to learn from the practical experiences of others. Moreover, secondary sources rarely capture the interpersonal dynamics, internal resistance, or power imbalances that can significantly impact how discrimination is addressed within an organization.

### ***Limited Representation of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)***

Most secondary research tends to focus on large organizations or multinational corporations, as they are more likely to publish internal data or be the subject of external research. This creates a gap in understanding how HR departments in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which make up a significant portion of the workforce in many economies, deal with workplace discrimination. SMEs often operate with limited HR resources, and their approach to handling such sensitive issues may be informal or undocumented. As a result, the study may overlook challenges and best practices relevant to this sector.

### ***Inability to Measure Outcomes or Effectiveness***

While secondary data can provide information on the existence of anti-discrimination policies and HR interventions, it often lacks follow-up or outcome-based analysis. There is limited information available on how effective these interventions have been in reducing incidents of discrimination, improving employee satisfaction, or fostering inclusive work cultures. Without performance metrics or employee feedback, it is difficult to determine whether the policies discussed in secondary sources are truly impactful or merely symbolic.

### ***No Control Over Data Quality***

In primary & secondary research, the researcher has no control over how the original data was collected, interpreted, or presented. This can lead to inconsistencies, especially if different sources define discrimination or HR practices in varied ways. Moreover, not all secondary data sources are peer-reviewed or reliable, which may compromise the credibility of the study's conclusions.

While primary & secondary research offers valuable foundational insights into how HR departments deal with workplace discrimination, it has clear limitations in terms of accuracy, depth, and applicability. It lacks the immediacy and relevance of primary data, is prone to bias and generalization, and often does not reflect current organizational practices. Therefore, future studies should consider integrating primary research methods such as interviews, surveys, or field studies to provide a more comprehensive and authentic understanding of HR's role in managing discrimination in diverse workplace settings.

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## **Conclusion & Recommendation**

### ***Conclusion***

This study focuses on the role of the Human Resources (HR) department in dealing with discrimination in the workplace. Discrimination occurs when employees are treated unfairly because of their gender, religion, caste, age, disability, language, background, or appearance. Although Indian laws like the Equal Remuneration Act, Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, and others are in place to protect employees from such unfair treatment, the problem still exists in many forms.

Using primary & secondary data such as articles, research papers, and company case studies, the study found that HR departments are making efforts to reduce discrimination, but many challenges remain. In many organizations, especially small or medium-sized ones, discrimination is often ignored or not taken seriously. Many HR departments have policies in place, but these are not always followed. In some cases, employees don't trust the HR team to handle their complaints fairly, and fear that reporting an issue may harm their job or work relationships.

Another major issue is that discrimination is not always obvious. It doesn't only happen through direct insults or unfair treatment—it can also happen indirectly. For example, a woman might be passed over for a promotion in favor of a less-qualified male colleague. Or someone from a minority background may be excluded from team decisions. These kinds of actions may not break any laws directly, but they still create an unequal and uncomfortable environment.

The study also found that many HR professionals are not trained properly to handle discrimination cases. They may lack awareness about unconscious bias, cultural sensitivity, or how to conduct fair investigations. In some companies, there is no proper complaint system or disciplinary process. As a result, cases of discrimination are either ignored or resolved unfairly.

Despite these issues, it is clear that the HR department plays a very important role in making the workplace safe, fair, and respectful. HR can help create a culture where everyone is treated equally and has an equal chance to succeed. But for this to happen, HR must become more proactive, educated, and transparent.

## ***Recommendations***

To improve how HR departments in India deal with discrimination, the following recommendations are suggested. These are based on lessons learned from primary & secondary data, case studies, and expert opinions.

### ***Develop Clear and Simple Anti-Discrimination Policies***

HR departments must create strong and clear anti-discrimination policies. These policies should explain what types of behavior are not allowed and what actions will be taken if someone breaks the rules. The policies should cover all types of discrimination including gender, religion, caste, disability, age, and background. These documents should be available to all employees and explained during induction or onboarding.

### ***Create Safe and Anonymous Reporting Channels***

Many employees hesitate to report discrimination because they fear backlash. HR should create safe spaces where employees can report issues without fear. This can include anonymous online forms, helplines, or independent third-party systems. It is also important that HR ensures confidentiality and takes action quickly and fairly.

### ***Train HR Staff and Managers Regularly***

Training is key. HR staff, managers, and team leaders should be regularly trained to understand different types of discrimination, unconscious bias, cultural differences, and how to conduct fair investigations. Workshops, seminars, and online courses can help. Real-life case studies and role-playing can make training more practical and effective.

### ***Promote a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace***

HR should actively promote diversity and inclusion (D&I) by hiring people from different backgrounds and giving everyone equal opportunities. This can include hiring more women in leadership, creating accessible spaces for persons with disabilities, and giving equal recognition to employees from all religions or regions. Inclusion means making sure everyone feels valued and heard, not just present.

### ***Conduct Regular Workplace Audits***

HR should regularly check data related to hiring, promotions, pay, and employee feedback to identify discrimination patterns. These audits can help HR understand if certain groups are being left out or treated unfairly. HR can also use employee satisfaction surveys to gather honest feedback.

### ***Take Strong Action Against Discriminatory Behavior***

When discrimination is reported and proven, HR should take strict and timely action. This can include warnings, suspension, or even termination depending on the case. Not taking action sends a message that the company doesn't care, which can increase the problem. Clear consequences also build employee trust in HR.

### ***Involve Senior Management***

HR's work becomes more effective when top leadership is supportive. Company leaders should talk openly about fairness, respect, and equality. When senior management supports anti-discrimination efforts, it encourages the whole organization to take it seriously.

### ***Recognize and Celebrate Diversity***

Companies should celebrate different cultures, festivals, and traditions. This helps employees understand and respect each other. Celebrating diversity can include simple steps like acknowledging all major festivals, inviting employees to share about their cultures, and organizing cross-cultural team-building activities.

### ***Encourage Peer Support Groups***

HR can support the creation of peer groups or employee resource groups (ERGs) for women, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ+ staff, or other minority groups. These groups help members share their experiences and feel supported. HR can learn from these groups about the challenges employees face and use their feedback to make improvements.

### ***Use Technology and Data Analytics***

HR can use software and data tools to track and monitor workplace trends. For example, if women employees are leaving the company at a high rate, or if certain departments have no diversity, HR can take action. Data helps HR make decisions based on facts, not guesswork.

Discrimination, whether direct or indirect, damages employee morale, company reputation, and productivity. While laws and policies provide a basic framework, real change comes from awareness, education, and action. The HR department is in a powerful position to drive that change. But to do so, HR teams must become more skilled, approachable, and focused on building a truly fair workplace.

The success of any organization depends on how well it treats its people. When employees feel respected and valued, they give their best. By following the recommendations above, HR departments can help build a positive, equal, and high-performing workplace where everyone gets a fair chance to succeed.



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