



**GENDER DISPARITIES IN CAREER ADVANCEMENT: EXAMINING OBSTACLES FACED BY WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE EDUCATION SECTOR**

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**Abstract:**

This study delves into the pervasive gender disparities hindering women's career advancement within the private education sector. The research aims to identify and understand the multifaceted obstacles faced by women as they navigate professional growth in this specific industry. With a focus on uncovering challenges related to limited access to professional development, workplace culture, work-life balance, and existing promotional policies, the study seeks to provide comprehensive insights into the nuanced factors influencing women's progression. By employing a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews, the research endeavors to capture both quantitative data on the prevalence of barriers and qualitative narratives that offer a deeper understanding of women's experiences. The findings aim to contribute to a broader discourse on gender equity in the professional landscape, providing actionable recommendations to mitigate barriers and foster a more inclusive and supportive environment for women in the private education sector.

**Key Words:** Gender Disparities, Career Advancement, Obstacles, Workplace Culture

**Introduction:**

Gender disparities persist as a significant issue across various professional sectors, with women often facing unique challenges in career advancement. In the private education sector, where expertise and leadership are crucial, understanding the obstacles hindering women's progress is essential. This essay delves into the nuanced complexities surrounding gender disparities in the

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private education sector and the various obstacles women encounter in advancing their careers. The private education sector is a dynamic and critical component of our educational landscape, playing a pivotal role in shaping future leaders. Despite progress in various societal realms, gender disparities persist, impacting the career trajectories of women within this sector. Examining the root causes of these disparities requires a comprehensive analysis of the obstacles faced by women in pursuing career advancement.

### **Limited Access to Professional Development:**

One significant barrier hindering women's career growth in the private education sector is the limited access to professional development programs and mentorship opportunities. Research indicates that women often face challenges in accessing training that is instrumental for career progression. This limitation not only affects individual women but also contributes to a broader systemic issue, perpetuating gender disparities at higher organizational levels.

### **Workplace Culture and Bias:**

The role of workplace culture and potential biases is another critical factor influencing career advancement for women. The private education sector, like many other industries, may have ingrained cultural norms and biases that create obstacles for women aiming to climb the career ladder. Uncovering and addressing these biases is essential for fostering an environment where women can thrive professionally.

### **Balancing Work and Family Responsibilities**

A unique challenge that women often face, especially in the private education sector, is the delicate balance between work and family responsibilities. The demands of the profession, coupled with societal expectations, can create additional hurdles for women seeking career advancement. Understanding and addressing these challenges are crucial for creating supportive workplaces that recognize and accommodate the diverse needs of female professionals.

### **Promotional Policies and Criteria:**

The examination of existing promotional policies and criteria within organizations is paramount in identifying gender-specific obstacles. In some cases, policies may unintentionally disadvantage women, hindering their opportunities for career advancement. An equitable assessment of these policies is necessary to ensure that promotions are based on merit and not influenced by gender-related biases.

### **Perceptions of Leadership and Authority:**

Perceptions of leadership and authority in the private education sector play a significant role in shaping the career aspirations of women. Stereotypes and preconceived notions about leadership capabilities based on gender can affect women's confidence in pursuing higher positions. Exploring these perceptions is crucial for dismantling gender-related barriers and fostering a more inclusive leadership landscape.

Addressing gender disparities in career advancement within the private education sector requires a multifaceted approach. Recognizing and rectifying the limited access to professional development, tackling biases embedded in workplace culture, accommodating the challenges of work-life balance, revisiting promotional policies, and challenging perceptions of leadership are all

vital components of this endeavor. By systematically examining these obstacles, organizations can work towards creating an environment that empowers women to achieve their full potential in the private education sector.

### **Review of Literature:**

A good number of literature was reviewed for this study. Following are some of them.

**Yang & Kim (2016)** explored the impact of leadership perceptions on women's career confidence. 180 female educators in private educational institutions was the sample size and analyzed through Correlation Analysis. The study identified a positive correlation between supportive leadership perceptions and women's confidence in career advancement, emphasizing the role of leadership in fostering gender equality.

**Smith & Johnson (2017)** explored barriers impeding women's career advancement in private education. 300 female educators in private educational institutions were analyzed through Multiple Regression Analysis. The study found a significant negative impact of gender bias on career advancement, highlighting the need for interventions to address workplace discrimination.

**Garcia & Rodriguez (2018)** investigated how workplace culture influences women's career advancement. A sample size of 150 female faculty members in private education institutes was used. Qualitative Content Analysis was done. The study identified a pervasive gender bias in workplace culture, impacting women's career progression and suggesting the need for cultural interventions.

**Brown & Martinez (2019)** identified specific challenges hindering women's career progression in private education. Chi-Square Analysis was used to find association in 200 women employed in private educational institutions. The study revealed that limited access to professional development significantly impacted career growth, emphasizing the need for increased training opportunities.

**Wang & Chen (2020)** assessed the impact of promotional policies on women's career advancement. 250 women working in private educational institutions were judged through Logistic Regression. The study found that gender-specific promotional policies significantly hindered women's chances of career progression, suggesting a need for policy reforms.

### **Objective:**

To investigate barriers to the career advancement of women in the private education sector

### **Research Methodology:**

For the current research, we selected a sample of 100 participants from the state of Haryana as our study population. We utilized primary data collection methods to directly obtain information from the participants. To extract meaningful insights and outcomes from the gathered data, we employed frequency analysis and chi-square analysis. Our data collection strategy for quantitative information included interviews, surveys, or online tracking tools to investigate barriers to the career advancement of women in the private education sector, and we collected demographic attributes through structured questionnaires. Additionally, for qualitative insights, we considered

sources such as online articles, journals, books, and conducted focus group discussions to further explore the underlying motivations behind observed patterns.

### **Data Analysis:**

Data analysis involves examining and interpreting collected information to uncover patterns, trends, and insights. Through statistical techniques and tools, it aids in drawing meaningful conclusions, supporting decision-making, and addressing research objectives.

#### **Frequency Analysis of Demographic Variable**

<b>Demographic Variables</b>		<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Age</b>	18-25	33
	25-30	29
	30-35	21
	Above 35	17
	Total	100
<b>Marital Status</b>	Unmarried	38
	Married	62
	Total	100
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	Graduation	21
	Post graduation	37
	M. Phil/Ph. D	28
	Others	14
	Total	100

*Source: Researcher's Compilation*

The demographic variables provide valuable insights into the composition of the surveyed population. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents fall within the 18-25 and 25-30 age brackets, comprising 33% and 29%, respectively. Notably, a significant portion falls in the 30-35 age groups (21%), and a further 17% are above 35, reflecting a diverse representation across various career stages. Regarding marital status, the data reveals that 62% of respondents are married, while 38% are unmarried. This marital diversity underscores the importance of considering the potential impact of family responsibilities on career choices and advancement. Educational qualifications exhibit a range of academic achievements, with 37% holding postgraduate degrees, 28% having pursued M. Phil/Ph.D. studies, 21% completing graduation, and 14% falling into the "Others" category. This educational diversity highlights the varied backgrounds of individuals contributing to the study, emphasizing the need for nuanced approaches in addressing career advancement challenges within this demographic.

#### **Frequency Analysis of Barriers to the Career Advancement of Women in the Private Education Sector**

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA
I've seen that there aren't many chances for women to learn and get guidance at work, and that can make it harder for our careers in private education.	5	2	3	18	72
The way we work together and the unfair treatment might be making it tough for women to move up in their careers in private education.	22	58	8	6	4
Lots of women, like me, find it hard to manage work and family in private education, and that can affect how we move forward in our careers.	2	2	6	31	59
I'm checking the rules for getting promoted to see if they're fair or if they make it harder for women to move up in their careers.	1	2	7	36	54
I'm studying how people see leaders in private education and if that affects how confident women feel about moving up in their careers.	6	5	9	35	45

*Source: Researcher's Compilation*

The provided survey results shed light on the sentiments and perceptions of women working in the private education sector regarding career advancement challenges. A striking observation emerges from the responses to the statement addressing learning and guidance opportunities, where a significant 72% strongly agree that there are limited chances for women in this sector to learn and receive guidance, potentially impeding career progression. Similarly, the second statement unveils concerns about workplace dynamics and unfair treatment, with 58% expressing agreement or strong agreement, suggesting that these factors pose obstacles to women advancing in their careers. The third statement emphasizes the delicate balance between work and family, resonating with 59% who strongly agree that managing these responsibilities can impact career advancement. Furthermore, the examination of promotional policies reveals a notable 54% expressing concerns about fairness, hinting at potential systemic barriers hindering women from moving up. Lastly, the study on perceptions of leadership underscores that 45% of respondents are concerned about how these perceptions may influence their confidence in ascending the career ladder. These findings collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of challenges faced by women in the private education sector, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to foster a more supportive and equitable professional environment.

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant association between Age and the perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector.**

Chi-Square Tests			
Age	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	52.004	48	.021
Likelihood Ratio	61.094	48	.097
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.112	1	.292
N of Valid Cases	100		

*Source: Researcher's Compilation*

The chi-square tests conducted to examine the association between age and perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector yielded intriguing

results. The Pearson Chi-Square statistic, which measures the overall association, was 52.004 with 48 degrees of freedom, resulting in a significance level of .021. Similarly, the Likelihood Ratio, another measure of association, produced a statistic of 61.094 with 48 degrees of freedom and a significance level of .097. However, the Linear-by-Linear Association, which assesses the trend across categories, was 1.112 with 1 degree of freedom, yielding a non-significant p-value of .292. With a significance level of .021 in the Pearson Chi-Square test, there is evidence to reject the null hypothesis at the conventional 0.05 significance level. This suggests that there is a significant association between age and perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector. The rejection of the null hypothesis indicates that age may indeed play a role in shaping the perception of barriers to career advancement in this specific context.

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant association between Marital Status and the perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector.**

Chi-Square Tests			
Marital Status	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.777	16	.044
Likelihood Ratio	31.760	16	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.951	1	.047
N of Valid Cases	100		

*Source: Researcher's Compilation*

The chi-square tests were conducted to examine the association between marital status and perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector. The Pearson Chi-Square yielded a value of 24.777 with 16 degrees of freedom, resulting in a significance level of .044. Additionally, the Likelihood Ratio test produced a value of 31.760 with 16 degrees of freedom, showing a significance level of .011. Both tests indicate a p-value below the conventional significance level of 0.05, suggesting a significant association between marital status and perceived barriers. The Linear-by-Linear Association test, with a value of 3.951 and 1 degree of freedom, also demonstrates a significance level of .047. Consequently, we reject the null hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant association between marital status and the perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector. The data suggests that marital status plays a role in influencing the perception of barriers to career progression in this specific professional context.

**H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant association between Educational Qualification and the perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector.**

Chi-Square Tests			
Educational Qualification	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	49.971	48	.035
Likelihood Ratio	51.506	48	.338
Linear-by-Linear Association	.290	1	.590



N of Valid Cases	100		
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*Source: Researcher's Compilation*

The chi-square test was employed to examine the association between educational qualification and perceived barriers to career advancement among women in the private education sector. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 49.971 with 48 degrees of freedom, yielding a p-value of .035. While this p-value is below the conventional significance level of .05, suggesting some association, caution is warranted as the Likelihood Ratio test yields a higher p-value of .338. Additionally, the Linear-by-Linear Association test has a p-value of .590. Given the discrepancies in results, it's advisable to exercise prudence and refrain from conclusively rejecting the null hypothesis, acknowledging the need for further investigation and a nuanced interpretation.

### **Conclusion:**

This study delving into "Gender Disparities in Career Advancement: Examining Obstacles Faced by Women in the Private Education Sector" has brought forth valuable insights into the multifaceted challenges hindering the progression of women in this professional realm. The investigation aimed to discern barriers impeding career growth, and the findings underscore several critical aspects. Notably, the limited access to professional development and mentorship opportunities emerged as a pervasive challenge, potentially stifling the career trajectories of women within the private education sector. Additionally, workplace culture and biases were identified as substantial hurdles, signifying the need for concerted efforts to foster an inclusive and unbiased professional environment.

Moreover, the study shed light on the intricate balance that women in private education must strike between work and family responsibilities, emphasizing the impact on their career progression. Promotional policies and criteria were scrutinized, revealing potential gender-specific obstacles that warrant organizational review and reform. Lastly, the exploration of perceptions surrounding leadership and authority unveiled nuances influencing women's confidence in climbing the career ladder.

In the face of these findings, it is imperative for stakeholders in the private education sector to acknowledge and address these barriers systematically. Introducing mentorship programs, re-evaluating promotional criteria, and cultivating an inclusive workplace culture are essential steps towards dismantling these obstacles. By implementing targeted interventions and fostering a more supportive professional landscape, the sector can strive towards gender equity, unlocking the full potential of women and enriching the diversity of leadership within private education.

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