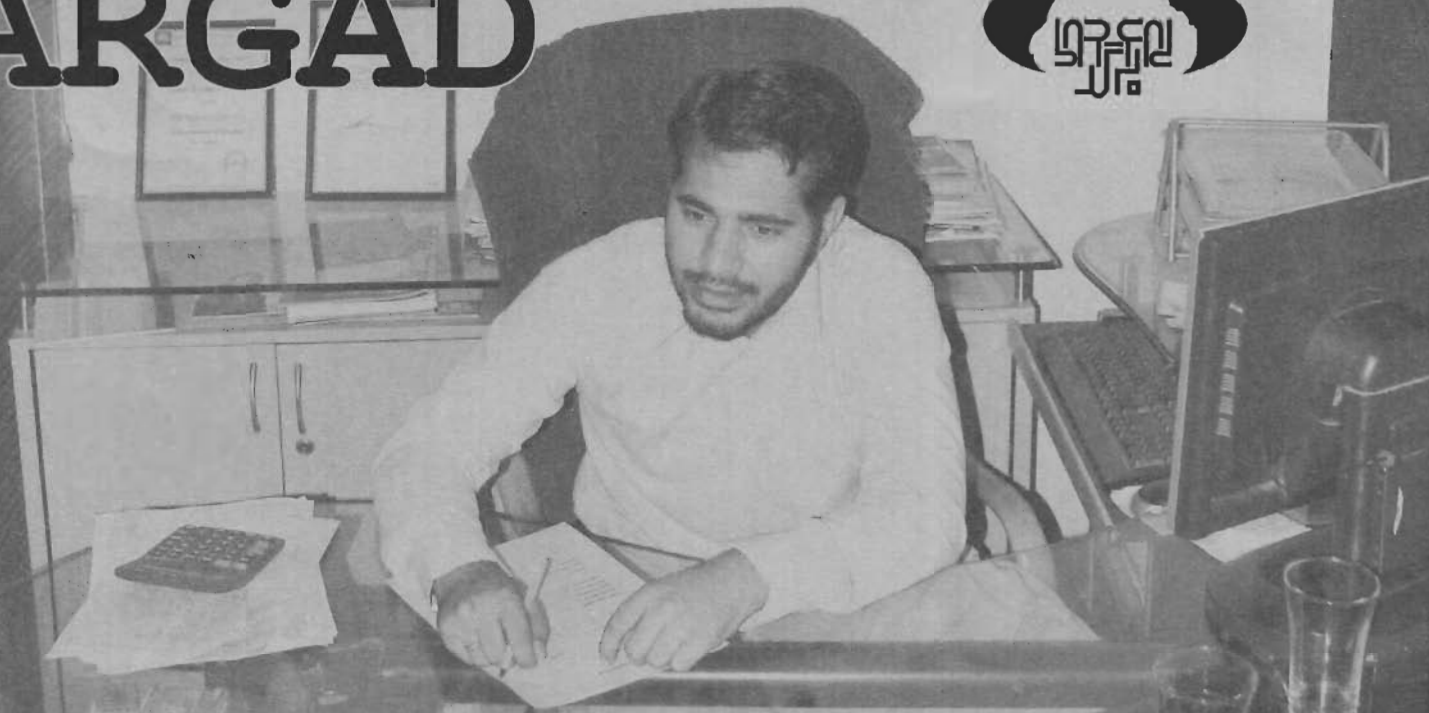


BARGAD



A Research Study Skills Gap in Labour Market A Gender Perspective





Skills Gap in Labour Market A Gender Perspective

A Research Study

BY

Ali Salman

Executed
by
BARGAD



Supported
by
CIDA-PAGE



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The present research could definitely have not been a success without the data collection team and staff members led by Salma Butt and Bushra Sadiq.

We are also grateful to our Chairman Board of Director (BOD) Dr. Kaiser Bengali whose internationally acclaimed expertise in economics has guided the research design.

To end, this research is result of hard work and dedication of Ali Salman author and lead researcher. We owe him gratitude to complete the study and to show-case this skill-mapping exercise that should be undertaken in other parts of the country as well. The future of Pakistan lies in planning for youth!

Sabika Shaheen
Executive Director

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Foreword

With rapid growth in the number of institutions of higher education in Pakistan, both in the public and the private sectors, the opportunities in higher education have increased substantially. The formal educational bar has been raised significantly, with a Masters degree becoming a normal qualification. This trend is, however, only quantitative and the qualitative focus addressing a core purpose of education, viz. skills building, is a rare phenomenon. That is why studies about the status of skills, what this report calls 'skills gap analysis', have become the need of the hour.

The current study presents a brief analysis of skills gap as measured by differences between the expectations of the employers and supply from the potential and current employees. This study adds value to skills gap analysis by introducing the gender dimension in this debate. As the percentage of women in our professional workforce is extremely low, around 2.11%, a focus on the gender dimension of skills gap analysis is praise worthy. If women are properly trained, they can bring huge demographic dividend for the economy of Pakistan.

The findings of the study document the assessment of current skills levels among fresh graduates by the employers. These findings are an eye opener for all educational institutions in Pakistan. They also point out specific directions for planners and managers of higher education in the country. I agree with the recommendation of a high level of interaction between the industry and the academia as an important mechanism to reduce the skills gap.

As quality higher education becomes expensive, the role of the private sector in promoting and financing this becomes more evident. The public exchequer can no longer be burdened for financing huge establishments of public universities. The entry of the private sector in the realm of higher education is indeed good news for the skills enhancement. The private sector is the biggest sufferer at the hand of the poorly skilled workforce and, therefore, it can ascertain mechanisms to alleviate this national concern effectively and systematically.

I congratulate the author and the Bargad team for bringing out this important study and I do hope that this report will be disseminated to all concerned quarters and that it would play a positive role in raising awareness about the status of skills level in Pakistan and in building an effective strategy to raise the bar.

Professor Dr. Mohammad Iqbal Tahir
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About the Author

Ali Salman

Ali specializes in economic analysis and business development. Ali's recent publications include "Telecom Liberalization" and "Mutual Funds: Dynamics of Liberalism." Ali has published a book on "Alternative Youth Policy in Pakistan" and advised the government in the formulation of the youth policy.

Ali Salman has worked in the private sector, public sector and development sector of Pakistan for over eight years, which includes a two years stint at Planning Commission's Pakistan 2010 Program, four years as an entrepreneur, and last two years as a consultant and researcher. He has traveled across United States, Western Europe, Far East and Middle East.

Ali did MA in Economics from Boston University as a Fulbright Scholar; MA in Development Studies as Royal Netherlands Fellow; and an MBA from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Currently, Ali works as a senior partner at Development Pool, a Lahore based consulting company. He also teaches Economics at Government College University, Lahore as a visiting faculty.

"Bridging Skill & Perception Gaps in Women Employment"

When
BARGAD
started
referring its

trained volunteers in the job market many years ago, it did not know that a whole new project will born out of this unique practice from an NGO perspective. BARGAD was becoming a job exchange!

This thinking led BARGAD to conceive and develop a full-fledged project, titled Bridging Skill and Perception Gaps, aimed at bringing out skill gaps in the job market i.e. differences between expectations of the employers and capacity and skills level of young and fresh graduates. It was realized that BARGAD would need to undertake the challenging, yet rewarding task of creating an interactive network between employers and potential employees.

Unemployment in Pakistan is caused by multiple reasons. One of these reasons is lack of qualified young men and women; another hindrance is their perceived limitation to do certain jobs. This project being carried out by BARGAD in collaboration with CIDA-PAGE helps in enlarging employments opportunities by bridging the gap between employers and employees through information and training.

Many activities were conducted in Gujranwala in the framework of this project namely Job Festival; preparation and dissemination of Employer's Directory; Meetings with district notables, industry and academia to create an institutionalized mechanism; and research and development. This study has also been done likewise.

About the Executing Agency BARGAD

BARGAD is an affirmative response to troubling youth apathy towards social development in Pakistan. It focuses upon literate youth, highlighting girls, as the primary target group of its work. This includes college/university-going students, community youth and those affiliated with religious seminaries.

BARGAD has so far been successful in attracting more than 800 youth volunteers who regularly contribute to its projects. The hallmark of its work is that BARGAD's projects are implemented by the youth themselves, including workplanning responsibilities.

The working approach of BARGAD is to combine rights-based training with personal development of youth and supports youth with mobilization, advocacy and capacity building work.

Today, alumni of BARGAD are also running Akath Youth Resource Centre for Boys and Ratti Jinnah Youth Resource Centre for Girls in Rahwali – Gujranwala. These resource centers work on daily basis.

In district Gujranwala, BARGAD's wide-ranging out reach is of both rural and urban in nature. Since 2003, the organization has also been working with 28 universities and higher education institutions in Pakistan 3 and with three universities of India and two of Afghanistan. More than 70000 students, faculty members and engaged citizens have been beneficiaries and recipients of the publications generated through one of its project, Peace and Youth Cooperation.

The organization has worked with different notable national and international agencies i.e. British High Commission (BHC), Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP), Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), ActionAid Pakistan, Gender Equality Project (GEP-DFID), MamaCash, Netherlands, Church World Service (CWS), South Asia Partnership Pakistan (SAP-PK), Environment Protection Department (EPD), Govt. of Pakistan and The British Council, etc.

BARGAD also hosts a website: <http://www.bargad.org.pk/>

BARGAD's Board of Directors (BOD) is chaired by Dr. Kaiser Bengali and its members are young leaders of Pakistan in various thematic and professional areas i.e education, journalism, international relations, political science, law, fine arts, gender, and peace and conflict resolution areas etc.

Introduction of the Study

According to Labour Force Survey of Pakistan (2005-06), the ratio of female participation in urban-professional labour force consisting of legislators, civil servants and managers is as low as 2.11%. Literature and social evidence cite five major reasons for this gross gender inequality: lack of opportunities for skills enhancement for women, bias against women to do managerial jobs, restrictions on mobility of women either due to infrastructure or due to socio-cultural traditions, access to information, domestic and familial obligations of women, and sexual harassment at work places.

This research helps in understanding the influence of the skills factor, while touching other factors broadly. The research uses in-depth interviews and research surveys to collect information from key stakeholders including employers, academic institutions and potential employees. The geographic focus of the project is Gujranwala city, whereas selected economic sectors include telecom, banking, government services, self-employed, information technology and large scale industries.

The report is divided into five sections. First section is the literature review, which presents key findings of selected studies and comments on their results. Second section introduces research methodology and sampling issues. Data analysis and conclusions are produced in the third and fourth sections. Fifth and the last section enlists recommendations.

The main purpose of this report is to enlist and describe skills gap within selected sectors of Gujranwala formal private sector with special focus on women as potential employees and to inform the professional educational institutes in the public and private sector about the demands of industry. The skills under consideration are: comprehension, verbal communication, written communication, analytical, time management, financial management, self management and priorities management. The gender based analysis reveals that differences between men and women on the basis of their skills are negligible. According to the industry, fresh graduates' performance in the case of comprehension skills is at the lowest degree. The study notes that both men and women have complementing jobs, not necessarily competing jobs and proposes gender based task allocation. The research also observes that there is a rapid change in the female labour force participation at managerial levels.

In 1990, an important report on 'Women's Economic Participation in Pakistan' recommended that 'women professionals (teachers, doctors, engineers, civil and business administrators) should be adequately represented in high administration and decision making positions' (Shaheed & Mumtaz 1990). Almost two decades later, the following study attempts to revisit the status of women's economic participation at this level and also present a course of action to elevate this status. I hope to have reflected aspirations and potential of both the workforce and the industry.

A.S.

1. Literature Review

National level studies have been conducted on gender gap¹ in the labour market, for instance see Ayesha Ghaus-Pasha et'al (1999) and Azid, Aslam & Chaudhary (2002). Almost every study has focused on the informal sector and dynamics of formal sector are not considered in depth. Nevertheless, a review of these studies helps us in getting a broader picture. Besides glimpses from the literature, we also give highlights from our findings in this survey, which supplements the broad picture with more specific information.

According to International Labour Organization (ILO), the share of women in managerial positions ranged between 20% to 40% in the 48 sampled countries. Given this benchmark, Pakistan is dramatically lower than even the minimum, as in Pakistan this share is 2.11%. However the other side of the coin is, as concluded in a study in the United States, 49% of high achieving women are childless, as compared with only 19% of their male counterparts (PAGE 2007).

“According to Harvard's Project on Global Working Families, the United States is one of only five countries out of 168 studied that doesn't mandate some form of paid maternal leave. The only other advanced economy among those five was Australia's, where women are guaranteed an entire year of unpaid leave. That puts the United States – the wealthiest nation on the planet – in the company of Lesotho, Papua New Guinea and Swaziland.”

Human Development Report in South Asia Report for 2003 contained an exclusive chapter on Gender Discrimination in Employment. It is an excellent resource from a comparative perspective and helps understanding the deeper dynamics of gender gap in the labour market. It suggests that Pakistan comes in the bottom even when compared across region and with Sub Saharan Africa in terms of gender gap in the labour market. Details are provided in Table 1 at Appendix-I.

The main explanation offered is in the education gap, which feeds into larger gap in employment market. One notices that the gender gap in the labour market is smallest (6.5%) for education level below primary. It is probably where the largest chunk of home based workers belongs too. However, on analyzing the gender gaps upwards along educational level, one realizes that the gender gap narrows down as education level goes high after reaching a highest level for education level below matric. For education level equivalent to bachelors and masters, the gender gap remains same at 8.3%.

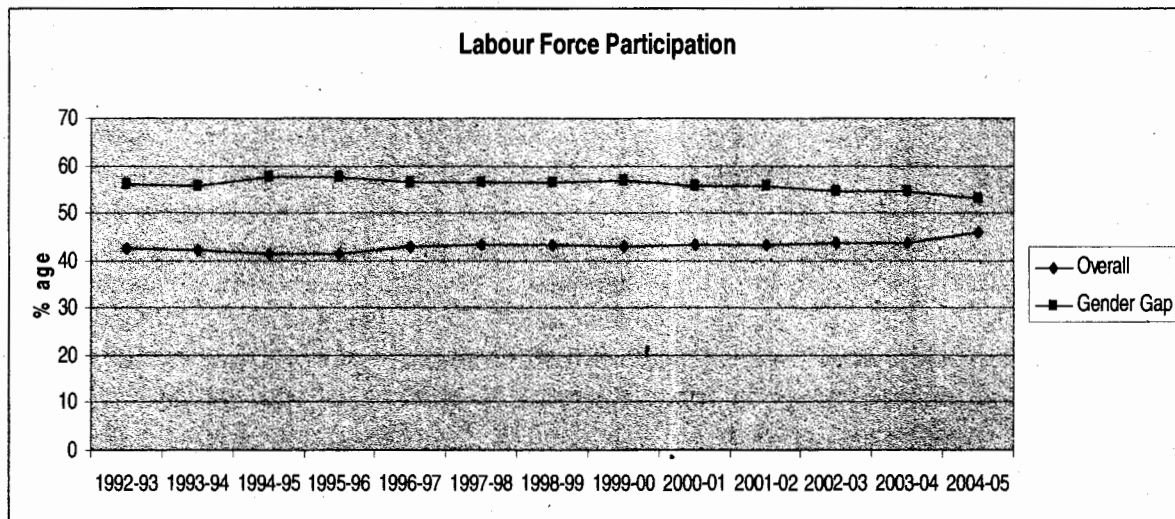
¹ Gender gap refers to the observed discrepancies between the presence, expectations, achievements and treatment of men and women. For our purpose, we will define gender gap as the female to male ratio employed. For example, a ratio of 100% suggests no gender gap, whereas a ratio of 1% suggests the highest gender gap.

According to an independent researcher, women development indicators as identified in 'National Action Plan for Gender and Development' have largely remained unchanged over past seven years (PAGE 2007). Government of Pakistan, on its part, has taken certain measures to promote gender equality. This largely pertains to policy making exercises, such as gender mainstreaming, in which policies are reviewed from a gender perspective. Also, a lot of credit has been claimed by the government for passing 'Women's Protection Bill', as if legal measures alone are guarantee of women protection.

Fact Box:

At Punjab College of Commerce, overall 40% students are female. Ten years ago, this ratio was 7%.

Women's share in an economy varies a great deal across sectors. In case of Pakistan, 45% of agricultural workforce is women, implying almost non-existing gender gap in rural economy. The problem lies in the non-agriculture sector, where female participation is only 6.7%. Generally, this pattern holds valid across many developing countries, and not just Pakistan (Ishaque 2007). Economic Survey of Pakistan (2006-07) indicates that the gender gap in the labour market is significantly high but in recent years, it has decreased with an overall increase in the labour force participation rate².



Graph 1: Labour Force Participation
Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan 2006-07

History Box:

² The percentage of working age population over 10 years of age (employed and unemployed). For Pakistan, the labour force is almost 40% of total population.

Government University College of Education, Gakhar was established in 1918 as an elementary teachers training institute. In 2002, after 84 years of educating boys only, it started admitting girls after being converted into a college.

Famous activists Farida Shaheed and Khawar Mumtaz, in their status report (Shaheed and Mumtaz 1990) wrote that 'women's potential productivity is under utilized and their actual labour over utilized.' Recommending policy actions to reduce gender gap in the labour market, this study suggested that 'women professionals (teachers, doctors, engineers, civil and business administrators) should be adequately represented in high administration and decision making positions (Ibid).

Fact Box:

In a leading bank, only 2 out of 66 branches in Gujranwala region have female managers.

In an ethnographic approach, renowned Iranian sociologist Shahla Haeri has profiled the lives of six prominent, educated, middle and upper middle class professional Pakistani women (Haeri 2004). It provides a deeper insight into the struggles and achievements by professional Pakistani women in general. It documents, demonstrates and analyzes the impact of women have had in their own societies. However from a policy perspective, this study is not very helpful as it draws on the individual circumstances of profiled women, doing justice with the ethnographic approach.

Fact Box:

In district government, female ratio is between 33% and 50% in health and education departments.

Few studies analysing the allocation of time among households' work and market work show that women's working hours (market +households work) are larger than of men's as they are over burdened by households work (Siddiqui 2004). Females' contribution to household production ranges from 2.5 to 14 times that of males in household sector. The imputed value of home production activities represents 38 percent to 60 percent of total households' income (Ibid).

Some studies also suggest that in case of entrepreneurship and self employment, the risks faced by women are not structurally different from those faced by men. Access to capital is described both by male and female entrepreneurs as major obstacle in starting new business (PAGE 2007). Similarly lack of proper marketing and competition from large players are also common factors. As a matter of fact, in the new economy, several corporate companies have a relatively greater number of openings for women than for men.

View Box:

'Society does not allow women to work at managerial work, because they will then ultimately rule men.' (A respondent)

Sexual harassment has been described as a big hurdle in a higher female participation rate especially in the industrial sector. According to a report, as much as 78% women face some kind of sexual harassment working in different sectors like hospitals, banks, offices, factories, brick kilns and private homes (DAWN 2007a). The report also mentions that certain NGOs have formed an alliance called 'Alliance Against Sexual Harassment at the Workplace.' This was followed with development of a code, later called 'Code of Conduct for Gender Justice at the Workplace', adopted subsequently by 269 local and international companies and by 10 trade unions. Pursuant to lobbying, the Government of Pakistan has now amended Section 2(b) in the Removal from Service (Special Powers) Ordinance 2000 to include sexual harassment at the workplace in the definition of 'misconduct' (Ibid).

2. Research Design

Research Objectives

- To enlist and describe skills gap within selected sectors of Gujranwala formal private sector with special focus on women as potential employees.
- To inform the professional educational institutes in the public and private sector about the demands of industry.

Limitations

- ✓ Present study does not incorporate working women in the informal sector due to its scope.
- ✓ This research is actually a study of Gujranwala however the results can be applied to other places with homogenous factors.

Data and Research Methodology

Multiple tools have been used in research to reflect the diversity across sampling frame suitable to extract maximum meaningful information from research subjects. Primary data has been collected through in depth interviews and surveys. Surveys conducted through questionnaires have helped in doing a need assessment of skills as required by the industry and comparing them with the level of skills as produced by educational institutions. The questionnaire used in survey is given at Appendix-II. In-depth interviews have focused on more gender differentials in terms of skills (capacity) and perception (attitude), their formats are given at Appendices III&IV. Another survey has focused on the perceived differences of skills level between men and women, given at Appendix-V.

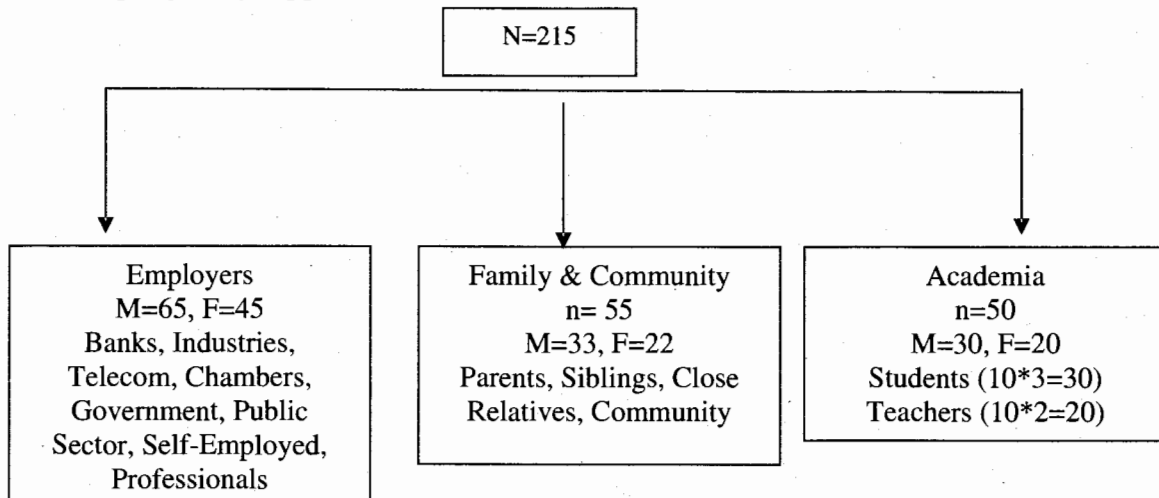
Sampling

The sample consists of employers, teachers, potential employees, working women and men, and families. Total sample size is 215.

The sampling technique used is Stratified Random Sampling, in which we randomly select people in pre-determined groups. Stratified Sampling is chosen, as the subject of our research does not lend neatly itself to simple random sampling, in which case, we are likely to miss out our intended sample profile. For example, not every one is a teacher or an employer. Also, the ratio of men to women in our sample is almost 3:2. An attempt was made to keep this ratio 1:1, however due to lack of response from certain categories, the percentage of men increased. However, as the research is gender oriented, a higher proportion of men can actually give greater weight to the findings.

The selected economic sectors are: telecom, banking, information technology, public sector corporations, government service, self-employed, professionals and relatively large scale³/export oriented industries. These sectors are chosen, as they have a greater capacity to attract women as employees due to relatively established office culture and higher level of social acceptance.

The sampling design appears below:



Skills Identification and Scoring Techniques

The identification of important skills was made in the initial round of discussion with the representatives from the industry and the academia. These skills include: comprehension, verbal communication, written communication, analytical, time management, financial management, self management and priorities management. It is worth mentioning that these are 'soft skills' required by each and every professional. Sectoral specific skills, such as banking skills, are offered by the specific institutions as part of their career development plans.

Each respondent was asked to rank each skill on the basis of its absence in fresh graduates on a scale of 1 to 8, whereas 1 stands for least lacking and 8 stands for most lacking. For example, if a respondent considers that most of the fresh graduates lack the time

³ The industrial sector of Gujranwala comprises SMEs, and so the word 'large scale' here is only a relative term within the local context. Even the large firms in Gujranwala would qualify for medium scale enterprises as per official definitions of Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority, which treats any manufacturing firm an SME if its annual revenue does not exceed Rs. 250 million.

management skill the most, then he/she will indicate the number '8' in front of time management skill. Thus each questionnaire generated a list of eight numbers. The numbers were then added across the responses to see which skill is perceived as the least or most lacking. The skill receiving least score is considered least lacking and the skill receiving highest score is considered most lacking. Thus a rank of eight skills was prepared. As our respondents belonged to two independent groups, therefore we are reproducing the summary of results in both aggregate and segregate forms.

3. Data Analysis

The skills gap⁴ assessment is carried out at both industrial and academic levels, as the former is the demand side of the skills and latter is the supply side. This chapter brings out the results of the survey conducted for this purpose. The skills gap analysis feed into policy recommendations for training need assessment. Skills are also considered from a gender perspective to see if there are any gender differentials across skills levels. This shows that skills differences across gender are minimum and therefore the following findings about the skills gap analysis apply equally to both men and women.

Ranking	Industry	Score	Interpretation
1	Personal Management	80	Least Lacking
2	Financial Management	89	
3	Writing	94	
4	Verbal	98	
5	Analytical	99	
6	Time Management	104	
7	Priority Management	109	
8	Comprehension	118	Most Lacking
Ranking	Academia	Score	Interpretation
1	Comprehension	98	Least Lacking
2	Time Management	99	
3	Analytical	111	
4	Self Management	112	
5	Verbal Communication	113	
6	Written Communication	119	
7	Financial Management	120	
8	Priorities Management	122	Most Lacking
Ranking	Overall	Score	Contd... Interpretation
1	Financial Management	192	Least Lacking
2	Verbal Communication	203	
3	Written Communication	209	
4	Self Management	210	
5	Time Management	211	

⁴ Skills gap refer to differences between expectations about the skills level in the employers and the available level of skills from educational institutions.

6	Analytical	213	
7	Comprehension	216	
8	Priorities Management	231	Most Lacking

Table 1: Results of Survey

Key Findings

1. According to the industry, fresh graduates' performance in the case of comprehension skills is at the lowest degree. This is a reflection of how industry perceives the level of understanding among job applicants and resultantly a commentary on the output of academic institutions, as the ability to understand should be considered as the most fundamental outcome of disciplined learning offered in an institute.
2. On a positive note, the industry appears satisfied with the personal management skills of fresh graduates as personal management trait gets the lowest score. It may appear contradictory with another finding wherein time management and priorities management receiving high score, which are otherwise, considered integral to the personal management. At closer inspection, it is revealed that personal management is *perceived* more as personality management, which refers to the grooming skills, attire etc. Thus given the time and effort, which the younger lot would spend on their effort to look good is appreciated by the industry!
3. The communication skills, so often perceived as the key problem by hiring authorities, according to our survey occupy middle ranked position. It implies that communication skills are somewhere in the middle of 'least lacking' and 'most lacking.'
4. The academia perceives the skill of comprehension as the least lacking. This is in exact contrast with the industry perception, which ranks the level of comprehension skills at the lowest. This is where the demonstration of a wide industry-academic gap becomes most prominent.
5. Industry and Academia seem to agree on the level of communication skills, by placing them, on average, in the middle ranking.
6. A link here ought to be established between comprehension skills and written skills. While the academia believe that fresh graduates lack written skills the most, the industry believe that the real problem lies not merely in the writing skills but the very basic comprehension skills.
7. Overall results suggest that the personal management skills are considered as least lacking and comprehension skills are considered as the most lacking amongst fresh graduates.

Correlation between Ranks (As viewed by the academia and industry)

Comprehension	-9.60%
Verbal	-15.31%
Writing	-22.18%
Analytical	-18.36%
Time Management	-37.31%
Financial Management	-4.53%
Personal Management	-2.93%
Priority Management	-8.70%
Table 2: Industry-Academia Gap	

8. Table 2 above presents a method to understand the infamous industry-academia gap. As the table suggests the correlation⁵ between the industry and the academia on the ranking of all of the skills is negative. It implies that the perception about skills level among fresh graduates varies across the industry-academia borders by a great deal. Thus the generally held perception of a wide gap between the industry and the academia is supported and reinforced by our survey.

	Industry	Academia
Male	23%	31%
Female	28%	19%
Overall	25%	25%

Table 3: Employee Turn Over Rate

9. Female turn over rate is greater than male turn over rate in the industry while the male turn over rate in the academia is greater than female turn over rate. Turn over rate⁶ is not just a financial indicator; it is also a social indicator. Since the society welcomes the stereotyped role of woman as a teacher, it encourages them to stay in teaching career. Likewise, since the society does not generally welcome a woman in the private sector, the women working in the industry get less social support leading to a higher turn over rate.
10. Interestingly enough, the overall turn over rate for both the industry and the academia is the same: 25%. It means that on the whole, the labour market considers both career paths of equal value.

⁵ Correlation measures relationship between two variables and could range from '-1' (negative one) to '+1' (positive one), whereas a zero implies no relationship, 1 implies perfect and positive one-on-one relationship and -1 implies a reverse relationship. Say if we find that the correlation between monthly expenditure on clothing and monthly income is +1, it means that for every additional rupee income, a rupee is being spent on clothing.

⁶ Turn over ratio suggests volatility in an industry in terms of flux of human capital. We defined turn over ratio as percentage of employees leaving an organization in first three years of service and asked our respondents to give us a gender break down.

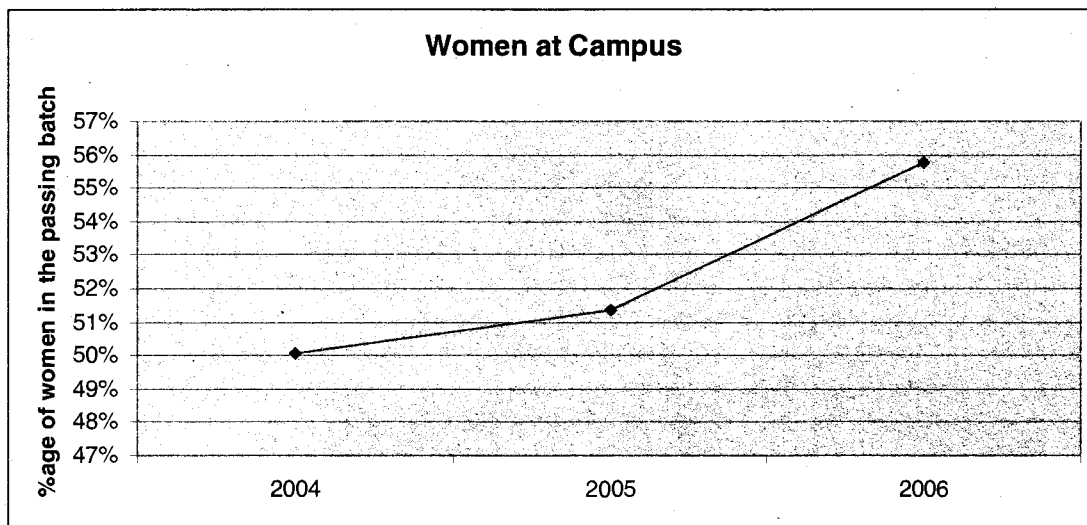


Figure 2: Women at Campus

11. For last few years, women have constituted almost half of the passing batch in coeducational institutions. This trend, as captured in Figure 2.2 is on the rise, which is likely to have a positive effect on reducing the gender gap in the labour market. It shows that when ever, women are socially supported, here for higher education, they tend to capture a share, which is proportionate with their share in the population.

Gender Perspective on Skills

At work, as well as in studies, analytical abilities form the basis of problem solving ability. According to our survey, 71% people believe that there are no significant gender differences in the analytical ability. Second important characteristic to measure gender based differences is to gauge leadership skills. In this respect, 48% people believe that the gender differences in leadership skills are significant. It is quite different from the analytical abilities, which implies that people perceive women to be as good as men in problem solving skills, but their ability to implement and enforce them, as measured by leadership skills, is not that strong. This perception is pretty close to a related opinion on the conflict management skills, which is our third characteristic. About 45% believe that the gender differences on this account are quite significant.

An interesting finding is reported in case of perceived differences in communication skills, also considered integral part of leadership. A resounding 80% people express their view that in terms of communication skills, there are no significant gender based differences. A similar favourable opinion exists in case of perception on the confidence level, where 76% believe that women and men fare equally well on the issue of confidence level.

The ability to get into the job market and following an upwardly mobile career path demands closer and quicker access to information about the job market. In this respect, 65% people believe that women and men have equal access to information. Besides information, a career orientation is a must for advancement. It is perceived that women may be less eager about

pursuing a career path than men, however our survey suggests that 75% people believe no such thing exists and gender differences on this scale are also insignificant.

Sexual Harassment

A both real and perceived hindrance for women to work is the unsafe environment given the backdrop of a largely segregated society. Normally, men and women do not have the opportunity to interact in a free way and therefore when they do, such as during work, lot of problems arise owing to lack of exposure, education and decency. According to our survey, a majority i.e. 65% people believed that women do face some kind of sexual harassment at work places. This high percentage confirms the cultural notions about women going to work and partially explain why, despite apparently equal capabilities, the gender gap in the labour market looms large. What is even more unfortunate that as many as 48% people believed that cases involving sexual harassment are neither officially noticed nor required action is taken upon them. This explains a lack of legal arrangement and also the problem of under-reporting of similar incidents out of a fear of a social stigma. This was also evident from the fact that many organizations do not maintain elaborate policies of sexual harassment.

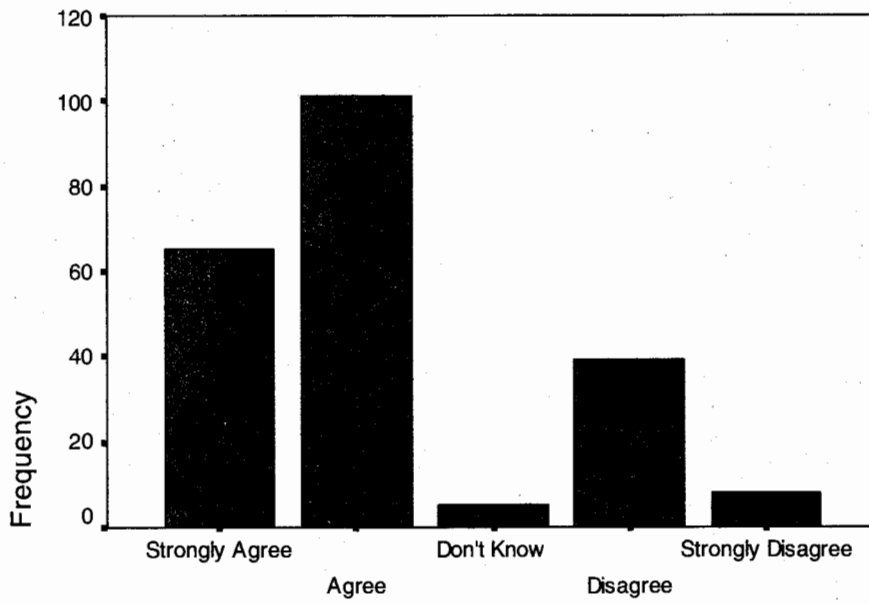
Graphical Representation of Survey Results

Before presenting graphs, it is worthwhile to repeat the main question, so that results can be understood readily. The question, asked to a very diverse group of respondents drawn from the public sector, private sector, and academia across main socio economic groups, was in the form of following statement:

There are no significant differences between men and women in terms of: confidence level, analytical ability, conflict management, career orientation, leadership, communication and access to information.

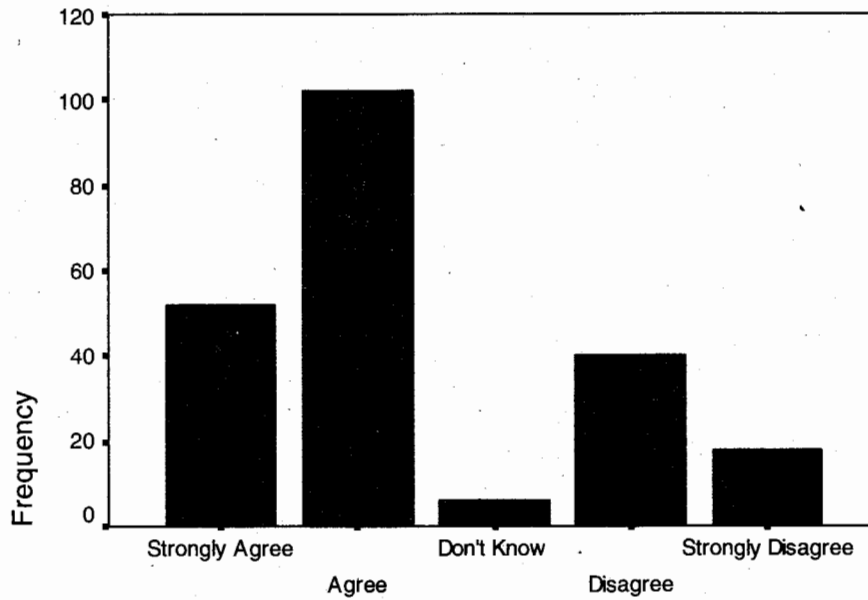
The respondents were requested to choose an answer from “Strongly agree, agree, Don’t know, Disagree and Strongly Disagree”. If most of the respondents express answer in terms of “Strongly Agree” or “Agree”, then it is understood that gender based differences in various skills are perceived as minimal. The information on the Y-axis represents the number of respondents expressing a particular answer.

Confidence level



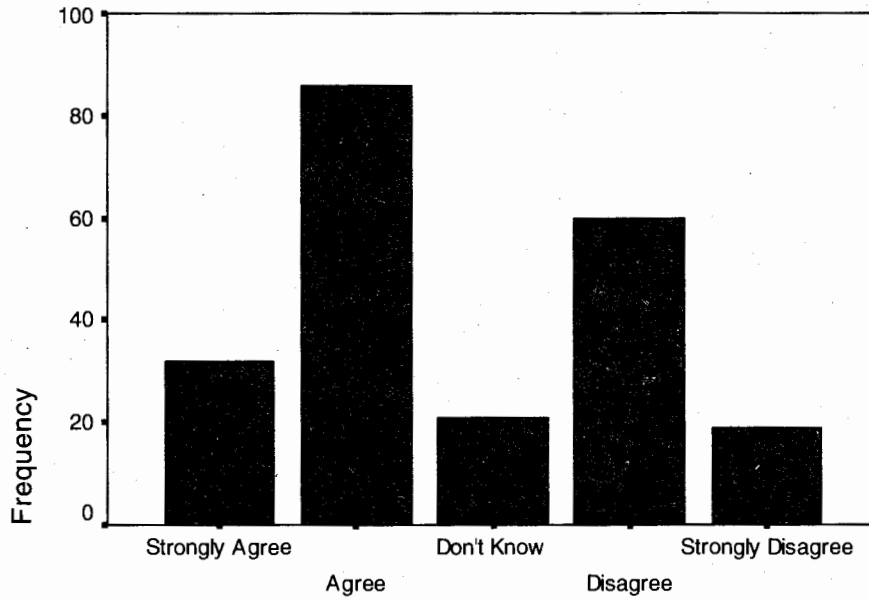
Confidence level

Analytical ability



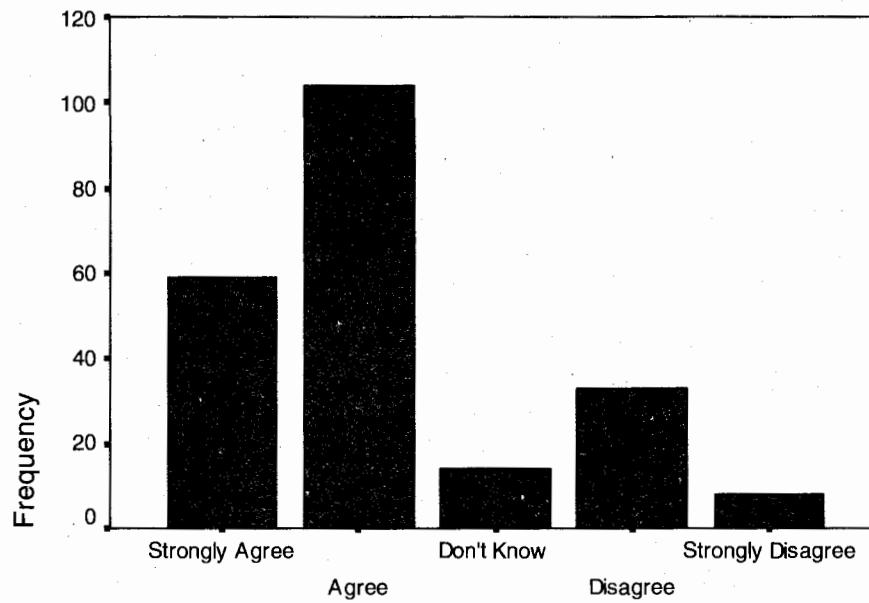
Analytical ability

Conflict Management



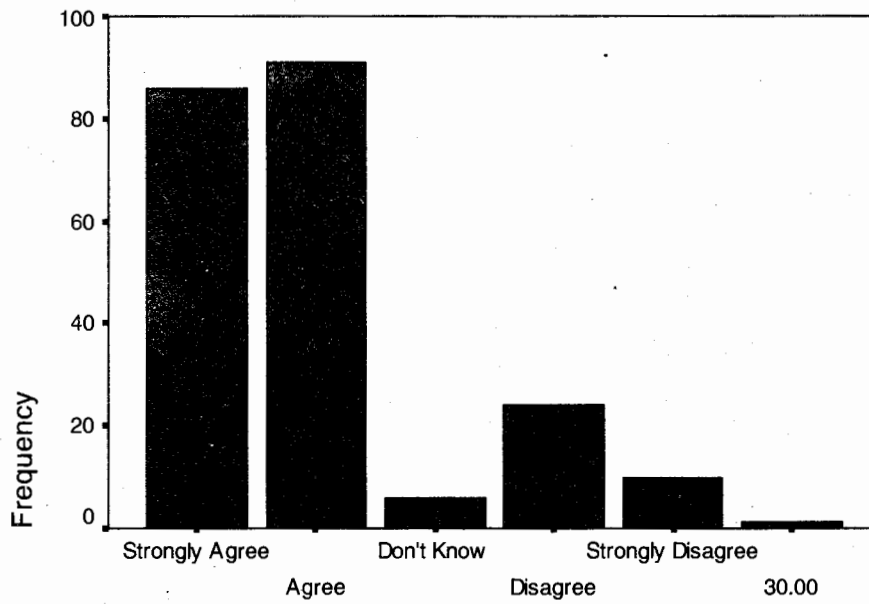
Conflict Management

Career Orientation



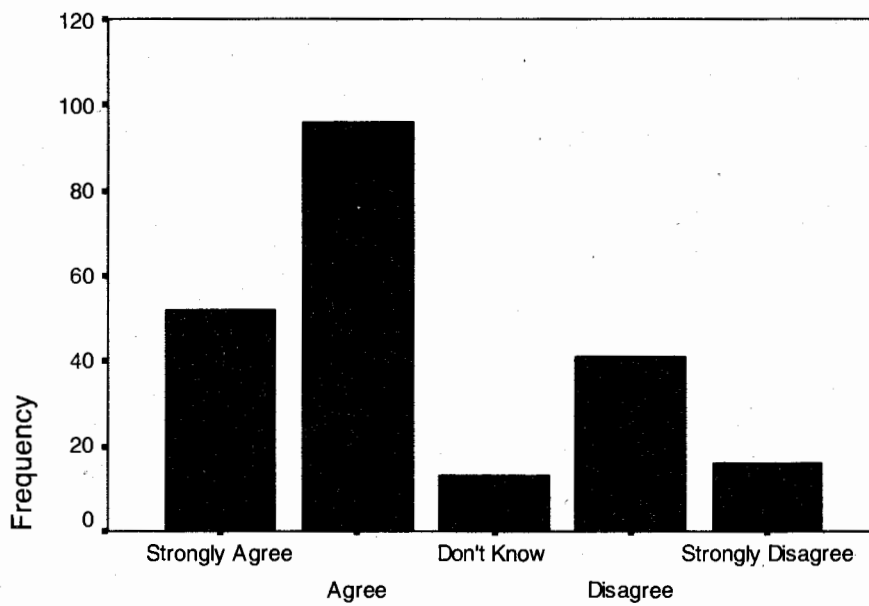
Career Orientation

Communication Skill

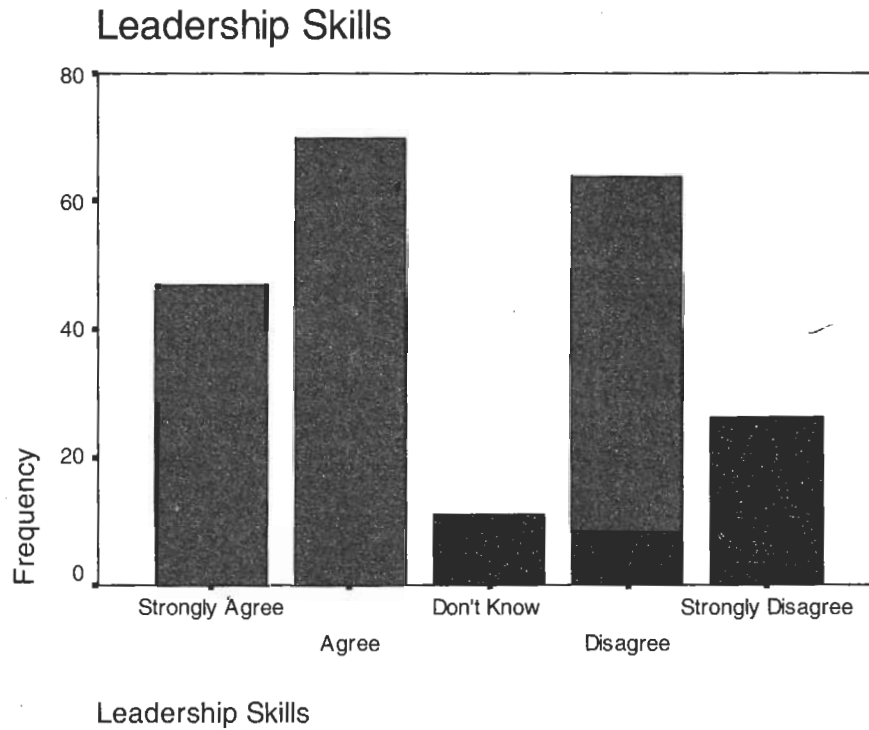


Communication Skill

Access to Information



Access to Information



4. Conclusions

Question: Would you recommend more freedom or more restrictions for working women?

Answer: Neither more freedom, nor more restrictions. I demand more education and [greater emphasis on] character building.

A

Respondent

Contrary to popular belief, employers and teachers do not observe any significant skills based differences in managerial capacities between men and women. Management capacity is taken rather as a function of experience. Mobility of women has been offered as one explanation for low female participation, but this is not true at least for career oriented women and more so, several good employers actually provide transport facilities for women. Harassment at work places has been acknowledged as a real factor, though necessarily not of sexual nature. Socio cultural restrictions particularly family obligations have been considered as most important restraint in female employment.

In terms of skills, we observe that priorities management and comprehension/analytical skills need greatest attention. It means that while the industry acknowledges a high level of formal education exists, it does not see its impact on the self management and analytical skills of fresh graduates. It is indeed an alarming situation. The industry-academia gap has been mentioned as the key factor in skills gaps. If the academic institutions do not reflect an

understanding of the real demands of the industry, foundations of meaningful and useful education cannot be laid.

Naturally, good analytical skills are of little use without good communication skills. In this regards, much before printing of this report, when the results of the research were already available, Bargad designed three training programs and prepared training manuals on 'Communication, Self-Management and Analytical Skills.' These programs were then conducted for selected gatherings of senior level students and executives. As a matter of fact, some of these programmes have been sought after by the local private sector, and some have been carried out already with a lot of positive feedback.

Economic needs are often quoted as the most legitimate reason for women to work. Surprisingly, even in low income and less educated families, economic rationale of women seeking jobs is welcome. Given the increasingly tough economic conditions in the society in terms of consumer choices and inflationary pressures, increasing family income has become a common concern. We are fast transforming from a single-earner-multi-dependents families to dual-earners-and multi-dependent families. This creates a greater room for women employment, as they constitute half of our population.

We also argue that gender sensibility leads to the idea of complementarities of skills paving way for a new gender based division of labour. Both men and women have complementing jobs, not necessarily competing jobs. This comes straight from the practice of gender based task allocation, which may not be construed as gender discrimination. For example, a leading paint manufacturer, Berger, would only hire women as their colour consultants however they are meant for home based clients only as they supposedly cannot handle the hard trade sector i.e. distributors and retailers etc. Women are hired because they are naturally more aware about various fashions and they can freely enter homes without any reservations from their clients. Therefore again, such gender based classification is emanating on the basis of a division of labour.

Our findings suggest that there is a rapid change in the female labour force participation at managerial levels. The increasing visibility of women at banks and telecom companies symbolizes a much larger structural shift in the demographical characteristics of labour market. This shift is happening primarily in professional educational institutions. For example, in medical institutions, where female face no handicaps, men have already been outnumbered. The increasing proportion of gender at campuses will ultimately transform the gender composition of labour market. It is only a matter of time, that the current social order also adjusts itself to new reality.

5. Recommendations

1. Gender gap in the labour market cannot be left to the naturally occurring social changes. The corporate sector, which is the ultimate beneficiary of a talented and diversified work force, should take proactive measures to encourage women to work. For this, facilities such as day care center and transportation should be provided by

all leading companies. Although these facilities will add the cost, the subsequent returns through a satisfied and committed workforce would be huge.

2. Educational institutions carry huge responsibility in imparting the right kind and quality of training needed by the employers. Although this is true without regards to gender, these institutions should take lead by designing tailor made training programmes for women. In this regards, the skills gap analysis conducted above presents the real needs of the industry.
3. The skills gap analysis brought forward the urgent need of incorporating training programs on 'Self Management' and 'Analytical' skills with equal emphasis on the 'Communication' skills. We recommend that all educational institutes must incorporate these trainings towards the end of their Masters level education in any discipline as they constitute the core soft skills which become generic needs of all graduates. These courses have been developed and executed for both students and executives by Bargad already and Bargad would be willing to share its experience.
4. Formal mechanisms of interaction between the academia and industry should be developed. Universities should take the lead in offering the space and technical facilities, where representatives from the industry can spend some fixed time to share industry needs and help in preparing demand oriented courses.
5. An often used policy instrument to ensure gender equality, or at least gender equity, is to introduce quotas for women. These policies are helpful in making a level playing field and do well in compensating the wrongs which have been done by discrimination. However, quotas can also lead to a compromise on the merit and hence may affect the organizational capacity to deliver.
6. Sexual harassment policy must be introduced and implemented in each organization, whether in the public sector or the private sector.
7. Educational institutes should also take lead in doing research on the economic participation of women in various sectors of the economy. Their job does not stop at conducting classes; they must generate new knowledge, so badly needed to formulate right policies.

In the West, later half of twentieth century is marked with an increasing proportion of women in the labour force, but this has been a merit driven change. The major factor in the increase of average labour productivity is in fact the women's increasing participation in the labour market. This is a result of both a resistance from the civil society against gender based discrimination and a proactive role of women in economic arena. In our case, women rights movements have largely focused on women's rights from political and social perspectives, and not much as an economic right. With increasing economic pressures, the time has come for women's movement to lay equal, if not greater, emphasis on economic empowerment of women.

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Appendix-I

Female participation in economic activity and Employment in South Asia and selected region of the world, 1995-2001a.			
Region	Female Economic Activity rate (b)	Female % of Labour Force	Female % of Total Employment
India	43.5	32.4	26.8
Pakistan	15.4	29	14
Bangladesh	57.2	42.4	37.5
Nepal (c)	85	40.5	50
Sri Lanka	41.6	36.8	35.2
Bhutan (d)	59.6	32	0
Maldives (d)	28.6	22	33.5
South Asia	42.7	33.5	27
Sub Saharan Africa	62.3	42	0
East Asia & Pacific	68.9	44.5	0

Col: 1 Refer to % of total women of age 15 and over.

Col: 2 Refer to women labour force as % of total labour force.

Col: 3 Refer to female of employment as % of total employment.

a: Latest available year

b: Data source for South Asian countries and regions are different

c: Nepal LFPR given here is somewhat different from national source and data for the above from The later table has been derived from national source and data for the above from international source,

d: 1994 for second column.

Table 1: Female Economic Participation
Source: Human Development Report 2003

Table 2			
Female LFPR as a percentage of male in South Asia, 1980- 2000			
Region	1980	1990	2000
India	54	48	50
Pakistan	8	14	18
Bangladesh	77	75	64
Nepal	65	64	92
Sri Lanka	39	59	50
Bhutan	65	65	65
Maldives	70	26	38

Table 3

Education handicap			
Female- male gaps in education in South Asia, 200-01			
Region	Female Literacy as	Average Year of Schooling	
	% of male Literacy	Male	Female
India	67	6.3	3.7
Pakistan	50	5.1	2.5
Bangladesh	62	3.3	1.8
Nepal	41	3.4	1.5
Sri Lanka	94	7.2	6.6
South Asia	67	5.8	3.4
Sub Saharan Africa	57	0	0
East Asia & Pacific	87	7.3	5.2

Table 4			
Unemployment rates by education levels in Pakistan 1999-2000 (%age)			
	Male	Female	Gaps
Literate	4.6	15.1	10.5
<Primary	7.4	13.9	6.5
<Matric	7.6	33.7	26.1
<Inter	7.7	27	19.3
<BA	7.3	22.6	15.3
BA	5.4	13.7	8.3
Master	6.1	14.4	8.3

Appendix-II

Survey: Gender Gap in Labour Market of Gujranwala

Questionnaire for Employers, Professionals and Teachers

Bargad is doing a research on gender gap in the labour market of Gujranwala. In this regards, a survey is being conducted to determine the status of job-related skills in fresh graduates (men and women) aspiring to start their career. We highly appreciate your cooperation in this regards. Thank you!

1. Which skills do you think, fresh graduates generally lack on the start of their careers? Please rank them on a scale to 1 to 8, where 1 stands for least lacking, and 8 stands for most lacking. You are welcome to enter other abilities in blank spaces below and rank them accordingly.

The ability to comprehend and understand an assignment.	
The ability to communicate verbally.	
The ability to communicate in written language.	
The ability to analyze a problem.	
The ability to manage one's time.	
The ability to manage financial and physical resources.	
The ability to maintain personal grooming including attire etc.	
The ability to manage priorities.	

2. Which factors, you will attribute to a lack in job related skills. Please allocate percentages to indicate the weight of the factor. All options should add up to 100%.

Factors	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Lack of skills development courses in the university					
Lack of interest in students to learn					
Lack of interaction between university and the industry					
Lack of opportunities for training in grooming and self management					

3. For Educational Institutions: In last three batches, what has been the percentage of women in:

MBA				IT				Commerce			

In blank spaces, you may write other fields.

4. For Educational Institutions: In last three batches, what has been the percentage of women in high grades i.e. A or above 80%?

MBA				IT				Commerce			

In blank spaces, you may write other fields.

5. For Employers/Managers in Industry: In last three recruitment cycles, what has been the percentage of women at management cadre?

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6. For Employers/Managers in Industry: In last three recruitment cycles, what has been the percentage of rejection in general?

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7. For Employers/Managers in Industry: In last three recruitment cycles, what has been the percentage of women in rejected candidates?

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8. For Employers/Managers in Industry: Women are generally rejected due to: (Please tick only one option)

There are no special reasons for women as our criterion is same for both.	
They are not career oriented and join an organization to pass the time.	
They are forced later by their families to quit jobs.	
There are not enough capable women to perform required jobs.	
(Any other, please state)	

Kindly provide your personal details to facilitate the analysis. It will be kept confidential.

Name	Organization/Designation	Profession	Age	Gender

Appendix-III

Framework for Interviews: Educational Institutions

1. Why women's percentage in professional courses is increasing?
2. Do you think this increasing percentage is affecting female employment ratio? Why or why not?
3. What constitute a good skill set for a fresh graduate?
4. Have the educational institutions been able to keep up with industry demands? If not, why not? If yes, how?
5. What kind of training may be imparted to fresh graduates to improve their chances of gaining employment?
6. Do teachers pay equal attention to female and male students? If not, why not?
7. What is your general perception about the influence of gender on managerial capacities?
8. What is your perception about social and cultural norms affecting women's freedom to work?
9. In last three batches, what has been the percentage of women in:

MBA				IT				Commerce			

In blank spaces, you may write other fields.

10. In last three batches, what has been the percentage of women in high grades i.e. A or above 80%?

MBA				IT				Commerce			

In blank spaces, you may write other fields.

Appendix-IV

Framework for Interviews: Industry/ Public Sector

1. Why women's share in the formal labour market is so low?
2. What constitute a good skill set for a fresh graduate?
3. Are you generally satisfied with the quality of graduates? Explain.
4. What kind of training may be imparted to fresh graduates immediately after their graduation or in the final stage of their education to improve their chances of gaining employment?
5. What is your general perception about the influence of gender on managerial capacities?
6. What is your perception about social and cultural norms affecting women's freedom to work?
7. Is there a gender bias in selection, promotion and firing decisions at corporate level? Any examples?
8. Do you provide any special facilities for working women like transport, day care center, extra leaves etc.?
9. Do you believe there are incidents leading to sexual harassment in your firm?
10. If yes, what has been your strategy to counter them?
11. What is current the percentage of women at management cadre.

- _____
12. In last three recruitment cycles, what has been the percentage of rejection in general?

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13. In last three recruitment cycles, what has been the percentage of women in rejected candidates?

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Appendix V

Survey: Gender Gap in Labour Market of Gujranwala Teachers, Employers, Employees, Community and Students

Bargad is doing a research on gender gap in the labour market of Gujranwala. In this regards, a survey is being conducted to determine various reasons contributing to this gap. We highly appreciate your cooperation in this regards. Thank you!

1. There are no significant differences between men and women in terms of:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Confidence Level					
Analytical Ability					
Consistency					
Leadership Skills					
Conflict Management					
Career Orientation					
Communication Skills					
Access to information					

2. Women at work frequently face sexual harassment, which is defined as *unwelcome* sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. (Please encircle one option).

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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3. The sexual harassment cases are officially noticed and mostly required action is taken.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Thank you!

Kindly provide your personal details to facilitate the analysis. It will be kept confidential.



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