By Karine Schomer, Ph.D. President and India Practice Leader, Change Management Consulting & Training, LLC

Professional
Women in
india

Changing Social Expectations and Best Practices for Global Corporations

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Dear Friends:

In 2009, Working Mother Media had the pleasure of presenting its Global Advancement of Women Leadership Summit in Bengaluru, India. At this important summit, women shared their thoughts on career planning, family issues and gender equity, as well as the impact of the caste system and generational differences. This fascinating discussion prompted Working Mother to commission this study.

This research paper delves into the needs of women in India and the solutions that companies can embrace. It lays out the challenges and opportunities currently facing working women and their employers in India, from changing social mores at home to gender awareness roadblocks at work. We also learn about a typical "day in the life" of a working woman in India. And finally, the study lays out what is gradually emerging as "state of the art" consensus about what global companies need to do if they are to remain serious about gender inclusion in India.

I would like to thank our sponsor, Deloitte LLP, for making this report possible. Our hope is that its findings will lead to more support for working women and working mothers in India and across the globe.

Best regards,

Carol Evans
President
Working Mother Media

Deloitte.

Deloitte is proud to be the sole sponsor of Working Mother's groundbreaking research, *Professional Women in India: Changing Social Expectations and Best Practices for Global Corporations*. This research paper investigates the needs of women in India, and offers some potential solutions that companies can embrace to effectively advance the population of working women throughout India.

We have made a substantial investment in building our India operations and recognize the potential challenges and opportunities our talent may face. But we wanted to know more. And we wanted to help share this knowledge. That's why we support this type of research through our sponsorship.

Although global companies have a vested interest in hiring and retaining the highly educated population of female engineers, mathematicians, scientists, lawyers and managers, India has the lowest percentage of women employed of all major Asian countries. As social habits shift, companies will need to respond with programs and policies that support the highly desirable talent pool that women in India represent. Government will likely come under increasing pressure by companies to participate in the solutions that are already desperately needed for infrastructure to support working women in India.

Through discussions with management experts and academics, as well as case studies from best-in-class companies, this report provides critical information about what changes are currently taking place and how organizations can stay ahead of the curve.

As an organization that has expanded our operations in India, Deloitte is focused on meeting the challenges and leveraging the opportunities to develop this growing pool of talent. We share this responsibility with all of you, and hope this report will serve to stimulate even more progress so that together we may change the world of work for the better.

Warm regards,

Barbara Adachi
National Managing Principal
Initiative for the Retention and Advancement of Women

Professional Women in India

Changing Social Expectations and Best Practices for Global Corporations

By Karine Schomer, Ph.D., *President and India Practice Leader, Change Management Consulting & Training, LLC*

To be a professional woman in India today is to be at the forefront of historic social change. What has been happening with this demographic over the past ten years is the start of a quiet revolution in gender relations at work and family relations at home, comparable to the social transformation the United States experienced starting in the 1960s.

The number of educated Indian women pursuing professional careers is still very small in comparison with the 62% of women in the country who are illiterate and the low 42% female participation in the workforce. Only 18% of women are part of the organized labor sector, and only 20% of these are employed in urban areas. Women workers in the new IT-related occupations are only 0.3% of urban women workers. Despite their small numbers in the overall picture, however, the Indian women professionals of today are and see themselves as the trend-setters of the future.

The obstacles to their success are many. Ceilings to their aspiration are made of more than glass. Traditional social attitudes and cultural patterns have not changed overnight. Overt discrimination may be receding, but the "old boys networks" may still be operational. The skills and confidence to push for career advancement are not instantly acquired. Practical infrastructure challenges can vex the most determined of women as they try to make lives that embrace both work and family.

But the momentum is unstoppable. Indian women are now 40% of students enrolled in college. They are coming out of college with degrees in science and engineering, and opting for demanding and sometimes uncertain careers in private industry rather than the security of lower-paid jobs in education or government service. From being overwhelmingly concentrated in traditional "women's jobs" in human resources, public relations and administration, women are moving into technical, finance, marketing and other job functions. Many middle class families, especially in the large urban "metro" cities, are coming to link their aspirations to a higher standard of living to having daughters and daughters-in-law who are educated and can contribute significantly to the family income.

Private industry was at first somewhat slow in recognizing the importance of this demographic and cultural shift. Women made their way into the corporate workforce, but concern with fully developing their talents and encouraging their rise to leadership positions was not a priority. But in the past ten years, especially since 2003-2004, there has been a groundswell of corporate interest in diversity and gender-inclusion initiatives aimed at capitalizing more fully on the new female talent now available and eager for challenging work. The realization has come that, in the global economy, winning in the "war for talent" is a major competitive factor, and that India's educated professional women are a significant asset that should no longer be under-valued and under-utilized.

The challenge for global corporations operating in India, both multinational corporations (MNCs) and Indian companies, is how to respond effectively to the new demographic reality with initiatives, programs and policies that will support the recruitment and success of the highly desirable talent pool that educated women in India represent.

This paper is based on findings from research studies and a number of in-depth interviews with representatives of MNCs and Indian global corporations. It provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities facing professional women and their employers in India, changing social expectations both at work and at home, and best practices for companies already in India or considering business in India. Four case studies show the solutions that select best-in-class companies operating in India have developed to further their corporate journey to gender inclusion and the advancement of women in their organizations.

Indian Professional Women In Comparative Perspective

In March 2010, the World Economic Forum released the first comprehensive global study benchmarking gender equality practices and comparative statistics on the employment of women by the corporate sector. Based on a survey of 600 heads of Human Resources at the world's largest employers in 20 countries, *The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010* looks at the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities, as well as barriers to the advancement of women in corporate leadership, and the degree to which various gender inclusion practices are employed in different countries.

On the overall percentage of women corporate employees, India at 23% comes out not only behind the U.S. at 52%, but also behind Brazil at 35%. At the senior management level, India shows only 9% women to Brazil's 16% and the U.S.A.'s 28%.

Global Gender Gap Ranking and Economic Participation of Women in BRIC Countries

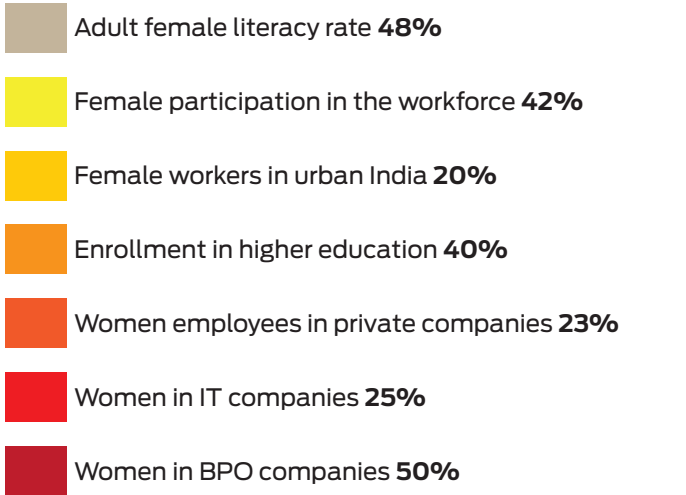| Country	Global Gender Gap Ranking (out of 134)	% Economic Participation
Brazil	81	63%
Russia	51	74%
India	114	42%
China	60	69%

Adapted from *The India Gender Gap Review 2009* by the World Economic Forum.

In 2009, the Diversity & Inclusion in Asia Network of Community Business, a Hong Kong-based think tank, produced the first ever *Gender Diversity Benchmark for Asia* report on companies operating in China, India, Japan and Singapore. In this report, based on a sample of ten MNCs operating in all four countries, India comes out last in percentage of women employed at all levels.

These figures for corporate India mirror the macro-economic data for the society as a whole, and point to how far India as a society still has to progress in the area of gender parity and integration. Out of the 134 countries surveyed in the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report 2009*, India ranks 114th on the overall index, 134th on female health and survival, 124th on educational attainment, and 127th on economic participation and opportunity — although, paradoxically, it ranks 24th on political empowerment. A comparison with the BRIC countries on economic participation of women shows India, at 42%, to be significantly behind the other three large emerging economies: Brazil at 63%, China at 69%, Russia at 74%.

And yet, while the number of professional women in India employed in corporations may still lag below the global mean, and the Asia regional mean, the last several years have seen gradual improvement as corporate India begins to realize how crucial the female talent pool is to long-term sustainability and success.

Women and Employment in India at a Glance

Adult female literacy rate **48%**

Female participation in the workforce **42%**

Female workers in urban India **20%**

Enrollment in higher education **40%**

Women employees in private companies **23%**

Women in IT companies **25%**

Women in BPO companies **50%**

Figures obtained from official Government of India and private industry sources.

A Day in the Life

How do today's Indian women professionals working for global corporations handle their work-life balance on a daily basis? Here is what a typical day looks like for a married woman in middle management with a working husband, a college-age son and a mother-in-law living in the home.

Rise at 6 a.m., get dressed, answer work and personal emails until 7:30 a.m. At 7 a.m., let in and instruct the domestic helpers who do the daily dish washing, food preparation and house cleaning. Eat a quick breakfast with husband. Leave with car pool at 8:15 a.m.

Commute takes 1–1½ hours. Reach work around 9:30 a.m. Work straight through, except for a lunch break at the company cafeteria. Leave work at 5:30 p.m. or 6 p.m., or as late as 6:30 p.m. or 7 p.m., if calls are scheduled. Commute home by shared or individual taxicab, arriving between 7 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
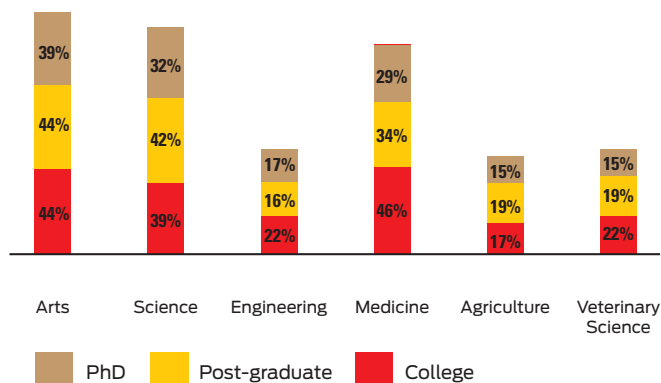
Prepare and serve dinner some time between 8–10 p.m., depending on when husband arrives home from work. Deal with miscellaneous household related matters. Log into computer again after dinner and take work and family calls from overseas time zones before retiring at 11 p.m.

While the official work week in India is 48 hours, it is common for corporate employees in the private sector to put in up to 60 hours a week. In corporations with global around-the-clock operations, the work shifts may be from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. or from 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. in order to overlap with daytime working hours in other countries.

A 2009 survey of corporate female employees by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) reported significant ill health impacts from the stress of balancing a work life of long hours and deadline pressures with daily home responsibilities, which still fall largely on the shoulders of women.

Is the glass half-full or half-empty? It depends on the perspective. The 2009 *NASSCOM Mercer Gender Inclusivity in India* report, based on a survey of over 45 leading IT-BPO companies in India, considers it "encouraging" that the percentage of female employees grew to 36% in 2008 from 35% in 2006. Likewise noted are increases at the manager level to 14% from 12%, at the director level to 7% from 5%, and at the top level to 7% from 6%.

Enrollment of Indian Women in Higher Education (2010)

Compiled by Deloitte Development LLC April 2010, used by permission.

"Not so encouraging," says Poonam Barua, Founder-Convener of Forum for Women In Leadership (WILL). "From the macro viewpoint of economics, less than 5% is not significant change. There have been modest increases at the entry level, and marginal increases at the upper levels. The bulk of Indian professional women are stuck at the mid-level." And while this "leaking pipeline" phenomenon has been documented globally, comparative figures seem to show it particularly endemic in India.

Whatever the perspective, an argument is often made in India in support of the country's potential for rapid progress on gender inclusion in spite of the relatively low benchmark numbers. India, it is said, has a "late mover" advantage: The country can go directly to diversity and inclusion as a winning business strategy without undergoing the decades of struggle of the U.S. and Europe to establish the fundamental principles of equal opportunity, non-discrimination and gender equity as moral societal imperatives. Whether this vision will turn out to be accurate or not remains to be seen, but the general tenor of corporate India's approach to the participation and advancement of women is that gender-blind meritocracy is the goal, and in large part the reality.

Indian professional women themselves tend to shy away from stances that directly challenge any built-in male-preferential biases in the corporate meritocratic system as it currently exists. They focus instead on how to navigate the existing system as successfully as possible. In the words of some of the respondents in the *Gender Diversity Benchmark for Asia*:

"Don't focus on gender and the fact that you are a woman. Focus on your strengths and who you are. Focus on your role and focus on doing really well... Try to be very much result driven and add value to the company, then you will be recognized. Forget about gender."

Indian Family And Gender Roles In Transition

The traditional Indian family structure, still prevalent in the rural areas where most of India's population resides and in India's smaller towns, is male-dominant with a clear division of gender roles. The normative pattern is men working outside the home to provide livelihood and making the important decisions, and women taking care of the household, cooking and raising the children. When women do perform remunerative outside work, the home responsibilities are still entirely theirs. Multigenerational living is still common, the usual pattern being that the daughter-in-law comes to live with her husband's family, and is expected to be subservient to her mother-in-law. In this family model, women have little autonomy or choice with regards to their personal lives and aspirations, and no financial independence. A young woman moves from being a daughter in her parents' home to being a wife in her husband's home, and never has a period of time when she is independent and on her own.

At the other extreme of India's social landscape, among the educated classes in the metro cities, one finds Indian families that are thoroughly modern and egalitarian after the manner of the contemporary West. The family is nuclear instead of multigenerational, the husband and wife are both engaged in professional careers, and the wife has many choices available to her because of her earning capacity. One can even find a few young women living independently on their own prior to getting married — or not getting married.

For the great majority of Indian women professionals, family patterns and gender roles are somewhere between the two extremes of the traditional and the ultra-modern, in a fluid state of transition as the Indian family reinvents itself for the new circumstances of the global world. In some cases, the three-generational family continues and is an asset. In-laws take on some of the housework and childrearing responsibilities, freeing women to concentrate more on their work. In other

cases, in a nuclear family situation, the professional couple may negotiate a division of home responsibilities and find outside help for childcare when they are both at work. But there are also situations where, with the birth of children, the husband and the in-laws may put pressure on the woman to stop working in order to devote herself full-time to the family.
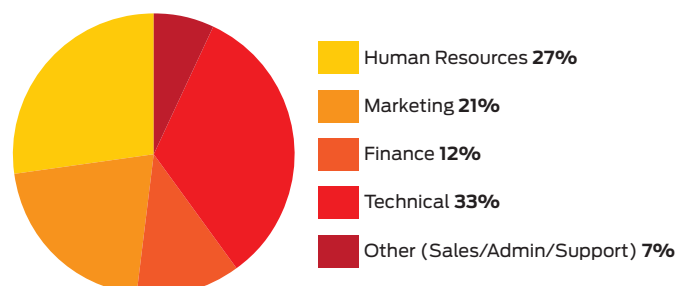
Overall, women continue to be more involved in caring for the children and the home, and men continue to have more flexibility when it comes to staying out late and favoring work requirements over home responsibilities. And though some of the housework responsibilities are lessened by the availability of domestic help, women do tend to have a "second shift" of work at home that is not shared by their husbands as a primary responsibility. The work-life balance issue is therefore particularly serious for Indian women.

According to Amita Kasbekar, Deloitte WIN leader for U.S. India offices, "Despite gaining higher education, historically, Indian women have faced a glass ceiling owing to issues of family support for working women, raising children, and home responsibilities. In recent times, this has changed. With families being more supportive and the concept of external child-care centers becoming increasingly popular, in a growing consumer economy, many more women are becoming career minded and not just taking on transient jobs to satisfy an economic need. This perhaps is apparent with the number of women I see in the workforce today as opposed to the time when I started my career. And my guess is that this trend will continue to grow."

Indian Women As Corporate Managers And Leaders

Globally, the business case for women in managerial and leadership roles has been made repeatedly. The 2007 Catalyst *Bottom Line*

Professional Women Employees in Corporate Job Functions in India

- Human Resources **27%**
- Marketing **21%**
- Finance **12%**
- Technical **33%**
- Other (Sales/Admin/Support) **7%**

Adapted from *Gender Inclusivity in India 2009* by NASSCOM Mercer.

Case in Point:
IBM India

With a workforce of 90,000 in India out of its total workforce of about 400,000, IBM is the MNC with the largest number of employees in India.

IBM has a long history of pioneering in workforce diversity and the advancement of women. Equal Pay for Equal Work was declared in 1935; IBM's first woman vice president was appointed in 1943; and its first Equal Opportunity Policy was adopted in 1953. IBM has consistently earned high rankings for diversity and inclusion.

IBM India participates in all the diversity programs and initiatives of the global corporation, and has developed some localized versions within different business units. In 2009, IBM was the winner of four of NASSCOM's Awards for Excellence in Gender Inclusivity.

Approach

IBM sees global workforce diversity as a cornerstone strategy to differentiate itself as one of the world's great companies, and as a business imperative. Diversity is viewed as a bridge between the workplace and the marketplace, helping the company be more responsive to a broader range of customers and suppliers.

The "four pillars" of diversity (equal opportunity, affirmative action, work/life balance, and cultural awareness) are equally stressed at IBM. Diversity and the advancement of women are treated as part of people management in every constituent business. Diversity goals are part of the business goals of every manager.

In IBM India, the advancement of women is one of the major areas of diversity focus. Current goals are to increase the representation of women in leadership and executive roles, and to ensure that the company is viewed by women as an employer of choice.

To create a high focus for diversity, there is a top-level Diversity Council headed by IBM India General Manager Shanker Annaswamy, with representatives from Councils that function at the level of each business. There is also a company-wide India Women's Leadership Council composed of senior women from all businesses.

Policies and programs

Some of IBM India's policies and programs to further gender inclusivity are the following:
- Required 2–3 day diversity sensitivity training for managers
- Requiring a certain % of women candidates in searches for senior positions
- Women-only recruiting events
- Campaigns to bring women back to work after periods of leave
- Formal mentoring programs, including group mentoring, speed mentoring, and one-on-one
- Pairing high potential women with senior executive sponsors
- Allowing employees to go to work at the IBM office nearest their home
- Home connectivity provided to most employees to allow work from home
- Streamlined transport system with radio networks to address safety concerns
- Affinity network groups for various diversity constituencies

Results

IBM India judges its success by the large number of awards it has received for diversity and gender inclusion initiatives. The Women's Leadership Council is seen as giving senior women a company-wide visibility they would not otherwise have. The passion from the top for gender inclusivity is seen as having a cascading effect throughout the organization. At 40%, the recruitment of women almost mirrors the gender ratio in India's colleges.

Continuing challenges

IBM India's continuing rapid recruitment creates challenges in terms of integrating newcomers into the IBM culture around diversity and gender inclusivity.

Socio-cultural challenges (e.g., prevailing social patterns around marriage, childbirth, raising children, caring for elders, household responsibilities, following the husband to a new work location) continue to have an impact of the careers of IBM India's women professionals.

Case in Point:
Infosys

With 113,796 employee worldwide, Infosys Technologies, Ltd. is India's largest IT company, and one of the most respected companies in India and globally. It has been a pioneer among Indian corporations in the area of inclusion and diversity. Infosys was the first winner of the NASSCOM-India Today Woman Corporate Award for excellence in gender inclusivity.

Infosys launched its diversity journey in 2003 with the establishment of the Infosys Women Inclusivity Network (IWIN), an internal peer counseling and advisory network charged with championing a gender sensitive work environment. This was followed by the creation of a dedicated corporate Diversity Office in 2006.

Approach

Gender inclusion is framed by Infosys as a key strategy for organizational sustainability and business advantage. The focus is on tapping the female labor pool and the strengths that a more diverse work force can bring.

Support comes from the very top. N. R. Narayana Murthy, founder and chairman of the board, explicitly articulates the vision of having more women at all levels in the company, and serves as chief mentor of the IWIN initiative. Additionally, the company's COO serves as chief sponsor. The Diversity Office reports directly into the Infosys board of directors.

From the board on down, inclusion metrics are built into the scorecards of leaders and managers, using special internally designed Inclusivity Index tool. Quarterly diversity dashboards in all business units track data on progress. Multiple communication channels and forums at the board, senior management and employee levels are used to spread and re-enforce awareness and the vision.

Policies and programs

Infosys has developed a whole menu of policies, support systems and developmental programs designed to promote gender inclusion and help women in their careers. They include:

- Gender sensitivity and diversity training
- Diversity Councils in every business unit
- Sexual harassment policies
- Work-life balance policies: flex hours, part-time work, telecommuting, sabbaticals, satellite office locations
- Tracking promotions to ensure non-discrimination
- Gender-balanced recruitment and promotion panels
- Special skill building, training and mentoring programs for women
- Peer and professional counseling for women
- Women's affinity groups and portals
- Participation in external women's forums

Results

Between 2004-05 and 2008-09, women in the Infosys workforce increased to 32% from 23%. Retention increased to 76% from 52%, and the percentage of women returning to work from maternity increased to 83% in 2009 from 59% in 2006."

Continuing challenges

Infosys works on a global delivery model, with shifts that can include night-time work, frequent travel and occasional relocation. This business model creates special challenges for female employees, especially those married with children.

There are also special challenges relating to recruiting female talent from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, including tier-two and tier-three cities or rural backgrounds.

report showed that companies with more female board members outperformed in their return on equity, sales and invested capital — a link that was shown to hold across industries. A 2009 study at the Ceram School of Management in France found that companies on the French CAC 40 Stock Exchange with more women on their boards also tended to perform better.

Women in Corporate Employment in Selected Countries by Job Level

	Brazil	India	Japan	Norway	U.S.A.
Entry level	16%	19%	13%	19%	40%
Middle management	13%	15%	9%	22%	26%
Senior management	16%	9%	8%	21%	28%
Boards of Directors	12%	8%	3%	29%	14%
Total representation	**35%**	**23%**	**24%**	**36%**	**52%**

Adapted from *The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010* by the World Economic Forum.

In India, an *Economic Times* study in 2008 found a similar link, when figures revealed that Indian companies headed by women grew by a compounded annual growth rate of almost 35% compared with the 21% average rate of companies registered on the Bombay Stock Exchange.

In order to understand what key skill sets women bring to the running of organizations and corporations in India, the WILL Forum in India and KPMG partnered in 2009 on a survey of 114 men and women in senior management roles in both public and private sector enterprises. The study identified distinct management capabilities and leadership styles more characteristic of women then of men:

● *A tendency to be fair and transparent in communications*
● *A tendency to drive an inclusive approach and build ecosystems that nurture talent*
● *Intuitive crisis management*
● *A calculated and prudent approach to decisions and risk taking*
● *Adeptness at managing teams and client relationships*
● *Leading ethically with values and by example*
● *A persuasive leadership style that enables long-lasting relationships*
● *A tendency to be self-critical of their own strengths and weaknesses*
● *A tendency to rebound gracefully from setbacks*

These findings are in line with research elsewhere that shows that women tend to be more adept at collaborative and situational leadership, with better skills at negotiation and

managing conflict, besides being more long-term rather than transactional in their orientation.

Women in India may be the champions and representatives of a new model of management leadership that may be more suited to the complexities and subtleties of today's global world. "Corporate India seems to be working on the traditional definition of hierarchical leadership," says Poonam Barua, "while Indian women professionals are definitely on the rise and paving the way for redefining leadership for future generations."

While this is the future vision among India's small numbers of leading corporate women, the day-to-day reality on the ground for the bulk of Indian professional women, whose careers languish at the middle management level, is the need to function within the old "think manager — think male" paradigm and pattern of managerial behavior.

Success Stories and Role Models

Corporate India and the press are enamored with the great Indian business women success icons. Indeed, over the past 30 years, a handful of remarkable Indian women have broken through the gender barrier to become the leaders of major business enterprises. Some are self-made entrepreneurs, like Kiran Majumdar-Shaw, the founder of India's largest biopharmaceutical firm, Biocom, and since 2004 the richest woman in India. Others like Neelam Dhawan, currently the Director of Hewlett Packard in India, have risen through the ranks in major global corporations. Yet others, like Vidya Manohar Chhabria, Chairperson of the Dubai-based $2 billion Jumbo Group, are women from the families that own the companies.

The existence of these high-powered trailblazers is no doubt an inspiration to young Indian women aspiring to professional success in business and the corporate world. They join the other famous Indian women whose names are household words: the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi; Indian Congress Party President Sonia Gandhi; President of India Pratibha Devisingh Patil; Kiran Bedi, the first woman to join the Indian Police Service; and Kalpana Chawla, the first woman astronaut of Indian descent, who died in the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster.

But there is a problem with iconic figures. They can no doubt inspire, but their stories are miles away from the daily challenges faced by ordinary women striving to make their way into entry-level jobs and careers in organizations that still do not have many

The Icons: Leading Indian Women in Business

Vidya Manohar Chhabria
Chairperson of the Dubai-based $2 billion Jumbo Group

Neelam Dhawan
Managing Director of Hewlett Packard India; formerly Managing Director of Microsoft India

Indu Jain
Chairman of Bennett, Coleman & Co., India's largest media group

Naina Lal Kidwai
Country Head and Group General Manager, HSBC India, and first woman to head the India operations of a foreign bank

Chanda Kochhar
Managing Director and CEO of ICICI, India's largest private bank

Kiran Majumdar-Shaw
Founder, Chairman & Managing Director of Biocom, India's largest biopharmaceutical firm, and India's richest woman since 2004

Sulajja Firodia Motwani
Joint Managing Director of Kinetic Engineering, the flagship company of the $500 million Firodia Group

Indra Nooyi
Chairperson and CEO of PepsiCo, number one in *Fortune* magazine's 2009 list of the 50 most powerful women in business

Preeta Reddy
Managing Director of Apollo Hospitals, one of the largest healthcare conglomerates in India

Akhila Srinivasan
Managing Director of Sriram Investments, part of the $7.5 billion Sriram Group

women in visible leadership positions. When Indian professional women articulate a need for more role models, what they are really talking about is role models within their organization who have made the journey from entry level to senior management.

The existence of a few high-profile and highly successful business and professional women also gives rise to a false logic that questions the need for any kind of affirmative measures to support the advancement of women. "In this country," the thinking goes, "which has had a woman prime minister, and has women like PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi, we don't need any special programs for women. They are perfectly capable of making it on their own." Today's aspiring young professional women themselves are often wary of asking for anything that might imply preferential treatment, despite the fact that they do indeed face many obstacles to success that are not there for their male peers.

Best Practices For Global Corporations Operating In India

In the few years since gender inclusion and the advancement of women have become priorities of MNCs operating in India, a considerable body of best practices has evolved. Most of these are policies and programs adopted as global rollouts of parent company initiatives. Others are localized practices established to address region-specific business and social-cultural issues. Similar practices are also being instituted in some leading Indian global corporations.

Two comprehensive sources on best practices in India are the Forum for Women in Leadership's *WILL Handbook* and the recommendations section of the NASSCOM Mercer 2009 *Gender Inclusivity in India* report. The NASSCOM Mercer report provides a helpful high-level framework by outlining best practices for individuals, organizations, government, and communities, and suggests a phased adoption of practices. The *WILL Handbook*

Practices and Policies in Selected Countries

	Brazil	India	Japan	Norway	U.S.A.
Target setting	0%	38%	52%	33%	100%
Tracking salaries	16%	4%	0%	24%	75%
Parental leave	33%	54%	100%	100%	75%
Re-entry programs	27%	33%	76%	18%	17%
Return to position of same or higher responsibility	38%	21%	70%	77%	75%
Childcare support	31%	43%	56%	22%	50%
Work-life balance polities	47%	51%	77%	85%	100%
Women-specific mentorship programs	28%	59%	34%	36%	96%

Adapted from *The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010* by the World Economic Forum.

Case in Point:
Deloitte U.S. India

Deloitte's Women's Initiative (WIN), now in its 17th year, began in India in September 2006, with the aim to "unleash talent, create opportunity, and spark a commitment to excellence." WIN's focus is on increasing the ratio of women employees in our India offices and the advancement of our current professionals through leadership development, flexibility, networking, mentoring, and creating awareness about the organization's women-friendly policies.

Approach

Deloitte has successfully integrated the advancement of women into its DNA. The vision is to drive marketplace growth and create a culture where the best women (and men) choose to be. Gender equity and the full realization of the potential of both genders are seen as a business imperative, not just the right thing to do.

While the name WIN is still used to describe the initiative, the focus is not exclusively on women. It's not about how women are different or have different needs, but on how to best leverage the talent of all professionals. For example, special mentoring or leadership development programs are provided to both women and men and incorporate learnings that can help all professionals succeed based on their personal needs.

Policies and programs

Deloitte's flagship WIN-related program, Mass Career Customization, is the most far-reaching in its impact. It offers a "corporate lattice" as opposed to a "corporate ladder" approach to professional careers, enabling women and men to customize their career journeys to their individual needs and circumstances over time. Originally pioneered in the United States and later in the U.S. India offices, it is now being rolled out internally across a number of countries.

As much as possible, programs, support systems and policies are common throughout Deloitte, both in the U.S. and India. Some examples for U.S. India offices include:

- WIN Council which includes members from all business units and supporting services
- Sexual harassment committee made up of both woman and men that reviews all reported harassment situations
- Hotline that allows all professionals to confidentially report ethical matters

- Virtual connectivity such as laptop computers, PDAs, wireless computer cards and home internet allows professionals to have the tools to work away from the office
- Web communities that allow both women and men to network and share perspectives and ideas around career-life fit
- Career-life fit options developed by individuals depending on their business and personal needs
- Door-to-door night-time taxi transportation
- Referral program to identify women candidates for management and senior management roles
- Apprentice program which aligns young women with senior leadership
- Tracking hiring and promotion numbers to focus on equity
- External support of India women forums

Results

In the 17 years since its inception, WIN is seen as having strengthened the Deloitte culture, values and brand. It has helped foster a more inclusive environment and has evolved into a powerful engine for innovation.

In the Deloitte U.S. India offices, 33% of Deloitte professionals, 48% of campus hires, and 32% of experienced hires are women as of 2010. From 2008 to 2010 the average percentage of women at and above the U.S. Manager level has risen from 4% to 16%.

Continuing challenges

The organization is concerned by the attrition rates of women employees resulting from cultural challenges of women employees getting married and relocating to their husband's home, or taking care of family members, and the organization is working to facilitate their re-entry.

There are also challenges around taking advantage of the many informal mentoring and professional development opportunities Deloitte offers and the expectation of many Indian women that structured networking and mentoring paths will be laid out for them. Finally, as flexibility options are still nascent in India, Deloitte looks forward to implementing new career development programs, identifying more women for senior roles, and providing opportunities that allow them to reach their own aspirations.

Case in Point:
Johnson Controls India

Operating in 150 countries, Johnson Controls is a global industrial technology company with three core lines of business: Power Solutions, Automotive Experience, and Building Efficiency.

The company has been a leader in supplier diversity, named for six consecutive years to the Billion Dollar Roundtable of companies that spend more than $1 billion annually with women and minority suppliers.

Johnson Controls India Private Ltd., a wholly based subsidiary of the U.S.-based Johnson Controls Inc.'s Building Efficiency business, has been in India since 1996.

Approach

Johnson Controls approaches diversity and inclusion as both a philosophical principle and a business strategy. Philosophically, the company's success is defined by the triple bottom line of economic prosperity, environmental stewardship and social responsibility. As a competitive business strategy, it considers it imperative to tap into the new, diverse global workforce and to have the workforce mirror the company's markets.

Four corporate goals have been set: (1) hiring, promoting and retaining diverse talent, (2) incorporating diversity and inclusion in all people processes, (3) creating a culture of inclusion and engagement, and (4) strengthening personal relationships.

Workforce diversity is seen as strategically linked to supplier diversity, community outreach, government relations, and public affairs.

Organizationally, diversity and inclusion efforts are led by a Diversity and Public Affairs Office reporting into the Executive Operating Team. Execution and ownership are owned locally in the business units. While the principles and broad strategies are company-wide, latitude is given for localization in the different regional cultures of the world.

Policies and programs

Johnson Controls has a number of global programs to track diversity and inclusion metrics, as well as specialized women and minority mentor and affinity networks.

In India, key policies and programs include the following:

- Addressing diversity and inclusion in every relevant leadership meeting and communication
- A 50-50 job applicant pool policy
- Building teams that reflect the regional, community and economic diversity of India
- Making diversity and inclusion a line item in performance reviews
- Flexible policy on how much work can be done from home
- Zero tolerance for sexual harassment
- Ensuring a safe work environment for women, particularly for night shifts and late night transport
- Family gatherings to allow spouse and other relatives to see the environment and culture of the company

Results

In the U.S., female and minority executives increased by 22% and 25%, respectively, between 2004 and 2009. In India, the overall female workforce increased from 5% to 15% between 2007 and 2009. The number of women in the enabling and support functions jumped from 25% to 55%. A modest increase from 10% to 11.25% was achieved in the core business and technical functions.

In the same time period, the number of women and minority proprietary suppliers grew from 25% to 51%, though the increase in women and minority suppliers as a whole only went from 10% to 11.25%. These results are seen as expressing a momentum that will only grow with time. The target for the future is to achieve a workforce in India that is 35% to 40% women.

Continuing challenges

The principal challenge Johnson Controls faces that its industry has not traditionally attracted women to the same degree as the software industry or light manufacturing.

The second major challenge is the company's projected rapid expansion in global workforce from 140,000 in 2010 to 200,000 by 2012. This presents special challenges for effective diversity recruiting in general, and the 50-50 job applicant pool policy in particular.

organizes best practices into a number of useful categories: Enabler Policies, Career Advancement Policies, Family Friendly Policies, Work Life Balance, Diversity Initiatives, Equal Employment Opportunity, Employee Welfare, and Safety for Women.

The *Corporate Gender Gap 2010* surveys eight foundational corporate practices for gender inclusion and their prevalence globally in the 20 countries covered by the study. The differences between countries are striking. The most notable finding about India is that salary tracking is very low (4% of corporations), which reflects the fact that salary equity is not generally viewed as a problem by corporate India. The second significant finding about India is that women-specific mentorship programs are relatively high (59% of Indian corporations, compared with 34% in Japan and 28% in Brazil).

The best practices and recommendations found in these sources, and the practices reported by individual MNCs and Indian corporations recognized as leaders in gender inclusion converge into what is gradually emerging as a state-of-the-art consensus about what needs to be done if an organization in India is serious about gender inclusion.

Four case studies of best-in-class corporations in India are included in this report: IMB India, Deloitte, Infosys, and Johnson Controls India. Each has its distinctive philosophy and approach to advancing gender inclusion and the advancement of women. Each embeds the inclusion and diversity imperative somewhat differently in its organizational structure. Some emphasize work-life balance policies, others put more emphasis on gender diversity sensitization. Some emphasize women-only programs and affinity groups, others less so. Some put hard numbers on their diversity hiring and promotion targets, others do not. But on the whole, the programs and policies with which the different corporations are experimenting have a great deal of similarity, reflecting the fact that these are the solutions that seem to work:

1. **Senior leadership engagement:** Proactive, unequivocal and high-visibility commitment and modeling from the top for the principle of gender inclusion and the advancement of women as both "the right thing to do" and "imperative for business success."

2. **A clearly articulated approach and overall strategy:** Ensuring that the whole organization operates from a consistent philosophy of how gender inclusion and the advancement of women are to be viewed and achieved.

Three Generations Three Career Profiles

Since the 1990s, when India began on its road to economic liberalization, changes in the opportunities and aspirations of educated middle class women have changed rapidly. Common differences in career profiles mark women of different generations.

"Boomer" post-independence generation (born between 1947 and 1964)
Degrees held are predominantly Bachelors of Arts or Bachelors of Commerce. Many educated women did not pursue professional careers after marriage. Those who obtained employment did so primarily in education and government service, which more readily accommodated traditional family obligations. Lifelong employment with a single employer is the norm.

Generation "X" (born between 1961 and 1981)
Among this group, a few more women have chosen to undertake degrees in technology, science and engineering. Small numbers have obtained professional employment in technical fields in the corporate world, as well as opportunities for global assignments. Opportunities in the business process outsourcing (BPO) field have opened avenues for women with liberal arts or commerce degrees. Aspirations for personal accomplishment and success have created some pressure on traditional marriage and family arrangements. For large numbers of women in this age group, the ability to focus on their career has been dependent on the degree of family support received.

Generation "Y" – the "Millennials" (born since 1980)
Among younger women, enrollment in higher education is moving toward parity with that of men, and women are pursuing degrees in all fields. The number of women in corporate employment is growing significantly, especially in technical jobs. Women are also moving into middle management. Aspirations are fueled by a new confidence, the desire of families to increase their living standards, a labor market that needs women's skills, and changing corporate attitudes towards the inclusion and leveraging of female talent. There is an expectation of job mobility and that families will learn to adjust.

3. **Implementation of roles and accountability structures:** Establishing clear roles, responsibilities and deliverables for strategy execution at all levels of the organization.

4. **Multiple communication channels:** Use of a wide range of internal and external communication channels to convey the company's commitment to gender inclusion and the advancement of women.

5. **Non-discrimination and equal opportunity policies:** Putting in place the fundamental tools for ensuring fairness and obtaining redress.

6. **Affirmative target setting and results tracking:** Determining quantitative goals in respect to women and measuring success in achieving them.

7. **Proactive recruitment and promotion processes:** Going beyond passive support of meritocracy to actively seeking out the available female talent.

8. **Skills development, leadership training and mentoring:** Supplementing general employee development programs with gender-specific training programs for women.

9. **Gender/diversity sensitization:** Developing in all employees an awareness of gender/diversity issues and an inclusion mindset.

10. **Networking and forums for women:** Developing and encouraging the participation of women in both internal and external networks and forums.

11. **Work-life balance and family friendly policies:** Adopting policies that will make it less difficult for women to simultaneously manage their professional work and their family obligations.

12. **Employee welfare and safety policies:** Establishing measures to address women-specific welfare and safety needs.

Conclusion

For corporations in India looking to advance on their journey towards gender inclusion and to fully leverage India's female professional talent, the demographic trends are clear, the business case is irrefutable, and the means are already largely available.

Beyond the means, however, there are three essential ingredients for success without which the best initiatives are unlikely to meet their stated goals:

- Sincere and unequivocal commitment from the top leadership levels of the India operations

- The organizational capacity to execute effectively on transformative people management initiatives

- The wisdom to look to the company's Indian professional women themselves for guidance and leadership in determining the mix of policies, support systems and programs that will best further their aspirations and overcome organizational and societal obstacles

Global corporations — both MNCs and Indian corporations — can be significant enablers of the historic change in gender relations that is so clearly underway in India. Many have already embarked on this journey, others will join in as the business imperative increases.

But while pursuing gender inclusion and the development of India's copious female talent does indeed make good business sense, it is something even more important: it is a key element of good corporate global citizenship — being "part of the solution rather than part of the problem" of overcoming old gender inequities and moving towards a future in which the economic participation of Indian women is equal to their numbers and their abilities.

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Working Mother Media

Working Mother magazine reaches 2 million readers and is the only national magazine for career-committed mothers; WorkingMother.com brings to the Web home and career information, advice and a broad range of solutions daily. This year marks the 25th anniversary of *Working Mother*'s signature research initiative, Working Mother 100 Best Companies, the most important benchmark for work-life practices in corporate America. Working Mother Media, a division of Bonnier Corp., includes the National Association for Female Executives, Diversity Best Practices, the WorkLife Congress and the Multicultural Women's Conference and Leadership Summits. Working Mother Media's mission is to serve as a champion of culture change.

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Dr. Karine Schomer is an expert in the cross-cultural and change management dimensions of managing a global workforce, with special expertise relating to India.

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