



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP ROLE IN ECONOMY SECTOR - GS I, II AND III MAINS

Q. Representation of women in corporate roles has been especially stagnating for long, discuss the factors hurdling women's leadership in the economy. (10 marks, 150 words)

News: *Proportion of women in leadership roles stagnating in India: LinkedIn report*

What's in the news?

- Representation of women in corporate roles — which has for long been below 30% in India — has been especially stagnating, and even possibly declining in the post-pandemic years, according to a report by professional social networking platform LinkedIn, ‘Women in Leadership in Corporate India’.

Factors Impacting Progress of Women:

1. Cultural Beliefs and Gender Roles:

- Entrenched cultural beliefs play a significant role in perpetuating gender disparities.
- Women are often seen as primary caregivers, and societal norms stigmatise them for working outside the home.

2. National Jobs Crisis:

- A national jobs crisis exacerbates the gender gap.
- Economic challenges, coupled with limited job opportunities, disproportionately affect women.
- The lack of suitable employment options discourages women from seeking work.

3. Demographic Implications:

- India’s fast-growing population can be an asset or a liability.
- If women are left behind in the workforce, it becomes a demographic liability.
- Ensuring women’s employment is crucial for sustainable growth.

4. Unequal Access to Resources:

- Women have limited access to networks, skill development, and mentorship.
- Organizations must create equitable pathways for women’s career advancement.

5. Pay Gaps and Glass Ceilings:

- Unjustifiable pay gaps persist, hindering women’s economic empowerment.
- Glass ceilings prevent women from reaching leadership positions.

6. Resume Gaps and Skills Obsolescence:

- Many women take career breaks due to family commitments, including child care and homemaking.
- These breaks can lead to gaps in their resumes and potential skill obsolescence.



- Re-entering the workforce after a break can be challenging, especially when technology and industry practices evolve rapidly.

7. Lack of Confidence and Stereotypes:

- Women often face self-doubt and lack of confidence, which can hinder their pursuit of leadership roles.
- Stereotypes about women's abilities and suitability for leadership positions persist, affecting their advancement.

8. Bias and Discrimination:

- Subtle biases and discrimination exist in workplaces, impacting women's career progression.
- The 'broken rung' phenomenon refers to the difficulty women face in moving from entry-level to managerial positions.
- Gender-based stereotypes can influence performance evaluations, promotions, and opportunities.

9. Household Responsibilities:

- Balancing work and family responsibilities remains a significant challenge.
- Women often shoulder a disproportionate share of household chores and caregiving, affecting their availability for work-related commitments.

10. Lack of Support and Mentorship:

- Women benefit from mentorship and sponsorship, but they often lack access to such support.
- Organisations need to create formal mentoring programs and provide guidance to aspiring women leaders.