

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT: *This tool is a first step in understanding how India's people and cultures operate, and is aimed at those with little or no knowledge of India today. This document provides a snapshot overview of India's legislative, societal, and work culture differences.*

First Step: India Overview

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CATALYST INFORMATION CENTER

The world's largest democracy, India is also one of the fastest growing economies and is poised to become a global economic leader.¹ The past two decades have seen social changes in this traditionally male-dominated society—one where women are expected to marry, raise children, and take care of the household²—which have created many new opportunities for women in the workforce. Despite modernization, India is a country with patriarchal religious customs that continue to impact a woman's rights more than the many progressive gender rights laws it passes.³ It is also a country of complex diversity of language (22 recognized by the constitution, and over 418 spoken), religion (four major religions), ethnicity (three major and thousands of smaller ethnic and tribal groups),⁴ and culture, where even most Indians cannot keep track of the many customs. There is not just one India—it is a complicated and often contradictory nation.⁵ This document provides a first step overview of work, culture, and gender in India. >>

India is the World's Largest Democracy

Government: The modern Republic of India was created when the territories gained independence from the British in 1947 and a constitution was ratified in 1950.⁶ It is a Federal Republic with a Parliament, Prime Minister, President as well as two Houses: the Council of States (*Rajya Sabha*) and the House of the People (*Lok Sabha*).⁷

Women currently represent 11.0 percent of the *Lok Sabha* and 10.6 percent of the *Rajya Sabha*.⁸

Due to India's tradition of strict social hierarchy from the influence of Hinduism and other patriarchal religions, the Indian concept of equality differs from that of the United States in that equality in India is seen as collectivist, while the United States views it as individualist.⁹ The Indian constitution addresses this historical inequality with Articles 14-18, "Fundamental Rights—Right to Equality," which protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of caste.¹⁰ The views of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a prominent politician and jurist, were influential when drafting the constitution and particularly those articles related to equality. To Ambedkar, the caste system was a social construct created by Brahmins (high-caste Hindus), and an impediment to social justice. One of his most important contributions to the new constitution was the attempt at caste-reform through reservation policies or quotas for government positions to favor "scheduled castes", i.e., previously disenfranchised lower caste minorities, such as *dalits* (once called untouchables).¹¹ Therefore Indians today already have some familiarity with quotas in the public sector.¹²

The Indian constitution guarantees gender equality, and it also guarantees religious freedom. However, gender rights guaranteed by the constitution do not extend over religious personal laws, which often give fewer rights to women.¹³ For instance, in order to respect diversity, Muslims, Hindus, and Christians may adhere to their religious personal laws in family matters such as marriage or divorce.¹⁴ And while there are many progressive gender-specific laws, they are often not implemented due to the lack of staff or funding necessary for oversight and enforcement.¹⁵

Women in Politics: India is one of the few nations to elect a women leader (Indira Gandhi) and a woman president (Pratibha Patil). However, women in general have low representation in politics at all levels. India has quotas for local politics, and a bill drafted in 1996 proposes expanding these quotas (or reservations) for women to one-third of seats in government at the national, state, and local levels. The bill passed the upper house, but is currently stalled in the lower house. The UPA government is committed to passing this legislation and is hoping to vote on the bill as soon as possible in the Lok Sabha. Upon passing the Lok Sabha, the bill must be approved by at least half of India's state legislatures and then signed by the president. The law has encountered resistance because opponents want provisions to ensure the bill will not favor only upper-caste women or Hindus, and also would like to reserve additional seats for scheduled castes/scheduled tribes (SC/ST, people from historically disadvantaged castes or indigenous tribes). The conflict around this bill is illustrative of the conflict within India today as advocates seek better representation and equal opportunities for people differentiated by caste, religion, ethnic group, and gender.¹⁶

The *Panchayati raj* is a five-person elected village council that manages local affairs. The 73rd Amendment to the constitution reserves 33 percent of these seats for women in an attempt to bypass discrimination.¹⁷ A million women have been elected since the passage of this amendment in 1992.¹⁸ Four states have increased the quota for women *panchayat* seats to 50 percent.¹⁹ After two years serving on the village council, elected women leaders gain confidence in their abilities to execute their responsibilities, and often plan on running again for office. In addition, including women in leadership not only increases political participation of women, but also ensures that issues important to women are raised.²⁰

Khap panchayats, the traditional all-male village councils located in rural northern India (common in Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh and parts of Rajasthan), have been ruled unconstitutional, yet still exert a strong influence in northern village life.²¹ They settle disputes quickly and set unofficial laws on marriage and other issues that impact women's daily lives. The *Khap's* rhetoric and rulings have even

promoted honor killings (reported as suicides) in the region.²² There is a wide gulf between modern India and traditional India, as well as north and south, and rural and urban. The influence of *Khap panhayats* is just one example of the vast differences in the lives of contemporary Indian women across India.²³

**If women were given more opportunities in the workforce,
India's GDP could jump another 4 percent.**²⁴

India has emerged as an economic power over the past decade

Economy: India's economy combines both private and public ownership of economic enterprises; a loosening of the strict government control over foreign trade in the 1990s has contributed to the growth of businesses.²⁵ Government-owned companies are an important part of the Indian economy, whether at the central, state or local level, and include such varied industries as mining, oil, financial services, and transportation. In 2007-2008, government-owned companies (SOEs) made up 23 percent of the Bombay Stock Exchange.²⁶

In the 1990s, in response to a financial crisis, India liberalized its economy and through deregulation opened up international trade markets, reformed the tax system, and increased privatization.²⁷ Today India's 2011-2012 real GDP is \$4.784 trillion, with a growth rate of 6.5 percent and a projected GDP of 5,967 trillion in 2020.²⁸ The average GDP growth between 2001 and 2011 was 7.5 percent.²⁹ While poverty still remains widespread, between 2009 and 2010 rural poverty declined 8 percent and urban poverty by close to 5 percent.³⁰

This economic growth has currently slowed to its lowest rate since 2002-2003,³¹ consistent with the global financial slowdown, and the low participation of women in the workforce is a contributing factor.³² Economic growth depends on the participation of a full labor force (including both men and women) and India's lack of gender balance in economic participation remains still one of the worst in the world. The International Labour Organization (ILO) ranks India 120th out of 131 countries examined for women's

labor force participation rate, and the World Economic Forum rates India 123rd out of 134 countries.³³

The 2010 workforce participation rate was 26.1 percent for women in rural India, and only 13.8 percent for women in urban areas.³⁴

There is much discussion about India Inc., with the service sector leading this economic growth and contributing more than half of India's output, yet including less than one third of its workforce. However, India still remains predominantly an agricultural society.³⁵ Once again it's important to remember the two Indias: the educated white-collar workers who have been able to take advantage of globalization, and the majority of Indians living in poverty who rely on the informal sector and agriculture for employment.³⁶ It is interesting to note that the agricultural labor force participation rate has actually increased since the 1980s.³⁷

India is a diverse country with a long history of blending cultures and traditions

While the word India suggests the idea of one unified nation, it is actually a country of many paradoxes, dramatic contrasts and differences.³⁸ India is diverse geographically and composed of 28 states and 7 union territories, and has a 4000-year-old history of blending cultures and traditions.³⁹ The constitution declares that India's official language is Hindi, yet each state may adopt any one of the local languages OR Hindi as the official language, while the language of the Supreme Court is English.⁴⁰ In fact, while Hindi may be the most spoken language in India, English is the required language for education, economic, and social advancement, and is also the language of corporate India (i.e., the language to be spoken with customers), but not necessarily the language used around the water cooler.⁴¹ Because the spoken language varies by region or village, there is much discussion in corporate India about the benefits of one language across organizations, with the understanding that restricting the diversity of language may also stifle creativity or innovation.⁴²

For organizations operating in India, this social diversity creates opportunities, but also significant challenges.⁴³ Conflict can arise from long-standing loyalties to religion, caste, language, or ethnicity, to name a few.⁴⁴ These differences can advance diverse and creative thinking, but must be leveraged and promoted through strong company policies that further cultural sensitivity.⁴⁵

There is not one homogeneous culture in India.

The number of religions, languages, and even the caste system all shape this diverse country.

Gender: India is a patriarchal country where women face unequal access in many areas including education, job advancement, and political power. Change for women has been slow, but modernization, industrialization, and pressure from the women's movement have helped make gains.⁴⁶ India's culture still prefers sons over daughters, which has led to an overall gender imbalance: 940 women per 1000 men, and in some states as few as 618 women per 1000 men.⁴⁷

Family: Social interdependence is a key part of Indian culture, and all interactions follow strict protocol in relation to hierarchy, respect, and honor.⁴⁸ The patrilineal extended family plays a significant role, especially among Hindus, and is the basic social unit. After marriage, women are still expected to live with their in-laws in the traditional family structure, and the wife has the least authority of all the adults in her new household. However, this extended family is helpful with childcare, not only in rural areas but also in cities where strong family connections can even help women obtain jobs.⁴⁹ Today among the urban, educated classes, marriage is more egalitarian, with dual-earning couples living in nuclear families. Most professional Indian women live somewhere in-between these two extremes.⁵⁰

Both the Hindu Marriage Act and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act suggest a woman should be 18 for marriage by stating that a marriage of a woman younger than 18 would be void, although not illegal, adding to the confusion caused by the lack of a consistent legal marriage age.⁵¹ The mean age today is 20, although 28 percent of women still get married between 15 and 19 years of age.⁵² This varies greatly between states, as well as between urban and rural areas. For instance, over 60 percent of 20- to

24-year-old women in Bihar and Jharkh were married before the age of 18, compared to less than 13 percent in states such as Maniur, Hamachal Pradesh, and Goa.⁵³ Even in modern India, elders often arrange marriages based on caste, religion, and social status.⁵⁴

**More than 80 percent of Indians agree with the statement,
“changing diapers, giving kids a bath, and feeding kids are the
mother’s responsibility”⁵⁵**

Religion: India was founded as a secular republic and partitioned along religious lines by the departing British, with Pakistan emerging as the new Muslim state. But there continue to be violent conflicts between Hindus and Muslims in parts of India.⁵⁶ Overall, religion in India has more impact on a woman’s daily life than the complex legal framework set up to protect gender rights. The dominant religion, Hinduism, has influenced Indian society for over 3,000 years.⁵⁷ Many Hindu cultural beliefs such as male dominance, caste purity, and chastity continue to hold women back despite the progress of modernization.⁵⁸ Over 80 percent of the population follows Hinduism’s customs and religious laws, and another 13 percent follow Muslims’ *Sharia* law; both of these can ignore government legislation passed to improve the rights of women.⁵⁹ For instance, in the rural north, many Muslim and Hindu women follow “*purdah*”, (adopted by some Hindus following a period of Muslim rule), where 80-85 percent of these women remain in their homes and therefore do not exercise their constitutional rights to education, work, etc.⁶⁰ Women in northern cities, the south, and large towns have much more freedom of movement.⁶¹

Class Diversity: India’s social and religious histories are intertwined with Hinduism, the dominant religion, in which once *varnas* (caste), or *jatis* (community), is rooted within the faith. The social inequality created by *varnas* and *jatis* is most apparent in the occupations at the top and at the bottom of the social caste system, but not as apparent in the middle.⁶² Today there are four major social castes, and within those there are several thousand sub-categories of castes.⁶³ Yet the basic model of four castes does not capture the strict contemporary social hierarchies which include wealth, region, power, and gender.⁶⁴ Caste is still important in India, but today it is more

important in rural India than in cities, and more important in selecting a spouse than in daily personal or professional interactions.

India has a program of affirmative action called a reservation system for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) to remedy existing inequalities as well as provide fairness before the law. To try to equalize these social imbalances, the constitutional quota dictates that 22 percent of seats in the lower house of parliament and state legislatures, as well as government jobs, are reserved for SCs and STs. In addition, a recent constitutional amendment increased the number of seats in state-funded educational institutions to over 49 percent for SC/STs.⁶⁵ Although the constitution bans the discrimination against *dalits*, many *dalits* in rural India still endure persecution.⁶⁶ And crimes against the *dalits* are actually on the increase from simple social discrimination such as not being permitted to take clean water from the village well or being allowed to wear clean clothing to rape, torture, poisoning and other physical abuse. Despite the laws set up to protect scheduled castes, the police are not responsive to *dalit* complaints. The number of official cases against the SCs by non-SCs and non-STs in India during 2003 to 2009 was as high as 203,576.⁶⁷

In 2006, the private sector pledged to increase the representation of SC/ST in an attempt to improve affirmative action and prevent a constitutional amendment for mandatory quotas. In March of 2013, a coordination committee chaired by the secretary to the prime minister declared that industry's performance had not showed improvement since the pledge.⁶⁸

In the south (Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu), people have higher incomes, are better educated, live longer lives and have fewer children. At the beginning of the 20th century, people from lower castes in the south started political protests against upper-caste domination, and so they are much further ahead on the equality journey and were better positioned to prosper when globalization arrived. The resulting wealth gap further divides the north and south of India.⁶⁹

Regional Differences: Approximately 30 percent of India's population now lives in urban areas and produces more than two-thirds of India's GDP.⁷⁰ Over 39 percent of men moved to urban areas for employment, compared to 4 percent of women. Less than 2 percent of women moved to an urban area for education, while over 55 percent moved to an urban area for marriage.⁷¹ The majority of Indian population still lives in rural communities. But by 2030, a projected 40 percent of India's population will have moved to the cities, which will double the urban populations.⁷²

Urban India, with its modern industries, media, and universities, is at the center of the economic boom, while rural India is traditional and has not kept up with the many changes seen in the cosmopolitan centers.⁷³ McKinsey reports that 70 percent of new jobs and 70 percent of Indian GDP will be created in India's cities between now and 2030.⁷⁴ This will increase the economic inequality between India's urban and rural populations, as well as between regions. While India's urban women have collectively doubled their incomes in the past decade, the majority of working women are from rural and economically disadvantaged areas, with over 35 percent working on farms.⁷⁵

Companies can be reluctant to set up in rural areas, where class conflict can create disruptions (for example employees may not be willing to report to a manager from a different caste). It is essential for companies operating in rural areas to have a strong diversity policy in place before operations begin.⁷⁶

Education Indian women are now 41 percent⁷⁷ of students enrolled in universities, and many are getting degrees in finance, technology, and marketing instead of opting for traditionally low-paying jobs such as in human resources or administration. In 2009-2010, women made up 41 percent of undergraduate science students and 35 percent of law students.⁷⁸ And in 2011-2012 over 19,000 women were admitted to the M.B.B.S. program (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery), representing over 50 percent of students.⁷⁹

But the talent shortage is increasing as India's economy grows faster than the pool of available skilled employees. A significant issue perceived by 53 percent of employers is that new graduates are still lacking in training and skills. In companies with 500 or more

employees, an average of 36 entry-level positions remain open due to lack of available talent.⁸⁰

On the one hand, India has renowned universities, but on the other it is still struggling to achieve 100 percent literacy due to the challenge of keeping India's millions of impoverished children in school. In 2010-2011, 25 percent of girls in India dropped out of primary classes, and almost 50 percent dropped out of secondary classes.⁸¹

63 percent of Indians surveyed in a recent study agree a university education is more important for boys than girls.⁸²

According to the 2011 census the literacy rate for women is 65 percent, compared to 82 percent for men.⁸³

India has one of the youngest populations in the world

Age: Currently 51 percent of the Indian population is under 25, and 66 percent is under 35, while only 6 percent of the population is over 65. This youthful demographic trend is expected to continue until 2050.⁸⁴ The *Indian Economic Survey* refers to this as the "demographic dividend," which has the potential to provide great benefits to India's economy as long as the population is healthy, educated, and includes a workforce trained in needed skills. Inclusive development is therefore essential to India's future.⁸⁵ In order to reap these prospective benefits, India will need to educate and employ its citizens, and close the skill gap for this large new workforce.⁸⁶

Rising Incomes: By 2025, as incomes in India rise, McKinsey & Co. predicts that over 291 million people will move out of grinding poverty, and the middle class will increase by more than ten times its current size to 583 million people. By 2025, there will be over 23 million wealthy Indians—more than the current population of all of Australia.⁸⁷

Only one third of women in India work outside of the home⁸⁸

Work: One of India's greatest resources is that it has the largest working-age population in the world, and the majority of this population in the organized sector speaks English, giving India a competitive edge in the global market. This growing labor force is expected to rise 32 percent over the next 20 years, compared to a decline of 4 percent in other industrialized nations.⁸⁹ However, the demographic dividend of youthful

workers is undermined by the decreasing participation of women in the workforce. This decrease now accounts for half of the overall drop in India's labor participation rate (from 62 percent in 2000 to only 57 percent in 2010). Women's active participation in the labor force in India has fallen 9 percentage points in just 10 years.⁹⁰

48 percent of Indian women drop out of the pipeline before reaching mid-career (compared to the Asia average of 29 percent).⁹¹

As in other emerging markets, the condition of women is a paradox: they can be CEOs of multinational corporations, yet 93 percent, can be illiterate or malnourished, and work in the unorganized sector in low-paying jobs which are not covered under India's labor laws.⁹²

The most common forms of gender discrimination in India include pay inequity (women earn around 30 percent less in all fields of employment than men do), available work (most women work in low-skilled jobs), and sexual harassment. Marginalized women such as *dalits* and Muslims endure double discrimination and exclusion on the basis of caste, gender, and religion.⁹³

Women from urban wealthier families (annual income above Rs 5 lakh, or approximately \$9,000) have a low participation rate in the workforce (only 9 percent); women from rural wealthier families (incomes above Rs 5 lakh) have a participation rate of just five percent. Women from the more liberal northeastern states have between 20-39 percent participation in the workforce. However, regardless of how many women are working, very few have control over how the wages they earn are spent.⁹⁴

According to a Pew Global Attitudes Project survey, 95 percent of Indians surveyed believe that women should be able to work outside of the home, but not if economic times are tough; in that situation, 84 percent believe that men should have priority in receiving available jobs.⁹⁵ Because many Indian executives do not believe multinational companies understand India or its culture,⁹⁶ they are now opting to work for Indian companies instead.

The liberalized Indian economy has created new job opportunities for educated urban women.⁹⁷

Professional Women: Women make up 23 percent of employees in private industries, 25 percent of employees at IT companies and 50 percent of employees at BPO (business process outsourcing) companies.⁹⁸ It is clear from the Bombay Stock Exchange 100 Companies how few women advance into leadership positions. According to a new report, women represent only 19 percent of senior leadership positions and just 15 percent of the total employed population. Forty-two percent of the companies surveyed said they plan to hire more women, particularly into senior leadership positions.⁹⁹

- Of 323 total executive directorship positions eight (2.5 percent) are held by women.¹⁰⁰
- Of 1,112 directorships, 59 (5 percent) are held by women.¹⁰¹
- Fifty-four percent of companies have no women on their boards of directors.¹⁰²

Work Life: In India, marriage and children often derail a woman's career. Motherhood not only entails increased responsibility, but it also changes how a woman is perceived at work.¹⁰³ In addition, according to a recent report from the Center for Talent Management, 80 percent of Indian women surveyed have left the workforce to fulfill eldercare responsibilities (compared to 30 percent in the United States).¹⁰⁴ The traditional gender roles and stereotypes still prevalent in India make women report that they have to work harder than their male peers to prove themselves, are excluded from informal networks, and face stereotypical biases against women bosses.¹⁰⁵ But high-potential women in India are focused on their careers and work-life fit to the same degree as Indian men. They just report more challenges in managing the workload of both family and work.¹⁰⁶ Many report a lack of support or empathy from their families making it difficult to accept more responsibility and advance in the workplace.¹⁰⁷

New graduates are equally divided among those wanting to work at multinational companies and those who prefer to work at Indian companies. Many are attracted to having the brand name of a multinational company on their resumes, and the

multinational work culture is perceived as being more professional and less dictated by family connections. On the other hand, many applicants believe they can find better work-life effectiveness policies at Indian companies, as well as better opportunities for advancement and better job security.¹⁰⁸ However, a recent Catalyst study finds a gap between this perception and the reality. The India-subsidary companies had a higher percentage of women promoted at all levels than India-headquartered companies, and 84 percent of India-subsidary companies reported a formal flexible policy compared to only 58 percent of India-headquartered companies.¹⁰⁹

Educated and talented women in India are highly ambitious, but both family obligations and limited professional opportunities conspire to make women settle or drop out of the workforce earlier in the pipeline than in the United States.¹¹⁰ In fact these strong feelings of family obligation are cited by many women as their reason for dropping out of the workforce altogether. In one study, 75 percent of women who quit their jobs did so for childcare reasons.¹¹¹ And women who do not have children are likely to have eldercare responsibilities. Managing the household, raising children, and caring for in-laws falls primarily on women whether they work outside of the home or not,¹¹² and is probably why in a recent Nielsen survey, 87 percent of Indian women respondents reported feeling stressed.¹¹³

Both Indian companies and multinational companies operating in India are starting to implement flexibility, but in one study more than 54 percent of respondents believed working flexibility would damage their career advancement opportunities. While 59 percent reported it would be a huge help, they indicated that they would only work flexible hours if they could be guaranteed that this wouldn't interfere with their opportunities for advancement.¹¹⁴

In India, the greatest number of professional women who leave the workforce, about 48 percent, do so between the junior and middle levels. This could be due to the fact that Indian women marry younger than their American counterparts and tend to start their families right away. Therefore, Indian women's first career break tends to be earlier than their American counterparts', typically between the ages 18 and 24. And unlike American women, Indian professional women may take several breaks over the course

of their careers. Work-life solutions are essential to keeping talented women in the labor force. In one survey, 55 percent of respondents would have stayed at their current jobs if telecommuting had been offered, while 62 percent would have stayed if they had been offered the option to work reduced hours.¹¹⁵

Safety: In addition to this gender bias, working women face limited options for safe transit to and from work, and social disapproval aimed at women travelling alone. This danger has turned many women towards careers that do not involve travel, such as medicine, education, or law.¹¹⁶ In light of the recent focus on rape and violence against women, an Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India study found that 82 percent of Indian women working in call centers or outsourcing firms in Delhi were responding to this violence by reducing their working hours or quitting their jobs in order not to be traveling after dark.¹¹⁷ Fifty-three percent of working women worry about their safety, with that number rising to 65 percent for those working in Delhi.¹¹⁸ Because safety is a constant concern for women, many managers will simply not hire a woman for a position that requires travel, thereby closing that door to career advancement.¹¹⁹

This past year, Indian companies are increasing their safety budgets and implementing measures such as providing self-defense workshops and selling pepper spray at the office.¹²⁰ Many tech companies like Google India provide taxis to bring women employees home at night, while the German company Boehringer Ingelheim pays for women to bring their mothers with them on business trips.¹²¹ Ernst & Young has a creative campaign to educate the parents and in-laws of working women on the benefits of allowing them to continue working. These innovative efforts on the part of businesses to retain talented women are helping to put more women in the public sphere and modernize gender attitudes.¹²²

Investing in women is investing in the future of India

While India is poised to be a superpower, its gender inequality is stalling India's economy and keeping it from reaching its full potential. Changes in the workplace and society take time, and India has been taking positive steps towards gender equality. But to remain competitive, Indian culture and society must catch up with the many

progressive laws on the books to advance and protect women's rights. While the media portrays an idealized picture of a few very powerful women at the top of corporate India, the majority of Indian women are working in the unorganized sector, and those in the corporate sector are faced with gender stereotypes, as well as family obligations.

The Asia-Pacific region continues to lose between 42 and 47 billion dollars a year in GDP due to the lack of participation of talented women in the workforce.¹²³

The looming talent shortage, and the Indian government's goal to train 500 million skilled workers over the next ten years, mean that those companies wishing to remain competitive will need to tap into India's population of highly educated Indian women. As long as women remain underrepresented in leadership positions, gender inequality will continue. As managerial ranks continue to become more diverse, more pathways will open for India's women, and this in turn will promote India's economic growth.¹²⁴

For Further Reading

STATISTICAL

Quick Take: Women in the Labor Force in India¹²⁵

Pyramid: Women Indian Women in Business¹²⁶

CATALYST RESEARCH

Expanding Work-Life Perspectives: Talent Management in India¹²⁷

This companion report to Catalyst's main report, *Expanding Work-Life Perspectives: Talent Management in Asia*, contributes to our knowledge of how organizations can best implement work-life programs within different cultural contexts. In this country profile, we draw from the larger sample to spotlight the experiences of 226 high-potential employees (27 percent of whom are women) working in India for United States- or European-based multinational organizations. Respondents in this study were referred by their respective companies as promising future leaders, and are among the best and brightest employees.

Leadership Gap in India Inc.: Myths and Realities¹²⁸

The first in Catalyst's *Advancing Women in India* series, we focus on building awareness and offering action steps for developing and advancing women in corporate India.

2010 India Benchmarking Report¹²⁹

This report helps companies become more nimble by accelerating their progress toward developing and advancing their talented women, often a largely untapped resource.

India: The Legal Framework for Women and Work¹³⁰

This report focuses on providing members with a general understanding of the laws related to gender diversity in the workplace in India. It outlines the major legislation protecting women's rights in the workplace

India: The Case for Gender Diversity¹³¹

India's widening talent gap, which compromises the country's economic growth, illustrates the need for businesses to expand their reach and tap into previously underutilized talent pools. The first step needed for diversity and inclusion practitioners and human resources professionals interested in building an organizational business case for diversity and inclusion is to understand the

connection between business goals and diversity goals. This tool provides that preliminary outline.

INDIA COMPANY PRACTICES (members only)

Unilever—Global Reach With Local Roots: Creating a Gender-Balanced Workforce in Different Cultural Contexts¹³²

Unilever's initiative, *Global Reach With Local Roots: Creating a Gender-Balanced Workforce in Different Cultural Contexts*, accelerates the advancement of high-potential women across different regions and leverages the company's strong foundation of cultural diversity and multinational expertise to promote a culture of inclusion.

HCL Technologies—Employees First: A Philosophy for Workplace Transformation¹³³

HCL Technologies (HCLT), a leading global IT services company headquartered in India, is a client-driven business. As such, it is imperative for the company to optimize and enhance employee-customer relationships. HCLT believes that the most reliable way to create customer value is by ensuring that employees are engaged, enabled, and empowered to do their best.

HSBC India—Flexible Work Arrangements¹³⁴

With competition to recruit and retain talented employees increasing daily, strong talent retention strategies are critical. That, together with its goal to develop a more diverse workforce, led HSBC India to introduce the Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) program in 2008.

¹ Country Watch, [India](#) (2012).

² Ujvala Rajadhyaksha, "[Work-Life in India](#)," *Boston College Center for Work & Family, Executive Briefings Series*, (2008).

³ OECD, "[Social Institutions in India](#)" (2012).

⁴ National Informatics Centre, Ministry of Law and Justice, [Eighth Schedule \[Articles 344 \(1\) and 351\]](#); Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "India," (2013), CIA, "[India](#)," *World Factbook* (2013).

⁵ "[India](#)," *Countrywatch*, (2012). CIA, "[India](#)," *World Factbook* (2013).

⁶ CIA, "[India](#)," *World Factbook* (2013); Ralph Buultjens, "[Understanding Modern India](#)," *The Asia Society*.

⁷ CIA, "[India](#)," *World Factbook* (2013).

⁸ Inter-Parliamentary Union, [Women in National Parliaments](#) (2012).

⁹ Nicole Lillibridge, "[The Promise of Equality: A Comparative Analysis of the Constitutional Guarantees of Equality in India and the United States](#)," *William and Mary Bill of Rights Journal*, vol. 13, no. 4 (2005).

¹⁰ Lillibridge.

¹¹ Lillibridge.

¹² Mukul Shastri, "[Reservation Policy in India: A Critical Evaluation](#)," *Social Science Research Network, Working Paper Series* (2009).

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- ¹³ Archana Parashar, "[Gender Inequality and Religious Personal Laws in India](#)," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2008).
- ¹⁴ United Nations Development Programme, *Power, Voice, and Rights: A Turning Point for Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific* (2010).
- ¹⁵ Nations Development Programme.
- ¹⁶ Aditya Menon, "[UPA Digs in its Heels on Women's Reservation Bill Despite Losing Vital Numbers in Lok Sabha](#)," *India Today*, March 27, 2013; Lydia Polgreen, "[Uproar in India Over Female Lawmaker Quota](#)," *The New York Times*, March 9, 2010.
- ¹⁷ Wharton School, "[What is the Role of Women in Indian Politics? Growing Stronger](#)," India Knowledge@Wharton (2009).
- ¹⁸ United Nations Development Programme, "[From Reservation to Participation](#)" (2009).
- ¹⁹ Wharton.
- ²⁰ Rohini Pande, and Deanna Ford, Development Report, "[Gender Quotas and Female Leadership](#)," *World Background Paper* (2011).
- ²¹ Pamposhi Raina, "[Does India Still Need Khap Panchayats?](#)" *The New York Times*, October 23, 2012.
- ²² Shakti Vahini, "[Honour Killings](#)" (2012).
- ²³ Vahini.
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