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Gender Equity and Equality
[IRSGEE-2024]**

**“Intersectional and Integrated Perspectives on
Gender Mainstreaming”**

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GENDER EQUITY AND EQUALITY
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**“Intersectional and Integrated Perspectives on
Gender Mainstreaming”**

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Exploring the Gender Pay Gap: Insights from Jaffna's Workforce

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Purpose: This study examines the perceptions of the gender pay gap in Jaffna's workforce to understand how these perceptions influence career choices for both men and women. It aims to highlight the underlying societal and systemic factors contributing to gender inequality and inform policies that promote gender equity in the workplace.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The research employs a mono-method approach, conducting semi-structured interviews with 10 employees and employers across various sectors to explore perceptions of the gender pay gap and its impact on gender equality in Jaffna's workforce. Cross-sectional data collection captures current perspectives, which are thematically analyzed to interpret the findings.

Findings: The study highlights several interconnected themes influencing the gender pay gap in Jaffna's workforce. Perceptions of Stability vs. Risk reveal that women often prioritize stable, lower-paying roles, avoiding high-risk positions due to societal expectations and family responsibilities. Career Aspirations and Gender Norms show that men are more likely to pursue higher-paying roles, aligning with traditional notions of being primary earners. While Acknowledgment of Pay Disparities exists among both genders, men perceive the gender pay gap as a less pressing issue. Systemic barriers, including Occupational Segregation and Traditional Gender Roles, further entrench disparities. These findings underscore the critical need for Targeted Policies, such as flexible working conditions and accessible childcare, to address systemic inequalities and promote gender equality in the workforce.

Research limitations: The study is limited to a specific Jaffna region, which may not fully represent broader national contexts.

Implications: The study highlights the need for policy interventions to address the gender pay gap and promote gender equality in the Jaffna workforce. These interventions should focus on challenging societal norms, providing support for women in higher-paying roles, and creating a more inclusive work environment. Additionally, organizations should implement equitable policies and practices to ensure equal pay and opportunities for all employees.

Keywords: Employee, Gender pay gap, Jaffna, perceptions, Wage disparity