A hard day's work: Global attitudes to gender equality in the workplace

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A new global study carried out in 27 countries by Ipsos MORI in the UK, in collaboration with the Global Institute for Women's Leadership at King's College London for International Women's Day shows men and women remain divided about gender equality in the workplace. The online survey of carried out with 20,204 adults aged 16-74 year olds finds:

- **Only 30% of online South Africans think that the workplace treats men and women equally.**
- **The majority of online South Africans (69%) think we need more female leaders in business and government to achieve equality.**
- **Majority of online South Africans agree that equality won't be achieved without men also taking action.**



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The study is conducted online and therefore only includes views of "connected" South Africans, which means that most are likely to be active in the workplace.

*Most people around the world **do not think that workplaces in their countries are a level playing field** for men and women – and there is a big gender gap here...*

SA findings

- In South Africa, the majority (68%) do not think the workplace treats men and women equally compared with just less than a third (30%) who do;
- SA men and women have very different perceptions about gender equality in the workplace, with 4 of 10 (40%) of South African men who believe there is gender equality in the workplace compared with just 3 in 10 South African women (31%).

Global findings

- Globally, almost half of men (49%) agree that there is gender equality in the workplace in their country compared with just three in ten women (32%).
- Countries where inequality in the workplace is felt to be greatest are Brazil (72%), Japan (71%) and France (69%). Conversely, those in Malaysia (68%), China (60%) and India (54%) are most likely to agree there is equality in the workplace between men and women.

*Representation matters; gender equality won't be achieved unless there are **more female leaders** in business and government:*

SA findings

- Almost 7 in 10 South Africans (69%) agree that women won't achieve equality with men unless there are more female leaders in business and government.
- Many more South African women (75%) agree with this statement than South African men (62%), however South African men rank third in terms of agreement with this statement.

Global findings

- Close to six in ten people (58%) agree that women won't achieve equality with men unless there are more female leaders in business and government, a third (36%) disagree.
- However, the gender gap persists: two-thirds of women agree (65%) compared with half (51%) of men.
- There is strongest agreement with this statement in India (69%), South Africa (69%) and Japan (68%) whereas those most likely to disagree are people in China (61%), Russia (49%) and South Korea (47%).

And both men and women acknowledge that men need to play their part in helping to achieve gender equality.

SA findings

- South Africans top the charts (80%) in terms of agreement with the statement that women will not achieve equality unless men start taking actions to support women's rights too. Although there are more women who support the statement (83%), more than three-quarters of South African men agree (78%) – highest across all markets surveyed.

Global findings

- The majority of people surveyed (68%) believe that equality won't be achieved between men and women unless men take actions to support women too although close to three in ten (27%) disagree.
- Here there is much less of gender divide between the sexes: three-quarters (74%) of women agree as do six in ten men (62%).
- Respondents most likely to agree that men need to play their part in achieving equality in other countries, include India (78%) and Hungary (77%). At the other end, countries where people are least likely to say that men should play their part are the Netherlands (53%), Russia (49%) and China (42%).

Mari Harris, Senior Client Officer at Ipsos said: *"While South African men and women appear to be more progressive when it comes to gender equality than some global counterparts, the data from this study still illustrates that we have a long way to go. It is also worth remembering that these are the views of online and connected South Africans, likely to be in the workplace already and aware of the challenges and changes that still lie ahead in creating a real positive shift towards the ideal of gender equality."*

Technical note

These are the findings of a survey conducted in 27 countries via Global Advisor, the online survey platform of Ipsos, between 24 January - 7 February 2020.

For this survey, Ipsos interviewed a total of **20,204** adults aged:

- 16-74 in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, and Sweden;
- 18-74 in Canada, South Africa, Turkey, and the United States of America;
- 19-74 in South Korea.

The sample consists of 1,000+ individuals in each of Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Spain, and the US, and of 500+ individuals in each of the other countries surveyed.

The data is weighted so each country's sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of its adult population according to the most recent census data, and to give each country an equal weight in the total "global" sample.

Online surveys can be taken as representative of the general working-age population in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the United States. Online samples in other countries surveyed are more urban, more educated and/or more affluent than the general population and the results should be viewed as reflecting the views of a more "connected" population.

Sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error. The precision of online surveys conducted on Global Advisor is measured using a Bayesian Credibility Interval. Here, the poll has a credibility interval of +/-3.5 percentage points for countries where the sample is 1,000+ and +/- 4.8 points for countries where the sample is 500+. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please go to https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/2017-03/IpsosPA_CredibilityIntervals.pdf.

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