DOI : https://doi.org/10.56452/7-6-121

ISSN: 0974-5823 Vol. 7 No. 6 June, 2022

International Journal of Mechanical Engineering

Unconscious Gender Bias in relation to Professional Skills Rating and Gender Pay Gap in Information Technology Industry in Delhi- NCR

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Abstract

Background- Women are often in the business, and the percentage of women is falling at each step of the corporate hierarchy. Women face many barriers to advancement in corporate leadership, including gender-based discrimination that continues to affect women in the workplace and more needs to be done to encourage talented women into the workforce.

Objective- The present study aims to explore relationship between the unconscious gender biasness, professional skills rating and gender pay gap among IT professionals belonging from Delhi NCR region.

Method- Sample comprised of 200 participants (100 male, & 100 female). The scales used were "woman as a manager scale" and "professional skills rating scale." The salary was determined by providing a neutral CV of a software engineer.

Result- The results of person's correlation revealed that there is no significant difference between salary setting by male and female participants however there is a significant difference between male and female ratters on professional skills rating of male IT Professionals as well as female employees, where men considered female to be less favourable for managerial position.

Keywords: *unconscious gender biasness, gender pay gap, professional skills, IT industry.*

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Introduction

All over the world, women are underrepresented in the business, and the percentage of women is falling at each step of the corporate hierarchy. Women face many barriers to advancement in corporate leadership, including gender-based discrimination. Many companies demonstrate commitment to gender equality by creating family policies and promoting women's work and collaboration. However, gender bias continues to affect women in the workplace and more needs to be done to encourage talented women into the workforce. According to Suveren (2022), Unconscious gender bias is defined as unintentional and automatic mental associations based on gender, stemming from traditions, norms, values,

culture and/or experience. Gender differences have been observed in occupations that are prerequisites for leadership and management, such as clerical work. Male candidates may benefit from forgetting whether job descriptions for managers and executives in organizations use language typically associated with men, such as "dominant" and "ambitious." Despite progress in gender equality, women are sometimes held back by practices and norms that favour men. Men will always be seen as fit for work, while the injustice of work for women is forgotten. Personal characteristics, including physical and demographic differences such as race and gender, can lead to bias, and female workers are more likely to face discrimination that hinders their career advancement because of classification based on gender dimensions. Cognitive factors such as when people often consider observations based on their preconceived beliefs rather than negative observations (Ellemers, 2018), so that employers have an impact on the advancement of female employees by gender.Aside from that Integration in organizations culture plays an important role and although prejudice begins in childhood and education, it influences the development of the unfair through a variety of practices such as workplace recruitment, promotion, and leadership. People tend to think that part-time jobs are designed for mothers, and therefore those in these roles are less successful (Ball & Brewis, 2008). The unconscious biasness in organisation can cause Injustice anxiety, an expectation that one will be judged or treated negatively according to the stereotypes of one's own group (Goff, Steele, & Davies, 2008),in the study done by Maxfield, Shapiro, Gupta, and Hass (2010) they stated that theoretically women are seen as risk-averse in the business world, but according to their findings, women are not risk-averse but can accept the risk, they are seen as risk averse because they cut costs when there is risk, they do not accept risk. In other study Schein (2007) emphasizes the importance of the "boss man" mentality, arguing that it is a workplace bias, leading to discrimination against the older mother in the selection, placement, promotion, and justice decisions of leaders. He also suggests that people often associate men with competing with management, so women face injustice when they seek to enter and move up in management positions. Although it is claimed that the reason why women are more involved in business life and the roles are very demanding is the visible change in the organization. It is important to consider how the events involved in this change will provide new information and perspectives. Change happens when women receive enough support in organizations to develop their skills and get more women as leaders (Tabassum et al., 2019). From the literature and researches, it can be concluded that unconscious gender bias plays an important role in the assessment of skills between men and women and creates gender pay gaps in organisations. Due to the widespread use of information technology today, India has set a milestone in this field and is doing well. With recent development in technology and flexible working style, many multinational companies have adopted a mixed-use approach. It is found that Gender restriction is most effective because of housework and operational results depend on meeting IT goals for employees. It appears that intelligence assessments should minimize the effects of unconscious gender bias. It will also reduce the gender pay gap in IT. Therefore, this study was done with following objective.

Objective of the study

1. To study the relationship between unconscious gender biasness, professional skills rating and salary setting of male and female IT professionals working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.
2. To study the difference of level of unconscious gender biasness for male and female IT professionals among male and female working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.
3. To study the difference of gender pay gap for male and female IT professionals among male and female working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

4. To study the difference of professional skill rating for male and female IT professionals among male and female working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

Hypothesis of the study

1.1. There will be a positive correlation between Gender biasness and Professional Skills Rating of female employee working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

1.2. There will be a positive correlation between Unconscious Gender non bias and setting of salary of female employee working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

1.3. There will be a positive correlation Professional Skills Rating and salary of female employee working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

1.4. There will be a positive correlation Professional Skills Rating and salary of male employee working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

2.There would be a significant difference of level of unconscious gender biasness for male and female IT professionals among male and female working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

3. There would be a significant difference of gender pay gap for male and female IT professionals among male and female working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

4. There would be a significant difference of professional skill rating for male and female IT professionals among male and female working in IT industry of Delhi NCR.

Method

Participants

A sample of 200 (100 male and 100 female) participants was selected through purposive sampling method.

Inclusion criteria 30-50 years old IT professionals who are team leaders or managers in IT compony belonging to Delhi NCR only.

Exclusion criteria Individuals who have any serious physical and mental health issues and individuals who do not want to participant were excluded.

Research design

Descriptive correlational research design

Instruments

Protégé Professional Skills Assessment Exercise by Elmhurst university (2021): The scale consists of 12 skills essential for any organisational setting the skills include: analytical skills, interpersonal communication skills, writing skills, presentation making scale, leading skills, learning skills, manipulating data skills, entrepreneur skills, conflict resolution skills, team management skills and technical skills. Each skill is rated on a 5-point Likert scale from excellent, good average, poor to very poor. Scoring is rating of each individual subskill.

Women as Managers Scale: (Terborg, Peters, Ilgen & Smith, 1977): A total of 55 items were written on "general descriptive traits/behaviours of managers" and "female-specific stereotypic traits/behaviours" representing barriers for women's integration into managerial. The 21-item scale consists with 3 interpreted components, The split-half reliability of the scale was found .91 (Terborg et al., 1977). The final questionnaire consisted of 11 favourable and 10 unfavourably worded items on women as managers (Terborg et al., 1977). The scores on the

scale range from 21 (highly unfavourable attitude toward women in management) to 147 (highly favourable attitude toward women in management) (Garland & Price, 1977).

Demographic data Sheet: participants will be asked to report their gender, age, education, occupation, ethnicity, and religion.

Procedure

Samples selected according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria and consent was taken from subject to use this data for research. Demographical data recorded carefully in demographical data sheet and after this were provided with a neutral CV of an software engineer and they were instructed to set the salary monthly based on the CV for a male and a female employee, then prodege professional skills rating scale were given to them to rate skills of both male and female employees at last they were asked to responds to woman as a manager scale to measure their level of favourable attitude towards woman employees belonging to an organisation.

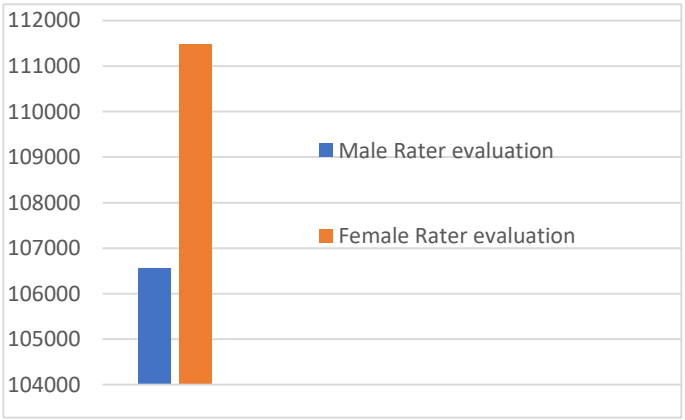
Results

Using SPSS-28 version software Mean, SD, and correlation for the responses given on WAMS and PPSC were calculated. Obtained values are mentioned in following table.

Table 3A: ***Salary Package setting of females Software Engineer by Male and Female IT professionals.***

	Mean	**SD**	**SE**	***t.***	**Level of Sig.**
Male	106554.01	52175.67	5217.56	.69	.24
Female	111474.00	47246.97	4724.69		

Figure 3A: **Mean of salary of female IT professionals by male and female participants**



The above table (Table 3A) and graph (figure 3A) shows mean, SD, SE, and level of significance for the salary package setting of female IT professional by male and female participants. Although the mean of male participants for setting salary of female IT professional is lower as compared to mean of salary set given by female participants for female employee there is no significant difference between male and female participants.

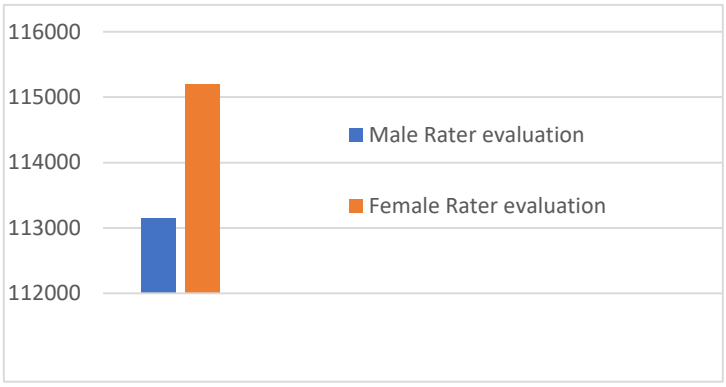
DOI : https://doi.org/10.56452/7-6-121

Table 3B: ***Salary Package setting of Male Software Engineer by Male and Female IT professionals.***

	Mean	SD	SE	*t.*	Level of Sig.
Male	113155.00	51299.07	5129.91	.68	.42
Female	115194.00	82397.35	8239.73		

Figure 3B: **Mean of salary of male IT professionals by male and female participants**

The above table(table 3B) and graph (figure 3B) shows mean, SD, SE, and level of significance



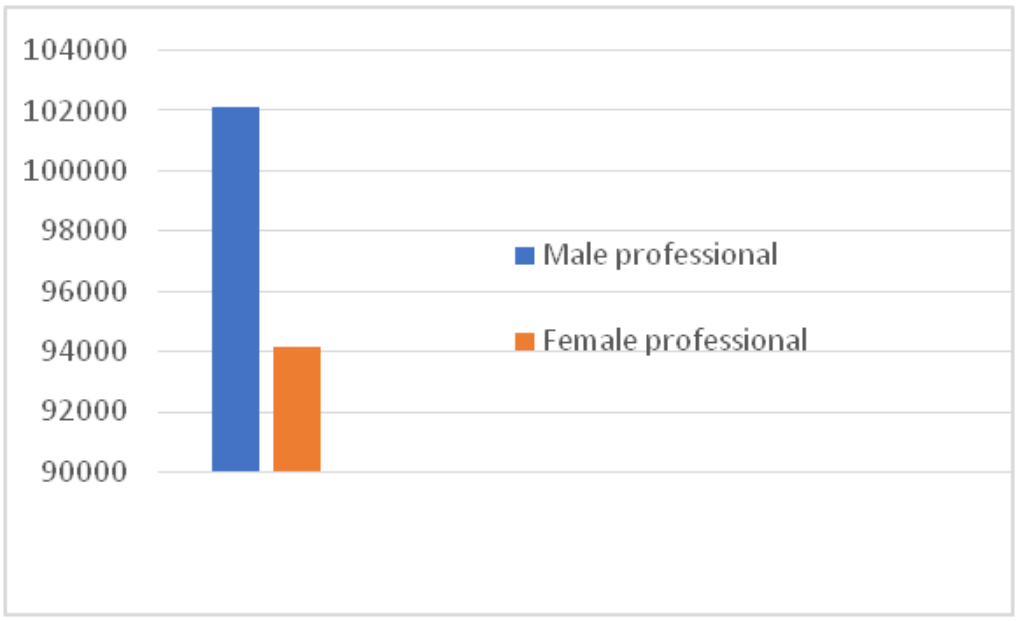
for the salary package setting of male IT professional by male and female participants. The mean of male participants for setting salary of male IT professional is lower as compared to mean of salary set given by female participants for male but there is no significant difference between male and female participants.

Table 3C: ***Salary Package Mean, SD and t. of Male and female Software Engineer rated by IT professionals (200 participants).***

Gender	Mean	SD	SE	t.	Level of Sig.
Male	102153.68	68467.75	6846.77	.63	.43
Female	94167.89	49708.37	4970.84		

Figure 3C: **Mean of salary of male and female IT professionals by male and female participants**

DOI : https://doi.org/10.56452/7-6-121



The above table (table 3C) and graph (Figure 3C) shows mean, SD, SE, and level of significance for the salary package setting of male and female IT professionals by 200 participants, from the table 3C it could be said that there is no significant difference between salary of male and female professionals.

Analysis of Gender Difference in Professional Skills Rating of IT Professionals is described as below-

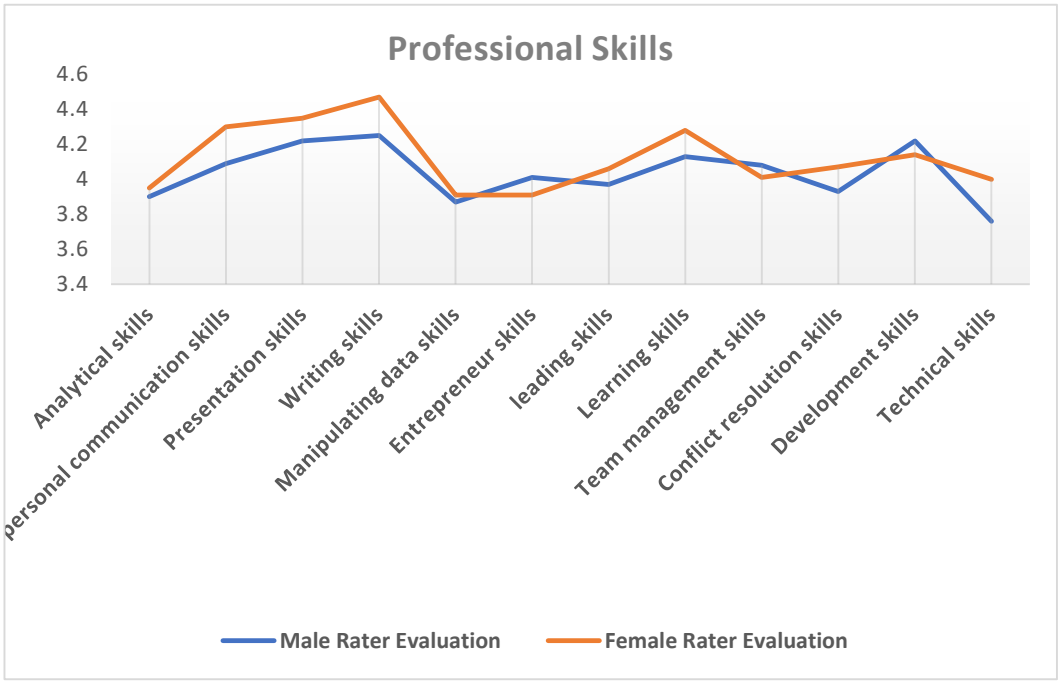
Table 4: ***Professional skills rating Difference Mean, SD and t. of female IT employ by male and female IT Professionals.***

Professional skills of Female	**Rater Gender**	**Mean**	**SD**	***t. (d.f.=198)***	**Level of Sig.**
Analytical skills	Male	3.90	.834	.004	.322
	Female	3.95	.687		
Interpersonal communication skills	Male	4.09	.805	.269	.031*
	Female	4.30	.771		
Presentation skills	Male	4.22	.859	.308	.129
	Female	4.35	.757		
Writing skills	Male	4.25	.857	.021	.024*
	Female	4.47	.702		
Manipulating data skills	Male	3.87	.799	.946	.362
	Female	3.91	.805		
Entrepreneur skills	Male	4.01	.846	.298	.187
	Female	3.91	.739		
leading skills	Male	3.97	.881	.474	.232
	Female	4.28	.725		

DOI : https://doi.org/10.56452/7-6-121

Learning skills	Male	4.13	.836	.333	.089
	Female	4.28	.725		
Team management skills	Male	4.08	.849	.064	.268
	Female	4.01	.745		
Conflict resolution skills	Male	3.93	.912	.107	.119
	Female	4.07	.755		
Development skills	Male	4.22	.847	.079	.241
	female	4.07	.755		
Technical skills	Male	3.76	.888	.032	.022*
	female	4.00	.778		

Figure 4: **Mean of professional skills of female IT professionals by male and female participants.**



The following table (Table 4) and graph (Figure 4) consisting Mean, SD, t. and level of significance of rating of professional skills of female IT professionals by 100 male and 100 female IT shows that there is a significant difference in interpersonal communication skills (.031), writing skills (.024) and technical skills (.022) in rating of professional skills by male and female participants.

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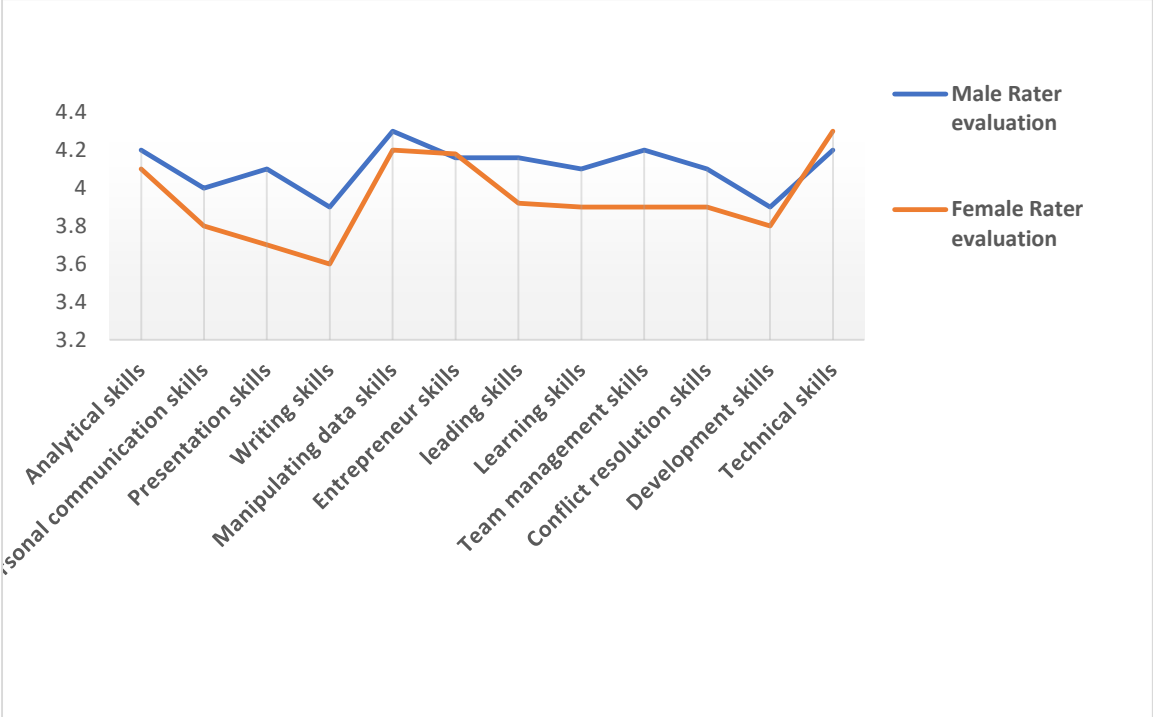
Table 5: ***Professional skills rating Difference Mean, SD and t. of male IT employ by male and female IT Professionals***.

Professional skills	Gender rater	Mean	SD	*t. (df=198)*	Level of Sig.
Analytical skills	Male	4.19	.691	.646	.181
	Female	4.10	.703		
Interpersonal communication skills	Male	4.04	.764	.494	.006*
	Female	3.77	.750		
Presentation skills	Male	4.06	.708	.087	.001**
	Female	3.72	.711		
Writing skills	Male	3.86	.738	.339	.148
	Female	3.5600	.769		
Manipulating data skills	Male	4.28	.888	.182	.003**
	Female	4.15	.868		
Entrepreneur skills	Male	4.01	.846	.809	.433
	Female	4.18	.845		
leading skills	Male	4.16	.861	.194	.020*
	Female	3.92	.774		
Learning skills	Male	4.12	.794	.036	.023*
	Female	3.91	.683		
Team management skills	Male	4.15	.857	.029	.024*
	Female	3.93	.700		
Conflict resolution skills	Male	4.10	.846	.763	.023*
	Female	3.86	.841		
Development skills	Male	3.93	.867	.679	.246
	Female	3.85	.770		
Technical skills	Male	4.20	.932	.089	.335
	Female	4.25	.715		

DOI : https://doi.org/10.56452/7-6-121

Figure 5: **Mean of professional skills of male IT professionals by male and female participants.**



The above table (Table 5) and corresponding graph (Figure 5) showing Mean, SD, t. and level of significance of rating of professional skills of female IT professionals by 100 male and 100 female IT reveals there is a significant difference in interpersonal communication skills (.006), presentation skills (.001), manipulating data skills (.003), leading skills (.020), learning skills (.023), team management skills (.024), and conflict resolution skills (.023) in rating of professional skills by male and female participants.

Table 6: ***Relationship between Managerial Competency, Professional Skills and Salary of Women IT Professionals (N=200).***

	Professional Skills											
	AS	IPC	PS	WS	MDS	ES	LEDS	LERS	TMS	CRS	DVPS	TS
salary	.217**	.129	.080	.115	.136	.225**	.152*	-.023	.122	.184**	.152*	.151*
MC	.237**	.339**	.289**	.268**	.154*	.149*	.297**	.288**	.142*	.260**	.212**	.303**

***=<0.05, **=<0.01**

MC: Managerial Competency AS: Analytical skills IPS: Interpersonal communication skills PS: Presentation skills WS: Writing skills MDS: Manipulating data skills ES: Entrepreneur skills LEDS: Leading skills LERS: Learning skills TMS: Team management skills CRS: Conflict resolution skills DS: Development skills TS: Technical skills

The above table (Table 6) shows Pearson correlation between professional skills attitude towards female in an organisation and salary for male IT professionals, from the above-mentioned table it could be said that there is a positive significant correlation between salary and the following professional skills, including analytical skills (.21), entrepreneur skill (.225),

conflict resolution skills (.184), development skills (.152), and technical skills (.151) showing the salary set would increase significantly with increase in these mentioned skills. Along with a significant correlation between favourable attitude towards managerial competency of female IT professional and professional skills for all 12 professional skills. Also, between salary and favourable attitude towards woman in managerial position there is no significant correlation.

Table 7: ***IT professionals' perception about Relationship between Professional Skills and Salary of male IT Professionals (N=200).***

	Professional Skills											
	AS	IPC	PS	WS	MDS	ES	LEDS	LERS	TMS	CRS	DS	TS
salary	.092	.198**	.122	.155*	-.014	.075	.100	.135	.138	.093	.156*	.015

***=<0.05, **=<0.01**

AS: Analytical skills IPS: Interpersonal communication skills PS: Presentation skills WS: Writing skills MDS: Manipulating data skills ES: Entrepreneur skills LEDS: Leading skills LERS: Learning skills TMS: Team management skills CRS: Conflict resolution skills DS: Development skills TS: Technical skills

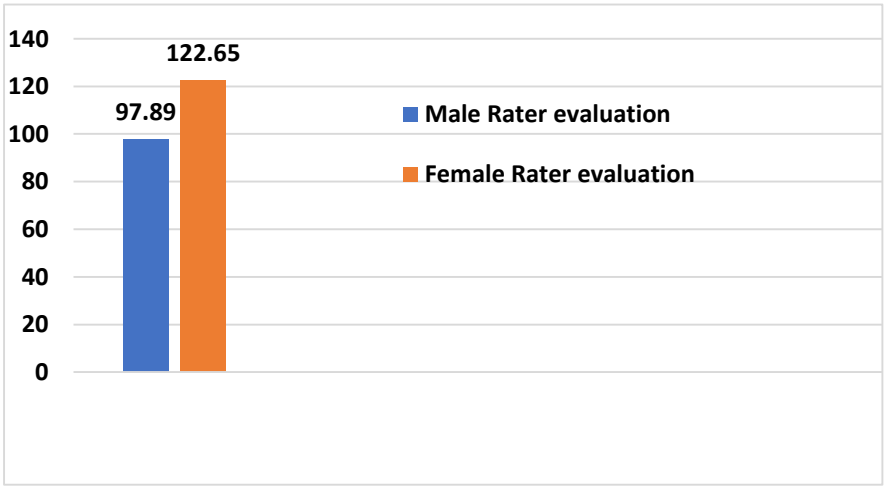
The above table (Table 7) shows Pearson correlation between professional skills in an organisation and salary for male IT professionals, from the above-mentioned table it could be said that there is a positive significant correlation between salary and the following professional skills, including interpersonal communication skills (.198), writing skills (.155), and development skills (.156) showing the salary set would increase significantly with increase in these mentioned skills.

Table 8: ***Level of favourable attitude towards Managerial Competency of Female IT employee as rated by Male and Female IT professionals***

	Mean	SD	SE	*t.*	Level of Sig.
Male	97.89	16.99	1.70	.87	0.01**
Female	122.65	16.76	1.68		

***=<0.05, **=<0.01**

Figure 6: **Mean of managerial competence of female IT professionals by male and female participants**



The above table (Table 8) and graph (Figure 6) showing mean, SD, SE, and level of significance for the favourable attitude towards managerial competency of female IT professional by male and female participants state that mean of male participants attitude about managerial competency of female IT professional is lower as compared to mean of favourable attitude of female participants for female employee with a significant difference between male and female participants.

Discussion

The main objective of this research was to study relationship between the unconscious gender biasness, professional skills rating and gender pay gap among IT professionals belonging from Delhi NCR region. Data was collected offline on two measures, prodege professional skills rating Scale for assessing skills of male and female employees, and woman as a manager scale to assess participants favourable attitude towards woman in organisational settings. Scales were in offline mode. Total 200 people participated all belonging to IT industry (100 male and 100 female). The first objective of the research was to study the relationship between Unconscious Gender Bias and Professional Skills Rating of female employee in IT after drawing out the results of Pearson correlation mentioned in table 6 it was found that there is a significant correlation between favourable attitude towards managerial competency of female IT professional and professional skills for all 12 professional skills including, Analytical skills (.23**), Interpersonal communication skills (.33*), Presentation skills (.29**), Writing skills (.26**), Manipulating data skills (.15*), Entrepreneur skills (.14*), leading skills (.29**), Learning skills (.28**), Team management skills (.14*), Conflict resolution skills (.26**), Development skills (.21**) and Technical skills (.33**) i.e., people high in favourable attitude towards female employee(less gender biasness) rated female employees significantly high on all the professional skills. Hence, accepting ***hypothesis 1.1***. that unconscious gender bias would affect professional skills of female employee, males here rated female slightly low on every skill as compared to female who rated females to be high on each skills. Similarly, the second objective of the research was to study the relationship between Unconscious Gender Bias and salary of female IT professionals from table 6 of Pearson correlation it was found that was no significant difference between unconscious gender bias and salary of female employee. Hence, setting of salary does not depend upon individuals' unconscious gender bias. Rejecting ***hypothesis 1.2.*** Third hypothesis was to study the relationship between professional skills rating and salary set of female IT professionals it was assumed that there will be a positive correlation Professional Skills Rating and salary of female employee in IT industry, from table 6 showing Pearson correlation between professional skills, acceptable attitude towards female in an organisation and salary for female IT professionals, it could be said that there is a positive significant correlation between salary and the following professional skills, including analytical skills (.217**), entrepreneur skill (.225**), conflict resolution skills (.184**), development skills (.152*), and technical skills (.151*) showing the salary set would increase significantly with increase in these mentioned skills hence, ***hypothesis 1.3*** accepted salary of female would be based on their professional skills. Objective four for the research w so study the relationship between professional skills rating and salary of male it professional It was assumed that there will be a positive correlation Professional Skills Rating and salary of male employee in IT industry. And for table 7 showing Pearson correlation between professional skills in an organisation and salary for male IT professionals, from the above-mentioned table it could be said that there is a positive significant correlation between salary and the following professional skills, including interpersonal communication skills (.198**), writing skills (.155**), and development skills (.156*) showing the salary set would increase significantly with increase in these mentioned skills i.e. accepting the ***hypothesis 1.4*** Study conducted by

More et. al., (2021) on prediction of professional skills for salary also support the finding that developmental skills effect the salary of the employee. The fifth objective for the research was to find the difference between unconscious gender bias among male and female professionals it was hypothesised that there will be a significant difference on Unconscious Gender Bias among male and female IT professionals. after analysis from table 8 showing managerial Competency of Female IT Professionals, it was found that there is a significant difference between Level of favourable attitude towards Managerial Competency of Female IT employee as rated by Male and Female IT professionals where the mean of male participants attitude towards managerial competency of female IT professional is lower as compared to mean of favourable attitude of female participants for female employee stating that female is more acceptable towards female on higher positions. Hence***, hypothesis 2*** accepted. Objective six of the research was to find the difference between professional skills rating of male and female participants it was assumed there will be a significant difference on Professional Skills Rating among male and female IT professionals Analysis of Gender Difference in Professional Skills Rating of IT Professionals revealed that for female IT professionals there is a significant difference between male and female ratters in the following professional skills including interpersonal communication skills (.031) in which female rated females higher as compared to male, writing skills (.024) in which female rated females lower as compared to male and technical skills (.022) in which female rated females higher as compared to male. Partially accepting ***hypothesis 3*** that there would be significant difference between male and female ratters on professional skills rating of female IT Professionals for interpersonal communication skills, writing skills and technical skills. For the professional skills rating of male IT professionals by male and female participants concluded that among all professional skills there us a significant difference between male and female participants for the flowing skills including interpersonal communication skills (.006), presentation skills (<.001), manipulating data skills (.003), leading skills (.020), learning skills (.023), team management skills (.024), and conflict resolution skills (.023) where in every skill male participants rated male IT professional higher in each skills as compared to female participants. The last objective of the research was to find the difference between salary, it was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference on setting of salary among male and female IT professionals. The descriptive statistics of salary given by 100 male participants and 100 female participants to a female IT professional revealed that the mean of male participants for setting salary of female IT professional was found to be lower as compared to mean of salary set given by female participants for female employee stating male participants even after providing same resume gave lower salary to female employee hence, providing evidence for unconscious gender biasness to some extend but there is no significant difference between salary set by male and female participants. The descriptive statistics of salary given by 100 male participants and 100 female participants to a male IT professional also state difference in mean scores where mean of male participants for setting salary of male IT professional which is lower as compared to mean of salary set given by female participants for male employee here the difference between male and female ratters is very less with no significant difference between male and female participants. When the mean score for salary package setting of male and female IT professionals by 200 participants were calculated, the mean of salary of male IT professional was found to be higher as compared to mean of salary of female participants for male employee with no significant difference between salary of male and female professional. Overall, it can be concluding that there is no significant difference between salary setting by male and female participants. Finally rejecting ***hypothesis 4*** that men and women would show gender pay gap but instead they rated them equally capable for the same salary set, this could be due to the increased awareness and equal opportunities for both gender giving importance to the physical limitations to woman that were earlier observed by the studies done by Dubey et. al., (2017)

hence, adapting to a mixed-use approach by many multinational company's gender restriction is affected and it appears that intelligence assessments, use of technologies and modernisation minimized the effects of unconscious gender bias along with reducing the gender pay gap.

Author contributions: Conceptualization- Sonal, & Jahan; Methodology - Jahan; Data Collection, Sonal, & Jahan; Data analysis - Manglani; Writing—Sonal, & Jahan: Supervised – Jahan: All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of interest: The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements: We are thankful to all the participants for providing their valuable time for this research.

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