



Get App >



News

Exclusives

Leaders
Speak

Events

Awards

Webinars

More ▾

HR
Movements

Interviews

Expert
SpeakBeyond
Office

HRTech

Editor's
PickHR
TVResearch
▾Brand
Solutions
▾More
▾

Diversity And Inclusion · 4 Min Read

Women in IT more than double to 2 lakh in a decade, make up 36% of workforce now

This growth can be attributed to various factors, including progressive policies by companies, more colleges offering computer science courses, and increased representation of women in leadership roles.

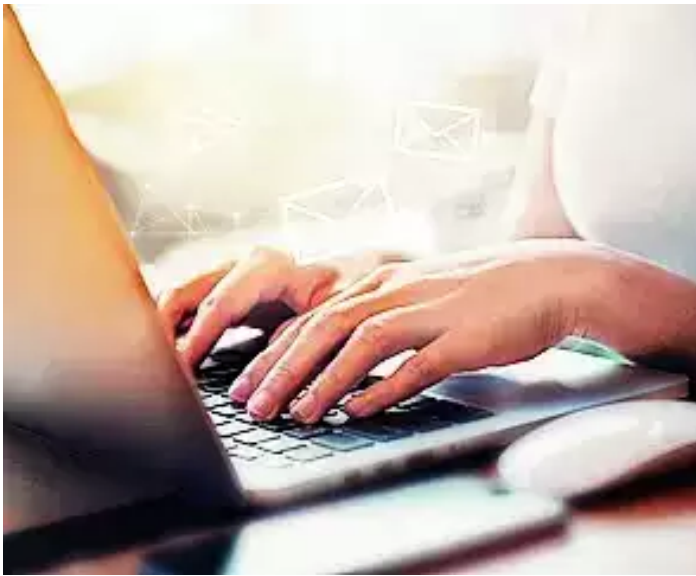


Shilpa Phadnis, · TNN

Updated On Aug 22, 2023 at 09:29 AM IST

BENGALURU: The Indian tech sector has added more than a million women in direct employment in the past decade, underscoring concerted efforts from the industry, academia and government in fostering and supporting inclusive action.

Indian IT employed 9 lakh women, or 30% of the 3 million directly



employed in the sector in 2012-13. Today, that number has doubled to more than 2 million, or 36% of the total workforce of 5.3 million in the industry.

Indian IT employed 9 lakh women, or 30% of the 3 million directly employed in the sector in 2012-13. Today, that number has doubled to more than 2 million, or 36% of the total workforce of 5.3 million in the industry.

A confluence of factors has accelerated women's representation, including companies developing progressive policies to induct more women into the workforce, increased number of colleges offering computer science courses and more women opting for it, visible examples of women in leadership roles and several state governments enacting policy to enable women to work in night shifts.

POLICIES HELPED

➤ Women were **30% of 3m** directly employed in IT sector in 2012-13, **now 36% of 5.3m**

➤ Aided by **firms developing policies** to induct more women, **more women opting for comp science** courses and several state govts enacting **policy frameworks to enable women to work in night shifts**

➤ TCS employs **2.2L women**, or **36%** of its workforce of 6.1L. Infosys has **1.3L**, or **39.4%**

Debjani Ghosh, president of the IT industry's apex body Nasscom, said it is encouraging to see organisations formalising DE&I (diversity, equity & inclusion) strategies, budgeting for it and embedding it as a critical component to organisational culture and values. "We are seeing outstanding efforts from leaders in re-imagining benchmarks and

accountability," she said.

Ramkumar Ramamoorthy, partner at Catalincs and former CMD of Cognizant India, said the number of seats in computer science engineering and related disciplines has expanded rapidly across India, and in states like Tamil Nadu, it has more than doubled. "Given the nature of work, many female students opt for this discipline of study over others. Two, the pandemic has enabled work to move to where great talent resides, including tier-2 and tier-3 locations, thereby enabling greater women participation. In some progressive companies, women as a proportion of workforce in tier-2 and tier-3 locations is well over 50%," he said.

Source: Nasscom

% OF WOMEN IN THE INDIAN TECH INDUSTRY	Year	Total employee base (in lakh)	Women employees (in lakh)	% of women
	FY2013	30.4	9.1	30
FY2014	32.6	11.0	34	
FY2015	34.8	11.8	34	
FY2016	36.9	12.5	34	
FY2017	38.6	13.1	34	
FY2018	39.6	13.4	34	
FY2019	42.2	14.7	35	
FY2020	44.6	15.6	35	
FY2021	46.5	16.2	35	
FY2022	51.0	18.3	36	
FY2023	53.9	19.4	36	

To raise women percentages, companies have introduced special skilling and upskilling programmes, identified women leaders and have offered programmes to help women who took breaks to reintegrate into the workforce.

Skilling boost for women techies

TCS has 2.2 lakh women employees, constituting 36% of the total workforce of 6.1 lakh employees. In its 2022-23 annual report, the company said it has seen a 60% increase in senior women executives over the last five years. Infosys has 1.3 lakh women employees, comprising 39.4% of its overall workforce.

Nasscom's Ghosh said their research finds that women representation is 40% higher in organisations where the senior leadership or the CEO is driving the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) agenda. "This corroborates the significance of leadership buy-in for successful DEI

outcomes. What is needed now is to dive deep in translating intent into actionable impact. This is extremely critical as we strive to become a world-class digital talent nation with inclusion, diversity, and equity at its core," she said.

Namratha Dharshan, chief business leader for India research in technology research and advisory firm ISG, said enterprises are also keen to partner with IT services companies that help address their diversity and inclusion strategy. "This is gradually becoming one of the critical criteria for outsourcing. Hybrid working and flexible working conditions have opened opportunities for women to consider employment, especially for those returning from maternity breaks. Besides, newer safety guidelines have pushed companies to take appropriate measures to ensure women's safety while deploying night shifts."

Ramamoorthy pointed out how many women have become CEOs, especially in GCCs of large multinationals, which is an inspiration for female students. "Uma Ratnam (Optum and Barclays), Gangapriya Chakraverti (Ford), Daisy Chittilapilly (Cisco), Prativa Mohapatra (Adobe), Sirisha Voruganti (Lloyds Bank) are some great examples of low profile but highly accomplished women leaders. Finally, policy changes by several state key governments enabling women to work in multiple shifts has also led to greater women participation in this industry," he said.

In the last 16 months, seven states - Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Odisha - have issued notifications making it possible for commercial establishments to employ women in night shifts. Karnataka was an early mover in this, coming up with an amendment to the Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1961 .

Vikram Shroff, head of HR Law at Nishith Desai Associates, said there continues to be a healthy competition among several progressive Indian states to attract and encourage women at work. Some of the reforms are primarily aimed at removing the night shift work restrictions as was historically contained in the state level labour laws applicable to IT/BPM companies. “These measures tie in well with the overall objectives of companies to promote diversity, equality and inclusion while supporting case laws on equal opportunities at the workplace,” he said.

Hansa Iyengar, senior principal analyst in London-based Omdia said “It is great to see the proportion of women in the IT workforce grow and many play significant roles within their organizations, but it is too soon to celebrate. A clearer indication of the success of women in the technology space would be an assessment of what proportion of leadership roles are held by women, compare the attrition rates of women and the reason behind these, and what is being done to address the long-existing disparity in pay and career progression opportunities. Simply adding female headcount is not enough and more needs to be done to ensure women are treated at par with male employees across all avenues.”