

**Mirjana  
Nedović****PERCEPCIJA O POLOŽAJU  
ŽENA NA RADNOM MJESTU****Marijana  
Markić****THE PERCEPTION OF THE  
POSITION OF WOMEN IN  
THE WORKPLACE**

**SAŽETAK:** Posljednjih desetljeća svjedoči se velikim promjenama u poslovnom svijetu, koje su formalno omogućile veću zastupljenost žena na vodećim pozicijama, no postavlja se pitanje je li u realnosti doista tako. Podzastupljenost žena vidljiva je u mnogim sektorima zaposlenja, ali i društvenog života. Iako su žene danas prisutne i u upravljačkim strukturama, njihov put prema vrhu često je obilježen brojnim preprekama ili izazovima. Prisutnost žena u menadžmentu poboljšava inovativnost i produktivnost poduzeća, no ipak, unatoč pozitivnim promjenama, žene i dalje nailaze na prepreke poput rodnih predrasuda, „staklenog stropa“ i teškoća u usklađivanju profesionalnog i privatnog života. Cilj je ovog rada istražiti podzastupljenost žena na rukovodećim pozicijama, analizirajući razloge koji pridonose toj neravnoteži te posljedice koje ona ima na poslovnu učinkovitost i društveni napredak. Pomoću anketnog upitnika, za potrebe ovog rada provedeno je istraživanje u razdoblju od 10. do 20. kolovoza 2022. godine. Anketni upitnik napravljen je u *Google Formsu*, u potpunosti je anonimna, sastojao se od 21 pitanja, provodio

**ABSTRACT:** In recent decades, the modern business landscape has undergone several significant changes, which have formally enabled a greater representation of women in management positions. Yet, the question arises whether this truly reflects reality. The underrepresentation of women is evident across various employment sectors, as well as in a wider societal context. Despite the increased presence of women in senior and executive management roles compared to past times, their journey toward attaining top leadership positions is frequently characterized by a multitude of obstacles and challenges. Enhanced female representation significantly contributes to the innovation and productivity of organizations; however, despite notable progress, women continue to face substantial barriers, including gender bias, the “glass ceiling,” and challenges associated with reconciling professional and personal responsibilities. The objective of this paper is to examine the pervasive issue of women’s underrepresentation in management positions, analysing the factors that contribute to this disparity and their impact on business efficiency and social advancement. A study



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se *online*, putem e-pošte i društvenih mreža. Istraživanju su pristupile 93 osobe različitog spola, godina i stavova, a obrada podataka provedena je deskriptivnom statistikom i korelacijskom analizom. Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju na to da su žene u prosjeku obrazovanije od muškaraca, ali teže nalaze posao, rade na lošijim pozicijama, manje su plaćene te imaju smanjene mogućnosti napredovanja.

**KLJUČNE RIJEČI:** žene u menadžmentu, rodna nejednakost, položaj žena u upravljačkoj strukturi poduzeća

## UVOD

Položaj žena u menadžmentu u Hrvatskoj danas je obilježen napretkom, ali i znatnim izazovima s kojima se susreću prilikom uspinjanja u hijerarhiji poduzeća. Statistike pokazuju da je udio žena na rukovodećim pozicijama i dalje znatno manji u usporedbi s muškarcima, osobito na najvišim razinama korporativnog upravljanja i izvršnih odbora. Iako su žene sve prisutnije u srednjem menadžmentu, primjećuje se da je njihov broj osjetno manji u visokom menadžmentu među direktorima i članovima uprava, posebice u velikim korporacijama i ključnim industrijama. Postoje razni čimbenici koji utječu na takvu rodnu nejednakost, od nevidljivih prepreka („stakleni strop“) pa do predrasuda da su muškarci tradicionalno sposobniji, unatoč tome što su žene, primjerice, obrazovanije. Osim toga, očekivanja društva i obiteljske obveze nerijetko na žene stvaraju dodatni pritisak, otežavajući im uspostavljanje ravnoteže između profesionalnih i privatnih odgovornosti.

was conducted for the purpose of this paper using a questionnaire, during the period of August 10 to August 20, 2022. The survey, which was created in Google Forms, was entirely anonymous, consisted of 21 questions, and was conducted online, via email and social networks. A total of 93 participants of varying genders, ages, and perspectives completed the survey, and the data were analysed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. The results of the research indicate that, on average, women are more educated than men, but encounter greater challenges in securing employment, occupy lower-level positions, receive lower salaries, and face fewer opportunities for career advancement.

**KEY WORDS:** women in management, gender inequality, the role of women in the corporate management structure

## INTRODUCTION

In Croatia, the status of women in management is marked by notable progress, but also by substantial challenges they face while climbing the corporate ladder. Statistics show that the share of women in leadership positions is still significantly lower compared to men, especially at the highest levels of corporate governance and executive boards. While women are increasingly represented in middle management, their presence in senior management roles, particularly among directors and board members, remains significantly lower, especially within large corporations and key industries. Several factors contribute to this gender inequality, ranging from invisible barriers, often referred to as the “glass ceiling,” to biases that suggest men are traditionally more competent, despite evidence indicating that women, for instance, tend to be more educated. Furthermore, societal expectations and familial responsibilities frequently impose additional pressure on women, complicating their ability to achieve a balance between professional and personal obligations.

Unatoč svim preprekama i poteškoćama, počinje se prepoznavati važnost uključivanja žena u menadžment, kao i stvaranja pozitivnijeg poslovnog okruženja za žene. Inicijative za ravnopravnost, politike rodne raznolikosti, kao i razni edukativni programi koji djeluju na osvještavanje postojanja rodne nejednakosti daju nadu da će se žene više ohrabriti u nastojanju hijerarhijskog probitka. Podrška razvoju edukativnih programa utječe na stvaranje pozitivnijeg poslovnog okruženja za žene. Iako proces nije jednostavan, ove promjene daju nadu da će se u budućnosti povećati broj žena na najvišim rukovodećim pozicijama u Hrvatskoj te da će rodna nejednakost postati manja.

## PREGLED LITERATURE

Literatura o položaju žena u menadžmentu ukazuje na raznolikost stavova i pristupa, koji naglašavaju važnost bavljenja ovim pitanjem u cilju smanjivanja rodne nejednakosti te poticanja i ohrabriranja žena u ravnopravnom natjecanju za rukovodeće mjesto u poduzeću. Položaj žena u menadžmentu u Hrvatskoj pokazuje složenu sliku, koja uključuje analize statističkih podataka, studija o ravnoteži privatnog i poslovnog života te istraživanja o društvenim i organizacijskim preprekama s kojima se žene suočavaju.

Prema statističkim podacima izvješća Državnog zavoda za statistiku i Hrvatske udruge poslodavaca (HUP, 2024), udio žena na rukovodećim pozicijama u Hrvatskoj u proteklih deset godina bilježi blagi porast, ali i dalje znatno zaostaje u odnosu na muškarce, posebice u većim kompanijama i sektorima poput IT-a, financija i građevine. Statistički podaci također pokazuju da žene češće napuštaju upravljačke pozicije zbog nemogućnosti usklađivanja privatnih i poslovnih obveza. Unatoč takvim podacima, ohrabruje postupak države Hrvatske, koja se u 2024. godini obvezala prenijeti europsku Direktivu u svoje zakonodavstvo, u smislu poboljšavanja rodne ravnoteže na visokim

Despite all obstacles and challenges, the importance of integrating women into management positions and creating a more positive business environment for women is increasingly being recognized. Equality initiatives, gender diversity policies, and educational programs raising awareness about gender inequality offer hope that women will be increasingly encouraged in their professional advancement efforts. Support for developing such educational programs influences the creation of a more positive business environment for women. Although the process is not simple, these changes give hope that in the future, the number of women in top leadership positions in Croatia will grow and gender inequality will become less pronounced.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the position of women in management reveals a diversity of perspectives and approaches, which underscore the importance of addressing gender inequality and fostering equal opportunities for women to compete for management positions within organizations. The position of women in management in Croatia presents a nuanced landscape, encompassing statistical analyses, comprehensive studies on work-life balance, and research into the social and organizational barriers women encounter.

According to statistical data from the report of the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Croatian Employers' Association (HUP, 2024), the share of women in management positions in Croatia has recorded a slight increase in the past decade, however; it still lags significantly behind men, especially in larger companies and sectors such as IT, finance and construction. The data also shows that women are more likely to leave management positions due to the inability to reconcile private and professional obligations. Notwithstanding these systemic challenges, recent legislative developments present a promising paradigm shift. The Croatian government's proactive alignment with European

upravljačkim pozicijama (u upravama i nadzornim odborima poduzeća).

Direktiva nalaže da je potrebno osigurati da do 30. lipnja 2026. godine najmanje 40 % radnih mjesta neizvršnih direktora ili 33 % svih direktorskih mjesta bude popunjeno podzastupljenim spolom (Hrvatska udruga poslodavaca, 2024).

U literaturi se također vrlo često mogu pronaći pojmovi rodne predrasude i „stakleni strop“. „Stakleni strop“ je pojam koji se koristi kada se govori o nevidljivim preprekama koje žene doživljavaju pri uspinjanju na više hijerarhijske razine upravljanja. Pojam „stakleni strop“ prvi spominju autori Hymowitz & Schelhardt (Hymowitz & Schelhardt, 1986), ukazujući na postojanje nevidljive barijere koju žene vrlo teško zaobilaze da bi došle do vodećih pozicija u poduzećima. U novije vrijeme pojavljuje se i pojam „stakleni labirint“, koji ukazuje na postojanje puta u smislu hijerarhije s mnogo prepreka, a prema Tešiji (2024) to je metafora koja prepoznaje prepreke, no upućuje na to da one nisu potpuno nesavladive. Istraživanja pokazuju da žene napreduju sporije od muškaraca, unatoč tome što su obrazovanije (Burušić-Barčan & Burušić, 2021).

Tradicionalno shvaćanje žene samo kao majke i domaćice također je jedna od otegotnih okolnosti i uvelike stvara poteškoće u ostvarivanju poslovnih ambicija. Žena je pod neprestanim pritiskom obiteljskih obveza, što ovelike otežava realizaciju poslovnih ambicija i uspinjanje hijerarhijskom ljestvicom. Prema Tudor, Osokina i Ingram (2005) postoji problematika dvostrukih obveza koje se ženi nameću brigom o kućanstvu i odgoju djece.

Za ostvarivanje ravnoteže između privatnog i poslovnog života od velike bi važnosti bila podrška poduzeća u vidu omogućavanja fleksibilnog radnog vremena i podrške u obavljanju posla. Upravo nedostatak razumijevanja dovodi do toga da žene rjeđe dolaze do najviših rukovodećih pozicija.

Union directives – specifically the 2024 mandate addressing gender balance in corporate governance structures – signals a transformative approach to institutional gender equity. This regulatory intervention aims to systematically recalibrate the demographic composition of management boards and supervisory councils, potentially catalysing substantive organizational cultural change.

The Directive mandates that by 30 June 2026, at least 40% of non-executive executive positions or a minimum 33% of all executive positions are occupied by the underrepresented sex (Croatian Employers' Association, 2024).

The terms “gender bias” and “glass ceiling” are common concepts in organizational literature. The “glass ceiling” metaphor, first introduced by Hymowitz & Schelhardt (1986), describes the invisible systemic barriers that impede women’s advancement to higher management positions. More recently, the term “glass labyrinth” has emerged, as noted by Tešija (2024), which recognizes obstacles but indicates that they are not completely insurmountable. Research shows that women progress more slowly than men, despite being more educated (Burušić-Barčan & Burušić, 2021).

Traditional societal constructs that predominantly conceptualize women as mothers and homemakers contribute to the previously mentioned professional impediments. Women consistently face dual pressures arising from familial responsibilities, which substantially complicate professional aspirations and advancement. Tudor, Osokina, and Ingram (2005) highlight the systemic challenge of “double obligations” imposed on women, by having to take care of both the household and the upbringing of children.

To successfully reconcile personal and professional responsibilities, corporate support in the form of flexible working hours and assistance in performing work is crucial. It is precisely this lack of understanding that directly leads to women rarely reaching the highest management positions.

U cilju suzbijanja rodne nejednakosti kontinuirano se provode i nadograđuju politike i inicijative za ravnopravnost spolova. Na primjer, Izvješće Europske komisije o rodnoj ravnopravnosti iz 2022. godine pokazuje da hrvatska poduzeća nastoje uvoditi politike za poticanje ravnopravnosti, poput mentorskih programa i politika inkluzivnog zapošljavanja. Hrvatska se nalazi ispod prosjeka Europske unije kada je riječ o zastupljenosti žena na vodećim pozicijama, ali se bilježe pozitivni pomaci zbog europskih i lokalnih inicijativa (Europska komisija, 2024).

Daljnje zalaganje za suzbijanje rodne nejednakosti može se očitovati provođenjem mentorstva kao podrške ženama u ostvarivanju njihovih karijera i ambicija. Nadalje, prema istraživanju, poduzeća s većim udjelom žena na rukovodećim pozicijama pokazuju veću inovativnost, bolju prilagodljivost tržišnim promjenama i veću produktivnost. Ovo izvješće ističe da žene unose različite perspektive i stilove upravljanja koji pozitivno utječu na organizacijsku kulturu i poslovne performanse (IDPU, 2020).

Istraživanje o rodnoj nejednakosti u poslovnom svijetu pokazuje da žene, unatoč velikim naporima za postizanje ravnopravnosti i suzbijanje rodne diskriminacije, i dalje nailaze na prepreke u napredovanju, posebice na višim pozicijama menadžmenta. U literaturi se sve više prepoznaje uloga politika koje ukazuju na važnost inkluzije, kao što su mentorstvo i programi podrške ženama u menadžmentu, a time se učinkovito suzbijaju prepreke.

## **RODNA RAVNOPRAVNOST – PREGLED HRVATSKE I EU-A**

Prema objavljenim podatcima Državnog zavoda za statistiku (Ured za ravnopravnost spolova, 2023), iz Popisa stanovništva za 2021. godinu o obrazovnoj strukturi u Hrvatskoj vidljivo je povećanje udjela visokoobrazovanih žena. Nadalje se navodi: „Važno je istaknuti kako u svim dobnim

To combat gender inequality, policies and initiatives for gender equality are continuously implemented and upgraded. For example, the European Commission’s Gender Equality Report from 2022 shows that Croatian companies are striving to introduce policies to promote equality, such as mentorship programs and inclusive employment policies. Croatia is below the European Union average in terms of women’s representation in leadership positions, but positive developments are being noted due to European and local initiatives (European Commission, 2024).

Further commitment to eliminating gender inequality can be demonstrated by implementing mentoring as a support for women in achieving their career goals and ambitions. Moreover, according to research, companies with a higher proportion of women in management positions demonstrate greater innovation, better adaptability to market changes, and increased productivity. This report emphasizes that women bring different perspectives and management styles that positively impact organizational culture and business performance (IDPU, 2020).

Research on gender inequality within corporate environments demonstrates that, despite significant efforts to achieve equality and combat gender discrimination, women still face substantial obstacles to advancement, particularly in senior management positions. Emerging academic literature increasingly recognizes the importance of inclusion, such as mentoring and support programs for women in management, as potentially effective ways for addressing these barriers.

## **GENDER EQUALITY – OVERVIEW OF CROATIA AND THE EU**

According to the recently published data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (Office for Gender Equality, 2023), there is a notable increase in women’s educational attainment, particularly in the domain of tertiary education. The 2021

skupinama (osim u onim starijih od 60 godina) u području visokoobrazovanog stanovništva znatno dominiraju žene u odnosu na muškarce, te njihov udio u dobi 25-34 godine iznosi 51 %. Ovi podaci ukazuju na izrazito pozitivan trend u posljednjem međupopisnom razdoblju kod mlađih generacija, jer je vidljivo kako sve veći broj žena upisuje i završava fakultetsko obrazovanje, odnosno programe u visokoobrazovnim institucijama.“

Iako su žene prema postotku obrazovanja od muškaraca i mogu biti jednako uspješne u obavljanju menadžerskih poslova, društvo je još uvijek sklonije takve poslove povjeriti muškim kolegama. Tu se ogleda rodna nejednakost i žene nailaze na prepreke koje mogu biti nevidljive, a ponekad i posve otvorene i jasne, što žene nepravedno stavlja u nepovoljan položaj. Time se obezvrjeđuju kvalitete i profesionalna dostignuća koje žena posjeduje.

Zakon o ravnopravnosti spolova donio je Hrvatski sabor na sjednici 15. srpnja 2008. godine. Njime se željelo urediti Ustavom utvrđena ljudska prava i temeljne slobode (članak 82. Ustava Republike Hrvatske) i definirati temelje za zaštitu i promicanje ravnopravnosti spolova, kao temeljne vrijednosti ustavnog poretka Republike Hrvatske. Dokument je jasno definirao načine zaštite od diskriminacije na osnovi rodne nejednakosti. Jedan od njegovih osnovnih ciljeva sadržan je u suzbijanju diskriminacije temeljem spola u čitavom nizu društvenih područja u kojima se ona pojavljuje. Zakon se odnosi na sljedeća područja:

- ☞ zapošljavanje i rad
- ☞ obrazovanje
- ☞ političke stranke
- ☞ mediji
- ☞ službena statistika.

Definiranjem načina zaštite pokušava se smanjiti ili suzbiti diskriminacija na temelju rodne nejednakosti. Rad je područje u kojem se nastoji osigurati jednak pristup poslovnim

Census on the educational structure in Croatia, demonstrates a significant shift in educational demographics. Specifically, the data reveals that “across most age cohorts (with the exception of individuals over 60), women demonstrate substantial educational dominance, with a particularly pronounced representation of 51% in the 25-34 age bracket.” This trend signifies a transformation in educational participation, suggesting progressive changes in gender dynamics within academic and professional spheres.

Although the data shows that women are more educated than men and can be equally successful in performing managerial tasks, society is still more inclined to entrust such tasks to their male colleagues. This reflects gender disparity through subtle and overt mechanisms of gender discrimination, which unfairly puts women at a disadvantage. These structural impediments systematically undermine women’s professional potential, effectively marginalizing their intellectual and professional contributions across various organizational contexts.

The Gender Equality Act was passed by the Croatian Parliament on 15 July 2008. It sought to regulate the human rights and fundamental freedoms established by the Constitution (Article 82 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia) and to outline the strategic and legal foundations for the protection and promotion of gender equality, recognizing it as a critical constitutional principle fundamental to Croatia’s democratic governance. The document clearly defined strategies to prevent gender-based discrimination, aiming to address inequality across various social domains. The Act focuses on the following key areas:

- ☞ employment and work
- ☞ education
- ☞ political organizations
- ☞ media
- ☞ official statistics.

moogućnostima za oba spola. Zakon pokriva i sektor obrazovanja, promovirajući ravnopravan pristup obrazovnim resursima i mogućnostima za oba spola. Za područje politike postavlja standarde za rodnu jednakost u političkim strankama, a za medije naglašava važnost promicanja rodne jednakosti. Konačno, u području službene statistike zakon propisuje obvezu prikupljanja i objavljivanja svih podataka u vezi s rodnom ravnopravnošću.

Problem rodne nejednakosti može se ogledati i u jazu u plaćama između muškaraca i žena koji obavljaju jednake poslove. Žene u EU-u u prosjeku su oko 15 % slabije plaćene od muškaraca. Pritom je situacija u nekim zemljama članicama EU-a još teža. Na primjer, žene u Velikoj Britaniji u prosjeku zarađuju 30 % manje od muškaraca (Chant, 2003), dok je situacija mnogo povoljnija u novim članicama, poput Malte, Mađarske i Poljske, gdje razlika iznosi između 10 i 15 %. Žene se uglavnom zapošljavaju u sektorima u kojima već dominiraju, koji su redovito slabije plaćeni i gdje teže dolaze do rukovodećih položaja, npr. u školstvu, zdravstvu, socijalnoj skrbi, činovništvu, uslugama (Galić i Nikodem, 2007).

Europski parlament pozvao je na konkretne mjere za smanjivanje rodne razlike u plaći, koja je u EU-u u prosjeku iznosila 13 % u 2020. godini, i mirovinskog jaza, tj. razlike u mirovinskim primanjima muškaraca i žena, koja je iznosila 29 % u 2019. godini. Također je pozvao na provedbu mjera za rješavanje problema ženskog siromaštva, s obzirom na to da je veća vjerojatnost da će žene živjeti u siromaštvu nego muškarci (Europski parlament, 2019).

Profesionalna rodna segregacija jedan je od glavnih čimbenika koji utječu na nejednakost u plaćama između muškaraca i žena. Premda se sve više žena zapošljava na dobro plaćenim stručnim poslovima, osobito mladih i visokokvalificiranih, raste i broj slabo plaćenih poslova povećanog uslužnog sektora ženske radne snage. Žene

By defining protection methods, attempts are made to reduce or suppress discrimination based on gender inequality. Employment is an area where equal access to business opportunities for both sexes is sought to be ensured. The legislative framework also covers the education sector, promoting equal access to educational resources and opportunities for both sexes. As far as politics goes, it sets standards for gender equality in political parties, and for the media, it emphasizes the importance of promoting gender equality. Finally, within the domain of official statistics, the legislative framework prescribes the obligation to collect and publish all data related to gender equality.

The problem of gender inequality is also reflected in the pay gap between men and women who perform the same jobs. Women in the EU are on average paid about 15% less than their male counterparts with variations across member states. The United Kingdom exemplifies more pronounced wage inequality, where women's earnings lag behind men's by around 30% (Chant, 2003), in contrast to newer EU member states like Malta, Hungary, and Poland, which demonstrate relatively narrower pay gaps of 10-15%. Women are mainly employed in sectors where they already dominate, which are regularly paid less and where it is more difficult for them to reach management positions, e.g. in education, health, social care, clerical work, services (Galić and Nikodem, 2007).

The European Parliament has called for concrete measures to reduce the gender pay gap. In 2020, the gender pay gap across the EU averaged 13%, while the pension income differential reached a significant 29% in 2019, highlighting persistent economic inequalities. It has also called for measures to mitigate female poverty, given that women are more likely to live in poverty than men (European Parliament, 2019).

Occupational gender segregation is one of the main factors influencing pay inequality between men and women. While more women

su i dalje u pravilu natprosječno zastupljene na slabije plaćenim poslovima, a najslabije na vrhu distribucije dohotka (Giddens, 2007).

Zbog nezadovoljavajućih podataka o rodnoj nejednakosti, među glavnim je ciljevima u suvremenom poslovnom svijetu nastojanje da se ukloni diskriminacija između muških i ženskih zaposlenika, kao i postojanje razlike između njihovih plaća. Ravnopravnost poslovanja dovodi do mješovitog menadžmenta. Menadžeri i menadžerice posjeduju različite menadžerske vještine i različito reagiraju na poslovne situacije koje se pred njih postavljaju. Jednakost i jednaki tretman muškaraca i žena u poslovnom okruženju za rezultat ima stabilno i uravnoteženo poslovanje koje dugoročno opstaje. Sasvim je sigurno da je potrebno još mnogo vremena i upornosti dok se svijet ne osvijesti o važnosti sudjelovanja žena u menadžmentu. Taj se proces može i treba poticati te ubrzati rodnom jednakošću.

## METODOLOGIJA RADA

Istraživanje je provedeno putem ankete. Anketni upitnik napravljen je u *Google Formsu*, potpuno je anonimna, sastojao se od 13 pitanja, provodio se *online*, putem e-pošte i društvenih mreža. Istraživanju su pristupile 93 osobe (N=93) različitog spola, godina i stavova. Obrada podataka provedena je deskriptivnom statistikom i korelacijskom analizom te je korištena metoda analize i sinteze. Cilj je istraživanja utvrditi jesu li žene na radnom mjestu diskriminirane.

U radu je postavljena hipoteza:

H1: Žene su na radnom mjestu diskriminirane.

## REZULTATI I RASPRAVA

Anketni upitnik počeo je s pitanjima o starosnoj dobi, spolu i statusu. Većina ispitanika nalazi se u dobnoj skupini od 18 do 25 godina i ne smatra žene ravnopravnima s muškarcima. Više ispitanika osobno

are increasingly securing professional and well-paid positions, particularly among younger and highly educated cohorts, they remain disproportionately represented in low-wage service sector employment. Despite progress in certain professional domains, women continue to experience systematic economic marginalization, with limited representation in high-income leadership roles (Giddens, 2007).

Due to inadequate data on gender inequality, one of the main goals in modern business environments is to eliminate discrimination between male and female employees, as well as the difference in their salaries. Equality in business fosters diverse management approaches, as managers possess varying skills and responses to the challenges they encounter. By promoting equality and fair treatment for men and women within business contexts, organizations can achieve increased stability and balance, ensuring long-term viability. It is evident that significant time and commitment are necessary for widespread recognition of the importance of women's involvement in management. Encouraging and expediting this process should be driven by a commitment to gender equality.

## METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted through an anonymous survey created using Google Forms. The survey consisted of 13 questions and was distributed online via email and social networks. A total of 93 participants (N=93) of different genders, ages, and backgrounds took part in the research. Data processing involved descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, employing methods of analysis and synthesis. The aim of the research is to determine whether women are discriminated against in the workplace.

The hypothesis presented in the paper is:  
H1: Women are discriminated against in the workplace.



poznaje muškarce na rukovodećim pozicijama, a svi ispitanicu složili su se da muškarac i žena mogu jednako dobro obavljati rukovodeći posao.

Grafikon 1 prikazuje spol ispitanika u postotcima: sudjelovalo je 8,6 % muškaraca i 91,4 % žena.

Grafikon 2 prikazuje dob ispitanika: najviše ispitanika, 61,3 %, u dobi je između 18 i 25 godina, a u dobi od 26 do 35 godina života ih je 31,2 %. Četiri su osobe stare između 46 i 55 godina, dvije između 36 i 45, a samo jedna osoba starija je od 65 godina.

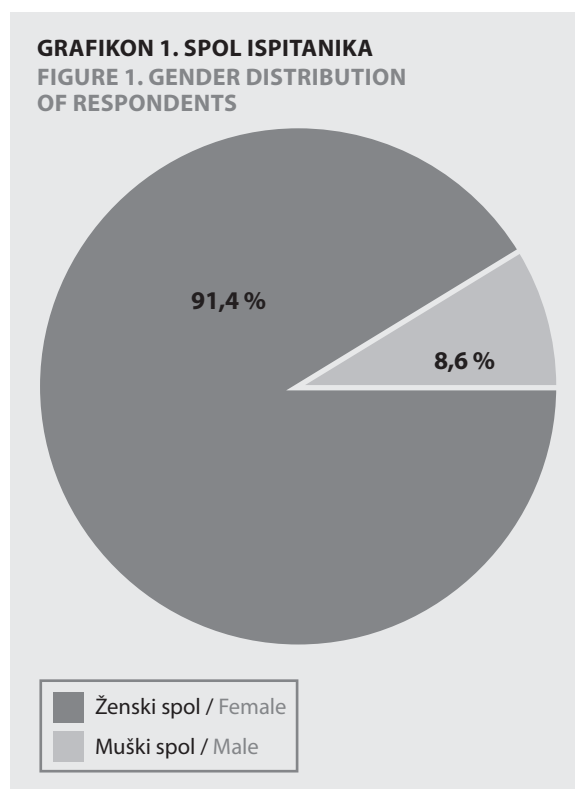
Grafikon 3 prikazuje radni status i iz njega je vidljivo da je gotovo jednak broj zaposlenih (48,4 %) i studenata (45,2 %), jedna je osoba umirovljenik, a petero ih je nezaposleno.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

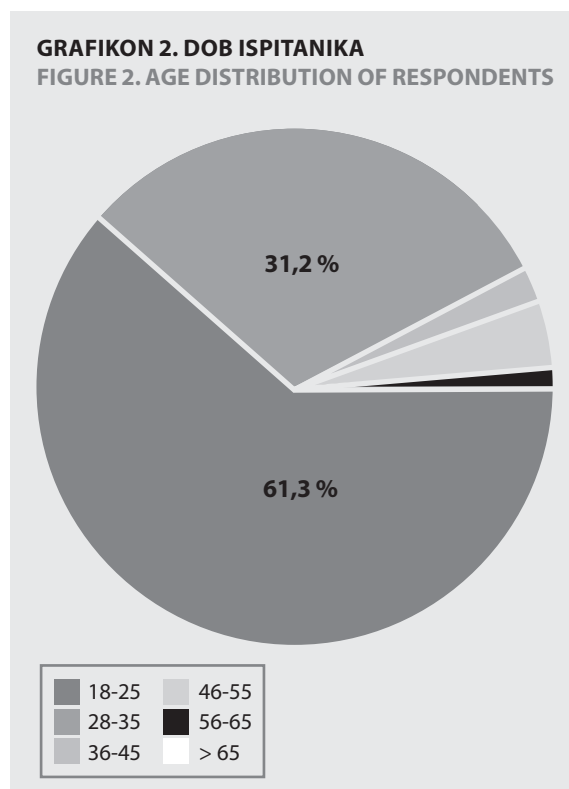
The questionnaire started with questions about age, gender, and employment status. The majority of respondents are in the age group of 18 to 25 years and do not believe that women are equal to men in the workplace. Several respondents personally know men in management positions. Interestingly, all respondents agreed that both men and women can perform management work equally well.

Figure 1 illustrates the gender distribution of respondents in percentages. Specifically, 8.6% of respondents identified as men, while 91.4% identified as women.

Figure 2 illustrates the age distribution of respondents. The majority of respondents, 61.3%,

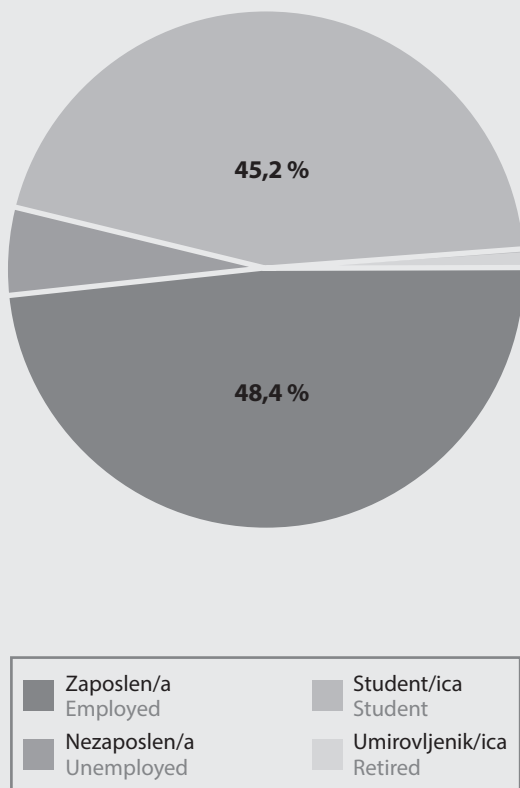


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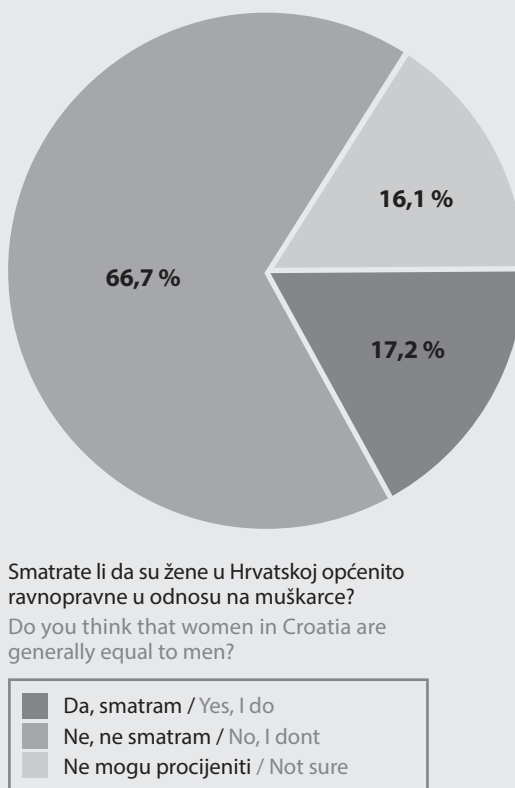
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**GRAFIKON 3. RADNI STATUS**  
**FIGURE 3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS**  
**OF RESPONDENTS**



Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

**GRAFIKON 4. RAVNOPRavnOST**  
**ŽENA I MUŠKARACA**  
**FIGURE 4. GENDER EQUALITY**



Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

Grafikon 4 prikazuje ravnopravnost žena i muškaraca: 16,1 % ispitanika nije moglo procijeniti ravnopravnost, najviše ispitanika, 66,7 %, smatra da žene nisu ravnopravne s muškarcima, a 17,2 % smatra ih ravnopravnima.

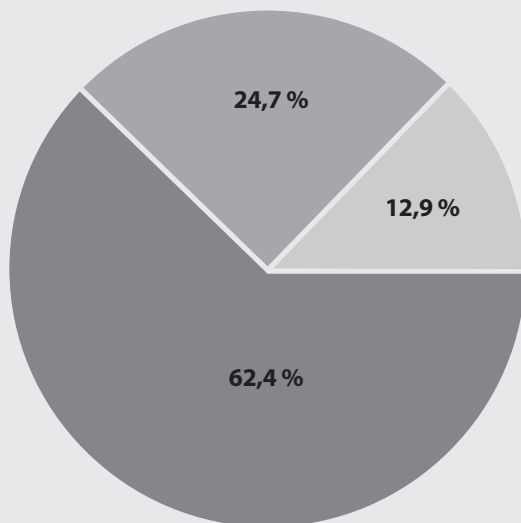
Grafikon 5 prikazuje koji su elementi najvažniji za uspješnu karijeru, pri čemu je 62,4 % ispitanika navelo da su najvažniji znanje i sposobnosti, a nitko od ispitanika spol ne smatra najvažnijim za uspješnu karijeru. Za 12,9 % ispitanika za uspješnu karijeru

are between the ages of 18 and 25. Additionally, 31.2% are between the ages of 26 and 35. Four respondents are between the ages of 46 and 55, two are between the ages of 36 and 45, and only one respondent is older than 65.

Figure 3 illustrates the employment status of respondents. It is evident that there is nearly an equal number of employees (48.4%) and students (45.2%). Additionally, one respondent is a pensioner, and five respondents are unemployed.

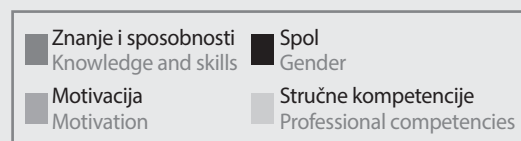
GRAFIKON 5. USPJEŠNOST KARIJERE

FIGURE 5. CAREER SUCCESS



Prema Vašem mišljenju, što je najbitnije za uspješnu karijeru?

In your opinion, what is the most important thing for a successful career?



Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

najbitnije su stručne kompetencije, a za 27,7 % najbitnija je motivacija.

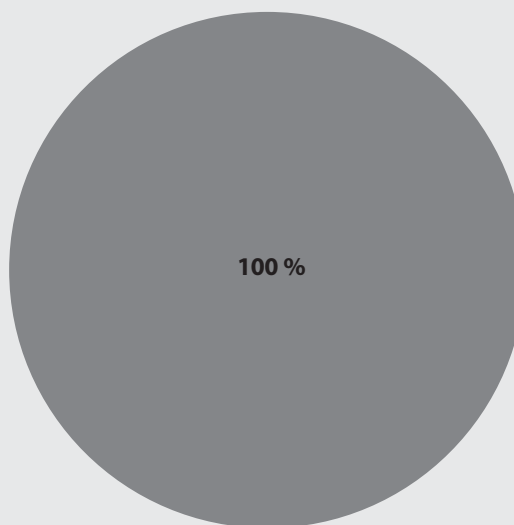
Svi ispitanici, ukupno 100 %, složili su se da žene mogu jednako dobro obavljati menadžerski posao kao muškarci (Grafikon 6).

Grafikon 7 prikazuje da je 58,1 % ispitanika svjedočilo diskriminaciji žena na radnom mjestu, dok ih je 41,9 % odgovorilo da nije.

Iz Grafikona 8 vidljivo je da 93,5 % ispitanika smatra da spol ne određuje pravednost, dva

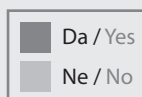
GRAFIKON 6. OBAVLJANJE MENADŽERSKOG POSLA – USPOREDBA ŽENA I MUŠKARACA

FIGURE 6. PERFORMING MANAGERIAL WORK – COMPARISON OF WOMEN AND MEN



Mogu li žene obavljati menadžerski posao jednako dobro kao i muškarci?

Can women perform the job of a manager as well as men?



Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

Figure 4 presents respondents' perceptions of gender equality. 16.1% of respondents were unable to assess equality. The majority, 66.7%, believe that women are not equal to men, while 17.2% consider women and men to be equal.

Figure 5 illustrates the elements considered most important for a successful career. According to 62.4% of respondents, knowledge and skills are the most crucial factors, with none of the respondents considering gender to be the most important. For 12.9% of respondents, professional

ispitanika vide muškarca kao pravednijeg rukovoditelja, a četiri ispitanika vide ženu kao pravedniju rukovoditeljicu.

Grafikon 9 prikazuje da 28 % posto ispitanika ne smatra da je žena manje plaćena za isti posao od muškog kolege, a 72 % smatra ih da su muškarci bolje plaćeni.

Grafikon 10 prikazuje da 14 % ispitanika na rukovoditeljskoj poziciji preferira ženu, 9,7 % preferira muškarca, a 76,3 % ispitanika navodi da im je svejedno je li rukovoditelj muškarac ili žena.

competencies are deemed most important, while 27.7% believe motivation is the key factor for a successful career.

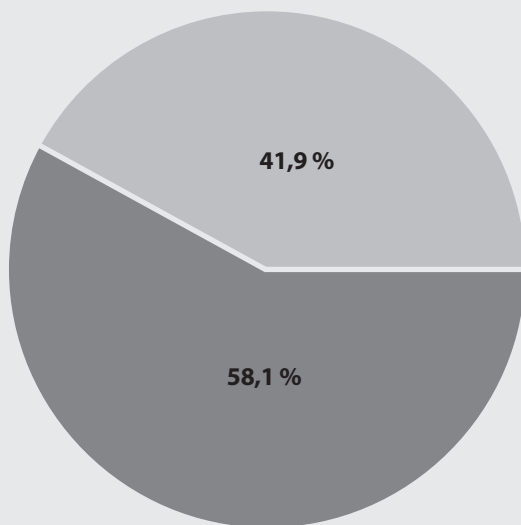
All respondents, a total of 100%, agreed that women are equally capable of performing managerial jobs as men (Figure 6).

Figure 7 shows that 58.1% of respondents have witnessed discrimination against women in the workplace, while 41.9% reported that they have not.

Figure 8 indicates that 93.5% of respondents feel that gender does not affect leadership fairness.

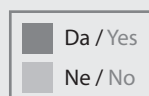
**GRAFIKON 7. DISKRIMINACIJA ŽENA NA RADNOM MJESTU**

**FIGURE 7. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE**



Jeste li svjedočili ili čuli za neki oblik diskriminacije žena na radnom mjestu?

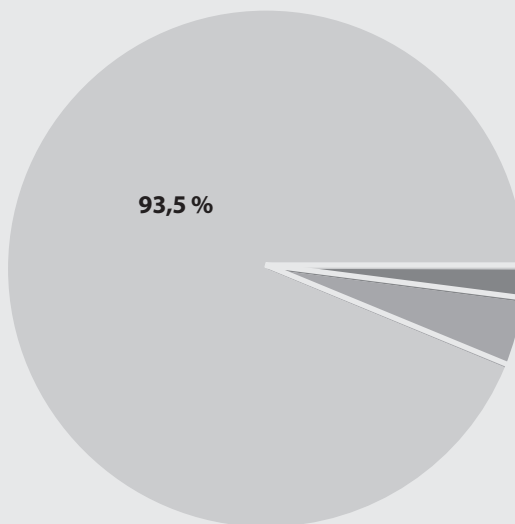
Have you witnessed or heard of any form of discrimination against women in the workplace?



Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

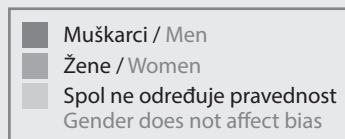
**GRAFIKON 8. PRAVEDNOST RUKOVODITELJA**

**FIGURE 8. FAIR LEADERSHIP ACCORDING TO GENDER**



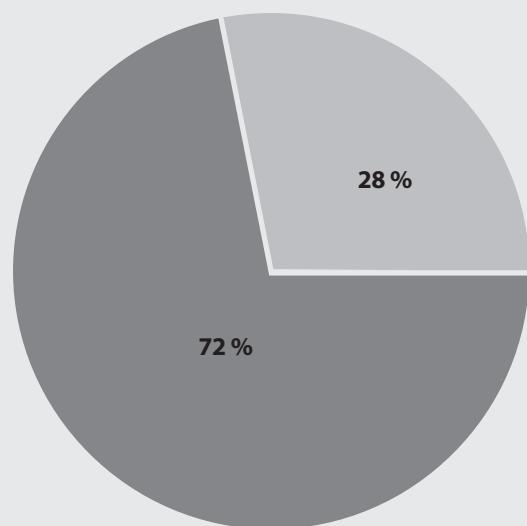
Tko je prema Vašem mišljenju općenito pravedniji rukovoditelj?

Who do you think is generally a fairer manager?

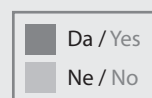


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**GRAFIKON 9. RODNA NEJEDNAKOST  
NA OSNOVI PLAĆE**  
**FIGURE 9. GENDER INEQUALITY BASED  
ON SALARY**



Smatrate li da su muškarci bolje plaćeni za isti posao nego žene?  
Do you think men are paid better than women for the same job?



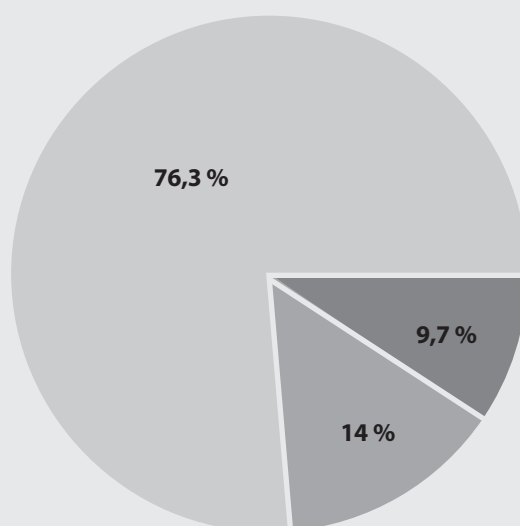
Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

Grafikon 11 prikazuje da većina ispitanika, 61,3 %, ne zna kome se mogu obratiti u slučaju diskriminacije, a 38,7 % zna kome se trebaju obratiti u slučaju diskriminacije.

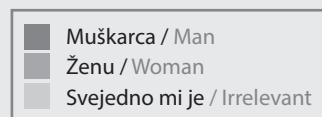
Grafikon 12 prikazuje da 53,8 % ispitanika ne smatra da se Zakon o ravnopravnosti spolova provodi u političkim i javnim tijelima, dok ih 6,4 % smatra, a 39,8 % ne može procijeniti.

Grafikon 13 prikazuje da diskriminaciju kao očiglednu vidi 71 % ispitanika, a 29 % ispitanika ne vidi diskriminaciju.

**GRAFIKON 10. PREFERENCIJA  
RUKOVODITELJA PO RODNOSTI**  
**FIGURE 10. GENDER PREFERENCES  
IN MANAGEMENT**



Koga bi radije imali za rukovoditelja?  
Who would you prefer to have as a manager?



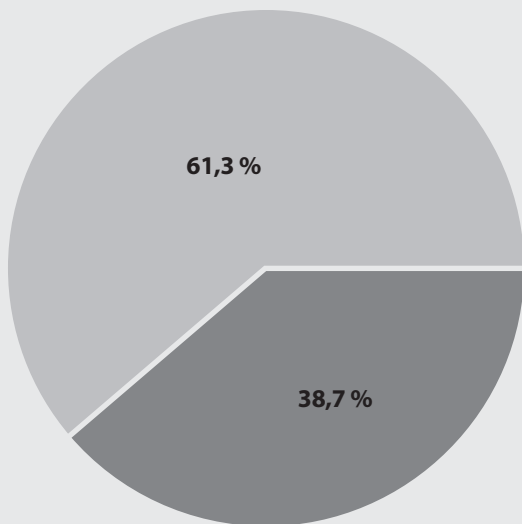
Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

Two respondents view men as more unbiased managers, whereas four respondents regard women as more unbiased managers.

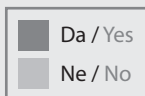
Figure 9 reveals that 28% of respondents do not perceive women as being compensated less than their male counterparts for equivalent work. Conversely, 72% of respondents hold the view that men receive superior compensation for the same roles

Figure 10 illustrates that 14% of respondents prefer a female manager, while 9.7% prefer a male one.

**GRAFIKON 11. POSTUPANJE U SLUČAJU DISKRIMINACIJE**  
**FIGURE 11. STEPS TO TAKE IN CASE OF DISCRIMINATION**

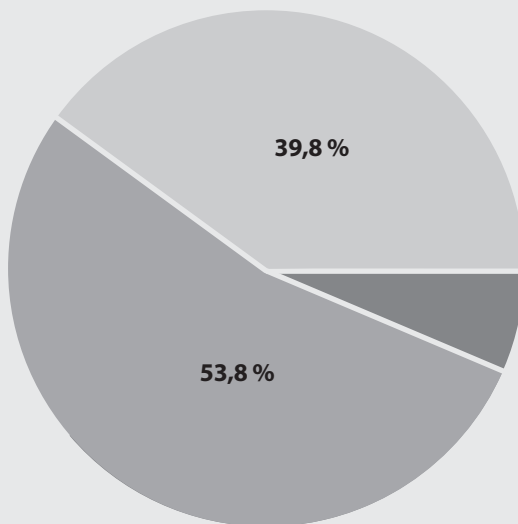


Znate li kome se kao žena ili muškarac možete obratiti u slučaju diskriminacije na radnom mjestu ili pri zapošljavanju?  
 Do you know what steps to take as a woman or a man in case of discrimination in the workplace or during hiring?

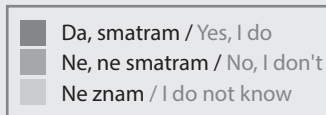


Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

**GRAFIKON 12. ZAKON O RAVNOPRAVNOSTI SPOLOVA / FIGURE 12. GENDER EQUALITY ACT**



Zakonom o ravnopravnosti spolova propisano je 40% zastupljenosti jednog spola u političkim i javnim tijelima. Smatrate li da se zakon provodi u stvarnosti?  
 The Gender Equality Act stipulates 40% representation of one gender in political and public bodies. Do you believe that the law is being implemented in reality?



Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

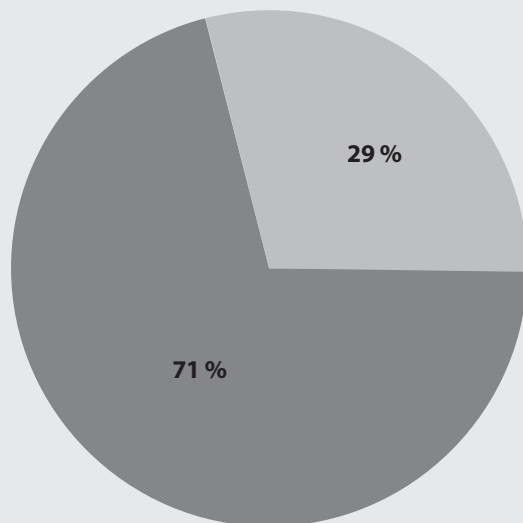
Empirijsko istraživanje ukazuje na to da većina ispitanika smatra da žene nisu ravnopravne s muškarcima, a svi su ispitanici stava da menadžerske poslove jednako dobro obavljaju i muškarci i žene. Zanimljiv je podatak da je više od polovine ispitanika (58,1 %) svjedočilo nekom obliku diskriminacije žena na radnom mjestu i smatraju da ne postoji razlika u pravednosti rukovoditelja s obzirom na spol. Nadalje, istraživanje pokazuje da velik postotak (72 %) ispitanika smatra da su muškarci bolje plaćeni. Najveći broj ispitanika (76 %) navodi da im nije

Notably, 76.3% of respondents indicate that the gender of the manager does not matter to them.

Figure 11 shows that most respondents, 61.3%, do not know who they can turn to in case of discrimination. In contrast, 38.7% of respondents are informed about the correct procedures for reporting discrimination.

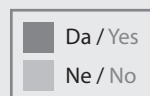
Figure 12 reveals that 53.8% of respondents are of the opinion that the Gender Equality Act is not applied in political and public institutions. Conversely, 6.4% believe that it is effectively

**GRAFIKON 13. RODNA DISKRIMINACIJA**  
**FIGURE 13. GENDER DISCRIMINATION**



Smatrate li da postoji očigledna diskriminacija između muškaraca i žena?

Do you believe that there is obvious discrimination between men and women?



Izvor: izrada autora / Source: Authors' own work

bitno je li rukovoditelj muškarac ili žena, a većina ispitanika ne zna kome se mogu obratiti u slučaju da dožive diskriminaciju na radnom mjestu. Ispitanici su naveli (71 %) da smatraju da postoji očigledna diskriminacija između muškaraca i žena.

Iz istraživanja proizlazi percepcija rodne nejednakosti jer većina ispitanika smatra da žene nisu ravnopravne s muškarcima na radnom mjestu, što ukazuje na prisutnost nejednakosti. Ova percepcija sama po sebi predstavlja snažan indikator da žene nisu u jednakom položaju

implemented, whereas 39.8% are uncertain about its enforcement.

Figure 13 illustrates that 71% of respondents acknowledge the clear existence of gender discrimination in the workplace, whereas 29% do not.

The data shows that the majority of respondents perceive women as not being equal to men, although all respondents agree that both men and women are equally competent in performing managerial tasks. Notably, over half of the respondents (58.1%) have observed some form of discrimination against women in the workplace and believe that leadership fairness is not influenced by gender. Furthermore, a significant proportion of respondents (72%) believe that men receive higher compensation compared to women. The predominant view among respondents (76%) is that the gender of the manager is inconsequential to them; however, most respondents are unaware of what steps to take in case of workplace discrimination. Additionally, a substantial number of respondents (71%) acknowledge the existence of evident discrimination between men and women.

The research reveals that there is a common perception of gender inequality, as the majority of respondents believe that women are not treated equally to men in the workplace, indicating the presence of inequality. This perception itself serves as a strong indicator that women are not on equal footing with men, potentially resulting from direct or indirect discrimination.

The findings demonstrate the presence of discriminatory behavior, as more than half of the respondents (58.1%) reported witnessing some form of discrimination against women. This data suggests that discrimination is not merely a perception but also a reality observed by the respondents. This further substantiates the hypothesis that discrimination is not just an abstract concept but a tangible phenomenon. A significant proportion of respondents (72%) believe that men are better compensated than

kao muškarci, što može biti rezultat direktne ili indirektno diskriminacije.

Istraživanje pokazuje prisutnost diskriminacijskog ponašanja jer više od polovine ispitanika (58,1 %) navodi da su svjedočili nekoj vrsti diskriminacije žena. Ovaj podatak upućuje na to da diskriminacija nije samo percepcija već se manifestira u stvarnim situacijama koje su ispitanici primijetili. To dodatno potvrđuje hipotezu, jer diskriminacija nije samo apstraktna već uočljiva pojava. Vrlo visok postotak ispitanika (72 %) vjeruje da su muškarci za slične poslove plaćeni bolje nego žene. Ova percepcija ukazuje na ekonomski aspekt rodne diskriminacije, jer rodni jaz u plaćama direktno utječe na financijsku poziciju žena i predstavlja jedan od najvidljivijih oblika rodne nejednakosti. Neutralnost prema spolu rukovoditelja, s obzirom na to da 76 % ispitanika tvrdi da im nije važno je li rukovoditelj muškarac ili žena, može ukazivati na činjenicu da predrasude nisu usmjerene prema sposobnostima žena u menadžmentu, već prepreke proizlaze iz strukturnih problema, kao što su politika poduzeća i pristup resursima. Iz istraživanja se primjećuje da unatoč postojanju sustava u kojem je uređen protokol za prijavu diskriminacije većina ispitanika ne zna kome se mogu obratiti u slučaju diskriminacije, što implicira da je problem prisutan, a i sama prisutnost ovakvih mehanizama često proizlazi iz prepoznate potrebe za zaštitom zaposlenika od diskriminacije. Priznavanje očigledne diskriminacije, jer 71 % ispitanika smatra da postoji očigledna diskriminacija između muškaraca i žena, dodatno potvrđuje prisutnost rodne nejednakosti. Visok postotak ukazuje na to da većina ispitanika ima ili direktno iskustvo ili dovoljno informacija da prepozna nejednak tretman. Ovi podaci pružaju jasnu podršku hipotezi da su žene na radnom mjestu diskriminirane. Diskriminacija se manifestira na različite načine, uključujući razlike u plaćama, uočenu neravnopravnost i iskustvo svjedočenja nejednakom tretmanu. Sve navedeno ukazuje na potrebu za daljim istraživanjem i konkretnim mjerama koje bi unaprijedile rodnu ravnopravnost na radnom mjestu.

women for similar roles. This perception highlights the economic dimension of gender discrimination, as the gender pay gap directly impacts women's financial status and constitutes one of the most visible forms of gender inequality. The gender neutrality of managers, with 76% of respondents asserting that the manager's gender is irrelevant to them, may indicate that prejudice is not directed at women's managerial abilities but rather stems from structural issues, such as company policies and resource access. The research notes that, despite the existence of protocols for reporting discrimination, the majority of respondents are unaware of whom to approach in cases of discrimination. This implies that the problem persists and that the presence of such mechanisms often arises from a recognized need to protect employees from discrimination. The recognition of obvious discrimination by 71% of respondents further corroborates the presence of gender inequality. The high percentage indicates that the majority of respondents have either direct experience or sufficient information to recognize unequal treatment. These data provide clear support for the hypothesis that women face discrimination in the workplace. Discrimination manifests in various forms, including wage disparities, perceived inequality, and experiences of witnessing unequal treatment. All these factors underscore the need for further research and concrete measures to enhance gender equality in the workplace.

## CONCLUSION

Despite progress across various business domains, women continue to face numerous obstacles that impede their ascension to higher management positions. The perception of women in the workplace, within the context of gender inequality, is complex and heavily influenced by the organizational culture of the company, the specific field of work, and the broader societal context. Women frequently



## ZAKLJUČAK

Unatoč napretku u mnogobrojnim poslovnim područjima, žene i dalje doživljavaju različite vrste prepreka koje im otežavaju probitak na više hijerarhijske pozicije. Percepcija žene na radnom mjestu u kontekstu rodne nejednakosti složena je i ovisna o organizacijskoj kulturi poduzeća, područja rada i države. Žene se suočavaju sa stereotipom da u odnosu na muškarce nisu dovoljno dobre za rukovoditeljske pozicije, što im otežava profesionalni napredak i pridonosi stvaranju „staklenog stropa“ i „staklenog labirinta“. Percepcija žene na radnom mjestu kao manje ambiciozne rezultira nižom plaćom za jednak ili sličan posao u odnosu na muške kolege. S druge strane, sve više poduzeća prepoznaje vrijednosti rodne ravnopravnosti i aktivno radi na sprječavanju bilo koje vrste diskriminacije žena. Percepcija žena na radnom mjestu postupno postaje pozitivnija, no rodna nejednakost i dalje je izazov, koji zahtijeva napore za promjenu radne klime u suvremenom poslovnom okruženju. Rezultati istraživanja apostrofiraju važnost svih aktivnosti koje pomažu sprječavanju rodne nejednakosti i poticanju osvještavanja o ravnopravnosti žena i muškaraca. Jedno od ograničenja ovog istraživanja jest pretežna zastupljenost osoba ženskog spola u uzorku, što može utjecati na generalizaciju rezultata. Zbog dominacije ženskih ispitanika postoji mogućnost pristranosti u percepcijama i iskustvima rodne nejednakosti, jer su rezultati više orijentirani na izazove s kojima se suočavaju žene. Preporučuje se uključivanje ravnomjernije rodne zastupljenosti da bi se napravila uravnotežena analiza svih zaposlenih. Buduća istraživanja o rodnoj nejednakosti trebala bi se usmjeriti na sveobuhvatniji uvid da bi se mogle razviti učinkovite strategije unaprjeđenja rodne ravnopravnosti. Za postizanje rodne jednakosti na radnom mjestu ključno je nastavljnje politika koje podržavaju profesionalni razvoj žena na višim hijerarhijskim razinama, kao i organizacijska kultura koja podupire rodnu ravnopravnost na svim razinama.

encounter the stereotype that they are less suited for management positions compared to men, which hinders their professional advancement and contributes to the phenomena of the “glass ceiling” and the “glass maze.” The perception of women as less ambitious in the workplace often results in lower compensation for equal or similar work compared to their male counterparts. Conversely, an increasing number of companies are recognizing the importance of gender equality and are actively implementing measures to prevent any form of discrimination against women. While the perception of women in the workplace is gradually improving, gender inequality remains a persistent challenge, requiring concerted efforts to transform the workplace dynamics within the present-day business environment. The research highlights the importance of initiatives aimed at preventing gender inequality and promoting awareness of equality between women and men. One limitation of this research is the predominant representation of women in the sample, which may impact the generalizability of the results. Due to the dominance of female respondents, there is a potential for bias in the perceptions and experiences of gender inequality, as the results are more oriented towards the challenges faced by women. It is recommended to include a more balanced gender representation to facilitate a comprehensive analysis of all employees. Future research on gender inequality should aim for a more holistic understanding to develop effective strategies for enhancing gender equality. Continuing policies that support the professional development of women at higher management levels, along with an organizational culture that promotes gender equality at all levels, are key for achieving gender equality in the workplace.

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