Indian Women Between Tradition and Western Modernity

The Impact of Multi- and Transnational Corporations in India on the Life, Social Role and Self-Perception of Their Indian Female Employees in the Early 2000s

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Preface

Acknowledgements

Abstract

India, alongside China, is known as one of the most quickly growing economies of the world. Due to the country's integration into the global economy it is influenced by globalisation processes and has attracted many investors. The multinational companies (MNCs) are an agent in these globalisation processes; they bring capital, new technologies and their corporate culture into the country, and they create jobs. As a result, they – along with other agents such as the media and educational institutions – have a significant impact on the social life and culture of the people in India. This is particularly true of Indian women especially from the middle class, whose understanding of traditional gender roles is in a dynamic transformation process. My research interests is focused on this transformation process, in particular on the impact – whether intentional or not – of the MNCs as employers on the social role and self-perception of their Indian female employees. The guiding research question is: 'Do multi- and transnational corporations in India have an impact on the life, social role and self-perception of their Indian female employees, and to what extent does this affect attitudes/ notions in society as a whole?'

The project required an interdisciplinary approach, employing methods of empirical social and political science research and cultural studies, especially gender studies. Numerous studies have been published on the impact of media, e.g. film and women's magazines on the changing image of the woman's role in India, but there is still no comprehensive publication on the impact of employment in an international company. The present study examines the satisfaction of women at their workplace, their reactions to foreign cultural influences as well as the effects of their employment on their lives outside of work, e.g. their strategies to cope with both the demands of their jobs and their – still heavy – traditional home duties. The results show to what extent their employment stimulates changes in the traditional role behaviour in the individual case and possibly also contributes to changing attitudes/notions in Indian society at large. Transcultural interrelations in the opposite direction are also taken into account, i.e. the question is investigated to what extent the MNCs are also influenced by the "other", Indian culture.

At the centre of the study is the empirical evaluation of case studies of 12 international companies which represent a broad cross-section of multi- and transnational companies, from both the manufacturing and service sectors and differing in size, product range, nationality or organisational and hierarchical structures. The data collection took place in three phases: Phase I in Pune from November 2006 to January 2007; Phase II in Mumbai from November 2009 to July 2010; Phase III in Mumbai in November/December 2011. The participating women from the MNCs belong to different employment levels (decision-makers as well as wage workers) and

age groups, and they also differ in their social background and education (simple school education as well as academics). The study required a research design that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches and applies several methods: a standardised questionnaire to collect the data with subsequent SPSS-based evaluation, guided interviews with the employed women and experts concerned, as well as supporting observations. In the light of relevant theories, cultural, social and political aspects of the results will be highlighted / identified and related to the current situation.

It remains to be stressed that the study covers the situation in a particular phase of Indian social history, i.e. the years between 2003 (when during a study stay at Pune University I first developed my interest in the situation of Indian women in times of globalisation) and 2011. It was a time when India, triggered by the policy of the Rao government in the 1990s, rapidly opened its economy to the world market and, as a consequence, experienced a growing influence of western culture. Since Narendra Modi took office in 2014 the political and social climate in India has changed significantly, guided by a reactionary Hindu ideology which not only discriminates against Muslims, but also pursues a roll-back in women's emancipation. Thus, the present study captures a certain moment in India's development and can – in a way – be considered a historical one, if of a very recent phase in history, and it remains to be hoped that the developments begun in the 1990s will be taken up again and continued in the near future.

Indien ist neben China als das Land mit dem größten wirtschaftlichen Wachstumspotential bekannt. Durch die internationale Vernetzung seiner Wirtschaft steht es unter dem Einfluss der weltweiten Globalisierungsvorgänge und hat viele Investoren angezogen. Die multinationalen Unternehmen sind ein Akteur in diesen Globalisierungsprozessen; sie bringen Kapital, neue Technologien und ihre Unternehmenskultur ins Land und schaffen Arbeitsplätze. Dadurch haben sie – neben anderen Agenten wie den Medien und den Bildungsinstitutionen – in nicht geringem Maße Einfluss auf das soziale Leben und die Kultur der Menschen in Indien. Das gilt in ganz besonderem Maße für die indische Frauen, deren traditionelles Rollenverständnis sich in einem dynamischen Wandlungsprozess befindet. Mein Forschungsinteresse richtet sich auf diese Veränderungsprozesse, speziell auf den Einfluss, den multinationale Firmen als Arbeitgeber, ob beabsichtigt oder nicht, auf die soziale Position sowie auf das Selbstverständnis ihrer indischen weiblichen Angestellten ausüben. Die erkenntnisleitende Forschungsfrage lautet also: Welchen Einfluss hat die Arbeit für multi- und transnationale Unternehmen in Indien auf das Leben, die soziale Rolle und das Selbstverständnis ihrer indischen weiblichen Angestellten, und in wie weit wirkt sich das auf Einstellungen in der Gesamtgesellschaft aus?

Das Projekt erforderte einen interdisziplinären Ansatz, bei dem Methoden der empirischen sozial- und politikwissenschaftlichen Forschung und der Kulturwissenschaften, insbesondere der Gender Studies, angewandt wurden. Es gibt zwar bereits etliche Untersuchungen zum Einfluss der Medien, z.B. von Film und Frauenzeitschriften auf das sich wandelnde Frauenbild in Indien, jedoch noch keine Untersuchung zum Einfluss des Arbeitsplatzes in einer internationalen Firma. Im Einzelnen untersucht die vorliegende Studie die Zufriedenheit der Frauen an ihrem Arbeitsplatz, ihre Reaktionen auf fremdkulturelle Einflüsse sowie die Auswirkungen ihrer Beschäftigung auf ihr Leben außerhalb der Arbeit, z.B. ihre Strategien zur Bewältigung sowohl der beruflichen Anforderungen als auch ihrer – immer noch starken – traditionellen häuslichen Pflichten. Im Ergebnis zeigt sich, inwieweit ihre Anstellung eine Veränderung des traditionellen Rollenverhaltens im individuellen Fall anregt und möglicherweise auch zu veränderten Einstellungen/ Ansichten in der indischen Gesellschaft beiträgt. Beachtung finden dabei auch transkulturelle Wechselbeziehungen in umgekehrter Richtung, d.h. es wird der Frage nachgegangen, inwiefern auch die MNCs von der „anderen", indischen Kultur beeinflusst werden.

In Zentrum der Untersuchung steht die empirische Auswertung von Fallstudien aus 12 internationalen Unternehmen, die einen breiten Querschnitt von multi- und transnationalen Unternehmen darstellen, die sowohl aus dem produzierenden Gewerbe als auch aus dem Dienstleistungssektor stammen und sich in Größe, Produktpalette, Nationalität oder Organisations- und Hierarchiestrukturen unterscheiden. Die Datenerhebung fand in drei Phasen statt: Phase I in Pune von November 2006 bis Januar 2007; Phase II in Mumbai von November 2009 bis Juli 2010; Phase III in Mumbai im November/Dezember 2011. Die teilnehmenden Frauen aus den MNCs gehören verschiedenen Beschäftigungsebenen (Entscheidungsträgerinnen und Lohnarbeiterinnen) sowie Altersgruppen an und unterscheiden sich auch nach ihrer sozialen Herkunft und

Bildung (einfache Schulbildung und Akademikerinnen). Die Studie erforderte ein Forschungsdesign, das qualitative und quantitative Ansätze verbindet und sich mehrere Methoden zu Nutze macht: zur Datenerhebung einen standardisierten Fragebogen mit SPSS gestützter Auswertung, Leitfadeninterviews mit den betroffenen angestellten Frauen und Experten sowie unterstützende Beobachtungen. In der Auswertung werden kultur-, sozial- und politikwissenschaftliche Aspekte der Ergebnisse, gestützt auf einschlägige Theorien, herausgearbeitet und in Beziehung zur aktuellen Situation gesetzt.

Es bleibt zu betonen, dass die Studie die Situation in einer bestimmten Phase der indischen Sozialgeschichte abdeckt, d.h. die Jahre zwischen 2003 (als ich während eines Studienaufenthalts an der Universität Pune erstmals mein Interesse an der Situation indischer Frauen in Zeiten der Globalisierung entwickelte) und 2011. Es war eine Zeit, in der Indien, ausgelöst durch die Politik der Rao-Regierung in den 1990er Jahren, seine Wirtschaft rasch für den Weltmarkt öffnete und infolgedessen einen wachsenden Einfluss der westlichen Kultur erfuhr. Seit dem Amtsantritt von Narendra Modi im Jahr 2014 hat sich das politische und gesellschaftliche Klima in Indien deutlich verändert, geleitet von einer reaktionären Hindu-Ideologie, die nicht nur Muslime diskriminiert, sondern auch ein Rollback bei der Emanzipation der Frau verfolgt. So fängt die vorliegende Studie einen bestimmten Moment in der Entwicklung Indiens ein und kann – in gewisser Weise – als historisch betrachtet werden, wenn auch von einer sehr jungen Phase der Geschichte, und es bleibt zu hoffen, dass die in den 1990er Jahren begonnenen Entwicklungen in naher Zukunft wieder aufgegriffen und fortgesetzt werden.

Contents

1 Introduction

My interest in the topic of this study was triggered by a study stay at Pune University in 2002/2003, where I did not only continue my studies of British cultures, which was the official purpose of the exchange programme, but became fascinated by contemporary Indian culture characterised by the very different and often conflictious influences of ancient traditions and modernisation. I developed a special interest in the situation of Indian women, who seemed torn between their traditional role and western influences, and I decided to do research in this field, especially as despite the numerous articles and studies on the phenomenon of globalisation published in the western world, very few of them seemed to take notice of the effects on women and even fewer of those on the women in Indian society. Multi-national companies (in the following abbreviated to MNCs) seemed places where the cultural clash was particularly acute. To get a first-hand impression I returned to India for an internship at the *German Insurance* subsidiary in Pune in the autumn of 2003, an international – and yet Indian in certain aspects – working environment in India. The experience at the site and conversations with female colleagues determined me to focus my research on Indian women working in such an environment. A leading question emerged: 'Do multi-and transnational corporations in India have an impact on the life, social role and self-perception of their Indian female employees?' Issues that would have to be explored were the women's experiences at work such as their general satisfaction, gender equality[1] and career chances, the respect the company paid Indian traditions, but also effects of the jobs on their private lives, e.g. their role in the family, free movement in the public sphere etc.

Obviously a combination of social science methods and a cultural studies perspective would be required. First, a relevant body of data had to be collected with the help of a questionnaire and guided interviews, secondly the material had to be interpreted in the light of relevant research literature, historical, political, economic, but also cultural theories. Additional material was drawn from in-depth interviews with experts such as scholars and leading managers, as well as from my own long-term observations. I retuned three times to India, from November 2006 to the end of January 2007 to Pune for an internship with *German Insurance* as well as for first research and contacts to experts, then for nine months of work at *German Automobiles* in Mumbai from November 2009 to the end of July 2010, and finally for a shorter research stay November/December 2011 also in Mumbai. During my visits to India I designed

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[1] Gender equality is understood as equal opportunities for both sexes. When I use the words men and women, I am using these terms that signify heterogenous categories.

the questionnaires, found 12 companies willing to cooperate and distribute the questionnaire, conducted interviews with a selection of female employees, company managers as well as academics, and I collected relevant research literature. My two later stays in Mumbai also opened the opportunity to extend the scope of research, which had first been limited to the manufacturing and service industries, to include the important finance sector as well as women working on higher levels of employment. Further research and the writing of the thesis was done in Germany.

It must be underlined that the study focuses on a particular phase in Indian history, not the present. Thus the study is – though the period observed is not so very long ago – a kind of historical research which offers the possibility of comparing the situation at an earlier moment with the direction in which the country has since developed, which many have seen as a negative turn. The time frame of the study was 2002/3 to 2011, a period when the Indian economy and its international connections were steadily growing. Since the government of P.V. Narasimha Rao (Nationalist Congress Party; 1991–1996) had started a policy of liberalisation, market-orientation and of opening the country to world trade, India had become one of the most successful developing countries, attracting more and more international companies and foreign investment.[2] Even though agriculture is still the largest sector of the economy and despite continuing obstacles to growth such as financial deficits, failing infrastructure and remaining restrictive labour regulations, India has been for some time among the top ten countries with the fastest growing economy. In the period of my research the economy grew annually at 6.7 per cent on average (World Bank Data Indicators).[3] In 2014 things changed. Narendra Modi of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power, who actually continued the neoliberal economic policy and global opening and installed a number of supportive programmes for the very poor, but he also introduced a highly controversial conservative cultural policy which has split the nation causing much conflict, which has naturally also affected the economy (Gottschlich 2018). The economy has slowed down since 2015, the growth rate falling to 6.1 per cent in 2017, and suffered a severe slump in the wake of the Corona crisis 2020, though there is some hope that it might pick up again in 2021 due to new government reforms and more investment (*Business Today* 2021; Bhagat 2021).

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[2] Although multinational and transnational companies differ in their organisational and functional structure, it is usually difficult to clearly distinguish them in practice. Henceforth, only the term 'multinational companies' (MNCs) or 'international companies' will be used in this paper.

[3] The economy also continued to grow after 2011 but was slacking before the pandemic and suffered a massive slump in the wake of the Corona crisis.

Foreign direct investment (FDI)[4] inflow to India reached $6.6 billion in 2005 and steadily grew throughout the years to reach $50.6 billion in 2019 (World Bank – Global, Development, Finance 2007; World Bank Data Indicators). Much of the FDI inflows have been concentrated in the services sector, computer software and hardware, telecommunications, trading and construction development (Government of India n.d.c; cf. Dossani 2005), mostly located in the business and industrial hotspots Bangalore, Mumbai, Pune or Delhi. By 2000, more than 3,000 MNCs could be found in India, and by 2007 their number has risen to around 4,000 MNCs in 2007 in India (Confederation of Indian Industry 2007).[5] The database of Bureau van Dijk listed 8,646 global ultimate owners[6] for India in the same year (Orbis-database, Bureau van Dijk Electronic Publishing). Among them are enterprises such as Apple, AT&T, Coca-Cola, BMW, Volkswagen, Toyota, Ericsson, General Motors, Nestlé, Sony, McDonald's, Vodafone, IBM and Microsoft (cf. Sinha 2004: 37; cf. Government of India n.d.b; cf. *National Herald* 2020). They have established subsidiaries and joint ventures or have entered into alliances, and the number of MNCs coming to India is still rising.

It seems helpful at this point to define the nature and operations of an MNC. The International Monetary Fund defined an MNC or direct investment enterprise as "an incorporated or unincorporated enterprise in which a direct investor, who is resident in another economy, owns 10 per cent or more of the ordinary shares or voting power" (IMF 1993: 86). Usually the term MNC is used when profit from foreign sources make up 10 to 20 per cent of the total revenue of a company (Sinha 2004: 40). The relationship between MNCs and developing countries started in the 1960s and, as Rohini Gupta Suri and Amrik Singh Sudan describe, has served reciprocal interests (Suri and Sudan 2002). Most developing countries are in need of technology, skills and an inflow of capital which can be supplied by MNCs, while they for their part are in search of resources and markets. As Rohini Gupta Suri and Amrik Singh Sudan explained, what initially began as international trade passed through stages characterised by bilateral and multilateral agreements, regional common markets, and subsequently regional economic unions, leading in the end to a global market (cf. Suri and Sudan 2002: 8-10). And it is the multinational companies that have become one of the catalysts of globalisation.

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[4] As stated by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTD), FDI is defined as "an investment made to acquire lasting interest in enterprises operating outside of the economy of the investor." Control over the foreign affiliate is given as 10 per cent or more ownership of shares. Lower equity shares are known as portfolio investments.

[5] The Ministry of Corporate Affairs listed 4,170 foreign companies in 2014 in India (Government of India n.d.d).

[6] Global ultimate owners with at least a 25 per cent shareholding and with subsidiaries of the following types: banks and financial companies, insurance companies, industrial companies, private equity firms, mutual and pension funds/ nominees/ trusts, trustees, foundations/ research institutes.

Although an expatriate manager is usually on site to promote sales, the local branches are managed by local managers. Values underlying MNC practices are "work discipline, punctuality, meritocracy, equity in pay and perks, rationality, individualism, egalitarianism, risk taking, creativity, and impersonal orientations" (Sinha 2004: 40). Usually MNCs also have forms of management different from those habitually used in the host country. In the case of India local companies in the post-independence period were characterized by familial forms of relationship (paternalism, patronage, hierarchical orientation) in the private sector and a bureaupathic (bureaucratic that becomes pathological) mode of functioning in the public sector (Sinha 2004: 33-40). Therefore a great deal of coordination and management skills is needed at the cultural interface, as standards demanded by the head office must be negotiated with local ones.

It is generally acknowledged that women's participation in the workforce is indispensable for the sustainable growth and development of emerging economies. Yet while the world average share of women in the workforce of a country was 46.9 per cent in 2020 (World Bank Indicators)[7], in India their share has actually fallen from 28 per cent[8] in 2007 (World Bank Genderstats 2007) to 20.3 per cent in 2020 (World Bank Indicators).[9, 10] It is true, in some fields women have made steady progress, for instance in the media, literature, teaching and medical occupations, yet these sectors are small. Indra Nooyi, former CEO of PepsiCo, argued at a panel discussion on *Women and Global Leadership* at Yale University that women's participation in the workforce was crucial to India's growth and underlined the MNCs' importance as crowd pullers by creating job opportunities for a wide cross-section of Indian women, not only from the middle classes, and urged Indian companies to follow their example (*Indianews.Net* n.d.).

The following study is divided into six chapters of which the first two deal with historical developments. Chapter 2 retells the story of women's social position and work throughout the ages, from the Vedic period to the present. Chapter 3 sketches the history of India's economic development and growing international connectedness since Independence in 1947 until today. In chapter 4 relevant social, economic and cultural theories are presented, first theories that deal with the cultural consequences of globalisation in general, i.e. the impact the culture of economically developed countries has on those of developing countries. The second part is

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[7] Based on 182 countries.
[8] This equals 427 million people.
[9] According to World Bank's statistics (World Bank Genderstats 2007), India's population in 2004 was 1,079.7 million, of whom 48.7 per cent were female. In 2019, India's population was 1,339.2 million, of whom 48.04 per cent were female (The Little Data Book on Gender 2019; World Bank Indicators).
[10] See also *2.4 The Legal and Economic Development of Women's Situation Since Independence.*

dedicated to theories of indigenous scholars who view the specific cultural change in India. Chapter 5, entitled "Research Methodology of Data Collection", describes in more detail the social science methods used and the localities where the research was done. Further it offers brief profiles of the participating MNCs. In the interest of the participating interview partners' privacy, their names, but also the names of their employing company, have been replaced by code names. Chapter 6, entitled "Results", is "the heart" of the study. First the social profile of the participants is defined including their age, family state, size of family, educational level, type of industry and position in the company. Then the results of the collected data are evaluated by analysing the answers to clusters of questions concerning the women's experiences at work (e.g. the work load, gender equality, work satisfaction, respect of the company for Indian culture, special support by the company, possibilities of complaint) as well as effects of their employment on their private lives. In the last chapter the results are summarised and compared with the currently most prominent cultural theories, and the MNCs importance as agents in the promotion of women's emancipation in India is discussed. Finally, various appendices present the instruments applied (e.g. the questionnaire and quantitative results) and offer some additional material.

2   Women's Position and Work in India throughout the Ages

As India – with its various castes, religions and its diverse regional languages – is such an extremely complex country, any attempt to give a comprehensive picture of the role of women in Indian society would be futile. Instead, the following sketch will concentrate on the history of middle and upper caste Hindu women, the social segment from which the majority of the female workforce employed by the MNCs active in India is recruited. To understand the professional possibilities and limitations of these women one has to take into account the relevant legislation (e.g. the constitutional rights of individuals) as well as the governmental policies and programs designed to promote the equality and protection of women. But the strong social taboos and norms, many of them deeply rooted in religion and old popular cultures, make it also necessary to take a look at some of the older traditions and patterns of belief which contributed (and still contribute) to defining the acceptable place and space of Indian women.

The modernisation of Indian women's situation was a very slow, ambiguous and at times even contradictory process. The three factors which most visibly accelerated this process were the institutionalising of British colonialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the nationalist movement which led to independence in 1947, and finally the new demands of global industrial and economic competition.

Fortunately, such a short functional survey can draw on a rich and solid historical/sociological literature – from general works like Geraldine Forbes' *Women in Modern India* (2004, part of *The New Cambridge History of India*) to more specialized studies like A.S. Altekar's *Role and Status Of Working Women* (2005) and Shanta B. Astige's volume with the same title (2006). As for the social reforms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with their important consequences for the situation of women, the political scientist and historian Partha Chatterjee, a controversial specialist on the later stages of modernisation, will be given special attention.

2.1   Pre-Colonial Heritage

Before the nineteenth century the social fate of Hindu women had seemed to be unalterable for almost two thousand years. Hinduism, the foundation religion of India, is estimated to have originated about 2000 BC and gradually taken shape in various stages until, as a reaction to the

arrival of Islam as a strongly competing religion in the fourteenth century, its profile became more fixed. Indian history is roughly divided into five stages: the Vedic Age (1500 BC – 500 BC), in which the basic texts of Hinduism – the four Vedas and the Upanishads – were created, followed by the post-Vedic periods. These are divided into the Classical Period (500 BC – 1200 AD), the Medieval Period (1200 AD – 1500 AD), the Early Modern Period (1500 – 1850) and the Modern Period (1850 to the present). The role of women was defined quite early, following the laws in the Manusmruti (the laws of Manu)[11] written between 200 BC and 200 AD (translated and quoted by Mitter 1991: 88-89):

> She should do nothing independently,
> Even in her own house.
> In childhood subject to the father,
> In youth to her husband,
> And when her husband is dead to her sons;
> She should never enjoy independence.
>
> She should always be cheerful,
> And skilful in her domestic duties.
> With her household vessels well cleansed,
> And her hand right on her purse-strings. […]
>
> Though he be uncouth and prone to pleasure,
> though he have no good points at all,
> the virtuous wife should ever
> worship her lord as a god.

The text set the tone for the ensuing post-Vedic centuries. Though of course not a precise description of a sociological reality, it listed the central laws and rules which shaped the life of the middle/upper-class segments of Hindu society. Above all, it defined the new sanctity of marriage; for in earlier centuries, in a society which was still tribally structured, marriage had been a much looser affair, with women able to divorce and re-marry. Women had enjoyed a remarkable degree of independence; they could inherit property (even if they could not always control it) and could perform religious sacrificial rituals.

All this changed in post-Vedic society. In a few respects the situation of women may be said to have improved with the sanctification of marriage; some tribal practices such as bride-selling or the acceptance of male extra-marital relationships were banned. Otherwise, however, women lost even the pretence of independence. Though in theory raised to the symbolic status

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[11] The Manusmruti (or laws of Manu) is part of the oldest Hindu law scripture called Dharmasastra. The smruti of the sage Manu contains codes of conduct.

of "a goddess of the home" women had neither property rights nor access to formal education (cf. Desai and Krishnaraj 2004: 306). As daughters they were considered guests in the family, as wives they did not have any status until giving birth, and as widows they were harassed and forbidden to re-marry. Astige, quoting Neera Desai, lists the barriers to women's free development in post-Vedic society – "the patriarchal joint family, the custom of polygamy, the purdah,[12] the property structure, early marriage, sati (self-immolation of widows) or the state of permanent widowhood […]" (2006: 49).

It is no surprise that according to the post-Vedic canon of rules women from the higher divisions of Hindu society were not supposed to work outside the home. Only three basic professions were open to such women (Altekar 2005). The most common – and acceptable – profession was teaching (of language or literature). A few women entered certain occupations of a medical nature (especially midwifery and Ayurvedic therapies). Finally, a woman in the post-Vedic period could enter a musical or dancing career, e.g. as a secular *nagar-vadhu* (i.e. a courtesan) or, in the service of a temple, as a *devadasi*. The temple girls, bought by a temple or dedicated by their parents to the temple, fulfilled certain tasks related to divine services, sometimes possibly also involving erotic practices. In later centuries, however, the dedication of girls to the temples fell into disrepute and was eventually banned.

2.2   The Nineteenth Century: British Policies and Nationalist Reform Concepts

Hardly any attempts were made to change the position of Hindu women before the nineteenth century. Then, not least under the influence of the British colonisers, reforms were introduced in India with the aim to modernise the country and thus make it economically and politically stronger. But the impulses towards reform originated from two very different sources.

The one was a Western concept of modernisation (cf. Forbes 2004: 12-14). The foreign administrators wanted to import Western ideas, habits and institutions to India in order to make the economy (and, of course, their exploitative policies) more profitable. Forbes thinks that the British colonisers regarded the improvement of women's position in society as one of the most important aspects of this modernisation. She quotes James Mill who tried to justify and idealise this "civilizing mission": "Among rude people, the women are generally degraded; among civilized people they are exalted" (qtd. in Forbes 2004: 13).

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[12] Purdah refers to the social and religious practice of female seclusion in two forms: the physical segregation of the sexes and the requirement for women to wear a veil. These practices were brought to India with the Muslim conquest from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries.

In some respects, the British did indeed try to curb or ban some of the problematic traditions (the marrying off of children, the sati etc.); and Astige argues that the British rule had a decidedly beneficial impact on female education and on the access of women to more modern occupations. Desai and Krishnaraj (2004: 309) also highlight the important role of the English language in teaching which helped to introduce modern values of secularism and liberalism. Forbes (2004), on the other hand, gives a very critical account of female work throughout colonial India. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of working women were hired for unskilled labour, e.g. in the factories or mills. Secondly, the new professional fields and modes of production imported by the British harmed the traditional small-scale enterprises. Women employed in bread-making, pottery and cattle-raising were forced into unemployment because of these changes. The introduction of machine power in the Indian mills, for instance, gradually replaced large segments of the female workforce. Those women, on the other hand, who kept their jobs in a mill, a factory or a mine faced harsh working conditions and poor health and sanitation standards – harsher than those of their male colleagues. To quote only one instance: while the men soon were given protective leather shoes the women still went barefoot. Later, after the beginning of the twentieth century, international conferences urged the rulers of India to legislate for more acceptable working conditions (cf. Forbes 2004: 168-169).

Although new job opportunities could be found in prestigious fields such as teaching and medicine, these were open only to very few Indian women. Not many parents encouraged their daughters to go into higher education; and women who did take up a medical or teaching profession faced great difficulties in combining work with the merciless demands of Indian family life; moreover they were paid less than European and Anglo-Indian women and were likely to suffer sexual harassment at the workplace.

As far as the other central aspect of "the woman's question" in nineteenth-century India was concerned, i.e. female education, Astige's positive evaluation of the British contribution needs some modifications, too. The colonisers came from Victorian England where middle/upper-class women were romantically "exalted" (James Mill's term again, qtd. in Forbes 2004: 13) as "angels in the house", but did not have the right to vote, to sue or to own property: "Man must be pleased; but him to please/Is woman's pleasure." Coventry Patmore's proverbial poem "The Angel in the House" (1854) offered a deceptive idealization of middle/upper-class women as "angels" which appeared to be not so different from the Indian identification of the domestic woman with the goddesses Sita and Draupadi.[13] Thus the question remains in how far

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[13] As described in the popular epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, the heroine Sita followed her husband Prince Rama into exile, enduring hardship and temptations for his sake. Draupadi, married to the five Pandava brothers,

upper-class/upper-caste Indian women profited from British modernisation, the answer probably being that they profited most in the field of education. But here, too, progress proved to be extremely slow. The literacy rate for Indian women was still below one per cent in 1900. By 1947, the year of independence, it had reached almost eight per cent – which may still sound unimpressive, but probably meant that the majority of middle-class/upper-class women had finally become literate while the literacy rate of all Indian men had not reached more than roughly 25 per cent (Patel 1996: 75)!

Thus one may conclude that British colonialism had an ambivalent effect. It did indeed "modernise" the situation of Indian women in some respects: it did away with some of the more extreme customs, it made many more women go to work (especially in the new forms of production), it encouraged the schooling of girls. But it also destroyed a great number of traditional female jobs; and restricted by their own Victorian standards, the colonisers did not seriously question the time-honoured role models for middle-class/upper-class Indian women. But to repeat the one exception: it was especially these middle-class/upper-class girls who profited most from the – slow, but continuous – spreading of general education and literacy.

The other factor eventually leading to a reform of the women's position were the emerging nationalist tendencies among Indian intellectuals and leaders, though it was a slow and uneven process. Many early reformers took an ambiguous stand, appealing for acceptance of modern technology and organisation of the economy in order to improve the country's wealth and standing in the world, but at the same time using the protection of the traditional view of women as an argument in their fight against colonialism. This position has recently been taken up again and cleverly adjusted to modern conditions by right-wing Hindu ideology, for instance by political scientist and historian Partha Chatterjee in his specifically Indian modernisation theory (cf. chapter 4.) Differentiating between two domains, the "outer", material sphere (*bahir*) and the "inner" spiritual sphere (*ghar)* (Chatterjee 2010: 120), Chatterjee argued that India should incorporate the alien norms of modernity in the "outer" sphere, i.e. in terms of economic organization, technology, science and "modern methods of statecraft" (ibid.: 121), but protect its "inner" realm, the core of its identity:

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is similarly devoted to all her husbands, but appears as a more powerful and confident woman when compared to the innocent and subordinate Sita (cf. Sara S. Mitter 1991).

What was necessary was to cultivate the material techniques of modern Western civilisation while retaining and strengthening the distinctive spiritual essence of the national culture. This completed the formulation of the nationalist project, and as an ideological justification for the selective appropriation of Western modernity it continues to hold sway to this day […].

(Chatterjee 2010: 121)

In a conclusion typical of patriarchy, Chatterjee saw the outer world as the domain of men, while he considered the inner sanctum of the home as a natural space of women, which must remain unaffected by this material world – "[a]nd so we get an identification of social roles by gender to correspond with the separation of the social space into ghar and bahir" (Chatterjee 2010: 122). Chatterjee explains that the new nationalist patriarchy adopted elements of indigenous tradition in a way which resulted in a reformed and reconstructed identity and in a "new woman" [14] (ibid.: 127) who had the duty to embody and to safeguard this national identity:

The home was the principal site for expressing the spiritual quality of the national culture, and women must take the main responsibility of protecting and nurturing this quality. No matter what the changes in the external conditions of life of women, they must not lose their essentially spiritual (i.e. feminine) virtues; they must not, in other words, become essentially westernized.

(Chatterjee 2010: 126)

This idea of the "selective appropriation of Western modernity" (ibid.: 121), which above all undermines and impedes the emancipation of women, appears to be very widespread among conservative Hindus and thus very influential at the moment; and it explains why the idea of an Indian woman working for a Western multinational company could become the source of some nervousness. Chatterjee, however, had emphasized that the spirituality of the "new women" did not necessarily amount to a form of imprisonment:

This spirituality did not […] impede the chances of women moving out of the physical confines of the home; on the contrary, it facilitated it, making it possible for her to go out into the world under conditions that would not threaten her femininity. In fact, the image of woman as goddess or mother served to erase her sexuality in the world outside the home.

(Chatterjee 2010: 132)

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[14] With regard to Muslim women and other minorities, Partha Chatterjee explains that little change had been made for the Indian Muslim woman. He argues that reforms that are related to the inner realm of a communal identity could only be addressed by the community itself and not by the state (Chatterjee 1947: 132). It is important to note, however, that, according to Chatterjee, the Indian nation failed to include minorities and their issues. Alarmingly, this is still valid until today.

Chatterjee's interpretation of "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question" – thus the title of the relevant chapter in his volume *Empire and Nation* – was taken up by Forbes who neatly summarized: "Indians pursued science, technology, rational economics, and Western political forms while regarding the home as the source of true identity that needed protection and strengthening, not transformation." (qtd. in Forbes 2004: 15).

Uma Chakravarti offered a more critical analysis of the creation of the Hindu-Aryan identity and the golden age of Indian womanhood myth in her essay "Whatever Happened to the Vedic Dasi? Orientalism, Nationalism and a Script for the Past" (Chakravarti 1989/2010). She argues that in the confrontation of colonialism and nationalism,[15] the construction of a particular kind of womanhood and a new national identity as a political imperative for the Indian intelligentsia was a process of selection which also implied exclusions[16] (Chakravarti 1989/2010: 47, 50, 38). Chakravarti sees the building up of the Indian woman to a heroic superwoman as a reaction to the attacks by colonial writers and argues that, in this process during the nineteenth century, the Hindu high caste woman with her high status was foregrounded either to highlight her high status in the past or to reform her low status in the present. Both Chakravarti (1989/2010) as well as Chatterjee (2010) further assume that the construct of Sita or the upper-caste Hindu-Aryan in theoretical texts as well as in modern literature or in art works was a product of the development of a middle-class culture during nationalism in the nineteenth century. And what was constituted in the confrontation between colonialism and nationalism has been embedded not only in the consciousness of the Indian middle class but the Indian collective memory and is now widely perceived as the reality (cf. Chakravarti 1989/2010: 78-79).

This glorification of the Hindu woman, the identification of "the goddess in the house" with the essence of Indian identity necessarily slowed down any possible emancipatory developments – but it did not altogether stop them. There was some progress during the decades of colonialism, mainly in the field of education, but also in the treatment of widows. With or without the encouragement of British administrators Indian reformers took the initiative. Ram Mohun Roy, the "father of modern India" (Forbes 2004: 10), successfully campaigned against sati and related practices. In Pune, for instance, Dhondo Keshav Karve

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[15] Chakravarti (1989/2010) gives an overview of the Orientalist, Utilitarian and Anglicists and Christian missionary writings, followed by a more detailed description of the Indian reactions to the degradation of Hindu civilization. She argues that that *History of Civilization in Ancient India* (1890) by the Bengali historian R.C. Dutt is the most significant historical writing in which he refutes James Mill's denigration of the Hindu civilisation and the low position of the Hindu woman in it (Chakravarti 1989/2010: 50-52).

[16] For example, Aryan values of motherhood, bravery and heroism that were associated with particular groups such as the Marathas, Rajputs or Sikhs were highlighted but foreigners and their identity, i.e. Muslims, were excluded (Chakravarti 1989/2010: 47, 50, 38). Furthermore, "the vedic *dasi* (woman in servitude), captured, subjugated, and enslaved by the conquering Aryans, but who also represents one aspect of Indian womanhood, disappeared without leaving any trace of herself in nineteenth century history", as Chakravarti states (1989/2010: 28).

founded vocational institutions for young widows who were trained to become teachers in girls' schools. In Calcutta Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar urged the British to pass the Hindu Remarriage Act. (Although its adoption in 1856 was an important step, it did not really prevent the harassment of widows or substantially change their status.) In Madras it was Kandukuri Virasalingam Pantulu who tried to promote the remarriage of widows and female education with the help of a Society For Social Reform as well as a Widow Remarriage Association – the examples could be multiplied. In 1887 the National Social Conference was founded, functioning as the social branch of National Congress. It fought against early marriages, and again for the remarrying of widows, for women's education and for women's right to property. But ten years after its foundation it had to be dissolved because of the fierce opposition it encountered. The historian Sumit Sarkar concludes that on the whole "reformers sought only limited and controlled emancipation of their womenfolk" (qtd. in Forbes 2004: 27) and that they did not seriously intend to distance themselves from the patriarchal system which tied down women to the roles of devoted wife and mother.

During the 1930s, when India had been awarded provisional autonomy, some women did become politically active – but these were still comparatively rare cases (Altekar 2005). They were inspired less by "feminist" causes than by nationalist ambitions. They supported the men who fought in the freedom movement, they backed Congress in the non-cooperation movement and the civil disobedience movement (1930–1932) (Forbes 2004). But in spite of the Government of India Act of 1935 which granted voting rights to women over twenty-one years who owned property or had attained a certain educational level, men continued to dominate the nationalist cause, while politically active women were denied the expected participatory rewards.

By World War II the situation had to some extent changed. A new generation of young women joined the freedom movement. Forbes describes them as educated, unmarried, coming from the urban middle class and willing to take action (Forbes 2004: 220). By the 1940s their numbers had dramatically increased. Now women from urban and rural backgrounds got involved in the Quit India Movement, taking part in demonstrations, non-violent campaigns and more radical actions like boycotts and picketing of court buildings (cf. Forbes 2004: 203-209). In other words: for the first time in the course of the freedom struggle women fought side by side with the men – e.g. by participating in the demonstrations inspired by the Bengal Famine of 1943, by joining one of the peasant or tribal movements or even the Nationalist Indian Army (cf. Forbes 2004: 209-220). Women were becoming an integral part of political and social change.

Along with these changes new ideas and ideologies began developing. Earlier women leaders had opposed customs such as child marriage, the purdah system or the discrimination of widows, without questioning the Sita-inspired ideal of the woman "heroically" devoted to the family. Now, in the 1940s, many women hoped for "universal womanhood" (Forbes 2004: 221) with no religious, caste, class or party differences: "The participation of women in the freedom movement generated confidence in them and also shaped the movement for women's rights. Most importantly, it legitimised their claim to a place in the governance of India." (Forbes 2004: 154).

2.3   Feminism(s) in India

When from the mid-19th century on during colonial rule and later in the national struggle Indian women, especially higher caste Hindu women, were gradually allowed more education and modest steps out of the private sphere, this did not result from emancipatory impulses on the side of the political deciders, but was done to provide support for men in their public duties; the basic patriarchal character of Indian culture was not touched. As will be shown in the next subsection, after Independence the new government, following the example of Western states, passed a series of laws establishing more equal rights for women. Nevertheless from the mid-1970s on a new kind of feminism developed under the influence of western feminism.[17]

That the decade 1975 to 1985 was declared the United Nations Decade for Women may have helped the development, but the first triggers were an economic crisis, which led to high inflation, and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's authoritarian politics. The first spontaneous protest movement was the Anti-Price-Rise Movement (APRM), started in Maharashtra against a price rise of 25 % for basic victuals such as rice, oil, etc. The movement consisted of a large number of independent groups, some with a left-wing bias, and lasted from 1972 to 1975, when it was abruptly stopped by a state declaration of Emergency. However, in India with her great heterogeneity of experience according to caste, education, location etc. not one unified feminism

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[17] The following subchapter is mainly based on the following sources:
Dietze, Gaby (²2009): "Postcolonial Theory" in Christina von Braun/Inge Stephan (eds.), *Gender @ Wissen. Ein Handbuch der Gender-Theorien*. UTB 2584, Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 328-349.
Gangoli, Geetanjali (2007): *Indian Feminisms. Law, Patriarchies and Violence in India*, London and New York: Routledge.
Krishnaraj, Maithreyi (2012): "The Women's Movement in India: A Hundred Year History", *Social Change* 42 (3), 325-333.
Loomba, Ania (1998): Feminism, Nationalism and Postcolonialism" In: *Colonialism/Postcolonialism,* London and New York: Routledge, 180-192.
Ray, Raka (1999): *Fields of Protest. Women's Movement in India,* University of Minnesota Press.

emerged, but a great polyvocality of feminisms, some local, some national, some more academic, others practical, and many connected to socialist groups or trade unions, later also to environmentalist groups. Feminists, especially women in academia occupied with overarching theoretical debates, were often blamed for succumbing to western dominance and disregarding Indian cultural values, but from the 70s on there have been considerable differences between western and Indian feminisms. An important issue in both parts of the world has been women's sexual self-determination, but while in the West the focus was on private life – until Me-Too of course –, in India from the beginning the fight was directed against violence within public institutions. The first major campaign in India was around the gang rape of a tribal girl, Mathura, by a group of policemen in a police station and the conspiracy of the judiciary which acquitted the culprits. This campaign, founded is 1980 and calling itself FAR (Forum against Rape), thus targeted violence of the state against the most vulnerable members of society and became a nation-wide movement. In later years the field of activities was broadened and the name changed to Forum against the Oppression of Women (FAOW). Other issues fought against since then have had to do with the tradition of dowry, which was legally forbidden in 1961, but has lived on. The fear to have to pay dowry for daughters led to infanticides of girls and the murder of young married women, whose families refused to top the original dowry. Today dowry-related crimes are even on the rise, which some scholars put down to increasing consumerism. On the other hand a growing number of women's groups and NGOs like Women on Wings or Sinhala focus on practical help for the most needy women, especially in the rural districts and city slums. It is obvious that all the many feminist movements and activities have been concentrated on much more basic and essential rights for women than the comparatively small problems of Indian women working for MNCs.

2.4   The Legal and Economic Development of Women's Situation Since Independence

The partitioning of India and Pakistan did not bring immediate improvement to women. On the contrary, the migration of millions of people brought a lot of suffering to many of them: 80,000 to 150,000 women were kidnapped or fell victims to violence. But after 1947 India continuously developed a constitutional and legal system which in many respects followed the patterns set by the "enlightened" countries of Europe and America. This was especially true for those regulations which defined the place of women within the state and society. A number of legal institutional provisions appeared to create and safeguard equal rights and privileges for

men and women. The equal status of women is declared, in the preamble to the constitution, to be a fundamental right, including social, economic and legal equality (cf. Forbes 2004; Astige 2006; Giri 2006).

Adult suffrage had added women to the electoral register, free education for all up to the age of fourteen was now guaranteed, as were equal protection under the law and equal opportunities in public employment,[18] discrimination in public places and at the workplace[19] was explicitly prohibited. An amendment to the constitution ruled that 33 per cent of the seats in parliament and in state assemblies were to be reserved for women (Singh 2000: 125). Hindu marriage and divorce laws, as well as adoption and inheritance laws were rewritten and passed as separate acts of the Hindu Code between 1950 and 1955. However, many Indians would agree that this legislation requires updating (cf. *The Indian Express* 2006a). To eradicate child marriage the Child Marriage Restraint Act in 1929 set the legal minimum age at 14 for girls and 18 for boys during colonial rule, and it was raised to 18 for both sexes in 1978.

In 2006, the respective legal regulations were tightened by the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (Spalinger 2011) which provides enabling provisions to prohibit child marriages, protect victims, and increase punishment for those who encourage, promote, or consummate such marriages. But again, progress has been sluggish in this field, too. Child marriage is a practice that continues until today despite its legal prohibition, although, according to the National Family Health Survey 2015–2016 (Government of India n.d.e), there has been a decline in the percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were married before the age of 18 (from 47.4 per cent in 2005–2006 to 26.8 per cent in 2015–2016, Government of India n.d.e). As obvious reasons for the persistence of the old practices social critics list tradition and the low status of women, the lack of knowledge and education – and, of course, poverty; for the dowry demanded is apparently more modest in the case of younger brides (cf. Patralekha Chatterjee 2011; cf. Spalinger 2011).

In several other fields legal improvements were introduced. A new constitutional guiding principle[20] and the Equal Remuneration Act (1967) are intended to protect the right of equal payment for working women.[21] The Maternity Benefit Act of 1961 granted 12 weeks of paid leave, nursing breaks and medical allowance; and in 2017 Indian Parliament passed an amendment bill which extends the paid maternity leave to 26 weeks (*The Times of India* 2017a). This law applies to companies with 10 or more employees. Several pieces of legislation demand

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[18] Indian Constitution, Article 16 (1).
[19] Indian Constitution, Article 16 (2).
[20] Indian Constitution, Article 39.
[21] According to the World Economic Forum's statistics of 2016, women earn 57 per cent of what their male colleagues earn for performing the same work (Catalyst 2017).

that child care facilities have to be provided when a certain number of women are employed by a company (cf. Kapur 2003: 193). Some bills, such as the Employees' State Insurance Act (1948), the Employees Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act (1952) or the Payment of Gratuity Act (1972) provide some social security benefits (cf. Kapur 2003: 196-198). It has to be underlined however, that many of the mentioned legal protective measures are mostly restricted to the formal economy (cf. Jhavala and Sinha 2002: 2041). Night work for women in factories has been limited by section 66 (B) of the Factories Act (1948) which defines working hours as running from 6 am to 7 pm with only a few exceptions in selected industries (cf. Kapur 2001: 16). The 2013 revision of the Companies Act makes it mandatory for listed companies and for big public limited enterprises to appoint at least one woman director to the board (*The Economic Times* 2017; cf. Dubey 2016b).

According to the decisions by the Supreme Court in two test cases (1997), mental or physical harassment against women at the workplace must be prevented or deterred by the employer (cf. Kapur 2001: 16). In general, however, legal provisions and consequent law enforcement still appear to be weak, when it comes to crimes against women, as the rising figures illustrate (see Table 1; cf. Amnesty International 2014; cf. Raj 2014; cf. Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation 2002).

SL	Crime Head	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1	Rape	16075	16373	15847	18233	18359	19348	20737	21467	21397	22172	24206	24923	33707	36735	34651
2	Attempt to commit Rape	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4234	4437
3	Kidnapping & Abduction of Women	14645	14506	13296	15578	15750	17414	20416	22939	25741	29795	35565	38262	51881	57311	59277
4	Dowry Deaths	6851	6822	6208	7026	6787	7618	8093	8172	8383	8391	8618	8233	8083	8455	7634
5	Assault on Women with Intent to Outrage her Modesty	34124	33943	32939	34567	34175	36617	38734	40413	38711	40613	42968	45351	70739	82235	82422
6	Insult to the Modesty of Women	9746	10155	12325	10001	9984	9966	10950	12214	11009	9961	8570	9173	12589	9735	8685
7	Cruelty by Husband or his Relatives	49170	49237	50703	58121	58319	63128	75930	81344	89546	94041	99135	106527	118866	122877	113403
8	Importation of Girls from Foreign Country	114	76	46	89	149	67	61	67	48	36	80	59	31	13	6
9	Abetment of Suicides of Women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3734	4060
10	Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961	3222	2816	2684	3592	3204	4504	5623	5555	5650	5182	6619	9038	10709	10050	9894
11	Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986	1052	2508	1043	1378	2917	1562	1200	1025	845	895	453	141	362	47	40
12	Commission of Sati Prevention Act 1987	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	426	461
14	Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act	8796	6598	5510	5748	5908	4541	3568	2660	2474	2499	2436	2563	2579	2070	2424
15	**Total Crimes against Women**	**143795**	**143034**	**140601**	**154333**	**155553**	**164765**	**185312**	**195857**	**203804**	**213585**	**228650**	**244270**	**309546**	**337922**	**327394**

Table 1. Cases Registered under Various Crime Heads of Crime Against Women During 2001-2015, Source: Crime in India – 2015: Additional Tables, http://ncrb.nic.in (23 July 2017)

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 327,394 relevant incidents (i.e. crimes against women) were reported in 2015 (National Crime Records Bureau 2015). The majority of cases were reported under 'Cruelty by Husband or His Relatives' (34.6 per cent), followed by 'Assault on Women with Intent to Outrage their Modesty' (25.2 per cent), 'Kidnapping & Abduction of Women' (18.1 per cent), and 'Rape' (10.6 per cent). 128,240 cases

went to trial, with a conviction rate of 21.7 per cent, in the course of 2015, yet it is important to note that many cases remain pending. In 2017, a total of 359,849 relevant incidents (i.e. crimes against women) and 378,277 crimes in 2018 were reported (National Crime Records Bureau 2018).

The proportion of crimes committed against women out of the total of crimes, increased from 9.4 per cent in 2011 to 11.1 per cent in 2015. NCRB figures in Table 1 and latest reports show that the number of reported crimes against women has been continuously rising since 2001, not counting the (possibly even higher) number of unreported cases (Amnesty International 2014; cf. Tiwary 2020). It remains to be determined, whether the significant increase of crime rates against women could be partly explained by the growing readiness of women to report assaults (cf. Salve 2016; Raj 2014).

Although experts have been urging for new legislation for a long time, the Bill against Sexual Harassment at the Workplace 2007 that intends to prevent and punish sexual harassment has only been passed in 2013 (cf. Chowdhury 2007). In recent years, high-visibility cases of sexual violence, particularly – but not only – the fatal gang-rape of a 23-year-old woman in Delhi in 2012 or the 10-year-old pregnant rape victim from Chandigarh (*BBC News* 2017), have caused public outrage and a broad media coverage. Due to the public pressure the Justice Verma Committee on Amendments to Criminal Law was constituted in 2013, in order to review laws and to make recommendations for quicker trials and the enhancement of punishment for criminals, some of which were subsequently translated into laws under the 2013 Criminal Law Amendments Act (cf. Kalra 2013). This Act was a significant step for women's rights in India, yet fell short of the Committee recommendations. As Table 1 shows, most sexual violence occurs in marriage. Until today, marital rape has not been made a crime in India.

In addition to constitutional and legal rights, newly independent India planned a number of educational and economic programmes, as well as health and welfare initiatives. Education was looked upon as the key to modernisation and social change[22], as well as economic and political success. The enrolment of girls in schools almost doubled in the first decade of Independence, whilst from 1951 to 2006 the literacy rate among women jumped from 7.93 per cent to 48 per cent (cf. Astige 2006: 52; cf. App. A), and then to 68.4 per cent in 2016 (Government of India n.d.e National Family Health Survey 2015–16). Nevertheless, the literacy rate for girls lags far behind that of boys, which in 2016 was as high as 85.7 per cent (Government of India n.d.e National Family Health Survey 2015–16). Although the number of

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[22] See also *4.1 Modernisation and Dependency Theory – Development Theories between Crisis and Redetermination* and *4.2 Modernisation Theory Discourse in India: Mapping Distinctive Modernity – The Specificity of India.*

girls and women enrolled in secondary and tertiary education has also increased significantly since Independence (cf. Astige 2006: 54; cf. Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation 2016), education for women still needs further improvement (cf. Elliot 2006). All in all, one can say that there has been a considerable rise in the educational status of Indian women since Independence, even though gender equality on educational terms has still not been achieved.

Throughout the years, as Forbes (2004) shows, a bureaucratic structure has been developed to meet the needs of women. For example, the National Social Welfare Board was founded with the intention to look after the interests of women. In 1951, the National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), a wing of the Communist Party, was founded with the goal of improving living conditions for women and realising equal rights. Other women's organizations became established, helping to start crèches, hostels for working women and educational centres or providing medical aid. However, these organizations focused on welfare strategies rather than preventive measures to help women adjust to new challenges and responsibilities. Great hope has been awakened by the National Commission for Women (NCW), a statutory body of the government established in 1992, and by the National Policy for Empowerment of Women, launched by the Indian government in 2001, as well as other governmental schemes to give to women economic empowerment (*The Times of India* 2017b; Dubey 2016a; Srivastava 2017).

Many women, however, have not profited from such legal advancements. The Toward Equality Report of 1974 recognized that constitutional guarantees were not sufficient to ensure equality, and that the status of women had actually deteriorated after Independence.

> The review of disabilities and constraints on women, which stem from sociocultural institutions, indicates that the majority of women are still very far from enjoying the rights and opportunities guaranteed to them by the Constitution […] The social laws, that sought to mitigate the problems of women in their family life, have remained unknown to a large mass of women in this country, who are as ignorant of their legal rights today as they were before Independence.
>
> (Toward Equality qtd. in Forbes 2004: 227)

Forbes (2004) confirms that the Toward Equality Report drew a disastrous picture of the status of Indian women, especially with regard to the failing of policies and programmes. Relatively few women could be said to have enjoyed a noticeable improvement. "But the main point of this report, that millions of Indian women have not benefited from modernity whether

it be economic, technological, political, or social, remains true even today" (Forbes 2004: 228-229).

As far as the substantial political achievements were concerned, the picture looks a bit brighter. Women were given full voting rights and the right to stand for election in provincial and central bodies. Some women from Brahmin families even achieved highly influential positions: Indira Gandhi, who served as Prime Minister for three consecutive terms, as well as Pratibha Patil, who in 2007 became the first female Indian President, are two outstanding examples (cf. Forbes 2004: 231). By 1991 the number of women in Parliament increased to 7.1 per cent and by 2016 to 12.2 per cent, which compares well with other countries such as the Ukraine, Mauritius or Brazil (cf. Forbes 2004: 230; *The Indian Express* 2017b; cf. Inter-Parliamentary Union 2017). Women in India vote in about the same proportion as men. The voting behaviour of Indian women is diverse, with some following the lead of male family members and others voting more independently. As Forbes points out, although the number of women in early post-independence Indian politics was impressive, it has to be borne in mind that their careers emerged out of their involvement in the freedom struggle, and that the post-Independence transition from protest to electoral politics was not always easy. Three reasons can be given for this difficulty in transition. Firstly, women were given insufficient support by the political parties. Secondly, women generally preferred to work in the field of social welfare rather than following a rough and insecure career in politics. And thirdly, the media's negative representation of the politically active woman discouraged potential activists (cf. Forbes 2004: 230-231). Forbes (2004) further regrets that most of the women in powerful political positions have not made use of their office to effectively advance women's issues. Many of them have emphasised their roles as mothers, wives, and daughters, and thus helped to bolster a traditional gender mindset. Nevertheless, they can serve as models for the empowerment of women across the country.

To obtain a more comprehensive picture of women's position in Indian society, the public portrayal of women and their issues in the media is also enlightening. Studies suggest that the media in India have been rather reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices (cf. Mishra 2015; cf. Patowary 2014; cf. Lau 2010; cf. Menon-Sen 2001; cf. Malhotra 2000). Several findings reveal that the space for women's issues in television news is marginal (Menon-Sen 2001) and that women are not only substantially underrepresented but also represented mainly in traditional roles, while men are shown in more diverse roles. With regard to TV series and soap operas, a slight trend towards the representation of female characters who are working outside the home, who have strong personalities and who strive for independence has been noted, even though

these portrayals have not always been fully positive (Menon-Sen 2001; cf. Mishra 2015). A more in-depth examination of women's portrayal was undertaken by Sheena Malhotra and Everett M. Rogers in a content analysis of the ten most popular television programmes in India in the 1990s, when there was a flood of new television channels (cf. Malhotra and Rogers 2000). Drawing on the concepts of cultural imperialism and cultural hegemony, the two authors demonstrated how the promotion of Western cultural values and beliefs by television was hampered even during the 1990s in India, the decade of economic opening to the West (ibid.: 409-410). They found that on those ten television channels men outnumbered women in terms of representation, and that the women, despite increasing visibility, were shown in their majority as housewives and mothers, hence in traditional and stereotypical roles depending financially on their husbands. Malhotra and Rogers ascribe these gender roles not only (and possibly not even primarily) to patriarchal interests aiming at the maintenance of men's dominance, but also to nationalist interests that try to resurrect Hindu rule and traditional cultural values in their struggle against westernising forces (cf. Mishra 2015). The fear of a decline of traditional cultural values resulted in a rise of nationalism and conservatism in the 1990s and the rise of the Hindu nationalist political party BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party)[23], who advocate the traditional role of the housewife (cf. Sprick 2017). Thus, the close link between the Sita model of the middle-class woman and the normative definition of Indian identity which had dominated discussions and practices during the time of colonialism, appeared to persist like a cultural *basso continuo*. It should be added, however the findings also revealed new peripheral spaces for alternative gender constructions:

> Contradictory, paradoxical messages of gender-role constructions in Indian television programming may indicate a change in the patriarchal context of Indian society. The new diversity of gender-role constructions in popular Indian-produced television programming indicates progressive possibilities for gender roles, even though traditional constructions often appear in each episode.
>
> (Malhotra and Rogers 2000: 422)

Still, the authors conclude that the most prominent theme in these TV programmes is the maintenance of the patriarchal status quo and of the "exalted" but utterly dependent role of women. It is interesting to note in this context, that according to the various TV narratives fate and destiny are demonstrated to be greater than the will of human beings and that therefore

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[23] See also 2.2 *The Nineteenth Century: British Policies and Nationalist Reform Concepts* and the remarks on Partha Chatterjee's discussion. Hindu nationalism in the 1990s but also in the 2002 appears to make the same linkages about women's role in society.

these human beings, particularly women, cannot change their destinies. Obviously, there is a need for further studies on more recent developments of the TV ideologies concerning contemporary Indian women.

As far as newspapers and magazines are concerned, women seem to play a marginal role, and women's issues are often relegated to a weekly separate page, unless these are related to crime reports or advertisements. News on cricket, according to an analysis of two newspapers in 1999, occupied almost 20 per cent more space than women's issues (Menon-Sen 2001). Meenakshi Thapan examined the Indian women's magazine *Femina* in order to understand how body images serve to construct the identity of Indian women and their place in contemporary society (Thapan 2004).[24] She found that the visual presentation of women's embodiment through fashion photography tried to project a world of glamour and beauty which did not, however, break with traditional Indian role models or notions of beauty. The typical woman addressed by *Femina* is from the middle or upper class, and she is projected as "educated, upwardly-mobile, status conscious, economically independent, capable of taking decisions for the family, 'modern', urban and consciously middle class" (Thapan 2004: 440). But most important: she is also seen as being able to simultaneously take care of her family, her marriage and to work hard and efficiently, which constitutes a remarkable break with the Sita stereotypes of Indian womanhood. This is even more true of some minority publications such as the feminist journals which do exist in India. The best known is *Manushi, A Journal about Women and Society*. Since its foundation in 1978, *Manushi* has been covering critical women's issues such as harassment, health or political power. The women's movement has been active on issues such as rape, dowry murders[25] and sati deaths,[26] as well as modernising the traditional image of the devoted Indian housewife.

A comprehensive analysis of literary representations of young, unmarried, working women in urban India is Lisa Lau's essay "Literary Representation of the 'New Indian Woman': The Single, Working, Urban, Middle Class Indian Woman Seeking Personal Autonomy" (2010). Lau deals with a significant shift in four narratives[27] published in the first decade of the twenty-

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[24] Thapan mentions the legitimisation of the recolonialisation of Indian women's embodiment in the global economy, referring to Jacqui Alexander's and Chandra Mohanty's *Feminist genealogies, colonial legacies, democratic futures* (1997). They saw 'processes of colonialization' as results of "global alignments and fluidity of capital [which] have simply led to further consolidation and exacerbation of capitalist relations of domination and exploitation" (Alexander and Mohanty 1997 qtd. in Thapan 2004: 412). Thapan further uses the concept of 'postcolonial habitus' when speaking talks of the objectification of the woman's body.

[25] Term refers to the killing of a young wife by in-laws.

[26] Term refers to a widow burning herself on her husband's funeral pyre.

[27] Lau draws on examples in the following contemporary literary texts: *The Chosen* by K.R. Usha (Penguin 2003), *Ladies Coupe* by A. Nair (Random House 2002), "The Rooftop Dweller" by Anita Desai (in *Diamond Dust and Other Stories* (Chatto and Windus 2000) and *Home* by Manju Kapur (Faber and Faber 2006) (Lau 2010).

first century, discovering as the prevalent identity issues for Indian women the typical "submerging of self-identity with the needs, demands and identity of their families" (Lau 2010: 276). She identifies the struggle with such cultural traditions as the main hindrance to female autonomy. The heroines of these narratives, i.e. "New Indian Women", find themselves in an ambivalent state. They know that in the patriarchal tradition they constitute a "threat to the nation", because "middle- and upper-class women are expected to embody national cultural identity" (Jyoti Puri qtd. in Lau 2010: 283), by strictly following the Sita idea. Thus, in most of the narratives quoted by Lau the "New Indian Woman" is portrayed not as an outright rebel, but as a courageous character who tries to work out a kind of autonomy for herself, while avoiding confrontations with her family and is content to manoeuvre within tight areas. Lau concludes that Indian working women would emphasise that working and fulfilling the traditional norms are not mutually exclusive roles. It is not difficult to guess that the ideal to reconcile work outside the home with the extremely demanding and ideologically charged role of Sita, to negotiate and mediate between these two worlds is especially demanding when middle-class Indian wives (or single women) work for a multinational company.

Looking at the many cultural forces in Indian society which have tended to discourage the professional emancipation of Indian women, one will not be surprised that in spite of the many legal improvements they are still very far from enjoying economic equality. Historically, women's work suffered a setback when home-based production was replaced by mass production. They could not compete with the new mechanised industries where special skills and education were demanded. Today women are disadvantaged by a still low and – since 2014 – even gradually shrinking participation in the market economy: working women are not really wanted in the modernised workforce. As explained in the Toward Equality Report "[…] opposition to increasing opportunities for women's participation in economic activities springs […] from a conservative view regarding women's 'proper' role in society" (qtd. in Forbes 2004: 239). This way of thinking is also responsible for the discrimination and exploitation of female workers and a considerable gender pay gap (cf. App. A; Catalyst 2017; Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation 2002). Thus with regard to estimated women's income India ranks on place 144 on an index of 153 countries and in leadership roles on place 136 (World Economic Forum 2020). Forbes mentioned a further disadvantage of women pointing to data showing that female members of a family do not benefit from gained prosperity in the family as much as could be previously assumed (Forbes 2004). Preferential treatment of sons, including better food, clothing, education and medical care continued to be the rule (cf. Banerjee 2004). To sum up, at the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the

twenty-first century the discrimination against women had not been overcome by improved economic conditions.

Statistics from the Indian Government show that the majority of female workers in India is still employed in the primary sector, mainly in occupations related to land cultivation and agriculture, though the share has gone down since 1991 (Government of India, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation 2002: 56; cf. Devasher Suri 2016). In 1991, 81 per cent of women worked in the primary sector, only about 11 per cent worked in the tertiary sector (mainly in trade, commerce and other services) and around 8 per cent were employed in the secondary sector (manufacture). Things changed since the deregulation of the economy and opening of the market by the Rao government (1991–1996). 2011–2012, according to the International Labour Organization, the percentage of women in the primary sector had fallen to 62.8 per cent, while that of women in the tertiary sector had risen to 20 per cent. Their share in the service sector increased to 17 per cent (cf. Devasher Suri 2016), profiting particularly urban women (cf. Astige 2006: 55-58; Datta 2005: 130; Banerjee 2004: 72).

But shockingly, the general workforce participation of women has seen a dramatic decline in the course of the last decade, falling from 29.4 per cent in 2004–2005, to 38 per cent in 2007, 22.5 per cent in 2011–2012 and to 20.3 per cent in 2020 (Devasher Surie 2016; cf. Verick 2014; cf. World Bank Indicators). This decline can be attributed to some objective reasons such as illegal hiring practices and structural constraints, rising employment in the informal, semi- or unskilled sector e.g. in domestic work, which does not figure in the statistics (cf. chapter 6); gender inequality at many workplaces run by local employers; a general shortage of employment opportunities; exaggerated concerns about the safety of women etc. (Devasher Surie 2016; Verick 2014; cf. Pande and Moore 2015; cf. Barry 2016; cf. Srivatava 2017; Grown 2018). But certainly also the antifeminist, conservative Hindu cultural policy of the Modi government has had a strong impact (cf. *Hindustan Times* 2020). In addition, the employment of women has decreased particularly sharply due to the Corona crisis, amounting to 60% of all those who have lost their jobs (Kumar and Pal 2021).

Despite this temporary roll-back one should not underestimate the overall historical trend. Some positive developments have continued such as the rising educational enrolment of girls, the rise of household income, the dropping-out of married women when they have children (Devasher Surie 2016; Verick 2014; cf. Pande and Moore 2015; cf. Barry 2016; cf. Srivatava 2017; Grown 2018). As Kakar and Kakar demonstrate in *Die Inder*, since the 1970s more and more women started to take up work outside their homes (Kakar and Kakar 2006). An important reason was a change in the upbringing of daughters: more of them entered higher

education, especially girls from the upper ranges of society. Astige shows how with the expansion of education in general, and higher education in particular, a growing percentage of women have gained access to white-collar jobs (Astige 2006). Today women represent a considerable proportion of employees in teaching, in medical and in clerical occupations. Moreover, a large number of educated and semi-educated women have started their own businesses under specially designed schemes. Over the last two decades, a small but not inconsiderable number of women have entered traditional men's professions, such as advertising, the software business, or the financial sector.

Three Indian women were ranked among the top twenty on the international list of the 50 most powerful businesswomen in 2016 published by *Fortune* magazine. However, even though the number of women on boards in India has increased according to a Credit Suisse Research Institute report, in 2015 only 11.2 per cent of Indian companies had a woman on their boards (Credit Suisse Research Institute 2016; cf. Dubey 2016b; cf. Datta 2005: 130). Whereas Datta attributes this to a lack of skills and the unwillingness of some women to take up another responsibility besides family and home (cf. Datta 2005: 130), Tina Vinod claims:

> [u]nfortunately, the systemic patriarchy and unconscious bias in our culture continues to seep into the workforce. The leaking pipeline of potential women leaders is a huge concern. Women continue to be viewed as primary care-givers and homemakers and this is a problem that our society as a whole needs to address.
>
> (Dubey 2016b)

In fact, a large number of women have actually grasped the opportunity of work, even some from the lower classes. As Datta explains, women's employment has by itself created further job opportunities for women in the domestic area (Datta 2005: 130). Demand has been increasing for housemaids, cooks and care-givers. Although payment is low, these jobs have expanded the range of job opportunities for women from lower classes (cf. chapter 6).

Another employment opportunity for Indian women with secondary and tertiary educations is provided by the mushrooming call-centre industry (Ng, Cecilia/ Mitter, Swasti 2005), where an estimated 45 to 70 per cent of employees are women. In contrast to men, women are deemed to possess the requisite soft skills for the job. India, with its low salaries and its growing pool of college graduates looking for jobs, as well as supportive government policies, has been a popular centre for information technology outsourcing, in particular call centres. Cecilia Ng and Swasti Mitter have examined the positive and negative impacts of call centres on female employees in India and Malaysia (Ng, Cecilia/ Mitter, Swasti 2005).

According to S. C. Dube:

> [t]he modern woman is gradually breaking through the shell of a narrow existence and rigid traditionalism. New horizons are opening up for women in modern India. The changes are, no doubt, most apparent today at the level of the sophisticated urban elite, but gradually women of other sections are also being affected by this trend. The transition cannot naturally be rapid in a society that has been traditional-directed for several centuries. But the resistance of orthodoxy is gradually weakening.
>
> (Dube qtd. in Astige 2006: 58)

The fact that this quote from the 1960s is still applicable to women today indicates that the transition from traditional restrictions to a more liberal outlook is taking place at a slow pace (cf. Kakar and Kakar 2006: 71).[28] However, Kakar and Kakar (2006) point out that the majority of working women feel that education and professional qualifications have had a positive impact on their social status and their self-confidence. According to them their social mobility, independence and influence in decision-making have also increased. The latter point has been verified by a study on single- and dual-earner couples in Bangalore (Ramu 2003). The findings revealed that among dual-earner couples, a wife's economic status grants her more authority in domestic decisions when compared to a wife from a single-earner couple. Nonetheless, family responsibilities, in particular towards children, are still a main priority for the wives. Indra Nooyi, former CEO of PepsiCo, said in an interview that "[w]hen it comes to my priority list, I am a mother first, then a CEO and then a wife." According to Indra Nooyi, a woman "tends to be a super human being because you are carrying the burdens of being a mother, wife and a daughter-in-law – that too an Indian daughter-in-law – besides taking care of her career" (*The Navhind Times* 2007).

In conclusion: Indian law has come to recognize the equal status of women to a degree, while the real conditions at home and at work differ from the constitutional and legal guidelines. Moreover, the International Labour Standards set by the International Labour Organization suggest that further protection of female worker's rights is needed (cf. Kapur 2003: 169-211). In rural areas, small towns and heavily populated city quarters advancement of women in social, economic and political terms seems to have slowed down even before Modi came to power (cf. Desai and Krishnaraj 2004: 312-313). Although positive achievements in education and politics should not be underestimated, serious problems remain and gender equality needs to be accelerated (cf. Sharma 2006: 12), especially today. Without doubt, the patriarchal and male-

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[28] See also *4.1 Modernisation and Dependency Theory – Development Theories between Crisis and Redetermination* and *4.2 Modernisation Theory Discourse in India: Mapping Distinctive Modernity – The Specificity of India.*

dominated system, recently newly strengthened by the current government's conservative Hindu cultural policy, banning women to the house under the pretence of protecting Indian identity, is a major obstacle. Thus, not all women seem to have benefited from the promises offered by the constitution or by the paradise of globalisation. Globalisation, in particular the internationalisation of the Indian economy and its effects on women's employment is the focus of the following chapter.

3   Economic Development and Internationalisation in India Since Independence

Three-hundred years ago, as Sinha points out, India had the second highest gross domestic income in the world (Sinha 2002: 19). However, when the British left in 1947 the economy was at the bottom of the league table. Jute and cotton mills, tea plantations, coal mines, and small iron and steel factories were the only industrial producers. The government controlled the railways, telegraphs, and factories. Thus, the country was much in need of widespread industrialization to build up the economy once again (cf. Emde 1999).

Since the private sector had neither capital nor technical equipment when the British left, the government was left to play the key role in the industrialization process. One major step was to regulate the economy by nationalizing businesses such as banking, insurance, basic industries, and the airlines. Another step was the introduction of Five-Year Plans. These drew up a coordinated development plan and in accordance with socialist theory, defined the public sector as society's leader. Thereby, industrial development was declared a responsibility of the state.

In fact, public works and investment grew, while basic as well as heavy industries[29] were established. "Prime Minister Nehru called the factories 'new temples' of India from which new values and lifestyles were to cascade over the rest of society" (qtd. in Sinha: 2004: 21). The Administrative Reforms Commission stated in 1967 that:

> […] through the medium of public enterprises the Government has been able to bridge serious gaps in the economy, strengthen the infrastructure needed for rapid industrial development, regulate trade to social advantage, and achieve increasing indigenous production of the basic materials and machines required by industry including equipment needed for [defence].
> (Sinha 2004: 21)

Nevertheless, the public sector did not flourish to the same extent as the private sector with regard to profits, sales and production. A major reason was the heavily bureaucratic style of management.

The *Receptive Phase for Foreign Investment* (1948–1967) describes the welcoming attitude towards foreign companies. Since most of India's investment was sunk into railways, power plants and irrigation projects, foreign capital was needed for the development of basic industries (cf. Emde 1999). To begin with there were no legal regulations. Indian ownership of a company was preferred but not mandatory. The only restrictions were concerning the number and nature

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[29] The steel industry, heavy engineering goods, machine tools, oil, fertilizers.

of foreign industries. Certain economic advantages were introduced to attract foreign investment and technical knowledge, such as "unrestricted remittances of profits and dividends, fair compensation in the case of acquisition, and non-discriminatory treatment" (Sinha 2004: 22). In the course of time, the Indian government offered more incentives and concessions, opening investment centres worldwide to foster foreign investment and allowing more profitable industries to enter the Indian market. These profitable industries, such as pharmaceuticals, heavy electrical equipment, fertilizers, aluminium and synthetic rubber, were previously restricted to the public sector. It is during this time that many foreign drugs companies founded subsidiaries in India. As a result, and as can be seen in Table 2 at the end of this chapter, many foreign companies entered the Indian market during the *Receptive Phase for Foreign Investment*. In the 1950s, 104 multinationals entered the Indian market each year, in the first half of the 1960s this rose to an average of 190 MNCs (cf. Sinha 2004: 23).

However, the enormous outflow of foreign exchange led the government to develop a more critical attitude towards foreign investment from 1967 to 1979, referred to as the *Restrictive Phase*. One major step the government took was to establish special economic institutions. For example, the purpose of the Foreign Investment Board, established in 1968, was to approve foreign investment on the basis of total investment, maintain equity share between Indian and foreign companies, ensure technology transfer, and secure the sublicensing of foreign technology within India or its export by Indian companies. The equally important Technical Evaluation Committee, founded some time later, made sure that Indian consultants were hired by foreign companies. "Obviously, the emphasis was to indigenise management by facilitating transfer of technology and to save foreign exchange" (Sinha 2004: 24). Several other restrictions followed (cf. ibid.: 24), one being the reduction of the maximum equity share of a foreign company to 40 per cent. The Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (1973), FERA, and the Industrial Policy Statement (1973) tightened restrictions and led to a largescale Indianization of foreign companies in India. As a result many multinational companies ended their operations on the subcontinent (cf. Sinha 2004: 24-24). The many restrictions during this phase led to a severe decline in the number of multinationals entering the Indian market (see Table 2).

In the 1980s the global economy went through a series of changes. The demise of the Soviet Union and the ending of the Cold War, Germany's reunification, the economic integration of Europe into the international market, the internationalisation of financial markets – all these events had an impact on the world market, one major effect being that the formerly socialist countries adopted market mechanisms. India was not untouched by these influences. The government began to rethink the efficiency of its restrictive measures and started its

transition into the *Phase of Gradual Liberalization* (1980–1989). Previously, restrictions were seen as a protective umbrella for Indian companies enabling them to sell their products on the home market. However, excessive welfare measures, investments in the industrial base, bureaucratisation, antiquated technology and the poor quality of Indian goods resulted in huge losses for the public sector. India was forced to turn away from Nehru's development model, with the public sector directing the economy, and at the beginning of the 1980s several liberalization measures were taken by the Indian Government. According to Sinha, the three main objectives were:

1)   To modernize plants and equipment through liberalized imports of
         capital goods and technology.
2)   To expose Indian companies to international competition by gradually
         lowering the entry barriers for multinationals.
3)   To attract MNCs to set up export-oriented units for meeting the
         foreign exchange requirements of capital goods and technology.

(Sinha 2004: 26)

In the following years many restrictions were relaxed. Thus, for example, an equity share of more than 40 per cent became possible, licensing rules were liberalized and more foreign collaborations allowed. This period of liberalization led to an increase in the number of multinational companies entering the Indian market, as well as increasing foreign investment (see Table 2).

At the same time, the government faced a foreign exchange crisis due to the burden of external debt and political uncertainty arising from the many non-resident Indians leaving the country. This time, instead of re-establishing old restrictions, the market was opened to global competition. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War may well have influenced this decision (cf. Girdhari 2002: 1; cf. Emde 1999; cf. Zingel 2014).

During the *Phase of Rapid Liberalisation* (1991–2000), starting with the New Industrial Policy of the government led by Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao (NCP) that came into power in 1991, more foreign companies were encouraged to enter the Indian market than ever before. Only a few industries were not opened to foreign industries (see Sinha 2004: 27). The restrictions imposed by FERA and governmental licensing were abolished in all industries. The limit of equity share was raised to 51 per cent. Non-resident Indians and their overseas corporate institutions were free to own an 100 per cent equity share in high priority industries, with foreign investments now protected by a mutual guarantee system (cf. Girdhari 2002: 2-3). Several

concessions were granted to attract more foreign investors and their capital, and to enhance Indian companies. Finally, serious attempts were made to integrate India into the global market.

As Kamal Nath, India's former Minister of Commerce and Industry, stated in an interview: "India's investment policies, including policies on foreign investment, are among the most liberal in developing economies, particularly in this part of the world" (cf. *India Now – A Perspective* 2005: 33). Liberalization has continued apace since the 1980s, having a positive impact on India's industries. The number of foreign collaboration increased fivefold from the *Phase of Gradual Liberalization* to the *Phase of Rapid Liberalisation*. Not only rose foreign direct investments, but also exports and outsourcing by multinational and Indian companies (cf. Giridharadas 2007; cf. Emde 1999). Both have had an exceedingly positive impact on industrial, capital and employment growth in India. As Sinha states, there has been an "[…] invigorating effect of liberalization on Indian companies" (Sinha, 2004: 32).

Over the years, the private sector has enjoyed greater profits than the public sector, while MNCs have been more prosperous than Indian companies. The latter is due to several reasons: MNCs have, for example, exploited better technical equipment and also manufactured a wider range of products (cf. Kharat 2002: 109-110). Consequently, Indian companies have tried to follow the business principles of MNCs, and even setting up alliances with their larger competitors.

During the last two decades, due to liberal investment policies and a growing domestic market, the number of MNCs entering the Indian market continued to increase, especially in the fields of semiconductors and car manufacturing. More Research and Development has been carried out in India (cf. *India Now – A Perspective* 2007; Timmons 2007), along with Knowledge Process Outsourcing or KPO (cf. Government of India n.d.a).

Nevertheless, liberalisation of the Indian market has its limits. As Wolfgang-Peter Zingel points out, India as an industrial nation does not play a crucial role on the global level as may be expected from a nuclear power and populous country like India (Zingel 2014; cf. Emde 1999: 10-12; cf. Eckert 2015). Hindering aspects are: the lack of reforms; a dual labour market with a small number of highly protected workers and a high number of unprotected workers; the land law which makes it difficult for industries to settle but also causes expropriation and expulsion; underinvested infrastructure, overstretched universities; inefficient trade with the public distribution system; fragmented wholesale and retail sectors (Zingel 2014; cf. *The Times of India* 2015; Hein 2015; Bhatt 2016; *The Economist* 2013); the competition with European member countries and countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that attracted substantial increases in FDI; lack of clear policy on FDI as well as repulsive government policies

and regulations that discourage MNCs (cf. Emde 1999). Jakob Rösel also critically analyses India's specific way of democratisation and globalisation (Rösel 2014: 267-300). Based on an examination of party politics, India's patronage system in conjunction with a state-controlled economy, as well as an increasingly fragmented India – economically, demographically, educationally and politically –, it is questioned if the Indian system can maintain the much-needed eight per cent growth rate in the long run. Yet, in spite of such hindering factors as well as new social problems, there is still optimism for the industrial sector to grow. Since 1980 the ratio of foreign trade has tripled with 38 per cent in 2014 (cf. World Bank Merchandise Trade n.d.) and India's share of world trade is increasing. Trade activities with China, Germany, Pakistan and other South Asian partners are significantly increasing as well.

Although it has lately become a bit more difficult and uncertain for MNCs in India due to new tax proposals (cf. Chatterjee 2014), India emerged in 2015 on top of the FDI destinations and seems to have overtaken China. It is beyond doubt that many less developed countries benefited from the low oil price (cf. *The Economic Times* 2015; Chen 2016). However, many economists have doubts about the country's economic growth rate (cf. Perras 2016; Goenka 2016; Kadam 2015). Even Raghuram Rajan, governor of the Reserve Bank of India, has expressed such doubts and relates his scepticism to the GDP calculation methodology, which was altered in 2015 (cf. Perras 2016). The controversy over India's growth rates has affected the optimistic picture that India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi tries to draw. With his 2014 initiative "Make in India" he wants to promote India as destination for investors and manufacturers in order to give an impetus to employment, growth and development (cf. *India Currents* 2016; cf. Meinardus 2016). Subprojects or marketing-oriented campaigns – or "progress utopias" as Hafner (2017) put it – of this initiative are called "Digital India", "100 Smart Cities" and "Skill India" (Hafner, 2017; cf. *The Economist* 2017; cf. *The Indian Express* 2017a; cf. *India Currents* 2016; Hein 2015; Huma 2016).

A hopeful sign is that against a global decline in the pandemic year 2020, India reached $58.4 billion FDI, sustaining the country's FDI upward trend (UN 2021). Most of the investments were made in the digital sector, information and communication technology and the construction industries. This made India the ninth largest recipient among the world's largest FDI recipients and the largest recipient of FDI in South Asia.[30] Not only has the inflow grown, but in 2019 there was also a remarkable FDI outflow of $12.1 billion by the acquisitions and mergers of Indian companies. Over the next few years it is expected that the number of MNCs

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[30] From a global perspective, the five largest recipients of FDI were the United States, China, Singapore, Brazil and the United Kingdom in 2019 (Kiran 2020).

investing in India will continue to grow. Nevertheless, this is only possible, if Narendra Modi is capable to secure the trust of the foreign investors and to convince them of the seriousness of economic liberalisation.

Periods	Average Number of Foreign Collaborations Per Year	Average Value of Foreign Investments Per Year (Rs Million)
1948-59	5	Not Available
1959-66	108	Not Available
1967-79	39	53.62
1980-88	170	930.84
1989-90	194	2,224.95
1991-2000	1,842	23,858.44

Table 2. Average Number of Foreign Collaborations and Average Value of Foreign Investments Per Year, Source: Sinha, 2004: 29.

4   Social, Economic and Cultural Theories

It is obvious that the encounter – not to say, clash – between a highly traditional and deeply rooted social culture (like that of the Indian gender norms) and the demands of a globalized, exclusively profit-oriented and technologically advanced economy (as represented by the MNCs) has created constellations that are far from unique and therefore have inspired a number of generalising discourses – on development, modernisation and dependency. These do not form, however, a consistent theoretical framework, but rather offer a conglomerate of frequently overlapping and/or contested approaches that range from historical analyses of class structures and economic developments to studies on contemporary political cultures (Mergel 2011 et al.). Therefore the first part of the following chapter will be confined to a rough and sketchy overview of the "global" theoretical debates concerning the general background and macro-political frame of the highly specific phenomena which are the central topic of this analysis. This overview will rely on some of the summarising accounts of the respective debates (on development theory, modernisation theory and dependency theory), as found in Johannes Berger and a few others. The second part of this chapter will deal, in greater detail, with the specificity of Indian modernity and the modernisation discourse in India. The third part of the chapter will then deal with culture change and a variety of acculturation theories, but foremost crossvergence theory, which much more specifically relate to what happens when Indian employees have to cope with the alien culture of Western MNCs.

4.1   <u>Modernisation and Dependency Theory – Development Theories between Crisis and Redetermination</u>

The terms modernisation and modernisation theory relate to a cluster of development theories from various disciplines. Since the nineteenth century, the term "development" or "development theory", according to political scientist Manfred Mols (1998: 130), played a central role in the various legitimisations of the attempts by colonialism and imperialism to transfer western political, economic and cultural values onto non-European societies. Later, in the course of decolonisation after 1945, such versions of "naive development thinking" (Mols 1998: 130) were given new impetus. Now, the aim was to transform underdeveloped countries into developed countries equalling industrial societies. Even until today most non-Western modernity concepts remain committed to western models (ibid.; Domingues 2011). A more

common definition is given by political scientist Ulrich Menzel who understands development theories as:

> [...] statements which help to describe why industrial societies of Western Europe, North America and East Asia attained economic growth, social differentiation and mobilisation, mental change, democratisation and redistribution (these processes are called development), or, why these processes have failed to appear in the remaining part of the world, or have been incompletely realised, or can only be observed as a caricature of these processes.[31]

(quoted in Brand 2004: 3-4)

This would also imply that development theories fulfil not only a descriptive but also a pragmatic function by suggesting therapies against those deficits which may lead to developmental failure.

Two paradigmatic views have evolved around the term and the nature of development: modernisation theory and dependency theory. Hardly any sociological theory has been criticised, for methodological and political reasons, as much as modernisation theory. Still, modernisation theory appears to be the only sociological offer when it comes to the analysis of profound overall societal changes. As far the general discourse on development was concerned, modernisation theory was the most influential paradigm in the 1950s and 1960s. Against the background of the Cold War and decolonisation, a historical superiority of the West European-American models was claimed (cf. Mergel 2011). This claim was confirmed by a sociological modernisation theory whose theoretical foundation was laid by sociologist Talcott Parsons. Main representatives of his "school" were Daniel Lerner, Shmuel Eisenstadt, Wolfgang Zapf, as well as political sociologists Samual P. Huntington and Seymour Martin Lipset. Daniel Lerner understood modernisation as a process of social change "whereby less developed societies acquire characteristics common to more developed societies" (Lerner qtd. in Berger 1996: 47). According to sociologist Johannes Berger (1996), this definition contains the four convictions that are central in modernisation theory: modernisation is carried out by the respective country itself; the various features of modernisation are compatible; the progress by one society does not imply a drawback for latecomers;[32] and modernisation is a developing process that

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[31] "[…] Aussagen, mit deren Hilfe begründet werden kann, warum es in den Industriegesellschaften Westeuropas, Nordamerikas und Ostasiens zu Wirtschaftswachstum, Industrialisierung, sozialer Differenzierung und Mobilisierung, mentalem Wandel, Demokratisierung und Umverteilung gekommen ist (diese Prozesse nennt man Entwicklung), bzw. warum in dem übrigen Teil der Welt diese Prozesse ausbleiben, nur unvollständig realisiert werden oder lediglich eine Karikatur dieser Prozesse zu beobachten ist." (English translation by the author.)

[32] This optimism inherent in modernisation theory was already expressed by Karl Marx: "Eine Nation soll und kann von der anderen lernen" (Karl Marx qtd. in Berger 1996: 47).

converges in one aim which is set by the more developed societies. It was Samuel P. Huntington who then emphasised the more revolutionary character of modernisation and social change, describing it as "bridge across the Great Dichotomy between modern and traditional societies" (Huntington qtd. in Berger 1996: 47; cf. Pollack 2014: 222)[33]. As the economist Jan L. Sadie stressed, the fruits of modernisation had a price:

> Economic development of an underdeveloped people by themselves is not compatible with the maintenance of their traditional customs and mores. A break with the latter is a pre-requisite to economic progress. What is needed is a revolution in the totality of social, cultural and religious institutions and habits, and thus in their psychological attitude, their philosophy and way of life. What is, therefore, required amounts in reality to social disorganisation. Unhappiness and discontentment in the sense of wanting more than is obtainable at any moment is to be generated. The suffering and dislocation that may be caused in the process may be objectionable, but it appears to be the price that has to be paid for economic development; the condition of economic progress.

> (J. L. Sadie 1960: 302)

Huntington, who shared the view that modernisation is a revolutionary process, listed some further formal features of modernisation (Berger 1996: 48-50): Firstly, the new development stage can only be reached by a profound upheaval – because of the radical difference between a traditional and a modern society. Second, it is a multidimensional and multifaceted process, but proceeds, thirdly, "systematically" so that "changes in one factor are related to and affect changes in the other factors" (Huntington quoted. in Berger 1996: 48).[34] This is supported by political scientist Ronald Inglehart who found out in a survey conducted in forty-three countries that there is a correlation between value conceptions, economic development and political change. The data showed that "coherent cultural patterns exist" and "these coherent patterns are linked with a society's level of economic development" (Inglehart qtd. in Berger 1996: 49). It should be added, however, that the coherence feature of development has often been questioned (which will be discussed later). Fourth, modernisation is a global process: "In any event, all societies were at one time traditional; all societies are now either modern or in the process of becoming modern" (Huntington qtd. in Berger 1996: 49).[35]

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[33] Sociologist Shmuel Eisenstadt also describes the modernisation process as revolutionary and conflictual in the context of decolonialisation (cf. Mergel 2011).

[34] Lerner talks about transformation and not a transfer of institutions: „The indispensable lesson, taught by failures to transfer institutions is that modernization must be systematic if it is to be durable" (Lerner qtd. in Berger 1996: 48-49).

[35] Parson speaks of "evolutionary universals", an innovation that is elementary for any further development and that enables a society to adapt to its environment (Parsons 1964).

Fifth, modernisation is characterised by irreversibility. To quote once more Huntington: "A Society which has reached certain levels of urbanization, literacy, industrialization in one decade will not decline to substantially lower levels in the next decade" (qtd. in Berger 1996: 49-50). Sixth, modernity is said to be "progressive". There seems to be hardly any doubt in the camp of modernisation theorists about the success and benefits of modernisation. According to Huntington "[t]he traumas of modernization are many and profound, but in the long run modernization is not only inevitable, it is also desirable" (quoted in Berger 1996: 50). Finally, modernisation is spread in time, it is a phased process, and it leads to convergence tendencies among societies (cf. Berger 1996: 49-50).

Berger further enumerates some aims of modernisation, following the "salient characteristics of modernity" (qtd. in Pollack 2014: 222) by Lerner, which encompass economic growth, a representative political system, spread of secular and rational norms in culture, more geographical and social mobility in comparison to traditional societies, performance orientation, and empathy as a key characteristic of a modern personality (cf. Berger 1996: 51-52; cf. Mergel 2011). Talcott Parsons mentions markets, bureaucratic administration, a legal system and democracy as characteristics (cf. Parsons 1964; cf. Pollack 2014). More recent representatives of the modernisation theory like Anthony Giddens identify capitalism, industrialisation, a nation state and the state's monopoly of power (cf. ibid.). Sociologist Wolfgang Zapf sees a competitive democracy, market economy and an affluent society as integral parts of modernity, while Ronald Inglehart considers change of values, an increase of living standards and democracy as characteristic for modernity (cf. ibid.). As Pollack (2014) states, the list of characteristics could be extended by urbanisation, juridification, cultural pluralisation, individualisation or educational expansion.

Finally, regarding the main factors contributing to modernisation, a majority of modernisation theorists claimed that they are endogenous. J. L. Sadie at least admits that outside agencies from the developed countries, which provide capital, skilled technical labour or entrepreneurs, constitute exogenous factors but adds that "[they are] used as a [means] to spark off an endogenous process of growth" (1960: 303; cf. Mols 1998: 132). Berger, on the other hand, argues that the endogenous nature of technological progress certainly applies to technically leading countries, but expresses doubts concerning the other, more backward ones (cf. Berger 1996: 56). Most of the theorists unanimously list science, technology and education among the prime factors encouraging economic growth and modernisation (cf. the various quotes in Berger 55 ff.)

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, hardly any sociological theory has been criticised as much and as passionately as modernisation theory. Objections have been manifold. Sociologist Detlef Pollack (2016) enumerated some of the key concerns: Firstly, he questions the unconditionally positive image of modernity and the early modernity theorists' readiness to take the superiority of western modernity standards for granted. (cf. Mergel 2011). Western modernity as "normative goal formation" (Mergel 2011) for the evolutionary higher development of the other societies can be read as an implicit Eurocentrism. Newer approaches, however, such as the reformulation of modernisation theories in the 1990s by Dutch sociologists van der Loo and van Reijen (cf. Mergel 2011) are exempted from this criticism; for they are seen to emphasise more strongly the ambivalent and paradox character and to question the unambiguously positive image of Western-style modernity. Mergel (2011) enumerates four macro-processes of modernisation with contradictory results: differentiation, rationalisation, domestication and individualisation. Secondly, the linear development assumption and the claim of universality have been criticised. Critics have argued that history is not characterised by linear developments but rather by contingency, deviant processes, unexpected twists and incidental constellations (cf. Pollack 2016). The third and main objection refers to the coherence feature of development[36] and argues that the coherent patterns – the interdependent connections of development – of economy, the legal system, politics and culture are not pre-determined (cf. Pollack 2016). There are no deterministic inter-linked cultural or structural connections between processes of democratisation, growth in prosperity, development of the legal system, or educational development. Referring to Eisenstadt, Pollack explains that modernity does not constitute a system or unit as such but shows quite different forms of connection between institutional and cultural elements. Fourthly, it has been criticised that the Western model of modernity is supposed to succeed in the entire world. Against this conception, advocates of "multiple modernities" insist that from case to case characteristics of modernity will be combined differently in different present-day societies.[37] An increasing "diversity of modern societies" (Shmuel Eisenstadt qtd. in Pollack 2016: 224) is seen to prevail in our age – and not convergence. Finally, the assertion of a necessary and severe break between tradition and modernity has been challenged. In the 1960s it had already been argued that modernity and tradition do not exclude each other (cf. Pollack 2016). In fact, tradition itself has been said to be a possible means of modernity, because premodern societies frequently are flexible,

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[36] See page 36.
[37] Pollack refers to Shmuel Eisenstadt.

conflictual and differentiated and not static, homogenous and undifferentiated. Thus, modern societies cannot be defined merely in opposition to tradition.

This whole cluster of counter-arguments against the modernisation theorists have contributed to the emergence of a number of competing theories, frequently grouped together under the title of Dependency Theories. The best-known school of this description was of Latin American provenance, developed by – and for – the "Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean" in the 1960s. As Mol (1998) explains, these new theoretical approaches offered an alternative access to the concerns of underdevelopment and development. The central argument was that underdevelopment is not the result of natural or historical backwardness and endogenous factors of traditional societies, but the outcome of exogenous factors, i.e. the penetration by Western economic systems. Main representatives were Raúl Prebish, André Gunder Frank and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (among others). As in the case of modernisation theory,[38] dependency theory is anything but a unified and consistent system. The Dependency School has authored a whole range of differing approaches and assumptions. According to Rovira Kaltwasser (2014), there are two significant basic tendencies of the dependency school that both deal with the understanding of dependent capitalism, especially in Latin America. For some theorists, dependent capitalism has led to growing stagnation, for others to an ambivalent development. The ones diagnosing a growing stagnation in Latin America (referred to as "periphery") diagnose a reproduction of underdevelopment. According to André Gunder Frank (cf. Rovira Kaltwasser 2014), a social revolution against the capitalist system could be the only solution. The ones speaking of an ambivalent development argue that history is an open process, that the periphery can make use of various development opportunities, and that dependence and development can coexist. In this sense, several Latin American countries are seen to undergo dependent development. Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto explain: "In the course of its unfolding, this form of development creates in the periphery as well as in the centre periodically prosperity and poverty, accumulation of capital and lack of capital, employment for some and unemployment for the others."[39] (quoted in Rovira Kaltwasser 2004: 26) However, the beneficiary countries of the periphery remain dependent in a specific way: "Their capital goods sectors are weak, far too weak to guarantee continuous development of the [economic] system financially, technologically and

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[38] See page 36.
[39] "Im Zuge ihrer Entfaltung erzeugt diese Form von Entwicklung in der Peripherie ebenso wie im Zentrum periodisch Wohlstand und Armut, Kapitalakkumulation, und Kapitalmangel, Beschäftigung für die einen und Arbeitslosigkeit für andere." (English translation by the author.)

organisationally."[40] As Rovira Kaltwasser explains, the dependency school/paradigm tries to explain with the model of dependent development that the world economic order establishes scope for centres, sub-centres, semi-peripheries, peripheries and sub-peripheries. Against this background, the biggest challenge for developing countries is to make the best possible use of their small scope, so that emancipation can gain predominance over dependency. The aim is, thus Rovira Kaltwasser, to formulate a development model that takes advantage of the global economy and that reduces dependency at the same time. The example of the tiger states has proven that such a "dependency reversal" (quoted in Rovira Kaltwasser 2004: 27) is possible.

Political scientist Alexander Brand (2004) deals with the alleged "dual failure" of both the development theories, modernisation and dependency theory. On the one hand, he suggests as a possible reason for the failure that these theories have failed to give plausible, convincing and substantial explanations for developing processes, or for the absence of developing processes, or for the differentiation in various developments. On the other hand, he brings to mind that the developing concepts and strategies which derived from these theories did not bring the anticipated development. Decisive factors for the dual failure, he argues, are related to the kind of theoretical construction, the forms of academic discourse and its social embedding but just as much as to wrong aspirations and expectations. Openness and awareness of the non-neutral/normative character of development theories are thus important for the analysis of development processes.[41] According to Aram Ziai, the most decisive question in development research is not the question about the definition of "development" but the question about who carries out this definition for whom (cf. Brand 2004; cf. Schmidt and Pimmer 02015).[42]

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[40] "Ihre Investitionsgütersektoren sind schwach, viel zu schwach, um eine stetige Fortentwicklung des [ökonomischen] Systems zu gewährleisten, und zwar sowohl in finanzieller als auch in technologischer und organisatorischer Hinsicht." (English translation by the author.)

[41] Even though Ulrich Beck's concepts of the world risk society, reflexive modernity or second modernity are not directly applicable to non-European or 'first modern' countries, his theoretical ideas should not go unmentioned here. (Beck et al. 2003). 'Reflexive modernisation' refers to the second phase of modernisation, the modernisation in a modern society so to speak. This second transformation, or 'meta-change' as he calls it, takes place when modernisation radicalises itself as a consequence of unintended side-effects of first modernity while, but also through the intensifying of globalisation and individualisation: "The continued technical, economic, political and cultural development of global capitalism has gradually revolutionized its own social foundations" (Beck et al., 2003: 2). Modernity has thus begun to question and to renegotiate its own premises, i.e. the nation-state, the welfare-state, the power of the legal system, social institutions, the nuclear family, full employment and economic security. These premises that characterised modernisation first, have become problematic. The self-produced side-effects of the Western industrial welfare state society, i.e. environmental pollution, the change of family patterns and work life or the global terrorist threat have put its foundations into question. Following the hypothesis of Beck et al., the disparity between the national past and the global future will grow in the second modern society while, according to Beck, cosmopolitan vision and states are desirable. Further studies on non-European or non-first modernity countries still have to be undertaken.

[42] Cf. Domingues, 2011 for further reading on the 'third phase of modernity' and a multidimensional approach, and Ruvituso, 2019 on dependency theories, circulation of knowledge and transregional entanglements, as well as Costa, 2019 for dependency theory, research on modernity in Latin America and multiple modernities.

Recent theoretical approaches in development theories are: neoclassic/neoliberalism (a general economic theory with politically powerful strategies that reacts to the failure of Keynesian development economy), post-development approaches (not a development theory; criticizes development theory and the idea of "development") and new realism (another form of the theory that consists of various theoretical concepts). These approaches do not give valid explanations for development processes or successful strategies either but nevertheless reveal that a failure of the overarching modernisation and dependency theories has not led to an absence of the examination of these theories. Moreover, ongoing differentiation processes ask for theoretical approaches that explain differentiation processes but which also deliver strategies to overcome impoverishment and inequalities more than ever before.

4.2   Modernisation Theory Discourse in India: Mapping Distinctive Modernity – The Specificity of India

As has been outlined in the previous chapter, numerous concepts and aspects of modernisation theory as well as many doubts and counter-arguments against such concepts have characterised the international debate. But as these theories are either extremely general or looking at other, very different cases like Latin America or Africa, the following analysis will mainly rely on recent texts by a group of theorists who – while being completely familiar with the general debate – have specifically examined the impact of globalisation and modernisation on the social, cultural and economic life in India. Prominent representatives of this group are Yogendra Singh, Satish Dehspande, Partha Chatterjee and Rupal Oza.

To explain the specificity of Indian modernity, they all refer to the early and mid-nineteenth century, the time of Indian renaissance and of anti-colonial tendencies. Partha Chatterjee's distinction between an "outer" material and an "inner" spiritual, sphere, formed during the nationalist struggle against colonial dominance, was already discussed in the context of women's position in Indian society. (cf. chapter 3). The "outer" sphere he assigned to men, the "inner" sphere" to women. While Chatterjee considered adopting western norms in the form of economic organisation, technology, science and "modern methods of statecraft" (Chatterjee 2010: 121) in the outer realm as acceptable, he deemed the inner realm, i.e. Indian culture, to need protection.

In his essay "Modernity" (Chatterjee 2010) Partha Chatterjee further explains how the Indian nation developed its own modernity. He starts off by referring to Rajnarayan Basu who at the end of the nineteenth century had tried to find out whether the introduction of English

education had brought improvement or decline to the areas of health, education, livelihood, social life, virtue, polity and religion and had diagnosed a decline in health. As a result he criticised an uncritical imitation of English modernity and manners and claimed that not all means adopted for becoming modern were suitable for Indians. Chatterjee, following his argumentation, concludes that there is not just one modernity but that forms of modernity vary among different countries and under particular circumstances. "[…] [I]f there is any universal or universally acceptable definition of modernity, it is this: that by teaching us to employ the methods of reason, universal modernity enables us to identify the forms of our own particular modernity" (Chatterjee 2010: 141). Chatterjee reminds the reader that in India the history of modernity has been entangled with colonialism: Indian modernity is the modernity of the once-colonised. He further observes that Indians have always been sceptical about the existence of a domain of free discourse and in return have not been taken seriously as creators of their own modernity. But, he argues, modern knowledge was not only advanced through indigenous discourses in the domains of religion, literature and arts but also in sciences like medicine and chemistry.[43] With regard to the age of globalisation and in conclusion, Chatterjee states:

> Modernity for us is like a supermarket of foreign goods, displayed on the shelves: pay up and take away what you like. No one there believes that we could be producers of modernity. The bitter truth about our present is our subjection, our inability to be subjects in our own right. And yet, it is because we want to be modern that our desire to be independent and creative is transposed on to our past.[44]
>
> (Chatterjee 2010: 151)

Chatterjee's argumentation shows how profoundly ambiguous the Indian attitude to modernity has remained profoundly ambiguous.

Satish Deshpande also observes this ambiguity in his book *Contemporary India: A Sociological View* (2004) when he describes the contemporary Indian psyche: "Modernity becomes a big deal because we are desperate to be, and to be acknowledged as, modern; but at the same time, we don't want to be 'too modern', or 'only modern' – we wish to be modern on our own terms, and we are often unsure what these terms are or ought to be (2004: 26).

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[43] Examples in Chatterjee's explanations include the indigenous medical systems of Ayurveda and Yunani, and *A History of Hindu Chemistry* by Prafulla Chandra Ray or scientific research by Jagadis Chandra Bose based on Indian philosophy (2001: 148-150).

[44] The past is understood here as a period of beauty, sociability and prosperity, marking the difference to the present situation of Indian society. By contrast, Chatterjee argues, Western modernity looks at the present as the site of one's escape from the past (Chatterjee 2010: 151-152).

Deshpande points out that "tradition" and "modernity" are ideologically loaded terms and that the history of modernisation studies in India differs from that in other countries of the Southern hemisphere because it was not dominated by American modernisation theory. He sees three reasons for this: first, other Western scholarly traditions have been influential in India, secondly, here has been a small but well-developed indigenous Indian research, and thirdly, there has been a significant influence by the nationalist movement. Social change and knowledge of modernisation were woven into colonial narratives but also into the emerging national narratives. After Independence, modernisation even turned into a national mission and became an essential component of Nehru's policy (Deshpande 2004: 34).

In the 1990s Indian scholars began to criticise the concept of the dualism modernity versus tradition as inadequate and too limited to describe the Indian situation[45] and a debate on a new definition of the relation between modernity and tradition in India developed. Deshpande sees the tradition-modernity dichotomy condensed in Daniel Lerner's parable on modern Turkey 'The Grocer and the Chief' of 1958[46] in which one person represents modernity and the other person tradition. Almost two decades later, this parable was translated into contemporary terms by Alex Inkeles and David Smith who contrasted a 'traditional' farmer and a 'modern' metal worker in Bangladesh (cf. Deshpande 2004: 35). Yet, Deshpande claims that the Indian version of dualism is far more complex than elsewhere: "[…] tradition and modernity are not only segregated into two separate personalities as in the Bangladeshi or Turkish tale, but are also apt to occur, in comparable Indian accounts, as integral parts of the same personality" (2004: 36). Deshpande argues that the Indian personality is therefore under permanent suspicion of schizophrenia[47] and points to the example of the South Indian Brahmins of the 1970s who lived a professional life in the Western world while their lives at home remained traditional and unchanged. The "dualistic-but-unified personality" (2004: 37) – the coexistence of different elements in a single personality, a family or a social group is a prevalent theme in Indian literature on modernisation but also in daily life. "It is remarkable how this motif of a society, a culture, a

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[45] However, Deshpande criticises that modernisation studies in India have been oriented towards tradition, i.e. the study of caste, tribe or religion and rural society. He accuses Indian modernisation studies of being imbalanced and biased. As outlined in the previous chapter, Deshpande also points out limitations and failure of modernisation theory to describe social change in individual societies. However, Indian social theory scholars seem to have gained more confidence since Western disciplinary dominance during the 1990s. Contemporary responses to the decline of modernisation paradigm have been: the term 'modernisation' has been avoided or used only in the technical sense (e.g. for buildings or machinery); 'contemporaneity' has been reconceptualised; scholarly attempts have been made to explore unconventional sites where the peculiarities of Indian modernity find expression, e.g. in areas such as the film or sexuality and the effects on institutions such as the state or the law; cross-cultural comparisons across countries of the Southern hemisphere have been undertaken.
[46] This parable is in the first part of his classic work *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (1958), which is a sociological analysis of modernisation and shifting attitudes in the Middle East.
[47] This view may follow from the assumption that Indians do not have a sense of contradiction or that contradiction does not have the same emotional implication as it has to non-Indians (cf. Deshpande 2004: 36-37, 179-180).

history, a politics or even a personality permanently in a state of in-between-ness – a double-edged failure – recurs across disciplinary contexts" (Deshpande 2004: 38). We shall see how far the findings in this study support his diagnosis.

Sociologist Yogendra Singh assesses the process of a modernisation basically as positive, but also acknowledges unevenness and social imbalance in its advance:

> [...] modernization, unlike social movements, constitutes a process of social, political, cultural and economic transformation which by its very nature tends to be accumulative, adaptive and which selectively promotes structural replacements and differentiation in society. […] modernization is a multidimensional and ideological process […]. […] [In India] traditional institutions, beliefs and social structure responded positively to the demands of modernization. They underwent selective adaptive changes in order to accommodate the requirements of modernization. The observations differed on the nature and the degree of unevenness of opportunities available to various castes, communities and groups to benefit from modernization […].
>
> (Yogendra Singh qtd. in Jha 2005: 6-7)

Singh lists in detail certain features of globalisation that are instrumental in the process of modernisation: the revolution in communication technology; the circulation of financial capital searching for new markets through international division of labour and the introduction of high technology; the homogenisation of market processes and consumer products; the expansion of electronic media, with its resulting impact on political ideologies (cf. Prasad 2006: 28-33); finally, the migration of manpower, leading to the strengthening of a common cultural identity, on the one hand, and distinctiveness, on the other (cf. Singh 2000: 71-72). Modern education is also mentioned as a significant instrument of modernisation, and one that furthers equality between men and women (Jha 2005: 7-11; ibid.: 20). As far as his own country is concerned, however, Singh deplores that "modernization through education thus, right from the beginning in India, has been confined to a sub-culture of college and university educated youth and elite and never did become a mass phenomenon" (Yogendra Singh qtd. in Jha 2005: 8). Tourism and migration are also recognised as factors promoting globalisation. As is well known, there has been a long history of Indian diaspora communities everywhere in the world and Singh stresses the fact that a majority of Indian migrants, who emigrated to other countries in search of better job opportunities, maintain a traditional way of life, frequently becoming even explicitly protective of their native culture. Singh even argues that Indian culture shows an unusual degree of immunity against the influences of globalisation (Singh 2000: 65).

This is obviously an issue which will have to be discussed when looking at the ways in which the female Indian employees of MNCs negotiate between the two sets of cultural norms. The question is: does this "immunity" also apply to people remaining in India? In general, globalisation or modernisation processes are not necessarily homogenizing. Singh explains that the initial cultural, social and economic structures of a country determine the durability of a particular cultural identity. In India, the effects of globalisation are only just being felt. Most people (about 70 per cent) still depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Ties of caste, family, and religion remain strong, particularly in rural areas. Singh assumes that the cultural identity in India, including values and beliefs, may have in fact been enhanced and that both the rising middle class and the Indian diaspora have contributed to this intensification (Singh 2000: 78-104). Nevertheless, even Singh does not deny the problems of globalisation, such as social and cultural alienation, conflicts among ethnic groups, disintegration of the family or individual identity problems (cf. Singh 2000: 240-247; *The Indian Express* 2006b).

Singh and also other scholars make a significant distinction between westernisation and modernisation (cf. Singh 2000: 107; cf. Oza 2007: 209; cf. Srinivas in Desphande 2004: 41, 181). Westernisation is described as an "empirically observable phenomenon in the behaviour and lifestyle of the people" (Singh 2000: 107), while modernisation is seen as "an ideological concept" (Singh 2000: 107). Westernisation is proceeding selectively in India. The two-thirds of India's population who live in villages have neither benefited from the country's economic growth nor been greatly touched by the influences of a western lifestyle (Elliot 2006). But economic growth and globalisation have greatly affected Indian cities and their urban inhabitants, with a boom in construction, the expansion of the middle class, and dramatic changes in urban ways of life (cf. Adiga 2006). With regard to gender, Oza for instance maintains that the Indian woman seems to be used by the political right to define Indian modernity, but is not actively participating in crafting India's modernity (Oza 2007: 2019). For example, women are encouraged to pursue paid work, preferably middle-class public service professions, but not to drink, smoke and adopt western lifestyle: "[…] women must balance the desired modern against the undesirable Western values" (Oza 2017: 209). This includes a desexualised narrative of Indian womanhood by the political right which accepts women's modernity but not westernisation which in their view equals uncontrolled sexuality.

Changes in lifestyles and habits of consumption can be especially recognized among the growing middle class of nearly 400 million people (*India Now – A Perspective* (2007: 18; cf. Petersen 2007). Their social advancement is based on employment, education, individualism and a moderate consumer-based lifestyle (cf. Petersen 2007). The change in lifestyle is especially

conspicuous amongst India's youth and adolescents, among whom a growing acceptance of western dress, music, food, drink and magazines can be observed as well as western practices regarding dating or living habits (cf. Singh 200: 117-123; Sengupta 2007; Adiga 2006). However, youth identity seems to be fragmented by contradictions which involve both modern and traditional values (cf. Singh 2000: 122-123; Sengupta 2007). As Singh explains, "cultural changes begin with changes first, in instrument values, such as economy, technology, patterns of consumption and living styles, etc." (Singh 2000: 121). Thus, India's young generation seems to be in the middle of an adaptive process, fluctuating between tradition, westernisation, and modernisation. Although changes have occurred predominately in youth lifestyle, older people have also been affected by these shifts to varying degrees.

The present study must be particularly interested in the changes of economic policies and new initiatives opening up the Indian economy: "Markets are the vital mechanisms through which globalization extends its reach", says Singh (Singh 2000: 54). As explained previously[48], the internationalisation of the financial markets and the opening of Indian markets to the global economy have brought about structural changes. While it is true that new markets and a new middle class have emerged, social inequalities have also increased (cf. Desai and Krishnaraj 2004: 315). Singh further points out that consumer behaviour in both urban centres and rural areas has changed. For example, women now wear salwar-kameez (a traditional but less formal style of dress) more often than saris, and middleclass people have started visiting beauty parlours and buying designer clothes, while the use of cosmetics and soap has increased all over India. Another significant change is related to the world of work: "There no longer exists a link between caste or community and the hereditary occupation" (Singh 2000: 54). Fewer people work in traditional occupations and there has been a rise in non-agricultural jobs in the countryside. Despite these gains, the modernized workforce, and women in particular, have been confronted with new problems.[49] (cf. Forbes 2005: 237-242). As Forbes maintains, women have not yet benefited from modernisation to the expected degree (cf. Forbes 2005: 237-242).

New market opportunities and the availability of cheap labour have attracted numerous MNCs. In many respects they are important agents of globalisation and modernisation. MNCs create jobs and, moreover, "they generate new forms of human resources, skills, technologies and infrastructure" (Singh 2000: 241; cf. Dossani 2005). An article in *Time* stated that India's very young population provides foreign companies with a large and cheap workforce. These

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[48] See *1 Introduction* and *3 Economic Development and Internationalisation in India Since Independence.*
[49] See *2.4 The Legal and Economic Development of Women's Situation Since Independence.*

adolescents then spend their wages on western clothes and goods, thus spurring the country's growth (cf. Green 2006).

G. D. Kharat (2002: 106), repeating the obvious, reminded his readers that MNCs play a vital role in modernising India. Besides modern technology, they have brought capital, skilled manpower and competitiveness to the country. Hence, they have helped India to claim an impressive role on the global market. However, this positive view of MNCs, which appears to be a majority view, has been challenged by a number of critics of such international companies and the process of globalisation in general (cf. Spero et al., 1997 256-258; cf. Bardhan 2004; cf. *The Indian Express* 2006b; cf. Rege 2007; cf. Stiglitz 2007). They believe that MNCs do not bring as much capital into India as their advocates believe. Some critics even argue that there is a net capital outflow due to fees for licences and royalties paid by the subsidiary to the parent company, as well as an intracompany trade that only allows purchases and sales by the subsidiary to the parent. Moreover, the impact on local development is seen as limited or even negative. Imported technology, this sceptical view maintains for instance, has high costs and hinders the development of local technologies. In the past this critical view led to strict regulations being imposed on foreign investment, especially during the 1970s.

Criticism has also been voiced regarding the impact of globalisation and MNCs on Indian businesses and on Indian women (cf. Desai and Krishnaraj 2004: 315-316). To list some of the key arguments: the introduction of new technologies eliminates jobs, while increased competition only serves to harm small-scale businesses (cf. Jhabvala and Sinha 2002; cf. Lakshmi 2013). This argument appears difficult to defend when one notes that, according to the Observer Statistical Handbook (2005), jobs in this sector and the number of small-scale businesses increased from 1993 to 2003 and also continued to grow thereafter (cf. Chaudhary and Saini 2015; cf. Lakshmi 2013). Another criticism is directed at casual employment, especially by subcontractors of MNCs, which increases employment opportunities but lowers the number of jobs available for better-paid professionals. Low wages and seasonal hiring are said to increase instability. Safe and healthy work environments are not always provided by the MNCs since international regulatory standards to protect staff are neither employed nor enforced by an independently recognised authority that has the power to impose sanctions (cf. Hippert 2002: 862; cf. Naik 2006: 1; cf. Gills 2002: 108).

As Datta (2005) states in "MacDonaldization of Gender in Urban India: A Tentative Exploration", MNCs have an impact on employee lifestyle, leading in turn to the emergence of a distinct sub-culture around such companies in India. The term "macdonaldization" refers to the "spilling over of the principles on which American fast food chain MacDonald's is based

and run to other sectors of society" (Datta 2005: 126). It is further explained that "more spontaneous and traditional lifestyles are giving way to those marked increasingly by efficiency, calculability, an emphasis on quantity rather than quality, predictability, increased control and the replacement of humans by non-human technology" (Ritzer qtd. in Datta 2005: 126). Datta examines whether macdonaldization has led to a renegotiation of gender roles in urban areas, resulting in more equal gender relations. Although in Datta's view it is true that women have gained more visibility, she concludes that they have not thereby gained in equality (cf. Roy 2001). It is the vague and sweeping nature of such assessments which has inspired the following case study. To what extent the MNCs accelerate the westernisation and modernisation of their female Indian employees, how strong, on the other hand, the cultural "immunity" of these women proves to be, and finally, how "convergently" the modernisation of the workplace and the "modernisation" of the cultural identities proceed – these are questions, which can only be answered by concrete empirical case studies.

4.3   Cultural Change and the Transformation of Value Systems in Times of Globalisation

Before proceeding with the empirical case studies and their results, in this section some theoretical ideas concerning cultural change and acculturation, transformation and hybridisation of value systems in times of globalisation will be introduced. From a broader perspective, there is no doubt that economic development and cultural change are linked and that economic development enhances social and cultural change. MNCs, or rather, the employment in an MNC constitutes a place or space of cultural encounter where two or multiple cultures collide. Not only does the corporate culture play a key role in this cultural contact zone, but single agents such as the expatriates or the Indian employees, who both act as mediators and cross socio-cultural borders, are equally of great significance.[50] Relationships and processes within the cultural contact zone are not one-sided or unilateral but interrelations. Transcultural aspects can be observed, described and examined on the basis of the social interaction between foreign and Indian employees, and the impact of the enterprise on their employees, but also the other way round, on the basis of the impact of the employees on the enterprise and its corporate culture.

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[50] It should be noted that Arjun Appadurai (1990; cf. Jones 2010) states that MNCs and TNCs are central agents of the 'technoscapes', one of the five dimensions of the global cultural flows and processes he describes. As an advocate of deterritorialisation as a central force of the modern world, he proposed a typology of five '-scapes' to describe the complexity of the global cultural economy: 'ethnoscapes' (landscape of people and groups, i.e. immigrants, refugees, migrant workers, tourists), 'technoscapes' (high and low technology, mechanical as well as informational), 'finanscapes' (global capital), 'mediascapes' (distribution of information), and 'ideoscapes' (ideas and images of political ideologies).

It remains to be clarified if, or to what extent, the MNCs constitute a place of cultural diversity and of mutual impact.

For the interpretation of the empirical data the crossvergence theory of values evolution postulated by David R. Ralston and his colleagues in a series of papers in the 1990s appears to be useful (cf. Ralston et al. 1993; cf. Ralston et al. 1997; cf. Ralston 2008). Their investigations focus on multi-country comparisons in international business research.[51] The crossvergence theory is supported by empirical cross-cultural studies using various instruments and methods, and its main thesis is that "it is the dynamic interaction of the socio-cultural influences with the business ideology influences that provides the driving force to precipitate the development of new and unique values systems in societies" (Ralston 2008: 1). Starting point for the investigations of Ralston and his colleagues was the debate on the convergence or divergence of managerial work values in international companies.[52] The companies tried to understand the diverse value systems of their multi-domestic enterprises and wanted to find out whether cross-societal values of their personnel are becoming more alike or not. Assessing the impact of driving forces such as socio-cultural, economic, technological or ideological influences on managerial work values was the focal point for investigations by Ralston et al.

Whereas convergence theory is a dynamic concept that deals with external forces, divergence theory presumes that cultural values remain stable. For example, the convergence school of thought argues that a change of values is a logical consequence of the influences of economic ideology, technological progress and industrialisation. Technological influence is said to be the driving force that motivates individuals to develop – regardless of socio-cultural influences – a value system that is consistent with technology. The advocates of convergence theory assert that globalisation will lead to homogenization, i.e. the values of the world will become more similar in a short period of time. Consequently, if economic development is based on a capitalistic ideology, societies will also shift towards more individualistic values. By contrast, divergence theory argues that socio-cultural influence is the catalyst for individuals in a given society to maintain the value system of their societal culture over time, regardless of technological, economic or political influences – even if a country adopts capitalistic business orientation. It follows that globalisation is not believed to cause significant value changes. In the Indian context, Hindu fundamentalists adhere to an extreme version of divergence theory (cf. Shah 2009).

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[51] For further reading, refer to the paper by Rosalie L. Tung and Alain Verbeke (2010), which gives an overview on the discourse of cross-cultural research in international business.

[52] Ralston rightly said, „[s]omewhat ironically, the MNCs have been both a catalyst for value evolution and those most affected by the nature and degree of this value change" (Ralston 2008: 22).

Obviously, the two concepts present extreme poles which are, however, both incapable of explaining a change in or evolution of values in certain countries, particularly the dichotomies in emerging economies. As Ralston states, "[b]etween these extremes is a form of acculturation where neither convergence nor divergence accurately explain the phenomenon" (Ralston et al. 1993:257). He explains: "crossvergence occurs when an individual incorporates both national culture influences and economic ideology influences synergistically to form a unique value system that is different from the value set supported by either national culture or economic ideology" (Ralston et al. 1997: 7). Ralston argues that values may change at different speeds: some may change while others do not, and some aspects of a value system may be transformed over a period of years while others may take generations to change. Socio-cultural influences or societal values will take generations and centuries to have an impact on individual-level values, while economic and political influence will take only years or decades to trigger change and technological change can occur even more rapidly. Economic, political and technological influences are related to business activities in a society, but socio-cultural influences are more closely related to the core social values of a society. Hence, values must be looked at individually and not as a blended unit.

Ralston combines both approaches and describes the change of cultural values culminating in a new value system.[53] The crossvergence theory suggests that "the combination of socio-cultural influences and business ideology influences is the driving force that precipitates the development of new and unique value systems among individuals in a society due to the dynamic interaction of these influences" (Ralston 2008: 5). According to Ralston, on the basis of a synergetic interplay of cultural and economic influences a unique value system evolves which differs from a purely ideological or culturally influenced value system. His theory is supported by empirical studies in numerous cultures (China, Russia, Vietnam), which developed from former communist (collectivist) to a more capitalist (individualistic) ideology, and which he compares with capitalist cultures (USA, Japan). He tests his theory in further studies of countries with divergent cultural and economic systems by demonstrating empirically that unique value systems evolve. For example, China and Japan have a similar cultural foundation in Confucian values, but establish different value systems due to the differences in their economic ideology. Ralston has also demonstrated that the same applies on a regional level. Studies were conducted in six Chinese regions on the basis of the Schwartz Value Survey[54] that showed that Chinese from the coastal region where they are exposed to Western influence are

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[53] In sociology, similarly, scholars refer to the theories of convergence, divergence and crossvergence in different terms, i.e. homogenization, heterogenisation and hybridisation.
[54] The method of the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS) reports basic human values.

far more inclined towards individualistic values associated with Western capitalistic countries than Chinese from the inner provinces (Ralston 1997). Thus, Ralston encompasses in his crossvergence approach both the theoretical considerations of the divergence and the convergence theory and provides empirical evidence for a change of value systems that is not carried out in ideal-typical form or to the same extent within a society.[55]

In India, Grishma Shah in a study of 2009 surveyed people living in globalised and less-globalised cities with the aim to examine the impact of economic globalisation on young middle class Indians' values valid in connection with their working environment on the one hand and in the family sphere on the other. The resulting data suggest cultural shifts in India, but not for all values: it was found that traditional values of collectivity are preserved when it comes to family but that work-related collectivism is undergoing change. We shall see in the course of this study how far Ralston's and Shah's theories apply to the result of the empirical research and can explain which explicit values and notions/ideas of the female employees in MNCs undergo transformation and to what degree, provided that changes do occur. Such findings could interest not only scholars but also entrepreneurs and corporate governance as well as policy makers in India.

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[55] Ralston et al. differentiates between three categories of crosservergence: conforming-crossvergence (individual-level values differences across groups decrease after a while), static crossvergence (values across groups may change but values differences between groups remain unchanged), and deviating-crossvergence (values differences across groups increase in the course of time, individual-level values in one group change but change in values may not occur in both groups).

5 Research Methodology of Data Collection

5.1 Methods Applied

As mentioned before, the subject of this study required an inter-disciplinary approach combining methods developed by the social sciences with those of cultural studies. While the social science methods used for the collection of the necessary data will be described in some detail in this section, the cultural studies perspective and cultural theories will become relevant for the evaluation of the findings in chapter 6.

In the following, first the design, implementation and evaluation of the questionnaires and interviews will be described. The locations for the field research as well as the participating companies will be introduced in chapters 5.2 and 5.3. The section on the participating companies will focus on the companies' size, product range, nationality and equity share. This will give a better insight into the kind of working environment which the women were faced with.

5.1.1 Design, Implementation and Evaluation of the Questionnaire

An informal interview with one Indian female employee of a multinational company located in Pune contributed decisive ideas for the design of a standardised questionnaire. The company, called *German Pharmaceuticals* here, later took part in the case studies and thus will be introduced in chapter 5.3. Additional conversations with experts and other Indian female employees of multinational and Indian companies were taken into account in the development of the questionnaire. The English sample questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

Many employees working for the factories of the participating companies (e.g. *Austrian Pearls*, *Belgian Steel Cords*, *German Pharmaceuticals*) did not speak English. Therefore, the questionnaire had to be translated into Marathi[56] by a professional translator. An example of this Marathi questionnaire can be found in Appendix D. It varies slightly from the English version due to the fact that in Marathi there are no native words for certain English terms, e.g. 'multinational company', 'marketing', or 'management'. The returned Marathi questionnaires were professionally translated back into English.

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[56] Marathi is the official language of the State of Maharashtra where the MNCs in question are located.

The questionnaire contained questions ranging from socio-economic issues to cultural aspects. Thus, for instance the participants were asked about the dress code and the language of communication at their workplace to determine the extent to which the MNC respected Indian culture. Other questions dealt with personal preferences with regard to clothing and language of communication outside of work, in order to see if there was a general preference for Indian or western culture. The questionnaire was designed to assess the level of satisfaction felt by the employees of the multinational company, and the possible change of the women's attitudes vis-à-vis their male colleagues, their own persons and their families. The participants were also asked about the demands by the company, possible disadvantages of female employees in comparison to male employees, gender relations including harassment, the amount of support given to women by the company and the existence of a complaint management. Moreover, the questionnaire aimed at finding out how working for an MNC influenced the women's life outside work with regard to their home responsibilities, mobility, friends and preferred sources of information. After the questionnaire was designed and revised, a pre-test was conducted. The time required to fill in the questionnaire was 15 minutes.

The questionnaires were distributed to the employees of twelve different multinational companies, and – due to the time limitation of my research stays, – in various ways. In four of the twelve companies the questionnaire was distributed by email (*German Agriculture Chemicals*, *German Insurance*, *American Constructions*, *German Automobile Plant*), in five cases printed copies were handed out by someone from human resources (*Austrian Pearls*, *Belgian Steel Cords*, *German Pharmaceuticals*, *British Call Centre*, *German Financial Services*) and in three companies by the author (*Finnish IT Services*, *German Automobiles*, *German Luxury Cars*).

The circulation time varied from one day to one week. In one case (*German Insurance*) it took several attempts to obtain responses. In a time span of four months, the questionnaire had to be sent three times before a few employees returned them completed. In another case, an email reminder was distributed at the MNC (*German Automobile Plant*) because the response rate was less than 50 per cent initially. Although a smaller number of participating companies had originally been chosen, the number was increased while the case studies were being conducted. This became also necessary owing to the suspicion that a number of questionnaires from the MNC *German Pharmaceuticals* had been manipulated (naturally these have not been taken into account in the data analysis).

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)[57] was used for the subsequent questionnaire evaluation. The questionnaire responses as well as the SPSS data record can be found in Appendices G and H.[58]

5.1.2   Design, Implementation and Evaluation of the Interviews

For the guided interviews, a minimum of two female employees per company were selected as interview partners.[59] Table 3 shows the participating employees and their professional position at the time of the interview for each company. The interview partners were chosen randomly, either by the company or by myself. However, for the most part, the interview partners were chosen by the company on the basis of voluntary participation.

In addition, the interview guidelines were sent to two women with long experience in an MNC and the results have been incorporated into the empirical data as well. One of the women had had 16 years of experience in diverse areas of corporate and global banking in MNC banks, such as American Express or Citibank, but also in the field of corporate and banking finance in a leading Indian company. At the time of the questionnaire consultation in 2007, she was employed as Associate Director at *American Financial Services* and had been pursuing an academic career after completing more than four years at *American Financial Services*. The other woman worked as recruitment executive at *British Call Centre*, a UK's leading customer management outsourcing company that participated later in 2009 in a case study. Further, individual interviews were conducted with two women whose employers did not participate in a case study, and these results have also been incorporated into the empirical data. One of these women had been working for five years for *Indian-Dutch Bank* but started to work for an Indian bank at the time of the interview. The other woman was and still is the Senior Vice President at *Japanese Bank* in Mumbai, a unit of *Japanese Financial Group*, one of the largest financial services companies in Japan. For the purpose of a complete overview, the participants mentioned in this paragraph are included in Table 3.

In the interest of the participating interview partners' privacy, their names, but also the names of their employing company, have been replaced by code names. These are also adopted here (see Table 3).

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[57] Computer programme used for statistical analysis.
[58] The questionnaire responses as well as the SPSS data record are not part of the online version and will be provided upon request.
[59] There was no guideline for the selection but it turned out that many women worked in white-collar or office jobs.

Year	Company	Interviewees (professional position)
2011	Japanese Bank*	Riya (vice president)
2011	Indian-Dutch Bank*	Nilisha (Customer Care Manager)[60]
2011/10 2009	German Financial Services	Anvi (controlling manager)
		Aeishwarya (senior operations manager)
		Kajal (legal assistant manager)
		Ananya (senior financial accounts manager)
		Charni (senior manager financial controlling)
		Yvonne (HR & administration manager)
2010	German Bank*	Madhu (corporate banking associate)[61]
2010	German Automobile Plant	Tulsi (executive assistant to director of production)
		Amiya (export assistant manager)
2010	German Automobiles	Sarah (head of press & communication)
		Mona (assistant to managing director)
2009	German Luxury Cars	Kavisha (press assistant)
		Nikita (assistant to managing director)
2009 2007/06	British Call Centre	Sasmita (resource analyst)
		Sudha (resource analyst)
		Safia (resource analyst)
		Sheela (recruitment executive)
2007	Austrian Pearls	Shilpa (production shift coordinator)
		Gita (production supervisor)
2007	Finnish IT Services	Shyama (software developer)
		Bhavana (technical consultant)
2007	German Agriculture Chemicals	Rajni (strategic planning manager)
		Vaidehi (head of finance)
		Puja (communication executive)
		Anamika (senior purchasing manager)
2007/06	German Insurances	Devi (head of human resources)
		Leela (accounts clerk)
2007	American Constructions	Radha (civil engineer)
		Shakti (lead control engineer)
2007	Belgian Steel Cords	Kumari (IT manager)
		Prija (front desk secretary)
		Manjiri (accounts assistant)
		Mohini (manufacturing process manager)
2007/06	German Pharmaceuticals	Kamala (senior officer)
		Asha (assistant manager in marketing service)
2007/06	American Financial Services*	Smita Khanna (vice president)

Table 3. Participating companies, year and code names of employees interviewed. *Individual in-depth interviews or written response but no case study with employing MNC.

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[60] After five years employment with *Indian-Dutch Bank*, Nilisha started to work as branch operations manager for an Indian bank at the time of the interview.

[61] Unfinished interview.

The interview guidelines were developed on the basis of the standardised questionnaire and extended by only a few questions. The sample interview guidelines can be found in Appendix E of this paper.

The interviews were generally audio-recorded. The time taken varied from approximately 30 minutes to 90 minutes, depending on the interviewee's available time and readiness to speak. One major exception is the group interview with Sasmita, Sudha and Safia from *British Call Centre* which took 106 minutes. However, the majority of interviews lasted 90 minutes.

The recorded interviews have been fully transcribed, with nothing shortened or left out and with the regional accent and variations at the level of syntax preserved. Yet, annotations on pronunciation and intonation, volume, pauses, gesture and facial expression, customary for conversational or linguistic analysis, are left out as they are not relevant for explorative research studies such as this. The transcribed interviews have been produced on the basis of transcription rules according to Hoffman-Riem (Kuckartz 2005: 47). Not all the Hoffman-Riem symbols have been used and Table 4 shows those selected. The additional symbol /er/ in the interview transcripts refers to a conversational pause taken by the interviewee.

Symbol	Meaning
((silence))	non-verbal action
((laughs))	side-effects while speaking
( )	incomprehensible
/er/	conversational pause
(in the household)	not comprehensible; suspected words are indicated in parentheses

Table 4. Transcription rules according to Hoffmann-Riem.

The interviewee's position and the employing company have been included as significant data in the interview transcripts. The transcripts can be found in Appendix F.[62]

5.2   Locations of Field Research

Undeniably, globalisation in India as in other parts of the world is more evident in larger cities than in towns or villages. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, foreign direct investment

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[62] The transcripts are not part of the online version and will be provided upon request.

has concentrated on Indian cities such as Bangalore, Mumbai, Pune or Delhi.[63] The locations chosen for my field research were therefore primarily Pune and its surroundings as well as Mumbai, both located in the Indian western state of Maharashtra, the second-most populous state which – along with Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Haryana and Punjab – belongs to one of the core regions of India that have been hubs of cash crop agriculture since ancient times and more recently of global trade. It has shown impressively developing results.[64] In 2017, Maharashtra was the richest state in India with a GDP of 0.25 trillion dollars, followed by Tamil Nadu (0.17 trillion dollars) and Uttar Pradesh (0.16 trillion dollars) (Jayakumar 2017). Both cities, Pune and Mumbai, are highly globalised cities that have attracted significant foreign direct investment. In recent years, Maharashtra attracted most foreign companies after Delhi (Government of India n.d.d).

Pune, one of the largest urban centres in India and the cultural capital and commercial centre of the state of Maharashtra, has a population of approximately 3.1. million, the metropolitan area about 5 million with an increasing trend. The main spoken languages are Marathi, Hindi and English. Accommodating one of India's oldest universities as well as numerous colleges, Pune is an educational centre and has certainly no shortage of well qualified people. It is also home to a large number of English-speaking people. Only 150 km to the east of Mumbai, the financial capital of India, Pune has attracted major industries and businesses. Even though infrastructure is still lacking around the city and personnel fluctuation is high, the proximity to the Mumbai harbour – India's biggest container harbour –, the connectivity to North and South India, lower land prices and lower personnel expanses in comparison to Mumbai, as well as customer and supplier proximity have been among the pulling factors for MNCs. In 2006 as many as 118 companies of British origin were listed in Pune (cf. Joshi 2006: 3). But it is also India's largest centre for German companies with more than 225 having set up their businesses here (Shinde 2010; Joshi 2011). The automobile industry, radio, television, glassware, pharmaceutical and many renowned IT companies can be found there today, as well as an ever-expanding BPO[65] sector (cf. Gupta 2006: 5; Chopra 2005). Indian corporations such as Kirloskar Group, Wipro or Infosys Technologies, automobile manufacturers Tata or Bajaj,[66] are also located there.

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[63] See also chapter *4.2*, 45.

[64] Rösel (2014) distinguishes between five "Indias" that have gotten more heterogeneous and divergent, amplified by liberalisation and globalisation: the Hindi speaking and poor India, the moderately prospering India, the impressively developing India, the tribal and Maoist India of the inner periphery, and the India of outer strategic periphery.

[65] BPO: Business Process Outsourcing.

[66] In November 2009, I paid an extensive visit to Bajaj Auto Ltd., Pune, the motorcycle and world's biggest auto rickshaw/three-wheeler manufacturer founded in India in the 1940s.

With this great number of multi- and transnational companies, Pune was an ideal location of field research for this survey. Moreover, Pune was chosen because of my previous stays there and familiarity with the city and its surrounding. Having been at Pune University as an exchange student for eight months and having completed an internship for three months in 2003 at the multinational company *German Insurance* located in Pune, I was quickly able to establish contacts to scientists, experts and people working in various positions for multi- and transnational companies. This was a great advantage and help for the survey.

Mumbai, the capital city of Maharashtra, is the financial and commercial centre of India (cf. Perry 2006). The megacity has a population of about 12.5 million, and more than 21 million people living in its metropolitan area, making it the sixth largest metropolitan area and one of the cities with the highest population density in the world. Marathi, Hindi and Urdu are the main languages. Mumbai has benefitted tremendously from liberalisation and economic reforms of the 1990s. It is not only home to Bollywood, but also many company headquarters and service companies are located here (cf. Nakaskar 2011) – rather than production facilities in need of spacy areas as real estate prices are among the highest in the world. But the city offers a highly qualified and English-speaking labour force. Also Mumbai's infrastructure is better in comparison to other Indian cities, though always insufficient for the ever-expanding metropolis.

Thus, Mumbai was another ideal location for my field research. As mentioned in the "Introduction", I worked there for nine months at the headquarters of *German Automobiles* and could make more detailed and precise long-term observations. Also Mumbai, as home to many banks, financial institutions and insurance companies with intense international connections, was an excellent site to conduct a case study in the finance sector.

It should not go unmentioned, however, that not all citizens benefit from the economic growth in Mumbai. Thousands of migrants especially from rural Maharashtra, but also from all over India are attracted by Mumbai's opportunities, but only few find accommodation and better paid jobs. Most will work and live in poor conditions with no access to electricity, drinking water or sewage disposal. Probably they will live in Dharavi and in its slum which is home to about 700,000 to 1 million people.

5.3   <u>Participating Multi- and Transnational Companies</u>

Throughout my visits to India I contacted a number of multinational and transnational companies before and upon my arrival with the request to be allowed to conduct case studies. Most of them initially expressed a willingness to cooperate which, unfortunately, was not always realised. Contacts made during my internship back in 2003 were therefore of great help. In the end, half of the participating companies were found with the assistance of these previous contacts.

As mentioned at the beginning of chapter 5, a short research visit to Mumbai end of November and beginning of December 2011 (phase III) had the aim to conduct a case study in the finance sector. However, the finance sector turned out to be the most challenging, i.e. to be the most evasive: some companies promised support but then found reasons not to comply. In September 2011, I was in touch with a former employee from *American Financial Services* who put me in contact with the Vice President of the "Organizational Development | Human Resources" department at *American Financial Services*. I sent two request to *German Bank* in Mumbai in 2010 and then again in 2011, but in vain. Therefore, I finally consulted my previous contacts, and with their support I was successful in finding an MNC based in the finance sector willing to participate. The result was a case study, interviews with executives, in-depth interviews with employees, as well as two in-depth interviews with two employees of two different international banks.

The companies that participated in the study represent a broad cross-section of the complete range of multi- and transnational companies as far as size, product range, nationality or organizational and hierarchical structure were concerned. In this section, I am going to introduce each company using information provided by them concerning the above-mentioned factors at the time of the study. It was mostly taken from official brochures and websites or shared in the interviews with the companies' representatives. The development of each company until 2011 will be briefly outlined and significant developments beyond this time span briefly highlighted additionally. The sequence of the companies has been chosen on the basis of the number of participating female employees, starting with the biggest turnout in the survey (see Table 5).

Company	Participants	Percentage
Austrian Pearls	54	25.8%
German Automobile Plant	39	18.2%
British Call Centre	26	12.4%
Finnish IT Services	24	11.5%
German Financial Services	18	8.6%
German Agriculture Chemicals	9	4.3%
German Automobiles	9	4.3%
German Insurance	8	3.8%
German Luxury Cars	6	2.9%
American Constructions	5	2.4%
Belgian Steel Cords	4	1.9%
German Pharmaceuticals	4	1.9%
Indian-Dutch Bank (Indian Bank)*	1	0.5%
Japanese Bank*	1	0.5%
American Financial Services*	1	0.5%

Table 5. Participating companies and number of employees taking part in the questionnaire survey. *Individual in-depth interviews or written response but no case study with employing MNC.

Austrian Pearls – Ranjangaon, Taluka-Shirur

The pearl coating factory of *Austrian Pearls* is located on 2.5 acres in the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) area of Ranjangaon, Taluka-Shirur, which is about 50 kilometres from Pune and accommodates a wide range of MNCs. The parent company chose India as a location for the factory for cost effectiveness and Ranjangaon for its infrastructure.

The company, with its roots in Austria, started operating in India in 1999. The parent company holds a 100 per cent equity share of the Indian subsidiary. In 2007, there were 201 employees: an expatriate managing director, ten Indian managers, 90 permanent employees and 100 casual factory workers. The company is an EOU (export oriented unit), i.e. entirely export-oriented. The products – crystal pearls, which are coated at the factory with enamel, and fashion jewellery – are mainly exported to Austria.

German Automobile Plant – Chakan, Pune

The *German Automobile Plant's* premises in Chakan, Pune, which was inaugurated in March 2009, comprise of over 560 acres. With an investment of 580 million Euros (INR 3,800 crores), it is the largest investment by a German company in India to date. The plant has been designed for a production capacity of up to 200,000 vehicles per annum. The parent company, Europe's largest automobile manufacturer, started business in India in 2001 with one of its brands and a plant in Aurangabad; two more brands followed in 2007, and another two in 2012. Today, the German subsidiary has approximately 5,000 employees at its Indian locations. At the time of the case study, more than 2,000 people worked at the plant in Chakan. Today, their number has risen to more than 3,500, while around 1,000 work in the Aurangabad plant and about 300 at the national sales office in Mumbai. Yet sales figures do not seem not to be sufficient. Since the beginning of 2017, the parent company has been in negotiation with the Indian automobile manufacturer Tata Motors about a collaboration in the form of a joint venture. If successful, this may include a mutual technology knowledge transfer and supposedly better sales figures. Yet, both corporations have different corporate cultures which have to be reconciled. The corporation with Maruti-Suzuki in 2011 failed due to differences in that respect.

British Call Centre – Pune

The BPO firm *British Call Centre* is Britain's leading customer services management outsourcing company. It was established in 1982 in the UK and has established several locations there but also one in Pune in 2004.

    British Call Centre as a subsidiary of a British retail company[67] manages more than 50 million customer contacts per annum for private and public sector clients, including leading telecoms, utilities and retail companies, such as O2, British Gas, or Orange. In 2011, *British Call Centre* was acquired by another company specialized in outsourcing[68]. The call centre in the business district of Kalyani Nagar in Pune had approximately 1,200 employees at the time of conducting the study in 2009, increasing to 1,500 employees in 2011. Today, the parent company has five offices across Pune, Mumbai and Bengaluru with more than 7,000 employees.

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[67] This information will only be disclosed upon request in order to ensure that information cannot be traced to the real name of the participating company.
[68] Ibid.

Finnish IT Services – Pune

In 2007, when the study was conducted, the software company *Finnish IT Services* was located in the business district of Kalyani Nagar in Pune. To accommodate its expanding workforce, the company had to relocate its office. The parent company *Finnish IT Services* was formed in 1999 by a Finnish and a Swedish company. Today, it is not only one of the largest IT service providers in Europe, but also the biggest R&D partner for Nokia and Ericcson. *Finnish IT Services* has acquired various IT service companies over the years, including in India a company producing healthcare-information systems. In 2007 *Finnish IT Services* had a non-Indian managing director and started its first Indian offshore production site in Pune in 2006 with a staff of about 120 employees. By 2007 it aimed to increase staff to 300 employees, expanding to 500 in 2008. In 2015, *Finnish IT Services* had 2,230 employees in India. The subsidiary in Pune develops software products in the areas of healthcare and banking for northern Europe, as well as operating in the service sector.

German Financial Services – Mumbai

German Financial Services is a 100 per cent subsidiary of its German parent company and has been in operation in India since 2009. The company offers financial services in cooporation with local banks and insurance products to support customers of *German Automobiles*. In 2011, 216 people were working at the office of *German Financial Services* in Mumbai.

German Agriculture Chemicals – Powai, Mumbai

German Agriculture Chemicals is a crop science company and subsidiary of the international conglomerate *German Chemicals*, a diversified international chemical and healthcare company which has been operating in India since the late 1950s. In 2007, its corporate head office was located in Powai, about 25 kilometres from Mumbai city centre. The head office is now located in Thane, also close to Mumbai city. The company operates in the fields of crop protection, non-agricultural pest control, seeds and plant biotechnology. The parent company holds a 76

per cent stake in the Indian subsidiary.[69] *German Agriculture Chemicals* manufactures and markets pesticides and agricultural chemicals at its production sites in Maharashtra (Thane, Mumbai) and Gujarat (Himatnagar, Ankleshawar). After buying another crop science company in India, *German Agriculture Chemicals* is today a leading company in India's crop protection sector. The sales turnover has increased from INR 7,746 Mio in 2006 to INR 29,484 Mio in 2016-17. According to information provided by the human resources department, in 2007 240 employees were working at the Powai office. In 2014 this office shifted to another location nearby Mumbai city centre, which houses all businesses of *German Chemicals* and which has a total workforce of 600 employees. The legal entity comprised 1,148 employees in 2017.

German Automobiles – Mumbai

German Automobiles encompasses two group division companies of *German Automobiles India*, a wholly owned subsidiary of the German parent company, and it manufactures and trades vehicles in India. As previously mentioned with regard to its plant in Chakan, Pune, Europe's largest automobile manufacturer started business in India in 2001 with founding a subsidiary and another one in 2007. At the time of the study, both divisions shared office space on one floor of an office building in Bandra East, Mumbai. According to information provided by the human resource department, one division had 71 employees, the other division 21 employees, and together with the division of *German Luxury Cars*, which was on a different floor of the building, the national sales office in Mumbai comprised a total of 115 employees in 2010.

German Insurance – Pune

German Insurance is a joint venture of an Indian company and the *German Insurance's* parent company, with the latter holding a 26 per cent stake. The office in Pune, where the interviews were conducted, is the company's head office. *German Insurance* started business in India in May 2001. The company is one of the financially most robust insurers in India, and today the company has more than 200 offices all over India and operates in the fields of general and health

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[69] 71.4 per cent as of 2019. Upon publication of the dissertation, the bibliographical information will only be disclosed upon request in order to ensure that information cannot be traced to the real name of the participating company.

insurance, as well as risk management. In 2007 at the time of the research, the head office had approximately 400 permanent employees. Today, there are about 1,000 permanent employees.[70]

German Luxury Cars – Mumbai

German Luxury Cars has been selling its products in India since 2004 and was incorporated as a group division company into *German Automobiles India* in 2007. At the time of the study in 2009/2010, the company could be found at the same office building as the previously mentioned divisions of *German Automobiles*. In 2010, *German Luxury Cars* comprised 23 employees.[71]

American Constructions – Pune

American Constructions is a global engineering, consulting and construction company specializing in infrastructure development in the fields of information, energy and water. The company started operations in Pune in March 2004. The American parent enterprise has an equity share of 100 per cent in the Indian company.

American Constructions has been active in India since the 1960s. The office in Pune concentrates on consulting and engineering services for the power and telecommunications industries. It is led by an Indian management. In 2007, there were four expatriates, plus 10 Indian managers and 150 permanent employees. 50 per cent of the work carried out by the Indian office was for the United States office during the time of the study. In the meantime, the company has shifted to deliver solutions for India's infrastructure challenges. *American Constructions* aimed at 1,500 employees in India by 2020.

Belgian Steel Cords – Ranjangaon, Taluka-Shirur

The steel cord plant of *Belgian Steel Cords* like *Austrian Pearls* is located in the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) area of Ranjangaon, Taluka-Shirur. *Belgian Steel Cords* produces a wide range of metal wire products, advanced materials and coatings.

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[70] This information was provided by the human resources department of the company.
[71] This information was provided by the human resources department of the company.

The Belgian company started operations in India in 1996. The plant in the MIDC area and the office in Pune were opened in February 2004, since which time it has been supplying international and local tyre manufacturers in India with steel cord for the reinforcement of radial tyres as well as hose reinforcement wire. Exports are sent to Sri Lanka and South Africa, although the figures are negligible in comparison to total sales.

The parent company holds a 100 per cent equity share in its Indian subsidiary. At the time of the study in 2007, the staff consisted of one expatriate and five Indian managers, 140 permanent workers and 20 to 30 casual workers.

In 2016, *Belgian Steel Cords* had three manufacturing sites in India, located at Ranjangaon and Lonand in Maharashtra and at Chennai in Tamil Nadu.

German Pharmaceuticals – Pune and Ranjangaon, Taluka-Shirur

German Pharmaceuticals has its corporate office in Pune, with production facilities located in the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) area of Ranjangaon, Taluka-Shirur.

The parent company began operations in India in 1995 through a joint venture. Since 1998 the German parent company has held an equity share of 100 per cent in the Indian subsidiary. *German Pharmaceuticals'* products include both pharmaceuticals and associated medical devices. The plant in the MIDC area produces plasma volume expanders, intravenous drugs and basic intravenous solutions for export to more than 30 countries, including many in Europe and Australia. In 2006/2007, the time of the study, *German Pharmaceuticals* had a total workforce of 650 employees throughout India, of which 300 are employed at the plant nearby Pune. The company has expanded by acquisitions and in terms of employment growth since then.

6 Results

The results relate to the quantitative data, i.e. the answers to the questionnaire and relevant interview responses.[72]

6.1 Social Profile of the Participants

The sample comprises a total of 209 female participants, of which the majority filled in the questionnaire at the company, while some sent their replies to the interview questionnaire by email, and a few answered the questions in the interview[73]. All responses were incorporated into the sample. Thus this survey provides a picture of a broad cross-section of Indian women working for MNCs, though it is of course not, representative of all working women in India.

As Figure 1 indicates, most of the participants came from the lower age ranges. The majority were younger than 30 years, 90 per cent being younger than 35 years. 1 per cent was even under 20 years, 39 per cent were between 21 and 25 years. 37 per cent were between 26 and 30, and 13 per cent between 31 and 35 years. Only 10 per cent of the participants were older than 36. None of them was older than 50 years.
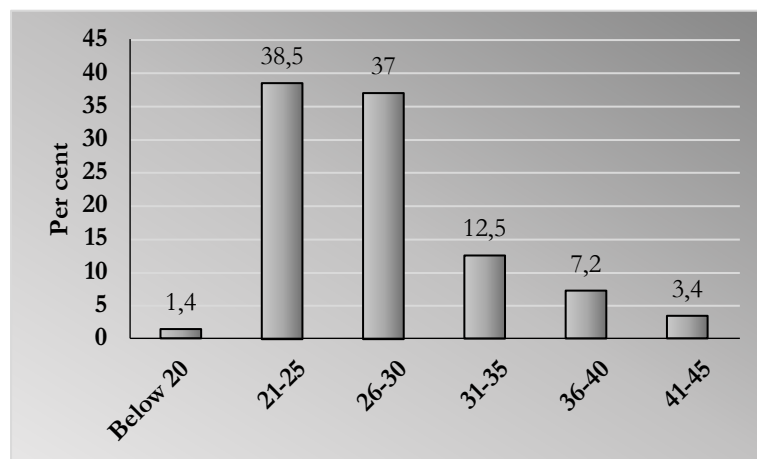
Figure 1. Age of the Participants, n=209.

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[72] I related the quantitative and qualitative results by defining common categories for analysis and assigning the questions from the questionnaire accordingly. The categories are identical in content to the subsections of chapter 6. The analysis of the interviews was based on the summary of the main contents, supplemented by relevant quotations.

[73] The interview guidelines were developed on the basis of the standardised questionnaire and extended by only a few questions.

Half of the participants were married (50 per cent) and almost half of the participants were single (48 per cent), and one per cent was widowed (see Figure 2). One interview partner stated that she was separated (divorced) from her husband.

Figure 2. Marital status, n=209.

The participants were asked about the number of people in their households (see Figure 3). The average number of people living in their household was four. Taking a closer look at the distribution, it becomes evident that the majority of the women live in nuclear families and not in the traditional joint families where the home is shared with the parents-in-law and the husband's siblings. Yet 61 per cent indicated that they were living with their own parents, and 34 per cent lived in a household with some form of extended family. In summary, one can say that though the pattern of traditional Indian joint family is still alive, among the participants there was a clear tendency towards a modern nuclear family model with fewer people together under one roof.

Figure 3. Percentage distribution of people per household, n=157.
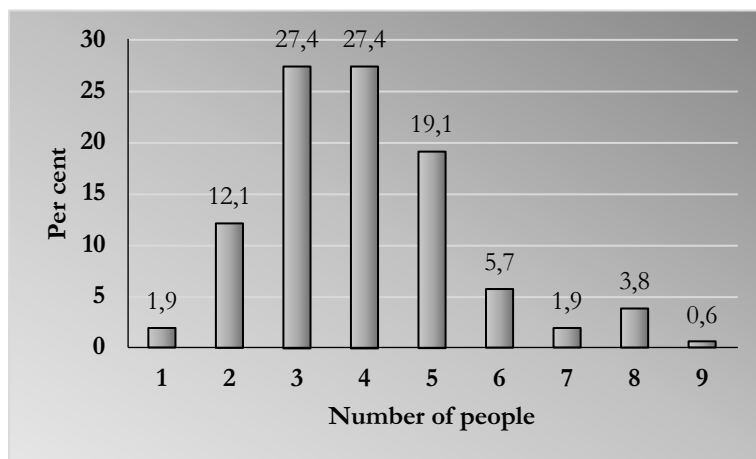
Although 50 per cent indicated that they were married (plus 1 per cent divorced and 1 per cent widowed), only 48 per cent of the participants stated that they were living with their spouses. With a view to other people living in the household, 35 per cent mentioned children and 34 per cent an extended family.[74] One per cent indicated some form of hired help was lodging with them.

When asked about their religious beliefs, 80 per cent of the participants claimed to be Hindus and only 6 per cent Muslims. Adherents of Catholicism (6 per cent), other Christian nominations (3 per cent), Jainism (3 per cent), Buddhism (1 per cent), and Sikhism (1 per cent) added up to a further 14 per cent.

The majority of participants came from urban areas. When asked about their place of birth, 59 per cent answered that they had been born in a large city, 30 per cent in a small town and 11 per cent in a village. At the time of the survey, 84 per cent were living in a large city, 13 per cent in a small town and only 3 per cent in a village, all this indicating a shift towards the city. One of the main reasons for relocation was the search for work. Other reasons were getting married, following other family members to a new area or obtaining an education or special training. 31 per cent of the 152 participants who did give an answer indicated that they still lived in their place of birth.

With a view to the level of education, 89 per cent of participants held a university degree. Yet it must be added that the category of university degree includes the polytechnic diploma. Of the rest, 9 per cent held a high school diploma and 3 per cent had completed 10 years of schooling (see Figure 4).
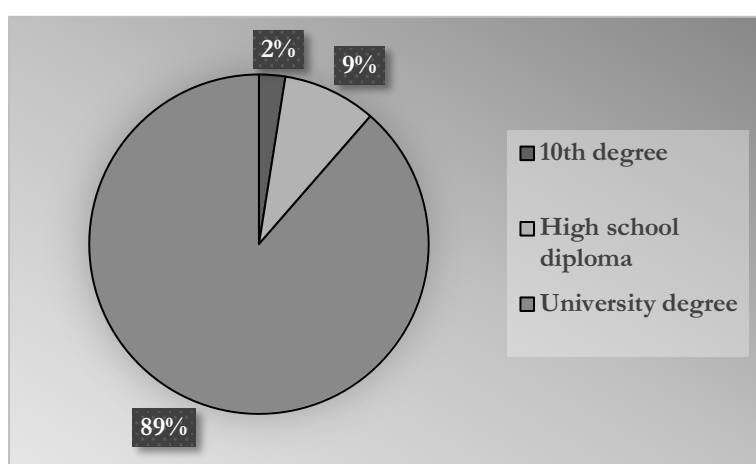
Figure 4. Educational level of participants, n=202.

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[74] 'Brother' was entered in the questionnaire in individual cases. This was added to the category of extended family.

The participants had been employed by an MNC for an average of 4 years. 55 per cent had not worked for a multinational company before. Although the duration of employment with the MNC should not be underestimated as a factor shaping the participants' impressions, it seems of relevance and worth mentioning that for most of them it had been the first exposure to a foreign or multinational work environment.

29 per cent of the participants worked in manufacture while the rest were employed in office work, particularly in clerical support, administration, and marketing or sales (see Figure 5). The distribution was as follows: 52 of the 179 participants who gave valid answers were employed in manufacturing. 34 respondents stated that they work as clerical support, 65 respondents worked in administration and 10 in marketing and sales. The added handwritten job descriptions of 18 participants, mostly in IT, were included in the category 'other'. 30 participants did not answer this question.
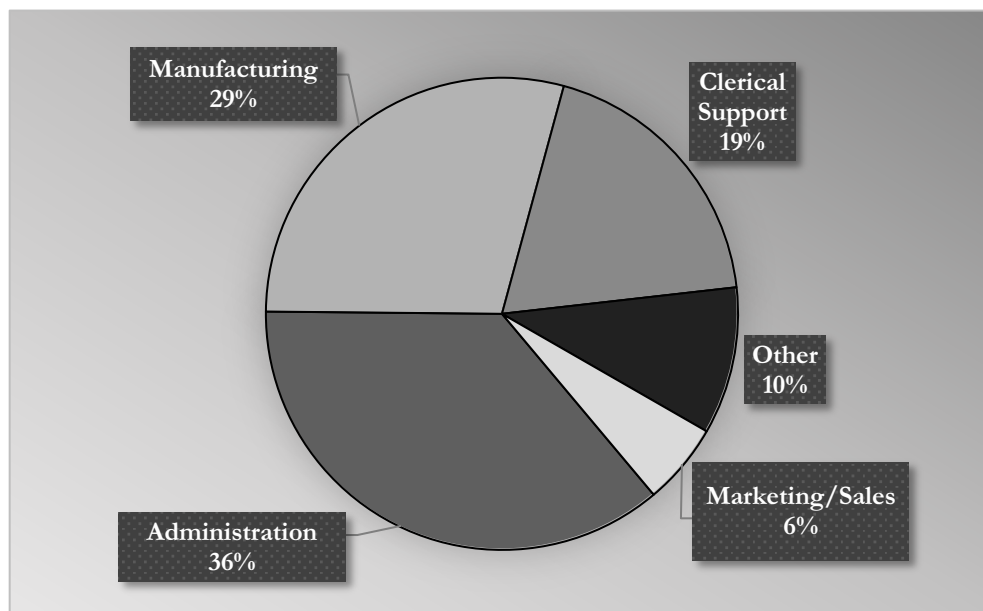
Figure 5. Job description of participants, n=179.

6.2   Satisfaction with the Working Situation

In the following sub-chapters the findings of the survey are presented. It will be seen that most of the participants, asked for their opinion on various aspects of their working situation and the compatibility of work and family duties, rated working conditions at an MNC and their general feeling of "comfort" as somewhat better than in Indian companies (cf. App. Basic Results: Question Nos. 7, 10, 11, 12 and 27). But this sweeping generalisation, as will also be

demonstrated, has to be modified in the face of numerous differentiations and counter-tendencies.

6.2.1   Indian Culture versus Foreign Culture at Work and at Home

MNCs constitute a place or space of cultural encounter where two or multiple cultures collide. In the case of India, not only the corporate culture plays a key role in this cultural contact zone, but also the confrontation with single agents such as expatriates or the local Indian employees, acting as mediators crossing socio-cultural borders. But though the MNCs seem to be a place of cultural diversity, the influence in fact seems to be rather imbalanced, meaning that the foreign (in this case western) culture impacts on Indian culture and values more than the other way round.

One of the central questions asked in the questionnaire was: "Which culture is promoted more at your current workplace? Indian or Western culture? Please, express by percentage." The question was, of course, extremely general. As Figure 6 shows on average the participants calculated the balance of power between the two cultures at their workplace as approximately 60 : 40 per cent or 3 : 2 in favour of Indian culture. A closer look, however, reveals that the answers varied considerably.

A quarter (25 per cent) of all participants answered (in some cases possibly for social desirability) that they thought there was a balance between the two cultures at their workplace (Figure 7). Another 20 per cent saw the foreign culture as privileged, which means that more than half, i.e. approximately 55 per cent of the participating women saw Indian culture in the dominant position. One can conclude that the majority of the 12 MNCs[75] involved in the study succeeded – more or less – in making their Indian employees feel at home. One consequence seemed to be that many of the women felt comparatively free to negotiate their individual position between the two cultural poles, between "sari and jeans", so to speak (cf. the following sub-chapters). There is no significant correlation between culture and the work area (manufacture or office).[76] In percentage terms, however, more participants working in manufacture answered that Indian culture was more prevalent in their work environment (65.4 per cent, n=51), and those working in office jobs (60.3 per cent, n=117).

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[75] This applies also to the three MNCs with whose employees individual in-depth interviews were conducted but no case study with employing MNC was compiled (*Indian-Dutch Bank*, *Japanese Bank*, *American Financial Services*).
[76] Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the correlation.
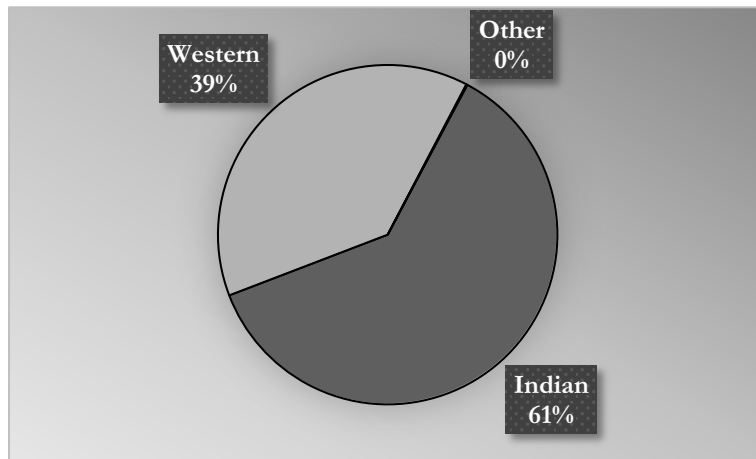
Figure 6. Culture at the workplace, n=192.
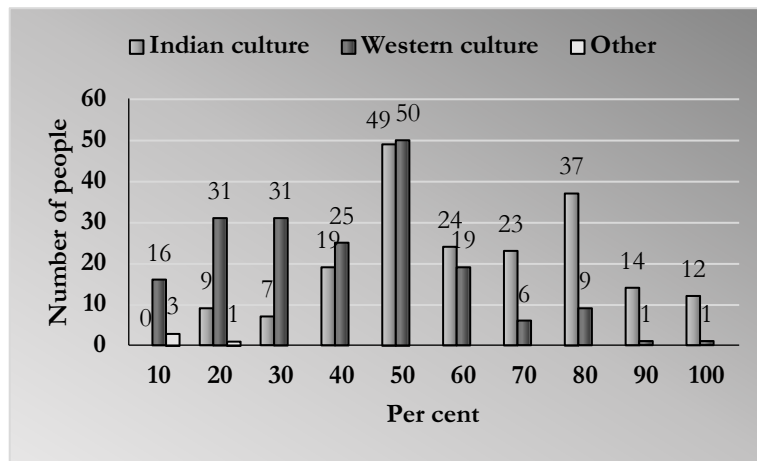
Figure 7. Indian and western culture at the workplace, 4 ≤ n ≤ 194.

But it was the interviews which revealed the complications behind the mere percentages. As far as ritualised forms of culture were concerned such as the religious or national festivals, most of participants reported – and appreciated – that their companies appeared to honour the Indian traditions more than Western ones, e.g. Christmas or Halloween. At festivals such as Dassera or Diwali many of the companies in question encouraged the Indian employees to dress up in their festive native clothes, to decorate their offices[77] and provide Indian food. As might have been expected, Indian managers, because more familiar with the native customs, were more generous in this respect than foreign managers – again with notable exceptions like the German MD at *German Luxury Cars* who actively participated in the Indian festivities and even

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[77] For example, offices were decorated with rangoli, a decorative design painted on living room and courtyard floors on the occasion of Hindu festivals, typically in bright colours.

came to the office in a traditional Indian outfit (interview transcript[78]: a-599; cf. ibid.: a-503-a-504).

On the other hand, on the deeper level of every-day culture – i.e. within the sphere of codes of conduct, hierarchies and forms of communication – the Western patterns were, in the eyes of the participants, predominant. A majority of the women interviewed or answering by questionnaire reported that they had learnt, instead of addressing colleagues and especially superiors by Sir or Madam, to address them by their family names or even by their first names, in accordance with the Western habits.[79] Moreover, many of them appeared to welcome this change, as it suggested a sense of equality and greater freedom (cf. ibid.: a-138; cf. ibid.: a-204). As a number of participants confirmed, freedom of expression was ascribed to the MNCs rather than to Indian companies. To add a typical quote (Charni from *German Financial Services*): "I'm more mentally free and confident to approach a, a German boss than an Indian boss because (= Mh. =) I know he will evaluate me in a neutral form […] I'll find them more approachable." (IT: a-480; cf. ibid.: a-335, a-344). And one employee from *Austrian Pearls* mentioned "the very friendly and healthy relation between we and our bosses" (ibid.: a-87). It seems significant, and is surprising, how unequivocally many of the women expressed their preference for the Western patterns, when it came to the handling of hierarchies and the codes of communication. Again, a few responses may illustrate this. The absence of the "differentiation between men and women", of discrimination (ibid.: a-221, a-531), hierarchical orientation (ibid.: a-204; cf. Sinha, 2014: 14) and of "bossism" (ibid.: a-12) was considered characteristically Western. And Shakti from *American Construction* expressed her approval in the words: "In style and freedom we follow Kansas office. That freedom I get here I cannot get at Indian companies. Professional wise, work culture it's Western. I like that" (ibid.: a-30).

Thus, a majority of the women did indeed appreciate the freedom and the lack of discrimination which they recognised to be principles of Western work culture and to be – explicitly – non-Indian. Significantly, however, a number of participants obviously tried to avoid the impression that in praising Western freedom they "betrayed" their native culture. They therefore added conciliatory phrases like "the overall atmosphere is more Indian" (Manjiri from *Belgian Steel Cords*, IT: a-107) or "[…] nobody shuns the Indian culture over here" (Yvonne from *German Financial Services*, IT: a-531). Yvonne then found a nice formula for this kind of

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[78] In the following abbreviated to IT.
[79] "Namaste" or regional variations spoken with the gesture of *anjali mudra*, where both hands are placed together with a slight bow, is the traditional Indian way of greeting. *Namaste* means "I bow to the divine in you", whereas a handshake was considered the characteristic western way of greeting (though it is not in the Anglo-Saxon world). One interviewee explained that she used the Indian form to greet her colleagues and the Western style to greet her foreign boss (IT: a-630). In times of Corona the Indian style of greetings has suddenly spread all over the world!

compromise. She talked about Indian culture (with its "excellent" family values and ethics), but at the same time criticised it because of "some stupid orthodoxies that spoiled it, /er/ spoiled [it] to a certain extent" (IT: a-531). And Anvi working at *German Financial Services* even offered something like a theoretical framework for such mediation: "<u>It is a mix</u> actually I can see because <u>people working</u> over here /er/ gives the culture to the office. (= Mhm. =) And <u>policies</u> and rules of the company also contribute towards the culture of the office." (ibid.: 464).[80]

The reverse reactions were caused by the respective concepts of time. Many of the women interviewed appeared to take it for granted that punctuality was less important to Indians than it was to their Japanese or Western colleagues or superiors (IT: a-480). Most of them seemed to find this form of strictness alien (and un-Indian). But, as for instance Riya (from *Japanese Bank*) explained, this cultural difference was not seen as necessarily unsurmountable. An Indian employee, when unable to meet a deadline, would simply ask for an extension – which demonstrated that Indians "were more up-front" than their foreign colleagues (ibid.: a-713-a-714). Such examples show that the participants admitted the discrepancies between the cultures involved, but that some of them thought they could be negotiated. Thus – the ambiguities behind the quantitative data – 61 per cent Indian versus 39 per cent Western culture – may be taken to offer a first, even if trivial, example of what Ralston calls "crossvergence": the figure of the Indian woman gladly absorbing Western forms of communicative culture, while insisting on "her" Indian time management. The different answers given to the general question seem to be the varying results of weighing up the attractions of the foreign culture against its disadvantages.

It is obvious that language – or more precisely: languages – had to play a decisive role in the handling and development of cultural codes within the MNCs. 47 per cent of the female Indian employees reported that English was the main language of communication in their work environment. Marathi was predominant in 28 per cent of the cases, and Hindi in 22. About 4 per cent named other languages (foreign languages like German or non-Maharashtrian Indian languages). But again the overall percentages are deceptive. If one compares the answers of women in production to those of white-collar workers the difference is dramatic.[81] While almost 60 per cent of the women with office jobs named English as their main language in their work context, only 20 per cent of the women in production did so. As the answers to the next question

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[80] Business culture is not only determined by beliefs, norms, processes and structures of a company. A definition of corporate culture is given in Gabler Wirtschaftslexikon (2018): "Grundgesamtheit gemeinsamer Werte, Normen und Einstellungen, welche die Entscheidungen, die Handlungen und das Verhalten der Organisationsmitglieder prägen." Translated into English by the author: "Entire set of shared values, norms, and views which shape decisions, actions and the behaviour of members of an organisation."

[81] There is a highly significant correlation between the variables work environment and English, as well as work environment and Marathi.

("language spoken outside work") shows, these were obviously the same (only) 20 per cent who use English in their private lives. Thus, one may infer that the MNCs to a certain degree adapt to – and make use of – existing native class (or caste) differences which are reflected in the varying levels of education. For the often repetitive and language-independent tasks in production the companies hire less educated women, for the language-based office functions better qualified women are taken on; frequently a good command of English is an employment requirement for office work. Therefore, most of the following statements about linguistic preferences and flexibilities apply more to the majority of the white-collar workers than to the 30 per cent in manufacture, most of whom seem to speak Indian languages only.

With these reservations in mind, the following examples illustrate that most of the participants used more than one language within their MNC, depending on the persons addressed (colleagues or clients from Maharashtra or another Indian state, Indian or foreign superiors or clients etc.) and also depending on the formality of the exchange or correspondence (official business letters, reports in a meeting etc.; IT: a-258; cf. ibid.: a-631; cf. ibid.: a-159; cf. ibid.: a-600-a-601). Thus, the use of language had, in many cases more to do with functionality than with identity. English "is used for formal communication" (Rajni from *German Agriculture Chemistries*) at conferences, in meetings, in written correspondence or in exchanges with superiors (cf. ibid.: a-13; cf. ibid.: a-667; cf. ibid.: a-159; cf. ibid.: a-465; cf. ibid.: a-504; cf. ibid.: a-649). But it is also used as the most important *lingua franca* of India, when conversing with people from other parts of the country or from abroad (cf. IT: a-377-a-378, a-600-a-601).[82] As many participants stressed, the local language was essential, too. It allowed the female employees to mediate between their company and its local clients – "so that they have the feeling that you are part of them" (ibid.: a-121). Furthermore, it made communication with junior employees more effective and with colleagues more relaxed (cf. ibid.: a-714-a-715). One sentence which described an interesting tendency in the working world of MNCs was uttered by Nikita from *Indian-Dutch Bank*: "I don't remember that I have ever spoken to anybody in one single language" (IT: a-631). This multilingual communication is characteristic for educated Indian employees. Speaking English, the German or Japanese managers moved in a foreign medium while their Indian employees, when speaking English, frequently did so in the consciousness that this was *one* of *their* languages. One may safely assume that most of the MNCs – with the

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[82] Interviewee Kavisha (from *German Luxury Cars*) gave insights into language choices in the course of education: she had preferred Hindi over Marathi at school because "Marathi would have confined […] [me] to only Marathi population" and Hindi at college opened doors to a "mixed crowd of people" and "different cultures, different communities" – "Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabis, Hindi, everyone, it's all mixed" (IT: a-602). If someone has studied only Marathi throughout education, Kavisha states, "it's a big difference in the mentality then" and further, "they're more conservative, they're more traditional" (IT: a-602). According to her, students who are exposed to non-Indian literature and books, learn more. She thought Marathi books were either too philosophical or humorous.

exception perhaps of the manufactural sector – had made fluency in English one of the required qualifications before hiring their Indian employees.

This impression is confirmed by the answers to the questions regarding the participants' use of languages outside the workplace. Asked for their main language, 35 per cent named Marathi, about 32 per cent English and 29 per cent Hindi. About 5 per cent specified other languages, such as Oriya, Tamil, Bengali, Telugu, Kannada or Malayalam. Again, most of the women added that they were used to speaking different languages in different contexts, depending on the respective conversational partners, situations and spaces (cf. IT: a-667, a-160). In other words: many of the women expressed that certain linguistic complications connected with working for an MNC were not new to them. It goes without saying that the class (or caste) and educational background are not expressly mentioned in the questionnaire and interviews, but they were nevertheless important factors for such versatile handling of languages.

Here it is enlightening to refer to the theoretical debates concerning "modernity" and "dependency" in the context of contemporary India. Remembering Chatterjee's quote that "Indian modernity is the modernity of the once-colonised", one realises that the MNCs with their culture of global English were confronted with an Indian upper- and middle-class culture, which, thanks to its colonial past, was more familiar with the English language than most of the Japanese or Western (e.g. German) managers. The answers of many participants appear to confirm that the black-and-white picture of the dependency theorists does not apply here.

As shown in Figure 8, English is the most spoken language in the international working environment but is also quite frequently used in leisure time.[83]
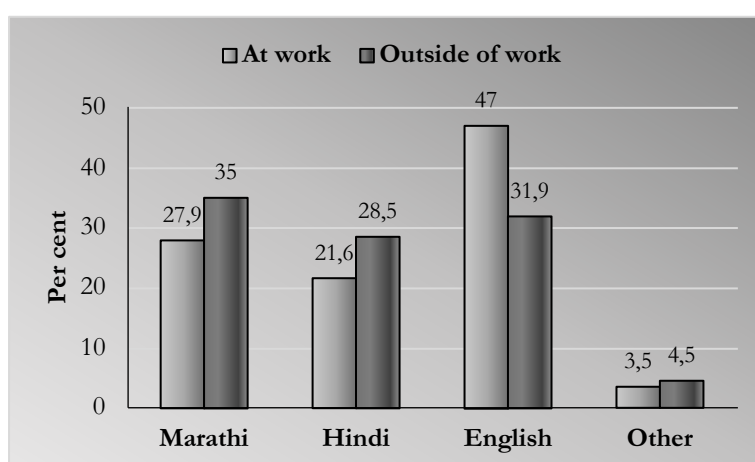
Figure 8. Language of communication at work and in leisure, n=193.

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[83] This contrasts with a census from 2001 (released in 2010) which examines the languages spoken in India. According to the census, 551.4 million Indians speak Hindi and 125 million Indians use English, which may constitute their first, second or third language (cf. *The Times of India* 2010).

Marathi and Hindi are used to a considerable extent as well, both at work and outside of work. Local Indian languages are least frequently used languages both at work and in leisure time.

As clothes are the most visible signals of identity and cultural partisanship, the participants were asked what kind of clothes, Indian or Western, they preferred to wear both at work and outside the workplace. Most of them confessed that, if possible, they would mix and change the two sets of style, again depending on the occasion and the context (see also Figure 9).
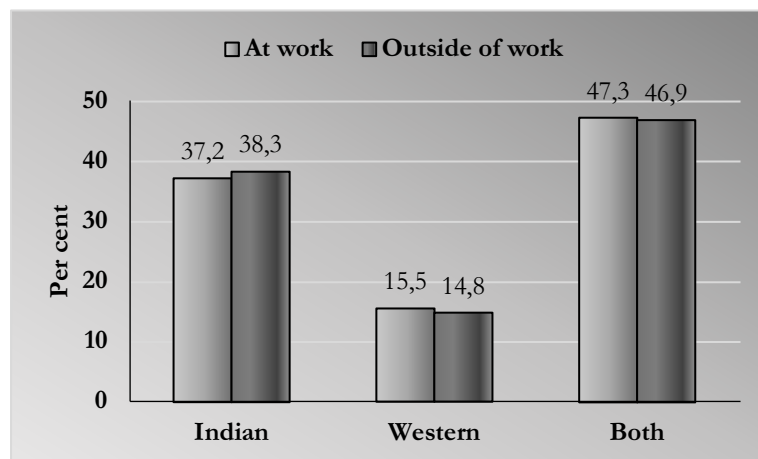
Figure 9. Clothes worn at work and during leisure time, 207 ≤ n ≤ 209.

At work half of all women (47 per cent) wore both Indian and Western clothes, 37 per cent would wear predominantly Indian clothes, while only 16 per cent reported that they wore exclusively Western outfits. It should be added, however, that some MNCs had introduced compulsory uniforms for their female employees (e.g. *Austrian Pearls* and *Belgian Steel Cords*), in most cases consisting of trousers, T-shirts and possibly jackets. Although some of the women pointed out that they had become used to wearing exclusively such non-Indian clothes, the majority seemed to prefer traditional Indian dresses (salwar kameez, sari, kurta etc.), interestingly also the women working in offices. Most of them indicated that their choice of clothes depended on personal preferences, but many explicitly denied that these preferences had much to do with cultural identity or with gender equality. Instead they stressed their individual taste as the decisive criterion. As Yvonne (from German *Financial Services*) insisted: "I prefer to be versatile. In my eye I don't see that it is Western […]. I would like to wear even a ghagra choli[84] if it suits me" (IT: a-533). Or, even more pointedly (Riya from the *Japanese Bank*): "I don't think that, you

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[84] Traditional Indian clothing, festive attire which consists of a long, embroidered skirt (ghagra), blouse (choli) and long scarf called Dupatta.

know, the company could make you <u>think</u> (= Mh. =) <u>Western</u>. OK, while wearing this pair of jeans I don't turn Western. (= Mh. =) OK, neither does my thinking. <u>I feel</u> because I am individual, I have my own feeling, you know, ideas and /er/" (IT: a-718). The sociologist Anurekha Chari-Wagh explicitly confirmed this claim that wearing jeans was a symbol of modernity rather than a marker for gender equality or cultural identity.

When it comes to the women's sartorial preferences outside the workplace, the striking result was that the respective percentages were almost exactly the same as those referring to the preference within the MNCs: 47 per cent professed that they liked wearing both Indian and Western clothes, 38 per cent would wear predominantly Indian clothes, and 15 per cent exclusively Western outfits. The reasons given for these choices were mostly practical – for instance that Western clothes were more easily washable and more comfortable (IT: a-199; cf. ibid.: a-351, a-295, a-465, a-448), or that for an Indian wedding or festival, or for visiting relatives Indian clothes would be almost a must (IT: a-236, a-378).[85] But in some cases the participants admitted that their choice of clothes was indeed dictated by questions of cultural identity. One case in question was Kavisha (*German Luxury Cars*) who explained that she felt more confident in Western clothes and that "Indian clothes make you feel little shy […] you suddenly get that conservativeness within you" (ibid.: a-603).

Taking a closer look at the clothing habits of the women in manual and office work, again a marked difference is to be noticed, pointing to class (or caste) differences. 60 per cent of the factory workers wear exclusively Indian clothes as compared to only 31 per cent of the office workers. The same ratio of 2:1 applies to women wearing both types of clothes: 52 per cent (office workers) to 23 per cent (factory workers). These findings may be partly explained by dress codes prescribed by the respective companies. But when it comes to life outside the workplace, the differences become more marked, approaching a ratio of 3:1. 75 per cent of the women employed in production stated that they wear exclusively Indian clothes in their private lives compared to 26 per cent of the office workers. Apparently the well-educated (and probably socially privileged) women employed in administrative or communicative functions show a stronger tendency to western clothes, and the MNCs seem to recognise and adjust to pre-

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[85] How expectations of others can influence this, is illustrated in the following interview excerpt. Riya from *Japanese Bank* wears western and Indian clothes but buys especially expensive Indian saris with embroidery and crystals for weddings or other family occasions. When asked if she would buy it because of her own wish or her parents' wish, she said: "<u>No</u>, /er/ given a choice (= Mhm. =) I wouldn't be spending this kind of money on clothes or things but /er/ sometimes /er/ for example, I'm going for a family /er/ you know a wedding in the family or things like that, such kind of occasions you're <u>expected</u> to you know be a little bit <u>dressed up</u> […]" (IT: a-717). She further told that when she was younger she used to be a rebel and she would wear "a decent formal trouser with a decent formal shirt and /er/ much <u>to the horror of my mom</u> but I've been grown up a bit ((laughing)) and ok, it doesn't harm to you know keep them a little happy […]" (ibid.)

existing differences of class (or caste) habits between their office and manual workers. But a fledgling westernising tendency can be observed among the women in manufacture too: while at their workplace 17 per cent of them wear western clothes always or sometimes, 4 per cent do so in their free time too.

The parallels of the women's preferences – inside and outside their workplace – allow the conclusion that work in the MNCs did not substantially "modernise" or "Westernise" their fashion choices. One reason probably was that the Indian women applying for jobs within the MNCs – and applying successfully – were comparatively "modern" women in the first place (cf. *Vogue India* 2010: 33-60).

Participants were also asked questions about their lifestyles at home, especially about their spending habits. 51 per cent said they bought a mixture of Indian and Western goods, 46 per cent declared that their salaries were exclusively spent on Indian goods, and only 3 per cent preferred exclusively Western goods. Again, the reasons given for the respective buying habits were mostly practical and had to do with quality, durability, availability, prices, personal tastes etc.[86] But some of the arguments were more particular. Some participants opted for Indian goods because of the cultural identification they offered as an expression of Indian belongingness. A few women even admitted that they disliked Western goods. Some women, on the other hand, felt seduced by the luxury image of western goods:

> You also get influenced by your society and your peer group and what they like and what they use. […] I think you spend a lot on what looks good. I think that's a bit of culture which is coming with the market opening up. You have the fanciest cars coming in, you have the latest LCD or DVD coming in and everyone wants to have it just because it's available.
>
> (Devi, *German Insurance*, IT: a-548)

But it is obvious that this changing of Indian lifestyles under the influence of a globalised economy was a general development[87] which cannot plausibly be attributed to the influence of the MNCs on their Indian employees.

This seemed to be an assessment shared by the participants themselves. Asked if they thought that MNCs were responsible for a "cultural globalisation" or a strong Western influence in India, more than half of them admitted that the MNCs did indeed contribute to such an

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[86] Domestic goods are preferred when buying everyday items like food, clothing or furniture. Concerning food, some interviewees stated that, even though they generally prefer Indian food at home, they would eat western food when going out (cf. IT: a-632, a-377). Preferred western goods, as stated in interviews, are electronic goods, luxury items, sanitary and cosmetic products. They are believed to be of better quality (cf. IT: a-108; ibid.: a-236, a-717).
[87] Anurekha Chari-Wagh also clearly pointed to the emergence of a domestic market with malls and shops as well as to the many people who have more disposable income.

effect. However, the majority did not think the MNCs were the only factor. Other factors were the increasing number of people travelling, media influence and the inflow of westerners to the subcontinent. Many explicitly added that in their opinion the media had a much stronger impact than the MNCs.

Finally, when asked whether they had a strong interest in Western culture, nearly half of the participants gave a positive answer. But many made it clear that while admitting to a curiosity for Western lifestyles, they did not want to adopt them. In a typical answer Rhada (from *American Constructions*) declared that she preferred Indian culture because of its insistence on strong family bonding and support (IT: a-17). And Bhavana (from *Finnish IT Services*) explained that even though her lifestyle was more Western, when it came "to the very basic beliefs, the very basic faith and […] philosophy of life you can say […] that we are very much, very much Indian" (ibid.: a-201). But there was also the minority represented by Nikita (from *German Luxury Cars*) who thought that they had grown up with Indian culture at home, but later Western culture had been taken over from others, and that one had to adapt to it if one wanted to move ahead (ibid.: a-630). Interestingly, only few women said that they would like to enjoy the best of both cultures – although many of them obviously did (as the answers to the other questions implied).

To summarise, the data evaluation so far has shown a shift in the cultural awareness of Indian women employed by MNCs. This change applied especially to work-related values and codes (informality, the downplaying of hierarchies, gender equality). The changes concerning personal identity markers and the cultural codes of Indian society outside the workplace were more subtle and gradual – the question of the dress code being only one example. As demonstrated in this sub-chapter, many of the women questioned recognised, but also relativised these changes, firstly by seeing them as only one more aspect of a cultural globalisation mainly propelled by the media, and secondly by insisting that they had left the core values of Indian identity intact. Here is Nikita from *German Luxury Cars*: "[The MNCs] should be a little flexible to understand their employees, their culture because another company from another country is coming down in our country and they're setting it up, so the basic (1) culture shouldn't be touched. (= Mh. =) The work environment can change but the culture cannot be touched" (IT: a-631; cf. ibid.: a-483). This reminds one of Partha Chatterjee's concept of Indian modernity, of his strict separation between the material sphere and the spiritual sphere and his inner/outer and home/world dichotomies.[88] But as some of the data quoted and some of the

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[88] See *2.2 The Nineteenth Century: British Policies and Nationalist Reform Concepts* and *4.2 Modernisation Theory Discourse in India: Mapping Distinctive Modernity – The Specificity of India.*

following sections will suggest, such strictness of differentiation is deceptive. The Western "markers of modernity" (from forms of address to jeans and habits of consumption) are not without influence on the "spirit" of Indian culture.

6.2.2   MNCs' Demands on Their Female Employees

An intriguing question was: Do female employees of MNCs notice and suffer from more pressure and stronger demands than in Indian companies?

    The most problematic issue, which was commented on by most participants, seem to be the working hours. In the foreign companies they were often longer than in Indian companies (cf. IT: a-568).[89] Nor were they always in tune with the Indian way of life. Due to the time difference between the parent company in the US or Europe and the subsidiary, longer working hours and night shifts could be introduced, especially in call centres (ibid.: a-200). Or employees could be expected to turn up on an Indian public holiday, which could lead to conflicts with their families (cf. ibid.: a-633; cf. ibid.: a-158 and a-163; cf. ibid.: a-414-a-418). But the greatest difficulty had to do with Indian women's traditional roles. Legally male and female had the same working hours, but women had greater difficulty in coping as they usually also had to shoulder a household. Puja from *German Agricultural Chemicals* said: "sometimes it is expected from us to sit late and complete important tasks. They don't make a differentiation between gender when a task has to be completed." (ibid. a-242; cf. ibis.: a-495). Chari-Wagh specified: Beside her gainful employment, the Indian woman had to do household work before and after her regular hours and even might have to take work back home to finish a project alongside her household duties, while a man could stay back at work to finish an unfinished task. No wonder that the women had noticed with anger that they had to work more than their European or American colleagues. Thus Ananya from *German Financial Services* discovered that at the German HQ fewer hours were worked (cf. IT: a-449), and Prija from *Belgian Steel Cords* complained: "The Belgium people get more holidays than Indians [at MNC]" (ibid.: a-138). Tulsi from *German Automobile Plant* deplored that "working hours are crazy" (ibid.: a-308) and that nobody at her company had taken into consideration that commuting to work in India took longer than in Germany. Her comment gave an impression of the exhausting daily routine of so many Indian working women:

_____
[89] See also gender equality and working hours in *6.2.3 Issues of Gender Equality*.

/Er/ I, I would say wake up at five fifteen every morning, ((smiling)) /er/ six thirty I have to leave the house because I have to walk ten minutes to my bus stop. /Er/ the bus comes at around six forty-five, so I'm there at six forty (= Mh. =) and we reach the plant at seven forty, in an hour. That is our in time, that's /er/ when we are supposed to start working, seven forty (= Mh. =) and /er/ (1) we leave the plant at five fifty pm and the buses start only at six, so by the time I'm home it's seven fifteen but I know there are people who start at six ten in the morning and reach home at around seven forty-five, eight. So /er/ I know it's worse for the others […].

(IT: a-308-a-309)

Again and again, the interviewees complained that die MNCs did not respect, or did not even understand the rigorous demands an Indian household places on the women. The female double burden of family and career is, of course, a hotly debated issue in Western societies too; but the Indian situation is characterised by a number of specific complications. The most important of these are the typical extended family, living in one household, the many ceremonial occasions (organised by the women of the house) and the habitual reluctance of Indian men to take on household chores. Thus men were much more flexible when it came to extra shifts or additional working hours. Nilisha from *Indian-Dutch Bank* summarised the problem: Indian traditional society had many festivities and there were many relatives that needed to be catered for, which was considered to be the woman's responsibility.[90] "[A] male doesn't do that", she said (IT: a-681). As a result, women in India have to take leave more often, and "stress levels are very high" (ibid.: a-681). This could mean that family problems would enter the working life and equally that problems at work were carried into the family life which might be disturbing. Nilisha described the consequences: "It has happened so many times that some problem with your in-laws, your husband, your kids, you tend to early morning you come to office and it's, you tend to be so stressed out that you can't concentrate on your work. It happens." (IT: a-681). According to her friends, "working and /er/ family life it's very difficult [to balance]" (ibid.; cf. ibid.: a-564; cf. ibid.: a-549; cf. ibid.: a-568-a-569). Chari-Wagh (2009) confirmed that, though legally working hours were equal, in everyday life the situation was quite different: "[…] working hours for women in India, starts at five in the morning and ends at twelve. [A]nd it's unfortunate that the household work is not being considered as not labour, not paid but it's they're working". Nilisha from *Indian-Dutch Bank* commented that men didn't have the same responsibilities: "guys are like free, /er/ you call them any time they'll come to office" (IT: a-681).

Further differences to Indian companies noticed were a greater load of work expected to be completed in a certain time and at a higher speed. One attitude of MNC managements

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[90] This, for example, also comprises that women go to the relatives' houses for birth or deaths.

was seen very critically by several participants: the rigidity with which some bosses insisted on punctual achievement of targets and their lack of human understanding. Thus Nilisha from Indian-Dutch Bank complained: "They tend to be <u>very rude</u> (1) as to they tend to be very imperson[al]" (IT: a-691). Whereas in an Indian company one could cover it up for months (!), in an international company the employee would be asked to leave if he or she did not work properly – no matter what the reason would be. According to Nilisha's experience, Indian companies were generally more understanding, ("they are more on a human side" (ibid.: a-691) and they work more on a personal level. MNC's were "basically process-driven […] but now they have come up with work-life balance and all. That, that's maybe, they might have seen that their /er/ employees are not very happy with (1) with the way they're /er/ like, with the way they are working […]" (IT: a-691). Thus, the only aspect she did not like about MNCs was that sometimes "the human touch […] is not there. (…) Otherwise process-wise they're very good" (ibid.: a-691).

But there was a minority of women who were ready to accept the greater pressure. Yvonne from *German Financial Services*, for instance, stated that "[…] I'm doing much more work over here but I'm not stressed" (IT: a-539). Chari-Wagh (2009) admitted that: MNCs were "hard taskmasters", but "if they pay good, maybe they expect lot of work from you, (= Mhm. =) maybe" (ibid.: a-743). And Sarah from *German Automobiles* explained: "I mean he pushes you hard, he makes you work but he also knows how to appreciate it, he also listens to you and <u>I listen</u> to him" (ibid. a-382). Thus Shyama from *Finish IT Services* realised that MNCs "want things to be done faster than an Indian company" (ibid.: a-223; cf. ibid.: a-247), but she and others did not strictly criticise this – in contrast to Kajal from *German Financial Services* for instance (cf. IT: a-568-a-568). She rather saw it as essential for progress in India. Answering the question whether such a faster way of working causes stress, she denied it, provided that there was support at home:

> No, not much. It depends on what environment you have at home, like if you have no one to take care of the child, or if you don't have anyone cook food, then it becomes stress, […] then it becomes a problem. But if you have good in-laws, or like my mother in-law is too good – I don't have to cook, she cooks, she takes care of my son.
>
> (ibid.: a-223)

To sum up: the motives of the women, who were willing to put up with the new and stronger demands, ranged from such rational reasons as better salaries to such high-flying motives as "progress in India."

I finally wanted to know about the effects working for an MNC have on family planning, i.e. marriage, the number of children and gender preference for them. More than half[91] of the interviewees replied that nothing had changed, but the individual answers actually proved the opposite (cf. IT: a-238; cf. ibid.: a-140; cf. ibid.: a-453; cf. ibid.: a-568-a-569; cf. ibid.: a-551-a-552; cf. ibid.: a-388-a-389; cf. ibid.: a-696-a-697). Although Rajni from *German Agriculture Chemicals* negated the MNC's impact on her personal plans she declared:

> I am very attached to my family and I delay the idea of getting married because of moving to in-laws. I would like to marry someone who is more western, in the sense of who doesn't expect me to be a conventional Indian housewife, e.g. cooking, has understanding for working late, not sitting at home. The in-laws should understand that I want to work.
>
> (ibid.: a-261).

Another interviewee stated that her employment at the MNC had an impact on her child's upbringing with regard to the quality of education, power in decision-making or systematic planning, as well as her preference for a nuclear family (ibid.: a-88-a-89). In another case, the interviewee's financial independence helped her to get separated from her husband and in-laws who did not contribute to the family income and harassed her (ibid.: a-67; ibid.: a-70-a-71).

Devi from *German Insurance* assumed that long hours and the hectic pace at work had a strong influence on the number and healthy development of pregnancies (IT: a-551-a-552). Devi had three miscarriages which she and her doctor suspected to be related to stress at work. But she ascribed this more to the generally growing percentage of women in employment than to the MNCs. She explained:

> As I said, work hours are difficult, pressure is high, so you typically tend to kind of dilate. If you look at the number of children, earlier every family would have at least two to three kids. Today, a lot of my friends have just one child or no children at all. They call them DINKS – Double Income No Kids.
>
> (IT: a-551-a-552)

Thus it seems that the MNCs were not only a force promoting changes in the world of work, but also profoundly influenced private life patterns.

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[91] n=38, Yes=7, No=27, Little=4

6.2.2.1   Adapting to the Double Load of Obligations at Work and at Home

As it has been discussed in some detail in the previous section, most of the women questioned also had to cope with a heavy load of responsibilities outside work, and the participants were quizzed at length about how they adapted to their double load of obligations. The most frequently mentioned private duties were household tasks, in the first place cooking (74 per cent) and cleaning (72 per cent), but also doing laundry (52 per cent) and running errands (54 per cent)[92].[93] The second field of importance was caring for family members. About 40 per cent declared that they took care of children, and about 30 per cent mentioned caring for parents or doing social work in temples and churches.[94] Additionally to these regular obligations lighter and less regular obligations like spending time with family and friends, (doing bank transactions) or handling medical matters were mentioned. These findings prove that even women who go out to work and contribute to the family income were still supposed to take over practically 100 per cent of the family and household duties. The separation of the cultural domain into the material sphere and the spiritual sphere,[95] observed by Partha Chatterjee as typical of Indian modernity, is still very much in place: the outer world (*bahir*) is still seen as the domain of men, while the inner sanctum of the home (*ghar*), ideally unaffected by the material world, is considered the "natural" realm of women (Chatterjee 2010: 122). The idea of a "selective appropriation of Western modernity" (ibid.: 121) aims at preventing the full emancipation of women. Even though women experienced more equality at work, especially at international workplaces, this did not seem to have much of an impact on the private sphere. David Ralston's assumption that societal values will take generations and centuries to change seems confirmed once more.

Yet working women in India had – and still have – one consolation: they receive a considerable amount of help at home (see Figure 10); and significant differences to western societies can be observed. Thus, strikingly, help from parents exceeded help from husbands by far: 28.5 per cent got no help from husbands at all, about 38 per cent were helped by husbands to some extent, while only 33 per cent said that their husbands supported them very much. But 64 per cent stated that their parents helped very much, and 25 per cent said to some extent. A remark of Mohini from *Belgian Steel Cords* illustrates this: she said that she could not work or

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[92] For example, bank formalities and transactions, as well as grocery shopping were mentioned by the interviewees.
[93] n=209
[94] Ibid.
[95] See *2.2 The Nineteenth Century: British Policies and Nationalist Reform Concepts* and *4.2 Modernisation Theory Discourse in India: Mapping Distinctive Modernity – The Specificity of India.*

would have to greatly restrict her activities if she did not receive help from her parents. (cf. IT: a-129-a-130).
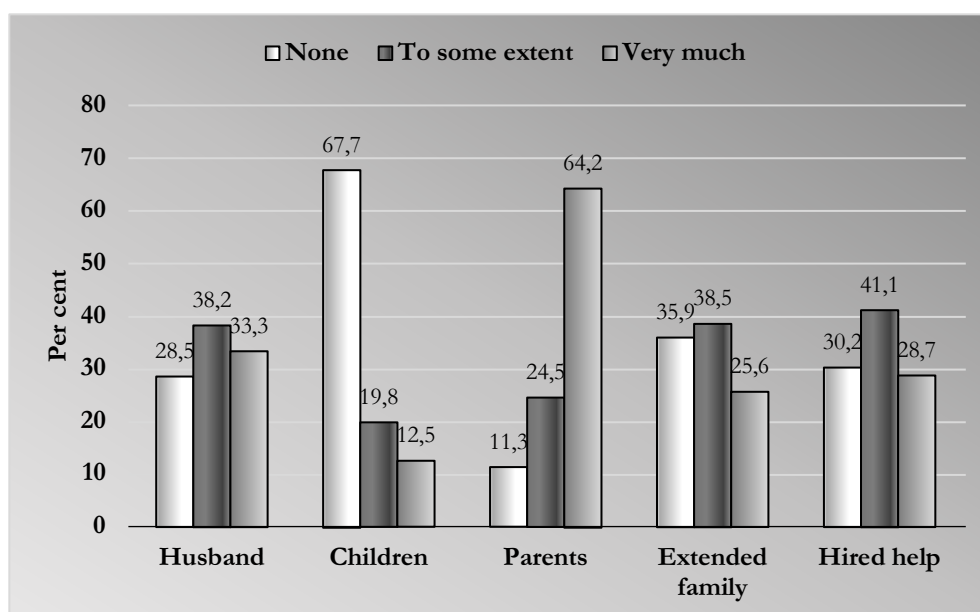

Figure 10. Help received for obligations outside of work, 96 ≤ n ≤ 159.

While help of parents may also be important in Europe,[96] support by the extended family is rarer in the West. By contrast, 26 per cent of the Indian women interrogated stated that they received much help from their extended family while 39 per cent were at least given some help. Even more characteristic of Indian society are hired domestic workers, which – as is well known – have decreased significantly in the West since World War I.[97] Kavisha from *German Luxury Cars* commented: "[y]ou can't work, you can't stay in India without maids ((laughing))" (ibid.: a-

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[96] Over the last decades, support in childcare by grandparents has increased significantly in Europe, as well as in the US, in response to demographic developments (increased life expectancies) and also social changes (rising female employment, higher divorce rates, cuts of public sector services) (Igel 2011; cf. Glaser 2018). According to a study in 2010, 58 per cent of grandmothers and 50 per cent of grandfathers take care of their grandchildren (cf. Bordone 2017, 846). Particularly in Europe, public childcare institutions provide regular, time-consuming services and grandparents take over less time-intensive and sporadic care. Differences can be found between the European countries: in Northern and Central Europe (Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands and France) grandparents help more but less intensive than in Southern Europe (Spain, Italy) which is related to the intensity of state investment (Igel 2011: 216-218). See Bordone et al. (2017) for a more detailed account how country family policies and the female labour market conditions relate to patterns of grandparents' childcare in European countries.

[97] According to ILO, there are 67 million domestic workers – mostly female – globally and the numbers are increasing (Chandran 2017; ILO 2013). The domestic service sector has particular importance in Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia (ILO 2013: 19-24). For Europe, the official number of domestic workers is estimated at 26 million today (EFFAT 2015). Historically, domestic service' peak was in Victorian England and paid domestic work increased significantly in Europe in the late nineteenth century. Domestic service has been declining in Europe since 1921 due to the low status of domestic work, the levelling of social classes, increased employment opportunities for women, as well as labour-saving devices and services (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017). But since the last two decades, domestic labour service has been increasing slightly in Europe again, particularly in Spain, France and Italy (ILO 2013: 35).

621; cf. ibid.: a-390).[98] Domestic workers in India, as a number of interviewees described, took over the usual household tasks like cleaning, cooking, doing the laundry (cf. ibid.: a-22; cf. ibid. a-130; cf. ibid.: a-210; cf. ibid.: a-250; cf. ibid.: a-514; cf. ibid.: a-621; cf. ibid.: a-672) or driving and gardening (United Nations in India 2014; Armacost 1994). 41 per cent of the participants stated that their household help supported them to some degree, and 29 per cent said that their contribution was essential. Only 30 per cent indicated that they did not enjoy any outside help at all;[99] they were probably those employed in the low wage sector (see chapter *6.1 Social Profile of the Participants*). Domestic workers were usually employed on a part-time basis (IT: a-228; ibid.: a-730; Chari-Wagh; cf. N. 2017). Only three of all participants indicated that a domestic worker lived in their private household (cf. IT: a-23).

6.2.2.2   Excursion: The Situation of Domestic Workers

Here we hit on a highly typical Indian phenomenon to understand which a short digression seems useful. Middle and upper class women's employment in the organised sector was and is dependent on the work of domestic helpers who belong to the unorganised and informal sector, which is characterised by a "lack of legal protection, cover of social security measures, and existence of well-defined contours of work and rest" (Sinha 2020; cf. Chandran 2017).[100, 101] What is more, domestic workers – as the only category of workers – have to be registered by the employer and verified by police, which can be a basis for discrimination since they are asked about their caste and religion, as well as complexion and physical built (cf. Sampath 2017). Muslims often face rejection (Tewari 2018).

Over the last two decades, the demand for domestic help has increased since more and more middle and upper class women have taken up work outside their homes and at the same time public social services have been reduced. For many lower class women domestic work, though paid very badly, offers a compensation for jobs lost in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors since 2008 (Krishnan 2017; cf. Tewari 2018). Over the past years the growing

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[98] Kavisha who lives with her parents mentions three maids, one being employed for laundry, another one for cleaning and the third if further help is needed (IT: a-621).

[99] n=129 (80 participants did not answer the question).

[100] Though the labour relations have changed significantly in more than three hundred years, the registration of domestic workers seems to be an echo from the past: Under colonial law and practices, registration and the belief in their criminal energy always kept the domestic workers/servants under the surveillance of policing (Sinha 2020).

[101] Only the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 and the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, as well as the inclusion of domestic workers in the schedule of Minimum Wages Act (even though not implemented in all states) construe in a way domestic help as worker (Sampath 2017).

commercialisation of domestic work could be observed. The number of placement agencies for domestic workers has increased dramatically – and so have exploitation and trafficking (N. 2017; SEWA 2014; Bergen 2014). Although domestic workers constitute a significant part of the work force, their working conditions are hardly officially discussed in India, especially on the state policy agenda (Tewari 2018; cf. United Nations in India 2014; N. 2017). They are not recognised as occupied in productive labour which excludes them from existing labour legislation (SEWA 2014). According to the National Sample Survey (NSSO Statistics-2011-2012, 68th round) the total number of domestic workers is estimated at 3.9 million, of which 2.6 million are women (Government of India 2019). But the numbers are contentious: Estimates range from around 10 to 80 million (ILO India; SEWA 2014; cf. Sampath 2017; cf. Sinha 2020). The majority are poor, illiterate, female interstate migrant workers coming from communities who are especially vulnerable, such as Dalits, Adivasis, or landless OBCs[102] (SEWA 2014; Sampath 2017).[103] In the past, they usually cleaned and cooked for one household but today, due to urbanisation and a trend towards nuclear families, "part-time domestic work" (N. 2017) comprises heterogenous work in different homes. Also many middle class families cannot afford full-time domestic workers. The best paid tasks are cooking, followed by childcare; the lowest paid are doing laundry and cleaning (N. 2017; cf. Anti-Slavery International n.d.).[104]

In the past, there have been many legislative attempts to improve the domestic workers' situation, but without success (SEWA 2014; Armacost 1994).[105] The ILO's (C189) Treaty, which defines domestic work through protective regulation has still not been ratified by India, and the Domestic Workers (Regulation of Work and Social Security) Bill 2017 has still not been passed (Sinha 2020). Until today, domestic workers in India face many inequalities such as the lack of: minimum wage in many states,[106] fixed working hours, the right to leaves, social security, the right to form their own trade unions or associations, maternity leave, day-care (Tewari 2018; Sharma 2019). Instead domestic workers often meet with discrimination, exploitation as well as physical and sexual violence based on religion, caste and ethnicity (cf. Ganeriwal 2018; Krishnan

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[102] The term Other Backward Class (OBC) is used by the Government of India to classify castes which are educationally, politically or socially disadvantaged. Reservation and affirmative action is provided for the representation for historically and currently disadvantaged groups in Indian society: Other Backward Class (OBC), Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SCs and STs).

[103] Even child labour is still a common in the field of domestic work (SEWA 2014; Armacost 1994).

[104] Cooking is paid with Rs 500-1,500 per month, childcare in a range of Rs 500-1,000 and cleaning in the range of Rs 100 to 400 per month.

[105] See Armacost (1994) for a detailed account of the history of domestic workers' trade unions and associations and their respective activities.

[106] The only states that have introduced minimum wages for domestic workers are: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan (United Nations in India 2014; N. 2017). For example, Rajasthan in 2016, set the minimum wage for a fulltime domestic worker at a minimum of Rs 5,642 per month (Ganeriwal 2018).

2017; United Nations in India 2014; Sugden 2014). As G. Sampath in his article "It's not help, it's work" (2017) stated: "If anything, one could argue that in this sector, it is the employer who poses a bigger security threat – to the employee". In addition, the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 endangered the domestic workers' livelihood: either they have been unable to work or worked overtime, were not paid and not entitled to social security, and thus, pre-existing issues only worsened (*The Economic Times* 2020; Kumar and Pal 2021).

To sum up: in a situation in which powerful Indian traditions – the spiritually defined role of women within family and household – threatened and still threaten to prevent women from working in the organised sector, including MNC, another couple of typically Indian phenomena helped and help to solve or at least soften the problem: firstly the extended family with a number of helpers among parents and in-laws, and secondly the vast number of underprivileged and cheap domestic workers.

6.2.2.3   Views on Travelling

This chapter examines the questioned women's attitudes concerning travel-activity patterns and (geographical) mobility[107], with the term "travel" covering local as well as long-distance movement. An empowering effect has been generally ascribed to mobility because it offers access to the public sphere, to wider opportunities and to freedom (Hanson 2010; cf. Raju 2005: 198). Thus, it may be assumed that increasing mobility gives an impulse to transforming gender relations. In general, Indian women's mobility is still fairly restricted as compared to their sisters in western societies. Conservative gender roles and societal norms but also a lack of safe and secure transport and infrastructure are reasons for this situation. The OLA Mobility Institute's report *What Do Women and Girls Want From Urban Mobility Systems?* (2019: 4) states:

> Overcrowding in public transport, poor street lighting, inadequate and insecure walking environment, and near absence of security measures in public transport and para-transit services – crucial especially for night travel – are some of the maladies plaguing the urban mobility systems in India today that do not inspire confidence in women. Such inadequate mobility services prevent women from participating in economic activities as freely as men.

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[107] See also *4.1 Modernisation and Dependency Theory – Development Theories Between Crisis and Redetermination* and theoretical explanations on characteristics of modernisation and modernity.

To find out whether there has been an increase in their daily mobility, participants were asked if the amount of travelling they do had increased since working for the MNC. 67 per cent answered in the negative but 33 per cent stated that the number of their business trips within India had actually increased.[108] However, one must bear in mind that such trips often only mean daily commuting from home to the workplace, as indicated by several interviewees, for example by Gita from *Austrian Pearls*: "I'm travelling only coming to company" (cf. IT: a-62; cf. ibid.: a-109; cf. ibid.: a-165). This also applies to women from Pune who work for *Belgian Steel Cords*, *Austrian Pearls*, *German Pharmaceuticals* or *German Automobile Plant*, or those from Mumbai who work for *German Agriculture Chemicals* to Powai[109]. In these cases the business trips are limited to the region. Business trips abroad have only marginally increased by 13 per cent.[110] Yet some interviewees, particularly from the middle and upper employment positions, confirmed that the number of business trips within the country and even abroad had increased as a consequence of rising numbers of training courses, conferences or business meetings (IT: a-237; cf. ibid.: a-19; cf. ibid.: a-32; cf. ibid.: a-126; cf. ibid.: a-205; cf. ibid.: a-260; cf. ibid.: a-386; cf. ibid.: a-424; cf. ibid.: a-487; cf. ibid.: a-617).[111] Some women expressly appreciated the chance to travel abroad. Puja from *German Agriculture*, for instance, especially valued the possibility to travel for the company because it offered the chance to get to know different cultures.

All interviewees were further asked if more business travelling was or would be supported by their families. Almost all interviewees affirmed this. As Kumari from *Belgian Steel Cords* believed, "[y]es, they want me to grow and see the world" (ibid.: a-99). Another employee from *German Agriculture Chemicals* stated that both her family and the MNC have been supportive of her work-related travels: "I used to go for one and a half years back and forth between Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai and my family supported that. Even my company – they offered to go in between to visit my family" (cf. ibid.: a-260). Bhavana's husband proved to be very supportive of his wife and a three months training in Germany by her company *Finnish IT Services*: "So I said, I said actually I was to say no but then my husband said no, you have to go. You are getting an opportunity, no matter what happens, I'll do everything, I look after the child and all, don't worry, you go" (ibid.: a-205; cf. ibid.: a-536). A further interviewee from *American Construction* stated that her family supported her career in view of the time and effort she spent studying (ibid.: a-19). Tulsi from *German Automobile Plant* explained that "my parents/family's attitude is

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[108] n=196

[109] At the time of the research in 2007, its corporate head office was located in Powai, about 25 kilometres from Mumbai city centre. The head office is now located in Thane, also nearby Mumbai city.

[110] 87 per cent answered that business trips abroad have not increased (n=188).

[111] Countries the participants went to for training purposes were the U.S.A., France, Germany and Belgium, the UK, China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, Bali and Australia.

different as compared to the normal conservative families in India. They have a modern outlook thinking as far as education/work is concerned. […], my sister is living alone in London since two and a half years and they are ok with that" (ibid.: a-324). Such an attitude was, however, not universal. One interviewee stated that traditional families did not like their daughters to travel alone (cf. IT: a-550). This may well have security reasons, as explained above and mentioned by Safia, Sasmita and Sudha from *British Call Centre* (ibid.: a-165-a-166; cf. ibid.: a-139; cf. ibid.: a-511). As examined in chapters 6.2.2 and as will be discussed in chapter 6.2.4, for safety reasons women were often not encouraged to work late or during the night, or were possibly not be considered for jobs which included travelling.

With regard to vacations, 34 per cent indicated that vacations within India had increased since working for an MNC, while seven per cent even stated that their vacations abroad had increased as well.[112] Two interviewees mentioned a good salary and a pay rise respectively as reasons for more holidaying abroad (IT: a-260; ibid.: a-300; cf. ibid.: a-536). One interviewee stated that it was easier at MNCs to take holidays in comparison to Indian companies (ibid.: a-362; cf. ibid.: a-536).[113] Another woman, Sarah from *German Automobiles*, however, said that her vacations had actually decreased because she would not get any holidays beyond an annual break (IT: a-386).

In summary, employment with the MNC had obviously increased the mobility of female employees on average. Daily commuting within the city or even the region had grown, while some women were even given the opportunity to attend training courses abroad, as in the cases of *American Construction, Belgian Steel Cords, German Agriculture Chemicals, German Automobiles, German Financial Services, German Luxury Cars* or *Finnish IT Services*. However, one must bear in mind that only women from the middle and upper employment positions benefitted from such training courses abroad and not women employed in lower job positions.

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[112] 66 per cent stated that vacations within India did not increase and 94 per cent answered that vacations abroad had not increased either (vacations in India: n=187; vacations abroad: n=184).

[113] For example, Tulsi from *German Automobile Plant* said: "[…] and then bosses also travelling because they are multinational, they are always travelling to Germany, so you can clap your holiday when your boss is on holiday. Indian companies the bosses are 24/7 in office and working even more than the work powers, so you can't take your holidays. It's very difficult in Indian companies to take holidays" (IT: a-362). And Mona from *German Automobiles* stated that "Yes because they give /er/ importance to your personal life as well" (ibid.: a-536).

6.2.3   Issues of Gender Equality

6.2.3.1   MNC's Employment Regulations Concerning Gender Equality

In this section a closer look will be taken at female employees' views on gender equality respecting their rights, payment, and the hiring and promotion practices in India in general and at their companies.

An expert's opinion may serve as an introduction. I interviewed Anurekha Chari-Wagh in 2009 at the Sociology Department at Pune University, where she is an Assistant Professor and has specialised in gender and development. In the interview she offered insights into social structures and expectations in India and assessed their effects on women's position. As to the legal situation, she declared women have equal rights – every individual citizen has the right to work in India. But whether a person in India works or not, where he or she works, which subjects he or she studies depends on, class, caste, ethnicity and region and also on gender (cf. Mohanty 1988). She then pointed out the enormous importance of the joint family as an essential part of India's collectivist society which is based on cohesion and interdependence. Thus, for instance, no institutionalised structure for taking care of helpless people, e.g. children and elderly persons exists.[114] Therefore, many families have to organise care themselves, and it is the woman who is held responsible for these duties. Chari-Wagh concluded that this "[also] has a repercussion on our working environment (= Mh. =) in terms of equal rights" (IT: a-730), for example by affecting a woman's working hours. Several interviewees mentioned that there was a legal gender difference in India with regard to night shifts: women are generally not allowed to work nights with the exception of the BPO sector or hospitals. Even if a wife worked only a bit later than usual, this could cause trouble at home, especially if the team at work consists of more men than women. Meetings, could also lead to conflicts in the family. Chari-Wagh pointed to "the relationship between husband and wife and the larger structure because in India when you marry, you do not marry between persons, you marry to the family also". She gave an example: "[s]o to what extent would a family accept a daughter who comes at twelve o'clock in the night, 'How important that meeting was?' [would be asked by the family]" (IT: a-730). And she quoted some prevailing prejudices and taboos, which did not allow women to work late:

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[114] There is a lack of crèches for children. In view to elderly, there are two institutions – but the private one is too expensive and the public, the governmental one's service is not good, as stated by Chari-Wagh.

Indian women even if she doesn't <u>drink</u>, I mean, Indian women drinking <u>itself is a big vision</u>, you know, because there is a lot stigma attached to drinking not because drinking has direct, direct connection, you know, if you're drinking means you are loose in moral character.

(IT: a-730-a-731)

Still Chari-Wagh believed that women working with an MNC enjoyed more equal rights and that pressures and constraints are better understood by the family, if both husband and wife worked in the corporate sector. Ananya from *German Financial Services* also argued that work and longer working hours were probably accepted and respected more if husband and wife both were working, for example, in order to take care of a home loan. Then, a "wife's income definitely <u>makes</u> a lot of difference" (IT: a-434).[115]

In the following the opinions and the participants' perception of gender equality in the field of work will be analysed. The data reveal that most women (almost 80 per cent), working at an MNC, felt they had the same rights as their male colleagues. The same goes for equal treatment in the working environment, for equal working hours, as well as for gender balance in decision-making. Figures 11–13 and 18 (p. 98) show the percentage distribution of the five-point Likert scaled responses for each examined aspect respectively (cf. App. Basic Results: Question Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 3). Many women were convinced that at their company women and men experienced equal treatment because at her company performance mattered and not gender (IT: a-143; cf. IT: a-703; cf. ibid.: a-397; cf. ibid.: a-517-a-519; cf. ibid.: a-328-a-330; cf. ibid.: a-328-a-330). When asked about their opinion on the attitudes of Indian companies, the participants were much more sceptical (see Figures 11–13). The MNCs seem to work as trend-setters in the words of Charni from *German Financial Services* commented "[…] it's going to a stage, moving to a stage where women are getting better rights, I would say, (= Mh. =) are getting equal rights as men get (= Mh. =) but it's still, you know, some way ahead to go" (IT: a-473).

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[115] Ananya further explained that nowadays the mother in-law in India "<u>does</u> come forward in support […] because she probably understands that /er/ /er/ it's it's required that two people need to (work) to run a comfortable life. But /er/ again, since we are also <u>bound</u> by society boundaries per se /er/ you know we have to somehow (2) balance it out […]" (IT: a-434; cf. Bajaj 2012).
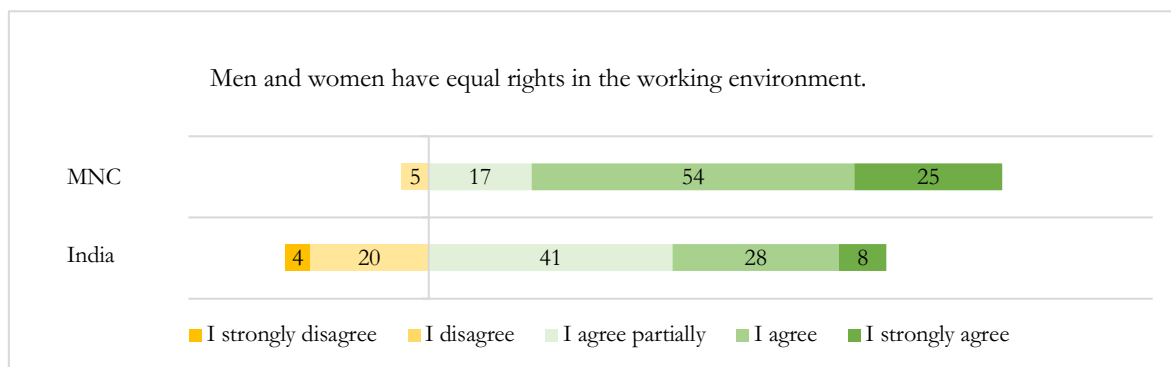
Figure 11. Equal rights in the working environment, 199 ≤ n ≤ 202.
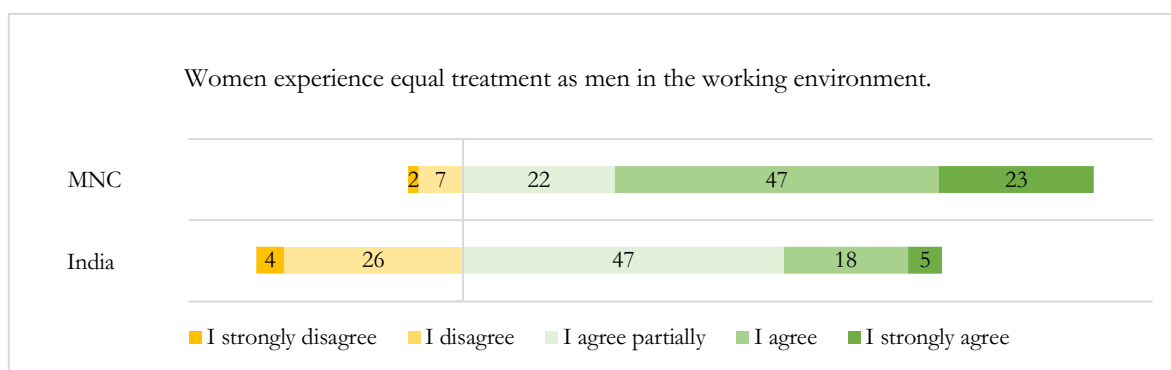
Figure 12. Equal treatment in the working environment, n=199.
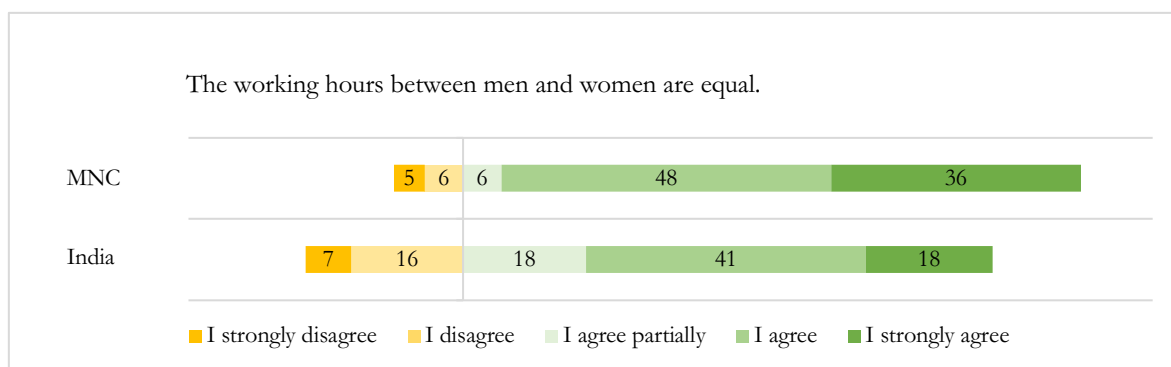
Figure 13. Equal working hours, 196 ≤ n ≤ 198.

In the past, only a limited number of women were given the chance to work at all, especially in such male-dominated fields as engineering (cf. IT: a-112; cf. ibid.: a-150-a-151; cf. Lila Poonawalla n.d.).[116] As numerous participants emphasised, MNCs had actually given them more opportunities to work (cf. IT: a-124-a-125; cf. ibid.: IT: a-281; cf. ibid.: a-384; cf. ibid.: a-525). Vishwas Gautum in an article published in *The Times of India: Pune Times* (cf. Gautam 2006:

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[116] See also *6.2.2 MNCs Demands on Their Female Employees*.

5; cf. IT: a-85; cf. ibid.: a-636) argued that the western concept of the working woman, though foreign to traditional Indian culture, was advancing in Indian society and that the MNCs were important agents in this process. Anamika from *German Agriculture Chemicals* appreciates the fundamental importance of their contribution: "Rights start with work. If you are not given work, you don't have rights and benefits" (IT: a-230).

Yet a majority of participants expressed their impression that, at both MNCs as well as in Indian companies, men were still often preferentially hired and that women had to prove themselves and their qualifications, skills and knowledge as better than men,[117] yet there was a marked difference between their judgement of MNCs and Indian companies (Figure 14 and 15, p. 94, show the percentage distribution of the five-point Likert scaled responses; cf. App. B: Question No. 6 and 8).[118] While 81 per cent more or less agreed that Indian firms preferentially employed men, only 62 believed so of MNCs. Correspondingly, a majority of 80 per cent assumed that women had to prove their worth more strongly than men in Indian companies as compared to 60 per cent who thought so of MNCs. Reasons given were that in Indian companies men were believed to perform better by pushing harder and concentrating more on their jobs. The participants also assumed that there was a widespread prejudice that women could actually not perform as well as men (cf. IT: a-216; cf. ibid.: a-288-a-289; cf. ibid.: a-266; cf. ibid.: a-557; ibid.: a-476; ibid.: a-149; ibid.: a-339). Thus Yvonne from *German Financial Services* felt that, at Indian companies, "[…] as a woman […] my output is not, you know, judged according to my capability or my qualifications that I mention in my resume", (IT: a-523). But the majority of the interviewees did not believe that doubt in women's capability was the main reason for preferring men, but saw a combination of complex reasons: Traditional lifestyle, stereotypes and orthodox mindsets were blamed in the first place for putting women at a disadvantage.[119] Radha from *American Constructions* explained that as in the past the majority of Indian women did not work or study (cf. IT: a-3-a-4; cf. ibid.: a-212-a-214), men consequently looked on women as non-working housewives and not as potential bread winners. Another factor was the heavy load of work at home which most women had to shoulder, which restricted their ability to work late or travel and thus excluded them from certain attractive jobs (cf. IT: a-243; cf. ibid.: a-475; cf. ibid.: a-522-a-524; cf. ibid.: a-497-a-498; cf. ibid.: a-680-a-681; cf. ibid.:

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[117] The participants rated the MNCs better than Indian companies, or rather than the overall situation in India. This is expressed by the mean value of 2.3 which indicates that the participants agreed with the statement that women have to prove themselves and their qualifications, skills and knowledge more than men in India.

[118] The participants partially agreed to the statements that men are preferentially hired at MNCs and that women have to prove themselves and their qualifications, skills and knowledge more than men, or agreed when referring to Indian companies.

[119] See also aspects of tradition and prejudices in conjunction with Indian women's responsibilities discussed earlier in this chapter, as well as *6.2.2 MNCs Demands on Their Female Employees*.

a-735). Paradoxically also the consideration for women's safety, though well meant, played a limiting role as companies were reluctant to take the responsibility for women in working or travelling late (ibid.: a-215; cf. ibid.: a-436; cf. ibid.: a-183-a-184; cf. ibid.: a-659). A few even made it mandatory for women to work only during the day, as Sudha from *British Call Centre* mentioned (IT: a-145). Several women saw these protective measures as obstacles to employing women (cf. ibid.: a-212; cf. ibid.: a-645). For companies it was "better to appoint a boy, or a man or whatever because they can stay, they can roam around more, they are not having a responsibility" (ibid.: a-3; cf. ibid.: a-623; cf. ibid.: a-327-a-328 and a-339; cf. ibid.: a-516 and a-523; cf. ibid.: a-286; cf. ibid.: a-624; cf. ibid.: a-306; cf. ibid.: a-144). Chari Wagh confirmed these observations in principle, saying many bosses preferred men, "so that they don't have to be to being perfect gentlemen all the time [...]" (IT: a-334). Although Bhavana from *Finnish IT Services* herself had never suffered from limiting protection at *Finnish IT Services*, she and others mentioned that even "though the company ( ) (is a) MNC, still most of the colleagues are all Indian" (cf. IT: a-184), and colleagues might judge a woman on her behaviour or clothes and suspect her of loose morals if she worked late. Class too could be a limiting influence as Sudha explained: "[...] if it is a well-to-do family, the parents would not like for the girl to stay out [...] for long hour, hours. [...] It's a, a what you call a middle class mindset" (ibid.: a-145). One consequence of most job offers which included travelling were even advertised for "men only" (cf. IT: a-114-a-115; cf. ibid.: a-148; cf. ibid.: a-460).

Amiya from *German Automobile Plant* took a more general, sociological view mentioning women's generally lower status in Indian society as the basic reason for preferring men: "It's a men's world" (ibid.: a-285). Yet though she deplored that many jobs were reserved for men, she partly also blamed women as many did not feel comfortable and secure enough to work in a male dominated work environment, if there was no special support for them (cf. ibid.: a-573). Considering the situation in India in general, Amiya offered an optimistic statement: "[...] of course, there is a lot of disparity but slowly it's coming down" (ibid.: a-284). Her boss used to bring her home in case she had to work late, and besides, gave her all the credits for her work (ibid.: a-285). Interestingly, however, she noted, that at her former workplace, although also an MNC, gender disparity existed, which she traced back to the management which was Indian.

In the employment market in India men are preferentially hired compared to women.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I agree partially	I agree	I strongly agree
MNC	8	30	34	22	6
India	2	17	20	40	22
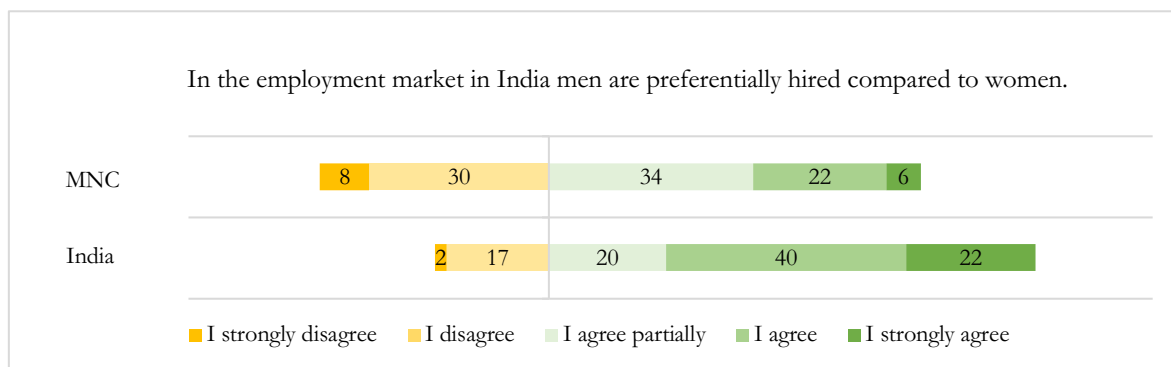
Figure 14. Hiring practices, 194 ≤ n ≤ 200.

Women have to prove themselves and their qualifications, skills and knowledge more than men.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I agree partially	I agree	I strongly agree
MNC	14	26	12	27	21
India	5	15	15	34	30
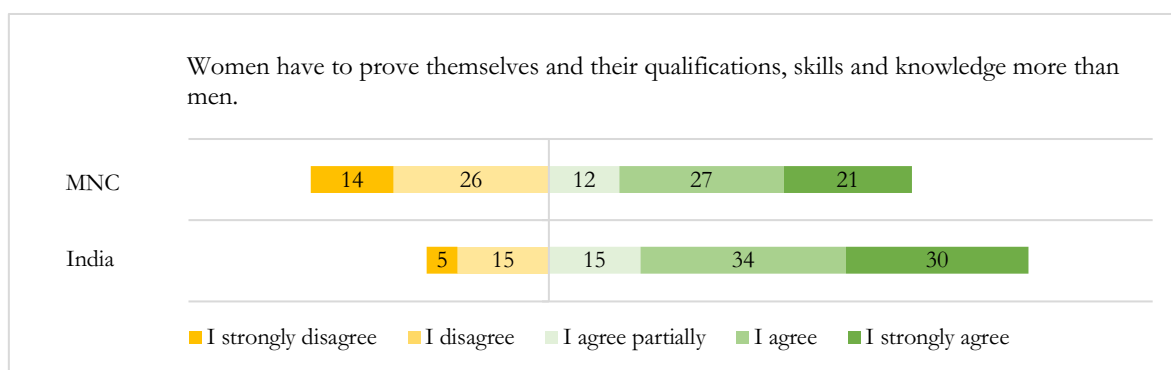
Figure 15. Proof of qualifications, skills and knowledge, 197 ≤ n ≤ 198.

The problems the often especially long working hours at MNCs caused for women have been discussed in the previous section. Yet it remains to be mentioned that most participants admitted and appreciated that their company was willing to help its female employees to resolve problems arising from the clash of home and work responsibilities. Thus Asha from *German Pharmaceuticals* emphasised that the working atmosphere at her company was very good for a woman and that the management was very helpful if a woman needed to go home to take care of a child (cf. IT: a-643). But that did not apply to all companies: in contrast, the MNC *Austrian Pearls* did not provide help to the same extent. Participants employed at this company stated that not enough time was left for home responsibilities. Employee Nilisha was under no illusion that the basic problem for women remained the same, but she admitted that the understanding of the employer – as often experienced in the MNCs – could make a positive difference. This topic will be discussed at greater length in chapter *6.2.3.5*.

As to the question of payment, the participants partially agreed that women and men were equally paid, both by the MNCs and Indian companies (see Figure 16, p.96; cf. App. B: Question No. 5). Yet, it was difficult or virtually impossible to obtain concrete information on wages due to the fact that companies and employees, because of company rules, were not

supposed to disclose remuneration scales. According to Chari-Wagh (2009), men and women were in fact equally paid in the organised sector in India, being a "legal thing", but that this was not the case in the informal or unorganised sector with agriculture and construction as the major industries. In government jobs every position had a fixed salary which rose with years of experience. Ten per cent of the working population would be employed in the state-regulated, organised sector where people experienced some social security, but the ninety per cent who are working in the unorganised sector were not protected by any rules or regulations – and many things depended on negotiation with the employer or on the backing of a lobby. Chari-Wagh summed up: women in India were more powerless, worse paid and at a disadvantage when it came to negotiations about payment, and she was sceptical if things were different at MNCs: "I don't think in the negotiation thing, a woman [would] be able to negotiate much [there] […].". Chari-Wagh made her own experience when she worked for an internationally funded research foundation. She reported that she did not have the knowledge to negotiate nor had she been aware of the "market rate", and as a result, she was paid less in comparison to another person in the same position and with the same experience. Indisputably, payment seemed to depend on knowledge of negotiating practice and negotiating experience. Nikita from *German Luxury Cars* assumed as a reason that men could be more demanding and that women tended to just accept what was offered, which then would lead to an imbalance in payment (IT: a-625). Charni from *German Financial Services* believed that despite defined pay structures at the MNCs differences in promotions did exist. But, as she explained, "[…] once a woman reaches at the same position, I don't think there is pay disparity" (IT: a-474). Mona from *German Automobiles* assumed that in Indian companies personal contacts might help getting a job and good pay, but believed that at an MNC qualifications and experience decided the salary. She named education, in particular language training,[120] as well as occupational qualifications and experience as decisive factors determining payment (cf. ibid.: a-332-a-333; ibid.: a-287). It should not remain unmentioned, however, that some interviewees explicitly stated that they did not feel they were paid as well as men in the same position (ibid.: a-6; ibid.: a-93; a-566).

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[120] Language and education can be key determinants for inequality. Mona said, "[the] biggest drawback […] is language" and explained that salary inequalities might also come from not being able to express oneself and thus, not being able to speak to the boss (IT: a-330). See also section on language choices in education and education possibilities in chapter *6.2.1 Indian Culture versus Foreign Culture at Work and at Home.*
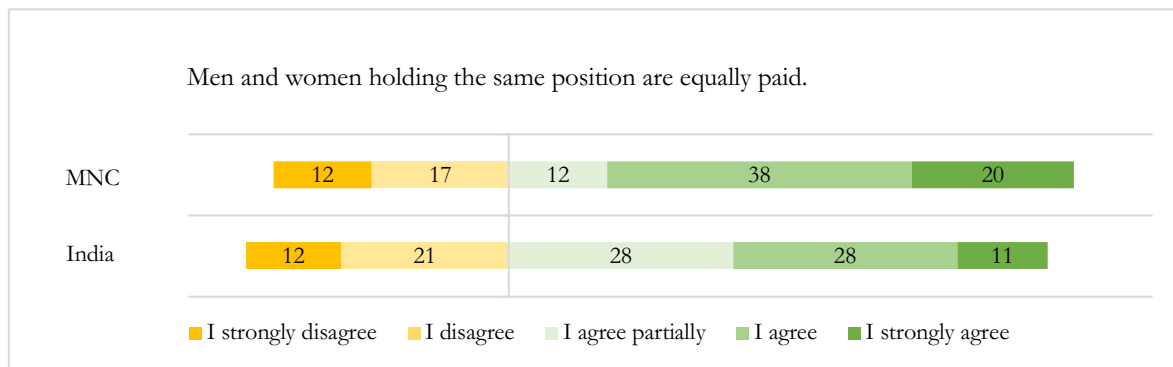
Figure 16. Equal payment, 186 ≤ n ≤ 187.

Another important question was how working and earning money influenced the women's standing in the family. As sociologist Chari-Wagh (2009) pointed out, a woman's income, "however much she earns, yeah, […] is always considered secondary", adding that, though the woman contributed value to the family's life, she was not seen as responsible for the family's survival. When I asked her if a woman's contribution to the family income increased the respect towards her, Chari-Wagh agreed. There were also indications by the participants that the contribution to the family's income improved her status within the family (cf. IT: a-569; cf. ibid.: a-434; cf. ibid.: a-698; cf. ibid.: a-772). But Chari-Wagh underlined that "if she [the woman] starts asserting that ok 'I'm bringing the income', that could upset the status quo there, there because in India, because we are a very patriarchal society, unless in there are exceptions, you know, there are like feminist friends and all who are like, (= Mh. =) very equal, you know, (= Mh. =) at least that's what shows" (Chari-Wagh, 2009; cf. IT: a-698). Yet, even though a woman had her own income, she – as a rule – would still give it to her husband or mother in-law to support her family. A woman was expected to see her work and income as for her family rather than for herself – a modern version of the old expectation that women had to make sacrifices in order to maintain the family (cf. Kakar and Kakar 2006). In other words, the ability of a man to take care of the family should not be questioned in the Indian patriarchal and collectivist setting, and therefore, the Indian woman's income should be declared by a wife as – in Chari-Wagh's words – "our money" and not "my money".

The next important point was promotion, especially to decision-making positions in the companies. Again a great difference appeared in the participants' assessment of treatment by the MNCs as compared to Indian employers. When asked about access to career advancement at their company, 84 per cent of the participants agreed (of whom 19 per cent agreed partially, 46 per cent agreed, the rest strongly agreed) with the statement that women have the same access to career advancement as their male colleagues. Some women especially appreciated career

advancement by their companies. Thus Shayma from *Finnish IT Services* emphasised the training courses, especially in her case a course in communication that improved her communication skills (cf. IT: a-226). Moreover, she was given the opportunity to conduct training measures for new employees. Both these activities improved her abilities and self-confidence. By contrast, only 73 per cent believed that Indian companies had an interest in promoting their female staff (of whom 29 per cent agreed partially, 31 per cent agreed, the rest strongly agreed; see Figure 17; cf. App. Basic Results: Question No. 9). Some women guessed that it was a consequence of men's traditional gender role that promotion had long seemed to be their natural privilege. Mona from *German Automobiles* explained: "[…] it is very important that he [male] gets a promotion and acknowledgement and a raise because he is, he is responsible for a family" (IT: a-342). Some participants reported with a twinkle how male colleagues show off to prove their worth. Kavisha from *German Luxury Cars* for instance told:

> A man usually tries to prove a lot, (= Aha. =) even if a woman is working, a man tries to make it more obvious before the seniors than the woman. I've seen that a lot. (= Mh. =) So even if she's probably wanting or having intentions to prove it, (2) ((laughing)) the man has already done the task. (= Mh. =) He has already got in first. But I think a woman will still, you know, do her work.
>
> (IT: a-589)

Nilisha from *Indian-Dutch Bank* guessed the reasons for such behaviour: when a man stayed longer at the office it was thought he worked more and was better qualified than his female colleague in the same rank even though she might have had completed her work before she left the office on time (ibid.: a-682). Yet at the MNCs also women had chances, as Charni from *German Financial Services* explained: "[…] in terms of promotions maybe they [men] would be given some preference but if you're capable enough /er/ somewhere you bridge the gap" (IT: a-476; cf. ibid.: a-151; cf. ibid.: a-309-a-310; cf. ibid.: a-589-a-590). Each individual had to prove himself or herself to get promoted (cf. ibid.: a-371), and career advancement was possible, regardless of the respective gender (cf. ibid.: a-589). Safia explained likewise, what "men and women have to go through are same kind of /er/ scrutiny and same kind of /er/ interview same kind of test, everything" (ibid.: a-149). Kavisha believed that if someone wanted to climb the ladder of success, that person would have to show performance – "It's like marketing. […] so talk about it. Sell yourself" (ibid.: a-590). Sarah from *German Automobiles* stated that every individual had to prove himself or herself, and once one had proved oneself, one would get promoted (ibid.: a-149-a-150). According to Anvi from *German Financial Services*, "[t]hey [women]

<u>are qualified</u>, no need of proving skills compared to men ((laughing))" (IT: a-460; cf. ibid.: a-26; cf. ibid.: a-190-a-191; cf. ibid.: a-645).
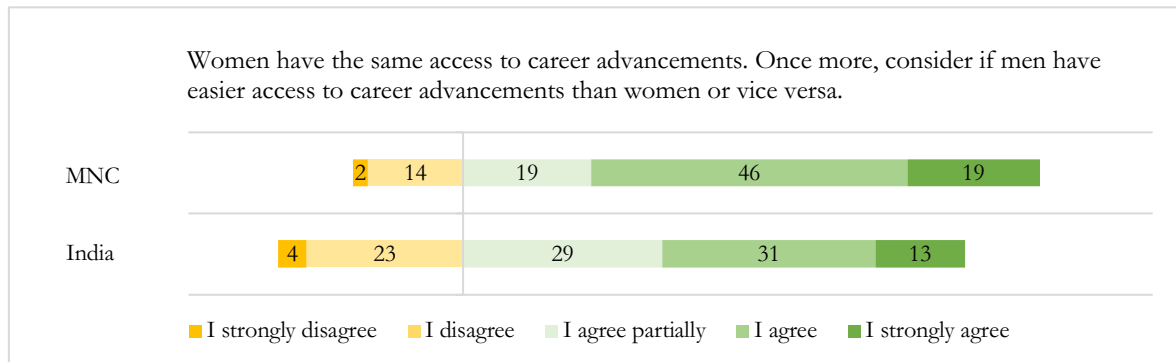
Figure 17. Career advancement, 187 ≤ n ≤ 193.
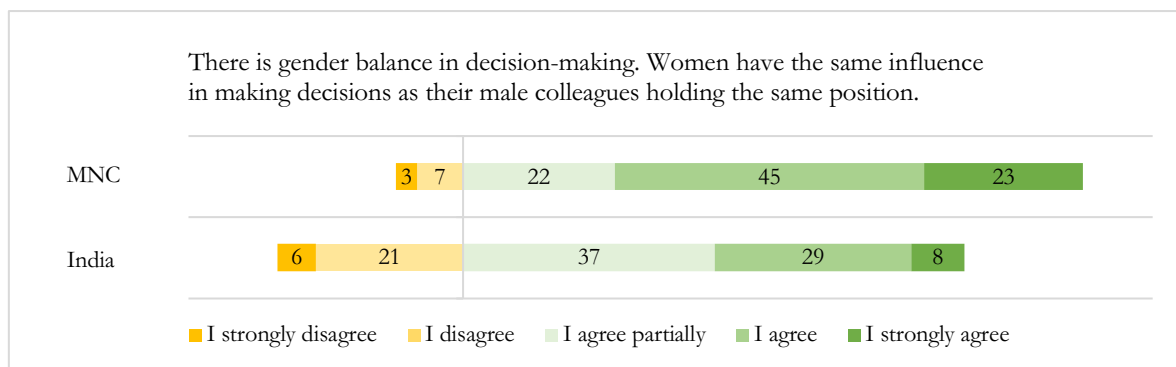
Figure 18. Gender balance in decision-making, 195 ≤ n ≤ 196.

As far as decision-making power was concerned, 68 per cent of the respondents agreed or even agreed strongly that women's voices at the MNCs, principally had the same weight as those of their male colleagues holding the same positions while only 37 per cent indicated the same for Indian companies (see Figure 18; cf. App. Basic Results: Question No. 3). But many obstacles and also some doubts were expressed in the interviews. The excessive consideration given to women's safety, for instance, was mentioned as sometimes working as a stumbling block. Thus Radha from *American Constructions* explained that she sometimes felt that some decisions were made for her. For example, women were not asked whether they wanted to stay longer when some work needed to be completed. Instead, the decision was taken by others that she had to leave on time and the work was to be done by "other holy boys", her male colleagues (cf. IT: a-4-a-5; cf. ibid.: a-624).

Charni from *German Financial Services* traced such occurrences back to the traditional patriarchal system: "It's a way of living […]. Right from the start men have been the decision

makers […] and they generally occupy top positions (= Mh. =) in most organisations. So they have the power of decision making. (= Mh. =) That's the way the culture is over here" (IT: a-474; cf. ibid.: a-461). In the group interview Sudha from *British Call Centre* pointed out that in the question of decision-making the typical Indian home was a powerful model, stressing that in Indian families it was the father who made all the important decisions. Safia, also from *British Call Centre*, replied that this was indeed the rule and "that's been continuing for so long. Difficult to change it/" (ibid.: a-146). She called to mind that only in the last two decades women had stepped out of their homes. Sudha showed understanding for this situation, pointing to its historical origin: "[…] at a point it was <u>right</u> also, listening to elders because it was, it was /er/ working to experience, so it was always benefited, […] so that is why it is continuing" (ibid.). Yet, as she believed, this was different at the MNC where opinions mattered more than gender (cf. ibid.: a-75; cf. ibid.: a-216; cf. ibid.: a-289).

Yvonne from *German Financial Services* also ascribed a certain reluctance (especially in Indian companies) to trust women with the same power of decision as men to cultural tradition, but saw that things were changing: "it is very difficult for a man's ego to <u>accept</u> that my female counterpart is same as me. […] but nowadays the men <u>have</u> to give up their ego and they have to listen […]" (IT: a-519). According to her, the type of industry and ratio of men and women in the workforce played a role, because if men and women were equally present, she believed, no one could be ignored (ibid.: a-517-a-518; cf. ibid.: a-398). Interviewee Nikita from *German Luxury Cars* was more pessimistic. She mentioned that there were still people who were behind developments, who "are still in the era wherein they do not, wouldn't accept a woman as their superior or a colleague at the same level or wouldn't like to take orders from her or any kind of suggestion from her" (ibid.: 623). She went so far as to say that "[…] it's always thought, I wouldn't say just in India but it's globally, that women have less brains. It's beauty without brains […]". Thus in summary she denied that a decision made by a woman was as much respected as decisions made by men (ibid.: a-624; cf. Tulsi from *German Automobile Plant*).

Ananya from *German Financial Services* by contrast, was quite sure that the hierarchy in MNCs was not gender-biased and everybody was expected to accomplish his or her tasks irrespective of gender, while in Indian companies, men were regarded as superior so that women were hardly seen in top positions. But she further assumed – an assumption that many other interviewees shared – that the many commitments of an Indian woman represented a strong impediment to her promotion, particularly in Indian companies. Mona from *German Automobiles* explained that a further obstacle to women's employment, especially in higher ranks was that men were not willing to take orders from women, which she explained with the strong male

ego. Interestingly, Kajal from *German Financial Services* almost literally said the same (ibid.: a-499). With an air of disillusionment Mona then generalised: "male counterparts do have an upper edge over the women in this country especially" (IT: a-327).

The finance sector seems to be a positive exception regarding women in leading positions, offering especially good opportunities. Anayana explains: "It's a sector which understands your qualifications, which respects it and which will give you your money's worth compared to the others" (ibid.: a-431; cf. ibid.: a-399). This was confirmed by an HR senior manager (2011) of *German Financial Services*, I met in 2011. He said that women in the finance sector were promoted to higher places in the hierarchy in comparison to other MNCs and that his company even followed a policy to reach a ratio of 50:50 of female and male employees in the top ranks. As he further explained, the idea of equality was transferred from the German parent company to the Indian subsidiary. The MD of *German Financial Services'* back office, for example, was a German woman. And he observed that there were several female CEOs of ICIC and at other banks like Axis Bank or HSBC too who are obviously trusted to be capable of doing the job.

Concerning Indian companies opinions were much more sceptical. Only 37 per cent believed women had the same chances as men to reach decision-making positions, and 37 per cent were doubtful. Shyama from *Finnish IT Services*, for instance, reported that gender bias had prevented her from making decisions at the Indian company where she had previously worked (cf. ibid.: a-213-a-214). Another woman who worked for *Austrian Pearls* added that in higher positions more men were given the opportunity to decide, especially in the production sector (cf. ibid.: a-73; cf. ibid.: a-580-a-581). Yet, Riya from *Japanese Bank* pointed to a change that had supposedly been taking place in India. Twenty years ago, no women at all were department heads in Indian companies, she stated, but this had changed. A lot of restructuring had been under way and traditional family-held companies had changed into "professional kind of handling […] companies" (IT: a-705). It is important, however, to bear in mind that only a minority of women in India had been benefitting from these changes. Anamika from *German Agriculture Chemistries* and Manjiri from *Belgian Steel Cords* believed that the participation in decision-making depended on the size of the Indian company and that larger Indian companies involved women more in decision-making (cf. ibid.: a-231; cf. ibid.: a-103). Nilisha from *Indian-Dutch Bank* explained that several years back there had been no equality in Indian companies, men had been culturally not used to report to a female boss, but that "nowadays" (at the time of the interview) Indian banks also accepted females as decision-makers in superior positions. When asked about the difference in MNCs, she explained that they from early on had followed

the HR policies and that the employees were treated more equally and given equal opportunities from the start. She was convinced, however, that Indian companies had caught up and that in many of them there was as much gender balance in decision-making in Indian companies just as in MNCs (IT: a-679).

This positive view was, however, decidedly contested by Kavisha from *German Luxury Cars* who argued that unequal treatment of men and women was deeply rooted in Indian culture and therefore permeating all sectors of society, the world of work as well as family life. She said:

> [I]f you're from a good background and if you still want to earn it's because you want to create an identity for yourself or you want to be smarter in the world or you want to get exposure. (= Mhm. =) But it's not very encouraged, so maybe /er/ there are less number of /er/ people who do get an opportunity to work because overall it's a male dominated country. So if the father says that no, you can't do this, means you can't do this. And post what happens in many communities, as again not all, is that the husband then says that 'No, you are not supposed to work. You're supposed to do work thing, you are supposed to do the household stuffs.' So then again it's male dominated, so that thing gets carried forward even at work, that when you're working, there is always a male domination that comes into picture.
>
> (IT: a-575)

According to her, it was very common in the public sector – in the private sector things might have been better – , that women did not get what they deserved in terms of increments and promotions even though they were very dedicated and for decades had put in all their energy into their work. In general, she argued, India was a male dominated country, so even though the management might have good intentions to promote women, male employees might not accept it. At her own workplace though, "<u>They look</u>, they look pretty professional (= Mh. =) rather than very gender specific. (= Mh. =) I don't know, they are only concerned with (1), you know, they're hiring the right people, the right talent, getting the work and giving compensation. It's pretty simple" (IT: a-576).[121] Thus, like many other interviewees, she saw the MNCs as more progressive regarding women's chances of equal treatment.

Finally we come back to the issue of women's hiring chances. Some interviewees believed that women's traditional double role, rather than always being an impediment, could even be of advantage. For example Aeishwarya from *German Financial Services* stated that people had begun to realise that women were disciplined, systematic and organised because they were used to manage at the same time many responsibilities at work, in the family and at home –

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[121] Kavisha from *German Luxury Cars* was convinced that "They're <u>only</u> interested in work. I think that's the reason this company is very successful" (IT: a-582).

which in her eyes could lead to a preference for women by some MNCs as well as in Indian companies (IT: a-408-a-409). Shilpa from *Austrian Pearls* indicated that at her company women were already preferred because their ability to successfully manage work and family commitments was seen as promising efficiency at work (IT: a-74). Leela from *German Insurance* explicitly preferred women in her team because she believed that women could manage more tasks at once (cf. ibid.: a-556-a-557). The MD of *Austrian Pearls* preferred women for a less flattering reason: he expected that household work has prepared them for tedious handwork.

When it came to the assessment of the overall picture, i.e. women's chances on the labour market, many interviewees offered a differentiated picture in spite of their general scepticism. Charni from *German Financial Services* differentiated between public and private sector, observing that the public sector companies in general preferred men, while in the private sector the picture was more varied: men were preferred as managers, when physical work was demanded (cf. ibid.: a-143, a-400), for instance in factories, as well as for jobs which – as was already mentioned – involved travelling (cf. ibid.: a-232; cf. ibid.: a-307; cf. ibid.: a-436; cf. ibid.: a-150-a-151; cf. ibid.: a-499), whereas women were in demand in the service sector and as secretaries or receptionists (cf. ibid.: a-265; cf. ibid.: a-736). Mona from *German Automobiles* mentioned good job chances in the fashion or design industries, in the dance and music field, while the military, the police and even travel agencies were closed to them (IT: a-334; cf. ibid.: a-307; cf. ibid.: 150-a-151). She would have liked to see more women in her company but probably due to the branch of industry – automobile sector – men were preferred or women did not even apply (ibid.: a-334; cf. ibid.: a-289; cf. ibid.: a-307; cf. ibid.: a-436). Sarah, working in the PR department of *German Automobiles,* explained that the PR field in India was open to women, and that she herself had never faced any disadvantage with view to equal rights, equal treatment or gender balance in decision-making. She maintained that it was performance and third- party recommendations rather than gender which would play a decisive role when it came to hiring someone in this field (IT: a-370). Human resources, events or marketing were according to the interviewees also fields where women had good hiring chances (ibid.: a-586).

Some participants observed a considerable rural-urban divide concerning gender equality, Safia from *British Call Centre*, for instance stated that "[…] when we talk about metros or the bigger cities, we, we kind of have an equality between /er/ men and women in workplace", which did not apply to semi-urban areas or villages (IT: a-143; cf. Mona from *German Automobiles*). She thought that while international companies might aim at providing equal chances for everybody, in villages an "old mentality" survived. Yvonne from *German Financial Services* also observed that people in rural areas still followed old, orthodox patterns,

for example when it came to gender wishes for their children. Thus women in cities and in the country were exposed to different atmospheric influences. Manjiri from *Belgian Steel Cords* described the mood in urban surroundings:

> Things are changing due to globalisation. The lady doesn't want just to sit at home she wants to break the shell free. In the past, the girl should get married and take care of the family. This changed. We manage both things, we work and take care of the family. There is a change of attitude: people want to be more educated, want to work, go out in the market.
>
> (IT: a-103)

Anvi from *German Financial Services* agreed that women in the cities went outside the house but also realised that there were people outside of Mumbai who still thought "that the female should stay at home, take care of family and the male should go out and earn for the family" (ibid.: a-458).

Inspite of the many differing attitudes and aspects quoted in this section, one overall tendency of the collected responses has become clear. According to the impressive majority of the participating women, it was the gender treatment where the cultural impact of the MNCs was seen to be most noticeable and farthest reaching. Many of the interviewees demonstrated that working for an MNC had opened their eyes for the unjust gender gap and gender treatment within the Indian labour market and Indian society as a whole. It is instructive that in all the relevant categories in the questionnaire a (sometimes strong) majority assessed the Indian company culture as more discriminatory and gender-biased than that of the MNCs. 78 per cent agreed or agreed strongly that equal rights were successfully guaranteed in the MNCs (Indian companies: 36 per cent); 70 per cent found the treatment "equal" in the MNCs (Indian companies: 23 per cent); 75 per cent diagnosed the relations between men and women as "pleasant" at the MNCs (Indian companies: 41 per cent). Questions concerning just payment, access to jobs and decision-making responsibilities were answered similarly. To sum up: a majority of almost two thirds (62 per cent) thought that men were in Indian companies systematically favoured, while less than one third (28 per cent) suggested this was the case in MNCs. In the conclusion we will see whether any of the leading theories on Indian modernity can explain these convincing empirical results.

6.2.3.2   Gender Relations among Employees Including Friendship

The participants were also asked about their opinion regarding gender relations at work, i.e. aspects such as interaction between men and women, discrimination and harassment. Moreover, they were quizzed for their thoughts regarding a possible change of gender roles promoted by MNCs.

92 per cent of the participants agreed more or less – 30 per cent even strongly – that both the social interaction between men and women and the working conditions at the MNCs were professional and pleasant, while only 81 per cent confirmed the same for Indian companies and 19 per cent vehemently denied it (see Figure 19; cf. IT: a-558-a-559; cf. ibid.: a-627). Rajni from *German Agriculture Chemicals* recalled her experiences: "Three years apprenticeship exposure to Indian companies and firms – afterwards decided not to work for Indian company because of work culture, naughty comments, [and] guys would be given preference for business travels" (ibid.: a-255).

The social interaction between men and women and the working conditions are professional and pleasant.

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I agree partially	I agree	I strongly agree
MNC	3	6	17	46	30
India	4	15	40	32	9
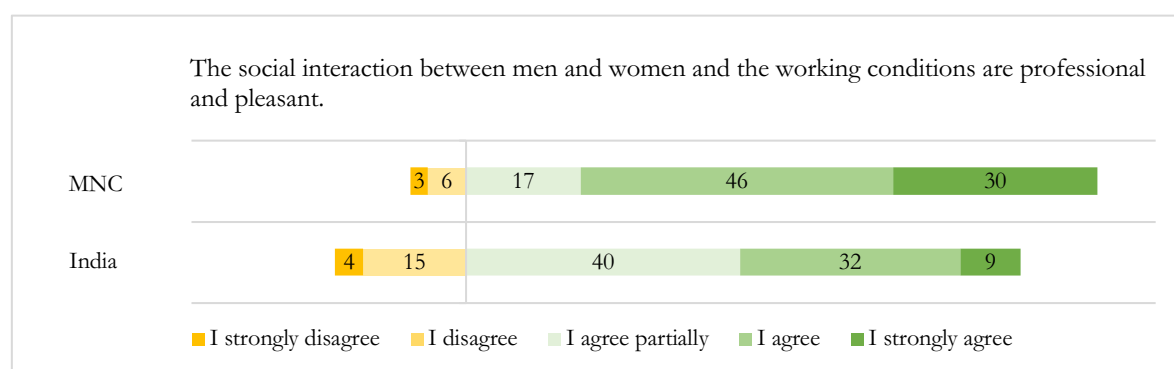
Figure 19. Social interaction and working conditions, 193 ≤ n ≤ 198.

As to working relations between employees and the management in MNCs, many interviewees described them as good, whether the bosses were Indian or foreign. They confirmed that hierarchies based on gender or position, on caste or ethnicity played a smaller role. One interviewee from *American Constructions* found the superiors friendlier than in Indian companies and said that bossism is rare in her company (cf. IT: a-12; cf. ibid.: a-74-a-75; cf. ibid.: a-82; cf. ibid.: a-247; cf. ibid.: a-355; cf. ibid.: a-592; cf. ibid a-643). Yet, on the other hand, a few questionnaire participants – in particular but not exclusively from *German Automobile Plant* – testified the opposite and complained of bias and discrimination by the foreign management or foreign colleagues (cf. ibid.: a-608-a-610).

The interviewees particularly appreciated the facilities and pleasant working environment provided by the MNCs. Devi from *German Insurance* observed that the negative aspects of the policies the MNCs brought from their home culture such as longer working hours, more competition and increased pressure at work were balanced by the better facilities provided: "For example, if you look at the BPOs. They are like 5-star hotels, some of them, very fancy places" (IT: a-544). A visit to the BPO company *British Call Centre* during the field research confirmed her observation. State-of-the-art facilities were provided, including a gym, a canteen, a roof-top café and a separate internet café.

At *British Call Centre* obviously also more social interaction between men and women took place than at the other MNCs observed, where men and women often were sitting separately during lunch breaks, as became apparent from comments by several employees and as I witnessed myself. As Sheela mentioned in an unrecorded conversation, *British Call Centre* invited staff to after-work parties, when alcoholic beverages were provided free of charge. Her colleagues Safia and Sasmita added in the group interview that picnics, brunches and team dinners were regularly organised by the company (IT: a- 168). Additionally, there was an annual party hosted by the company where the best employees and departments were awarded and recognised. Safia cheerfully told that everyone waited for the party and that the whole company got together: "It's fun, free booze and / (Safia and Sasmita laughing). For fifty per cent of them it's free booze or /er/. […] Yeah. It's, it's free booze, so and /er/ most of them can't just to get out of the routine. […] It's just fun. Time to get, get together" (IT: a-168). Some other companies obviously followed the same policy. Puja from *German Agriculture Chemicals* reported: "There are parties but women are not involved in all parties. Earlier, before the new boss, girls were not invited for parties like product launch party or a get together – maybe with a good intention because of late night. Now it has changed and ladies are invited as well" (IT: a-241). Dinners and outings also took place outside the workplace as for example organised by *German Financial Services* or *German Luxury Cars* (cf. IT: a-504; cf. ibid.: a-592-a-593). Such team entertainments and team building programs (vs. team training), organised and financed by the company obviously aimed at encouraging team spirit by improving communication, advancing motivation among the employees, helping employees to get to know each other better and learning about colleagues' strengths and weaknesses (cf. Klein, Cameron, et al. 2009).[122] Thus they worked as factors promoting the company's economic success (cf. Kohll 2018). But

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[122] Cf. Saraswat, Neelam, and Shilpi Khandelwal (2015), also for a detailed picture of team building programs and objectives, and particularly of the impact of team building exercises on team effectiveness (trust, problem-solving skills, leadership, communication) as well as on the functioning of business organisations in the Indian context.

women's participation in such events possibly has a wider effect as it encouraged women to take a more active part in social life outside the private sphere.

Creating a workplace culture which encourages social connections is important as several studies have confirmed that lively social relations make people physically as well as mentally healthier and happier, which boosts motivation (Kohll 2018; Brody 2017; DNA 2010). One important element of such an atmosphere is the opportunity to form friendships (cf. Wood 2019). Therefore participants were asked if they had more friends within or outside their workplace. As Figure 20 shows half of the respondents said that the numbers were balanced and 17 per cent stated that they had more friends at work. The reasons given for so many friendships at work were to a certain extent pragmatic. One interviewee, asked why she had more friends at work, said that "75 per cent I am spending in the company […] I don't have time also" (cf. IT: a-225). This was affirmed by other interviewees who stated that they in their in their private lives had to take care of their households and children (cf. ibid.: a-86; a-63) and had no free time for meeting friends.
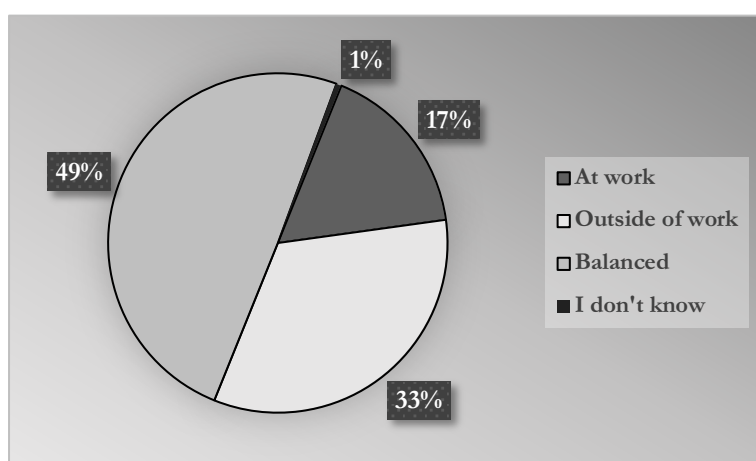
Figure 20. Friends at work and outside the working environment, n=198.

But it was certainly also important that at work the women could exchange views on their lives and work with colleagues in the same situation. The findings show that the women's social interactions had been extended through their employment, but on the other hand, as one interviewee noticed, the opportunities for a social life outside work had become restricted because "of this travel and work schedules" (cf. IT: a-127).

With regard to discrimination against women at their company the great majority of the participants (77 per cent) disagreed with the statement that discrimination, whether, physical, mental or sexual, seriously impaired equality at the workplace, while 72 per cent thought

discrimination did happen in Indian companies (see Figure 21).[123, 124] The MNCs seemed to have strict policies in this respect,[125] which might effectively prevent discrimination or harassment at the workplace, thus adding to women's well-being at work (cf. IT: a-591). H.E. Walter Stechel, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Mumbai at the time of the interview in 2010, said that he expected MNCs to be even more cautious than a local company since they could not afford to ruin their reputation and their recruitment potential (IT: a-781-a-782). However, some interviewees mentioned that such good company policies and rules could not totally prevent all verbal harassment in the form of sexist jokes, comments or remarks (cf. ibid.: a-9; ibid.: a-95; a-462; see below). Thus one interviewee reported that "[t]here has been mental discrimination, like stupid jokes" at her MNC (ibid.: a-95). Others stressed the necessity to pluck up courage and resist, as for instance Manjiri from Belgian Steel Cords did: "It depends on yourself and strength. If you are straight, smart, speak up, you resist and don't get harassed" (IT: a-104; cf. ibid.: a-117; cf. ibid.: a-218; cf. ibid.: a-291; cf. a-526-529; cf. ibid.: a-664-a-665).
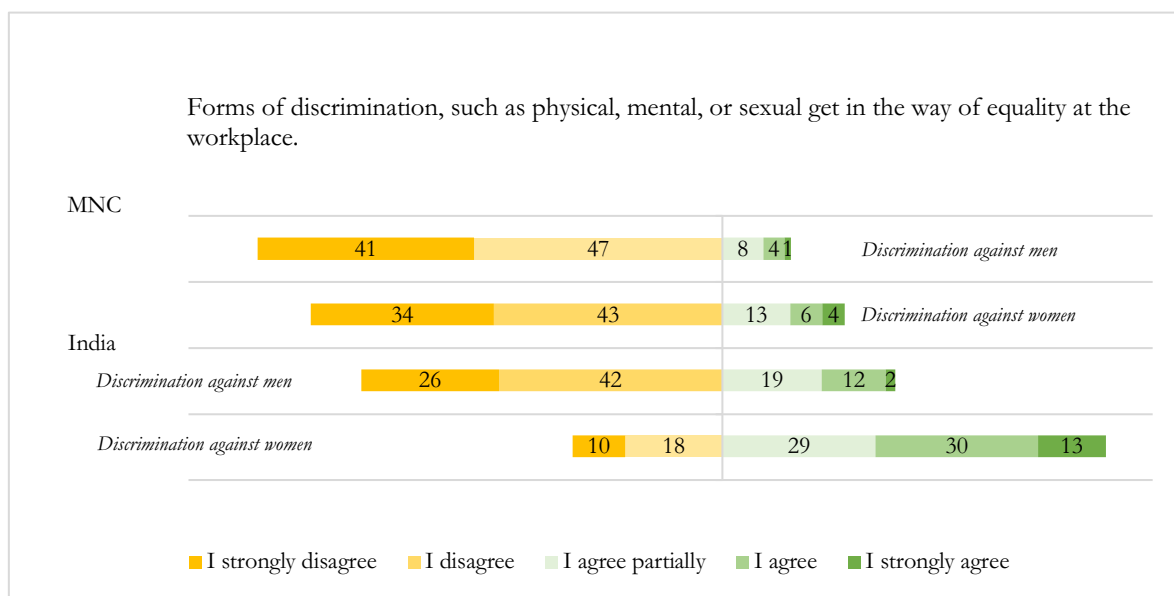
Figure 21. Discrimination at the workplace, 166 ≤ n ≤ 181.

The participants were then asked if they themselves had personally experienced any forms of discrimination and harassment at the workplace and how their experiences compared

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[123] See also *6.2.3.3 MNC's Dealings with Complaints*.

[124] The degree of disagreement was a little stronger with regard to harassment against men at the MNC, and less strong with regard to harassment against men and women at Indian companies. Devi from *German Insurance* explained that „[men] don't get harassed just for being men. There would be other reasons why they would get harassed which may be for example caste and things like that but not on the bias on gender" (IT: a-544).

[125] Anamika from *German Agriculture Chemicals* also explained that „[t]here are very strict policies with regard to harassment – this needs to be reported, so women are protected" (IT: a-233).

to former ones in Indian companies. Though the overall figures of such negative experiences are low in both types of companies, they are even lower in MNCs: as Figure 22 shows, 17 per cent of the participants claimed such an experience at an MNC comparing to 25 per cent declaring to have had such experiences at a former Indian company.
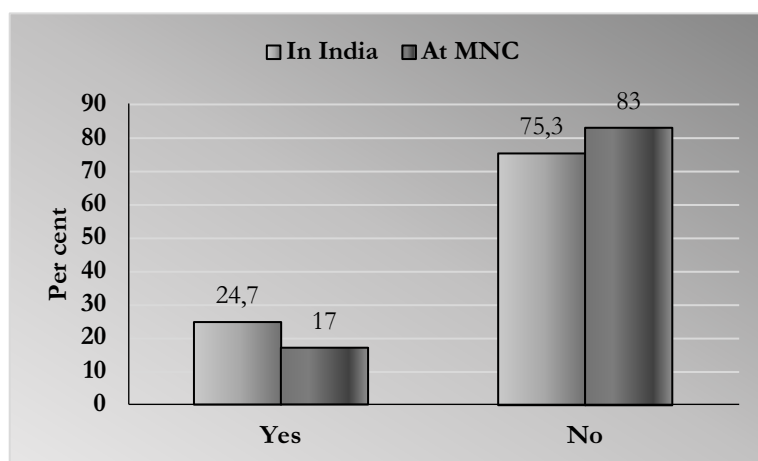
Figure 22. Discrimination and harassment at the workplace, $190 \leq n \leq 194$.

The exact forms of discrimination or harassment were not indicated by the participants (with the exception of exposure to verbal discrimination). The interviews, however, revealed a few complaints about various forms of discrimination. In one case the Belgian managing director was accused of discrimination without further explanation (cf. IT: a-95). Tulsi from *German Automobile Plant* gave a vivid account of feeling discriminated and not taken seriously during the daily meeting at the plant:

> Ok, there was <u>no</u> water in the washrooms, there was no water <u>anywhere</u>, so and /er/ you know we got the information that this is gonna go on for six to seven hours. So you know <u>I</u> thought that the <u>platform was right to</u> <u>discuss this because all the managers are present and according to me it's</u> <u>not a stupid issue. This is something that is very important because you</u> <u>need to use the washroom, there is no loo. What you gonna do? And you</u> <u>know I said that there is no /er/ you know water in the washrooms and all</u> <u>the, you know men even at management position were laughing and saying</u> <u>that 'you know what you can go outside or something'. So which is like</u> <u>you know a crazy thing, so I, I was actually, I felt that you know I was then</u> <u>thinking 'Oh, my god' you know 'should I have not said it or something'</u> <u>and then later realised that no even, it's just that these people are stupid.</u> <u>This, this is an issue that has to be discussed but maybe because you know</u> <u>a woman is saying that and they're just like you know laughing about it</u>.
>
> (IT: a-311-312)

Tulsi's case is an example of a harmless, nevertheless embarrassing discrimination, no well-meant code of conduct, nor any other company policy can completely prevent. A few interviewees fatalistically claimed that harassment and discrimination were universal and could not be eradicated (cf. IT: a-477). "[S]exual harassment and /er/ you know, some very pervert, pervert is, it can, it can be anywhere, you know, (= Mh. =) it is an individual characteristic. It doesn't have to do anything with the country (= Mh. =) or /er/ or a company. It can happen anywhere" (ibid.: a-526). Similarly Mohini, Manager of Processes at *Belgian Steel Cords* and the only woman in her department was under no illusion that the problem could be solved once and for all: "Men are the same everywhere, if it's a multinational or it's a house, it's home or it's outside, they'll not leave their basic characteristics" (ibid.: a-117; cf. ibid.: a- 372). In such a man's world, she concluded, women had to face things like discriminatory jokes: "Then you have to draw a line also" and say something against it (ibid.: a-117).[126]

To summarise: as to the issue of discrimination and harassment, the great majority of the participants judged the situation at MNCs better than in Indian companies and appreciated the managements' commitment to fight them. Though some interviewees admitted that milder forms such as sexist jokes seemed to be ineradicable, they showed a healthy grade of self-confidence and willingness "to draw a line", i.e. to stand up against such trespasses. As to support by the company in cases of harassment, see the following section.

6.2.3.3   MNCs' Dealings with Complaints

I was especially interested to know how the MNCs dealt with complaints and problems, especially discrimination. First, the female employees were asked their opinion on the following question: "Do you feel comfortable approaching your supervisor or management for any work-related issues, such as payment, uniform, or working hours?" The majority of participants answered in the affirmative (see Figure 23). Some interviewees stated that they could even approach their supervisor to attain advice on non-work-related problems, for example the company complied when they had to go home early because of an urgent private problem. One interviewee said, "the work culture is different, also open-culture, here we talk to each other" (ibid.: a-115; cf. ibid.: a-707; cf. ibid.: a-52). Shilpa from *Austrian Pearls* emphasized that, in contrast to an Indian firm, she would not hesitate to approach someone in a higher position: the foreign managing director "is always available for any employee or his supervisor or any

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[126] See also *6.2.3.4 Effects of Women's Employment at an MNC on Women's Self-Esteem and Social Position.*

operator" (IT: a-75). Tulsi from *German Automobile Plant* also felt comfortable approaching her German boss and found him more approachable than an Indian boss, but realised limits: talking to HR because of "crazy" working hours[127] for example would never work (cf. ibid.: a-308; cf. ibid.: a-335). She thought it was more difficult to approach an Indian boss because his Indian mentality could not easily accept that women were equal members of the workforce (cf. IT: a-400-402; cf. ibid.: a-409). Anamika from *German Agriculture Chemicals* judged more generally that her company policies had a good impact and that "you are more exposed to rights and responsibilities, so in this case a lady can fight for her rights" (cf. IT: a-238). But certainly there were differences between the individual companies. A few interviewees mentioned that sometimes women hesitated, were insecure or even afraid to report or complain because they wanted to maintain a positive reputation. "So, no one wants to be in the bad books () ((laughs))", as Kajal from *German Financial Services* states (ibid.: a-499; cf. ibid.: a-587).
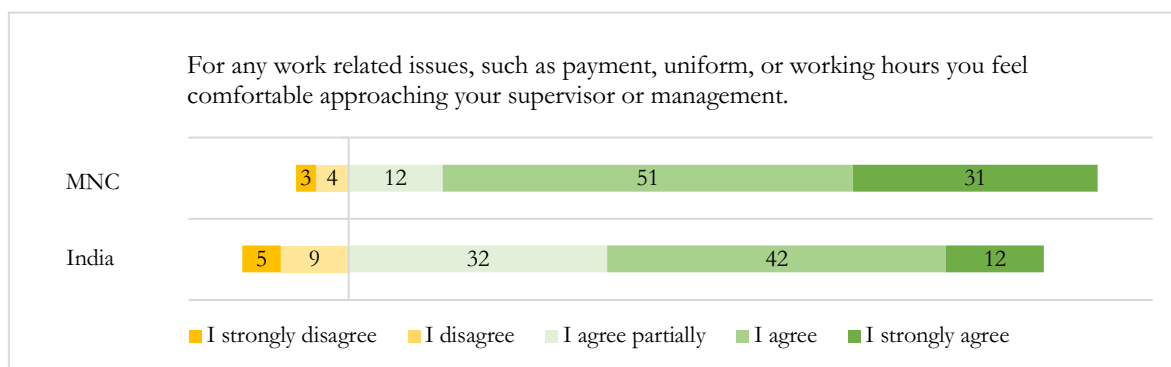
Figure 23. Support in case of work-related issues, 189 ≤ n ≤ 197.
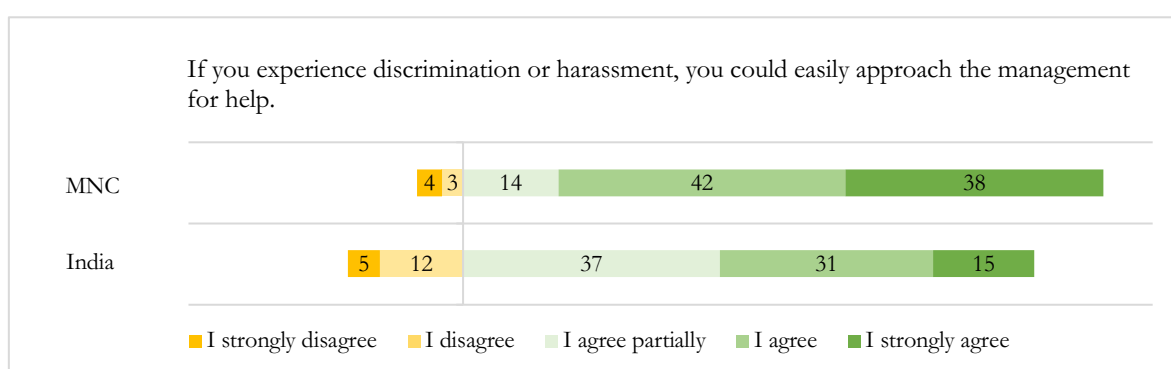
Figure 24. Support in case of discrimination, 190 ≤ n ≤ 194.

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[127] See also *6.2.2 MNCs' Demands on Their Female Employees.*

With regard to discrimination against women at the MNCs, most participants agreed that they could easily approach the management for help if they experience any (see Figure 24). Mona working at *German Automobile Plant*, for example, confirmed that she felt very comfortable talking to the management directly and that the management and HR were taking care if someone felt harassed (IT: a-344). Tulsi from *German Automobile Plant* told me in the interview about a female colleague who claimed she was harassed by the manager: "whenever he would talk to her he would try like you know touching her" (IT: a-311). Her colleague complained and reported this to HR and the accused got an official warning. *German Automobile Plant, German Financial Services* and some other companies like *German Agriculture Chemicals* and *Belgian Steel Cords* seem to have had installed strict policies against harassment and even encouraged employees to report respective cases (cf. IT: a-233; ibid.: a-135). In response their female employees were particularly aware of their employee rights – a good sign for the companies' treatment of their staff. Ananya from *German Financial Services* believed that awareness of both rights and duties had increased generally and that any form of harassment was prosecuted in both Indian and multinational companies (IT: a-440; cf. ibid.: a-477; cf. ibid.: a-545; cf. ibid.: a-665). Yet other interviewees reported that women employees at some Indian companies who voiced complaints about discrimination were in danger of facing further harassment and questioning of their character from colleagues (IT: a-256; cf. ibid.: a-78; cf. ibid.: a-477; cf. ibid.: a-499; cf. ibid.: a-526; cf. ibid. a-529; cf. ibid.: a-587; cf. ibid.: a-560).

Although Indian companies might also persecute discriminatory behaviour by men against women, the formal implementation of certain rules and the openness to complaints at MNCs obviously gave their employees a special sense of security and protection, which also attracted women applicants. Leela (from *German Insurance*) said, "[t]here is hope to approach the management if the harassment is going on. That's why women are coming to MNCs more than in general" (ibid.: a-560; cf. ibid.: a-573).

6.2.3.4 Effects of Women's Employment at an MNC on Women's Self-Esteem and Social Position

A study by S. S. Nathawat and Asha Mathur (1993) has proved that employment in general has a positive effect on women's life satisfaction and self-esteem. The responses by the participants in the present study show that this effect was heightened by employment in an MNC: women gained in self-confidence and independence and won new chances for self-realisation in a

western business environment.[128] A statement by the interviewee Shayama may be taken as a proof: she explained that her previous discomfort when talking to men had changed since starting work at an MNC (cf. IT: a-224; cf. ibid.: a-254; cf. ibid.: a-651; cf. ibid.: a-302-a-303). Now, she feels confident and did not hesitate to talk to male colleagues.

The interviewees were asked whether they thought that working at an MNC had an effect on gender roles in general by contributing to a change in the conservative image of women and/or attitudes towards them in Indian society. The majority were in fact conscious of a general change in the traditional image of the submissive Indian housewife and assumed that the social climate in the MNCS – less conservatism, more interaction between men and women and more freedom of expression (cf. ibid.: a-248; ibid.: a-272) – had furthered this development. But to repeat: work at an MNC was not the only modernising influence; education and the influence of the media were equally – or even more – effective,[129] while others described the developments in more general terms. Thus for instance Nikita from German Luxury Cars attributes a change of male mentality, as well as Indian women's more open behaviour, growing strength and higher ambitions to globalisation and the trend to westernisation in India rather than to MNCs (IT: a-637). When asked to which extent the MNCs played a role in this change, Radha from *American Construction* answered: "multinationals to India they came after I think '94, '95 and /er/, but before that also, means, India improved a lot, so you can say, yeah, they have a part but I can't say a very strong part. I think it's media, it's the education, it's the womans, means own thought process that helped" (ibid.: a-18). Yet the impact of the MNCs should not be underestimated. One interviewee observed with pride that the role of the Indian woman today was no longer solely reproductive – now she could also be productive. Another found that women were in fact more efficient than men saying: "women are more portrayed as more career oriented as well and they can take care of the house as well as work. Women have to do the balancing act – more than men" (IT: a-259; cf. Gautam 2006: 5; cf. The Times of India. Pune Times 2006). Anamika from *German Agriculture Chemistries* hoped that the MNCs would exert even more influence in the future: "Maybe the new generation would have a better impact. There are many MNCs because of the FDI, the Federal Direct Investments, and government policies, so that brings a cultural change slowly and slowly" (ibid.: a-237).

Yet the positive experiences at work had not changed Indian women's lives completely – one might even say the modernisation of Indian women's role seemed to be more or less limited to the international workplace. As was discussed in some detail in the last section, even

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[128] See also *6.2.3.5 Do Multinational Companies Programmatically Support Women?*
[129] See also 'cultural globalisation' and strong influence of western culture in India, p.79.

women working full-time were still expected to take the lion's share of the family and home (cf. Nathawat and Mathur 1993: 354; cf. Bharat 1995; cf. IT: a-108), a situation Anurekha Chari-Wagh, tongue-in-cheek, compared to "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde".[130] Some of the women voiced a clear opinion on the strongest obstacles to further progress in modernising women's roles in and outside workplace. Thus Kumari from *Belgian Steel Cords* acknowledged that the MNCs wanted to change the conservative image of women: "but it is difficult because of the Indian men's mentality and the patriarchal system" (ibid.: a-98; cf. ibid.: a-558). Kumari confirmed: "They try but it is difficult because the patriarchal system is strong" (IT: a-99).

Indian women's efforts to negotiate and combine aspects of traditional Indian culture with a more modern or western outlook, seem to fit Deshpande's theory of the typically Indian version of modernity as a dualistic state of mind. In the conclusion we shall see whether this is convincing.[131]

6.2.3.5   Do Multinational Companies Programmatically Support Women?

A specially intriguing question was: Do multinational companies deliberately support women? A question logically following was: Do you think that your company programmatically invests money in the support of women? 19 per cent answered with yes, 40 per cent with no and 42 per cent stated that they did not know. In other words, a large number of the participants did not seem to be well informed on this issue.

The participants were then asked in a multiple-choice question which benefits their company provided to its employees. Figure 25 shows the percentage distribution. The most frequently mentioned perks were maternity benefits, health care and excursions.

Other benefits mentioned were a good canteen, reserved seats for disabled people (*Austrian Pearls*), sport activities or Leave Travel Allowance, picnics, self-development games, annual celebrations with awards and games, annual health checks (*German Agriculture Chemicals*), Tai Chi and yoga courses, a language course (German at *German Automobiles*), a canteen, subsidised lunch (*German Automobile Plant*), a library and gym at *British Call Centre*, uniforms and shoes, and performance related financial incentives. The most exceptional training mentioned by the women questioned was that held at *Belgian Steel Cords*. Their 'social fitness' course included

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[130] Anurekha Chari-Wagh: "So they, they're, it's a Jekyll and a Hyde – (= Mh. =) have a different set of values in the work, there are certain set of values at home" (IT: a-744).
[131] See *4.2 Modernisation Theory Discourse in India: Mapping Distinctive Modernity – The Specificity of India.*

topics such as how to offer business cards, correct table manners, western-style dancing and how to shake hands.
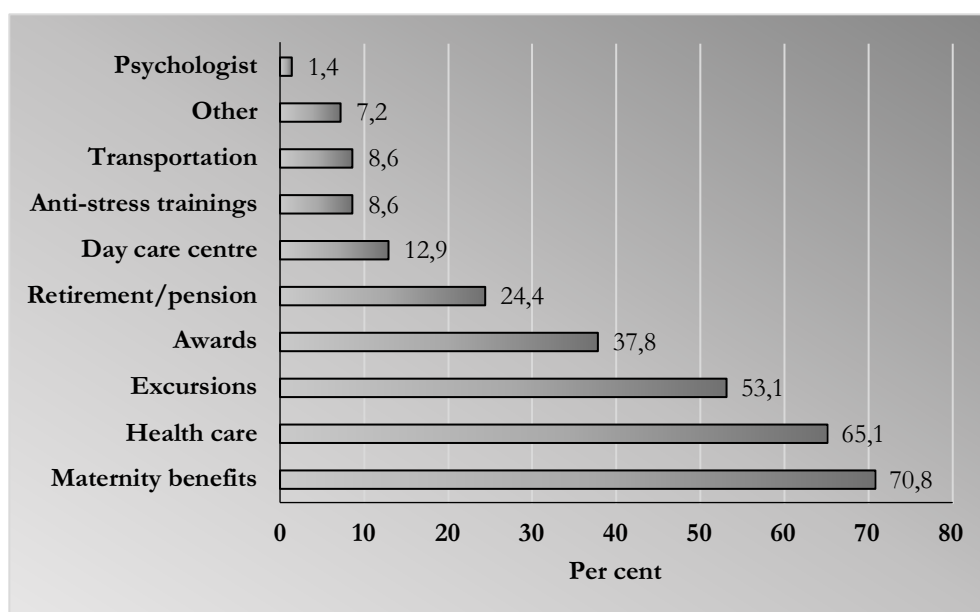
Figure 25. Benefits provided by the company, n=192.

To determine how important such benefits were for the employees, and if the perks provided were seen as sufficient, participants were asked whether or not they would be willing to accept a smaller salary if the extra money went to company facilities such as a day-care centre or courses that benefit women. While a little over half (51 per cent) said they would be unwilling to accept a smaller salary, 37 per cent claimed they would be prepared to accept less money, and the remaining 12 per cent were unsure one way or the other.

The interviewees were also asked which kind of perks they thought most essential. Women from *German Agriculture Chemicals*, *American Construction*, *German Automobiles*, *Austrian Pearls*, *Belgian Steel Cords*, *German Pharmaceuticals*, *German Financial Services*, *Japanese Bank* and *British Call Centre* all mentioned a day-care centre as most important. Other benefits considered necessary were a canteen and a stress-reducing course (*American Construction*), a technical training course (*Finnish IT Services*) or professional development (*German Financial Services*, *Japanese Bank*), a company car (*German Agriculture Chemicals*) or transportation (*German Financial Services*), flexitime (*German Financial Services*) and a yoga course (*Belgian Steel Cords*, *German Insurance*, *German Financial Services*). In some cases forms of social commitment to people in need outside of the MNC was suggested. Deserving causes mentioned by participants were an orphanage for unprivileged kids and a fund for local women to improve their standard of living.

Finally, the female employees were asked whether they thought that at MNCs the advancement of women's issues was a programmatic part of the companies' policy. Participants were asked with regard to both their current workplace and to all MNC in India. As Figure 26 shows, the majority believed that their company as well as all other MNCs in India did have a positive effect on the advancement of women's issues, though they could not say if this was the result of a deliberate policy.
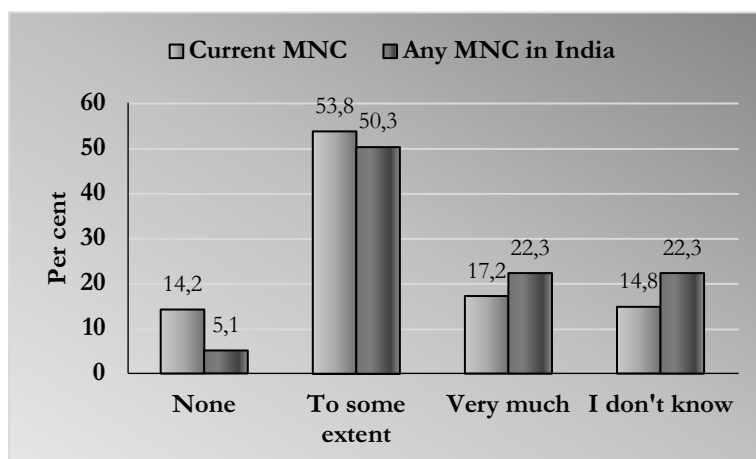
Figure 26. Role of MNCs in the advancement of women's issues.

Though the women, as shown at length, on the whole appreciated many features of work at an MNC like good facilities, the working conditions, the human intercourse, the many facets of gender equality, several participants doubted that the motives of the MNCs were idealistic, in the sense of promoting Indian women's equality as an aim in itself. One interviewee diagnosed that her company (*Austrian Pearls*) was more interested in the work performed by employees rather than in their personal well-being or problems (cf. IT: a-63). Several other questionnaire participants shared this view. Mohini from *Belgian Steel Cords* explained:

> It's not that they have come for social service, we have to keep that in mind. If they want profit, if they are getting output from women then they hire women. If they don't get it, they'll not hire, then there is no charity. The same again, it's the opportunities, they are creating opportunities for women which is a support, so to some [extent] they are doing good.
>
> (IT: a-127; cf. ibid.: 167)

Although the support of women, their autonomy and empowerment certainly did not have first priority in MNCs obviously did have an impact, even if some people put the changes down more to general forces like globalisation and the advance of western civilisation.

6.2.4　The Participants' Sources of Information

As the lives of the female employees of MNCs were not only influenced by their current company's work culture, but – as already mentioned before – also by other sources such as the various media, it seemed interesting to ask the women which sources of information they used and what their main interests were. This section is dedicated to their answers.

As one of the results of liberalisation of the economy communications and mass media had been flourishing since the 1990s. India's growing audience, especially from the middle class, constituted a target for advertising as well as promoting global behaviour and lifestyles (cf. Prasad 2006). Firstly, participants were asked about the sources of information they used most often. Multiple answers were allowed. The most frequently mentioned sources were newspapers, television, internet and radio (see Figure 27). These were followed by books, with 41 per cent mentioning books as one of the most frequently used sources of information. With view to a literacy rate in India of 74 per cent (Bose 2017) this was not so surprising as, according to a survey, Indians spend more time reading than the citizens of any other nation in the world, which is 10.4 hours per week (Bose 2017). The reasons for India's high rank include a high number of very popular Indian authors, such as Ravinder Singh, Arvind Adiga or Jeet Thayil, further the easy access to books, a growing numbers of internet users with access to e-books and social media (Bose 2017). 32 per cent mentioned movies and 30 per cent magazines as further sources of information.
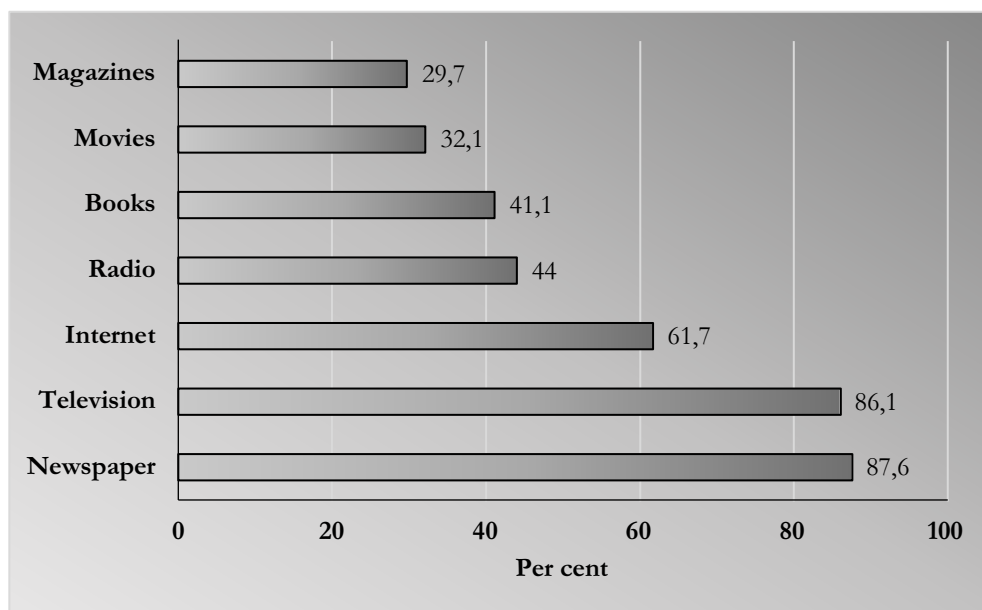
Figure 27. Sources of Information, n=209.

When asked about the cultural origin of the most frequently used sources, 65 per cent indicated a balance between national and international sources. 28 per cent claimed to use predominantly national sources, with only 8 per cent using information sources of international origin. The most frequently mentioned television channels were Aaj Tak, Star News, BBC, Star Plus, NDTV, CNN, Sony India and the Discovery Channel. Examples of newspapers read were the local newspaper *Sakhal*, *Times of India*, *Indian Express* and *Economic Times*. At the time of the study, the mentioned television channels and newspapers were rather objective in their reporting and programming.[132] Radio stations included Radio Mirchi and Radio FM and among the magazines named *Women's Era* was obviously popular. If books were mentioned, they are both work-related and non-work related. When a movie preference was stated, the interviewees tended to prefer Bollywood movies to Hollywood productions.

The main areas of strongest interest in the sources mentioned were work, health or personal fitness, entertainment and culture. Other fields listed apparently were of little interest such as current events and politics, relationship matters, religion and spiritualism, travelling, finance and investment, beauty and cosmetics and fashion.

Then the interviewees were asked if they thought that working for an MNC leads to an increase or decrease of use of various means of communication such as internet or media. Though two interviewees – Prija and Kumari from *Belgian Steel Cords* – argued that they made less use of information sources, because the combined burdens of work and responsibilities at home left them with less time, most interviewees stated that there had been an increase, especially in the use of internet. Reasons given are exposure, availability and the aim of keeping oneself informed. One interviewee from *German Agriculture Chemicals* argued that "people at MNCs try to gain knowledge and be updated. Since we deal with international companies we need to be updated" (IT: a-246). Another interviewee from the same company stated that people working for MNCs were especially exposed to the internet, but all other sources were also available to people employed by Indian firms (cf. IT: a-268). Shilpa from *Austrian Pearls* further explained that MNCs provided their employees with more work-related information and knowledge than Indian companies (cf. ibid.: a-79-a-80). Her colleague Gita explained the increased interest in information by the curiosity of a new generation which craved variety, giving the following reasons: "[…] one is globalisation, as the other is multinational companies comes to give, to make it, to keep it up with their standards, to know their culture, the way of their working, the people take interest in all these" (IT: a-57). Devi from *German Insurance*,

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[132] In recent years media use has changed and social media has developed rapidly. Of concern, however, is the restriction of journalists in their freedom of speech and press. As a result, there is little critical news reporting, and the credibility of Indian media is threatened (Rüsberg 2020; Betz 2018; Schneider 2014).

however, insisted that "it's not about working for a MNC. In India as a whole the culture is changing, so everybody, irrespective of they are with a MNC or not, everybody is a IT savvy, means, aware of internet. […] It's because there is a boom in the country, an economic boom. […] The infrastructure is improving" (IT: a-546; cf. ibid.: a-119-120).

7   Summary and Conclusion

The issue of this study was not to judge a cultural process, for instance to regret that Indian culture in many fields of life is on the retreat while modernisation western style is on the advance. Instead I started from accepting the status quo in the early 2000s, i.e. the fact that in times of increasing globalisation India – like many Asian, African or South American countries – had become a contact zone in which indigenous culture and western culture, the latter triggering and boosting modernisation processes, co-exist and impact on each other. MNCs can be considered as small exemplary places inside the larger social space in which these encounters are condensed and can be observed at close quarters: the management abroad and in India, deciding the company policies, represent the foreign element, while most of the (dependent) employees are born Indians and fully or partly raised in Indian culture. A great number of studies on these complex relations are feasible, not only from the point of view of business studies or political science, but also with a cultural studies perspective. Worthwhile topics for such studies might be the influence of the foreign companies' management style on Indian companies or studies on the reverse impact: are elements of Indian culture included into the business culture of the foreign companies or by individual foreign managers into their personal lifestyle. My focus of interest were the human relations inside the companies and the impact of the working situation on the self-perception and private lives of their employees. To repeat my motivation for this piece of research: as a woman I was intrigued to investigate how – as an example of many women in the countries concerned – a group of middle-class Indian women, traditionally extremely housebound and in the changing society especially exposed to western influences by working at an MNC, came to terms with their particular situation.

To begin with, a brief reminder of some basic facts seems helpful: as is well-known, India is among the economically fastest growing nations in the world, jumping from the 13th place in 2000 to the fifth in 2019 with GDP of $ 2.87 trillion and a growth rate of 4.29 per cent. This does, however, not mean that its individual citizens are among the richest worldwide – on the contrary, the per capita income in 2019 was $ 2,100 compared to $ 46,445 in Germany and $ 658,298 in the USA (Silver 2020). But this fact – the generally low wage level – is precisely one of the reasons why India has become a favourite country for foreign investment, the other pull factor being the liberal economic policy with market-orientation and the country's opening to world trade introduced in the 1990s. More and more MNCs from Britain, the US, Germany, Japan and other highly industrialised countries have opened subsidiaries, their number having risen from about 3,000 in 2000 to 4,300 in 2015. They have proved to function as agents of

globalisation and modernisation, though other agents such as the media, higher education, tourism and migration also exert a great influence, if not a stronger one. The MNCs' sphere of influence is more or less limited to urban areas and hardly extends to the rural districts where about 70 per cent of the population still earn their livelihood in agriculture. Yet many MNCs do not only actively engage in furthering the well-being of their employees in general, but are especially committed to promoting women's equality. The participating MNC *Finnish IT Services*, for example, among several awards they have received for their efforts at good personnel management, was listed among the *Top 100 Best Companies for Women in India* by Working Mothers and Avtar group in recent years.[133]

As described in the introduction, the plan for the present study was triggered by several stays of mine in India between 2003 and 2011, some of them academic (as a student, later as a researcher), others testing the reality of working life in MNCs. My interest focused on the situation of Indian women, who formed about 48 per cent of the total population (1.234 billion in 2010; 1.38 billion in 2020), and I was curious to know how the special minority of women employed by MNCs reacted to the foreign influence. I had met some older women in respectable higher-caste families, who still fulfilled the traditional role of the modest housewife, cooking and serving at dinner, but not taking part. And I wished to know how the young women of the daughter generation, employed at MNCs, coped with the clash between the traditional role of Brahmin women and the foreign influence at their workplace, which inevitably must have had a cultural spilling-over effect on their private lives. Basically I wanted to find out, if they judged the foreign influence in summary to be more positive or more negative for their personal lives, in other words whether they welcomed modernisation or rather perceived it as a danger to their home culture.

To better understand the women's situation, I researched the historical background leading up to it, i.e. the history of women's role in Indian society from Vedic times to the present as well as the development of the Indian economy since Independence and dedicated two introductory chapters to these preconditions of the state of affairs, which is analysed in the long core chapter 6 "Results".

It seems important to stress again that the period of my empirical research is now part of history, even if of very recent history. My research was done at a time when the Indian economy and its international connectedness were on the rise since the government of P.V. Narasimha Rao (Nationalist Congress Party, 1991–1996) had started a policy of liberalisation,

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[133] Primarily in the interest of the participating interview partners' privacy, the source for this information will only be disclosed upon request.

market-orientation and opening the country to world trade. Tolerance vis á vis an influx of western culture went along with it, not only in terms of the corporate culture, but also in features of everyday culture such as the growing use of English, access to the internet and international media, the taste for fast food and a spreading preference for western fashion. But the deepest effect probably had western ideas, of which women's emancipation is of crucial importance in our context. On the whole the concept had made good, if uneven, progress, but from 2014 on there has been a serious relapse after Narendra Modi of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power and implemented a new policy with the (involuntarily ironical) title "New India", a fact to which I will return a little later.

To find answers to the complex questions mentioned above, it was necessary to develop a whole range of questions and weigh the different answers, and it was also important to ask a broad cross-section of women employed in a variety of companies and jobs, including manufacture and office work, as well as women working on different levels in the company hierarchy. As to the methods applied, a combination of social science methods (quantitative evaluation of a questionnaire and 38 qualitative interviews with women employees) with a cultural studies analysis, based on theoretical and sociologist literature and expert interviews, recommended itself. The questionnaire was distributed in 12 MNCs, representing a broad selection from the manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors,[134] also varying in aspects such as nationality, size and product range. All were located in Pune and its surroundings as well as Mumbai, both situated in Maharashtra, the state that attracts the most international companies. All in all 209 women took part in the investigation, coming from a broad cross-section of Indian society, as the social profiles of the participants illustrated: the majority were Hindus, and most of them were highly educated, the majority holding a university degree (yet it has to be remembered that the category of university degree includes the polytechnic diploma). Most were younger than 30 years, half of them were married. With regard to their living situation, the majority came from urban cities and areas, and some lived in a traditional Indian joint family, although a clear tendency towards a modern nuclear family model with fewer people together under one roof was to be observed. More than half of the participants had not worked for an MNC before and the ones with MNC experience had been employed at an average of 4 years at an MNC. While 29 per cent worked in manufacture, the majority was employed in office work, particularly in clerical support, administration and marketing or sales, and worked on the lower and medium employment level, with the exceptions of some women working in management.

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[134] See 5.3 *Participating Multi- and Transnational Companies*

Evaluating the results of my investigation, the experiences of the women at work are of prime importance: most of them assessed them as positive. They argued that, first of all, the MNCs had widened and improved women's job opportunities, opening up even previously male-dominated fields such as engineering. Secondly, many of them praised the pleasant working environments and facilities. Thirdly, it was mentioned that the MNCs had greatly improved the situation of women in their companies by equal, non-gender-based treatment from hiring policies, equal pay for equal work to promotion including decision-making positions. Only with regard to hiring chances and payment some women felt still disadvantaged compared with their male colleagues. As to the interaction between male and female colleagues, the women appreciated the freer and more equal dealings with men and felt better protected against sexual harassment and discrimination by their companies than at Indian ones, for instance by the implementation of a strict code of conduct in many companies.

Work at an MNC, the participants maintained, also had important positive effects outside work. Thus women had gained in public esteem by having proved their ability to perform a productive role beside their traditional reproductive one. Some interviewees indicated that also their status in the family had improved by contributing to the family income, though many participants and (even more?) husbands considered their salaries not as *hers* to decide upon. Thirdly, many participants agreed that employment outside their familiar surroundings had increased women's freedom, social interaction/connectedness and mobility,[135] which, combined with their own income[136], granted them some measure of independence and self-realisation. Last but not least some guessed that the more equal gender relations at work had had a positive influence on gender relations in the private sphere, encouraging self-confident women to claim their share in family-planning (re. later marriages, delay of pregnancy and limiting the number of births), the children's upbringing and generally decision-making in family affairs including the family budget. All in all, working at an MNC seems to have contributed to boosting women's empowerment.

Yet going out to work also held some challenges for women, especially for the female employees of MNCs where the working hours are often longer, the working speed higher and human understanding for the women's burden at home less marked than in Indian companies. For Indian women, as a rule, have to shoulder a much heavier load at home than women in

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[135] Yet, Indian women's mobility is still fairly restricted as compared to their sisters in western societies. Conservative gender roles and societal norms but also a lack of safe and secure transport and infrastructure are reasons for this situation. Thus, it may limit women's abilities and exclude them from certain attractive jobs.

[136] If the woman is home to a patriarchal and collectivist setting, it has to be considered that she is still working for her family and not herself – a modern version of old expectations that women have to make sacrifices in order to maintain the family.

western societies: they are expected to run the household, care for the children and feeble relatives, plus feeding families on the many religious holidays, while traditionally men have been – and in many cases are still – reluctant to share the burden. Therefore many respondents deplored a high stress-level; but good pay, fair treatment, a pleasant working environment and good facilities seemed to balance the negative aspects on the whole, especially if members of the extended family or a domestic worker were available to help with household and family care. The – in contrast to western countries – widespread employment of domestic workers, was made possible by the same sociological facts that attracted the MNCs: the large workforce and the generally low level of income in India. Some companies like *Finnish IT Services* and *American Constructions*, also tried to relieve their female employees by introducing flexitime, others offered part-time jobs and/or provided day care facilities for children.

A particularly interesting aspect to be investigated was how the clash of Indian and western everyday cultures (e.g. codes of conduct, forms and languages of communication, respect for religious and popular traditions, dress codes) was handled by the companies and their female employees. We have seen that in the sphere of work organisation the western model dominated and was welcomed as an improvement by the great majority of the participants compared to conditions in Indian firms. The same holds true of the mode of communication: the less formal and less hierarchical style of most foreign companies appealed to their female employees. As to the use of languages and the dress codes, the picture was more varied: differences according to the field of work were to be observed. While the majority of the manual workers wore Indian clothes at work and in their free time, a majority of the office workers preferred western fashion in both environments. The use of languages showed a similar picture. Only a minority of the manual workers used English at their workplace and very few privately, while most white-collar workers used English as a matter of course in both contexts, some considering it to be *one* of *their* languages. The differences in both these cultural habits point to class or caste differences between the two types of workers, to which the companies reacted wisely with flexible rules. This attitude was also apparent in their handling of traditional Indian festivals: as many participants agreed, they were usually respected by the companies.

It remains to be seen how the findings confirm or contradict the most prominent theories of a specific Indian form of modernisation. At a first glance one would assume that David A. Ralston's crossvergence theory would be applicable, with which he explained how managerial work values in multi-nationally operating businesses were formed by the joint impact of various driving forces such as socio-cultural, economic, technological and ideological influences. The merit of Ralston's work is that he judged the influence of socio-cultural forces

as equally influential to those of economic ideology and technological progress, all flowing together into one value system. This was his answer to two earlier theories, the convergence and the divergence theories, which both had seemed inadequate to explain particular economy-related cultural developments in the globalised world. While the convergence theory had expected that the value system of capitalistic ideology would soon dominate in all parts of the world, the divergence theory had assumed that capitalistic business orientation and local cultural traditions in a given society would always exist unconnected side by side. Ralston, finding both extremely opposed theories inadequate to explain what actually happened in certain countries, had combined both approaches. But the whole discussion, including Ralston's own crossvergence theory, focused on the managerial level, i.e. the level of companies' decision making, while the focus of this study is on people in a dependent position at work. The female employees of MNCs were confronted with an already existing value system in their company, which – as could only be indirectly concluded from the participants' answers – were certainly aiming to make maximum profits by technological superiority compared to local firms, but were also committed to some emancipatory values (realising they boosted the effectivity of work? or they helped to retain employees?), such as granting equal chances to men and women of equal abilities. The women interviewed welcomed this part of company policy, as was shown, but it was left to them to negotiate it with their traditional duties at home.

So it seems that perhaps Satish Deshpande's theory is more to the point as he was concerned with what happened in an individual who is exposed to the conflicting forces of tradition and modernity. As early as 1958 Daniel Lerner had diagnosed the problem concerning modern Turkey and translated it into a parable "The Grocer and The Chief", in which one person represented modernity and the other tradition. Desphande interpreted Indians' attitude to modernity in 2004 as much more complex, because "[....] tradition and modernity are [...] apt to occur [...] as integral parts of the same personality" (Deshpande 2004: 36). This diagnosis fits the situation of the women, who though in paid employment at MNCs, were still fully responsible for all the household duties and the observance of Indian traditions. Deshpande saw this situation as a tragic one, arguing that the Indian personality, "a dualistic-but-unified personality" was "therefore under permanent suspicion of schizophrenia" (ibid. 36-37; 179-180) and deplored that – just like society, culture, history and politics, – single personalities were "permanently in a state of in-between-ness", calling it "a double- edged failure" (ibid: 38). Yet this does not fit the reality of our participants' view. Despite numerous and various complaints about their double burden of work-related and home duties, on the whole the women signalled not only contentment with their all-round situation, but also took pride in their social role as

members of the working community as well as in their ability to cope with their mixed load of work – and home-related demands, however great the pressures were. Thus it seems that so far no theory has been developed which could adequately describe and explain the mental and social situation of the female employees of MNCs active in India. A very likely reason for this is that Indian feminism is more focused on the more damaging and therefore more urgent issues of women's position in family and society, as was shown in subchapter 2.3. Dowry murders and the growing cases of violence against women in the public call for more attention than the relatively comfortable situation of female employees in the business world, even if the harmonisation of the work situation and traditional family duties poses a difficult task for the women concerned.

At this point it is necessary to return to the great change which began in 2014, when Modi of the BJP came to power. His government continued the country's commitment to the neoliberal, market-oriented economic policy and global opening, but the "New India"-policy also had a highly problematic flipside: a pronouncedly conservative cultural policy which split the nation, favouring Hindus and discriminating against other religions, especially Muslims. This has caused much conflict, which has naturally also negatively affected the economy (Gottschlich 2018). But above all the revival of patriarchal Hindu gender stereotypes of women as sacrificing mothers, wives and daughters and the protectors of Indian tradition limited to the home as her natural place has severely impeded the once lively trend to women's emancipation in Indian society. Partha Chatterjee's theory of the division of the cultural sphere into the material sphere as man's realm and the spiritual sphere as the woman's, formulated in several writings of the 2010s, may have helped to prepare the ground for the ideological change and thus can be considered a dangerous piece of academic work, but one may doubt if it has reached a mass readership. Probably more influential have been public utterances of leading religious and political figures, spread in temples and certain media. The most obvious and shocking sign of the ideological swing is the fall of women's workforce participation rate from 30.3 per cent in 1990 to 20.3 per cent in 2020 (World Bank Indicators). Economic opportunities for women have become remarkably limited, and the economic gender gap runs deep, deeper than the political gender gap according to some researchers (World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap 2020 Report*): India now ranks 112 on an index which includes 153 countries. As implied in the few studies available, MNCs in India also seem affected: they now employ fewer women in comparison to the same MNCs in other parts of the world (Rajadhyaksha 2011; cf. Zinnov-Intel India Gender Diversity Benchmark Study Released 2019; cf. Vankipuram 2019). Thus my research offers a snapshot of a particular moment in history, when women's emancipation in

India was on the advance and the prospects for the future were promising. One can only hope that my study is not the picture of what might have been but of what might soon be taken up again and continued. The economic conditions do not look too bad. Though India has also been hit by the global economic slowdown in consequence of the Covid-19-pandemic and is among the countries suffering from the highest infection rate and the highest death toll, it still attracts more foreign investment than other Asian countries. UNCTAD World Investment Report 2020 stated: "Investment flows to developing countries in Asia could fall up to 45% in 2020", but expected "India 9th largest recipient of FDI in 2019, will continue to attract investments."

8   List of Tables and Figures

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Appendix A: Global Gender Gap Report 2020 – Country Profile

India

rank out of 153 countries **112**

score 0.00 = imparity 1.00 = parity **0.668**

	2006 score		2020 score	
Global Gender Gap Index	98	0.601	112	0.668
Economic participation and opportunity	110	0.397	149	0.354
Educational attainment	102	0.819	112	0.962
Health and survival	103	0.962	150	0.944
Political empowerment	20	0.227	18	0.411

India score
average score

COUNTRY SCORE CARD

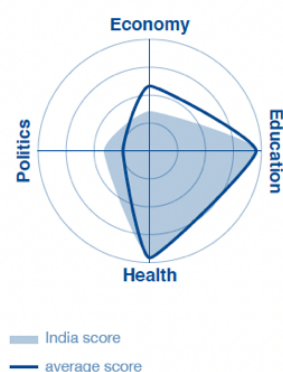|	rank	score	avg	female	male	f/m
Economic participation and opportunity	149	0.354	0.582			
Labour force participation rate, %	145	0.304	0.661	24.8	81.6	0.30
Wage equality for similar work, 1-7 (best)	117	0.555	0.613	–	–	3.89
Estimated earned income, int'l $ 1,000	144	0.206	0.499	2.3	11.1	0.21
Legislators, senior officials and managers, %	136	0.158	0.356	13.7	86.3	0.16
Professional and technical workers, %	132	0.434	0.756	30.3	69.7	0.43
Educational attainment	112	0.962	0.954			
Literacy rate, %	127	0.799	0.899	65.8	82.4	0.80
Enrolment in primary education, %	1	1.000	0.757	93.0	91.6	1.02
Enrolment in secondary education, %	1	1.000	0.954	62.4	60.9	1.02
Enrolment in tertiary education, %	1	1.000	0.931	29.1	27.2	1.07
Health and survival	150	0.944	0.958			
Sex ratio at birth, %	149	0.910	0.925	–	–	0.91
Healthy life expectancy, years	134	1.020	1.034	59.9	58.7	1.02
Political empowerment	18	0.411	0.239			
Women in parliament , %	122	0.168	0.298	14.4	85.6	0.17
Women in ministerial positions, %	69	0.300	0.255	23.1	76.9	0.30
Years with female/male head of state (last 50)	4	0.642	0.190	19.5	30.5	0.64

distance to parity

Source: World Economic Forum (2020) – *The Global Gender Gap 2020 Report*, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/-WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf, 185 (15 November 2020).

0.668 / 112   IND

SELECTED CONTEXTUAL DATA

General Indicators	female	male	value
GDP, US$ billions	–	–	2.27k
GDP per capita, constant '11, intl. $ 1000	–	–	6.98
Total population, million people	649.6	703.1	1.14k
Population growth rate, %	1.03	1.01	1.02
Population sex ratio (female/male), female/male ratio	51.98	48.02	1.08

Work participation and leadership	female	male	value
Labour force, million people	79.86	287.4	0.22
Unemployed adults, % of labour force (15-64)	5.42	5.54	0.98
Workers employed part-time, % of employed people	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gender pay gap (OECD only), %	–	–	n/a
Proportion of unpaid work per day, female/male ratio	n/a	n/a	n/a
Advancement of women to leadership roles, 1-7 (best)	–	–	3.92
Gender parity in tech roles, 1-7 (best)	–	–	4.77
Boards of listed companies,% board members	13.80	86.20	0.16
Firms with female majority ownership, % firms	2.80	97.20	0.03
Firms with female top managers, % firms	8.90	91.10	0.10

Access to finance	female	male	value
Right to hold a bank account & get credit, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.25
Inheritance rights for daughters, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.50
Women's access to land use, control & ownership, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.25
Women's access to non-land assets use, control & ownership, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.25

Civil and political freedom	female	male	value
Year women received right to vote	–	–	1935
Number of female heads of state to date	n/a	n/a	2
Election list quotas for women, national, yes/no	n/a	n/a	No
Party membership quotas, voluntary, Yes/no	n/a	n/a	No
Seats held in upper house,% total seats	11.48	88.52	0.13
Right to equal justice, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.25
Right to travel outside the country, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.00

Family and care	female	male	value
Mean age of women at birth of first child	n/a	n/a	27.4
Average number of children per woman	n/a	n/a	2.24
Women's unmet demand for family planning, % women 15-49	–	–	12.90
Right to divorce, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.50
Child marriage, % women 15-19	–	–	21.50
Length of maternity/paternity leave (days), weeks	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wages paid during maternity/paternity leave, % annual gross wage	n/a	n/a	n/a

Education and skills	female	male	value
STEMS, attainment %	26.93	36.61	0.74
Agri., Forestry, Fisheries & Veterinary, attainment %	0.40	1.07	0.37
Arts & Humanities, attainment %	6.23	4.93	1.26
Business, Admin. & Law, attainment %	16.52	19.05	0.87
Education, attainment %	11.07	7.16	1.55
Engineering, Manuf. & Construction, attainment %	7.19	16.35	0.44
Health & Welfare, attainment %	3.96	2.51	1.58
Information & Comm. Technologies, attainment %	6.00	7.05	0.85
Natural Sci., Mathematics & Statistics, attainment %	13.75	13.20	1.04
Services, attainment %	0.47	0.24	1.92
Social Sci., Journalism & Information, attainment %	34.42	28.44	1.21
Vocational training, attainment %	n/a	n/a	n/a
PhD graduates, attainment %	n/a	n/a	n/a

Health	female	male	value
Maternal mortality, deaths per 100,000 live births	–	–	145
Prevalence of gender violence in lifetime, % women	–	–	28.7
Law permits abortion to preserve a woman's health, 0-1 (worst)	–	–	0.25
Births attended by skilled personnel, % live births	–	–	81.40
Antenatal care, at least four visits, % women 15-49	–	–	66.00

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Appendix B: Basic Results of the Questionnaires

<u>QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS</u>

THE IMPACT OF MULTI- AND TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN INDIA ON THE LIFE, SOCIAL ROLE AND SELF-PERCEPTION OF THEIR INDIAN FEMALE EMPLOYEES

There are many views on the equality of men and women in the working environment. Please respond to the following statements according to your strong agreement or disagreement:	**I strongly agree (1)**	**I agree (2)**	**I agree partially (3)**	**I disagree (4)**	**I strongly disagree (5)**	*Mean Value*
1) Men and women have equal rights in the working environment.						
a) in India	7.9%	27.7%	40.6%	19.8%	4.0%	2.84
b) at your company	24.6%	53.8%	17.1%	4.5%	0%	2.02
2) Women experience equal treatment as men in the working environment.						
a) in India	5.0%	18.1%	46.7%	26.1%	4.0%	3.06
b) at your company	22.6%	47.2%	22.1%	6.5%	1.5%	2.17
3) There is gender balance in decision-making. Women have the same influence in making decisions as their male colleagues holding the same position.						
a) in India	7.7%	28.6%	36.7%	21.4%	5.6%	2.89
b) at your company	23.1%	45.1%	22.1%	6.7%	3.1%	2.22
4) The working hours between men and women are equal.						
a) in India	18.4%	40.8%	17.9%	16.3%	6.6%	2.52
b) at your company	36.4%	48.0%	5.6%	5.6%	4.5%	1.95
5) Men and women holding the same position are equally paid.						
a) in India	11.3%	28.0%	28.0%	21.0%	11.8%	2.94
b) at your company	20.3%	38.0%	12.3%	17.1%	12.3%	2.63
6) In the employment market in India men are preferentially hired compared to women.						
a) in India	21.5%	40.0%	19.5%	17.0%	2.0%	2.38
b) at your company	5.7%	22.2%	34.0%	29.9%	8.2%	3.13

	I strongly agree (1)	I agree (2)	I agree partially (3)	I disagree (4)	I strongly disagree (5)	*Mean Value*
7) For any work-related issues, such as payment, uniform, or working hours, you feel comfortable approaching your supervisor or management.						
a) in India	12.2%	42.3%	32.3%	8.5%	4.8%	2.51
b) at your company	30.5%	51.3%	11.7%	4.1%	2.5%	1.97
8) Women have to prove themselves and their qualifications, skills and knowledge more than men.						
a) in India	30.3%	34.3%	15.2%	15.2%	5.1%	2.30
b) at your company	21.3%	27.4%	11.7%	25.9%	13.7%	2.83
9) Women have the same access to career advancements. Once more, consider if men have easier access to career advancements than women or vice versa.						
a) in India	13.0%	31.1%	29.0%	22.8%	4.1%	2.74
b) at your company	19.3%	46.0%	18.7%	13.9%	2.1%	2.34
10) The social interaction between men and women and the working conditions are professional and pleasant.						
a) in India	8.8%	32.1%	39.9%	15.0%	4.1%	2.74
b) at your company	29.8%	45.5%	16.7%	5.6%	2.5%	2.06
11) Forms of discrimination, such as physical, mental, or sexual get in the way of equality at the workplace.						
I. in India: a) harassment against women	12.7%	30.4%	28.7%	18.2%	9.9%	2.82
b) harassment against men	1.8%	12.0%	18.6%	41.9%	25.7%	3.78
II. at your company:						
a) harassment against women	4.2%	6.0%	12.7%	42.8%	34.3%	3.97
b) harassment against men	1.3%	3.9%	7.7%	46.5%	40.6%	4.21
12) If you experience discrimination or harassment, you could easily approach the management for help.						
a) in India	14.7%	31.1%	37.4%	12.1%	4.7%	2.61
b) at your company	37.6%	41.8%	13.9%	3.1%	3.6%	1.93

13) *Have you personally experienced any forms of discrimination and harassment at the workplace?*		
a) in India	24.7% **Yes**	75.3% **No**
b) at your company	17.0% **Yes**	83.0% **No**

14)   a) In general, which source of information do you use most? More than one answer is possible:

87.6%	**Newspaper**	44.0%	**Radio**
29.7%	**Magazines**	61.7%	**Internet**
41.1%	**Books**	32.1%	**Movies**
86.1%	**Television**		

b) List the names of your two most important sources of information (for example, if television, the most watched TV channel):

c) Are the sources more:

	27.7%	**National or**
	7.7%	**International or**
	64.6%	**Balanced?**

15) What are your main interests when using the checked sources in question 14a? Please check according to your interest:

	No Interest (1)	Little Interest (2)	Strong Interest (3)	*Mean Value*
Health/ Personal fitness	5.9%	37.1%	56.9%	2.51
Current events/ Politics	13.6%	55.1%	31.3%	2.18
Entertainment	6.2%	34.9%	55.0%	2.51
Relationship matters	27.4%	47.4%	25.3%	1.98
Religion/ Spiritualism	27.5%	41.5%	31.0%	2.04
Work/ Profession	4.4%	23.4%	72.2%	2.68
Travelling	9.0%	38.5%	52.5%	2.44
Finance/ Investments	18.6%	39.2%	42.2%	2.24
Beauty/ Cosmetics	21.1%	47.2%	31.7%	2.11
Fashion	19.2%	47.5%	33.3%	2.14
Culture	5.5%	42.0%	52.5%	2.47

16) Which culture is promoted more at your current workplace? Indian or western? Please express by percentage:

Indian culture:	61.4	**%**
Western culture:	38.5	**%**
Other:………………. (Please indicate other culture if applicable):	0.1	**%**
	100	**%**

17) What is the language of communication in the working environment? Please express by percentage:

Hindi:	21.6	**%**
English:	47.0	**%**
Marathi:	27.9	**%**
Other:……… (Please indicate other language/ dialect if applicable):	3.5	**%**
	100	**%**

18) What is the language of communication you use outside of work? Please express by percentage:

Hindi:	28.5	**%**
English:	31.9	**%**
Marathi:	35.0	**%**
Other:……… (Please indicate other language/ dialect if applicable):	4.5	**%**
	100	**%**

19) With regard to uniform, do you wear at work:

Indian clothes	Western clothes	Both
37.2%	15.5%	47.3%

20) What do you wear outside of work:

Indian clothes	Western clothes	Both
38.3%	14.8%	46.9%

21) Do you spend your salary more on:

Indian goods	Western goods	Balanced
46.1%	3.4%	50.5%

Is there a reason for your spending habit? If so, please note it down:

22) What do you like about multinational companies in comparison to Indian companies?

23) What don't you like about multinational companies in comparison to Indian companies?

24) a) Does your company spend money on research and development?

47.6%   **Yes**
17.0%   **No**
35.4%   **I don't know**

b) Do you think money is spent by your company on the support of women?:

19.0%   **Yes**
39.5%   **No**
41.5%   **I don't know**

25) Since you have been working with a multinational company, has there been an increase in your amount of travel?

Business related travels within India:	32.7%	**Yes**	67.3%	**No**
Business related travels abroad:	12.8%	**Yes**	87.2%	**No**
Vacations within India:	33.7%	**Yes**	66.3%	**No**
Vacations abroad:	6.5%	**Yes**	93.5%	**No**

26) Do you have more friends within or outside your workplace?:

16.7%	**At work**
33.3%	**Outside of work**
49.5%	**Balanced**
0.5%	**I don't know**

27) Do you see multinational companies having an effect or not having an effect on the advancement of women's issues? Please give reasons for your answer.

	None	To some extent	Very Much	I don't know
a) Any Multinational Company in India	5.1%	50.3%	22.3%	22.3%
Mean value			2.62	
b) Your company	14.2%	53.8%	17.2%	14.8%
Mean value		2.33		

Reasons for a)
Reasons for b)

28) What benefits does your company offer? More than one answer is possible:

12.9%	**Day care centre**	53.1%	**Excursions (e.g. team training, group events)**
65.1%	**Health Care (Insurance)**	37.8%	**Awards for employees (Best Employee of the Month)**
1.4%	**Psychologist**	8.6%	**Anti-stress trainings (e.g. yoga course)**
24.4%	**Retirement/ Pensions**	8.6%	**Transportation[137]**
70.8%	**Maternity benefits**	7.2%	**Other**

29) Would you accept or would you not accept less of a salary if the extra money went to company facilities like a day care centre, or trainings that would benefit women etc.?:

37.1%	**Yes**
50.7%	**No**
12.2%	**I don't know**

30 a) Outside of your employment, what following obligations do you have at home:

39.2%	**Childcare**	51.7%	**Laundry**
73.7%	**Cooking**	54.1%	**Errands**
71.8%	**Cleaning**	27.8%	**Others**

30) b) If you receive help with these obligations, please mark the corresponding boxes.

	None	To some extent	Very Much	*Mean Value*
Husband/ Wife	28.5%	38.2%	33.3%	2.05
Children	67.7%	19.8%	12.5%	1.45
Parents	11.3%	24.5%	64.2%	2.53
Extended family	35.9%	38.5%	25.6%	1.90
Hired help	30.2%	41.1%	28.7%	1.98

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[137] Category was created thereinafter.

31) ANY ADDITIONAL REMARKS (Attach a separate sheet if needed)

BIO INFO

32) Are you male or female? 209 women participated in the survey.[138]

33) What is your age?:

Below 20	1.4%	
21-25	38.5%	
26-30	37.0%	
31-35	12.5%	
36-40	7.2%	
41-45	3.4%	
46-50	0%	
50+	0%	

34) What is the highest level of your education?:[139]

No degree	0%
8th degree	0%
10th degree	2.5%
High school diploma	8.9%
University degree[140]	88.6%
PhD	0%

35) What is your marital status?:

Married	49.8%
Single	47.8%
Divorced	1.0%
Widowed	1.4%

36) How many people live in your household?: 3.97

Number of people living in the household:

1	1.9%	**6**	5.7%
2	12.1%	**7**	1.9%
3	27.4%	**8**	3.8%
4	27.4%	**9**	0.6%
5	19.1%		

And what is their relation to you? Multiple selections are possible:

Husband/ Wife	47.8%
Children	34.9%
Parents	61.2%
Extended family[141]	34.4%
Hired help[142]	1.4%

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[138] There were 61 male participants but for this evaluation only female employees were taken into consideration.

[139] Categories were created thereinafter.

[140] Degrees or certificates attained at a polytechnic were added to the category of university degree.

[141] 'Brother' was mentioned handwritten in individual cases. This was added to the category of extended family.

[142] Category was created thereinafter.

37) What is your religion/ faith?:

	Hindu	79.5%
	Muslim	5.6%
	Catholic	6.2%
	Buddhist	1.0%
	Jain	2.6%
	Christian	3.1%
	Humanity	0.5% [139]
	Sikh	1.0%
	Indian	0.5%

38) Where were you born?:

	Large city	59.1%
	Small town	30.3%
	Village	10.6%

39) Where are you living now?:

	Large city	84.1%
	Small town	12.6%
	Village	3.4%

40) What is the reason why you came to the place where you live now?:[140]

13.2%	**Education**	9.2% **Family moved**
36.8%	**Job**	30.9% **Native Place**
9.9%	**Through marriage**	

41) Job description: [141, 142]

5.6%	**Marketing / Sales**	10.1% **Other**
36.3%	**Administration**	**Manufacturing & Administration**
19.0%	**Clerical support (accounts, technical department, claims etc.)**	**Administration & Clerical support**
29.1%	**Manufacturing**	

42) Did you work for any other multinational companies before your present employment?:

    45.4% **Yes**   54.6% **No**

43) How many years total have you been employed at a multinational company?: 4.35 **Years**

---

[139] Category was created thereinafter.

[140] Categories were created thereinafter.

[141] Absolute number or cases are indicated.

[142] The categories 'Other', 'Manufacturing & Administration', and 'Administration & Clerical support' have been added thereinafter.

Appendix C: English Questionnaire Sample

<div align="center">

QUESTIONNAIRE

</div>

THE IMPACT OF MULTI- AND TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS ON THE LIFE, SOCIAL ROLE AND SELF-PERCEPTION OF THEIR INDIAN FEMALE EMPLOYEES

This questionnaire will be distributed at your company. According to the limited participants in this survey, it is of great importance that you answer the following questions. If you cannot answer a question, please proceed to the following one. The questionnaires will be viewed and evaluated only by myself and you can be absolutely sure that your answers will not affect your career in any way! There will be an envelope at the reception to deposit your completed response.

Please do not include your name at any place on this survey.

Thank you very much in advance. If you have any question, you can contact me at 9860635125 or via email: survey_india2007@yahoo.com
Sophie A. Mattheus

There are many views on the equality of men and women in the working environment. Please respond to the following statements according to your strong agreement or disagreement:	**I strongly agree**	**I agree**	**I agree partially**	**I disagree**	**I strongly disagree**
1) Men and women have equal rights in the working environment.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
2) Women experience equal treatment as men in the working environment.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
3) There is gender balance in decision-making. Women have the same influence in making decisions as their male colleagues holding the same position.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
4) The working hours between men and women are equal.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
5) Men and women holding the same position are equally paid.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					

	I strongly agree	I agree	I agree partially	I disagree	I strongly disagree
6) In the employment market in India men are preferentially hired compared to women.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
7) For any work-related issues, such as payment, uniform, or working hours, you feel comfortable approaching your supervisor or management.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
8) Women have to prove themselves and their qualifications, skills and knowledge more than men.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
9) Women have the same access to career advancements. Once more, consider if men have easier access to career advancements than women or vice versa.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
10) The social interaction between men and women and the working conditions are professional and pleasant.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
11) Forms of discrimination, such as physical, mental, or sexual get in the way of equality at the workplace.					
I. in India: a) harassment against women					
b) harassment against men					
II. your company: a) harassment against women					
b) harassment against men					
12) If you experience discrimination or harassment, you could easily approach the management for help.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					

13) *Have you personally experienced any forms of discrimination and harassment at the workplace?*		
a) in India	**Yes**	**No**
b) at your company	**Yes**	**No**

Numerous multinational corporations have set up businesses in India. In order to understand their impact on the people working for them, in particular Indian women, please answer the following questions about your personal experience.

14)   **a) In general, which source of information do you use most? More than one answer is possible:**

Newspaper	**Radio**
Magazines	**Internet**
Books	**Movies**
Television	

b) List the names of your two most important sources of information (for example, if television, the most watched TV channel):

………………………………………………………………………………………

c) Are the sources more: National   or   International   or   Balanced?

15) What are your main interests when using the checked sources in question 14a? Please check according to your interest:

	No Interest	**Little Interest**	**Strong Interest**
Health/ Personal fitness			
Current events/ Politics			
Entertainment			
Relationship matters			
Religion/ Spiritualism			
Work/ Profession			
Travelling			
Finance/ Investments			
Beauty/ Cosmetics			
Fashion			
Culture			

16) Which culture is promoted more at your current workplace? Indian or western? Please express by percentage:

Indian culture:	….	**%**
Western culture:	….	**%**
Other:………………. (Please indicate other culture if applicable):	….	**%**
	100	**%**

17) What is the language of communication in the working environment? Please express by percentage:

Hindi:	….	**%**
English:	….	**%**
Marathi:	….	**%**
Other:………………. (Please indicate other language/ dialect if applicable):	….	**%**
	100	**%**

18) What is the language of communication you use outside of work? Please express by percentage:

Hindi:	….	**%**
English:	….	**%**
Marathi:	….	**%**
Other:………………. (Please indicate other language/ dialect if applicable):	….	**%**
	100	**%**

19) With regard to uniform, do you wear at work: **More Indian**   **Western clothes**   **Both**

20) What do you wear outside of work: **More Indian clothes**   **Western clothes**   **Both**

21) Do you spend your salary more on: **Indian**   **or**   **Western goods**   **or**   **is it balanced?**

    Is there a reason for your spending habit? If so, please note it down:
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………

22) What do you like about multinational companies in comparison to Indian companies?
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………

23) What don't you like about multinational companies in comparison to Indian companies?
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………

24) a) Does your company spend money on research and development?
    Yes   No   I don't know

   b) Do you think money is spent by your company on the support of women?:
    Yes   No   I don't know

25) Since you have been working with a multinational company, has there been an increase in your amount of travel?

Business related travels within India:	**Yes**	**No**
Business related travels abroad:	**Yes**	**No**
Vacations within India:	**Yes**	**No**

Vacations abroad: Yes   No

26) Do you have more friends within or outside your workplace?
     At work   Outside of work   Balanced   I don't know

27) Do you see multinational companies having an effect or not having an effect on the advancement of women's issues? Please give reasons for your answer.

	None	To some extent	Very Much	I don't know
a) Any Multinational Company in India				
b) your company				

Reasons for a)…. ……………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
Reasons for b)………………………………………………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………………………

28) What benefits does your company offer? More than one answer is possible:

     Day care centre   Excursions (e.g. team training, group events)
     Health Care (Insurance)   Awards for employees (e.g. Best Employee of the Month)
     Psychologist   Anti-stress trainings (e.g. yoga course)
     Retirement/ Pensions   Other:………………………………………..
     Maternity benefits

29) Would you accept or would you not accept less of a salary if the extra money went to company facilities like a day care centre, or trainings that would benefit women etc.?:

     Yes   No   I don't know

30 a) Outside of your employment, what following obligations do you have at home:
     Child care   Laundry
     Cooking   Errands
     Cleaning   Others:…………………………………………

30) b) If you receive help with these obligations, please mark the corresponding boxes.

	None	To some extent	Very Much
Husband/ Wife			
Children			
Parents			
Extended family			
Hired help			

31) ANY ADDITIONAL REMARKS (Attach a separate sheet if needed)

BIO INFO

32) Are you: Male or Female?

33) What is your age?:

  Below 20 21-25 26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45 46-50 50+

34) What is the highest level of your education?: …………………………………………...

35) What is your marital status?: Married or Single or Divorced or Widowed?

36) How many people live in your household?: …………
   And what is their relation to you? Multiple selections are possible: Husband/ Wife
                                                                          Children
                                                                          Parents
                                                                          Extended family

37) What is your religion/ faith?: ……………………………………

38) Where were you born?: Large city or Small town or Village

39) Where are you living now?: Large city or Small town or Village

40) What is the reason why you came to the place where you live now?:

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

41) Job description: Marketing / Sales   Administration   Clerical support (accounts, technical department, claims etc.)   Manufacturing

42) Did you work for any other multinational companies before your present employment?:
   Yes   No

43) How many years total have you been employed at a multinational company?: ……….Years

[1]

प्रश्नावली

आंतरदेशीय कंपन्यांचा भारतीय स्त्रीवर होणारा परिणाम व त्यात असलेली स्त्रीची भूमिका

ही प्रश्नावली मी तुम्हाला माझ्या संशोधनासाठी भरून द्यायला सांगत आहे. मला तुमच्या उत्तरांची निश्चित खूप मदत होईल. तुमच्या उत्तरांचा तुमच्या नोकरीवर कोणताही परिणाम होणार नाही, त्यामुळे निसंकोचपणे उत्तरे लिहा. तुम्हाला जर एखाद्या प्रश्नाचे उत्तर आले नाही, तर पुढचा प्रश्न सोडवा. तुमच्या मदतीबद्दल मी तुम्हाला आभार मानते. बरोबर उत्तरासाठी ☑ ही खूण करा.

कृपया ही प्रश्नावली सोडवताना कुठेही तुमचे नाव घालू नका.

कामाच्या ठिकाणी असलेले स्त्रा-पुरुष समानतेवर बरेच दृष्टीकोन आहेत. कृपया खालील उत्तरे द्या	मला खूप पटते	मला पटते	मला थोडे पटते	मला पटत नाही	मला आजिबात पटत नाही
1) स्त्री-पुरुषांना कामाच्या ठिकाणी समान हक्क आहेत					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2) स्त्रीयांना कामाच्या ठिकाणी समान वागणूक दिली जाते					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3) कंपनीत निर्णय घेताना, स्त्रीयांच्या निर्णयाला पुरुषांच्या निर्णयाएवढेच महत्व दिले जाते					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4) स्त्री व पुरुष यांच्या कामाच्या वेळा सारख्या आहेत					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5) जे स्त्री व पुरुष एकाच दर्जावर काम करत आहेत, त्यांचे वेतन सारखे आहे					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	मला खूप पटते	मला पटते	मला थोडे पटते	मला पटत नाही	मला आजिबात पटत नाही
6) व्यवसायाच्या ठिकाणी पुरुषांना स्त्रीयांपेक्षा जास्त नोकऱ्या मिळतात					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7) तुम्हाला काहीही प्रश्न असतील, तर तुमच्या वरिष्ठांना छेटायला तुम्हाला सोयीचं वाटते का					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8) स्त्रीयांना त्यांचे गुण, कौशल्य व ज्ञान पुरुषांपेक्षा जास्त सिद्ध करायला लागते					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9) स्त्रियांना पुरुषांइतकेच करिअर करायला संधी मिळते. पुरुषांना ही संधी स्त्रियांपेक्षा सहजतेने मिळते					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10) स्त्री व पुरुषांमधील असलेले संबंध नोकरीच्या ठिकाणी चांगले असतात					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11) तुम्हाला कोणत्याही प्रकारचा त्रास, लैंगिक किंवा मानसिक सहन करावा लागतो का? त्यांला समानता राहत नाही					
I भारतात a) बायकांना छळणे	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) पुरुषांना छळणे	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
II कंपनीत a) बायकांना छळणे	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) पुरुषांना छळणे	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12) तुम्हाला कोणताही त्रास झाला तर, तर तुम्ही वरिष्ठांकडे सहजपणे मदत मागू शकता					
a) भारतात	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13) तुम्हाला स्वतःला कोणत्याही त्रासाचा अनुभव आला आहे का?		
a) भारतात	☐ हो	☐ नाही
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐ हो	☐ नाही

१४) तुम्ही माहिती संपादन करण्यासाठी खालील कोणत्या गोष्टींचा
[अ] उपयोग करता? तुम्ही एकापेक्षा जास्त उत्तरे देऊ शकता.

☐ वर्तमानपत्रे   ☐ रेडिओ

☐ मासिके   ☐ इंटरनेट

☐ पुस्तके   ☐ सिनेमा

☐ टी.व्ही

[ब] तुम्ही कोणत्या दोन गोष्टी माहिती संपादन करण्यासाठी
वापरता, ज्या तुमच्या मते खूप महत्त्वाच्या आहेत- (उदा.
टी.व्ही वापरत असलात, तर तुमच्या आवडत्या चॅनलचे
नाव लिहा): ....

[क] ही माहिती संपादन करण्याचे घटक कसे आहेत-

☐ देशीय   का   ☐ आंतरदेशीय   का   ☐ दोन्ही

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१५) तुम्ही माहिती संपादन करताना (१४ अ मध्ये दिले आहे त्या प्रमाणे)
कोणत्या गोष्टींमध्ये तुम्हाला जास्त रूची वाटले?

	अजिबात रूची नाही	थोडी रूची	खूप रूची
शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य	☐	☐	☐
राजकीय घडमोडी	☐	☐	☐
मनोरंजन	☐	☐	☐
परस्परांमधील संबंध	☐	☐	☐
धर्मा विषयी	☐	☐	☐
काम / व्यवसाय	☐	☐	☐
प्रवास	☐	☐	☐
पैसे / गुंतवणूक	☐	☐	☐
सौंदर्य प्रसाधने	☐	☐	☐
फॅशन	☐	☐	☐
सांस्कृतिक	☐	☐	☐

16) तुम्ही जेथे नोकरी करता तेथील वातावरण कसे असावे असे तुम्हाला सांगितले जाले - भारतीय का पाश्चात्य ?
कृपया प्रतिशत प्रमाण सांगावे

भारतीय संस्कृती   ——%

पाश्चात्य संस्कृती   ——%

                       100 %

17) तुम्ही जेथे नोकरी करता, तेथे कोणती भाषा वापरली जाते? कृपया प्रतिशत प्रमाण सांगावे

हिंदी   ——%

इंग्रजी   ——%

मराठी   ——%

अजून कुठली भाषा वापरली जात असेल तर? ——%

                       100 %

18) तुमच्या नोकरीच्या जागेच्या बाहेर तुम्ही कोणती भाषा वापरता? कृपया प्रतिशत प्रमाणे सांगावे

हिंदी   ——%

इंग्लिश   ——%

मराठी   ——%

अजून कुठली भाषा वापरली जात असेल तर ——%

                       100 %

19) तुम्ही कामाच्या ठिकाणी कोणत्या प्रकारचे कपडे जास्त घालता ?

☐ जास्त करून भारतीय कपडे   ☐ पाश्चात्य कपडे   ☐ दोन्ही

20) तुम्ही नोकरीसाठी गेला नसाल, तेव्हा कोणत्या प्रकारचे कपडे घालता ?

☐ जास्त करून भारतीय कपडे   ☐ पाश्चात्य कपडे   ☐ दोन्ही

२१) तुम्ही तुमचे वेतन कश्यावर जास्त खर्च करता ?
☐ भारतीय गोष्टी विकत घेण्यात
☐ पाश्चात्य गोष्टी विकत घेण्यात
☐ दोन्ही प्रकारच्या गोष्टी घेण्यात

ह्याला काही ठराविक कारण असल्यास, कृपया ते लिहा : . . . . . .

---

२२) आंतरदेशीय कंपन्यांची भारतीय कंपन्यांशी तुलना केली, तर तुम्हाला आंतरदेशीय कंपन्याबद्दल काय आवडते ? : . . . . . .

---

२३) भारतीय कंपन्यांच्या तुलनेत, तुम्हाला आंतरदेशीय कंपन्यांची कोणती गोष्ट आवडत नाही ? : . . . . . .

---

२४)अ) तुमची कंपनी संशोधन आणि विकासावर पैसे खर्च करते का ?
☐ हो   ☐ नाही   ☐ मला माहित नाही

ब) तुमची कंपनी स्त्रीयांना आधार मिळावा म्हणून पैसे खर्च करते का ?
☐ हो   ☐ नाही   ☐ मला माहित नाही

25) तुम्ही जेव्हापासून आंतरदेशीय कंपन्यांमध्ये काम करायला लागलात, तेव्हा पासून तुम्हाला जास्त प्रवास करावा लागतो का ?

कामासाठी भारतात प्रवास: ☐ हो ☐ नाही
कामासाठी भारताबाहेर प्रवास: ☐ हो ☐ नाही
सुट्टीमध्ये भारतात प्रवास: ☐ हो ☐ नाही
सुट्टीमध्ये भारताबाहेर प्रवास: ☐ हो ☐ नाही

26) तुम्हाला जास्त मैत्रिणी ~~भारतील~~ तुमच्या कामाच्या ठिकाणी आहेत का बाहेर आहेत ?

☐ कामाच्या ठिकाणी
☐ कामाच्या ठिकाणाच्या बाहेर
☐ दोन्हीकडे
☐ मला माहित नाही

27) तुम्हाला आंतरदेशीय कंपन्यांचा स्त्रीयांच्या समस्यांवर काही परिणाम होत आहे किंवा नाही असे वाटते का ?

	नाही	थोडाफार	खूप	माहित नाही
a) भारतातील आंतरदेशीय कंपन्यांमध्ये	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) तुमच्या कंपनीत	☐	☐	☐	☐

a) साठी कारणे — . . . .

b) साठी कारणे — . . . .

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२८) खालील कोणत्या सोयी तुम्हाला तुमची कंपनी देते? एकापेक्षा जास्त उत्तरे तुम्ही देऊ शकता.

- ☐ पाळणाघर
- ☐ हेल्थ इंशुरन्स
- ☐ मानसशास्त्रज्ञ
- ☐ रिटायर झाल्या नंतर/पेन्शन
- ☐ गरोदर असताना काही सोयी

- ☐ ट्रीपा (ग्रुप मध्ये)
- ☐ कामगारांना बक्षीसे
- ☐ तणाव कमी करण्यासाठी (योग)
- ☐ इतर काही :.........

२९) समजा तुमच्या कंपनीने तुम्हाला वरील दिलेल्या (उदा : पाळणाघर) वगैरे सोयी दिल्या, पण तुमचा पगार आहे त्यापेक्षा कमी दिला तर तुम्हाला चालेल का?

☐ हो ☐ नाही ☐ मला माहित नाही

३०) नोकरीच्या ठिकाणाबाहेर तुम्हाला खालील कोणत्या गोष्टींकडे लक्ष द्यावे लागते?

- ☐ मुलांकडे
- ☐ स्वयंपाक
- ☐ स्वच्छता

- ☐ कपडे धुणे
- ☐ घरासाठी लागणाऱ्या गोष्टी विकत घेणे
- ☐ इतर :.....

३१) ही कामे करत असताना, तुम्हाला जर मदत होत असेल, तर ✓ करा.

	आजिबात नाही	थोडी	खूप
- नवरा/बायको	☐	☐	☐
- मुले	☐	☐	☐
- आई वडिल	☐	☐	☐
- घरातील इतर लोक	☐	☐	☐
- पैसे देऊन घेतलेली मदत	☐	☐	☐

३१] अजून काही जास्त माहिती तुम्हाला द्यायची असेल तर तुम्ही एका कोऱ्याकागदावर लिहून देऊ शकता : ....

तुमची माहिती

३२] तुम्ही कोण आहात : ☐ पुरूष का ☐ स्त्री

३३] तुमचे ~~वर~~ वय काय आहे =
☐ २० च्या खाली   ☐ २१-२५   ☐ २६-३०   ☐ ३१-३५   ☐ ३६-४०
☐ ४१-४५   ☐ ४६-५०   ☐ ५०+

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34) तुमच्या शिक्षणातील शेवटची उच्चपदवी कोणती आहे? :
. . . .

35] तुम्ही कोण आहात ?
☐ विबाहित   ☐ एकटी   ☐ डायव्होर्सी घेतलेली   ☐ विधवा

36] तुमच्या घरात किती लोक राहतात ? :_____
तुमचे त्यांच्याशी काय नाते आहे एकापेक्षा जास्त उत्तरे असू शकतील
☐ नवरा / बायको
☐ मुले
☐ आई- वडिल
☐ परिवारातील इतर सदस्य

३७] तुमचा धर्म कोणता आहे? : . . . .

३८] तुमचा जन्म कुठे झाला होता?

☐ मोठ्या गावात ☐ छोट्या गावात ☐ खेडेगावात

३९] आता तुम्ही कुठे राहता?

☐ मोठ्या गावात ☐ छोट्या गावात ☐ खेडेगावात

४०] तुम्ही आता जेथे राहता, तेथे रायचे कारण काय आहे? :

. . . .

४१] तुमच्या व्यवसायाचे वर्णन

☐ मार्केटिंग/विक्री

☐ कार्यालयीन

☐ कारकुनाचे काम

☐ उत्पादन क्षेत्रात

४२] ही नोकरी स्वीकारण्याच्या आधी तुम्ही दुसऱ्या कुठल्या आंतरदेशीय कंपनीमध्ये काम करत होता का?

☐ हो ☐ नाही

४३] तुम्ही आतापर्यंत किती वर्षे आंतरदेशीय कंपनीमध्ये काम करत आहात? —— वर्षे

Appendix E: Interview Guideline

Sophie Mattheus sophiemattheus@yahoo.com survey_india2007@yahoo.com	Name: Company: Position/ Years in position:	Date: Time: Recording:

THE IMPACT OF MULTI- AND TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS ON THE LIFE, SOCIAL ROLES AND SELF-PERCEPTION OF THEIR INDIAN FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Introduction
1 time planning/break
2 form of interview: questions, yet open: additional remarks, opinion; Don' hesitate to ask questions. If you cannot answer a question, we will proceed with the following one. The interview will be evaluated only by myself and you can be absolutely sure that your answers will not affect your career in any way!
3 voice recorder

4 * **Do you agree that your personal details will be published in my thesis?   yes   no**

5 * **Do you agree that your name is replaced by another one?   yes   no**

OPINION

There are many views on the equality of men and women in the working environment. Please respond to the following statements according to your strong agreement or disagreement and feel free to make additional remarks:	I strongly agree	I agree	I agree partially	I disagree	I strongly disagree
1) Men and women have equal rights in the working environment.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
2) Women experience equal treatment as men in the working environment.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
3) There is gender balance in decision-making. Women have the same influence in making decisions as their male colleagues holding the same position.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
4) The working hours between men and women are equal.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
5) Men and women holding the same position are equally paid.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					

	I strongly agree	I agree	I agree partially	I disagree	I strongly disagree
6) In the employment market in India men are preferentially hired compared to women.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
7) For any work-related issues, such as payment, uniform, or working hours, you feel comfortable approaching your supervisor or management.					
a) in India					
b) at Swarovski					
8) Women have to prove themselves and their qualifications, skills and knowledge more than men.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
9) Women have the same access to career advancements. Once more, consider if men have easier access to career advancements than women or vice versa.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
10) The social interaction between men and women and the working conditions are professional and pleasant.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					
11) Forms of discrimination, such as physical, mental, or sexual get in the way of equality at the workplace.					
I. in India: a) harassment against women					
b) harassment against men					
II. your company: a) harassment against women					
b) harassment against men					
12) If you experience discrimination or harassment, you could easily approach the management for help.					
a) in India					
b) at your company					

13) *Have you personally experienced any forms of discrimination and harassment at the workplace?*		
a) in India	**Yes**	**No**
b) at your company	**Yes**	**No**

14) **a) In general, which source of information do you use most? More than one answer is possible:**

Newspaper   Radio

Magazines   Internet

Books   Movies

Television

b) List the names of your two most important sources of information (for example, if television, the most watched TV channel):

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

c) Are the sources more: **National   or   International   or   Balanced?**

15) What are your main interests when using the checked sources in question 14a? Please check according to your interest:

	No Interest	Little Interest	Strong Interest
Health/ Personal fitness			
Current events/ Politics			
Entertainment			
Relationship matters			
Religion/ Spiritualism			
Work/ Profession			
Travelling			
Finance/ Investments			
Beauty/ Cosmetics			
Fashion			
Culture			

16) With regard to people working for a MNC, do you think there is an increase or decrease of using various means of communication (internet, media)?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

17) Which culture is promoted more at your current workplace? Indian or western? Please express by percentage:

Indian culture: ….   %

Western culture: ….   %

Other:……………. (Please indicate other culture if applicable):   ….   %

                                                                   100   **%**

18) What is the language of communication in the working environment? Please express by percentage:

      Hindi: ….   **%**
      English: ….   **%**
      Marathi: ….   **%**
      Other:……. (Please indicate other language/ dialect if applicable):   ….   **%**
                               100   **%**

19) What is the language of communication you use outside of work? Please express by percentage:

      Hindi: ….   **%**
      English: ….   **%**
      Marathi: ….   **%**
      Other:……. (Please indicate other language/ dialect if applicable):   ….   **%**
                               100   **%**

20) With regard to uniform, do you wear at work:

      More Indian clothes   **Western clothes**   **Both**

21) What do you wear outside of work:

      More Indian clothes   **Western clothes**   **Both**

22) Is there a reason why you work for a MNC and not an Indian company?
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

23) Do you spend your salary more on:

      Indian   or   Western goods   or   is it balanced?

   Is there a reason for your spending habit? If so, please note it down:
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

24) What do you like about multinational companies in comparison to Indian companies?
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

25) What don't you like about multinational companies in comparison to Indian companies?
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

26) a) Do you think that the MNCs are responsible for a 'cultural globalisation' or strong influence of western culture here in India?   **Yes**   **No**

   b) Do you have a strong interest in western culture?   **Yes**   **No**

27) With regard to the role of women, do MNCs bring a change in the conservative image or attitudes (men acting accordingly to Indian hierarchal system)?
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

28) a) Does your company spend money on research and development?
      Yes   **No**   **I don't know**

b) Do you think money is spent by your company on the support of women?:

        Yes   No   I don't know

29) Since you have been working with a multinational company, has there been an increase in your amount of travel?

Business related travels within India:	**Yes**	**No**
Business related travels abroad:	**Yes**	**No**
Vacations within India:	**Yes**	**No**
Vacations abroad:	**Yes**	**No**

30) If so, is this supported/ accepted by your family?

……

31) Do you have more friends within or outside your workplace?

        At work   Outside of work   Balanced   I don't know

32) Do you see multinational companies having an effect or not having an effect on the advancement of women's issues? Please give reasons for your answer.

	None	To some extent	Very Much	I don't know
a) Any Multinational Company in India				
b) your company				

Reasons for a) ……………..………………………………………………………………………

Reasons for b)…………………………………………………………………………………..

33) What benefits does your company offer? More than one answer is possible:

        Day care centre   Excursions (e.g. team training, group events)

        Health Care (Insurance)   Awards for employees (Best Employee of the Month)

        Psychologist   Anti-stress trainings (e.g. yoga course)

        Retirement/ Pensions   Other: (e.g. transportation)……………………

        Maternity benefits

34) Since you have been working for this MNC, has there been a change in your view of family planning? (marriage, amount of children, gender preference for baby)

……

35) Would you accept or would you not accept less of a salary if the extra money went to company facilities like a day care centre, or trainings that would benefit women etc.?:

        Yes   No   I don't know

36 a) Outside of your employment, what following obligations do you have at home:

        Child care   Laundry

        Cooking   Errands

        Cleaning   Others:…………………………………………..

36) b) If you receive help with these obligations, please mark the corresponding boxes.

	None	To some extent	Very Much
Husband/ Wife			
Children			
Parents			
Extended family			
Hired help			

37) ANY ADDITIONAL REMARKS

BIO INFO

38) Are you: **Male**   **or**   **Female?**

39) What is your age?:

    Below 20   **21-25**   **26-30**   **31-35**   **36-40**   **41-45**   **46-50**   **50+**

40) What is the highest level of your education?: ……………………………………

41) What is your marital status?: **Married** or   **Single** or   **Divorced** or   **Widowed?**

42) How many people live in your household?: …………
   And what is their relation to you? Multiple selections are possible: **Husband/ Wife**
                                                         Children
                                                         Parents
                                                         Extended family

43) What is your religion/ faith?: ………………………………

44) Where were you born?:   **Large city** or   **Small town** or   **Village**

45) Where are you living now?:   **Large city** or   **Small town** or   **Village**

46) What is the reason why you came to the place where you live now?:
    ……………………………………………………………………………………………

47) Job description: **Marketing / Sales**   **Administration**   **Clerical support (accounts, technical department, claims etc.)**   **Manufacturing**

48) Did you work for any other multinational companies before your present employment?:
    Yes   **No**

49) How many years total have you been employed at a multinational company?: ….Years