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International Women’s Day 2020: Gender Equality at Work?

Women (32%) Less Likely than Men (54%) to Say Canadian Workplaces Treat Men and Women Equally

Toronto, Ontario, March 6, 2020 — On the eve of International Women’s Day, a new global survey released by Ipsos finds that despite significant progress on gender equality, men and women have different views on how it applies to the workplace, including here in Canada. Findings cover more than 20,000 respondents from across 27 countries around the world.

Equal Treatment Not a Done Deal

The concept of equal treatment in the workplace is not seen as a done deal in Canada, with only 43% of Canadians agreeing that Canadian workplaces treat men and women equally – on par with 41% globally. In Canada, men (54%) are significantly more likely than women (32%) to hold this view.

Women tend to see equality being achieved through a rise in female leadership in business and government, but not all men agree. While Canada matches the global average (58%) on agreement that equality won’t be achieved unless there are more female leaders, women (68%) are significantly more aligned with this view than men (47%).

Seven in ten Canadians (71%), including most women (77%) and men (66%), think that equality won’t be achieved unless men also take action to support women’s rights – but some think that enough has been done already. Although only 36% of Canadians agree that ‘when it comes to giving women equal rights with men, things have gone far enough’, it is an opinion that is much more prevalent among men (44%) than women (29%).

Agreement with statements on gender equality in Canada

[CANADA]

	Agree (strongly/somewhat)		
	Women	Men	Gap
Women won’t achieve equality in Canada unless men take actions to support women’s rights too	77%	66%	11%
Women won’t achieve equality with men in Canada unless there are more female leaders in business and government	68%	47%	21%
Workplaces in Canada treat men and women equally	32%	54%	22%
When it comes to giving women equal rights with men, things have gone far enough in my country	29%	44%	15%

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What's Acceptable in the Workplace?

Broadly speaking, men and women in Canada have similar perceptions of which behaviours are appropriate for the workplace: a majority say compliments and hugging a colleague in distress are fine, very few think it's acceptable to keep pursuing a date or show sexually explicit material. However, there are vital gaps in opinion on specific behaviours.

For instance, women (86%) are more likely than men (76%) to find it acceptable to compliment someone of the same gender on their appearance or dress. Women (78%) are also more likely than men (68%) to find it acceptable to hug someone at work because they are crying. While only a minority of men agree that it's acceptable to ask a colleague for a date (40%), tell stories or jokes of a sexual nature (18%), or continue to ask for a date even when a colleague has said no (9%), they are nonetheless more likely to think so than women.

Compared to the global average, Canadians are *more* likely to find these workplace behaviours acceptable:

- Complimenting someone of the same gender: 81% agree it's acceptable, vs. 71% globally
- Complimenting someone of the opposite gender: 73% agree, vs. 67% globally

By contrast, Canadians are *less* likely to agree that the following are acceptable at work:

- Asking a colleague for a date: 34% agree it's acceptable, vs. 46% globally
- Continuing to ask for a date: 6% agree, vs. 12% globally
- Telling stories or jokes of a sexual nature: 14%, vs. 22% globally
- Showing or displaying material of a sexual nature: 6% agree, vs. 10% globally

In your view, how acceptable, if at all, is it to do the following in the workplace? [CANADA]

	Acceptable (Completely/Fairly)		
	Women	Men	Gap
Compliment someone of the <u>same</u> gender on their appearance or dress	86%	76%	10%
Hug someone because they are crying	78%	68%	10%
Compliment someone of the <u>opposite</u> gender on their appearance or dress	74%	72%	2%
Ask a colleague for a date	29%	40%	11%
Tell stories or jokes of a sexual nature	10%	18%	8%
Continue to ask a colleague for a date when they have said no before	4%	9%	5%
Show or display material of a sexual nature	4%	8%	4%

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Career Damage

Continuing with the workplace, the survey delves into a range of behaviours and asks whether they are more likely to be career-damaging for women or for men. Many Canadians find that women and men are equally likely to suffer career damage, especially when it comes to being unable or unwilling to work overtime. However, Canadians see all behaviours as being more likely to damage the career of a woman than a man. Behaviours perceived as most damaging to a woman's career include having childcare responsibilities during the day (38%), rejecting a colleague who wanted a date or a romantic relationship (36%), and prioritizing family over work (29%).

More likely to damage the career of...			
[CANADA]			
	A Woman	A Man	Both Equally
Having childcare responsibilities during the working day	38%	7%	29%
Rejecting a colleague who wanted a date or romantic relationship	36%	6%	24%
Prioritizing your family over work	29%	6%	35%
Being unable or unwilling to work beyond your contracted hours	19%	5%	51%
Talking about your family life	18%	3%	20%
Working part-time	15%	5%	25%
Being unable or unwilling to socialize with colleagues outside of working hours	15%	6%	33%
Working from home regularly	13%	5%	20%
Having different interests or hobbies to your colleagues	9%	4%	18%

These are behaviours that impact a significant number of Canadian women. Nearly four in ten (37%) say they've prioritized their family over work in the past five years, along with one in ten who have juggled childcare responsibilities during the working day (13%) or rejected a colleague who wanted a date or relationship (11%).

While men have also lived through all these experiences to one degree or another over the past five years, in most cases, it's women who report that it has harmed their career at least a little. In a clear indication that gender equality in the Canadian workplace still has some way to go, women are most likely to say their career was harmed as a result of their childcare and family needs, and an inability to work overtime (likely as a result of family commitments).

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And what impact, if any, has each of the following had on your career?		
<i>[Among those who have experienced workplace behaviour in past 5 years: CANADA]</i>		
	Acceptable (Completely/Fairly)	
	Women	Men
Having childcare responsibilities during the working day	49%	25%
Being unable or unwilling to work beyond your contracted hours	47%	28%
Prioritizing your family over work	45%	28%
Rejecting a colleague who wanted a date or romantic relationship	38%	8%
Being unable or unwilling to socialize with colleagues outside of working hours	30%	19%
Working part-time	26%	13%
Working from home regularly	15%	15%
Having different interests or hobbies to your colleagues	12%	8%
Talking about your family life	7%	7%

Calling It Out

The survey paints an encouraging portrait of Canadians' confidence to call out sexism and harassment where they see it, although confidence falters as the stakes get higher: it's easier to call out a family member than it is to call out your boss. Nonetheless, Canada outpaces the global average when it comes to being confident about:

- Telling off family or friends who make a sexist comment: 71% vs. 64% globally
- Telling off a junior colleague who makes a sexist comment: 65% vs. 58% globally
- Confronting a man who is harassing a woman in a public place: 64% vs. 56% globally
- Telling off a senior colleague who makes a sexist comment: 54% vs. 50% globally

Equally encouraging is the fact that most women in Canada express confidence in addressing many of these situations (just under half say they're confident about telling off a senior colleague) – yet here too, a notable gender gap is at play. Men are significantly more likely than women to feel confident confronting a man harassing a woman in public (72% vs. 55% of women), telling off a junior colleague (69% vs. 61%), or telling off someone more senior (60% vs. 48%). Only within their own circle of family and friends do women (71%) feel just as confident as men (71%) to tell someone off who makes a sexist comment.

And how confident, if at all, would you feel to do each of the following?			
<i>[CANADA]</i>			
	Confident		
	Women	Men	Gap
Tell off family or friends who make a sexist comment	71%	71%	0%
Tell off a junior colleague who makes a sexist comment	61%	69%	8%
Confront a man who is harassing a woman in a public place	55%	72%	17%
Tell off a senior colleague who makes a sexist comment	48%	60%	12%



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About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted in 27 countries via Global Advisor, the online survey platform of Ipsos, between January 24 and February 7, 2020. For this survey, Ipsos interviewed a total of 20,204 adults aged:

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

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

The data is weighted so each country's sample composition best reflects the demographic profile of its adult population according to the most recent census data, and to give each country an equal weight in the total "global" sample. Online surveys can be taken as representative of the general working-age population in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, and the United States. Online samples in other countries surveyed are more urban, more educated and/or more affluent than the general population and the results should be viewed as reflecting the views of a more "connected" population.

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

Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or not stated responses.



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ISIN code FR0000073298, Reuters ISOS.PA, Bloomberg IPS:FP

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