



FEASIBILITY STUDY: IDENTIFYING TRENDS IN DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE IN SOCIAL MEDIA



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PROGRAMME AREA: GENDER

SUMMARY

In collaboration with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Country Office for Indonesia, Pulse Lab Jakarta conducted a feasibility study to explore online data as a source of real-time signals of discrimination against women in the workplace. Keywords were used to filter public tweets related to discrimination, identifying four topics with significant volume of discussions (over 100,000 tweets over three years); discrimination in job requirements, permission for women to work, perceptions on appropriateness of different types of work for women, and the multiple burdens of working women. The study found that, using these keywords, signals were not strong enough in ILO's priority focus areas in Indonesia. Therefore, the tweets analyzed in the research did not lead to conclusive results. While most of the identified tweets corresponded to discriminatory job requirements, weak signals from messages coming from directly affected populations may imply that it is common for women workers to keep silent about their experience related to discrimination and violence in the workplace for various reasons including fear of losing the job and facing further discrimination.

BACKGROUND

In Indonesia, as is the case in many other countries, women continue to face discrimination in the world of work, including access to training and employment and terms and conditions of employment. Traditional ideas on what women and men should do persist and women continue to bear heavy and unequal care responsibilities, limiting their involvement in the labour market. Women's labour force participation rate has been around 50-53 per cent, while it has been 80-83 per cent for men in the past 10 years. The proportion of workers in vulnerable employment is higher for women compared to men including higher proportion of women as unpaid family workers, and women are 24 percent more likely to be working informally than men. Women generally earn less than men and the gender wage gap is 35 per cent.

Monitoring workplace discrimination can be challenging because both workers and employers seldom report incidents. Monitoring of public perceptions and discriminatory practices is traditionally conducted through surveys, which can be costly and time-consuming. New sources of digital data have the potential to provide new insights on a population's behavior in real-time, and can supplement existing monitoring and evaluation tools.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) promotes social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, and helps advance the creation of productive and decent work for all around the world. The ILO Country Office for Indonesia (CO-Jakarta), in close partnerships with the Government of Indonesia and employers' and workers' organizations, oversees programmes in

Indonesia and Timor-Leste, where employment issues are considered one of the priority development issues.

Pulse Lab Jakarta worked with the Government of Indonesia and the ILO CO- Jakarta to analyse online perceptions of workplace discrimination as a potential complement to traditional surveys.

HOW TO CITE THIS DOCUMENT:

UN Global Pulse, 'Feasibility Study: Identifying Trends in Discrimination Against Women in the Workplace In Social Media', Global Pulse Project Series no.11, 2014'.

MONITORING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

This project was designed as a feasibility study to test the existence and relevance of social media signals (in particular tweets) for real-time monitoring of workplace discrimination. Topics included:

1. **Permission to work:** There is a perception that women need the permission of their husbands or families to be able to engage in productive employment.
2. **Appropriateness of work:** Many women in Indonesia are constrained by the types of employment they are able to engage in, which varies at different ages and stages in their lives. E.g. some married men may prefer that their wives remain at home rather than working in the formal economy.
3. **The burdens of working women:** Having children and working can be especially challenging for women in Indonesia. Finding childcare can be difficult, and women with domestic duties may feel they do not have time to engage in employment.
4. **Discrimination in job requirements:** Some job recruiters explicitly request 'attractive' women or women of a specified height or weight, or request that only men apply in job vacancy advertisements.
5. **Lack of skills or education:** A lack of formal education or vocational skills, or inability to pay or enroll in education, can impact a woman's ability to work.
6. **Cost to access employment:** Some employers or recruiters require women to pay an 'informal' fee to obtain a job.
7. **Home-based workers:** Many home-based workers are vulnerable to exploitation, often without written contracts or standard working conditions or protections.
8. **Sexual harassment in the workplace:** Sexual harassment can be perpetuated against both women and men. However, the majority of cases of sexual harassment in the workplace are perpetuated by men against women as women often do not have equal status as men.

In order to extract relevant conversations from Twitter, a keyword taxonomy was developed for each topic in the Bahasa Indonesia language. Tweets containing words from the taxonomy were filtered, and then analysed for volume and content using a social data analytics platform called Crimson Hexagon.

Tweets from January 2010 to August 2013 were analysed to identify which topics provided sufficient volume of tweets to analyse further as potential signals of perceptions, opinions and incidents of discrimination.

INSIGHTS & OUTCOMES

The feasibility study found that four topics returned a sufficient number of relevant tweets for further exploration:

1. Permission to work (3K tweets)
2. Perceptions regarding the appropriateness of work (5K tweets)
3. The multiple burdens of working women (21K tweets)
4. Discrimination in job requirements (78K tweets)

Online signals were extracted from conversations about the need for women to have **permission to work** from husband and family members. Others talked about continuing to work after marriage.

BAHASA INDONESIA

Gw pernah jg loh diminta resign kerja sama suami. Dan gw nurut. Sampe akhirnya gw masuk kerja lagi pun atas ijin beliau.

ENGLISH

One time my husband asked me to resign my job, and I just follow his suggestion. After that I got a new job, also with his permission.

More than half of the tweets collected about **perceptions of the appropriateness of work** were relevant to this topic. For example, many public conversations included concerns about recently promoted research warning that long-term night shifts could put women at risk of cancer.

BAHASA INDONESIA

Waduh, jgn smpe, Wanita Kerja Malam, Rawan Kanker Rahim!!!

ENGLISH

Oh please don't let me get this! Women doing night shift work are at high risk of cervical cancer!!!

There were many conversations relevant to the multiple **burdens of working women** such as caring for children and other domestic responsibilities. For example, discussions expressing concerns about the double standards of women who work were identified, as well as a widely shared questionnaire asking people about their preference for a 'career woman' versus 'housewife.' There was a mix of differing opinions in responses to the questionnaire, some women noting they could juggle both career and family.

BAHASA INDONESIA

Pilih mana Perempuan Karir Ibu Rumah Tangga

ENGLISH

Which one you choose, career woman or housewife?

The topic of **discriminatory job requirements**, which included physical attributes, the obligation or interdiction to wear a jihab, and gender was also widely discussed. Most of the tweets extracted announced job postings rather than expressing public opinion. A more detailed definition and keyword taxonomy of what is considered to be discriminatory in the specific context of job requirements would be needed for more comprehensive analysis of the conversations within this topic.

BAHASA INDONESIA

LOWONGAN KERJA #Bag. Kasir. syarat : 1. Perempuan 2. Menarik 3. Pendidikan min. SMEA / SMA 4. Umur max. 23.

ENGLISH

Job vacancy: Receptionist position, Requirements: 1. Woman, 2. Attractive, 3. Min. Education High School, 4. Max Age 23.

IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Four of the analysed topics about gender discrimination should be investigated further- in particular messages related to discriminatory job requirements and about the conciliation of work and family for women. A more detailed subtopic classification and extension to other social media platforms that might be appropriate.
- The study showed increasing volumes of relevant online conversations over the three years of data analysed, which reveals opportunity for further research as greater volumes of social media data become available for exploration.
- Appropriate mechanisms at workplace should be established to address gender discrimination and violence at workplace. Monitoring cases might be complemented by digital tools.

CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrated that social media could provide real-time information related to discrimination against women for certain topics in the Indonesian workplace.

Four topics could be further analysed as a supplemental source of insights about discrimination. In particular a large number of messages about discriminatory job requirements needs further exploration. The study found that social media was not well developed as a source of information on the other four topics.

The study also noted an increasing volume of relevant tweets over time. As of December 2010, there were only 17 tweets (0.002% of the total) related to workplace discrimination against women in Indonesia. By 2013 the number of relevant public tweets exceeded 10,000 per month, revealing a dramatic increase in public engagement on social media.

Ultimately, this feasibility study showed the possibility of using social media for real-time information related to public concerns and opinions, which could be integrated into existing methods of monitoring and evaluation.

REFERENCES:

Identifying trends around workplace discrimination using social media (2014) UN Global Pulse. <http://www.unglobalpulse.org/workplace-discrimination-indonesia>. ILO Indonesia: About the Office (2014) ILO. <http://www.ilo.org/jakarta/aboutus/lang-en/index.htm>