

HOW BIAS DECIDES WHO IS SEEN AND WHO IS IGNORED

HONESTLY BIASED

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all those who have walked through the shadows of bias, both visible and invisible, and to those who have dared to question the silent assumptions that shape the world around us. It is offered as a gesture of recognition, a voice for the unheard, and a tribute to the courage that endures in the face of prejudice.

To the families who carry within them both the comfort of belonging and the struggles of misunderstanding, this book is for you. For every child who has grown up under the weight of comparisons, judgments, or favouritism within their own home, may these words remind you that love and fairness are not privileges but rights that every soul deserves. To the parents who strive to rise above the biases inherited from past generations, who labour daily to instil empathy, patience, and compassion into their children's hearts, may this book honour your commitment. Families, though often the first places where bias is learned, can also be the first spaces where healing begins. This dedication belongs to you, for you carry the responsibility of shaping tomorrow's minds.

To the professionals across the globe who rise each day to enter workplaces that are sometimes unfair, this book is for you. To the women and men who have been overlooked for promotions not because of their capabilities but because of their gender, ethnicity, or background, we dedicate these

pages to your strength. To those who have been underestimated because of accents, appearances, or unconventional paths, may this book serve as a reminder that your worth cannot be measured by the prejudice of others. And to the leaders who consciously work against these inequities, who dare to challenge bias even when it is subtle and systemic, this book is also for you. Progress is not built on silence but on the courage to question.

To the strangers who meet each other every day—on buses, in marketplaces, in classrooms, and in public squares—this book is for you. Each encounter carries within it the possibility of openness or the risk of prejudice. For every individual who has been misjudged at first glance, who has felt the sting of assumptions based solely on clothing, speech, or skin, may this work stand as a quiet acknowledgment of your pain. And to those who have chosen kindness instead of suspicion, curiosity instead of judgment, and friendship instead of fear, we dedicate this book to you. For every bond formed across lines of difference, humanity becomes stronger, richer, and wiser.

To the poor and marginalized, who live at the edges of society and yet hold within themselves a resilience the world often fails to notice, this book is especially for you. Bias and poverty often walk hand in hand, each feeding the other in cycles that seem impossible to escape. To the families who are denied opportunities because of where they were born, to the children who walk long miles to access education, to the

workers whose labour is undervalued and whose dignity is too often overlooked, we dedicate this work to your silent endurance. May your struggles not be forgotten, and may the stories of bias remind the privileged that equality is not charity but justice long overdue.

To the innovators, thinkers, and dreamers who work with technology, this book is also for you. We live in an age where machines and algorithms shape our choices and perceptions, yet even here, human biases echo. To those who seek to design with fairness, who labour to create systems that serve all people equally, this book honours your effort. To those harmed by technologies that amplify stereotypes, may these words stand as recognition of your experiences and as a call for accountability. Technology has the power to either deepen injustice or expand justice, and this book is dedicated to the hope that the latter will prevail.

To every culture and tradition across the globe, this book is dedicated to you as well. Culture is the lens through which we see the world, but it is also the filter through which bias is often justified. To the communities that hold tightly to their traditions while still embracing others with respect, this book is in your honour. To the cultures that have been misunderstood, mocked, or diminished by others, may these words validate your worth and beauty. And to those who have dared to challenge oppressive traditions within their own societies, who have struggled to balance heritage with humanity, this dedication belongs to you.

Above all, this book is dedicated to humanity itself—to our contradictions, our struggles, and our potential. Bias is not an enemy outside of us; it is something we all carry within. We are each capable of prejudice, but equally capable of rising above it. To the dreamers who imagine a world where empathy replaces suspicion, where understanding silences hatred, and where justice is not a distant hope but a lived reality, this book belongs to you.

And to the readers who now hold this book in your hands, we dedicate it to you as well. May you not only recognize bias in the world around you but also within yourself. May these chapters encourage reflection, spark dialogue, and nurture compassion. And may you leave these pages not just informed but inspired to act with fairness in your daily lives.

This dedication is not only for individuals but for generations. It is for the ancestors who endured injustice yet passed down resilience. It is for the present, where the struggles of bias are real and urgent. And it is for the future, where perhaps our children's children may inherit a world less bound by prejudice.

So let this dedication extend across time and space—to the past, to the present, and to the future. Let it be a gesture of solidarity, a promise that the stories of bias will not be silenced, and a reminder that every act of fairness, however small, is a victory for humanity.

To all who have been judged unfairly, to all who have risen despite it, and to all who dream of a fairer world, this book is yours.

Preface

Bias is not a modern invention, nor is it something that belongs to a single culture, people, or era. It is as old as humanity itself, woven into the very fabric of how we think, feel, and act. Every society, no matter how advanced, carries its own layers of prejudice. Every individual, no matter how self-aware, harbours assumptions they may not even realize they hold. Bias is both deeply personal and universally shared, sometimes subtle, sometimes glaring. It influences how we see our families, how we relate to colleagues, how we greet strangers, and even how we understand entire communities we may never meet. It shapes the institutions that structure our opportunities, the technologies we use daily, and the cultural narratives that define belonging. This constant presence of bias is what gave rise to the creation of this book.

The purpose here is not to condemn bias outright or to suggest that humanity can ever be free of it. To be human is to categorize, to interpret, and to rely on memory and experience to navigate the present. Bias, in its simplest form, is a survival mechanism. Our ancestors depended on quick judgments to decide between safety and danger, friend and foe, nourishment and poison. Without some form of bias, survival itself would have been impossible. Yet what once ensured survival now often distorts reality and perpetuates

injustice. The same instinct that once helped protect life now divides it—confining individuals and communities within assumptions that deny potential and limit freedom.

This book was created to explore bias in its many forms and to reveal how deeply it permeates everyday life. Too often, discussions of prejudice are confined to the most visible and widely recognized issues such as racism or sexism. While these are undeniably crucial, bias stretches far beyond them. It is present in the way families raise children, in the recruitment practices of organizations, in the fleeting judgments made when meeting new people, and in the ways, societies treat the poor. It is built into the very technologies we depend on and embedded within cultural traditions that go unquestioned. By widening the lens, this book invites readers to see how prejudice is not only external but deeply internal—part of the ways we think about others and ourselves.

In recent years, the urgency of this topic has only intensified. We live in an age where the world feels both more connected and more divided than ever before. Globalization and technology have shrunk distances but amplified differences. The speed of communication has often outpaced the depth of reflection. Instead of bringing greater understanding, the rise of digital platforms has hardened biases into echo chambers. People increasingly hear only the voices that confirm their assumptions, while other perspectives are dismissed or vilified. This polarization

compels us to ask difficult but necessary questions: What kind of societies are we building? Are we allowing prejudice to grow stronger, or are we willing to imagine something beyond it?

Bias, however, is not simply about how we see others. It also shapes how we see ourselves. Within families, unconscious favouritism may lead one child to feel perpetually overshadowed, while another grows accustomed to privilege. In workplaces, individuals may undervalue their contributions because they have internalized social prejudices about gender, race, class, or background. Poverty is not only perpetuated by external structures but also by the internalized belief among the poor that they are less deserving. Bias, then, operates on two levels: outwardly, in our judgments of others, and inwardly, in the way we measure ourselves. Recognizing this duality is vital to loosening its grip.

The structure of this book reflects this layered reality. We begin with the family, the first institution any human encounters. It is within households that the earliest biases are absorbed—through language, parental expectations, and treatment among siblings. From there, the discussion moves into professional environments, where biases influence careers, opportunities, and financial security. The next chapter explores encounters with strangers—those ordinary moments where stereotypes surface instantly in first impressions. From personal interactions, the book turns to

poverty, showing how economic exclusion is both shaped by and reinforces prejudice. Technology follows, highlighting the biases coded into algorithms and digital tools. Finally, the book widens to culture itself—the overarching web of stories, traditions, and identities that define what societies consider normal or deviant, superior or inferior.

Each chapter stands as a piece of a larger puzzle. Bias within families influences professional opportunities; workplace prejudice reinforces economic inequality; poverty feeds cultural stereotypes; technology amplifies them all. The chapters weave together to form a portrait of bias not as isolated incidents but as an interconnected system. By tracing these links, the book offers a holistic understanding of how prejudice operates, both personally and collectively.

This is not intended as a book of statistics or a manual of ready-made solutions. While facts and examples inform the discussion, the goal is not to present bias as something that can be “fixed” with a checklist. Rather, this is a reflective exploration meant to raise awareness and inspire self-questioning. The hope is that readers emerge not with all the answers, but with a deeper recognition of their own assumptions and the ways those assumptions shape the world around them. Awareness is the first step toward meaningful change. A society willing to confront its biases honestly is a society capable of growth.

Writing about bias means confronting vulnerability. It is not easy to examine prejudices, especially those linked to

identity, tradition, or experience. Readers may find themselves unsettled, seeing their own tendencies mirrored in these pages. This discomfort is intentional. It is not meant as condemnation but as invitation. To acknowledge bias is not to admit failure; it is to embrace growth. Recognizing prejudice is already a step beyond denial, and a society willing to take that step is already on the road to transformation.

The language chosen throughout this book avoids simplistic categories of “good” and “bad” people. Instead, it frames bias as part of human nature, shaped by history, culture, and circumstance. All of us are capable of prejudice, just as all of us are capable of fairness. Oversimplification risks moralizing, while nuance allows for reflection. By approaching the subject with subtlety, the book aims to encourage honesty rather than defensiveness.

It is also important to acknowledge that bias manifests differently across cultures. What one society recognizes as prejudice may be normalized elsewhere. Gender expectations, attitudes toward age, or assumptions about class vary widely across contexts. The intention is not to judge cultures against each other but to highlight the universality of bias, even when its forms differ. No culture is immune, even if the expressions of prejudice vary. This universality is one of the strongest reasons to study bias: it serves as a mirror, reflecting both humanity’s flaws and possibilities.

The motivation behind this book is both personal and collective. Many of us have witnessed or experienced bias—in our families, in schools, in workplaces, and in chance encounters with strangers. These experiences provoke deep questions: Why do people treat others differently for reasons beyond their control? Why do societies, despite centuries of progress, continue to perpetuate inequalities? Why do those who suffer prejudice in one sphere sometimes reproduce it in another? These questions grew more urgent as divisions around the world became more visible. Writing this book became a way to wrestle with these questions—not with the expectation of solving them, but with the hope of deepening understanding.

This book does not claim neutrality, for no such position exists. Every perspective is shaped by experience, context, and values. What we seek here, however, is humility and openness. Readers may find themselves in agreement at times and in disagreement at others. Both responses are welcome, because the aim is not uniformity but engagement. The goal is dialogue—between the reader and the text, and between the reader and themselves.

Bias is not an abstract theory; it is lived reality. It is felt in the child overshadowed by favouritism, the worker overlooked for promotion, the stranger judged by accent, the student denied education due to poverty, the woman misrecognized by an algorithm, the community stereotyped by outsiders. These are not random misfortunes but

recurring patterns. They are evidence of the deeper structures that shape perception. By gathering these patterns into one narrative, this book shows that bias is not “out there” but “in here”—in our homes, workplaces, societies, technologies, and cultures.

As readers step into the following chapters, we invite them to approach the subject with curiosity rather than defensiveness, with empathy rather than judgment. Reading about bias is not only an encounter with ideas but also with the self. It asks: Where do we see ourselves in this? What assumptions do we hold? How have we been shaped by prejudice, and how might we unknowingly perpetuate it? These are difficult questions, but they are the questions that open the door to change.

Ultimately, this book is not about bias as an obstacle alone but also as an opportunity. Prejudice may be universal, but so too is the human capacity for compassion. Every act of awareness, every moment of fairness, every choice of empathy becomes a quiet revolution against the weight of prejudice. If this book can nurture even a small step toward such awareness, it will have served its purpose. Bias may divide us, but compassion can bring us back together. It is this hope—that understanding can lead to empathy, and empathy to transformation—that underlies every page of what follows.

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Introduction

Biasedness is the tendency to Favor, lean toward, or hold prejudice against a person, idea, or thing in a manner that is typically unjust, partial, or lacking objectivity. It can subtly shape how individuals think, interpret, or behave, often without conscious awareness, resulting in misaligned or distorted conclusions. Bias is a process which develops in a short period of time, for instance, infants quickly develop a preference for individuals from groups they recognize. A baby may Favor a face that resembles the gender or ethnicity of their primary caregiver. Remarkably, even within hours of birth, newborns prefer hearing a language they were exposed to in the womb over an unfamiliar one. (Lai & Wilkins)

In this book we will try to explore why human beings are biased towards certain belief or opinion and go against certain other beliefs and opinions. We will also explore how biasedness prevails in various domains of our lives which is our unconscious mind playing a role in it, as per face value we humans tend to think that we are not biased and our judgements are very accurate but, in this book, we would argue and show how different biases work in different aspects of life how it impacts human life for good and bad both

The science behind biasedness

Neurobiology

The neurobiology of bias explores how the brain's structures and functions contribute to the development, reinforcement, and expression of biases. These biases often operate unconsciously, shaped by the interplay of emotional, cognitive, and social processes. Specific regions of the brain play critical roles in bias formation and expression, influencing how individuals perceive and respond to others.

The amygdala is central to the emotional processing of bias, particularly in detecting threats or unfamiliar stimuli. This part of the brain is highly responsive to situations that evoke fear or discomfort, such as encountering individuals from unfamiliar groups. Research has shown that the amygdala is activated when individuals view members of perceived "out-groups," even if they consciously reject prejudice (Amodio, 2014). This reaction is thought to have evolutionary roots, where recognizing and responding to potential threats was crucial for survival.

Counterbalancing the automatic responses of the amygdala is the prefrontal cortex (PFC), which governs higher-order thinking and self-regulation. The PFC allows individuals to override instinctual biases through conscious reflection and empathy. For instance, the dorsolateral and ventromedial regions of the PFC enable people to analyse and question stereotypes, helping align behaviour with personal values and social norms. Studies indicate that greater activation in the PFC is associated with reduced expression of implicit biases (Kubota et al., 2012).

However, when the PFC is impaired or underdeveloped, biases are more likely to manifest in behaviour.

Another critical region is the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC), which detects conflicts between automatic biases and conscious beliefs. The ACC helps individuals recognize when their instinctive responses clash with their values or intentions, triggering corrective actions. This function is vital for fostering self-awareness and promoting behaviour that aligns with egalitarian ideals (Botvinick et al., 2004).

Memory also plays a crucial role in bias formation, with the hippocampus storing associations from past experiences. These associations, whether positive or negative, shape future perceptions and behaviours. For example, repeated exposure to stereotypes in media or personal interactions can solidify biased attitudes. However, the hippocampus also supports the brain's neuroplasticity, enabling individuals to unlearn biases and form new, more inclusive associations through positive interactions and education (Phelps et al., 2000).

At a fundamental level, bias stems from evolutionary mechanisms designed to ensure survival. Humans are predisposed to favour "in-group" members—those who share similar characteristics—while being cautious or distrustful of "out-group" individuals. This survival strategy, while beneficial in ancient environments, has led to persistent social divisions in modern society. Moreover, the brain's mirror neurons, responsible for empathy and social bonding, tend

to activate more strongly for in-group members, further reinforcing group-based biases (Iacoboni, 2008).

The brain's ability to change, known as neuroplasticity, offers hope for reducing biases. Positive interactions with diverse groups, mindfulness practices, and educational interventions can rewire neural pathways, foster inclusivity and reducing automatic prejudices. Functional imaging studies, such as fMRI and EEG, have been instrumental in uncovering these processes, revealing how interventions can alter brain activity associated with bias (Amodio & Devine, 2006).

The study of the neurobiology of bias not only enhances our understanding of how biases form but also provides a foundation for developing strategies to mitigate their effects. By leveraging insights from neuroscience, we can create interventions that promote fairness, empathy, and social cohesion, ultimately contributing to a more equitable society.

Apart from Neurology biases are deeply ingrained psychological and social phenomena, shaped by evolutionary, cognitive, and environmental factors. While neurobiology offers insights into the brain's role in bias formation, a broader scientific perspective encompasses evolutionary theories, cognitive mechanisms, and sociocultural influences. These elements interact to form the biases that influence individual behaviour and societal structures.

From an evolutionary perspective, biases have adaptive origins, enabling humans to navigate complex social environments efficiently. Early humans relied on in-group favouritism and out-group caution for survival. These instincts were critical in identifying allies and threats, as well as allocating resources within groups (Cosmides & Tooby, 1992). In-group favouritism fosters cooperation and strengthens social bonds, while out-group bias often manifests as distrust or prejudice against those perceived as different. Though these biases were beneficial in ancestral environments, they persist in modern society, often in ways that reinforce discrimination and inequality.

Cognitive science provides a detailed explanation of the mechanisms underlying bias. One key concept is heuristics, mental shortcuts that simplify decision-making. These shortcuts, while efficient, often lead to systematic errors or biases in judgment. For example, the availability heuristic causes individuals to overestimate the likelihood of events based on how easily they can recall similar occurrences, which may lead to stereotyping (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). Similarly, the representativeness heuristic leads people to judge others based on how closely they match a mental prototype, reinforcing categorical thinking and stereotypes.

Another significant cognitive mechanism is implicit associations, which form through repeated exposure to cultural norms and societal messages. These associations

operate unconsciously, linking certain groups with traits or stereotypes. Implicit biases are measured using tools such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which highlights how quickly individuals associate positive or negative concepts with different groups (Greenwald et al., 1998). Implicit biases are not necessarily aligned with conscious beliefs, underscoring the dual nature of cognition: the automatic and controlled processes.

The role of memory also contributes to the formation and perpetuation of biases. Memory consolidation and retrieval are influenced by previous experiences and emotional states. People are more likely to recall information that confirms their existing beliefs, a phenomenon known as confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998). This selective attention reinforces stereotypes and makes it challenging to integrate new, contradictory information.

From a sociocultural perspective, biases are shaped by the environments in which individuals live. Cultural narratives, media representations, and institutional structures perpetuate stereotypes and normalize discriminatory behaviour. Social learning theory posits that individuals acquire biases through observation and imitation of role models, such as parents, teachers, and peers (Bandura, 1977). For instance, children exposed to biased attitudes or media portrayals of certain groups are more likely to internalize these biases, which can persist into adulthood.

The self-concept and social identity theory further explain the psychological foundation of biases. According to social identity theory, individuals derive a sense of self-worth and identity from their group memberships (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This identification fosters in-group favouritism, where individuals view their own group more positively, while out-groups are often devalued. This dynamic is particularly evident in intergroup conflicts, where bias serves to protect the in-group's status and resources.

In addition to individual biases, science also addresses systemic or institutional biases. These biases arise when societal structures and norms perpetuate unequal treatment of certain groups. Institutional biases are often invisible and unintentional but have far-reaching effects, such as disparities in education, healthcare, and employment opportunities (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). The science of bias examines these structures and seeks ways to create more equitable systems.

Finally, the concept of behavioural reinforcement plays a role in maintaining biases. When biased behaviour leads to positive outcomes, such as social approval or resource acquisition, it is likely to be reinforced. This principle is rooted in operant conditioning, where rewards and punishments shape behaviour (Skinner, 1953). For example, an individual who receives social validation for expressing a stereotype may be more likely to repeat such behaviour.

The scientific study of bias beyond neurobiology underscores its multifaceted nature. Bias is not solely a product of brain activity but also the result of evolutionary imperatives, cognitive processes, and sociocultural influences. Understanding these layers of bias is essential for developing strategies to address its impacts on individuals and societies.

The Psychology behind biasedness

Biases, both explicit and implicit, are deeply rooted in human psychology and emerge as a result of cognitive, emotional, and social processes. They serve as mental shortcuts that help individuals navigate the overwhelming amount of information in their environments. While these shortcuts, or heuristics, are often efficient, they can lead to errors in judgment and unfair treatment of others. Understanding the psychological underpinnings of biases provides insights into their origins, persistence, and ways to mitigate their impact.

At the core of biases lies the brain's need to categorize information. Humans have an innate tendency to group individuals, objects, and situations into categories to simplify decision-making. This process, known as social categorization, occurs automatically and allows the brain to process vast amounts of social information quickly (Tajfel, 1981). However, this efficiency comes at a cost, as it often leads to overgeneralizations, such as stereotypes, which are fixed beliefs about the characteristics of a group. For

instance, stereotypes about gender or race can influence how individuals perceive others, often without conscious awareness (Devine, 1989).

Implicit biases, in particular, operate on an unconscious level and are shaped by cultural and environmental influences. They are formed through repeated exposure to societal norms and stereotypes and can persist even when individuals consciously reject prejudice. These biases are typically measured using indirect methods, such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which reveals the automatic associations people make between certain groups and traits (Greenwald et al., 1998). The psychological mechanism behind implicit bias lies in associative learning, where repeated pairings of concepts (e.g., certain groups with negative traits) create strong mental connections that influence behaviour.

Emotion plays a significant role in the psychology of biases. Negative emotions such as fear and anger are particularly potent in reinforcing biases. For example, intergroup bias, which refers to the preference for one's in-group over out-groups, is often driven by fear or mistrust of the unfamiliar. This fear response is heightened during situations of uncertainty or perceived threat, leading individuals to rely more heavily on stereotypes and prejudices to make quick judgments (Fiske et al., 2002). Similarly, emotions like guilt or shame can be associated with attempts to suppress biases, creating internal conflict and cognitive

dissonance when an individual's actions or thoughts contradict their values (Festinger, 1957).

The development of biases is influenced significantly by socialization. From a young age, individuals absorb societal norms, values, and stereotypes through observation and interaction. Parents, peers, media, and cultural narratives play a pivotal role in shaping these attitudes. For example, children often mirror the biases expressed by their caregivers or depicted in media portrayals, internalizing them as part of their worldview (Bandura, 1977). Social identity theory further explains how individuals derive self-esteem and a sense of belonging from their group memberships, often leading to favouritism toward in-group members and discrimination against out-group members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Another critical psychological concept underlying bias is confirmation bias, which refers to the tendency to seek out, interpret, and remember information that confirms existing beliefs while ignoring evidence that contradicts them (Nickerson, 1998). This bias reinforces stereotypes and prejudices, making it difficult for individuals to challenge their preconceived notions. For instance, if someone believes that a particular group is less competent, they may selectively notice instances that support this belief while overlooking counterexamples.

Biases also persist due to the psychological principle of cognitive dissonance, which occurs when individuals

experience discomfort from holding conflicting beliefs or behaving in ways that contradict their values. To resolve this discomfort, individuals may rationalize their biased behaviour or adjust their beliefs to align with their actions. This mechanism explains why people may continue to justify prejudiced attitudes even when confronted with evidence to the contrary (Festinger, 1957).

Reducing biases requires deliberate psychological effort and strategies. Interventions such as perspective-taking, where individuals attempt to understand the experiences of others, have been shown to reduce biases by increasing empathy and reducing reliance on stereotypes (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). Similarly, contact theory posits that meaningful interactions with members of different groups can break down prejudices and foster positive attitudes (Allport, 1954). However, the effectiveness of such interventions depends on the quality of contact, mutual respect, and shared goals.

Understanding the psychology of biases is critical for addressing their impact on individuals and society. By recognizing how biases form and persist, researchers and practitioners can develop evidence-based strategies to mitigate their effects, promoting fairness, equity, and social harmony.

Let us dive deeper into How biasedness works in real life scenarios.

Chapter 1:

Family

The family as an institution is a fundamental unit of society that plays a crucial role in shaping individuals, cultures, and civilizations. It is often viewed as the primary context for socialization, emotional support, and value transmission. Biases inside a family is very complex and difficult because of the emotional dynamics and the cultural factors involved in a family. Let us try to simplify it and understand how subtle biases work in a family set up, I took the help of surveys here to simplify it and understand it, so we put a question to the mothers in different families who has a minimum of two children

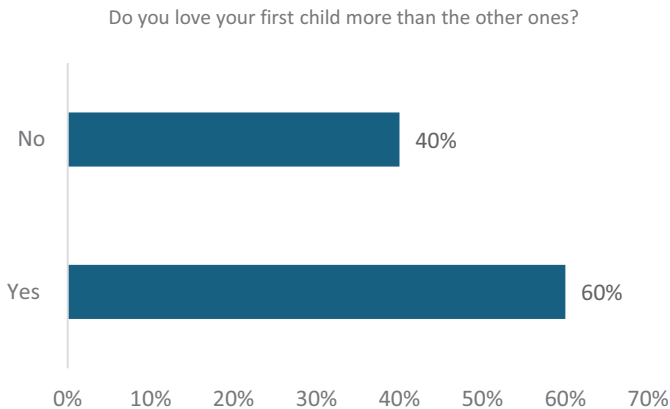


Chart 1.1

As you can see we asked the mothers in the families whether they loved their first child more than the others, 60 percent of them said Yes as they loved their first child more than the others and 40 percent of the mothers said No. We tried to find why such things happen that a whopping 60 percent love their first child more because mothers are often perceived to have a special bond with their first child, stemming from the unique emotional and psychological experiences associated with first-time motherhood. The arrival of the firstborn marks a profound life transition, filled with memorable "firsts" such as first smiles, steps, and words, which leave an indelible mark on a mother's heart. This child often receives undivided attention before siblings arrive, creating a deep early bond. Societal and cultural expectations may also amplify this dynamic, as the firstborn is often viewed as a symbol of responsibility or achievement. Additionally, from an evolutionary perspective, some theories suggest parents may naturally invest more in their first child to ensure genetic survival. Also, psychology plays an important role here, the psychological context behind a mother's perceived stronger bond with her first child is rooted in emotional, cognitive, and cultural factors. The firstborn often marks a profound life transition, making the experience of first-time motherhood novel and emotionally intense. Attachment theory explains how this child becomes the focal point of a mother's caregiving and emotional energy, creating a unique bond. Evolutionary psychology also suggests an unconscious prioritization of the firstborn to ensure genetic

survival, while cognitive psychology highlights the salience of “firsts,” making these experiences more vivid and memorable. Culturally, societal narratives often emphasize the importance of the firstborn, reinforcing a mother’s perception of their special role. Additionally, the first child often receives undivided attention and serves as a partner in the mother’s learning curve, anchoring memories of personal growth and identity. While these dynamics may influence the depth of the bond, they do not diminish a mother’s love for subsequent children, as her affection evolves uniquely for each child.

Biasedness in a family is not necessarily limited to a mother and their first son but biasedness can happen across family members. This can be proved more in a joint family set up as nuclear families has few members therefore less scope of biasedness but in a joint family with more members biasedness can take place and it can be said that family politics also plays a role in increasing the concept of biasedness in a joint family.

When we talk about a joint family mostly in Indian context, the male head of the family in majority cases take decisions mostly in consultation with other male members of the family and sometimes in an autocratic way where the head of the family takes all the decisions with minimum consultation with other family members, we can compare a joint family unit to a state, where head of the state takes decision as compared to a head of the joint family taking

decision. As we compare, the family members in a state are all the population of the state and the cabinet ministers can be compared to all the elder members of the family with limited female members

Now when it comes to biasedness in a joint family structure the decisions taken by the family head could be of interest to all family members but in most cases it can be of interest to only few family members, same happens with a state that a decision could be of interest to majority of the population or only a minority of the population, since our writings will be limited to a joint family here we will not elaborate more on the state. Coming back to our joint family set up the decision of the head of the family can be biased towards those elder members who the head of the family is more close to, it could be for example out of sheer love for a younger family member as in an Indian joint family context the younger family member get less responsibilities of the family and more privileges for being the youngest one or for any other member whom the head of the family's interest matches, we have to go more deeper on this how the family head decisions could be biased and sometimes not depending on the culture of the particular joint family. Let's take a situation for example in a joint family two family members reaches the head of the joint family for financial help, one member wanted to buy a road side plot of land for business purpose and the other family member who is the youngest family member who ask the same amount of money for higher studies abroad to study arts, the head of the family now has

to take a decision on this case, on one side there is a clear rational choice where one member wants to buy a plot of land for business which could bring in more revenue to the family treasury and on the other hand the youngest member wanting to study arts abroad which has limited scope of earning higher income, now whose side would the head of the family take? Now if the head of the family takes a decision in favour of the youngest member, we can argue that his decision is biased towards the youngest member of the family as the decision is not rational but has been taken due to other consideration such as love or other factors. Rationality do play a role in keeping a decision unbiased, here in a joint family set up we can also argue about the role of the informer who fills the ears of the decision maker with his own views about the family members, the informer in the joint family can up to an extent influence the decisions of the family taken by the head of the family, the informer may have his own biasedness and this gets reflected in the way he put all the information to the family head now since the informer itself could be biased the decision taken by the head of the family can also turn biased, so it is not just the biasedness of the head of the family but it is also about the biasedness of the informer. The decision maker has to be careful with his own biasedness as well as the biasedness of the informer in order to take a rational decision.

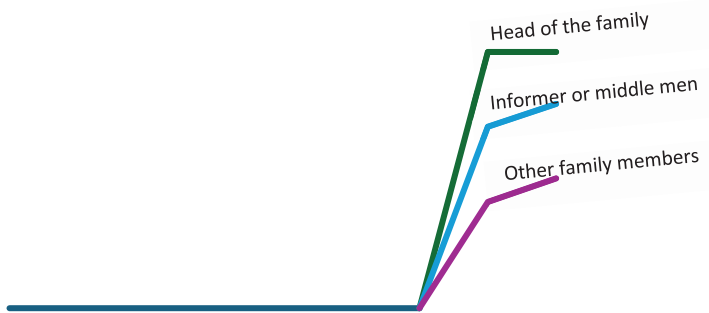


Chart 1.2

So, if we put the role of everyone in a joint family in a chart which is Chart 1.2, the information flow happens from the down to the head of the family through the informer or middle men or sometimes directly, in this case we have considered where information flow happens from the bottom of the family members to the top via an informer or a middle man which is usually played by a family member itself. So the decision maker needs to be extra careful while deciding on family members and we can argue that in most cases a hint of biasedness exist and this can be eliminated only when the decision maker takes an informed perspective based on facts and data rather than on human emotions, but saying so since it's a family the emotional factor cannot be ruled out and whenever the emotional factor comes in the probability of biasedness increases.

Continuing with the examples or situations of biasedness in a joint family we have come to an interesting

subject and that is about marriages. Biasedness kicks in when marriages happen and in Indian culture marriage is not about just boy and the girl but about the two families. For elaborating this more let's take one joint family as family A and the other joint family as family B. In this book we are talking about marriages in the rural and semi urban areas where eighty percent of the Indian population stays. Tier 1 cities in India tend to have a more different culture when it comes to marriages as Tier 1 cities are more cosmopolitan and not rigid. Now when marriages take place between two joint families A and B, love marriages are discouraged so we will not consider love marriage here and only take arranged marriages. When a boy from family A plans to marry a girl from family B, both the families usually get together to discuss and here too the information flow about the prospective bride is taken from a middle man whose job is to look at the birth charts of the boy and the girl and also mediate discussions, when the family A meets family B and see the girl, the first biasedness kicks in if the girl is not wearing a traditional outfit such as saree and instead wearing a western style cloth, In lot of cases if family A see's the girl in western attire the marriage is outrightly rejected in the first meeting itself, biasedness happens when the girl is judged solely on the basis of clothes because sometimes what we see can be deceptive and not the true character of a person. In the same way if the boy is not into family business and do not have a stable government job the girl side of the family can outrightly reject the boy in the first meeting itself and again

in this case also biasedness comes in and the true character of the boy is ignored. Well it cannot be completely known what the boy does the boy might be a day trader and making millions a year but when it comes to marriage this is outrightly rejected by the girl's family and judgement just on the basis of a profession may not necessarily lead to a happy married life and same for the boy's family judgement just on the basis of the western clothes of the girl could lead to a biased decision, so both the head of the families need to be careful while making a decision about the marriage, there could be lot of biasedness happening on the both sides which needs to be eliminated while coming to the final conclusion.

The other areas where biasedness could happen in a family decision would be while buying a car for the family, in a joint family a consensus is built which car to purchase basically the brand image of the car plays a crucial role. Brand image plays a powerful role in influencing car purchase decisions by creating bias in the minds of consumers. It shapes perceptions, often leading buyers to favour certain brands based on reputation rather than objective factors like performance, price, or features. The same decision bias could impact the decision making for a family to buy a certain brand of car.

In a traditional Indian joint family the women of the house are not allowed to do outside jobs but in cases where it is allowed it is given as a privilege to the women and in most cases an ego battle or cold war kind of erupts between

the head of the family and the working women, the head of the family provides his support to the non-working women of the house as they stay in the house and do not go out. Now in this case the head of the family is biased towards the non-working women of the house and makes a judgement or form an opinion without understanding the needs and requirement of a working women, not all women would want to sit in the house and do household chores but they might also want to go out explore the world and work to be financially independent. The biasedness of the head of the family towards the stay in house women occurs because the head thinks that they are cooking food and serving the family in a better way, this biasedness is also due to the traditions which has been going on for decades that women should do household work and be confined to the four walls of the house, it is a form of social stigma and this leads to biasedness by the head of the family. In order for a country to progress the social stigma associated with working women should be removed and this can happen only when the decision makers of the family understand the situation of women in the country. Working women could potentially contribute to a huge amount of increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country, a McKinsey research calculates that achieving gender equality could increase India's GDP by about 18% and this is a huge number which the Government of India is also aware of, but to bring gender equality in workplace and society it starts from the culture in the family, if the culture in the family is too rigid and do not allow its women to participate in the workforce then India will miss a

big opportunity to increase its share of GDP, government is already running many awareness campaigns for gender equality but it has to reach each and every family and mostly the decision maker of the families.

In a joint family set up there is a hidden bias which takes place due to the power struggle between the mother-in-law and daughter in law. Mother in law's always want to have the upper hand in the family decision making related to the household chores and about their respective son, a mother in law try to control their respective son on the other hand the daughter in law also tries the same thing to control their husband and in this process a lot of power struggle happens between the mother in law and the daughter in law, the son is put in a tight spot he can neither take one side completely but need to balance the family and think about the larger family interest of keeping peace and harmony in the family, when the daughter in law loses the power struggle they usually pressurize their respective husbands to shift out of the joint family and move to a different place and stay as a nuclear family. It is important for the head of the family to solve such tussle and power struggle to keep the family together and save it from being broken.

There is another hidden bias which takes place in a joint family is the preference given to the genetic daughters of the family as compared to the daughter in law. So, there is a power struggle that takes place between the daughters and the daughter in law. A daughter in law is usually expected to prove themselves to be considered a part of the family but

in case of the daughters the joint family is lenient so there is a degree of jealousy between daughters and daughter in laws.

In joint families another form of biasedness happens while distributing the property of the family among its members. In many cases it is seen that women who are married and no longer stays with the family are tend to be excluded from the properties in simple terms the brothers get all the properties and sisters are excluded. The male member who is closer to the head of the family gets a better piece of the property such as the roadside land, this biasedness is done by the head of the family and it can impact the members of the family. Also, many kinds of conflicts happen such as property disputes among the brothers if the properties are not distributed equally. Property disputes in a joint family often involve conflicts over inheritance, usage, and division of ancestral or jointly owned property. Common issues include one owner selling their share without consent, refusal to share profits or vacate, disagreements over financial contributions, and contested claims of ownership. Legal remedies for these disputes can involve negotiation, mediation, or filing a partition suit to divide the property, with the court potentially ordering physical division or sale with proceeds distributed among co-owners.

Now if we look at the daily chores that happens on a day to day basis in a joint family such as buying vegetables and other outside household chores are mostly given to male members of the family, but even among the male members some specific member does it more than others so there is an

unequal distribution of work among the men too, the decision all boils down to the head of the family if he gives the responsibility to just one individual then it's a clear case of biasedness that happens.

With all this biasedness there could be lot of frustration among the family members. These biases result in family quarrels, lack of harmony, psychological distress, and sometimes legal disputes (including litigation over property or marital issues). Emotional warmth may be replaced by suspicion, anger, or frustration, especially when contributions and freedoms are unequally shared.

In our study we have found that the role of women is very important to break the biasedness in the families, a women should break the shackles and do multi-tasking at home and also take up work to find a purpose or a goal in life once the women of the joint family find their own purpose in life it may not be a job it could be anything related to art and culture, poetry, further studies as it will help them to have a goal and work towards it rather than thinking about the joint family politics that takes place on a day to day basis.

If we look at our Indian society and culture it cannot be denied that joint family system is the backbone of our country although with the advent of technology, media and western influence the joint family system is broken currently as we have moved forward to nuclear families, we can argue that nuclear families would help vested interest to make it difficult for the country in different situations. Joint family always

worked as a protective shield to every member of the family in difficult times and joint family provides a safety net against any financial shocks and external problems to the family, although it comes with certain demerits but we would argue for a joint family culture to be back in the country for its social development and it provides a mental satisfaction to its members, joint families got broken in the country as more and more media and advertisement started influencing the masses and we can also argue that to some extent the newly married women of the family also played a role in encouraging their husbands to set up nuclear families, for short time it all looks good but in today's context Indian society is in a phase where its core values are broken. Members in a joint family now look for more privacy and do not like the interference from its elders and once a nuclear family is set up they then get shocks from their children as there is a generational change and the upcoming generation such as Generation Z has no idea of a joint family as they have never lived that phase, the parents in a nuclear family expects the children to further create nuclear family but it is a stage where even parents are confused because they want to live with their children but their children on the other hand ask for privacy from a young age. This dilemma of the parents and their new age children creates more confusion. The new age children thought process are also biased towards a nuclear family and think of joint families as invasion of privacy, we need to educate and create awareness that joint families have merits and their existence in Indian society is important and this culture needs to be preserved.

So, what are other solution for joint families to solve the biasedness problem mainly by the decision makers: To solve the problem of biasedness in joint families, decision makers can adopt inclusive and respectful decision-making strategies that promote fairness and harmony.

Strategies to Address Bias in Joint Families

Promote Joint Decision Making

- Encourage joint decision-making involving all relevant family members rather than unilateral decisions by elders or senior members, creating a sense of unity and cooperation.
- Active listening and valuing everyone's viewpoints can help minimize conflicts and respect individual feelings and concerns.
- Clear Communication and Respect
- Maintain open and honest communication to understand each member's perspective and needs fully.
- Conduct discussions calmly and respectfully, avoiding anger, blame, or ultimatums, to foster trust and reduce emotional barriers.
- Discuss issues when everyone is calm rather than during heated moments.
- Set Agreed Boundaries and Roles
- Define clear roles, responsibilities, and boundaries for all family members, including

financial responsibilities and daily chores, to avoid overlap and resentment.

- Parents and elders should agree on boundaries related to discipline, household rules, and career or personal freedom, explaining reasons to gain buy-in from others including younger members or new spouses.
- Encourage Equality and Fairness
- Avoid gender or hierarchical biases by promoting equal participation in decision-making and respecting the autonomy of women and younger members.
- Fairly distribute financial responsibilities and privileges, making sure budgeting and spending rules apply equally to all members, regardless of age or gender.

Conflict Management and Compromise

- Address and resolve conflicts quickly and privately, away from other family members to avoid negative undercurrents.
- Seek common ground, be willing to compromise, and respect differences in opinion by focusing on mutual family goals rather than individual gain.

Build Trust and Support Independence

- Respect individual decisions and allow family members the freedom to succeed or fail in their choices, which helps build confidence and trust within the family.
- Encourage and support personal growth without undermining family unity.

By adopting these strategies—joint decision making, respectful communication, clear roles, fairness, conflict management, and trust building—decision makers in a joint family can effectively reduce biasedness, enhance harmony, and promote individual and collective well-being.

The last and the most foremost thing a joint family should have is freedom if we compare freedom Index of a joint family to nuclear family it gives a clear picture which type of families have more freedom for its members

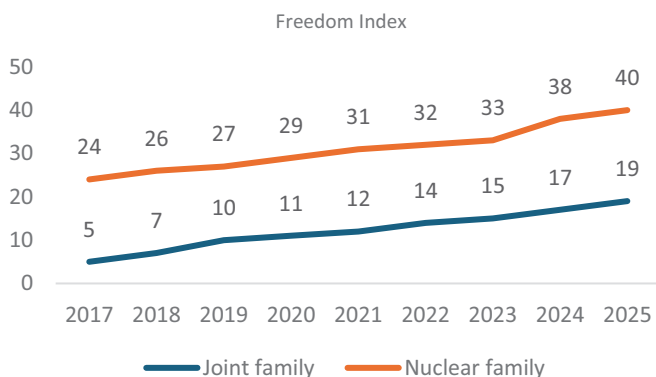


Chart 1.3: The quantitative data of the freedom index is not 100 percent accurate as it gives only the trend of the freedom

as the qualitative data is collected from survey questions and then quantified which may lead to some error but the trend is accurate. Minimum Index value is 0 and the maximum Index value is 100.

Now readers will ask what is a freedom index and how is it calculated. A freedom index is a simple index containing of the feedback data received by talking to different joint and nuclear families and asking them a set of questions about the freedom that they have in their families to take a decision or pursue something etc, it calculates these qualitative criteria into quantitative numbers using a weighted average method of the qualitative criteria of the questions asked to both the joint families and nuclear families. Higher the freedom index number signifies more freedom in the family for the members and lower the freedom index number means lower freedom in the family. If we have a look at the time series data of the chart above in Chart 1.3 the freedom index number of the nuclear family has been always high and on a increasing trend which signifies that with time nuclear families have been successful in giving more freedom to its members, now if we look at the freedom index number of the joint families historically the numbers were low which signifies less freedom for members of a joint family but with time the freedom index number of joint families has been increasing and reached a score of around 19 in 2025 but it is still considerably lower than the freedom index number of a nuclear family which is 40 in the year 2025.

Chapter 2:

Biasedness in a professional work environment

A professional work environment refers to a setting where individuals carry out their responsibilities supported by resources, organizational systems, and a workplace culture that aligns with both institutional objectives and employee welfare. Such a space nurtures clear communication, provides essential tools, encourages growth in one's career, promotes respect and inclusion, and fosters conditions that boost motivation and fulfilment. This environment is shaped by both material aspects, like office design and available equipment, as well as intangible elements such as management attitudes, workplace relationships, and the overarching organizational ethos. The interplay of these factors creates a space that drives teamwork, sparks creativity, and enhances the overall experience for each member of the organization. In the context of this book, we will consider a professional work environment as an office mostly a corporate office or private office.

Before we get on to the details of how biases take place or shape in a corporate environment, we would like to clarify that we have nothing against the corporate work environment, corporates have fundamentally shaped lives in

our country specially for the middle class. We are just trying to explain our readers how biases can form in a professional working environment such as corporates.

Let us examine the biases from the side of the management or the managers. First let us start with hiring new workforce to the company, hiring typically for freshers or new candidate is done through college campus placements or walk-in in the offices where candidates come on a particular day to give interview. The hiring managers ask for candidates Curriculum Vitae (CV) to judge the candidate capability and fit for the position which is currently open in the company. In a country like India there are lot of young candidates who come for the interview, at first the candidate is asked to write an aptitude test and this happens mainly in the case of a fresher or a new candidate and based on a certain cut off score they select the candidate for the further rounds. Those candidate who could not meet the cut off score are rejected in the first round itself, now for the selected candidates interview happens and this where biasedness starts, In the interview panel mostly the highly experienced managers take the interview, we would give an small example where biasedness starts if a candidate has passed out from a particular college and by any chance in the panel an experience manager had also passed out from the same college, the brain suddenly clicks for the hiring manager that the candidate is from the same college so they both studied at the same college, the hiring manager in a conscious or subconsciously starts giving preference to the candidate from

the same college, it is a clear case of biasedness that has taken place although other panellist are there in the interview panel but the hiring manager gives preference to the candidate from the same college without much looking into the facts and figure of the candidate CV.

Another form of biasedness which takes place during an interview is judging the candidate by its look and dress. If the candidate is well dressed and presentable a biased opinion starts forming on the interviewer's mind that the candidate is well groomed and certain Psychological biases clicks in which says that if a candidate is well dressed he or she would be sincere in his work however there is no evidence to prove that, this is a complete psychological bias that takes place while hiring, some hiring managers looks into the shoes of the candidate a well-polished shoe provides a positive information about the candidate to the hiring manager and messy shoe is taken as the candidate not being disciplined, these are complete biases and there is no scientific evidence or claim to prove that wearing a well-polished shoe in the interview would mean that the candidate is disciplined and will be a great performer in the team. Due to such biasedness, we cannot estimate how many well-deserved candidates would fail to qualify an interview. It is a sad state of affair in the corporate interview process that looks only for well-groomed candidates in the interview.

There are other biases such as for some particular jobs like a secretary to a senior level executive of the firm should

be a female, even when the job announcements are done, they specifically mention that the candidate needs to be a female candidate again this is a bias which is formed that a female could be a better secretary than a male, there is no scientific evidence to prove such claim. After talking to a bunch of Senior Management level people we can argue that the job of a secretary can be done by male too but the industry trend has been that way so the senior folks prefer a female candidate as a secretary and this is a bias.

In a corporate environment the management needs to maintain diversity in the workplace and it is mostly with the foreign Multinational Companies (MNC) so the foreign MNC hire female by maintaining a certain ratio of male to female employees but here also certain level of biasedness kicks in among choosing the female candidates, they select the ones with good looks and professionally well-dressed mostly western clothes, this biasedness comes with the fact that good looking female candidates would be more presentable and look decent in front of the clients and this is a bias which is rampant in the foreign MNCs. Again, there is no scientific evidence to prove that hiring only good-looking girls would bring in more revenue for the firm. There is nothing wrong in hiring good looking female candidates but our job through this book is to point out the biasedness that take place in any organization and any other place in the world, the only difference is that subconsciously we know it but unable to accept it as a bias and through this book we shall try to explore some of the biases that takes place and

are in front of our eyes but our readers do not know it. Our job through the book is not to judge any organization hiring practices or their working styles but to understand how human behaviour works in the form of certain biases and our book can make everyone aware of it, that's the whole objective of the book.

Our country has become modern or we call it pseudo modern, we can see people talking about freedom to explore themselves freedom to explore their respective physical bodies and many more things which in the name of modernity is done in our country and very young people talking about modernism in social media and everywhere on the internet but our eyes went into the firms hiring practices mostly the MNCs hiring practices as their base is in a foreign land so some amount of culture transform happens to our country too, when we did some research about the employees we found that there are no transgender employee working for this foreign MNCs, that's why I used the word pseudo modern we as a society has not become modern in our thoughts and this is reflected in the hiring practices of the biggest firms in India, we hardly see any transgender employee working for the MNCs in India, in what sense have we become modern, we think the definition of modernism is not about wearing western clothes and talking about freedom but the participation of the vulnerable groups such as transgenders to our workforce, we urge our readers to ask themselves a question are they comfortable in working with a transgender colleague, mostly the answer would be no. We

argue that modernism is about keeping our traditional values alive and if we read traditional Hindu scripts such as Ramayana and Mahabharata there is a mention of a third gender in those religious text and if we read more into our Hindu philosophies we see transgenders were divine figures for example the androgynous deity Ardhanarishvara, a composite of Shiva and Parvati, and Vishnu's female avatar, Mohini, are prominent examples of gender fluidity within the Hindu pantheon. The Vedas and texts like the Manusmriti recognized a "third sex," or tritiya prakriti. The Kama Sutra also describes people of the third gender in respectful terms. So traditionally the third gender has been respected in the society but today's so called modern work culture do not have a place for them. So, we need to seriously ask what modernism means today? Is modernism about just fulfilling the material goals of our life and putting it on social media or there is something more to it, we are sure there is much more to modernism and will leave it to our readers to think about it.

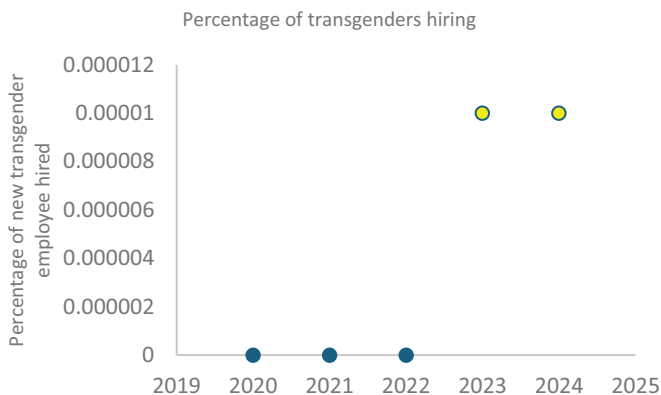


Chart 1.4: Data collected from friends and families working in different organization

If we look at the time series data Chart 1.4, the number of transgenders hired in foreign MNCs as a percentage of total employees, until 2022 the figure was Nil and only recently the MNCs have started hiring a very small segment of transgender employees, we would argue with the estimated figure that only 0.00001 percent of the new hiring done by the MNCs today are transgender employees we have estimated this figure based on a small sample size data of the foreign MNCs, we have interestingly found out data about a transgender employee in a leading foreign coffee chain in India who has opened stores with an Indian collaboration (In their Guwahati Store) . So, we can imagine the situation of transgender workers who even if they get educated and get degrees the probability of getting hired in a MNC are almost Nil. So here again I would ask the same question to my

readers what does modernism means? Transgender hiring is a very open case of biasedness that takes place in today's India. Interestingly the government has taken some remedial measures to solve this issue as a first step the transgender individuals in Assam are now eligible for central and state OBC (Other Backward Class) welfare schemes. So, giving a welfare scheme is the first step to it and we are sure in future the government will come up with a reservation for transgender in terms of hiring for a government job.

Let us dive deep into the work culture of private organization, we would try to look into how promotions happen in a company and how there are several unrecognized groupism that happens in a company based on language or state or culture or may be just political lineage to a particular manager or boss in a workplace. These groups work in a subtle way and we will talk about it more after we finish discussing the promotion part. So how does an employee get promoted in a workplace is its sheer performance? or is it a combination of performance with good reputation and relation of the reporting boss or does it happen solely on the basis of the good relation with the boss? By having conversations with people that got promoted and our view and experience of working in a corporate atmosphere it can be said that promotions completely depend on the reporting manager or other supervisors, In their lenses or from their perspective if you have performed well then they would promote you otherwise just solely on the basis of work and from your idea of work, promotion is not possible, even

if a person does five people's work but if their relationship with their reporting manager is not smooth promotion would not happen, some organization do follow a culture of taking feedback from colleagues as well but at the end its reporting manager and other supervisors prerogative to promote someone in the office. There is a certain element of biasedness in every promotion that happens and that biasedness sometimes could be subconscious and may not be a conscious decision, now coming to the second part about unrecognized groupism, there are certain groups in every company who stays together, go for lunch together joke around together and many more things and I would say these groups are very powerful as they may make or break somebody's career, sometimes if a person is introvert and comes from a rural background it could be a daunting task to become a part of these unrecognized group, everyone on the office floor knows that these kind of group exist but nobody wants to talk about the groups much. Well, we can argue that these things are part of the office politics and it is not necessary that there will be just one group there could be more than one group and they may be competing against each other and playing politics in a subtle way. The management of the company are very much aware about these groups and some management would always want their employees to be divided in groups so that it is easier to rule them, but there are many companies who do not support such groups and keeps a fair and transparent system, we could say as India is very vast and some groups in the office may be

formed based on the common state from which these group members come from and language groups could be another one, and these groups tend to have a leader whom every member responds to and discusses and does back biting of the other groups, we have observed that they make the groups in the way like that they are immortals but they forget the basic human nature that when times are stressed and if we want to test the loyalty of the group members towards the group just a small pressure to them would reveal the true side of a human that every human is vulnerable these groups can break within minutes when it comes to certain specific things and we should not be surprised by it at the end we are all humans but saying so these groups are powerful and can become a source of lobbying for the group members to get promoted as they in a subtle way put things in to the mind of the reporting manager about the person from the group that they want being promoted, so another bias thing which happens while promoting certain worker is the groups behind the candidate to be promoted. The reporting managers do know that such groups exist but they are concerned that breaking such groups could lead to chaos and instability in the workplace but we would argue that some biasedness should be removed by the manager who has the authority to promote someone in the workplace.

We have talked about groups in the corporate culture and how they operate but we forgot someone, whom did we forget it could be someone who may not know how the corporate culture works, it could be someone whom

everybody considers him to be a loner, now does biasedness affects the loner who is not in any group in his promotions, we would argue that at the beginning it does not but after a certain level being a loner could be very difficult and many of my readers would understand that being a loner and not close to the manager and not being a part of any group could isolate the person and mostly his career progression stops, we would argue that reporting managers and supervisors should take a note of it that everybody cannot be same and his or her promotion should not just depend on inter personal skills sometimes work can explain a person or compensate an introvert person. Does it mean that for non-technical roles the person who can talk in a polished way and knows how the office politics work is at the top of the management? It can be the reality and that's how the entire world works now? not surprised!! though.

Another aspect of the corporate culture is people losing their jobs, does biasedness impacts firing decision also, we would argue that when firing is done at a mass level where entire departments are removed the chances of biasedness is low as it is a very calculated decision by senior management, so more data based decision making happens in case of mass firing but biases kicks in when the layoff is about just one particular employee in a department or a team, we would not deny that it could be a performance issue but if more research is done it will show that people with the same level of performance was not fired in the same team or the department then why only a particular employee is fired, here

how biases work as discussed before the fired employee may not have had a good bonding with his or her reporting boss or the employee did not belong to any group which could have protected him, so the perception could be different from reality and biases continuously plays a role to form biases in the reporting boss mind and hence this kind of decision is taken.

Looking globally the current scenario of workers working in the Information Technology (IT) sector is difficult with large scale firing happening in IT companies. Let us look at the data of the number of employees fired in the last 4 to 5 years globally only for the IT sector which is one of the largest employers

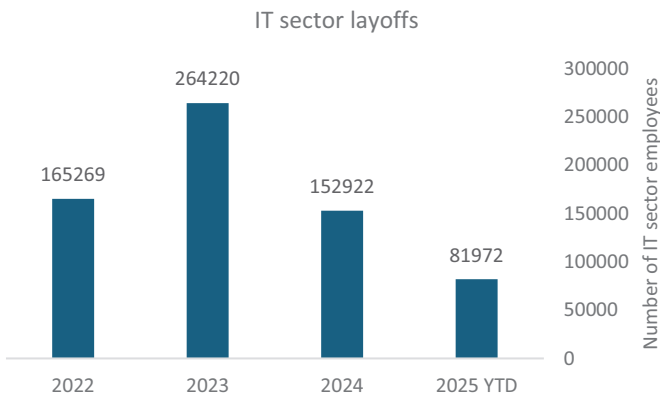


Chart 1.5: Source: Layoffs.fyi

Now if we total the number of IT employees fired up to 2025 YTD from 2022 globally the total number comes at

around 664383 employees. If we look at a Deloitte Survey of 2019 it was reported that Sixty-four percent of U.S. adults said they had experienced bias in the workplace within the past year. The company surveyed 3,000 adults employed full-time at large businesses as part of a report. We do not have a concrete survey or scientific study to claim that how much of the firing that has happened over the last four years globally in IT sector is due to biases but if we take an average of all the small studies done We can make an estimation that around 45 percent of all the layoff decision that has been taken in the IT sector in the last 4 years globally may be affected by some form of bias. So around 300 thousand employees were fired due to certain biases and these biases makes the management to take such actions on the particular employees as we discussed earlier that performance is not the only criteria on the basis of which employees are fired but biases in the mind of the senior management and reporting managers plays a role in the employee getting fired while many other employees escaping the axe.

There are also hidden biases which can impact a reporting manager decision to keep an employee and not fire him or her but fire some other employee, there could be a very common reason for it and it is the most basic thing called the first impression. A manager's initial perception or first impression of an employee is frequently shaped by cognitive biases, which are the mental shortcuts our brains use to make rapid judgments. Several key biases are particularly relevant in this context:

- **Halo/Horns Effect:** This bias occurs when a single positive or negative characteristic of an individual disproportionately influences one's overall impression of them. For instance, if a manager is impressed by a new hire's promptness and polished appearance, they might subconsciously attribute other positive qualities like high competence and dependability, even without direct evidence. Conversely, a poor first impression—such as being late for an initial meeting—can trigger a "horns effect," causing the manager to unfairly label the employee as unmotivated or disorganized.
- **Similar-to-Me Bias:** This refers to the tendency for managers to form more positive initial impressions of employees who share similar backgrounds, interests, or personality traits. This affinity can lead to stronger working relationships and more favourable assessments. Employees who differ significantly from their managers may find they need to exert extra effort to gain comparable trust and support.
- **Primacy Effect:** This bias highlights how the first pieces of information encountered about a person have a lasting impact on how they are perceived. A powerful initial impression can become deeply ingrained and prove challenging to alter, even when subsequent experiences suggest otherwise.

The Role of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

First impressions also play a critical role within the framework of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory. This theory posits that leaders develop distinct, individualized relationships with each of their team members, which can vary in quality.

- **High-Quality LMX:** In these relationships, often termed the "in-group," there's mutual trust, respect, and a strong sense of shared commitment between the manager and employee. This dynamic typically results in the employee receiving greater support, more resources, and enhanced opportunities. Managers in such relationships are more likely to entrust employees with significant tasks and offer mentorship.
- **Low-Quality LMX:** Conversely, "out-group" relationships are characterized by a more formal and transactional dynamic. Managers provide minimal support, and the employee's role is largely confined to their basic job description. This often leads to reduced job satisfaction, lower engagement, and limited avenues for career advancement.

The initial encounter significantly influences whether an employee is perceived in a way that fosters an "in-group" or "out-group" relationship. A favourable first impression makes it far more probable that a manager will invest in cultivating a high-quality working relationship. The biases stemming from first impressions can directly influence

performance evaluations. A manager's pre-existing positive or negative perception of an employee can unconsciously sway their assessment of the employee's performance, even when objective metrics are supposedly being used. This can result in evaluations that are unfair or inaccurate, directly affecting an employee's compensation, opportunities for promotion, and overall career trajectory. To mitigate these effects, managers must cultivate self-awareness and prioritize objective, data-driven feedback throughout the entire review cycle, rather than relying solely on initial feelings or recent events.

To end this chapter, although we shall not recommend any solution from our side to remove biasedness while hiring or laying off an employee but would like to quote the holy Hindu scriptures “The Vedas” on leadership, work environment and work culture. Vedic philosophy provides a framework for a thriving workplace, emphasizing that a healthy and productive culture is built on a sense of duty (dharma), mutual well-being, and individual excellence. These ancient scriptures underscore that work should be performed with diligence, skill, and an ethical mindset, while recognizing the interconnectedness of the entire community.

Principles for Leadership

Vedic texts portray an ideal leader as a compassionate and ethical guardian who prioritizes the greater good over personal gain.

- **Ethical Conduct (Dharma):** A leader should act according to righteous principles, ensuring fairness and justice for everyone. Leadership is viewed as a responsibility to protect societal harmony and the welfare of others.
- **Empathy and Fairness:** Great leaders are characterized by their fairness, their ability to listen impartially to concerns, and their respect for all stakeholders.
- **Accountability:** Leaders are accountable for their decisions and for the well-being of their followers. Taking ownership and delivering on promises are key responsibilities.
- **Mutual Dependence:** The Vedic tradition teaches that all beings are interdependent. Therefore, leaders must value their relationships with those who work for them, understanding that collective effort is essential for success.

Principles for Workers

The Vedas promote a work ethic based on diligence, focus, and a sense of purpose that extends beyond personal profit.

- **Hard Work and Diligence:** The scriptures state that deities only help those who are diligent, not those who are lazy, and consider laziness the root of poverty.

- **Selfless Action (Nishkama Karma):** The Bhagavad Gita, a text containing the essence of Vedic wisdom, teaches that work should be performed with full effort but without attachment to the results. This approach can help reduce performance anxiety and stress.
- **Concentration and Skill:** A core teaching is that skill in action is a form of yoga. High productivity is achieved by performing one's duties with a calm and focused mind.
- **Integrated Living:** The Vedas encourage balancing material success with spiritual fulfillment. Work should serve as a source of meaning, contributing to both personal growth and the welfare of the world.

Principles for the Workplace Environment

Vedic thought frames the workplace as a collaborative community that functions best when grounded in harmony, mutual respect, and a shared vision.

- **Collaboration over Competition:** Ancient Indian cultures prioritized working together for the greater good. A story from the Ramayana illustrates this by showing how even a small squirrel's contribution was vital for success, highlighting that every team member's role is important.

- **Mutual Respect:** The Vedas emphasize the spiritual equality of all beings. Respecting elders and treating everyone with dignity, regardless of their position, is a core value for fostering harmony.
- **Shared Purpose:** The Sahanavavatu mantra from the Upanishads is a prayer for a harmonious relationship between a teacher and student, calling for mutual protection and collective effort. This principle can be applied to any work environment, emphasizing a shared purpose and cooperation.
- **Work as a Sacred Space:** The concept of Karma-kshetra suggests treating the workplace as a sacred space by keeping it clean, orderly, and respectful.

This perspective offers timeless guidance on how to create a more ethical, productive, and harmonious work environment.

Chapter 3:

Meeting new people

Meeting new people in life can be interesting for many and for some it could be a bad experience but whatever happens meeting new people in life itself is an experience we cannot forget, some will become friends, some will be colleagues and some of them would be passed on without any chance of interaction in the future. These experiences will be in our memory forever, we would definitely miss the ones who made us laugh, who made us cry and basis of different elements we form a perspective about people we meet in our lives. Most of the people touch us emotionally and sometimes it becomes difficult to forget some but one thing never stops that we constantly get to meet new people, be in the roads, in a mall, in a movie theatre, in a park and many other such places. When we look at the restaurants, we see teenagers on dates and that makes us wonder what our lives were when we were teenagers. Oh! Let us not forget our subject and it is about biases that is formed while meeting new people in our life.

While meeting new people there could be several biases which is formed for example if you find someone good looking, well dressed and attractive it also influences your perception about the other traits and qualities of the person such as the person who is good looking and well-dressed you

might subconsciously assume that person is also successful and Kind, on the other hand if a person is not attractive and well-dressed you might subconsciously assume that the person would be rude and helpful, so the first impression gets a long way in your brain about a person. Now once the first impression is confirmed in the coming time you tend to overlook any other thing such as if the person is a good negotiator now even if the person fails in negotiating deals you tend to overlook it and keep the first impression in your mind. Sometimes we tend to forget about external factors impacting certain situation for example if an employee could not submit a project on time, then we call that person to be not punctual but in reality, there could be a technical glitch or power cutoff due to which the employee was unable to work. Also, when we meet a new person, we assume that they would agree to our beliefs but in actual when they not agree to our beliefs, we are taken a back.

Let us now examine how biases takes place with different kind of people, first let us start with meeting an old lady, now when we meet an old lady our mind states that she might be lethargic and may not have the energy to do certain physical activity but when we met this old lady and named her as B, lady B was very energetic and she does brisk walking daily for an hour, does yoga, meditation and surprisingly does household chores also Lady B broke all our biases that we had in our mind so certain beliefs are subconsciously set in our brain that an old lady would be lazy and may not be physically active but meeting lady B clears

all the biases that we had about old women, we agree there are old women who are not physically active but it does not necessarily be an old women even a young guy can be physically inactive and lazy.

Our next person was a teenager now when we think about teenagers we form biases in our mind that a teenager would be moody and spend time in playing online games and be busy with the mobile phone and on social media and may not behave or answer properly to elders but when we met this teenager C we found that the teenager on the outer appearance looked like a junkie but when we started having conversation with him he was very matured in his talks, he shared the view of different philosophers like Socrates and Plato and had knowledge about ancient Indian Vedic scripts, we are amazed after the conversation, he broke all the biases that the society has towards teenagers but there will be teenagers who may not be like C, they could be totally opposite but that should not create biases in our mind for the entire teenager community. Since we are talking about teenagers in India let us explore some data about them:

India has the largest adolescent population in the world, with over **253 million** individuals between the ages of 10 and 19. This demographic accounts for roughly one-fifth of the nation's total population. Ensuring the health, education, and social well-being of this group is vital for India's future.

Demographics

- **Adolescent and Youth Population:** India's population is one of the youngest globally, with a median age of 29.5 years in 2023. The youth population (aged 15-29) made up about 27.2% of the total population in 2021, though this percentage is expected to decline to 22.7% by 2036.
- **Education**
- **School Attendance:** While over 95% of children aged 6-14 are enrolled in school, there is a significant drop-off at higher levels. Only about 40% of teenagers continue to secondary school.
- **Literacy and Higher Education:** Among youth aged 15-29, nearly 58.3% have completed secondary school or higher, while about 5.85% are not literate. The rate of enrolment in higher education has been rising, reaching 27.1% in 2019-20. Interestingly, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for females (27.3%) was slightly higher than for males (26.9%) during this period, indicating progress in closing the gender gap.

Health and Well-being

- **Anaemia:** Anaemia is a significant health concern, particularly among adolescent girls. The National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5) found that 53.2% of girls and 22.1% of boys aged 15-19 in Himachal Pradesh were anaemic.

- Teenage Pregnancy: Although declining, teenage marriage remains an issue. The NFHS-5 (2019-21) data shows that 1.7% of girls aged 15-19 were married by age 15, a decrease from 11.9% in the NFHS-3 (2005-06) survey.
- Mental Health: There is a growing focus on the mental health of this age group, with an increasing number of young people experiencing a mental health crisis.

Next on our meeting list was a middle aged Man and we have named it as D, so person D is happily married with two children, our biases towards middle aged men is that they would be having a midlife crisis and may be looking for love outside the family, we started having a conversation with him and came to know that he is very happy in the middle age, he says it's a golden period for him, he is not looking for love or flirting with younger women, he follows a strict routine in his life and are happily married

Our next person is a housewife and when we say housewife the biases that forms in our mind is that housewives would just do the household chores and would not know much about the outside world but this housewife that we met was highly educated and she was doing an online job and also managing household chores so our biases makes us think that a housewife would be of certain type and have certain specific traits but that's not the case here

So, in this way we met several new people from different fields and found that our biases make us think in certain way for example we would think a scientist to be nerd but that is not the case with every scientist.

Another thing about meeting new people is that when we talked to several people who are in a look out to meet new people in the urban areas it is found that youngsters usually want to meet people who have a happy mindset and a jolly attitude and not so serious in life, this feedback came from the female side that girls want to meet guys who are comfortable in their own space and have a jolly attitude with good sense of humor. Let us see what the chart says:

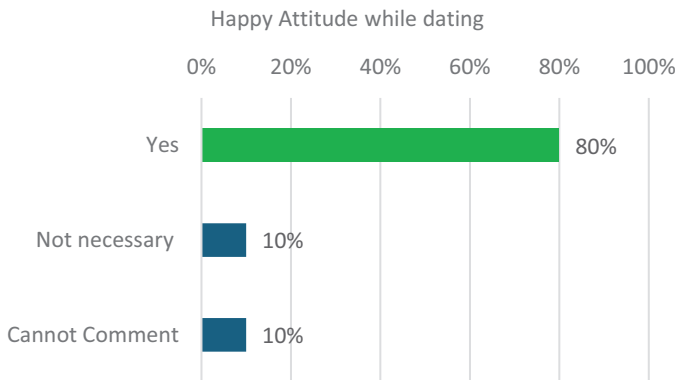


Chart 1.6

When we put this question to some teenagers who are looking to meet new people almost 80 percent responded that they want to meet people who has a happy attitude, 10

percent of them said not necessary and the rest 10 percent did not want to comment. So, we believe a happy attitude is a good quality to have while meeting new people and especially young girls look to date someone who can make them laugh.

Now from a girl's perspective there could be biases while looking for a guy to date, girls look at different qualities and attributes or features in a guy while deciding to date.

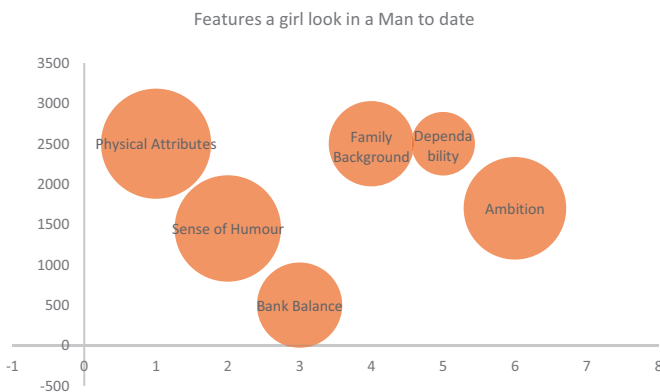


Chart 1.7: The size of the bubble explains which attributes are more important than the other

If we look at the chart 1.7, we can find the qualities and attributes that a female looks for in a male before deciding to date, in this case we are not talking about teenage dating but more mature level of dating where if the girl find the boy suitable would further continue the date and go for marriage. The main attributes which a girl consider are physical

attributes of the guy, Sense of Humor, Financial condition, Ambitions, Family background and Dependability. While there are other more qualities and features which a girl aspires for but these were the main ones. Now there is a point where biasedness comes in while choosing a guy to date and one of the attributes that the Chart 1.7 has is the guy has to be ambitious and ambition is a double-edged sword. When a guy is ambitious the girl needs to be ready to face certain things such as not getting enough time to spend with each other as a person becomes more ambitious, he runs in the rat race and while running keeps him busy in his professional life but he may not be able to give time to the girl and many marriages fail due to lack of time for each other.

On the other hand, if we look at the Chart 1.8 below, we can find the qualities and attributes that a male looks for in a female to date, again in this case we are talking about a more mature level of dating and not the dating scene about the teenagers. The main attributes which a man would consider are good looks of the girl, good health, Dependable Character, Sociability and Ambition. While there are other more qualities and features which a man considers but these were the main ones. Now there is a point where biasedness comes in while choosing a girl to date and one of the attributes that the Chart 1.8 has is about the Good looks of the female, now good looks which a man wants in a female is not of a permanent nature, good looks are temporary physical attribute which disappears with age and another attribute in Chart 1.8 is ambition and again even for female, ambition is

a double edged sword if a female is highly ambitious she would not be able to find time for her partner as she would be more busy pursuing her professional goals and this could lead to conflicts. So, biases exist for both Men and Women while looking for a partner to date and then Marry.

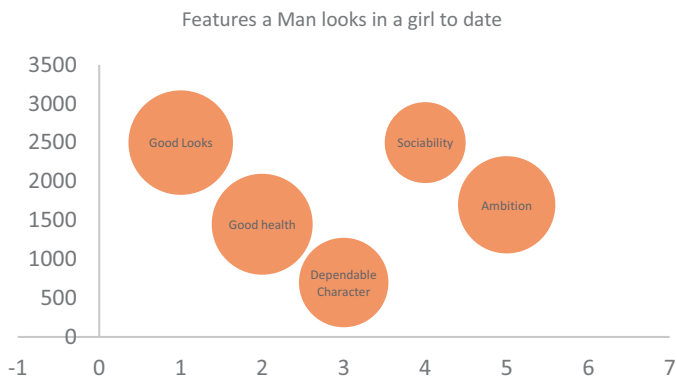


Chart 1.8: The size of the bubble explains which attributes are more important than the other

Chapter 4:

Biasedness and Poverty

Poverty can be described as a situation where people or communities are deprived of the resources needed to live a secure and dignified life. While it is often associated with insufficient income to cover basic needs like food, clothing, and housing, poverty is much broader in scope. It also reflects a lack of access to quality healthcare, education, clean water, proper sanitation, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Living in poverty often traps individuals in a cycle that passes from one generation to the next. For instance, children born into poor households may have limited access to schooling, which restricts their chances of securing decent jobs later in life. Poor healthcare weakens their ability to work productively, and the absence of financial resources or property rights prevents them from breaking free from hardship. As a result, the cycle of disadvantage tends to repeat across generations.

There are two major ways of looking at poverty. Absolute poverty refers to extreme deprivation, where individuals cannot even meet the basic requirements for survival such as food, clothing, and shelter. The World Bank, for example, measures absolute poverty as living on less than \$2.15 a day. Relative poverty, on the other hand, is defined within the context of a society. Even if people are

able to meet their basic needs, they are considered poor when their living standards are significantly lower than the average in their community, leaving them socially and economically marginalized.

Importantly, poverty is not limited to material scarcity. It also has social, psychological, and political dimensions. Those who live in poverty often face exclusion from decision-making, suffer from discrimination, and experience a loss of dignity and self-worth. This makes poverty not only an economic issue but also a matter of human rights and social justice. Addressing poverty therefore requires more than economic growth; it demands fair distribution of resources, equal access to opportunities, and empowerment of disadvantaged groups so they can lead fulfilling lives.

If we look at the world data of poverty for the year 2023-24 and the number of people affected by poverty worldwide, we get the data in the following chart

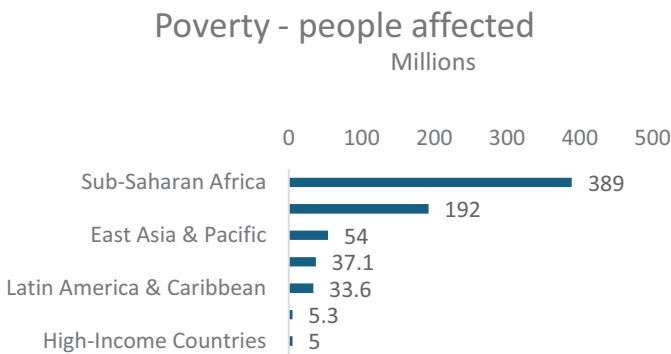


Chart 1.9: Source: World Bank

Sub-Saharan Africa is the region where poverty is the highest followed by south Asia and East Asia and Pacific.

Now let us discuss how biases happen in poverty or how biases impact poor people and how different biases exist against the poor. When it comes to poor people finances, they mostly do not have access to formal credit from banks due to many reasons such as:

Insufficient documentation: Many low-income families are unable to provide required documents like income certificates, making it difficult for them to obtain loans from formal financial institutions.

Lack of credit history: Around 63 million Indians do not have a credit record, which prevents banks and other lenders from evaluating their repayment capacity.

Convenient access: Informal moneylenders provide fast and flexible loans without demanding lengthy paperwork, which becomes especially important during emergencies like medical needs.

Barriers to formal finance: Despite widespread bank account ownership, poorer households often struggle with the complexity and rigidity of formal procedures. In addition, bank branches and digital financial platforms are frequently out of reach in their local areas.

More and more people from economically weaker section are going to informal sources such as local money

lenders for borrowing and these local money lenders charge a hefty interest to the poor. And a recent data by Piramal Enterprise the number of borrowers in the lower income category has increased the amount of borrowing form the local money lenders.

An analysis done by Piramal enterprise Economist on data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) found that between 2018-19 and 2022-23, the number of borrowers from the economically weaker sections of society who borrowed from formal channels such as banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) contracted by 4.2%.

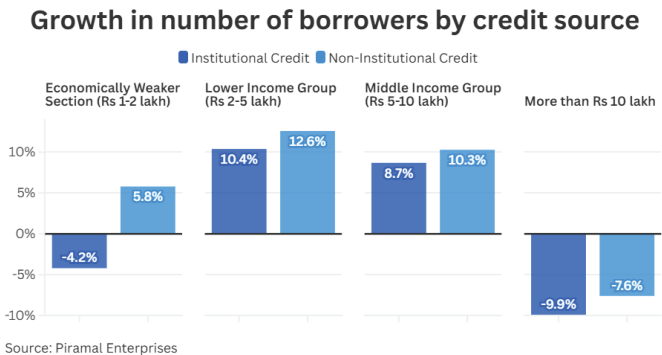


Chart 1.10

Conversely, households earning between ₹1–2 lakh annually recorded a 5.8% increase in borrowing from informal or non-institutional sources such as moneylenders, chit funds, acquaintances, or local shopkeepers.

A similar pattern is visible in the slightly higher income group earning ₹2–5 lakh per year. Although this segment experienced a 10.4% rise in borrowers accessing formal credit, the proportion turning to non-institutional lending grew at an even faster rate of 12.6%

So it is very clear that poor are depended on the local money lenders for their financial needs, now money lenders use this to their advantage and charge an extravagant interest rate so money lenders are biased in terms of dealing with the poor, if same money lender gives money to some rich person they give it at a lower interest rate thinking that the rich has the capability to pay the borrowed money easily and they exploit the poor by charging higher interest on a compounding basis which makes life very difficult for the poor while repaying and repayment continues for years as the interest rates are compounded poor do not understand this and they have to pay for a very long tenure and money lenders benefit with this long tenure.

The next aspect that I wanted to cover on biasedness was about gender bias among the poor people, when poor labourers go for manual work there is a gender bias that the women labourers are paid less wages than the male labourers, there is a subconscious bias among the employers that women's productivity would be less as compared to men, however there are no scientific evidence to prove that, this bias has come from the Indian society itself where women are not treated equal to man and the employer carries the same mentality and makes biased decision for the poor labourer.

The women labourer has to multi task as they have to cook food, take care of the children and also do manual labour job this makes the life of women more difficult, when we talk about empowerment and less biases towards women we talk about the urban elite women more and empowering them would not add much value to their life, but the feminism and empowerment is benefitted by the urban modern women, In reality empowerment is needed for the rural women specially the ones who does day labour job and earn a livelihood for the family, their situation is same if we take out data for last 30 to 40 years the rural women's life has not changed much more prejudice, more biases has hindered the progress but if we look at the urban elite their women has made tremendous progress, got well educated having fancy foreign degrees and well settled corporate job and truly empowered but the situation in rural India remains bleak for women interestingly 80 percent of India stays in rural India, so we should ask ourselves who is actually getting empowered? Ones that actually need empowerment or the ones who are already empowered from birth. Biases can be countered and defeated when we as a society give respect to the rural women who are doing daily labourer job which are physically very intensive. We would argue that more capacity building by government, NGOs and other international poverty consulting bodies should put their focus on rural women who work as labourers because if we can empower the women in the bottom then only, we can talk about a more egalitarian society, without rural women participation India's economy will be difficult to make it like a first world country. We would argue that all

the benefits of feminism and the awareness is taken by the urban elite women sitting in the board rooms and the rural women working in factories or MNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act) work are getting no benefit and this is a form of bias which is mostly hidden , so we have to solve the rural dilemma first and break the stereotypes of rural women and this will lead to less biases towards them, we are not saying we can completely abolish the bias here for rural women but we can work towards educating them providing them nutritious food and other health care facilities which a rural women need.

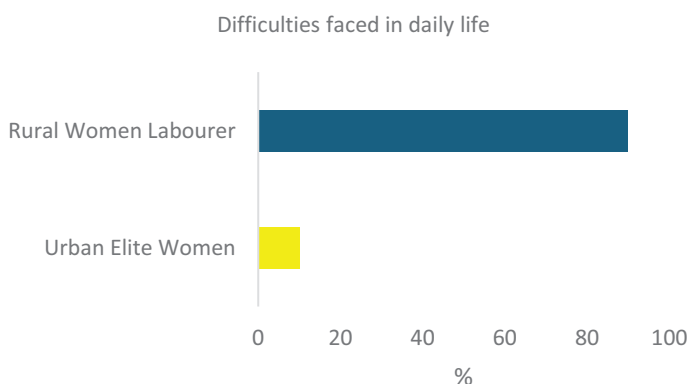


Chart 1.11: Data calculates the difficulties faced by women in their day-to-day life, the metrics includes financial difficulty, health problems, access to nutritious food etc.

If we have a look at Chart 1.11, we have tried to calculate the difficulty faced by Rural women labourer and urban elite women on the basis of different indicators such as

Financial, health metrics, access to food, access to education, access to freedom to pursue education and we calculated the difficulties faced in percentage and made a comparison between the difficulties faced by Rural women Labourer and Urban Elite Women. It very clearly shows that the difficulties faced by rural women labourer is much more than the difficulties faced by urban elite Women, we are not giving a conclusion that Urban Elite Women do not face any difficulties in life they do but compared to a rural women labourer it is very less, we would again raise this question and ask my readers, who needs more empowerment - the urban Elite Women or the Rural Women labourer, it is up to the readers to decide on this question, we just presented a fact and have not given any concluding answer to the question

Another form of bias which is rampant in rural India is the caste bias that takes place, lower caste people who are also poor has to deal with a lot of bias, the rich has still been able to get out of the caste ghetto with the help of money but the poor are still facing it in terms of getting representation and many other factors which rural lower caste poor are facing.

Another bias that poor faces is upbringing their children in a difficult situation, children of poor people are treated by the society as third rated citizen, they are mocked at school and other public places as there is also a subconscious bias against the children of poor people that these kids will also grow up to be poor and hence the mistreatment given to

them. This is another bias which has been prevalent from a long time. It is a fact that a poor kid finds it very difficult to climb the ladder, get good education, proper food to have a good physical condition and study and beat poverty, whenever we see one or two cases of success we think that the time has come where the poor's children are doing well in life but in reality this one off cases are very rare and the probability of a poor' child to become rich is very less. Urban Indian elite society has grown up to welcome foreign goods and their children having a great lifestyle but the rural poor' children are still struggling with basic necessities like education, food and shelter. So, all these biases work against the poor's children to think big and do well in life. This will need a generational shift in our efforts to give a level playing field to a poor's kid to educate themselves and become successful materially in their life. Children born into low-income families often face very different life outcomes depending on the country they live in, largely because opportunities for social mobility vary widely across societies. The transmission of poverty from one generation to the next is not only a matter of income but also the result of factors such as access to quality education, family environment, and the strength of social safety nets. These factors together determine whether children are able to rise out of poverty or remain trapped in its cycle.

Even in the most developed country of United States, studies reveal a strong connection between a child's economic background and their financial status in adulthood. Nearly

40 percent of children who grow up in the lowest income group remain in that bracket as adults, while only about 3 percent manage to move into the highest income group. Race also plays a significant role in shaping economic mobility. A Columbia University study shows that Black children are more likely than their white counterparts to experience both childhood and adult poverty, even when accounting for similar childhood conditions. Geography further compounds this problem, as children raised in certain regions of the U.S. are twice as likely to remain poor compared to those in communities with stronger opportunities for advancement.

The persistence of poverty across generations can be explained by several reinforcing mechanisms. Families with limited resources often cannot adequately invest in their children's education, healthcare, and development, which restricts future opportunities. Poor nutrition, inadequate housing, and limited access to healthcare weaken both physical and cognitive growth, leaving long-term consequences. The stress and instability of poverty also affect parenting quality and children's mental well-being, creating barriers that extend well into adulthood. Education becomes a crucial link in this cycle, as children growing up in poverty frequently attain lower levels of schooling, which in turn limits their earning potential and economic security later in life.

Comparisons across countries reveal striking differences in the persistence of poverty. In the United States, children

who spend their entire childhood in poverty are 43 percentage points more likely to remain poor in early adulthood. By contrast, Nordic countries such as Denmark report much lower rates of poverty persistence, around 8 percent, highlighting the effectiveness of stronger welfare systems and redistributive policies in fostering upward mobility. These differences underscore how social structures and government interventions can shape the extent to which poverty is passed from one generation to another.

Despite these daunting statistics, research also highlights factors that can help individuals overcome disadvantaged beginnings. Many successful adults who grew up in poverty attribute their achievements to having strong aspirations, confidence, and a belief in their ability to succeed. The presence of supportive adults, such as parents, teachers, and mentors, also plays a critical role in offering guidance, encouragement, and opportunities that might otherwise be out of reach. These examples show that while poverty is deeply entrenched, the right mix of individual resilience and structural support can create pathways toward upward mobility.

When we talk about poverty we also remember the great saint Kabir, and poverty without Kabir's sayings is a unfinished task, while Kabir himself came from a very poor family and this is very rare that a kid from a poor family grows to become a saint, Kabir understood life even though he was poor, if we look at other saints such as Gautam Buddha and

Mahavir they all come from a rich and affluent family but Kabir was an exception. Saint Kabir's famous quote on not oppressing the weak, or "Durbal ko na sataiye, jaaki moti hay," warns against harming the poor and weak, emphasizing that their silent suffering or curse can be powerful enough to melt even iron. Similarly, the doha, "Tinka kahun na nindiye, jo paavan tar hoy," advises against underestimating small or weak things, as even a tiny dust particle in the eye can cause great pain. These powerful Doha's from Saint Kabir urges us to treat all people, especially the poor and weak, with respect and compassion. They caution against arrogance and emphasize that even the most seemingly insignificant among us possess a power and dignity that should not be violated.

Saint Kabir did his job of spreading love and making people aware about oneness of God, promoting universal love, equality, and social justice. He emphasised on inner devotion over blind faith. Our book has given an extra importance to the poverty chapter because being poor can be really difficult in a world where materialistic pursuits have taken over humanity, where human greed has taken over justice to the poor and needy. We would argue that there is no one size fit solution for removing poverty but one thing can always help the poor and for that they don't need any money and that is spirituality and devotion to God. Being spiritual can help the poor to look at the injustice happening in this world from a different angle, being spiritual will help connect the poor to the nature which is the ultimate reality,

spirituality has the power to change the condition of the poor their perspective on life will change and this has come from our own personal experience of dealing with mid-level poverty during college days when budget was so limited that it became difficult to get a proper meal and depend on others for various things, we would not say that we were extreme poor but we saw some poverty and has developed the empathy to look at the poor from a different Lense, the hidden biases against the poor makes their life more difficult, so what exactly is the solution? The government should set up a fund called the spiritual capital fund and what this fund does is open spiritual centres in some of the remote part of the country and teach spirituality to the poor and how they can fight biases against them. These centres can also do the job of giving yoga and meditation lesson for the poor to tackle life and progress by breaking all the barriers. This seems easy to talk about but ask a poor, the first thing they think is how to get the next meal and government has been doing their best to provide free rice which is a great step towards battling poverty in the country.

Now let us examine the factors and data due to which poor in India are unable to enter the corporate world.

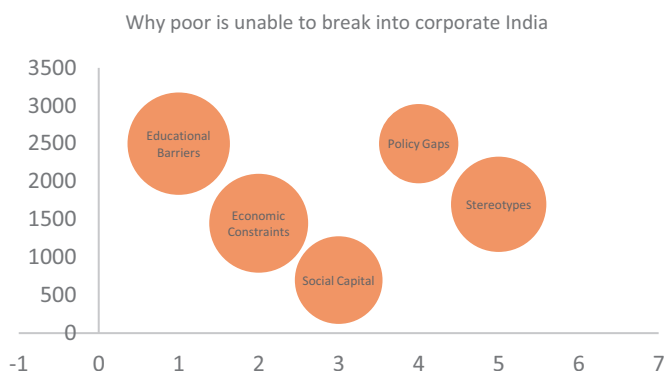


Chart 1.12: The size of the bubble explains which attributes are more important than the other

So, we did a small study to find out what holds the poor from breaking into the corporate world and corporate is a place where poor can completely transform their life to become middle class and in some rare cases to the upper elite class. So, it's been a long time that we are thinking about this problem and about the barriers that they face. The first barrier for a poor is their educational background, poor children usually go to government schools where there is infrastructure been built and along with the infrastructure there is mid-day meal scheme which gives poor children nutritious food, so where is the challenge, the challenge is not infrastructure or any other thing but the quality of teaching that keeps the poor disadvantaged, although there is a rigorous and a merit driven system of hiring teachers by the government and good candidates join as a teacher in government school, there is very high level of enthusiasm

among the teachers when they initially join but they cannot continue the enthusiasm to teach, teachers have the required knowledge and skill to train students with some exceptions but their motivation to teach decline with the passing of teaching years the below Chart 1.13 represents that as the number of years of teaching goes by the motivation for the teachers to teach gradually declines and it's a gradual decline, so when teachers are not motivated in government schools they somehow teach something to the poor children and finish their duty and there is a bias view of most of the government school teachers is that anyways the poor children will grow up to become labourers why to invest so much of time and energy on them but exceptions are there, there are phenomenal teachers in government schools who take it as a duty to serve the nation by teaching the poor, but their number is low. So, what is the solution? we have infrastructure, we have mid- day meals for students. This is a behavioural problem, we would argue that to keep the teachers motivated, teachers should be given frequent trainings outside their district mostly in city campuses where bureaucrats are trained, teachers should be send to business school programmes within the country, mostly rural teachers will feel that they are a very important part of the system and will motivate to come back and teach the poor students, but this motivation may not last long and hence a mentor from a business school or a high quality government training institute should be assigned to teachers to guide them in their journey and frequent visits should be arranged for the

government teachers to some of the best private schools in India and make them go through the process of teaching this will also enhance their teaching skills, we would again argue that it's not about the school infrastructure or salary but the motivation of the teachers that will make all the difference for the students to learn the desired skill. In economics always incentives work but here behavioural economics will come into play and not traditional economics, even if you give a very high salary to the government school teachers the teaching quality will not improve, you have to give them a sense of belongingness to the system and a purpose that teachers too are building the nation.

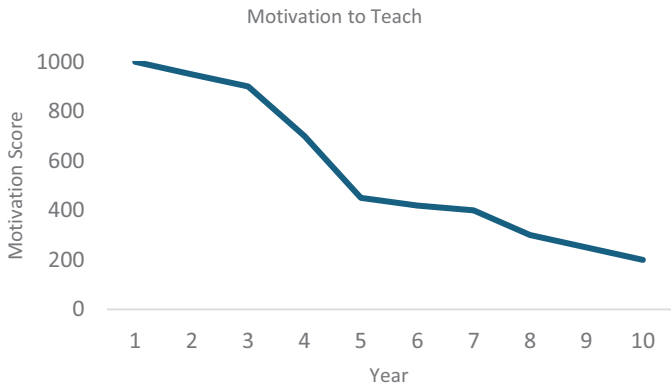


Chart 1.13

Another factor in government schools is that the medium of instruction is usually not English and here we would argue that along with the vernacular languages and mother tongue spoken English should also be taught in

government schools separately as a course in itself here the trainings of the teacher as mentioned earlier in business school and government training institutes will play its role, how much ever we argue about the language we know as a fact that India is a service based economy and services sector will continue giving the highest employment in the organized sector for the next 10 years, manufacturing will take time to pick up and till manufacturing picks up where English language will not matter much till then we need to focus on English language in government schools and for a service based economy where 80 percent of the clients are foreign professionals from United States and United Kingdom, there will be communication gap without English proficiency and this language barrier is also holding back poor to enter corporate India.

When we talk about higher education, the poor already has financial constraints in their life, the higher education and professional courses like Master in Business Administration (MBA) from elite institutions becomes not reachable for the poor due to its high fee structure although government banks provide loans to students who get in to top schools, for the poor to navigate the process becomes a daunting task and corporate India usually hires from the elite institutions, the cream job goes to the ones from this elite institutions. If we take out the data of this elite institutions and look at the family background we can argue with great conviction that more than 90 percent of the students comes from an upper middle class backgrounds and a very few

students from the poor families, at first the entrance to this schools are difficult for the poor due to language and other constraints and the mathematics they ask is of the class 10th standard and as discussed earlier poor's children go to government schools and government school teachers due to a lack of motivation and behavioural aspect do not teach well to the students, they are disadvantaged from the beginning itself and one more thing we realised with our experience of working in the corporate sector (not every company) is that there is a certain biasedness towards the workers who come from the elite institutions, if someone from a lesser known college enter these elite group of this companies there is serious biases against them as the elite from the top schools look down upon them and forget a poor even the rich if not from an elite institution enter they could also face the biases so in short the life of the poor becomes extremely difficult, the odds are against them. But to look at the positive side there are cases where the poor has excelled and got into top schools and entered top corporates and became C level executive, so we would not argue that elite college biasedness is everywhere in corporate India but in some cases, it does exist and these biases will continue until the society itself transform and give importance to skilled workers and not to their fancy degrees. Also In the corporate world, internships, referrals, and social connections matter a lot. Poor families usually lack such networks. Corporate workplaces also expect soft skills like presentation, confidence, accent-neutral English, and familiarity with corporate etiquette—skills

rarely taught in the schools where the poor go to attend. There are also some stereotypes which some recruiters might assume that candidates with a poor family background lack polish or fit for the corporate culture.

How to solve the poverty problem along with the biases that the poor faces? The solution is cutting edge research in behavioural economics and human Psychology can solve the poverty problem and also the biases against the poor because research would give ground level information to the policy makers about poverty and the biases that poor faces as poverty and bias are deeply intertwined. The mental strain of living in poverty can lead individuals to make decisions that prioritize immediate needs over long-term goals, a phenomenon known as present bias. This isn't a sign of flawed character but a practical response to a scarcity of resources.

On a societal level, deeply ingrained stereotypes often portray people in poverty as lazy or unmotivated. These biased beliefs, sometimes rooted in the idea that people deserve their lot in life, can influence public opinion and lead to a lack of support for social safety nets. This blame-the-victim mentality, combined with the belief that those in poverty are less affected by hardship, reinforces inequality and makes it harder for people to escape their circumstances.

Ultimately, both the cognitive biases of those experiencing poverty and the societal biases against them create a difficult cycle to break. Understanding this two-

sided relationship is crucial for designing effective solutions that address the problem from all angles.

More research is essential for solving the problem of poverty and its biases by moving the focus from individual faults to systemic and psychological factors.

By studying the cognitive burden of scarcity, research can show how constant stress from a lack of resources limits a person's ability to think long-term. This helps in creating interventions that are designed to work with human psychology, rather than against it.

Research also has the power to combat societal biases. By providing data that demonstrates how poverty is often the result of structural issues, not personal failings, it can change public opinion and increase support for effective social programs. For example, studies showing the positive impact of unconditional cash transfers can help dispel the myth that people are poor because they lack motivation.

Finally, using methods like randomized controlled trials (RCTs) allows researchers to rigorously test different anti-poverty solutions. This evidence-based approach helps identify which interventions truly work, leading to more effective policy-making and giving policymakers the confidence to implement bold solutions.

Chapter 5:

Technology and Biasedness

Technology can be understood as the practical use of human knowledge, skills, and creativity to address challenges and make life easier. It is not limited to gadgets or machines; rather, it includes processes, tools, and systems that people design to achieve specific goals. From the earliest days of human civilization, technology has been central to progress—whether it was the discovery of fire, the invention of the wheel, or the development of farming tools. One important feature of technology is that it is always created with a purpose, usually to solve a problem or meet a human need. It can take the form of something as simple as a hammer or as advanced as artificial intelligence. Unlike natural occurrences, technology is built and shaped by human effort, and it continues to evolve as society advances. Over time, technology has taken many forms. In the industrial age, inventions like the steam engine, electricity, and the telegraph changed how people worked and communicated. In the modern era, computers, smartphones, and the internet have transformed nearly every aspect of daily life. Today, emerging technologies such as biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing are opening new possibilities for the future. It is also important to remember that technology extends beyond physical objects.

It includes processes such as mass production, systems like digital banking or online education, and frameworks of knowledge such as computer programming or engineering. In short, technology represents the way human beings apply their knowledge to create innovations that solve problems and enhance the quality of life.

So, when we define technology its different from a traditional view which differs from what a technology is usually defined in the world. In our view technology is something which makes seemingly impossible things possible, technology is something which humans dreamt of in the past but it is actually happening in present times, technology is about making the future look dynamic and ever changing. Technology does make human life easier but it also bridges the gap between the dream and the reality. Although technology is human made and some in Silicon Valley has started working on replacing entire human work with technology but we would argue that technology can never replace the work of the human's soul and it stands with the hand of God. Although many technocrats who are building new ways to reduce human effort, we would like to argue that technology will reach a saturation point but there is a long way to go.

Technology has the potential to improve lives, but it can also magnify existing biases. This happens because algorithms, datasets, and design decisions often mirror the prejudices present in society. As a result, the systems we rely

on may produce outcomes that are unfair to certain groups, especially marginalized communities. These biases can reinforce harmful stereotypes, widen social and economic inequalities, and affect crucial areas such as hiring, healthcare, finance, and even law enforcement.

Bias in technology occurs when digital systems—particularly those driven by artificial intelligence or algorithms—generate results that are discriminatory or unjust. The problem does not stem from the machines themselves but from the way they are created and trained. The data used, the assumptions built into their design, and the human decisions guiding their development often carry traces of historical and social inequities, which then shape how these technologies function.

Several real-world cases highlight this issue. Facial recognition software, for instance, has been shown to misidentify women and people of colour at far higher rates than white men, sometimes leading to false arrests or workplace complications. Recruitment platforms have also reflected gender biases, with one well-known case involving a system that automatically ranked female candidates lower because it was trained on past hiring data dominated by men. In healthcare, algorithms designed to allocate resources have disadvantaged black patients by focusing on spending history rather than medical needs. Similarly, digital advertising platforms have targeted job opportunities based on

stereotypes, presenting nursing roles largely to women and physical labour jobs to minority men.

The consequences of such biases are wide-ranging. They can worsen inequality by unfairly limiting opportunities for already disadvantaged groups. They may also raise legal and ethical concerns, as discriminatory outcomes could violate laws and damage institutional credibility. On a broader level, these technologies reinforce harmful stereotypes, shaping social perceptions in negative ways. From a business perspective, biased systems can erode trust, damage reputation, and reduce market potential.

There are multiple reasons why bias emerges in technology. One major factor is skewed or incomplete datasets that fail to represent the diversity of society. Design flaws also play a role when systems are built without considering the needs of all user groups. Additionally, algorithms trained on past behaviours often replicate existing patterns of discrimination, embedding historical prejudices into new systems.

To address these problems, a proactive approach is essential. This includes gathering more inclusive and representative data, designing systems with diversity in mind, conducting regular audits to detect unfair outcomes, and ensuring transparency in technological processes. By taking such measures, it becomes possible to reduce biased results and create tools that distribute benefits more fairly across society.

In short, bias in technology is not a distant or abstract issue—it has real and measurable impacts on people’s lives. Tackling it requires awareness, responsibility, and ongoing efforts to make sure that innovation works in the service of equity and inclusion.

Now let us look at the different biases that impact Technology in a more detailed way, first let us understand How does techno-bias differ from systemic bias in tech?

Techno-bias and systemic bias are closely connected, but they are not the same. Techno-bias refers to the prejudices that emerge within the technology itself, often as a result of the way data is gathered, processed, and used. These biases typically stem from technical decisions such as how an algorithm is designed, what data is selected for training, or which parameters are emphasized in computational models. Even when developers intend to remain neutral, the outcome can still favour certain groups or disadvantage others if the system’s design embeds hidden biases.

Systemic bias, in contrast, is broader and extends beyond the technical system into the structures and practices of organizations, industries, and society as a whole. It reflects the influence of unfair cultural norms, institutional policies, and organizational behaviours that consistently disadvantage marginalized groups. This form of bias may manifest through hiring practices, unequal opportunities for advancement,

limited representation in datasets, or unequal access to technology, thereby reinforcing long-standing inequalities.

The key difference is that techno-bias arises from technical flaws or choices that affect how a system functions, while systemic bias reflects deep-rooted inequities built into the environment where technology is created and applied. Techno-bias is about the outputs of a system, whereas systemic bias speaks to the social and institutional context that shapes technology and its use. Recognizing the distinction between the two is vital for building fairer technologies and for ensuring that technological progress helps reduce, rather than entrench, existing social disparities.

Next let us study what common data sources most often introduce bias into algorithms. Algorithmic bias often stems from the data that is used to build and train these systems. A major source of error arises when the datasets are unbalanced or fail to represent the full range of people the technology is meant to serve. For example, facial recognition tools that are trained mostly on images of lighter-skinned individuals tend to misidentify people with darker skin, leading to unequal and discriminatory outcomes.

Another important factor is historical bias. When data mirrors past social inequalities, algorithms can reproduce and even intensify those patterns. For instance, if hiring data reflects a history of preferring male candidates, a recruitment algorithm trained on that information may continue to undervalue female applicants. Similarly, natural language

models built on large text collections can adopt the gender or racial stereotypes present in those sources.

Bias can also emerge from the way information is measured or classified. When the tools used to collect data produce systematic errors, the bias carries into algorithmic decisions. A well-documented case is that of pulse oximeters, which have been less accurate in measuring oxygen levels for individuals with darker skin tones. Algorithms depending on such faulty data risk reinforcing disparities in healthcare.

Other forms of bias include selection bias, which occurs when sample data is incomplete or unrepresentative, and confirmation bias, where algorithms strengthen existing patterns by favouring dominant groups or viewpoints.

In short, algorithms often inherit their biases from the data they rely on. If the data is incomplete, historically skewed, or inaccurately measured, the systems built on it are likely to deliver unfair outcomes. Addressing these issues requires careful auditing and correction to ensure algorithms serve all groups equitably. Next, we will discuss how companies and other organizations can audit and reduce the bias in Artificial Intelligence systems. Effectively addressing bias in AI systems requires organizations to follow a structured, multi-layered strategy. The first step is a close review of training datasets to make sure they are balanced, inclusive, and not shaped by historical or systemic inequalities. Techniques such as data cleaning, re-sampling, and balancing can help reduce distortions before models are

trained. In addition, algorithms can be designed with fairness constraints built in, ensuring that outcomes are equitable across different demographic groups.

Ongoing audits play a central role in this process. These involve both human oversight and the use of technical tools that measure disparities in AI outputs. Fairness metrics—like demographic parity or equalized odds—are often used to assess whether certain groups are being treated unfairly. Auditors look beyond the technical details of the model, analysing features, decision paths, and social impacts to uncover hidden biases. It is also important to study how multiple sources of bias interact and to evaluate the broader consequences of deploying AI in real-world contexts.

Reducing bias is not only a technical challenge but also an organizational one. Strong governance frameworks that emphasize accountability and transparency are essential. Building diverse development teams brings in varied perspectives, which reduces blind spots during design and testing. Collaboration among data scientists, compliance experts, legal professionals, and ethicists ensures that both regulatory requirements and ethical principles are upheld. After deployment, continuous monitoring and feedback loops help organizations detect and correct biases as they arise.

Additional safeguards may include post-processing methods that adjust outcomes after predictions are made, as well as privacy-focused techniques such as differential privacy

to protect individuals while maintaining fairness. Clear communication about how AI systems work—often referred to as transparency—helps build trust with stakeholders and allows for more meaningful oversight. Ultimately, mitigating bias is not a one-time task but an ongoing responsibility, requiring vigilance, interdisciplinary cooperation, and a long-term commitment to fairness in order to create technology that benefits everyone.

Next let us discuss the future regulations that are being proposed to reduce biases in technology. Upcoming regulations designed to curb bias in technology are increasingly cantered on the principles of transparency, accountability, and fairness in both the creation and use of AI and automated decision-making systems. In the United States, proposals such as the Algorithmic Accountability Act would obligate certain organizations to conduct impact assessments before deploying AI tools, with a focus on preventing discrimination and limiting misuse of data. Similarly, the White House’s AI Bill of Rights lays out guiding principles that emphasize protections against algorithmic bias, the safeguarding of personal data, greater openness about automated systems, and giving individuals the ability to challenge decisions made by machines.

President Biden’s Executive Order on Artificial Intelligence builds on these efforts by promoting the development of safety and security standards for AI applications, particularly those that could threaten public

health, safety, or national security. The order also calls on federal agencies to work together to address bias and discrimination linked to AI while extending consumer and worker protections. It further highlights the importance of global cooperation on responsible AI governance and makes investments in education and research to support innovation while ensuring technologies are aligned with ethical norms.

On the international stage, initiatives like the European Union's AI Act take a risk-based approach, identifying high-risk applications and placing stringent requirements on them. These include mandatory bias audits, transparency obligations, and provisions for human oversight. While many countries are still in the process of shaping comprehensive national policies, sector-specific rules are already emerging in areas such as healthcare, finance, recruitment, and public safety. These often require organizations to document their AI systems, explain how decisions are reached, and provide safeguards against discriminatory outcomes.

Regulatory strategies also stress the need for collaboration among governments, industries, researchers, and civil society. Some proposals encourage responsible innovation by offering incentives, while others seek to strengthen existing regulatory bodies by equipping them with AI expertise rather than creating new agencies. This balanced approach aims to foster technological progress without sacrificing oversight, ensuring AI systems operate safely and fairly.

In short, the direction of future regulations will rely on mandatory impact assessments, stronger transparency rules, robust anti-discrimination protections, and mechanisms for accountability, all while encouraging innovation and building international partnerships to guide the ethical use of AI.

If we look at the recent developments in Artificial Intelligence the below chart 1.14 explain the latest innovations that has happened and research is ongoing on this, as new development comes in certain biases also happens

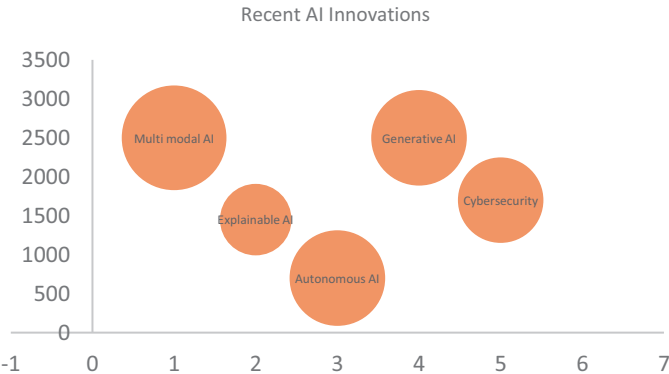


Chart 1.14: The size of the bubble explains which technologies are more developed than the other

Now let us discuss what these new developments in Artificial Intelligence means and the biases associated with them:

AI Innovation Description Biases & Real-World Impacts

Multimodal AI	Integrates multiple forms of data such as text, images, and video to generate richer insights. Example: OpenAI's text-to-video model Sora.	Historical & representational bias: These systems often reproduce stereotypes present in their training data. • In 2023, tools like Stable Diffusion and Google Gemini generated images of CEOs and judges as predominantly white men, reinforcing occupational stereotypes. • When asked to counter the “white saviour” narrative, one model still produced mostly white doctors and Black children, reinforcing racial hierarchies.
Explainable AI (XAI)	Techniques designed to make machine learning models more understandable and trustworthy for humans, often used to detect and reduce bias.	Algorithmic & cognitive bias: Despite their purpose, XAI models still reflect the assumptions of their creators and the data they rely on. • Developers' perspectives can influence how the model values features, unintentionally leading to discriminatory results.
Autonomous AI	Systems that function with minimal human	Measurement bias: Errors arise when training data does not

	control, such as self-driving cars and AI diagnostic tools, often trained through reinforcement learning.	accurately mirror real-world conditions. • The COMPAS tool in the U.S. criminal justice system unfairly assigned higher risk scores to Black defendants, reflecting racial disparities in policing data. • A healthcare algorithm gave priority to white patients because it equated health needs with spending history, ignoring systemic underinvestment in Black patients' care.
Generative AI	Produces original content—text, visuals, or video—based on patterns learned from large datasets. Examples: ChatGPT (text), Midjourney (images).	Gender & cultural bias: Models can reproduce stereotypes and harmful associations. • A 2024 UNESCO study showed major language models more often linked women to “home” and men to “executive” roles. • In 2022, Lensa AI was found to generate sexualized avatars of women from specific racial groups, reflecting biases in internet training data.
Cybersecurity	Employs AI tools to anticipate and identify digital threats, such as	Exclusion bias: Certain systems may be neglected if training data excludes them. •

	malware or hacking attempts.	For example, models may be tuned to threats common in Western contexts while overlooking vulnerabilities in other regions, leaving them exposed.
Automated AI Development	Uses AI to streamline and automate the design and rollout of AI systems, increasing accessibility. Example: Google's AutoML.	Algorithmic bias: Biases from earlier data and design choices can be embedded in automated systems, making them harder to detect. • An automated credit approval tool trained on biased financial data could systematically reject applicants from marginalized groups, even without human intent.

Chapter 6:

Culture and Biasedness

Culture plays a powerful role in shaping bias because it provides the lens through which people make sense of the world, form opinions, and judge others. Every culture is made up of shared values, traditions, norms, and belief systems that influence how individuals behave and interpret situations. Bias often emerges when these cultural norms privilege certain groups or viewpoints while unintentionally disadvantaging or excluding others. Many of these biases operate subconsciously, making them harder to recognize.

Cultural bias refers to the tendency to interpret or evaluate experiences according to one's own cultural background, often at the expense of fairness toward other groups. This can lead to stereotypes, misunderstandings, or even prejudiced attitudes toward individuals from different cultures. For example, in Western societies, direct eye contact is considered a sign of honesty and confidence, while in some Asian cultures, avoiding eye contact is seen as a mark of respect. Misinterpreting these differences may lead to biased judgments about someone's character. Similarly, concepts of time vary across cultures—while punctuality is highly valued in Germany or Japan, more flexible attitudes toward time are common in countries like India or Brazil. These differences can foster negative stereotypes in cross-

cultural workplaces, where one group might unfairly view the other as "lazy" or "rigid."

Cultural norms also shape expectations about gender roles, leadership, and social behaviour, which can lead to biases in professional and personal settings. For instance, in some cultures, leadership qualities are closely tied to masculinity, which can marginalize women from decision-making positions. A concrete example is the underrepresentation of women in executive roles in many countries, often due to culturally embedded assumptions that men are more authoritative.

Stereotypes—oversimplified and generalized beliefs about groups—are another way culture reinforces bias. These stereotypes are often spread through education systems, family teachings, or media portrayals. African cultures are sometimes portrayed in Western media as underdeveloped or dependent, ignoring the diversity and progress within those societies.

The relationship between culture and bias is not fixed; it evolves with globalization, migration, and social change. As societies become more interconnected, exposure to diverse cultures can either reduce biases through greater understanding or, conversely, reinforce them if stereotypes are left unchallenged.

In summary, culture molds bias by influencing how people interpret differences and categorize others, often in

ways that reflect cultural norms and traditions. Recognizing and addressing these biases requires openness to cultural diversity and a willingness to reflect critically on one's own cultural assumptions. For example, promoting cross-cultural training in workplaces, encouraging diverse media representation, or questioning long-held stereotypes can help build a more inclusive and equitable society.

Cultural bias often becomes visible in everyday public behaviours, where individuals interpret others' actions through the lens of their own cultural norms. One common example is greeting styles. While some cultures value handshakes or hugs as signs of warmth and respect, others emphasize bows or nods. When these gestures are misunderstood, they can cause awkwardness or even be perceived as disrespect.

Personal space and touch are another area where cultural expectations differ widely. In some societies, close proximity and physical contact during conversation are natural and comfortable, whereas in others, the same behaviour might feel invasive or inappropriate. These contrasting norms can lead to misjudgements about friendliness, boundaries, or respect.

Communication patterns also reflect cultural diversity. Cultures that prize direct and explicit communication may view indirect or context-based speech as evasive, while societies that prefer subtlety may see straightforward talk as

overly blunt or rude. Such interpretations reveal how cultural bias influences perceptions of character and intent.

Hygiene and cleanliness practices also vary. What one group considers a standard of cleanliness may be perceived by another as excessive or insufficient. These judgments can foster stereotypes or negative assumptions about entire communities.

Similarly, dress and appearance are often subject to biased interpretations. Clothing styles, grooming choices, and other visible expressions of identity are frequently judged against one's own cultural expectations, reinforcing stereotypes or notions of appropriateness.

Public behaviour, including attitudes toward noise, queuing, eating in shared spaces, or displaying affection, also differs across cultures. Someone who appears disruptive in one cultural context may, in reality, be following the accepted norms of their own community. The same applies to food preferences and dining practices—what one culture celebrates as a delicacy may be seen as unappealing or even offensive by another, leading to discomfort or disapproval in social settings.

Altogether, these examples highlight how invisible cultural assumptions shape the way people interpret public interactions. Everyday moments—whether in greetings, dress, or eating habits—reveal how cultural bias quietly influences social judgments and relationships.

Conclusion:

Bias is one of the oldest and most enduring forces shaping human existence. It is woven into the fabric of daily interactions, quietly guiding choices, informing judgments, structuring opportunities, and dividing communities. From the intimacy of the family to the impersonal reach of technology, from face-to-face encounters with strangers to the collective rhythms of culture, prejudice takes on countless forms, some overt and recognizable, others subtle and nearly invisible. This book has attempted to walk across these terrains, examining bias in the home, in professional environments, in moments of social interaction, in the context of poverty, through the lens of technology, and within the vast domain of culture. At each step, what has emerged is not a single, isolated phenomenon but a web of interconnected forces. As we arrive at this conclusion, the task is not merely to summarize what has been said, but to weave together the threads and reflect on what they reveal about humanity, its fragility, its contradictions, and its possibilities for renewal.

Bias, as explored in the preceding chapters, is not simply a matter of individual failing or moral weakness. It is structural, historical, and systemic. It emerges in personal attitudes but is reinforced by broader patterns of social organization, economic inequality, political power, and cultural inheritance. A single unfair assumption in the mind

of one person may seem inconsequential, but multiplied across millions of interactions, institutionalized in organizations, and amplified by technology, it becomes a force that shapes the destinies of entire groups. The family teaches the first lessons of belonging and exclusion, the workplace reflects systemic hierarchies, strangers trigger the instinctive categorization of “us” and “them,” poverty reveals the entanglement of material deprivation with social stigma, technology both reproduces and magnifies prejudice, and culture becomes the lens through which all of this is normalized or contested. To analyse bias is therefore to analyse humanity itself, for it is in the mirror of our prejudices that we confront our deepest fears, assumptions, and hopes.

The family, as the first institution in which we are socialized, lays the foundation for how bias is learned and how it endures. A child does not enter the world with hatred or prejudice; rather, these are absorbed through the unspoken rules and subtle signals of family life. Favouritism between siblings, rigid enforcement of gender roles, or whispered warnings about “those people” all become part of the scaffolding of a young person’s worldview. What makes family bias so powerful is that it is rarely recognized as bias at all. Within the protective walls of the household, such attitudes are often framed as “tradition,” “care,” or “guidance.” Yet, precisely because the family is a child’s first universe, the lessons learned there echo outward into every subsequent sphere of life. If one grows up believing that girls should be quieter, or that certain neighbours are

untrustworthy, those assumptions do not vanish when adulthood begins—they calcify into default lenses through which others are viewed.

At the same time, the family is not merely a site of reproduction of bias; it is also a site of resistance and transformation. Families that cultivate empathy, that encourage children to ask why, that model fairness and openness, create individuals capable of questioning inherited prejudices. To raise a child to value compassion over conformity, to emphasize respect for difference, is to give them a shield against the biases they will inevitably encounter outside the home. Thus, the family emerges as a paradoxical space: it can either plant the seeds of exclusion or nurture the capacity for inclusivity. This dual possibility mirrors the broader theme of bias itself—always a danger, but also always an opportunity for growth.

From the private sphere of the home, bias extends into the public sphere of professional life. Workplaces are often imagined as meritocratic, as places where talent and effort are the primary determinants of success. Yet reality shows otherwise. The professional world is riddled with inequities—unequal pay, underrepresentation in leadership, and subtle daily slights known as microaggressions. A woman may be passed over for promotion despite excellent performance because her assertiveness is perceived as aggressiveness. An immigrant with a strong accent may be assumed to lack competence, regardless of expertise. A

person of colour may be seen as fitting only certain roles, never quite belonging in the executive suite. These are not accidents of perception but reflections of deep social biases that seep into organizational cultures.

The analytical lens here reveals that workplace bias is not simply the sum of individual prejudices but is encoded into structures: recruitment systems that privilege certain universities, evaluation metrics that reward conformity to dominant norms, networks that circulate opportunities among the already privileged. This is why unconscious bias training, while valuable, is not sufficient on its own. Systemic reforms—transparent hiring practices, mentorship programs, inclusive leadership pipelines—are required to shift the architecture of opportunity. Yet here too lies a philosophical question: can institutions truly become neutral, or do they always reflect the biases of the societies that sustain them? Perhaps neutrality is an illusion, and the real challenge is not to erase bias but to consciously cultivate counter-biases that affirm inclusion, equity, and justice. The workplace, as a collective experiment in cooperation, becomes one of the most fertile grounds for testing humanity's ability to rise above instinctive prejudice.

Beyond family and workplace, the daily encounters with strangers reveal bias in its most immediate and visceral form. Humans are social creatures, but they are also categorizing creatures. The brain seeks shortcuts, grouping people by appearance, accent, clothing, or gesture. These shortcuts

often slide into stereotypes, leading to instant judgments that may bear little relation to truth. A person may be avoided on a bus because of skin tone, a passerby dismissed because of shabby clothing, or a fellow student mistrusted because of religious markers. These fleeting biases may seem harmless, but multiplied across societies, they create walls of suspicion that fracture communities.

Philosophically, this raises a profound tension: human beings yearn for connection, yet their instinctive biases push them toward separation. To overcome this, intentional openness is required. Travel, intercultural dialogue, friendships across divides—all these disrupt the stereotypes that instinctively arise. Every encounter carries within it a choice: to see the other through the lens of fear and preconception, or through the possibility of shared humanity. This is why simple acts—greeting a stranger kindly, listening before judging—become revolutionary in their implications. Meeting new people is not merely a social act; it is a moral and philosophical test, a daily opportunity to expand the boundaries of belonging.

Bias is nowhere more entangled with structural injustice than in the realm of poverty. Poverty is not only an economic condition but also a social stigma, sustained by narratives that blame the poor for their own suffering. In many societies, the poor are seen as lazy, irresponsible, or undeserving, while the systemic factors—inequitable education, exploitative labour markets, discriminatory policies—remain obscured.

This stigmatization creates a vicious cycle. Poverty limits opportunities, and bias against the poor further restricts them, creating self-fulfilling prophecies where deprivation is mistaken for deficiency.

The analytical insight here is that poverty and bias reinforce one another in ways that entrench inequality across generations. A child born into poverty not only lacks resources but also carries the burden of others' low expectations. Teachers may assume less capability, employers may presume unreliability, peers may view them as inferior. These assumptions harden into barriers that prevent escape from poverty, perpetuating the cycle. To break this cycle requires more than economic redistribution; it demands a cultural shift in how societies perceive and value the marginalized. Philosophically, it compels us to confront the question of justice: if all humans share dignity, why do we allow systems that deny that dignity to persist? Addressing poverty bias is therefore not an act of charity but of justice, a recognition that equality is not a gift from the privileged but a right inherent in humanity itself.

Technology, the defining feature of modern life, introduces a new arena where bias both mutates and magnifies. Algorithms, often perceived as objective, are in fact reflections of human assumptions. Trained on biased data, they replicate and even amplify discrimination. Hiring software may filter out women because past data favoured men. Facial recognition systems may misidentify people with

darker skin, leading to disproportionate harm. Social media platforms, designed to maximize engagement, amplify divisive content, reinforcing stereotypes and polarizing societies.

The analytical task here is to recognize that technology does not escape the logic of bias but rather accelerates it. Whereas an individual's prejudice may harm dozens, a biased algorithm can disadvantage millions simultaneously. Yet technology also offers possibilities for fairness: anonymized recruitment tools, inclusive design, equitable access to information. The philosophical challenge is to confront the illusion of neutrality. Technology is not an autonomous force; it is a mirror of human values. The question then becomes: what kind of values do we choose to embed in our machines? Technology can either deepen injustice or expand justice, depending on the ethical commitments of those who create and regulate it. Thus, in technology as in family, workplace, society, and economy, bias is not destiny—it is design, and design can be changed.

Culture, finally, is the deepest and most encompassing context of bias. Culture shapes not only what we think but how we think. It defines the boundaries of normal and deviant, acceptable and unacceptable. A practice seen as natural in one society may be condemned as prejudice in another. Gender roles, class systems, religious traditions—all become lenses through which people are judged. Cultural bias is especially resilient because it is bound up with

identity. To challenge cultural norms often feels like betraying one's heritage, and so prejudice persists under the guise of tradition.

Yet culture is also dynamic, constantly evolving through exchange, migration, and dialogue. Just as culture can justify exclusion, it can also nurture openness. Festivals that celebrate diversity, educational curricula that highlight multiple perspectives, intercultural collaborations—all expand cultural horizons and weaken the grip of bias. Philosophically, culture raises the question of universality: are there values that transcend cultural difference? If justice, fairness, and dignity are universal, then every culture must be willing to interrogate itself, to ask whether its practices honour or diminish humanity. In this way, culture becomes both the container of bias and the crucible of transformation.

Having traversed these domains, we are left with a central question: can humanity ever truly move beyond bias? The analytical answer is cautious. Bias is rooted in the cognitive shortcuts of the human brain, in the historical inequalities of societies, and in the inertia of cultural traditions. It cannot be entirely eradicated. Yet the philosophical answer offers hope. While bias may be inevitable, injustice is not. We cannot prevent the mind from categorizing, but we can prevent societies from weaponizing those categories into oppression. The challenge is not to dream of a world without bias, but to build a world where bias does not determine destiny.

This requires action on multiple levels. Individually, it demands self-awareness, the courage to question one's assumptions, and the willingness to listen to others. Institutionally, it requires reforms in education, workplaces, governments, and technologies that reduce the opportunities for bias to translate into harm. Culturally, it calls for dialogue, exchange, and the celebration of diversity. Philosophically, it asks us to embrace the paradox of humanity: that we are creatures of division and connection, prejudice and empathy, but that through conscious choice, we can tip the balance toward fairness.

Bias, in the end, is a mirror. In it, we see not only the flaws of our societies but also the possibilities of our growth. Every act of fairness, however small, becomes a defiance of centuries of prejudice. Every inclusive institution becomes a beacon that illuminates what is possible. Every culture that embraces difference becomes a testament to humanity's capacity for wisdom. This book, in tracing the many faces of bias, has sought to show not only the persistence of prejudice but also the resilience of hope.

The journey ahead is not about erasing difference but about learning to celebrate it. Families can raise children with open hearts. Workplaces can nurture talents across lines of identity. Societies can meet strangers with kindness rather than suspicion. Economies can provide dignity to the poor rather than stigma. Technologies can be designed to serve all rather than a few. Cultures can honour their traditions while

embracing the richness of others. If there is one lesson to carry forward, it is that the story of bias is also the story of humanity's struggle with itself—a struggle between fear and understanding, division and unity, exclusion and inclusion. The future we create depends on the biases we challenge today.

And so, this conclusion is not an ending but a beginning. To read about bias is one thing; to act against it is another. Let these reflections not remain confined to the page but ripple outward into daily choices, into conversations with family, into policies in workplaces, into gestures toward strangers, into advocacy for the poor, into the design of technologies, into the shaping of cultures. For in the end, bias is not destiny. It is a challenge—an ancient, persistent, yet surmountable challenge. And it is only by facing it with honesty, courage, and compassion that humanity can hope to move closer to the justice it has always sought.

To understand bias is to recognize it as both an ancient inheritance and a living presence. It is ancient because it accompanied humanity from the dawn of survival, when swift judgments about friend or foe, food or poison, meant the difference between life and death. Yet it is also living, adapting to new contexts, shaping new technologies, and embedding itself in new social structures. What was once a survival mechanism has become a force of division. But because it is living, it can be transformed. Humanity is not condemned to endlessly repeat the past; it is capable of

transcending it. The story of bias is therefore not a closed circle but an open spiral, moving through history, bending toward greater awareness, and, potentially, greater fairness.

Let us look more deeply at the philosophical implications. Bias reveals something essential about human perception: that we do not encounter reality as it is, but as it appears through our filters, shaped by upbringing, memory, and culture. To be human is to interpret, to categorize, to make sense of overwhelming complexity by reducing it into patterns. But these reductions, while useful, are never neutral. They emphasize some features, ignore others, and distort the fullness of what is before us. Bias is therefore not simply an error of judgment; it is the condition of judgment itself. The question is not whether we are biased, but which biases we hold, and whether they serve justice or perpetuate harm.

This realization forces us into humility. No perspective is absolute. No interpretation is free of assumption. To claim neutrality is itself a bias—a bias toward denying one's own filters. True wisdom begins when we admit this limitation, when we see that our way of viewing the world is not the world itself but one version among many. Such recognition is not paralyzing; it is liberating. It allows us to listen more carefully, to approach others with curiosity, to remain open to being changed. Bias teaches us that certainty can be dangerous, that humility is a safeguard, and that openness is a path toward greater understanding.

From this philosophical grounding, we can turn back to the practical realms already explored. Families, workplaces, societies, economies, technologies, and cultures all present unique manifestations of bias, but each also offers unique opportunities for transcendence. In families, fairness can be taught alongside tradition, empathy alongside identity. In workplaces, equity can be built into hiring, evaluation, and promotion systems, making organizations not merely efficient but just. In daily encounters, individuals can practice radical openness, treating each stranger not as a category but as a possibility. In economies, policies can shift from punishing poverty to investing in dignity, recognizing that equality of opportunity is not an act of charity but an obligation of justice. In technology, algorithms can be trained not to mirror prejudice but to counter it, embedding inclusivity into code. In culture, traditions can evolve, absorbing the wisdom of the past while discarding the prejudices that no longer serve humanity.

Yet the challenge remains: transformation requires courage, and courage is rare. Bias provides comfort because it simplifies the world. To stereotype is easier than to understand. To exclude is easier than to include. To dismiss is easier than to engage. Overcoming bias, therefore, is not a matter of convenience but of deliberate effort. It is work—sometimes uncomfortable, often slow, always requiring persistence. But this is precisely why it is valuable. A world without struggle would be a world without growth. Bias, by

challenging us, provides the very conditions for our moral evolution.

Consider the example of poverty bias once more. To dismiss the poor as lazy is to absolve ourselves of responsibility. To see poverty as a structural injustice, however, is to confront our complicity and to demand change. The first path is easy but cruel; the second is difficult but humane. Similarly, in technology, to accept biased algorithms as inevitable is to embrace passivity; to insist on ethical design is to exercise agency. Bias offers us a choice in every domain: surrender to its inertia, or resist its pull. That choice is not trivial—it is the foundation upon which societies are built.

Another dimension worth exploring is the temporality of bias. Prejudice is not static; it evolves. What one generation considers normal, another may see as unjust. Practices once defended as tradition—slavery, segregation, disenfranchisement of women—are now recognized as moral failures. This demonstrates that humanity is capable of progress. Biases may never vanish, but they can be weakened, reshaped, and redirected. The moral arc of history does not bend automatically toward justice; it bends when people push it. The awareness of bias, therefore, must lead to action. Reflection without transformation risks becoming complacency.

This brings us to the role of education. Education is the single most powerful tool for confronting bias, not because it

erases prejudice, but because it exposes its mechanisms. A child taught to question stereotypes, to see through propaganda, to analyse systems critically, is less likely to accept injustice as natural. Education equips individuals with the intellectual humility to recognize their own assumptions and the courage to challenge collective prejudices. But education itself must be reformed; curricula often reproduce the very biases they should be dismantling. Whose histories are told? Whose voices are included? Whose knowledge is valued? Education can either be a vehicle of indoctrination or a practice of liberation. The choice rests with societies.

Philosophically, this raises a question about human nature: are we doomed to bias, or capable of transcending it? The answer lies in the tension between instinct and reflection. Instinct pushes us to categorize, to prefer what feels familiar, to fear what feels different. Reflection, however, allows us to interrogate those instincts, to ask whether they serve truth or justice. It is this capacity for reflection—the ability to question not only the world but also ourselves—that distinguishes human beings. Bias may be inevitable, but blind bias is not. Through reflection, bias can become conscious, and once conscious, it can be reshaped.

This reshaping does not occur in isolation. No individual, however self-aware, can dismantle systemic bias alone. Collective action is required. Movements for civil rights, gender equality, and economic justice all demonstrate the power of solidarity. When individuals join together, their

awareness becomes amplified, their voices magnified. Collective resistance to bias creates cultural shifts that endure beyond any single generation. The struggle against prejudice is therefore not only personal but communal, not only philosophical but political. It requires laws, institutions, and movements, as well as self-awareness, empathy, and dialogue.

Yet even as we push for collective change, we must guard against a subtle danger: the bias of believing ourselves free from bias. This is perhaps the most insidious prejudice of all—the conviction that “others” are biased, but we are not. Such arrogance blinds us to our own assumptions and undermines the very humility needed for growth. To truly confront bias, we must accept that no one is exempt, that even the most well-intentioned among us carry unseen prejudices. This is not cause for despair but for vigilance. Awareness of our fallibility keeps us open to correction, to learning, to transformation.

Bias, then, is not only an obstacle but also a teacher. It reveals the limits of human perception, the dangers of complacency, the necessity of humility, the power of empathy, and the importance of solidarity. It challenges us to see beyond the surface, to look beneath assumptions, to resist the easy path of exclusion. In this sense, bias is a mirror in which we see not only our flaws but also our potential. To confront bias is to confront ourselves, and in doing so, to

discover the possibility of becoming more just, more compassionate, more human.

As we conclude this exploration, let us reflect on what it means to live in a world where bias is both universal and surmountable. It means recognizing that every interaction—between parent and child, employer and employee, stranger and stranger, rich and poor, human and machine, culture and culture—carries within it the possibility of prejudice but also the possibility of fairness. It means understanding that progress is not inevitable but requires effort, courage, and persistence. It means accepting that while we cannot erase bias from the human condition, we can choose whether it imprisons us or propels us toward justice.

The vision, then, is not of a perfect world without bias, but of a better world where bias does not dictate destiny. A world where children grow up questioning prejudice rather than inheriting it. A world where workplaces reward talent without discrimination. A world where strangers meet as potential allies rather than potential threats. A world where poverty is met with justice rather than stigma. A world where technology reflects inclusivity rather than exclusion. A world where cultures honour diversity rather than fear it. This vision is not utopian; it is possible, if humanity chooses to pursue it.

In the end, bias is a reminder of humanity's dual nature: fragile yet resilient, prone to division yet capable of unity, bound by history yet open to transformation. To live with

bias is unavoidable; to live enslaved by it is not. The task before us is to continually expand the circle of belonging, to continually question our assumptions, to continually strive toward fairness. The work is never finished, but neither is it futile. Every generation has the opportunity to move the world a little closer to justice.

And so, the story of bias is also the story of hope. Hope that families can nurture fairness, that workplaces can embody equity, that societies can embrace strangers, that economies can dignify the poor, that technologies can serve humanity, that cultures can evolve toward inclusivity. Hope that awareness can lead to action, that reflection can lead to transformation, that compassion can lead to justice. Hope that, despite the weight of history, humanity can choose differently.

Bias is ancient, but so is the human capacity for love. Bias is persistent, but so is the human drive for justice. Bias divides, but so does empathy unite. The final lesson, then, is not one of despair but of possibility. If bias is the mirror in which we see our flaws, compassion is the horizon in which we glimpse our potential. The task of humanity is to walk toward that horizon, step by step, choice by choice, bias by bias, until the world we inhabit reflects not only what we fear but also what we hope.

Note: Please note that most of the data that has been collected for the charts is of qualitative nature and for better representation of the qualitative data, we have converted the*

data into quantitative data. We would like to admit that there are certain errors in the quantitative data but the overall trend and picture presented by the chart remains accurate. We apologize for the minor data errors

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