

Women's Day 2013: "Glass ceiling" still intact

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More women than men are looking for work whilst caring for young children and when working, they generally earn less than men. Many South Africans still believe that education is more important for a boy than a girl and that a woman "should be kept in her place"!

These are some of the prominent findings from a Pulse of the People survey conducted by Ipsos during April and May 2013. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with a randomly selected representative sample of 3,590 adult South Africans from all walks of life.

Women and employment

Only about three in every ten South African women are formally employed - either full-time or part-time. This is in comparison with 44% of men who are employed. Although one could argue (and in a lot of cases it is true) that women stay at home to look after the household or care for children, a much larger proportion of women than men are unemployed **and looking for work**.

	Females %	Males %
Working full-time/part-time	29	44
Not working (student, housewife, retired etc)	30	23
Unemployed and looking for work	41	33

This should be seen in the context of the widely held opinion that men should get preferential treatment when employment opportunities are scarce. This sentiment is not only held by men (as one might expect) but more than a third (37%) of South African women agree.

When jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to jobs than women	Total %	Females %	Males %
Strongly agree/Agree	41	37	45
Neither agree nor disagree	20	21	20
Disagree/Strongly disagree	36	40	31
Don't know	3	2	4

The argument here could be that men are traditionally the breadwinners and can look after the children too, but upon scrutiny, only half of men (51%) live in a household where there are kids younger than 15.

The burden of raising children often rests on women, with almost two thirds (64%) of women living in a household where there are kids younger than 15 - thus women are the sole breadwinners in many cases.

Women and education

The ability to find employment is often influenced by education level and whereas only 4% of all adult South Africans (women and men) have *completed a university degree* - there is a discrepancy in the figures, with more men currently enjoying a tertiary education:

	Females %	Males %
No schooling	2	2
Primary school (some primary school/primary school completed)	12	9
Secondary/high school (some high school/high school completed)	74	73
Tertiary education (some tertiary education/post school qualification/university or technicon degree or diploma completed)	12	16

Moreover, almost a third of adult South Africans (both women and men) believe that education is more important for a boy than a girl:

A boy has more right to education than a girl	Total %	Females %	Males %
Strongly agree/Agree	31	31	31
Neither agree nor disagree	21	21	22
Disagree/Strongly disagree	46	46	44
Don't know	2	2	3

Not only do girls have to compete with their peers at school, but they can also experience societal prejudice against education of females. Fortunately almost half of South Africans (46%) do not share the idea that male education is more important but there are no indications that these opinions are changing dramatically when compared to previous years' scores.

Women and money

The level of education achieved has an influence on the type of employment one can find and resultant earning potential. Looking at the *personal income* of South Africans, a large proportion (47% of women and men) was not prepared to share information about their personal incomes, but the figures are still insightful:

	Females %	Males %
None	12	13
R1- R999	11	6
R1,000-R2,499	16	13
R2,500-R4,999	4	7
R5,000-R9,999	5	6
R10,000-R19,999	4	5
R20,000+	1	3
Refused	47	47

Overall, among those who disclosed their personal income, more women (36%) than men (32%) earn less than R10,000 a month. On the other side of the scale 8% of men earn more than R10,000 a month, while only 5% of women do so.

The average monthly personal income of females (who disclosed their personal income) is therefore a fairly modest R5,863.94, while the average monthly income of males (who disclosed their personal income) is almost R2,800 more at R8,663.04. (The average for South Africa is R7,185.38)

Women and communication

When it comes to communication and staying in touch there is no gender difference, as 87% of both men and women own, rent or have the use of a cellphone.

Also with regard to access to the internet there are negligible differences between genders:

Internet access	Total %	Females %	Males %
Via cellphone	26	26	27
@home	7	6	8
@work	9	8	9
No access	69	70	68

Women and mobility

The ownership of cars is still a man's domain, with 27% of South African men and 20% of women who own, use or maintain a car, station wagon, bakkie or minibus.

Women and politics

Political parties in South Africa make an effort to include both women and men in their parliamentary delegations and on provincial and local government levels.

However, more than four in every ten (42%) adult South Africans are of the opinion that men make better political leaders than women do. This opinion is especially strong amongst men with almost half (47%) of men definitely preferring men making the political decisions in the country.

Men make better political leaders than women do	Total %	Females %	Males %
Strongly agree/Agree	42	38	47
Neither agree nor disagree	25	26	24
Disagree/Strongly disagree	30	34	26
Don't know	3	2	3

Women and rights

About six in every ten adult South Africans (58%) agree that there has been a marked improvement in women's rights in the democratic South Africa - this opinion is shared by women and men alike.¹

Over the last 19 years we have seen a great improvement in the area of women's rights	Total %	Females %	Males %
Strongly agree/Agree	58	58	59
Neither agree nor disagree	24	25	23
Disagree/Strongly disagree	15	14	15
Don't know	3	3	3

South Africans are also giving the government some credit for "Promoting equality between men and women" with almost six in every ten (58%) saying that the government is doing very well or fairly well in this aspect.² A strong minority, however, (about four in every ten) feel that the government is *not doing well* in the area of promoting gender equality.

How is the government doing in promoting equality between men and women?	Total %	Females %	Males %
Very well/Fairly well	58	57	59
Not really well/Not at all well	40	41	39
Don't know	2	2	2

Despite this perceived moderate progress, more than 4 in every ten adult South Africans (42%) either agree or strongly agree that "South African women should be kept in their place".

"In a country where more than half of the adult population are female and which battles with a very high rate of gender violence, this attitude would need to be addressed before any real gender equality - *as guaranteed in our constitution* - can be achieved in our country," says Mari Harris, Director Public Affairs at Ipsos.

South African women should be kept in their place	Total %	Females %	Males %
Strongly agree/Agree	42	41	42
Neither agree nor disagree	24	24	25
Disagree/Strongly disagree	30	32	29
Don't know	4	3	4

Technical aspects

- Fieldwork was carried out from 22 April 2013 to 30 May 2013 by trained and experienced fieldworkers.
- Face-to-face in-home interviews were conducted with a randomly chosen sample of 3,590 South Africans, 15 years and older, in the language chosen by the respondent.
- The results were weighted and projected to the universe.
- The margin of error of the study (determined by sample size, sampling methodology and response rate) is 1,67%.

¹ This was 57% in 2012 - thus no change.

² This was exactly the same, i.e. 58% in 2012- thus no change or development.

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