



Women March 2019 in Tech



The ripple effect of encouraging women into STEM reaches far and wide. Science, engineering and technology are fundamentals to the future of the planet. We need women to take their rightful place in creating that new future.

Preneur Lab Limited is a *'Technology for Social Good'* company that designs innovative digital solutions and community-based programs for Women, Young People and Entrepreneurs in rural and urban settings to create social impact and cogent opportunities for bringing these three groups in the mainstream.

Preneur Lab has been working to empower women since its formation. It has conducted a wide range of programmes, workshops, events and surveys for women. Preneur Lab not only worked with urban university students or young professionals, but it also worked for rural women in remote parts of the country as well as women living in the slums of mega city Dhaka. Preneur Lab publishes reports on women participation in ICT sector since 2017.

Women Participation in the ICT Industry

In “Women Participation in the ICT Industry” Survey, 107 different ICT (Software, Hardware, E-commerce etc) companies of Bangladesh has participated. The survey result shows the percentage of women employed in ICT Companies is around 15%. The data also shows smaller e-commerce companies have a higher percentage of women employees than software or hardware-focused companies. BPO or call centre companies weren't included in the survey.

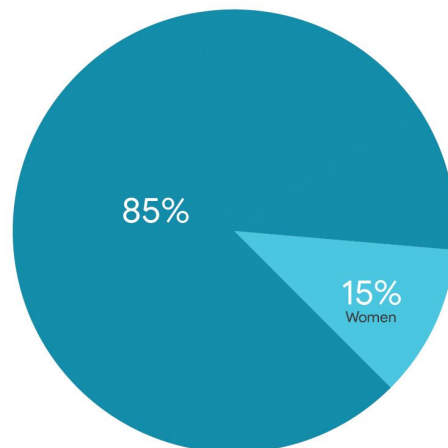


Figure: Percentage of Women Employee in ICT Companies



The survey also had questions to identify women participation in the board and women ownership (shares). Most of the companies ignored those questions so any quotable data cannot be formed. According to last representatives' or voters' list of BASIS published in 2018, women who are representing their companies in BASIS were only 33 out of 688 companies at that time. That is only 5% of women representation.

Companies need to seriously work on the issue to bring gender balance which will eventually lead to growth of the companies and the industry as a whole.

Women Participation on the Internet

To determine the participation of women on the Internet, the number of Facebook user accounts, user demographics of few Bangladeshi top websites, usage of different social media apps/games and interaction of women in multiple Facebook pages were taken into consideration.

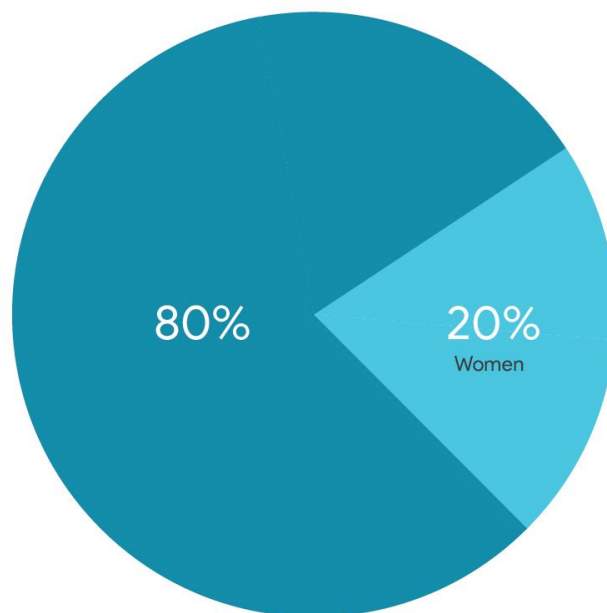


Figure: Women Participation in Internet Usage or Activities

Bangladeshi women represent only 20% of the total internet activities according to the sources mentioned above. Female of age group 18 to 24 are the major users of the Internet. This age group represents 46% of the total female internet



activities. Age group 25 to 34 are the second major user group with 40% representation of the total female users and activities.

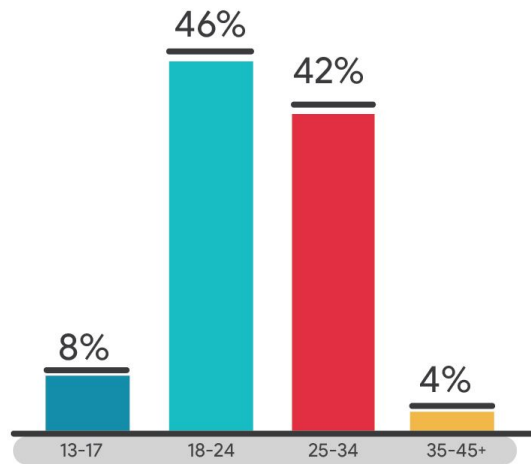


Figure: Age-wise Female Internet User Representation

In the percentage of female internet users, a large portion of women and girls are using the internet only for social media activities, especially Facebook. Almost 27% of the total Facebook accounts from Bangladesh are identified as female. This percentage also includes fake accounts where male runs Facebook accounts as female for several unethical reasons. The real female accounts number is considered to be around 20%.

Women Shaming Contents on the Rise

Women shaming contents, known as “slut shaming” in the west, are rising in this part of the world. Facebook and Youtube videos that insult women for being dressed in a certain way or for interacting in public places are very popular with a certain class of men.

Women also facing online harassment in forms of messages, photos and videos via chat inbox. This is the most common type of online harassment. Facebook messenger, IMO and Whatsapp is the most used chat messaging app. “Revenge Porn” also growing at a very disturbing rate.

There are many popular Facebook groups with huge numbers of users who are promoting early marriage and discouraging women working outside of their



houses. Those groups also being used as major channels to spread different types of hate speech and hate narratives against women and women empowerment.

According to a recent FGD (Focus Group Discussion) of Preneur Lab with school teachers and principals, a common phenomenon was reported that male students tend to open fake accounts with the name of female students to harass her.



Cyberbullying is something that needs to be tackle properly by educating our men and women. Internet and technology are the major force of growth in today's world. More collective efforts should be taken to bring women in ICT to ensure diversity and gender balance.

Disclaimer: The data of the report was collected from different platforms and via crowdsourcing method. The report is only to bring a picture of women participation in the technology sector. Please reach out to mail@preneurlab.com for any clarification required.

Credits: We would like to thank all participating organizations for voluntarily providing the data.

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