

“It’s time to encourage gender equality”

Having worked hard to achieve a top job within the valve industry, Ms. Radhika Pawar (Pawar Industries) knows at first hand the extra challenges facing women in this sector. Nevertheless, hers is a voice of positivity, encouraging the next generation of female students to aspire to roles in production, design and engineering. Ms. Radhika is adamant that more inclusivity would give women greater self-esteem and have a beneficial impact on society as a whole.

By David Sear

Ms. Radhika, why are you encouraging more women to work within the valve and actuator industry in India?

Engineering is definitely a hot field for women to work in. When I joined this industry, I quickly realised that there was just a really small number of women working in this sector. It seems that most people are either going into finance or IT sectors so why not into technology? We definitely need some fierce working brains for smart working and sustainable solutions to our problems.

What types of jobs do you think are ideal for women in valves?

Typically speaking, most of the time we find women working in marketing, sales or communications sectors. Now even after some twenty years, there has been no drastic change as regards the position of women in this industry. I feel that along with cubical work, women should also be engaged in various aspects of production work, such as quality & inspection, calibrations, etc.

I would like to share one incident which I came across in the town of Kolhapur in India. There you will find a number of local ladies wearing sarees and working on CNC machines. I was stunned when I saw this, but it clearly demonstrates that women can also participate in production jobs where accuracy is much needed. While it is no surprise that women are trying to embrace careers in male-dominated industries, still it is unusual.

How might valve companies also benefit from employing women?

The potential for decision making power, insights on tackling situations, managements



Ms. Radhika Pawar says that equality for women alongside men in more industries would create a positive impact on society as a whole

skills... I think even this short list nicely shows how companies could benefit from women employment. From another perspective, male employment in India contributes to 70% of the workforce. If women were to take an equal share, that would boost the country's employment rate as well as promoting the women literacy rate which has been around 12.7% in India for past few years.

Are there any hurdles that need to be overcome?

Lack of education is the most common aspect. Some institutions do promote skills-based courses to men and women and this practice should, I feel, be nurtured. Talking about societal pressures world-wide, women have often been considered as a backward gender and denied the rights, opportunities, choices and pay that are offered to men. Such challenges are much more pronounced in developing countries and low income families. Fortunately many countries have begun establishing equality.

“Training girls and women with STEM skills would be a great game changer”

Which groups of women would you most like to see becoming enthusiastic?

In my honest opinion, young women who are said to serve the best for the nation should be put forth in this scenario. In India, students who graduate in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) fields are not always going to pursue jobs in their own sectors. So some skills oriented courses and further specialization should be provided and undertaken so that these young women can enrich their own knowledge and benefit their companies as well.

Can you describe your own experiences in the valve industry?

When I was in school I was sometimes uncertain which career I should take up in college. Yet every time I looked at my father I knew that I wanted to be an engineer. That is why I followed a Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering. After graduating, I entered into this industry and then I saw myself for the first time and at first hand the actual hurdles that a female engineer has to overcome. Despite the fact that women are known to have superb management skills. So I was and still am determined to prove, more to myself



Pawar Industries was established to manufacture control valves in India.

than anyone else, that I can be just as good as the people around me.

What do you enjoy about working with valves?

This is without doubt a challenging sector and every day brings surprising problems. So you have to be creative and quickly come up with workable solutions, which is very rewarding. But you don't work alone. Colleagues can have great insights too so it is important to canvas everyone's thoughts. Sharing ideas and developing joint solutions is the best way forwards. And as said, women often have fresh perspectives which contribute very much to the decision-making process.

Do you have a plan for where you would like to be in five years' time?

To be honest, I currently manage a team of five women and that gives me quite some inner satisfaction. But let me tell you about one of India's top cab rental services, which recently set up a factory of 10,000 workers. That factory is whole and soul operated by women – hurray! I find this step very encouraging, as it feels like India is making some real progress as regards women. My long-term ambition would

therefore be to hire local women and give them the right training and skills so that they could work in both our corporate as well as production areas. This would boost employment as well as self-confidence which is the foundation of real change. A nation's progress is totally dependent on its people. If women are able to participate equally in more sectors alongside men that would really create a positive impact on society as a whole.

॥ योगः कर्मसु कोशलम् ॥

Achievement through work excellence

We serve - All type of Industries

- Industrial Valves
- Automotive
- Pumps
- Instrumentation & General Engineering
- Power Sector

Quality Approvals

- ISO 9001:2015
- ISO 14001:2015
- OHSAS 18001:2007
- NORSOK APPROVED
- Well known foundry as per IBR

Call : (91-285) 2660113 | Mail : info@castech.in | Web : www.castechindia.com