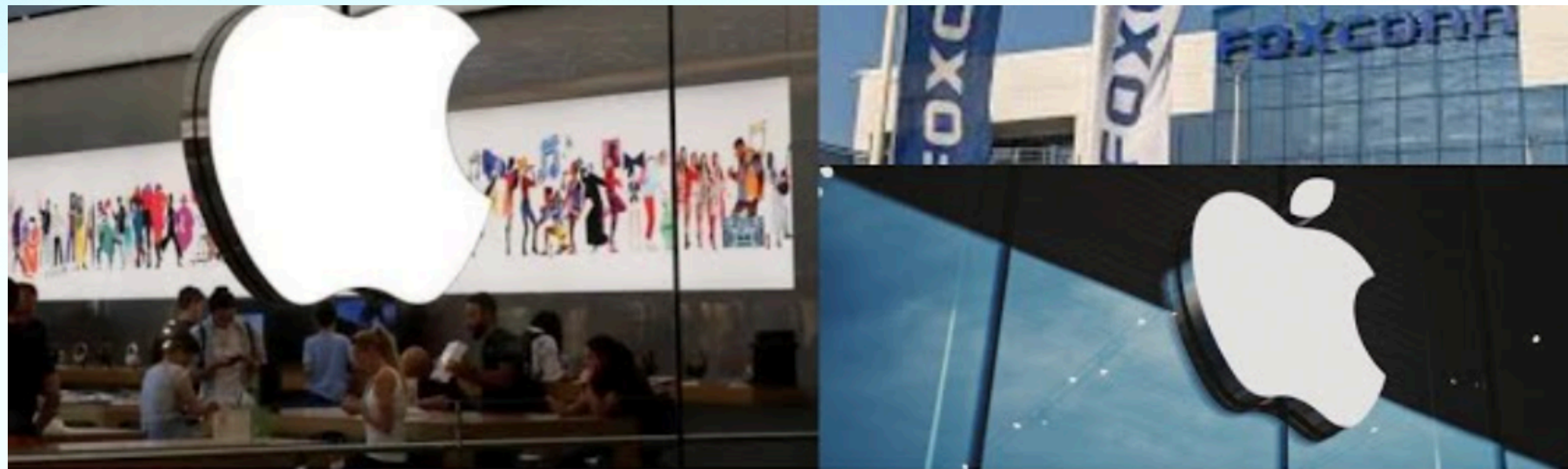


# Apple supplier Foxconn said to reject married women from India iPhone jobs

Women have babies after marriage, risk factors increase when you hire married women, a former human-resources executive at Foxconn India said



APPLE SUPPLIER EXCLUDES  
MARRIED INDIAN WOMEN FROM  
ASSEMBLY JOBS

# Why came in NEWS?

Two sisters, Parvathi and Janaki, attempted to apply for jobs at the Foxconn iPhone factory in Tamil Nadu in March 2023.

- They were turned away at the main gate by a security officer after being asked if they were married.
- The sisters were informed that they would not be hired because they were married.
- Even the auto-rickshaw driver who transported them to the facility mentioned that married women were not being hired.
- Despite the discouraging information, the sisters decided to try applying anyway but were unsuccessful.

Special Report

## Apple supplier Foxconn rejects married women from India iPhone jobs

Both companies' codes of conduct state that workers shouldn't be discriminated against on the basis of marital status.



REUTERS/Palani Kumar

## **Investigation Findings**

Reuters found that Foxconn systematically excludes married women from jobs at its main iPhone assembly plant in Sriperumbudur, citing family responsibilities and societal pressures.

## **Reasons for Exclusion**

Family duties, pregnancy, and higher absenteeism are cited as reasons.

Concerns about married women wearing metal ornaments that could interfere with production and cause electrostatic discharge.

Security concerns regarding theft of components.

## **Company Statements**

- Foxconn refutes allegations of employment discrimination and states that married women are welcome to wear traditional ornaments at work.
- Apple acknowledges past lapses in hiring practices and claims corrective actions have been taken.

## **Legal and Cultural Context**

- Indian law does not prohibit discrimination based on marital status in hiring.
- Foxconn's and Apple's codes of conduct prohibit discrimination based on marital status.

## **Broader Implications:**

- The practice highlights challenges in upholding global standards of inclusion while expanding in conservative regions.
- Discrimination risks undermining efforts to boost female labor force participation in India.

## **Government and Corporate Efforts:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government aims to increase female workforce participation.
- Foxconn and Apple are key to India's manufacturing and economic goals.
- Foxconn has made some changes, including increasing the hiring of married women in recent rounds.

## **Work Environment:**

Foxconn has faced scrutiny for its work culture and conditions, with past incidents in China raising concerns about worker treatment.

# Foxconn's Response

- Foxconn informed the government that 25% of its new hires are married women.
- The company stated its safety protocol, which requires all employees to avoid wearing metal, is not discriminatory.
- Foxconn claimed that reports of not hiring married women may have come from individuals who were not hired.
- The company emphasized that such media reports damage the reputation of the Indian manufacturing sector.

# Government Involvement

- The Ministry of Labour and Employment requested a detailed report from the Tamil Nadu labor department regarding the allegations.
- Employment Statistics:
  - The Foxconn factory employs about 70% women and 30% men.
  - During peak periods, the Tamil Nadu plant employs around 45,000 workers, making it the largest factory for women employment in India.



# Safety Protocols

- Foxconn stated that the rule against wearing metal applies to all employees regardless of gender, marital status, or religion.
- The policy is cited as a safety measure common in many industries.
- Media Report Critique:
  - Foxconn suggested that the negative comments might have come from a small number of individuals (5-10) who were not hired or no longer work at Foxconn.
  - The company did not immediately respond to an email query regarding the matter.

# Laws in such case

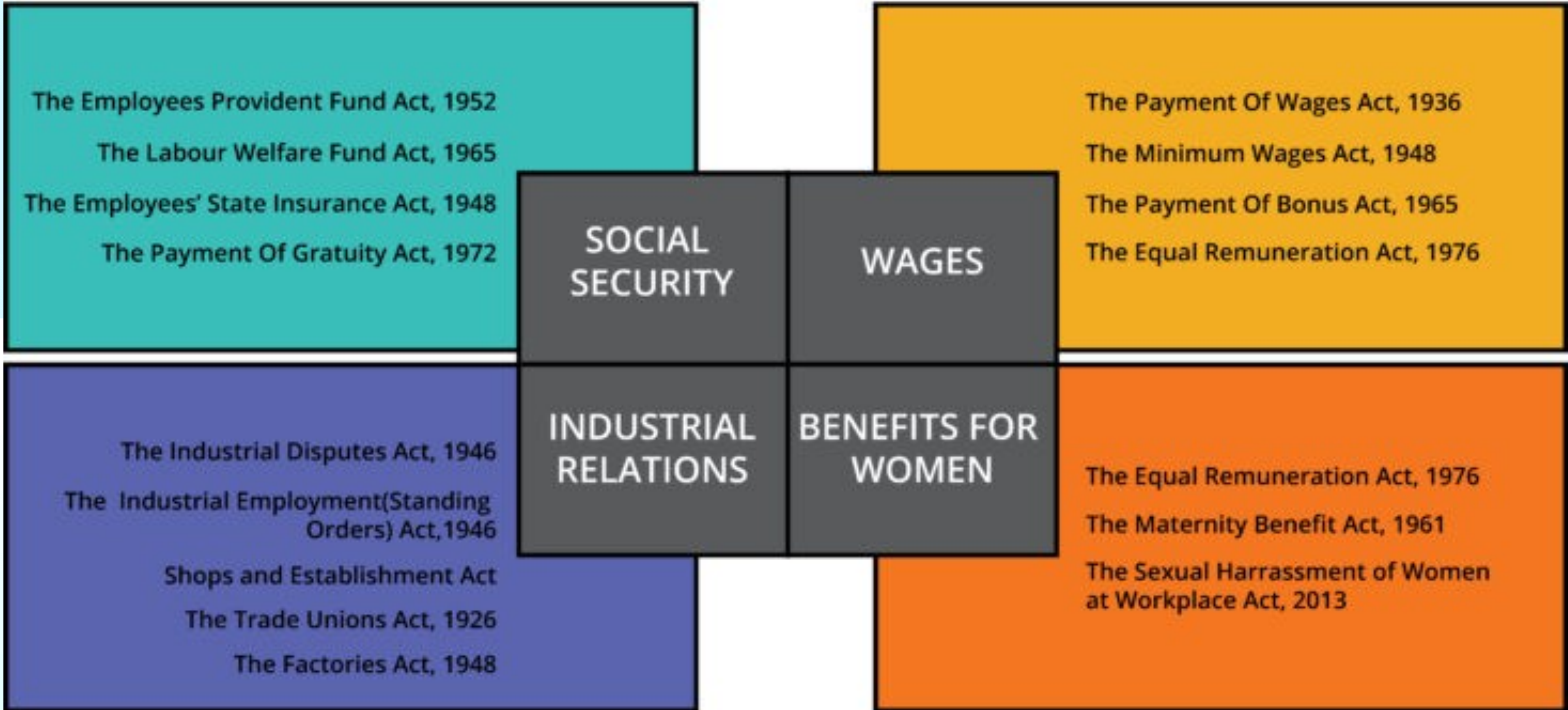
## 1. Constitutional Provisions:

- **Article 14:** Guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.
- **Article 15:** Prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth.
- **Article 16:** Ensures equality of opportunity in matters of public employment and prohibits discrimination in employment or office under the State.

## 2. Labor Laws:

- **Equal Remuneration Act, 1976:** Mandates equal pay for equal work for both men and women and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender in matters of employment.
- **Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946:** Requires employers to define and communicate the terms and conditions of employment, which should be free from discriminatory practices.
- **Factories Act, 1948:** Provides provisions for the health, safety, and welfare of workers, including women, in factories.

# LABOR LAWS IN INDIA



### 3. Employment Policies:

- **Maternity Benefit Act, 1961:** Protects the employment of women during the time of their maternity and entitles them to a maternity benefit.
- **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013:** Provides protection against sexual harassment of women at the workplace and for the prevention and redressal of complaints.

### 4. Court Rulings and Precedents:

- **Supreme Court Judgments:** There have been several judgments by the Supreme Court of India that reinforce the prohibition of discrimination based on gender or marital status in employment. For example, the 1965 judgment striking down the practice of firing married women based on absenteeism.

### 5. International Conventions:

- **ILO Conventions:** India is a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and is committed to upholding various ILO conventions that prohibit discrimination in employment and occupation.

# Making It Easy For Mothers

The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 amends the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 to provide the following

**26 weeks** maternity leave for the first two children

**12 weeks** maternity leave for children beyond the first two

**12 weeks** leave for mothers adopting a child below the age of three months



The Act makes it mandatory for employers in establishment with 30 women or 50 employees, whichever is less, to provide creche facilities either in office or in any place within 500–meters.

**Working mothers** will be permitted to make four visits

during working hours to the creche

**The employer** may permit a woman to work from home if it is possible to do so

**Every establishment** will have to make these benefits available from the time of appointment