



Event Outcome Report

## Diversity in Business Leadership Programme

Tackling conscious and unconscious gender bias in the workplace.

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Location: Pearl Initiatives' Zoom Platform

Speakers:



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## **Session Objectives:**

The panel discussion will highlight the importance of addressing biases in the workplace as part of the business's corporate governance approach and to ensure the growth and sustainability of a business. Unconscious and conscious biases that occur can impact the workplace and there are key data-driven strategies and tactics that can be employed by business leaders to ensure such biases are mitigated. The session will highlight how successful businesses put in place specific measures to tackle gender bias to improve governance and accountability in the workplace.

- Share experiences on successful business practices which how to address the bias
- Promote different tools and methods of correction?
- Explore how business leaders implement policies to advance women at work and ways to enhance their effectiveness.

## **Key Takeaways:**

1. Due to gender discrimination, many women lose the opportunity to work at senior levels and majority of them strive for equal pay. Many of these positions are unequal and devalued for women. For these reasons, despite all attempts to abolish gender discrimination, this issue persists.
2. When it comes to working in a workforce, men consider unconscious bias to be the most significant barrier. This is the most major hindrance that males confront while attempting to excel in today's workplace.
3. Gender equality entails treating all genders equally, respectfully, and without prejudice. It also implies that men and women are socially, economically, politically, and otherwise equal. This is attainable through enacting legislation that promotes gender equality and sensitivity.
4. Gender discrimination is the prejudice and unequal treatment of an individual based on their gender. It affects women in many ways, ranging from being paid less than men for the same job to being denied a promotion because of stereotypes about women being less aggressive leader.
5. The United Nations has stated that achieving gender equality will take more than 135 years. According to them, it will take that long to reduce the gender gap.
6. In the United States, women experience gender discrimination at a rate of 45%. However, in many regions around the world including the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe, women face even higher rates of discrimination. Despite these obstacles, several places have made it possible for women's leadership and involvement.
7. The world is becoming a place where women's leadership and inclusion is not only accepted but celebrated as well as increasingly recognized. In fact, many regions have been able to pave the way for women's leadership and inclusion, with impressive results. For example, in 2017,

women held 26% of seats in the Norwegian Parliament, with a high record. That same year, women held 30% of seats in the Swedish Parliament, also a high record.

8. When it comes to men and women in the workplace, there is a double standard when it comes to hiring. People examine a candidate's gender and what others believe about a candidate's gender. People utilize this information to select a candidate who they believe would be successful or will work well with others, based on their perception of the gender role.
9. Conscious bias refers to prejudiced sentiments against a group that we are aware of, which might be invisible or visible that can be accessed.
10. Unconscious biases are biased attitudes that operate outside of your consciousness and control, are difficult to access or recognize, and impact your actions more than conscious biases. This adds to the difficulty.
11. In the middle east, the gender biases are more magnified. As women are seen to do certain things in a particular way. The traditional role of women in the middle east is seen to be much more conservative than the western culture. Women do not enjoy the rights that women in the west do, for example, they do not have the same rights as men in the west. Thus, gender biases are more amplified.
12. There is unintentional prejudice against women that is more conscious than unconscious biases as a result of how we were indoctrinated as children.
13. Gender discrimination is everywhere. One can notice this in the pay gap, which is known as the glass ceiling. Another issue that women face is glass door, which restricts women from working in certain occupations.
14. Gender discrimination can be the most insidious way that it creeps into our lives is through our own thoughts and actions. We are taught from a young age that the world is a certain way such as, that men are leaders, women are caretakers; that men are strong, women are weak; that men are assertive, women are submissive.
15. Most firms today consider a candidate's appearance before they even consider their skills or qualifications. As a result, many don't include photographs with their job applications. Thus, organizations must rather utilize batch numbers to identify who has been hired in the recruiting process, as HR managers should be more compassionate.
16. Candidates are more likely to be hired in the presence of an attractive appearance, a good resume, or a personable personality. So, it's no surprise that they will subconsciously look at an attractive female and appoint her as they see a great candidate. This is not just a matter of a woman's confidence, but a reflection of the biases held within the society.
17. We have seen that attractive people are hired at a higher rate than their unattractive counterparts. This leads to a negative impact on gender diversity. Companies can help to eliminate the negative impact that gender has on a company by promoting gender diversity. By hiring more women for managerial positions and promoting gender diversity, businesses can

have a positive impact on gender diversity.

18. As the number of highly qualified women increase, they will become a valuable resource that employers should be aware of. Women should be included during the recruitment process, as they will help to increase the productivity of the company.
19. As a society, we have come a long way in the fight for equality for both men and women. We have outlawed discrimination based on gender, and today women have access to education and career opportunities that were once only available to men. But despite our best efforts, the career field is still not equal.
20. Women encounter several factors to consider before making a decision to step out of the house. As a result, many women miss out on many career opportunities.
21. Individuals in any company should have an equal opportunity to get to the top. As a result, management should regularly monitor gender discrimination in the workplace. Therefore, management should ensure to eliminate gender discrimination within the workplace.

## **Summary**

As mentioned previously that 45% of women in the US experience gender discrimination. This is the result of the way in which gender discrimination is embedded in institutions, workplaces, and the society. These patterns are not new, but in the past, they were not prevalent enough to significantly impact the overall experience of women as a proportion of the total population. Now these patterns have become prevalent because gender discrimination has been normalized, and because of this it can be hidden. In addition, it can increase difficulty to counteract it. A good example is a workplace: Women have been in the workforce for a long time, but there is still abundance of gender discrimination that still goes on. Most women agree that the main factor for them to choose between staying at home or going out to work is to maintain a balance between family and work. Some women believe that women are more suitable for taking care of children and home because they are emotionally mature and can cope with the many tasks with the family. Women also face several problems like gender bias, discrimination and lack of opportunities as a result of their gender. Thus, there is always a requirement to promote gender equality and equity. Women should be given the same possibilities as males in the workplace. As a consequence, when given the same opportunity, companies perform better, and it has been proven that firms have always had more scope for more innovative ideas. Women have always been underrepresented in business. This has resulted in a number of negative consequences, including decreased profitability and an increased chance of failure. The addition of women will ensure that the company is more diverse in its workforce. This may lead to higher levels of cooperation within the organization and a more dynamic work environment, as different individuals will be able to bring different perspectives and opinions to the table.