

# *Gender Impact on Execution of Business Strategy*

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**Abstract:** Gender equality has been a global debate both within the political, social and business environment. Gender equality according to most researchers have established a positive relationship with performance of organization. Furthermore, in relation to the impact gender equality has on business strategy execution, it would be argued that having gender equality enhances effective execution of business strategies. The study seeks to find out the gender impact on the execution of business strategy. This would include conducting a survey using questionnaires from 50 women.

**Keywords:** gender equality, business strategy, performance

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

Because it reflects the exact distribution of women and men across positions within organizations, as well as the well-known link between gender inequalities in pay and other employment advantages, gender disparity is an effective indication of gender equality. Gender inclusivity has inspired a number of rules in industrialized nations aiming at eliminating gender bias in hiring, compensation, and career advancement. In theory, women have more chances to have the same jobs as men and enjoy the same privileges. But taking a look at the actual happenings in many corporate offices and other workplaces, one quickly realizes that there is still a significant gender gap that still places women at a disadvantage. Many organizations and governments have made policies and regulations to ensure gender inclusion. Despite this, there are still gender disparities in the workplace. In many organizations, women get paid less than men, even when they have the same educational background, qualifications, and work experiences. Discrimination against women is known to contribute, at least in part, to gender imbalance in the workplace. Several studies have found that decision-makers prejudice towards women on purpose, with some focusing on the effects of leaderships' sexist attitudes toward female employees on discriminatory policies. The paper highlights the gender gap in managerial economics to determine how gender equality is strategic to a business.

## 1.2. General Theoretical or Experimental Bases

### 1.2.1. General Theoretical

The notion that ideas drive economic behaviour is essential to economic sociology, and social researchers have generally understood that social theories may shape actuality rather than explain it [12]. Despite significant advances for women in the public sector over the last half-century, advances in gender equality seemed to halt in the late 1990s and early 2000s on many fronts [11]. This fact is alarming because more women today have access to education and the opportunities that equip them to have the same skills and competence as their male colleagues. Therefore, a decline in the advances of gender equality points to the increasing trend for tolerance of gender discriminatory vices and practices in the workplace, which can also be translated to an increasingly toxic workplace for female employees. Trends in the number of women working, gendered school-subject selection, and views toward gender parity and the allocation of unpaid labour have all been highlighted as stalling. Discrimination theories can deepen and intensify structural inequalities by influencing how people who are exposed to them think, act, and believe they are acting. In most cases, people do not even realize they are being biased because they have internalized gender bias. It has been normalized in organizations, making some people think it is acceptable.

Although there is still space for improvement, empirical studies reveal that great steps have been taken toward equal rights since the second wave of feminism. Evidence also implies that women's advancements in the public arena of employment and politics have been more dramatic than in the private domain of home life [9]. Because the term "gender revolution" implies a singular dramatic moment of change, a levelling witnessed over a brief period can be referred to as the "end of," or a stop in, that revolution. It is clear, for example, that neither the institutional structure around workplace chances to combine work and family duties nor normative masculinity standards have adequately responded to women's increased participation in the labour field [11]. The data reveal that this hypothesis increased people's trust in stereotype accuracy, tolerance of stereotyping, and the degree to which they discriminated against women in a hiring simulation [12]. These practices lead to more discriminatory acts that only add to the gender imbalances and the discrimination that women in the workplace have to experience to the extent that this discrimination becomes systematic. Women have to learn to live and work within these unjust conditions. This tolerance and acceptance of stereotypes are harmful because it creates the illusion that the stereotypes are correct and even threaten to dismantle the progress that gender equality policies in the workplace have made.

### 1.2.2. Experimental Base

Gender representation has always been a focus for researchers across numerous different fields. As per the studies, having even one female executive on a board of directors is not enough to bring about change; instead, having multiple women directors, or women occupying 20 per cent or higher executive positions, tends to be more advantageous in removing gender inequalities [2]. Female representation in decision-making has either increased decision value by providing new perspectives and broadening the knowledge accessible to the team, or it has hampered successful team performance by driving a wedge and controversy [1]. It is possible that this is due to the fact that men and women have different types of leadership, with women being so much more participatory and liberal than men. According to studies, the more women on a board of management, the more probable it is to rank on categories of the most admired companies, most ethical companies, most desirable companies to work for, and most corporate citizens. Gender is regularly one of the driving drivers of a company's corporate social responsibility [1]. Research

conducted in the past has established a relationship between gender diversification, female executives' presence, and the firm's performance [8].

### **1.3. Research Gap**

There is little literature that presents the perspectives of women who opt out of leadership roles and their reasons for doing so. The literature especially lacks these women's perspectives, especially for organizations, regions or sectors that have been established to be more discriminatory towards women.

### **1.4. Research Question/Purpose**

As argued by different researchers, gender equality has an impact business strategy execution the researches seek to establish to what extent would gender influence the execution of business strategy. This is to be guided in four different objectives. One is the to find out what is the ratio of men to women is appropriate for a workplace. Second is to examine if there exists any laws or policies put in place by the organizations to promote equality. Third, is to find out what are some of the reasons cited by the women who turned down leadership and management roles in their organizations? And last is to find out what are the benefits the organization has enjoyed due to gender diversification in their organizations?

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Theoretical Framework & Practical Evidence**

Gender stereotypes are challenging to address because they might subconsciously influence people's perceptions and judgments [4]. Gender stereotypes can have an unconscious and conscious impact on us. Some persons may have explicit sexist inclinations that lead them to avoid working with and employing women. Others may make conscious decisions not to hire women based on prejudices based on the fact that women are more likely than males to leave the employment to care for children [3]. However, most persons with gender bias are likely to be impacted by unconscious stereotypes. The overwhelming majority of people are quicker at identifying women with a family and men with a career than they categorize women with a job and men with a family, implying that people have implicit gender preconceptions [3]. Even when people declare their support for gender equality, research reveals that they may have unconscious associations that drive them to favour men over women. Gender stereotypes have rarely worked positively for women because they have traditionally been viewed as the inferior gender. They cannot be as efficient and essential to the workplace as men. On the other hand, gender stereotypes favour men, and they have liberties that are not available to their female colleagues, even when they all have the same qualifications.

According to the upper echelon approach, a manager's demographic qualities (such as age, education, organizational commitment, and background), as well as psychological variables (especially personal values), influence organizational outcomes [1]. In many ways, the manager is the executor of company policies, responsible for ensuring the workplace environment is conducive. In some cases, managers also double up as leaders in their organizations. Therefore, their actions can be taken to be those of the company. And if these actions foster gender bias, it is safe that female employees in such organizations will be subject to gender-discriminatory actions and will have little organization help or solutions to such instances.

Female executives have been discovered to pay significantly increased recognition to societal rather than ecological concerns in a society where the community has a sizeable humane orientation [1]. Environmental issues include recycling, environmental services, energy and water conservation,

and pollution reduction, while social problems include donations, encouraging education, and aiding non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Men are more concerned about sustainability than women, according to past study. Other studies show that women are more at ease and engaged in social activities than men, that are more preoccupied with financial and environmental issues. As mentioned earlier, these differences in the leadership styles and approaches of the two genders can co-exist. There is no need for one to be proclaimed superior to the other as both have value to the organization and the company.

Gender diversity on corporate boards has recently become a hot topic. It is claimed that men and women have different ideas regarding social duty [1]. According to the findings, women are more likely than males to keep their connections and accept accountability for the needs of others. Experts consistently observe that women are more likely than men to conduct ethically and avoid breaking company policies [1]. Women on the executive board or in managerial positions are frequently thought to be a positive move because they are anticipated to boost their firm's value through their performance [4]. The organization's goals are rarely centred on its well-being only. In most cases, they have plans to improve their clienteles' lives or even the community. Therefore, matters of social responsibility, responsibility for other people's needs, ethical conduct, and respect for company policies, which have been established to be some of the strengths of female leaders, have a high value to the company.

## 2.2. Importance of Gender Equality

It must be realized that men and women play an essential role in every sector. There is an established difference in how men and women react, operate and respond to factors in their work environment, but this does not make one reaction or response superior to the others. But in most cases, men's reactions and general attitudes are perceived to be superior to those that women have, which can be attributed to gender stereotypes and male dominance even in the modern workplace. This prejudice impacts the employee's productivity and mental health, quality of work-life, and relationships at home and work [13]. The majority of studies suggest that many barriers hinder women's inclusion and commitment in leadership and decision-making positions. These variables are intertwined. A lack of suitable educational facilities for women, a lack of integrity by higher authority, such as the top executive decision-making authority, regressive political and social mindsets, and a lack of miserable ordeal for women to occupy and govern the high level positions are among them.

Additionally, people also had overwhelmed or heavy domestic commitments, as well as negative character traits of men toward women, and last but not least, a lack of confidence in women themselves [13]. These factors are seen as substantial roadblocks to senior positions and leadership. While there has been progress, female workers continue to be paid much less than their male colleagues and are underrepresented in senior management roles. In the workplace, a mindset of fairness aids everyone's advancement to higher positions [7].

Men and women are viewed as homogeneous social constructs with naturally contradictory subgroup interests in many gender equality studies [10]. As a result, men are frequently cast in the roles of perpetrators or bystanders, whereas women are commonly thrown in the position of victims. Put differently, most people assume that granting women equal rights, liberties, freedoms, and footing in the workplace means that men will automatically become the inferior gender because there has to be a superior gender in this way of thinking. The two cannot co-exist as equals. As a result, achieving gender equality is described as detrimental interconnectedness, with women's interests being portrayed as requiring men to give up their advantage [10]. For many, however, there is at least as much mutual understanding between men and women regarding handling increasingly demanding employment norms and practices as there is subgroup tension between

them. Gender equality is not a matter unique to women and thereby one that only women should be concerned about. Given that women are individuals in a society with relationships with all people, the matter is a societal concern. Promoting gender equality in the workplace becomes more conducive as both genders are appreciated and feel valued by their organization.

The political solidarity model of social transformation is valuable in explaining how such shared attitudes and aspirations might evolve between men and women [10]. This model describes how inequity persists and how achieving equality becomes a social change issue that affects all people [10]. It allows men and women to move from being "bystanders" and "victims" to both being "agents of change." Recent data support this notion, indicating that comparatively prosperous groups can play an essential role as allies in the fight for social justice, particularly when they share the disadvantaged groups' belief that the status quo is unjust. It is irrefutable that in the history of many civilizations, both present and past, the brunt of gender discrimination has been a burden to women because, in most cases, they are deemed the weaker gender. Efforts to dismantle this well-established practice in the workplace require efforts from men, not only women, because, as mentioned earlier, it is not a problem that is strictly for women to solve. But instead, it is a societal problem that impacts how communities function and people relate to each other. Gender equality and fairness are about treating men and women in the same manner without using their gender against them. Women are more often deemed an inconvenience given that they are more likely to place their jobs as a second priority right after the family.

### **2.3. Challenges to Gender Equality Implementation**

Senior executives are frequently thought to be the best position to spearhead the organizational changes required to achieve gender equality in the workplace [14]. This influence in the workplace environment results from the power they have to introduce change, support gender equality policies and create a fair working environment for both genders. Even though businesses have invested significant money in diversity initiatives, they are frequently unproductive and can even backfire, for example, by normalizing bigotry or igniting resistance. In most instances, the industry is not actualized in its entirety, which eventually leads to unachieved policies and results. Also, suppose this becomes a common trend in the organization. In that case, it follows that the employees are likely to learn that their leaders do not place a high value on actually following through with any gender reforms, which will lead to more toxic workplaces that will have an adverse effect on the female employees. Women make up about half of the workforce in the United States, yet women hold just 26% of computing jobs, and many of Silicon Valley's best companies have less than 20% women in technical positions [14].

The underrepresentation of women on the boards of publicly traded corporations is still a problem. Essentialist gender attitudes, such as considering men and women as 'naturally' different, are used to justify gender inequities in leadership and, as a result, are negatively associated with successful policies like mandated board quotas. Despite the diversity of opinions held by men and women, men leaders have a higher negative link between essentialist gender attitudes and acceptance of quotas or other legislative measures [5]. As a result, there is evident resistance, particularly among organizational leadership, necessitating companies can make the urgent need to address essentialist gender views before any substantial change in practice. Despite persistent gaps above that level, board quotas have been one of the more successful approaches to answering gender disparities in institutions and companies. Even though quotas are mandated at the national level, corporations are active members in both the pro and con camps [5]. Quotas, despite their efficacy, have proven to be divisive and met with a lot of opposition. Resistance appears unavoidable in the quota strategy, which tries to change the current system without relying on organizational consensus.

Objection to gender equality reforms, defined as "attempts to reform the unequal gender hierarchy" by disputing dominant norms, ideologies, and power structures, is a well-studied topic in the literature on gender equality transformation [6]. Rejection of these gender equality initiatives is expected in general, as the interventions' goals and techniques are likely to be different, if not conflicting, from those of the organization [6]. Opposition to gender equality initiatives is commonly mentioned as an obstacle to gender equality change, following conventional organizational change literature, which views resistance to organizational change as damaging to change projects.

Many academics argue that men's role in gender transition programs should be better understood [5]. Males are in a unique position to foster equality for women because men hold most leadership positions. On the other hand, men are frequently perceived as impediments to gender equality, and their lack of participation implies that gender-related change projects often fail. Because women lobbying for women are commonly perceived as self-interested, males are frequently considered adequate transformational leaders on gender equality [5]. However, little research has been done on the role of men as change agents in achieving gender equality. Men's desire in refuting their privilege to promote gender equality has also been called into doubt.

#### **2.4. Similarities and Differences**

The studies all seek to address the discrepancies between the gender equality policies of the organizations and the actual action taken to lower the gap between men and women in the workplace. The most common subject is the different pay, treatment and career progress opportunities that are more available to men than those that women have access to. However, they use different approaches and look at various industries. Some look at the differences between the pay of male and female employees, and others look at the difference between the number of female and male employees. On the contrary, some try to view the gender inequality in organizations from the leadership point of view and the role of management. Several studies highlight the role of men in ensuring that the workplace becomes conducive for both genders. Another article also takes a different perspective by looking at the reaction of the top management executives to gender balance quotas. In most cases, these leaders become part of the problem instead of the solution because their actions further make it hard for women to be included and advance and flourish in the workplace.

One of the most common similarities is that all the studies identify women as being at a disadvantage in the corporate world. These articles present women as a party that has, for a long time, been marginalized and that the efforts to grant them the same opportunities that their male counterparts have in the workplace. This is the basis of most gender equality studies, with some new takes being how gender equality also entails flexible working hours for fathers. This includes paid paternal leave.

### **3. Research Method**

#### **3.1. Research Object**

The target population will be 50 women with a working experience of about 3-5 years. The participants would be only those who have worked on the specific company of choice for more at least 1 year. This timeline is also enough time for an employee to become acquainted with the organization's positive and harmful practices. Also, the participants should have worked in their organizations in top or middle-level management or have held a leadership role that granted them responsibility and accountability in a particular segment.

### **3.2. Collection Method**

The primary tool of data collection will be questionnaires. The adopted questionnaire method will embrace both closed and open type of questionnaires. Open-ended questions will allow the participants to provide their insights into the research topic. In contrast, closed ones will enable the researcher to gather data on the variables the study is specifically interested in. The closed-ended questions will be graded on a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The need to use closed questionnaire was encouraged by the fact that the questionnaire allows the researcher to get specific answer to specific questions crucial in answering the research objective. On the other hand, open questionnaire would be crucial in getting in-depth understanding of the respondent's view on the research questions.

### **3.3. Process of Collecting Data**

The first step of collecting data is sending introductory letter to the participants requesting for their participation. The study will as a result send questionnaires through emails to only respondents who would have agreed to be part of the research. The researcher selected this method because it presented the participants with some convenience, and they could answer the questionnaires from any geographical location at any time. Therefore, it provides a degree of comfort and flexibility by allowing the respondents to quickly fill out the data at the convenience of homes or offices and at a time they deem to be the most suitable for them. Also, the researcher benefitted because it allowed them to back up the research data easily. Each respondent will only have access to the questionnaire once to safeguard the integrity of the collected data. The participants will be given a time frame within which they will be able to access the data collection tools. They will also be sent reminders when the time is approaching.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

The quantitative data collected in this study will be analyzed using SPSS. To assess the state of gender impact on business strategy, the mean scores of each participant will be calculated first. Other tests to be carried out on the data collected include a chi-square test to test the significance of the relationship between gender representation and business strategy in an organization.

### **3.5. Ethical Consideration**

The participants taking part in this study will be anonymous. Before starting the study, participants will be informed in great detail about the research subject and how the study will be conducted, with priority given to safeguarding their identities. They will be given a chance to ask questions on issues that they would like to get more clarification on. For the most critical part of this study, the participants' identities have no significance to the subject matter of the study. Additionally, the research project will involve the researcher will communicate all procedures in that participants in data collection to the respondents to help them gain confidence in the research and know their rights and freedoms. They will be required to sign a consent form that displays the research process and the rights and liberties available to them during the entirety of the study. Their details, such as names and work addresses, will not be realized at any stage of the research or during the presentation of the findings. Also, they reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any point, and the study will not use their data in the study in such a case.

The above aspects of the study will take into account the following elements of ethical considerations; informed consent, voluntary participation, no harm done to any party in the course of the study, confidentiality, anonymity and assessment of relevant components.

#### 4. Conclusion

Gender equality has always been a global debate considering that each state and business is currently trying to meet the two third gender. Gender equality has been a global issue and the reason why there has not been gender equality is the gender stereotyping and existence to barriers such as access to education and lack of integrity by higher authority. Gender plays a crucial role in business to ensure that members of the decisions making process have a diversity of thoughts. Furthermore, the literature demonstrates that female executives have been positively contributing towards an increased recognition to societal rather than ecological concerns within the society. From the extensive analysis on the relationship between gender and business strategy through the adopted literature reviews it would be established that gender play a crucial role in a business. In answering the question on to what extent can gender equality influence business strategy accusation it would be clear that gender equality positively contributes to effective execution of business strategy. The research seeks to examine the relationship between gender and business strategy execution by adopting quantitative research method and embracing 50 women, from which data is to be collected by the use of questionnaires.

As a solution to the gender inequality in the workplace companies should re-evaluate job specifications for the senior management team. The lack of senior-level female employees in a corporation can be linked to a range of issues, including the absence of female leaders. Inquiring whether 15 years of managerial experience is required when ten years may suffice is a start in the right way. Additionally, businesses should assess whether combining diverse forms of experience that extend the application pool is equally advantageous. Second, firms need to remover the gender pay gap. As long as firms cultivate a culture of secrecy, gender wage gaps will continue to persist. It is time to discontinue the practice of asking job applicants their past salary and instead encourage them to investigate the gender pay gap. Rather, each post should have a pay range that outlines its compensation. As a social media management platform, Buffer has demonstrated a commitment to transparency at all organizational levels. Since 2013, Buffer has provided compensation information and a salary calculator to all employees, allowing anyone to instantly assess how much they may earn at the company and view the pay for each position. Although going to such lengths is not optimal for the majority of firms, compensation ranges for each position should be disclosed to minimize bias.

Third, businesses should make work/life balance a priority to all employees. Due to the financial burden of unpaid leave, the salary gap between men and women widens for working mothers while it narrows for recent graduates. Currently, the absence of accessible childcare support is a key barrier stopping women from achieving career success. To reduce employee dissatisfaction and early exits, employers should consider assisting with child and elder care expenditures and refrain from exaggerating how family-friendly they are to job prospects if they do not currently offer such choices. Parental leave for fathers should be pushed to relieve working mothers since it not only allows mothers to dedicate more time to their careers, but also because research indicates that fathers desire and should be more actively involved in childrearing duties. When it comes to aiding working mothers, businesses must collaborate to establish a productive, flexible atmosphere that allows workers to work from home as needed.

The businesses should also embrace, effective and Strict Anti-Harassment and Anti-Offense Policies in the Workplace. On average, one in four women had suffered physical or mental workplace harassment. Women are more likely to experience sexual harassment if their employer does not promptly notice and address the issue. Employers must move swiftly to ensure that the criminal is punished and that the victim receives all necessary assistance. Taking preventative steps

in the workplace can aid in preventing future accidents of a similar nature. The lack of understanding of these activities in the workplace is indicative of the existing gender gap.

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