**WOMEN ON CORPORATE BOARDS**

Today’s organizations encounter capricious markets, unceasing international competitive firms, complex technologies and also dramatic changes of the society. Of all these changing contexts, the change in management composition of organizations is the most important. The change in “Think Manager: Think Male” attitude led to increased proportion of women attaining positions in higher level of management. This gender diversity in the boardroom had a positive impact on the performance of organizations. Evidences suggest that companies with strong female representation show a more ameliorative performance than those which do not.

Homogenous boards with members of similar background and education are more likely to produce “group think”. Hence diversity in board members brings different perspectives to the debate and decision making process. Women often have different experiences from the male counterparts which add to the diversity. Having women on boards, who in most of the cases represent the customers companies’ products, improve understanding of customer needs resulting in a more informed decision making. The more gender balanced boards are observed to show different governance behaviors. They ensure better communication and focus on non-financial performance aspects such as customer and employee satisfaction and corporate social responsibility.

In the last decade, there has been a commendable increase in the number of women on boards. Coming to the global scenario, the European countries top the charts indicating the number of women on boards followed by the contiguous United States. Within India too, women are being encouraged to attain higher positions in the hierarchy of management. The Companies Bill 2012 of India proposes that one woman director be appointed on the board of directors in companies.

Despite of encouraging statistics that the number of women on management boards is on increase, they continue to face significant barriers in climbing up the corporate ladder. Women are frequently overlooked for developing opportunities due to the perception that they would not understand corporate issues or corporate board governance. To achieve the objective of seeing women on boards, certain measures have to be taken to increase the demand for women in corporate sector and also expand the scope for female candidates by increasing the number of women reaching the executive management and encouraging them to play a role in corporate boards.

MONIKA

ECE-1(3RD YEAR)