

# Role and Representation of Women in Management of Corporate Board with Special Reference to Women on Board in Indian Companies

Ms. Nikita Rai<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Sheeba Ahad<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Student, LL. B -3rd Yar, Semester 6, Amity Law School, Amity University, Noida

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Amity Law School, Amity University, Noida

## Abstract

The significance of having a diverse mix of genders in corporate leadership especially when it comes to the makeup of corporate boards has come into greater focus in recent years. With a particular emphasis on women sitting on boards in Indian corporations, this research study seeks to examine the significance of women's presence in corporate board management. In the context of India's corporate environment, this study aims to assess the effects of women's participation on board dynamics, decision-making processes, corporate governance, and organizational performance through a review of the literature, statistical data, and case studies.

**Keywords:** Corporate Governance, Gender Diversity, Board Dynamics, Women on Boards, Organizational Performance, Indian Companies

## Introduction

The significance of gender diversity in corporate governance systems has gained global awareness in the last several decades. Organizational strategy, decision-making procedures, and long-term viability are all significantly influenced by the makeup of corporate boards. In light of these developments, the participation of women on corporate boards has become a major issue of interest, mirroring larger cultural trends towards workplace diversity and gender equality. The topic of women's participation in corporate governance has attracted a lot of interest in India, a country with a fast changing economy defined by globalization and dynamic growth. Women are still underrepresented in leadership roles, especially on corporate boards, despite significant advancements in corporate governance and economic development. In listed firms, women hold a very modest percentage of board seats, and the corporate landscape in India is still primarily male-dominated.

The purpose of this research study is to examine the function and significance of women's presence on corporate boards, with an emphasis on Indian businesses. With a focus on legislative frameworks, possibilities, difficulties, and the present state of affairs, the article attempts to offer a thorough grasp of the dynamics surrounding gender diversity in corporate governance in the Indian setting.

**Background of the study** - The value of gender diversity in corporate governance is well acknowledged, and this is the foundation of our study. Even while corporate boards have a big say in how organizations are run and who is held accountable, women have historically not been sufficiently represented on them. The promotion of inclusion in boardrooms has been sparked by societal movements towards gender equality and studies demonstrating the advantages of varied viewpoints.

Even in India, where the economy is growing, women are still underrepresented in business leadership positions, including board positions. Although regulatory changes have led to some advancement, difficulties still exist. The purpose of this study is to examine the gender diversity situation in Indian corporate governance, pinpoint obstacles, and suggest fixes to promote more welcoming and productive boardroom environments.

### **Research objective –**

1. To assess how many women are already serving on corporate boards in Indian businesses and to spot any trends or patterns in the makeup of these boards
2. To look at the effects of having more women on corporate boards on decision-making procedures, board dynamics, and corporate governance standards

### **Review of literature –**

The body of research on gender diversity in corporate leadership particularly as it relates to women's presence on boards provides important insights into the advantages, difficulties, and tactics surrounding this issue, especially when it comes to Indian businesses. Research continually demonstrates the beneficial relationship between gender diversity on boards and the performance of organizations, highlighting the distinct viewpoints and abilities that women bring to the boardroom. But obstacles like gender prejudice and small networks still exist, making it difficult for women to get onto boards. A number of regulatory measures have been put in place to rectify this imbalance, such as disclosure requirements and quotas, albeit their efficacy is still up for discussion. Furthermore, the impact of females on board dynamics and decision-making procedures differs based on elements including company culture and board membership. It is advised that aggressive recruiting campaigns, mentorship initiatives, and governance changes be implemented in order to increase the presence of women in the workforce. These measures will create inclusive boardroom environments that stimulate innovation and add value for stakeholders in Indian businesses.

The topic of women's participation in corporate governance has attracted a lot of interest in India, a country with a fast changing economy defined by globalization and dynamic growth. Women are still underrepresented in leadership roles, especially on corporate boards, despite significant advancements in corporate governance and economic development. In listed firms, women hold a very modest percentage of board seats, and the corporate landscape in India is still primarily male-dominated. The topic of women's participation in corporate governance has attracted a lot of interest in India, a country with a fast changing economy defined by globalization and dynamic growth. Notably, corporate governance reforms and economic development have progressed, but women remain underrepresented in senior roles, especially on company boards. Women make up a very tiny percentage of board seats in listed businesses in India, where the corporate environment is still primarily male-dominated.

The inclusion of women on corporate boards has garnered increasing attention in the last several years, especially when considering Indian businesses. A considerable gender disparity is currently seen in boardrooms throughout India, despite attempts to encourage gender diversity in business leadership.

### **Women on board in Indian companies : Indian scenario**

**Regulatory landscape** - In India, the regulatory environment has a significant impact on how many women serve on company boards. Regulations requiring listed firms to have at least one female director on their boards were adopted by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in 2013. Despite the fact that this move was a positive step, compliance has been patchy, and many businesses have just selected token women directors in order to comply with regulations rather than encouraging true gender diversity.

**Barriers of entry** - In India, there are several obstacles for women who want to join corporate boards, such as limited access to board nomination procedures, gender prejudice, and a dearth of networking opportunities. These obstacles are exacerbated by cultural norms and social expectations about women's responsibilities in the workplace, which make it challenging for women to enter boardrooms that are predominately run by males.

**Impact on decision making** - Notwithstanding the obstacles, a number of programs and best practices are available to increase the number of women serving on corporate boards in India. These consist of lobbying campaigns by groups supporting gender diversity in corporate governance, leadership development programs, and mentorship programs. Recognizing the need of diverse leadership teams, several businesses have also taken proactive steps to find and develop female executives for board roles.

**Low representation:** According to statistical statistics, women's presence on corporate boards in India is still disproportionately low when it comes to the representation of males. Several assessments, including those from Catalyst and McKinsey, claim that women make up a very tiny percentage of board positions in Indian corporations. In industries like manufacturing, technology, and finance, the underrepresentation is more pronounced.

**Future outlook** - Though there has been progress in increasing awareness of the value of gender diversity on corporate boards, there is still a long way to go before there is meaningful representation of women in the boardrooms of Indian corporations. Fostering a more inclusive and fair corporate governance landscape in India would need persistent lobbying, strict implementation of statutory demands, and cultural changes inside firms.

### **Case studies –**

**Tata group empowering in governance** - Women's presence in business leadership roles and gender diversity have been actively promoted by The Tata Group, one of India's biggest conglomerates. Increasing the number of women on the board of directors is one of the main goals of this case study, which also looks at the efforts made by the Tata Group to support gender diversity in its corporate governance structures and to empower women leaders. In order to promote a more inclusive corporate culture and achieve gender parity in boardroom representation, it explores the company's policies, initiatives, and best practices. The case study sheds light on the obstacles that Tata Group had to overcome in order to progress gender diversity, offering other Indian businesses looking to improve the participation of women in corporate governance important insights.

**HDFC bank advance gender diversity** – Women's presence in the boardroom and senior management roles at HDFC Bank, one of the top private sector banks in India, has been actively promoted. The HDFC Bank's efforts to recruit, retain, and advance women leaders are the main subject of this case study, which examines the bank's path towards gender diversity in corporate governance. It looks at the collaborations, mentorship programs, leadership development projects, and advocacy campaigns that the bank has implemented to further gender equality. The bank's performance and competitiveness are evaluated in the case study together with its dedication to gender diversity, with an emphasis on the advantages for business and society that result from the bank's inclusive corporate governance practices.

### **Women on corporate boards: impact on decision-making & performance**

The presence of women on corporate boards has a significant and diverse influence on decision-making procedures, corporate governance standards, board dynamics, and ultimately the success of the firm. Research continuously demonstrates the benefits of gender diversity on boards, as women directors provide special viewpoints, experiences, and abilities that improve the caliber of decision-making. Better strategic results for businesses are produced by their presence, which encourages more careful consideration, fruitful discussion, and creative thinking. Furthermore, via promoting sustainable business practices, preserving ethical standards, and giving priority to stakeholder interests, women on boards enhance corporate governance. Gender-diverse boards frequently outperform their rivals in terms of profitability, shareholder value, and long-term sustainability. This increased attention on governance and responsibility translates into improved organizational performance.

Women directors are essential to the overall performance of the board because they promote positive board dynamics, trust, and collaboration in addition to financial measures. Not only that, but their presence challenges conventional conventions and preconceptions in the business sector and inspires next generations of women executives as a potent symbol of gender diversity and inclusion. Indian businesses must continue to put a high priority on increasing the number of women on boards because they understand the substantial benefits of gender diversity. By utilizing the skills and viewpoints of these individuals, they can contribute to innovation, sustainability, and stakeholder value in a global marketplace that is becoming more and more competitive.

### **Empowering women in boardrooms: effective strategies for representation –**

**Mentorship program** - Programs for mentoring are organized attempts that are designed to give prospective female leaders advice, connections, and support. Experienced mentors share their thoughts, provide insightful guidance, and assist in navigating the complexity of the business world through these programs. Women may increase their professional networks, get important resources, and develop the self-assurance and competencies required to apply for board positions by cultivating mentorship connections.

**Leadership developed initiatives** - The goal of leadership development programs is to provide women the abilities, know-how, and competences needed to participate effectively on boards. Training courses, seminars, and workshops on subjects like boardroom etiquette, corporate governance, and strategic thinking may be a part of these projects. These programs help women executives become more capable leaders, which equips them to perform well on boards and make valuable contributions to deliberations and decision-making.

**Advocacy efforts** - Raising awareness of the value of gender diversity on corporate boards and gaining support for legislative changes are the two main objectives of advocacy work. Promoting the business case for gender diversity in leadership, advocates seek to dispel prejudices and alter cultural attitudes. Advocacy groups work to promote systemic change and foster an atmosphere that is favorable to women's development in corporate governance through public campaigns, thought leadership projects, and stakeholder involvement.

**Policy intervention** - Legislative actions, government programs, and regulatory requirements all fall under the category of policy interventions that support gender diversity on boards. Companies may be required by regulatory bodies to publish diversity plans, provide data on gender diversity measures, and establish goals for the proportion of women on boards. These legislative initiatives offer a foundation for encouraging responsibility, openness, and advancements toward gender equity in corporate governance.

**Learning from case studies and best practices** - It is possible to get important insights into practical methods for improving the representation of women on boards by examining case studies and best practices from top firms. Stakeholders may spot potential ideas, draw lessons from the past, and implement winning tactics in their own companies by looking at actual instances of successful initiatives. Through coordinated efforts to promote gender diversity in corporate leadership, case studies showcase creative initiatives, fruitful collaborations, and measurable results.

## Conclusion

The solutions presented here for increasing the presence of women on corporate boards, in summary, provide a comprehensive way to overcome the structural obstacles preventing gender diversity in corporate governance. Programs for mentoring women offer priceless advice and assistance, giving them the networks and abilities they need to apply for board seats. Women's capacities are further enhanced via leadership development programs, which equip them to participate and make decisions on boards effectively. While policy interventions offer a legislative framework to promote accountability and advancement, advocacy actions serve to increase public awareness of and support for policy reforms targeted at improving gender diversity on boards. Gaining practical knowledge and reproducible tactics for promoting gender diversity in corporate leadership is possible by studying case studies and best practices. When combined, these tactics offer stakeholders a full toolset for promoting women's inclusion on corporate boards, which will eventually lead to more profitable, inclusive, and productive firms.

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