

A MESSAGE TO INDIA

Bimtech and Raheja QBE have collaborated on a diversity study in India – Praveen Gupta reviews the findings, which show a lot remains to be done...

THE LOW LEVEL OF AWARENESS ABOUT LIABILITY INSURANCE WAS A DISAPPOINTMENT. FOR ME, IT IS SUCH A 'GIVEN' THAT ONE EVALUATES RISKS AND THIS SHOULD BE INCLUDED, THAT I SUPPOSE THE BEST WAY TO EVALUATE THIS PART OF THE STUDY IS THE OPPORTUNITIES TO EDUCATE THAT IT REPRESENTS!

Carissa Hickling, report expert

SURVEY STATS

679

REACH

202

RESPONDED

91

PARTICIPATED
IN THE SURVEY

42

AVERAGE AGE

The CII has worked hard in recent years to collaborate with a wide variety of leading insurance professionals, businesses, policy and

third-sector organisations on issues relating to women's risks.

The CII's Insuring Women's Futures programme aims to evolve the insurance and personal finance profession's approach to women and risk, with work stretching across the UK. But what is the situation elsewhere in the world?

In India, a joint project by Insurance Business Management, Bimtech and Raheja QBE General Insurance Company aimed to analyse the risks faced by women leaders across the entire spectrum of businesses in India's National Capital Region (NCR). An attempt was made to understand views on gender inequality and its prevalence in various aspects of risk management including risk transfer.

THE FINDINGS

The survey turned out to be unique in many ways. Despite anonymity, very few women leaders in the NCR who were approached were forthcoming, which was surprising, given the high number of those interviewed that affirmed the extent of discrimination. Of the 650 corporate leaders reached out to – of a mix of listed, unlisted firms and startups, just 86 were interviewed.

If one were to view the results with optimism, the findings do show some light at the end of the tunnel in the form of self-employment and entrepreneurship. They also suggest that new-age businesses with sustained affirmative action could create a level playing field.

WHERE IS INDIA LAGGING?

Just 3% of boards are headed by women (as chairperson) and women directors now account for 7% of executive directorships in the NIFTY 500. This is comparable to European markets, where 4% of chairpersons and 7% of executive directors are women. But where India falls behind

is independent representation – only 16% of independent directors in India are women, compared to 34% in the STOXX Europe 600 Index.

Only 21% of NIFTY 500 boards have two or more women, compared to more than 80% in some other markets. On average, India has 1.2 female directors on boards, which is significantly less than its European and US peers. Even on committee memberships, women directors are underrepresented in India.

WHAT DID THE SURVEY COVER?

Areas covered by the survey included gender discrimination, trust deficit, sexual abuse, lack of reliability, non-cooperation, isolation and wage gap.

Also highlighted was the poor understanding of liability and cyber insurance solutions as a means of risk transfer.

• Risk mitigation through insurance:

The interviewees were asked about insurance and its role in risk mitigation.

• **Insurance awareness:** Awareness about the various insurance solutions available in the market. Some 84 interviewees were aware of insurance and major lines of insurance business – life insurance, health insurance and property insurance in particular.

• **Insurance awareness related to business:** Awareness about the various insurance solutions that protect the interest of an enterprise against the risks faced. Some 74 interviewees had partial knowledge or awareness of insurance solutions related to their respective businesses.

• **Awareness of liability insurance:** Awareness about the various liability insurance offerings that help in protecting the interest of the enterprise. Some 79 interviewees had no clue about liability insurance

and its significance in risk mitigation.

• **Awareness of cyber insurance:** Some 81 interviewees did not know about cyber insurance and its increasing significance in businesses including technology.

• **Awareness of reputational risks:** Awareness about reputational risks to both the organisation and individual, and its concerned repercussions. Some 71 interviewees were not sure whether they were fully aware of reputational risks or not, and the extent to which they could damage their business.

SO WHAT NEXT?

A significant amount of work still needs to be done to improve corporate culture to make it really conducive for women to work and increase the overall number of women in the sector. The business press has been abuzz with the merits of how useful directors and officers (D&O) insurance is in the world of #MeToo; however, D&O cover is neither a means of prevention nor cure for this malaise – it should be the last line of defense.

A judicious risk management programme should be put in place to first address what corporates, as employers, can do by themselves and also to address the deficiencies in understanding of risk management practices and risk transfer mechanisms. There also needs to be a shift by carriers from the existing product-centric transactional relationship, to a value-proposition approach.

To read the full report, visit: bit.ly/2TXOrtZ



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