

Gender diverse boards a goal worthwhile pursuing? A case study research approach

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Abstract.

The ever-present topic of gender inequality has been on the agenda of policymakers around the globe. (Ford & Pande, 2011) The lack of female representation on corporate boards correspondingly raised the attention of scholars (Hillman, Shropshire, Jr, Hillman, & Shropshire, 2007), practitioners as well as civil society. It seems to represent one of the important columns to build up gender equality in society. (Chizema, Kamuriwo, & Shinozawa, 2015) Although a vast majority of research has been done on the characteristics of women on boards (Gamba & Goldstein, 2009; Ruigrok, Peck, & Tacheva, 2007; Singh & Vinnicombe, 2004; Zelechowski & Bilimoria, 2004), as well as on the impact female board members have on the (financial, economic or social responsibility) performance of a corporation (Bear, Rahman, & Post, 2010; Reddy & Jadhav, 2019) there has been little research on the effect a gender diverse board has on the corporation in general. Kirsch and Wrohlich recently identified in their study trickle-down effects from the supervisory board to the executive board in Germany (Anja; Kirsch & Wrohlich, 2020). However, what is with the top, middle and lower management? Does a gender diverse board contribute towards an overall gender equality in a corporation? This paper aims to describe an intended case study research approach to gather in-depth understanding of the dynamic a gender diverse board has on a corporation's gender diversity of different management levels as well as on gender equality in corporations. Readers should bear in mind that the current version of this case study research approach is a working paper, still being expanded towards the conference end of July.

Keywords: gender board composition, women on boards, electoral quotas, gender diverse boards