The Benefits of Structural Evaluation and Program Implementation in addressing Workplace Gender Inequality

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Abstract

With the international community recognizing the importance of gender mainstreaming, it has become important to understand how to evaluate and create an implementation plan that will help a business or organization obtain gender equality. The report will discuss the importance of gender equality in the workplace and how to achieve it. There will also be a focus on the different steps of the process, which includes structural and cultural evaluations, organizational learning, corporate responsibility, as well as policy assessments. By going through the processes of evaluation and implementation, one can bring to light specific aspects that could hinder or benefit gender mainstreaming. The overall success relies on the multiple aspects of execution, in order to deliver the outcomes desired.

Key Words: Gender Mainstreaming; Workplace Policies; Equality; Pay Gap; Workplace Culture; Organizational Learning; Implementation
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In molecular biology there is a concept of "self" and "non-self" discrimination where our immune system differentiates between our cells and pathogens. Once the immune system has discerned what is not of itself, it attacks and destroys the non-self. Globally, there is social differentiation between self and non-self; with the “self” equating to the male gender. The ironic nature of this social phenomenon, however, is visible through women attacking their own gender. Both forms of discrimination are influenced by gender norms that infiltrate every area within society. With this understanding, policies and programs should be put in place that promotes a positive work environment for both genders. This is referred to as gender mainstreaming.

Globally, organizations are beginning to realize the importance of incorporating gender mainstreaming and ongoing monitoring and evaluation practices. (Grosser et al., 2008). Proper evaluation techniques of any business, organization, or program require: assessing the organizational structure prior to starting; monitoring business practices; and, if applicable, assessing outcomes at the end of an endeavor. Formative evaluations should be conducted to derive initial data for future comparison and to create standards or objectives that are in line with gender equality goals. When conducting the initial evaluation and ongoing monitoring of a company's progress, resulting data should be sex aggregated. By doing this, businesses will become aware of what areas need to be addressed. This report will discuss how to implement an evaluation and will note key areas within data that are telling for an organization. Results should be used to establish objectives, a course of action, and as a justification for resource allocation (UNESCO, 2003).

Structural Evaluation

_Evaluation Practices in Business_
Initially, some businesses will see conducting an evaluation as either a risk or a means to appease a funding agency (Hegland & Oesterreich, 2002). Admittedly, some companies are encouraged to implement and monitor such strategies because of governmental regulation. Australia, for example, requires organizations to report to the government, thus increasing accountability in the national effort to bring about gender equality. However, any form of evaluation is profitable for a business, as can lead to: improved services; identification of training needs; budget revision; retaining or an increase in funding; and the recruitment and retention of competent staff (Hegland & Oesterreich, 2002). In order to reap these benefits, one or more evaluators – with at least one being an external evaluator – must collect ongoing data in order to improve the organization (Hegland and Oesterreich, 2002).

Governmental accountability reports, is a good practice that more nations should adopt as it has facilitated progress (Grosser et al., 2008). This includes actively seeking to correct or thwart gender inequalities through such strategies as gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming includes promoting gender equality at all levels and phases within a company (Grosser, 2009). Inclusive within gender mainstreaming is the evaluation of strategic implementation (e.g., policy, program) by reporting gender disaggregate data and qualitative assessments that aim to evaluate
the impact on the organizational culture, which is inclusive of gender-bullying. This will be discussed more under the section “Developing a Culture of Gender Equality in the Workplace.”

**Conducting an Evaluation**

Utilizing expert consultants to evaluate the current state of a company - whether large or small - is important, as it reduces discrimination. Such an evaluation will not only assess any gender-related biases amongst the managers and staff, but will also shed light on gender-related incidents throughout the company. The data gathered will also serve as a baseline, which will prove helpful later when assessing whether or not improvements have been made. Once the evaluation has been conducted and the data analyzed, the Evaluator(s) can meet with the relative stakeholders of the business in order to discuss short and long term plans to improve gender-diversity and the social environment at large.

There are many types of evaluations. The two types that we will review are formative and summative. Formative evaluations are used to assess whether or not an entity or initiative is meeting its goals while the endeavor is occurring, while the latter (i.e., summative evaluation) focuses on a summation of the entire venture, which includes whether or not programmatic/business goals were met. The difference between the two have to do more so with the timing of when the evaluation is conducted and the purpose for assessing the information. In formative evaluations, an initiative/environment is assessed in order to establish a baseline and set periodic steps to improve it; correcting any issues that may arise along the way. Whereas a summative evaluation is conducted at the end of a project, in order to assess how beneficial the steps were in achieving a particular goal and to set a new baseline for future projects.

Although each Evaluator may vary in their steps when conducting an evaluation, typically an action plan is created first, followed by a logic model. An **action plan** is a detailed proposal that helps to the organization and Evaluator(s) to place all of their ideas on single sheet of paper. This action plan will help to guide and keep accountable the organization and Evaluator(s) during the evaluation process. Although each action plan will vary, it should list: the objectives; where the evaluation information is coming from (e.g., staff, managers); what measure(s) will be used to collect the information (e.g., survey); how often the information will be collected; who will summarize and disseminate the information; the cost of the evaluation (Hegland & Oesterreich, 2002); what funds will be used to cover the evaluation costs; and who is in charge of allocating such funds. Each of these action items should be charted on a timeline. The action plan should be completed by both the Evaluator(s) and the organizational manager over the evaluation.

Another important item to create is a logic model. Logic models go beyond an action plan in that it visually shows the presumed effects of specific actions (Schmitz and Parsons, 1999). The strength of logic models is that it shows the necessary inputs and outputs in order to achieve both short and long-term outcomes. A logic model typically contains five distinct elements: 1) resources or inputs; 2) activities; 3) outputs; 4) outcomes or short-term outcomes; and 5) impact or long-term outcomes (The Pell Institute, 2015). According to The Pell Institute (2015), inputs/resources are aspects of the project that are used by the program/business. Examples of these would be human talent (e.g., number of full-time and/or part-time staff), financial support, supplies, and in-kind donations. Activities are any events or actions that the organization does that include the inputs (e.g., develop a coalition using members of the staff). These activities
should be in line with the objectives listed within the action plan (The Pell Institute, 2015). Outputs are directly linked to the inputs and activities, and are quantifiable (The Pell Institute, 2015). More specifically, outputs enumerate the result of the activities. Regular collection of data concerning the inputs and outputs will help to fine-tune the organization's efforts (Hegland & Oesterreich, 2002). Short-term outcomes are immediate (i.e., within 1-3 years) measurable changes. Typically, these changes include attitudinal, skill, and structural changes (The Pell Institute, 2015). Long-term outcomes (i.e., impact), on the other hand, are changes that are viewed within 4-10 years. Frequent examples of long-term outcomes are sustained environmental and economic changes (The Pell Institute, 2015). The following is a practical example of the 5-point progression of a logic model: food (input); go out to eat (activity); eat 3/4th of a plate of food (output); feel less hungry (short-term outcome); maintain health and well-being (long-term outcome) (Ledingham, 2009).

During the evaluation, special consideration should be given to a document analysis, in addition to interviews and/or focus groups. Due to the fact that much gender-discrimination is based on perceived ability, a critical area of focus is the de-genderalization of jobs. This includes reevaluating the descriptions listed under a job position and ensuring that they do not include words or descriptions that are typically deemed masculine or feminine (Welle & Heilman & 2005). Should these descriptions need revision, the updated job characteristics should be disseminated to all employees and discussed in staff meetings. This overview will begin to alter the perception of whether or not an individual may be qualified for a position because of their gender. Changing job descriptions is especially critical for leadership positions. Having gender-neutral leadership descriptions will allow for women and men to only be considered for positions on the basis of merit and not on perceived gender abilities. These descriptions will also hold accountable those responsible for hiring, as gendered qualities would no longer be part of the deciding factor. Research "indicates that ambiguity in human resource practices can create the conditions for gender stereotypes to flourish" (Well & Heilman, 2005) and thus it would behoove companies to review any documents that may lead to gender biases.

**Workplace Policies that Affect Gender Equality**

There are numerous policies to be implemented in the workplace that could either hinder or benefit gender equality. Policies that could hinder gender equality in the work place would be policies that are either not applicable to the workplace culture, or policies that have unrealistic expectations of success. Policies implemented for short-term outcomes will not have positive long-term effects. As gender bias is engrained in our culture, steps taken to overcome that bias must be calculated to ensure proper outcomes (Meyerson, 1999).

Gender equality benefits the workplace by establishing institutional support to the female population. Policy creation that emphasizes the differences that are brought to the work place by women helps a company take advantage of their full potential within the workforce. It is vital that policies educate and help streamline success of both the male and female population in the work environment. Forms of support could include professional expectations for each employee in the company, and vice versa. Also, the implementation of a formal mentoring program, the placement of alternative career tracks, as well as benefits regarding childcare-related issues for
women can be constructive in the pursuit of gender equality. It offers solutions to many obstacles that face women in the workplace, while encouraging upward mobility (Meyerson, 1999).

According to Gerson (2009), policy changes that aim to improve the organization and culture within the workplace are needed in order to promote gender equality. Gerson (2009) suggests creating flexible work place environments for employees who have family responsibility. Through creating child supportive environments, such as child care or after school programs, both female and male employees will be able to mentally focus on work and not on other responsibilities. Economic policy changes are also important for the creation and tenure of gender equality. This report will discuss 4 empirical policy practices from 4 different countries who have worked to close the gender-based pay gap (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe [UNECE], 2012) under the “The Gender Pay Gap” section.

Although policy changes are imperative, access to organizational power is essential for the creation, promotion, and sustainability of gender equality (Huffmen et al., 2010). Indeed, it is not enough for men to solely occupy all of the top-ranking positions within a company whilst promoting gender equality. Words alone will not bring about effect. It is important for women to be a part of change. The visual of male leaders showing respect and equality to their female colleagues would do more for promoting gender equality as opposed to just implementing a new set of policies. Incorporating women executives will also allow for diversity of opinion and strategy when discussing how to promote gender equality within the organization. In addition, it will promote confidence amongst women.

Program Implementation

Although the concept of gender mainstreaming has been around for over 30 years, there is still much work to be done globally to achieve gender equality. This may be due to the fact that there are various logistical considerations to embrace when trying to implement gender mainstreaming (e.g. allocation of funds for gender training) (Theobald et al., 2005). The aim of this section is to impress upon its readers the necessity of incorporating gender mainstreaming within any organizational structure. It is our hope that the readers will internalize the gravity of gender mainstreaming and will seek its inclusion within their organization and/or business.

Managerial Accountability and Responsibility

Inequalities within a workplace are often reflective of the inner organizational structure; which includes, but is not limited to opportunities for advancement and the distribution of rewards (Huffmen et al., 2010). Gender inequalities with management speaks to the fact that leaders within the organization have directly or indirectly contributed to gender inequalities within the workplace. Though the extreme gender differentials in management may be an inherited problem to someone who is newly appointed to a managerial position, it then becomes part of their responsibility to create a managerial and staff culture that is welcoming to men and women and does not prefer one gender over the other.
A recent study indicated that the more women occupied top-level management positions, the more women also filled lower-level management positions (Kurtulus & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2012). Knowing that the work environment may be prone to gender-discrimination, it then becomes the responsibility of the leaders within each business to address the underlining problems. In return, work productivity and employee satisfaction will increase (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2013). Imagine if employees were in better mental and emotional health. Indeed, there would be great benefits to having every employee mentally present throughout the day.

One of the ways in which managers can improve the gender-diversity amongst the staff and managers is to create an action plan. As mentioned earlier, action plans are both beneficial for evaluations and establishing new initiatives. A good example of an action plan to promote gender equality within the workplace can be found at Swinburne University of Technology (Swinburne) in Australia (Swinburne, 2014). On page 7 of their strategic plan, Swinburne’s action plan clearly displays the overall objective, sub-categories that meet that objective, and the deliverable, entity accountable, timeline and performance indicator relative to that sub-category. What sets this action plan a part is that it seeks to strategically target every area of the “employment life cycle” (i.e., recruitment, retention, performance, management processes, promotions, talent identification and identification of high potentials, succession planning, training and development and resignations) (Swinburne, 2014).

Though the creation and monitoring of action plans are vital, employee “buy-in” is imperative for sustainable change. In order to achieve this action plans should include ways to incorporate organizational learning and cultural shifts.

**Organizational Learning**

To implement organizational learning, it is important to take into consideration the current culture of the work place. Each workplace consists of different races, socio-economic backgrounds, and values. The steps taken towards the implementation of organizational learning are not *one-size-fits-all* (Thomas, 1991). They must be tailored to each specific workplace. With that in mind, the first step to be taken should be to complete a cultural audit of the workplace. It helps to identify the root culture, which should express the leaders’ and employees’ attitudes towards managing diversity, in our case gender equality. The analysis of the audit will show how to implement the organizational learning and what material to put forward (Thomas, 1991).

Once the cultural audit has taken place, it is important to have an initial conversation with the leadership and employees to explain what will be taking place. It is vital to inform the leadership and employees of the upcoming education in order to give them the opportunity to begin accepting change (Thomas, 1991). The cultural audit should assist with the direction of the initial conversation.

Organizational learning is best held in smaller groups. Smaller groups encourage more individual participation, which is important when educating employees on gender equality. It also encourages individual responsibility in the process, as well as personal input, which can make the process of implementing change more successful (Thomas, 1991). A primary point to take into consideration is to recognize that organizational learning is an on-going process with long-
term results (Thomas, 1991). The education of gender equality with the work place must be thorough and consistent in order to ensure long-term benefits. Also, education on this topic must never stop within the workplace. In order to ensure extended success and a change in culture, annual or bi-annual workshops should be held as reminder to all of the values of the company (Thomas, 1991).

In all cases, careful consideration should be included in the planning and implementation of workplace programs to ensure that employees do not perceive that a particular group is acquiring preferential treatment (Heilman et al., 1998). With this in mind, workshops or policies that seek to advance gender equality, should be incorporated into other employee programs. In addition, headings such as "team dynamics" or "employee betterment" should be used rather than the heading of "gender equality training:" as labeling seminars this way may engender the undesired effect of a further divide between men and women. This negative effect arises when employees feel as if women are seeking or are being given "special treatment." This perceived preferential treatment could further the "us-them" attitude. Portions of these communal sessions should be reserved for employee skill building exercises. This will give employees the opportunity to advance themselves and also be viewed as equally capable amongst their work colleagues, which lessens perceived gender inabilities.

This requires firstly educating managers on the social construct of gender and how it may be negatively perceived. Key phrases often heard about women (e.g. "she's so emotional") should be utilized to indicate how gender plays a role in how individuals may perceive one another. Once a clear understanding is in place, managers should be told that they would be monitored for gendered-based decisions. This same workshop should be utilized with all employees.

**Developing a Culture of Gender Equality in the Workplace**

Although the aforementioned and subsequent information to this section of the chapter is important, much of the success of building an organization that supports gender equality hinges on the culture within the business itself. For this reason, much of this report is devoted to the theoretical understanding of and necessary practical steps towards engendering a culture conducive for gender equality.

**Understanding Gender in Disciplines**

Studies have shown that women who enter into male-dominated fields either must behave like men to be accepted, leave the field if they do not like the culture, or stay a non-conformist and not ascend to important positions (Powell et al., 2008). Women are often forced to endure the culture of sexist conversations and even choose to allow the men to use them as a source of humor in order to gain some favor (Kanter, 1977). Indeed, fitting in reinforces rather than challenges the unequal gendered culture often found in many workplaces.

For many women, assimilation to the culture of certain professions includes properly managing their gender. This includes accepting sexist behavior (Powell et al., 2008). Women often know that they have become "honorary men" when normal behaviors reserved for men are now bestowed upon women. Gherardi (1994) gives the example of the "hearty slap" (as cited in Powell et al., 2008). In a particular study, Gherardi discovered that women who downplayed
their gender began to receive "hearty" slaps on the back for a job well done by their male colleagues and supervisors (as cited in Powell et al., 2008). Leaving some women to be devalued as a woman, but accepted as an "honorary man."

According to Powell et al. (2008), in order to "fit in" the culture of hypermasculine fields, women may consciously or unconsciously behave in certain ways that gains their acceptance, yet devalues their gender. In other words, women who are caught between a desire to be themselves and a desire to be socially accepted, will more than likely forgo who they are in order to please others. Etzioni and colleagues (2000), also noted that women who do successfully fit into a male dominated field are often times viewed as "honorary men" or "flawed women" (as cited in Powell et al., 2008), leaving her to be viewed as unfeminine. Evetts (1997) goes on to say that female managers especially have a hard time and are often caught between being considered unfeminine - if she is a competent and efficient manager - or a bad manager if she is caring or sensitive (as cited in Powell et al., 2008).

Unfortunately, this discrimination often starts as early as college, where young women have reported discrimination within male-dominated disciplines, resulting in some female students leaving the field (Powell et al., 2008; Sipe et al., 2009). Significant and persistent mental changes must be made within organizations in order for social norms to not only impact the company, but the next generation of students and young professionals.

According to Heilman and Welle (2006) the accepted attributes of what it takes to succeed in many work settings are discordant with perceived characteristics of women. This lack of fit causes many jobs to be gender-typed based on historical representation of the primary gender who occupied the role (Heilman & Welle, 2006). Historical dominance of a particular gender within a role influences the ideology of who can perform particular duties; regardless of whether the associated duties are perceived or actual responsibilities accompanying that position. For instance, the role of a primary school teacher is simply to teach basic knowledge; however, perceived associated characteristics of someone occupying the role is that of a nurturer, which is commonly associated with women. Thus anyone perceived not able to fulfill these additional gendered-typed criteria will more than likely be at a disadvantage when pursuing a career (or promotion) within that field. However, if an individual successfully fulfills a position that is atypical for their gender, they are often labeled as being different or strange. For instance little girls who are active in sports, climb trees, and resent dolls are labeled as "tomboys." Similarly, women who are do well in senior-level positions are often thought of as masculine or mean (i.e., "bossy").

**Improvement of Workplace Culture**

Given the profound impact that gender roles have on men and women, all workers should be equipped with the necessary skills and resources to effectively deal with gender-based inequalities at work and within their community (World Health Organization [WHO], 2011). Gender mainstreaming training is not an individualized mission, thus it will require many projects to bring about awareness, development of knowledge and skills, and behavior change (WHO, 2011). Those seeking to incorporate gender mainstreaming training should anticipate conducting at least: classes outlining the history and implications of gender, skill-building workshops, and possibly intervention sessions with trainees. These intervention sessions may
include helping constituents see past their own biases and/or counseling on how to deal with external issues when facing and tackling gender inequalities. Trainers should ensure that they use proven frameworks as a foundation for the training and that they only utilize empirical data from studies that have implemented gender mainstreaming in a similar context within their trainings. It is important for trainers and the leaders of any organization to understand that there will more than likely be contextual differences between the empirical data and their organization, which may impact the progression of the training.

Globally, women have been socially trained to put themselves down and not to boast. This social phenomenon, along with other factors, can lead to a lack of confidence in their job-related duties. They may feel themselves unfit for a position that they have rightfully earned. Companies should seek to build the confidence of their female employees. This can be achieved through capacity building and mentorship.

Capacity building is the overall empowerment of an individual or a group so that they may achieve a goal. In essence, people are being equipped in order to accomplish a task. Capacity building can have a profound impact on the perceived ability of a person to see through a task, thus increasing overall self-confidence and the drive to be committed to a program or project. This also leads to increased perceived ability by fellow colleagues, which can foster a more respectful and unified atmosphere.

Professional mentoring leads to increased job satisfaction, job performance, and more promotions for the mentee (Kelso et al., 2012). In a survey of 4000 individuals from 3 different continents who had earned their Master of Business Administration (MBA), those who had professional mentors were more likely to advance in their careers. The study also revealed that men were more likely to have mentors than women. Of the women who did have professional mentors, 56% of them were more likely to acquire to obtain a middle-management position after completing their masters (Carter & Silva, 2010). Mentoring can lead to the advancement of individual employees and the overall competency of a company. It would then behoove the upper-level managers to engage in mentoring of lower-level managers and employees. Involving senior management also creates a sense of accountability and responsibility for the advancement of their female managers and employees (Reinhold, 2005). This may seem like a daunting task by upper-level managers due to time constraints, but a well-built mentoring program takes minimal effort once it has been properly structured. Part of structuring this program involves incorporating a family/work life balance and a culture that is not supportive of hypermasculinity (Kelso et al., 2012). Mentoring programs should allow for open lines of communication, so that women may be able to have access to advice and support when necessary (Hewlett et al., 2011). In addition, mentoring programs should include ongoing monitoring and evaluation practices to ensure that the program is ever improving and meeting agreed upon benchmarks (Dinolfo & Nugent, 2010). If possible, mentoring programs should include both male and female mentors. The inclusion of female mentors is also crucial as their mentees, whether male or female, will have the opportunity to embrace female leadership.

Other best practices to effectively foster gender equality include creating opportunities for employees to network and build relationships (Heilman & Welle, 2006). Though managers cannot force the organic process of building social relationships, they can encourage it through
structured activities and programs. By creating spaces for interactions, it allows employees to connect and potentially diminish perceived gender limitations. Strong social cohesion will aid in the sustainable development and retention of a meaningful gender mainstreaming project (WHO, 2011) and overall work productivity.

The Gender Pay Gap

In the majority of countries, women’s wages represent between 70 and 90 per cent of men’s, with even lower ratios in some Asian and Latin American countries (International Labour Organization, 2009). Although the gap in pay between genders are narrower for some countries than others, the differentials still persist. However, change can occur if the correct policies are implemented. We will now look at four empirical policy practices from 4 different countries who have worked to close the gender-based pay gap

Denmark
In 2007 Denmark instituted an evidence-based policy on equal pay, in which all enterprises were required to report their pay statistics, by gender. This allowed businesses, potential funders, and the government to be aware of the differentials in pay. The knowledge is also meant to inform workplace practices and collective agreements (UNECE, 2012). Denmark also created an equal pay guide, which can be used by local enterprises and employees on how to promote equal pay.

Germany
The German government has aimed to decrease their 23% gender pay gap by 10% by the year 2020. In order to do this, Germany implemented several measures, one being the “Logib-D” – which helps to identify gender differences in the wage structure (UNECE, 2012). It is to be used by businesses to analyze their payroll data in order to reveal the reason for the discrepancies between male and female employees (UNECE, 2012). The information should be used by the companies to start initiatives to close the gap.

Portugal
In Portugal, the government started an initiative - Revalue Work to Promote Gender Equality Initiative – to create a job evaluation method which was free from gender-bias (UNECE, 2012). The evaluation was coupled with a training handbook. Following the evaluation tool and handbook, a Labor Code was enacted to reinforce the policy of equal pay for equal work (UNECE, 2012). Enforcement of this law was seen through random workplace inspections. In 2008, 376 inspections were conducted, which resulted in 120 written notices and fines (UNECE, 2012).

Switzerland
Because measures in the past have proven insufficient in bringing about compliance to equal pay, the government of Switzerland has begun a Dialogue on Equal Pay, in which they are conversing with companies in order to eliminate discriminatory wage policies (UNECE, 2012). Part of this dialogue includes strongly encouraging companies to perform an equality audit in exchange for being nationally certified with an “Equal Salary” label (UNECE, 2012). This label is meaningful in the company recruitment of new talent.
Although the source of the motivation for equal pay comes from national governments in these examples, the strategies used can be interwoven within any company. The following is a real case study written by the Government Equalities Office in the United Kingdom:

“Tesco is the UK’s biggest private sector employer, with over 300,000 colleagues in the UK. As more than half of them are female, we take great care to ensure that they are fairly rewarded for their work and have the same opportunities as male colleagues. Our core values at Tesco are that everyone is welcome and that we aim to treat people as we would want to be treated, so we work really hard to support colleagues whatever their needs or family situation. We run a number of initiatives to make sure we live up to these values, including the regular reporting of the gender pay gap internally.

We recognise the importance of gender equality in the workplace. At Tesco, we completed our first equal pay audit in 2002 by comparing the amount men and women were paid across our entire UK workforce and we’ve been reporting on pay equality ever since. We were a founding signatory of the Government’s ‘Think, Act, Report’ scheme when it was launched in 2011.

**Taking Action**

As well as using the gender pay gap figures to look at basic pay, we looked beyond the surface figures to identify any contributing factors behind apparent differences in salary. For example, initial analysis showed a gap when comparing the average pay of our store managers. However once we split the store manager analysis by store format, it became clear that the best paid managers, running our largest Extra stores, had an average of 20 years’ service with the company, whilst the average female store manager had been with us nearer five years.

This clearly showed us that the issue is not just about pay, but also about supporting women at Tesco to reach these most senior roles. Networks like Women at Tesco and fairer internal recruitment and pay procedures have helped to redress that gap. We are also proud to support wider initiatives like ‘Inspiring the Future,’ which will see senior women at Tesco visit local schools to inspire young female students. Last year, our pay gap was 0.45%, which is statistically insignificant and much lower than the national average of 18.6%.

**Going forward**

We will continue to analyse our gender pay gap each year and publish the information on our website” (Government Equalities Office, 2014).

**Home-based Work**

Unique to the published literature is the structure and consequences of “home-based work.” Although there is a paucity of papers on this topic within the literature, the prevalence of this type of work and the gender inequalities surrounding it are vast. Though the literature is contradictory on the impact of home-based work on women, we will look at both sides. Within the umbrella of home-based work, is also the concept of “telework,” or working remotely. The World Development Report (2012) indicates that women tend to have more time constraints,
when compared with men and thus telework can be more profitable for women who need flexible work arrangements.

On the other hand, gender inequalities can also limit women to home-based work. According to the UNECE (2012), women are less likely to receive loans from banks. This not only leaves women to be more vulnerable if they have no other means of support, but it also lessens their ability to start a business venture. The lack of initial capital may lead women to get involved with telework, as opposed to starting their own business. Even worse, a lack of loans or microfinance by banks—often because of gender discrimination—can lead to unprofitable and unstable business ventures (UN Women, 2012). Unfortunately, such unregulated home-based work can often lead to debt, exploitation (UN Women, 2012), isolation, and vulnerability (Doane, 2007).

**Corporate Social Responsibility**

All companies are considered to be social partners and thus must take on corporate social responsibility (Grosser, 2009). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) includes a variety of ways in which a company aims to correct and prevent misgivings within the environmental and social realms of their business.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) goes beyond the four walls of a physical company building, but rather it extends to the very reach of the company, which are the stakeholders (e.g., investors, consumers, suppliers, and within supply chains). Indeed, the company has responsibility for how products and/or services are made and delivered (Grosser, 2009). In essence CSR analyzes the company’s impact, both good and bad, on the world; namely the workplace, marketplace, community, and environment (Soares et al., 2011). Companies must ensure that ethical principles are established, so that business transactions exude respect and concern for their employees, contractors and sub-contractors, suppliers, and home-based workers who are affiliated with the company. Viewing your company from a CSR perspective makes good business sense, as the process improves business outcomes, such as risk management, corporate and brand reputation, and the recruitment and retention of employees (Soares et al., 2011). The promotion of gender equality within your business is without a doubt part of Corporate Social Responsibility.
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