

SA lagging in female representation at executive level

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Only 2.2% of JSE-listed companies have female CEOs and SA lags behind on female representation at the executive level, according to a Bain & Company report released on Wednesday, 24 May.



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Women in SA remained under-represented in leadership roles in companies despite the existence of strong legislation and regulations, Bain & Co revealed in the report.

The *Gender Disparity in SA* report showed that the percentage of female CEOs in the country, sitting at 10%, was lower than the global average of 12%.

The Businesswomen's Association of SA reported that, according to its latest census, about 22% of directors were women, but only 7% were executive directors.

According to Census 2011 data, 51.3% of the population is women and 48.7% men.

Bain & Co found that women's aspirations "for growth were higher than that of men, but their confidence took a dip once they came into junior- and middle-management positions".

However, the report found that women at that level were on average 11% less confident than their male counterparts that they could climb higher up on the corporate ladder.

"As I climbed the ladder, it became trickier, and I came to realise that there are political imbalances that I, as a black woman, need to navigate to progress that men around me do not face. In cases where my male colleagues face similar challenges, they have access to a sponsor or mentor normally of the same sex and colour to help navigate these issues," said one survey respondent.

The report surveyed more than 1,000 women and men in listed and private companies

JSE media manager Pheliswa Mayekiso said the exchange could not speak on behalf of companies that used its platform as they merely provided the environment for trade.

Source: Business Day

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