Shaping the Future of Women in Business
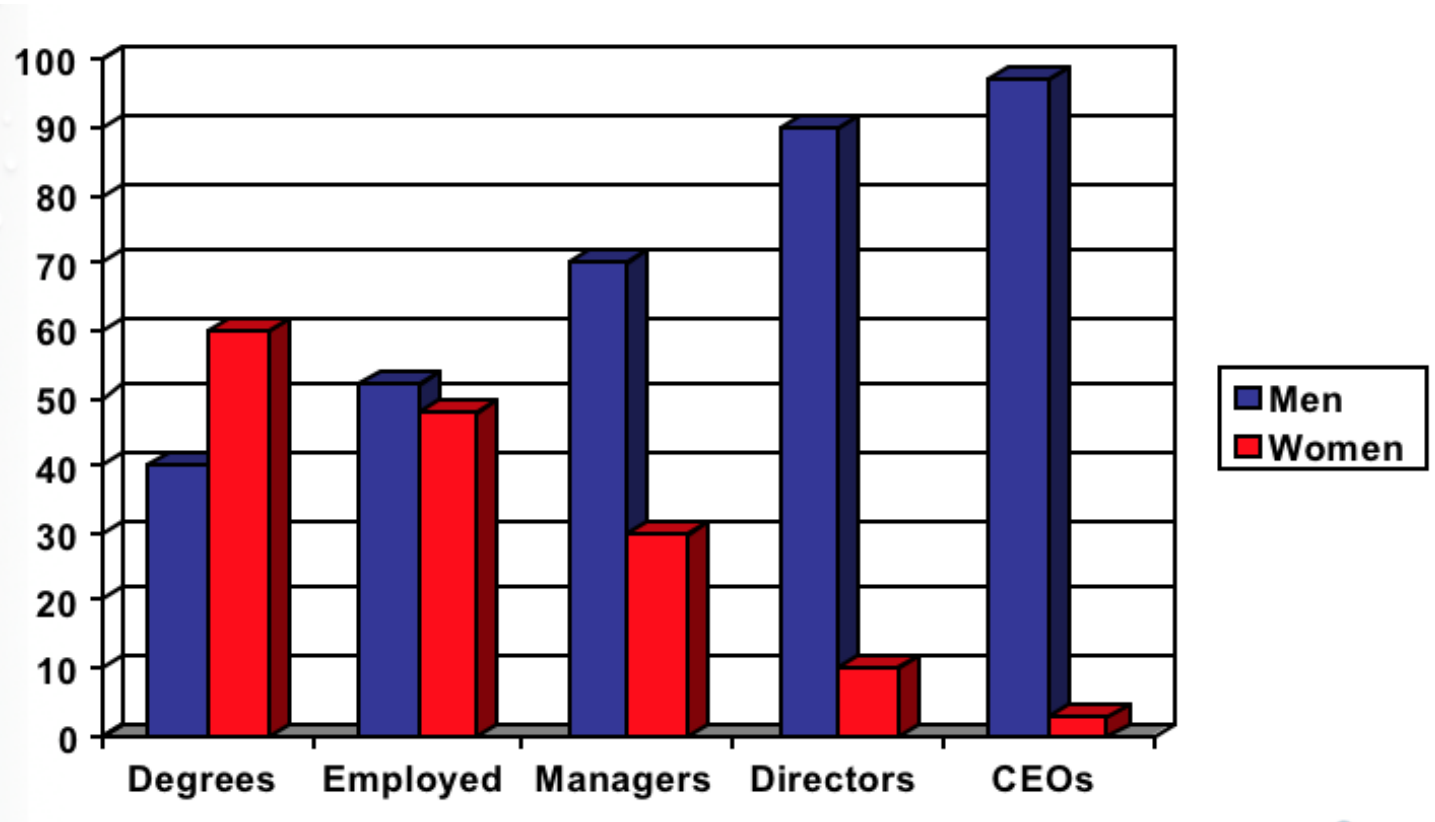

Government Events

Dr. Victoria Opara
v.opara@bathspa.ac.uk
vo215@exeter.ac.uk

BATH SPA UNIVERSITY

University of Exeter

Setting the Scene

- (Catalyst, 2018)

The Problem

(Catalyst, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2021)
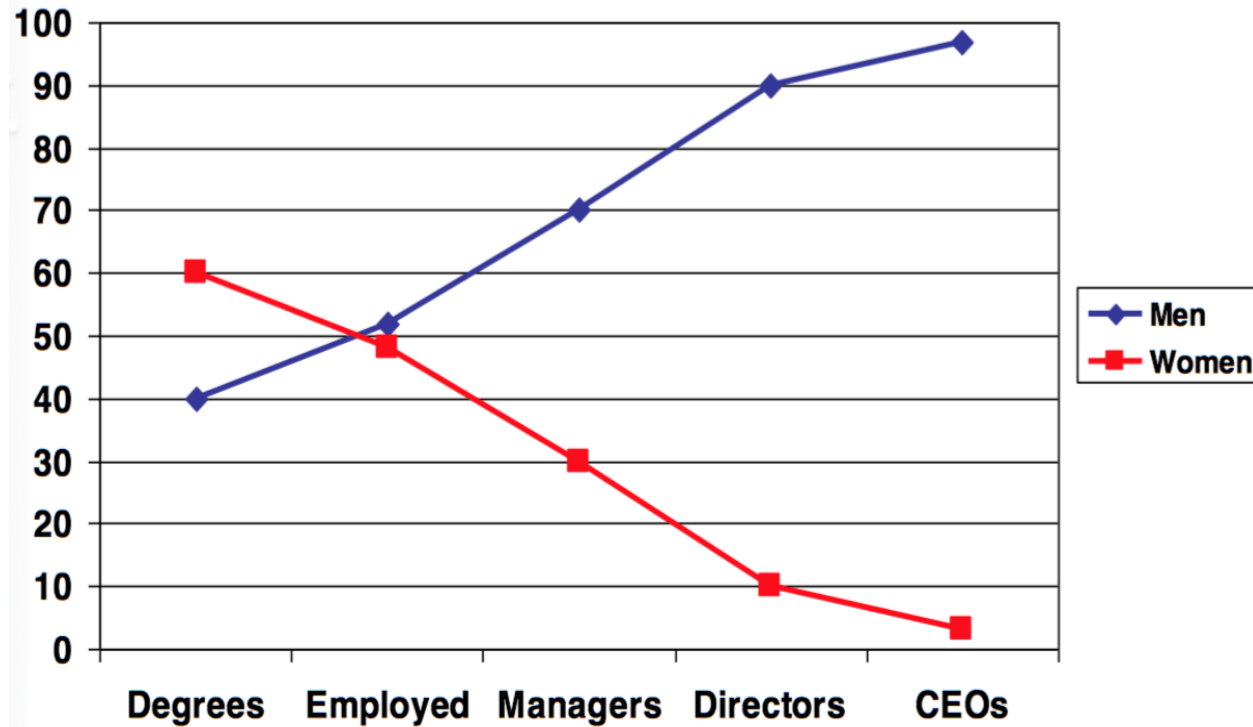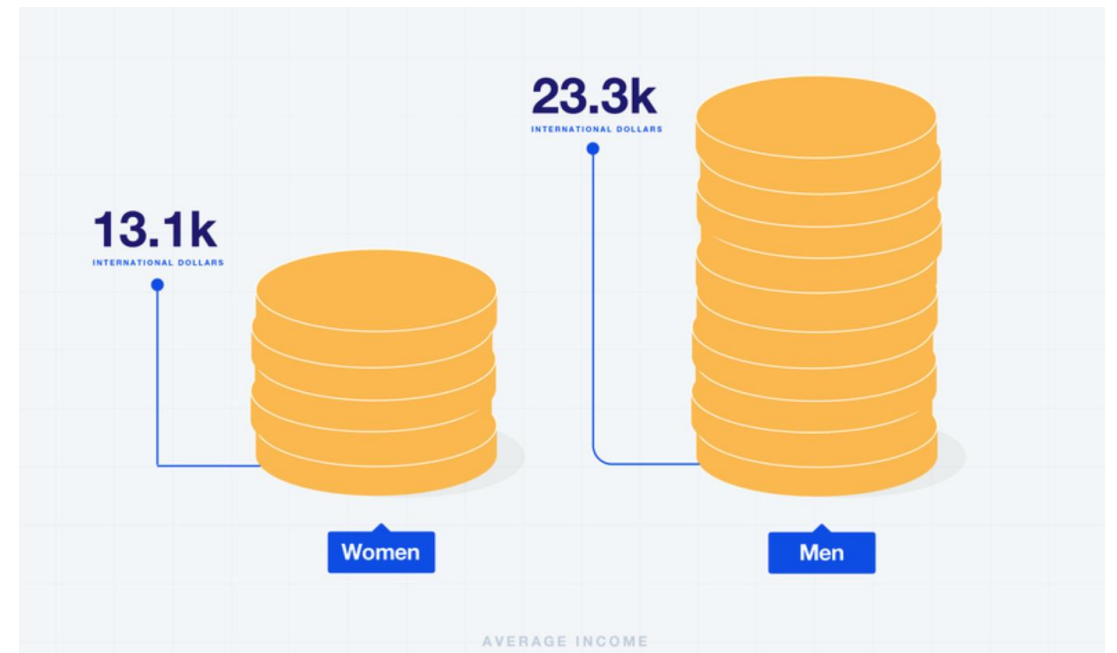
Workplace experiences of women remain qualitatively different to the experiences of men

(see: Mattingly & Blanchi….)

Possible Reasons why....

FRC Financial Reporting Council

BOARD DIVERSITY REPORTING

(Sealy, Page, Tilbury & Opara, 2018)

Table 2: FTSE 100 Board Diversity Policy

FTSE 100	Board Diversity Policy	Specifies Gender	Specifies Ethnicity
2018	98%	83%	33%
2014	85%	78%	Not collected

Table 4: FTSE 100 Board Diversity Measurable Objectives

FTSE 100	Board gender diversity objective	Progress reported against gender diversity objective	Board ethnic diversity objective	Progress reported against ethnic diversity objective
2018	34%	23%	4%	3%
2014	58%	52%	Data not collected	Data not collected

Other Possible Reasons …When we consider academic research…

Informal Expressions of gender-based discrimination	Likely Outcomes
• Women are more likely than men to be omitted from key discussions **(Welle & Heilman, 2005; Opara et al., 2020).**	Decreased job-satisfaction.
• Women tend to face more difficulty establishing mentoring relationships with male colleagues, than do men **(Peters, Ryan & Haslam, 2015; Ragins & Cotton, 1991).**	Lack of fit, resulting in lowered ambition.
Women may often be subjected to an inhospitable organisational culture or climate **(Mugisha & Olsson, 2015)**	Lowered well-being e.g., leading to burn-out, frustration and exhaustion.

Back to Women's Experiences…

- Existing research tends to focus on the "women" category (*and other social identity categories)* in isolation

  (Booysen and Nkomo, 2010; Crenshaw, 1994)

- The majority of research into women's experiences focuses on white women

- Implicit to much of our current understanding is the assumption that women's experiences in Western contexts are the experiences of white women

  (Bowleg, 2017; Öztürk, Tatli & Özbilgin, 2016; Ryan & Branscombe, 2013).

- Where research does consider for example, race/ethnicity, it tends to focus on British professional men from African, Asian, Caribbean (AAC) ethnic backgrounds.

- Women's workplaces experiences **are not solely "white"**, and the experiences of **AAC men, do not replace the unique experiences of AAC women.**

- Therefore, current knowledge is irrefutably lacking.

Intersectionality & Intersectional theory

(Crenshaw, 1991)

- "Signifies the belief that social identity categories such as:

- Ability,
- Age,
- Class,
- Ethnicity,
- Gender,
- Sexual orientation
- Migration Status,
- Nationality,
- Race,
- Socio-economic background,
- Religion, etc.

All interact or intersect to form qualitatively different experiences for the individual"

Is Intersectionality Important?

- The tendency to aggregate across groups in all cases, can sometimes be problematic. UK full-time gender pay gap by ethnicity shows:

(Sandhu & Stephenson, 2015)

Ethnicity/ Race	Gender Pay Gap (%)
Chinese	5.6%
Indian	6.3%
White British	17.2%
African	19.6%
Bangladeshi / Pakistani	26.2%

- **The Full-Time Gender /Gender Pay Gap when compared with White British Men**

(Fawcett Society Report, 2010)

Why is Intersectionality Important?

Race/ethnicity

Legend:
- Indian
- African (Black)
- Pakistani
- Caribbean (Black)
- Bangledeshi
- Chinese
- Mixed-Heritage
- Asian other
- Black other
- White British
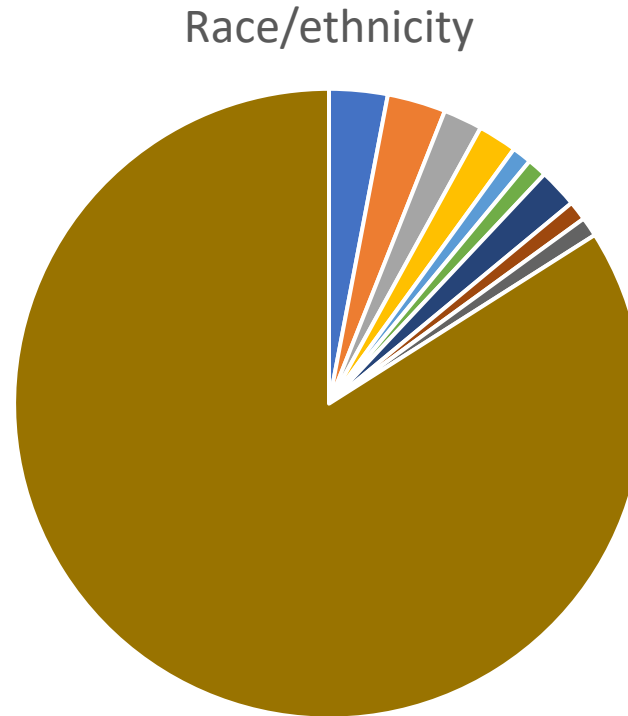
(BITC, 2010 ; Fawcett Society Report, 2010)

Final Reminders

1. Ask questions

2. General discussion is encouraged

3. Use the chat function

4. Consider what you will take-away from today's session and hopefully implement in your organisation?