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 The [Nasscom](#) "Diversity and Inclusivity Summit 2009" at Bangalore saw a plethora of women from the IT-BPO sector participating in the event. Themed "Diversity and Inclusivity Actions – Winning in a Transforming Economy" probably for the first time not only touched the subject of gender inclusivity as a business imperative but also included factors such as age, culture, gender and recruitment of disabled people. However, the central theme of the whole agenda was talent pool v/s Gender Inclusivity. Would enterprises focus on talent pool or [gender diversity](#)? Which is the most important criteria for an organization?

Says [Som Mittal](#), President, Nasscom "The Indian IT-BPO industry has set high standards in inclusivity and has recognized the business imperative for diversity and inclusion. Women are a vital part of the workforce and the industry is working towards developing a diverse and inclusive workforce for the world. Said, Vinay Dhumale, Dean and Lead Mentor, MBA Program, Manipal University, "In this shaking dynamics, everything is changing. Businesses cannot say Que Sara Sara. From changing business dynamics to climate changes, one has to keep on strategizing and winning. How much mighty one might be, success is not guaranteed throughout. We have to morph ourselves according to the changing dynamics." On lines of gender inclusivity he added that a key outcome from diversity is culture and a healthy culture is needed. Similarly like growth, success needs to be shared as well.

Is Diversity just a Lip Service?

The panel discussion moderated by Nupur Basu, Independent Journalist and Documentary Film maker raised this question to the panelists – Is Diversity just a Lip Service? Adds Suresh Vaswani, Joint CEO IT Business, Wipro Limited, "Diversity inclusivity is part of the planning process and there is a new norm in the world

today that gender inclusivity is a strategic imperative. However it is also important to access talent pool in the country.” Wipro totally believes in diversity and gender inclusivity, however retaining talent is a more important aspect for the organization. Harsh Manglik Chairman and Geography Managing Director, Accenture India, said, “In the emerging world gender diversity makes a lot of sense for businesses. From a mental principle, society is based on equal justice and equal opportunities. Either ways diversity and inclusion links to creating conditions for opportunities and helps women to contribute and engage in the work processes.”

Mohan Sekhar, President and COO, [Collabera](#) said, “Diversity is looked as a very important factor and that IT and BPO has come a long way to address the gender inclusivity and diversity. However sensitivity in dealings, employee satisfaction, and retaining the right talent and right output should be key for any organization. However Sudhir Sethi, Founder Chairman and MD, IDG Ventures India felt that “The biggest challenge is talent in the world. The key question would be – Would you focus on diversity or would you focus on talent. Another challenge organizations face is attrition where companies do not compromise. They have to take in account the talent criteria rather than the gender inclusivity criteria. ” A interesting area which Sethi raised was that a lot depends on the size of the company to push gender diversity. There is so much focus on the percentage of women employees employed, however one needs to also see that companies who have the time and energy coupled with capital and investment will be able to foster gender inclusivity and gender diversity in their organization.

Connect through WEConnect

Nasscom on sidelines of this event also launched WEConnect India, an organization that reaches out to women owned businesses. The organization certifies these businesses according to the established international norms and connects them to Fortune 500 companies. The goal is to create competitive advantage and push sustainable economic growth for women owned businesses.

Awards Recognition

Nasscom recognized key industry awards for organizations fostering gender inclusivity and diversity. [IBM Daksh](#) won the award for excellence in gender inclusivity in the BPO category; Hytech Professionals India Limited won the award for excellence in gender inclusivity in the best emerging company (less than five years existence) category; Integra Software Services won the award for excellence in gender inclusivity in the best company with less than 1000 employees category; while IBM India won the Nasscom award for excellence in gender inclusivity in the best childcare services. The award criteria included parameters such as business rationale, senior leadership support, communication, accountability, and measurable results.

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