



On-line Panel Discussion on

"Promoting Gender Equality at Workplace"

15th March 2022

Jointly organized by

G L B Institute of Technology & Management Gr Noida

G L B Institute of Management & Research

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Academic Foundation (FES) Germany

The aim of gender equality in the workplace is to achieve broadly equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men, not necessarily outcomes that are the same for all. Workplace gender equality will be achieved when people are able to access and enjoy equal rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender.

It will require:

- Workplaces to provide equal pay for work of equal or comparable value
- Removal of barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce
- Access to all occupations and industries, including leadership roles, regardless of gender; and
- Elimination of discrimination based on gender, particularly in relation to family and caring responsibilities.

In this context, *G L B Institute of Technology & Management Gr Noida* in association with *G L B Institute of Management & Research* and *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Academic Foundation (FES) Germany* has organized a Panel Discussion on "Promoting Gender Equality at Workplace", on 15 March 2022 at 11:00AM to 13:00 PM through online mode.

Dr Abhay Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, Pratap University, Mr Pravesh Bhardwaj, Head, Human Recourse, Stanley Black & Decker Inc. and Ms Soumya Baniwal, Founder CEO, Benevo Management Pvt Limited addressed the participants during the panel discussion. Mr. Ripu Daman Gaur, GLBIMR moderated the event. Representatives from various organizations, relevant departments of the institutions, faculty and students of GLBITM/GLBIMR took part in this panel discussion.

Online! Panel Discussion

"Promoting Gender Equality at Workplace"

Tuesday, 15th March 2022 at 1100 hrs



Ripudaman Gaur
Moderator



Dr. Abhay Kumar
Vice-Chancellor
Pratap University



Pravesh R. Bhardwaj
Head-Human Resource
Stanley Black & Decker, Inc.



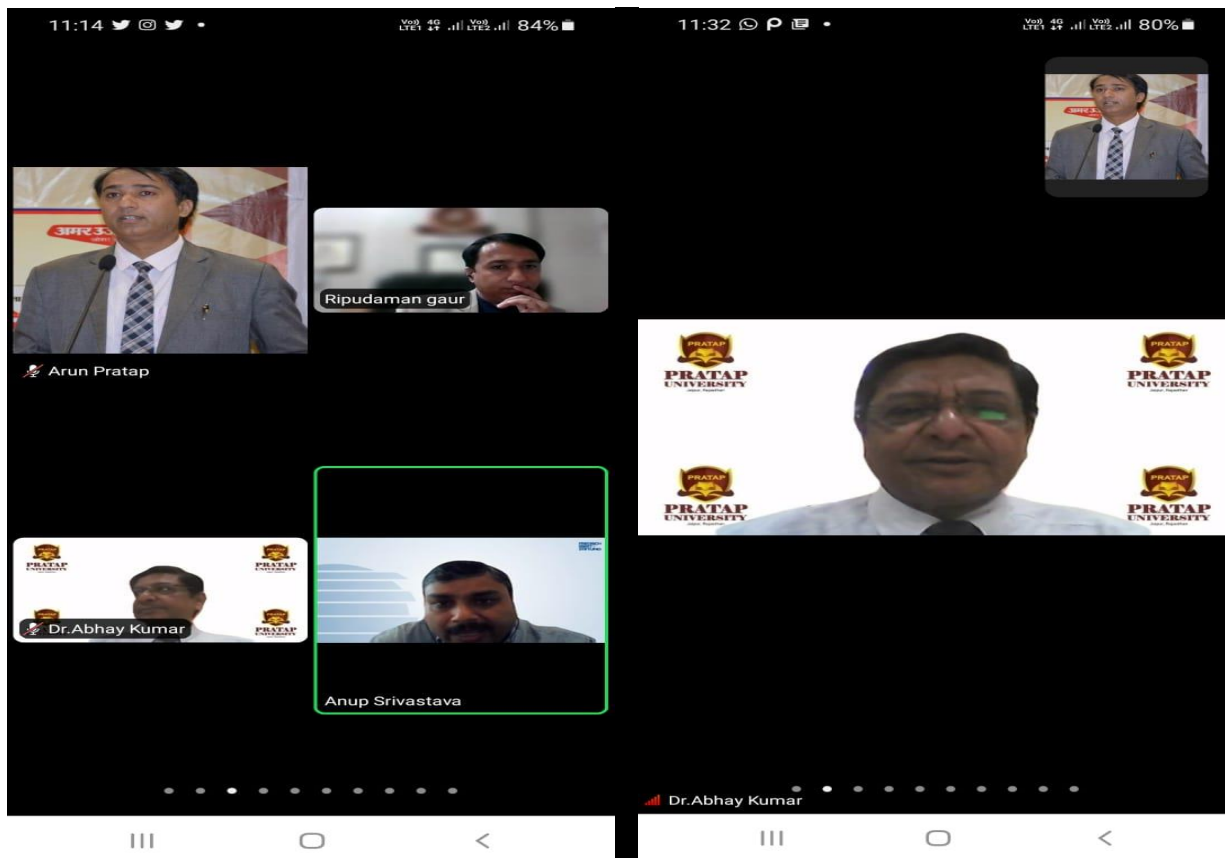
Soumya Jitendra Baniwal
Founder CEO
Benevo Management Pvt. Ltd.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98339142600?pwd=MUVWQXdZdHBlZzUwSjdTV2Zk08yUT09>
Meeting ID: 983 3914 2600 | Passcode: 873255

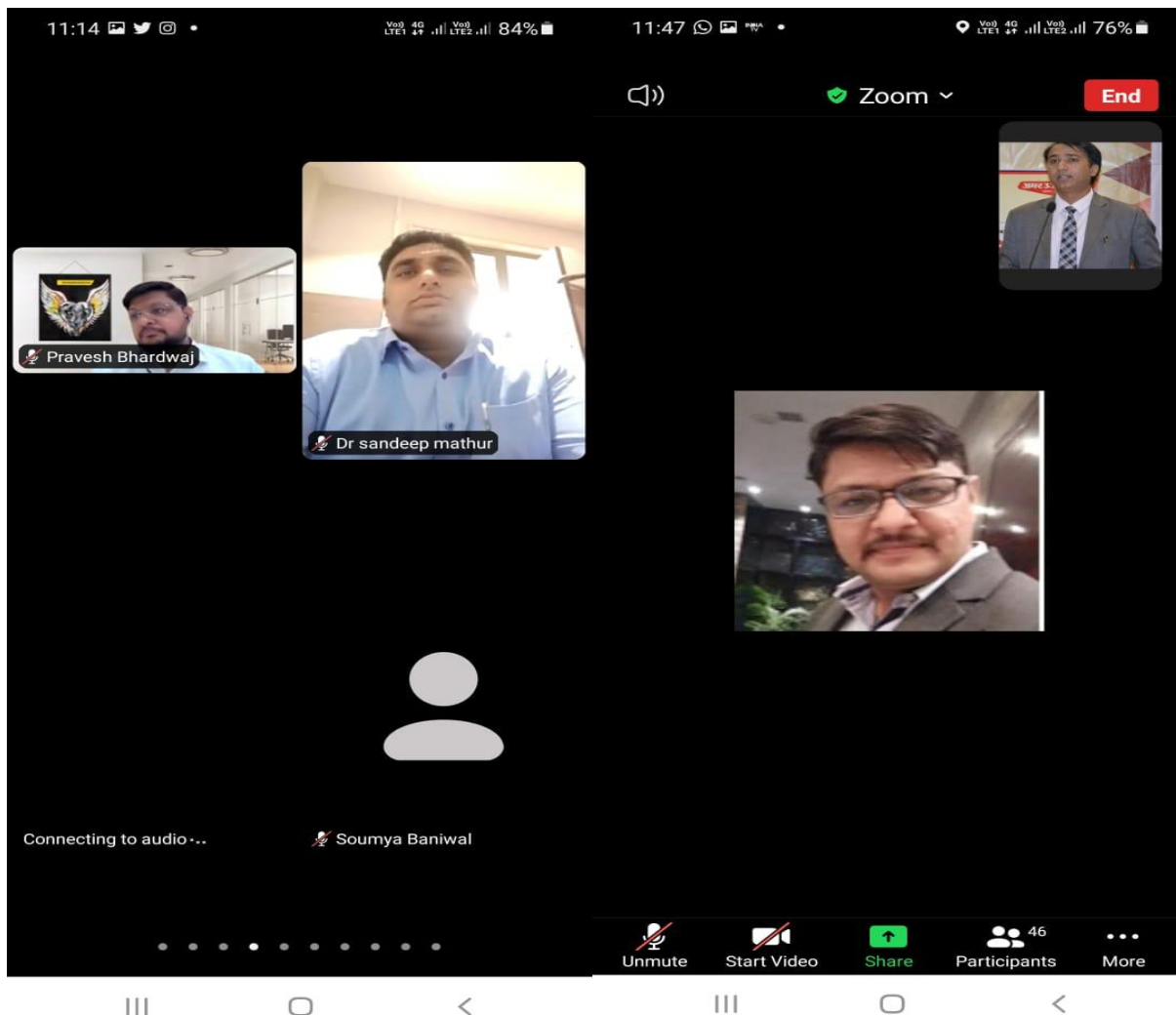
The proceeding of the event was started with the opening remarks delivered by Mr. Ripu Daman Gaur. At the outset of his remarks, Mr. Gaur welcomed the participants to the event on behalf of the organizers and stated the rationale of organizing the panel discussion. He stated that gender is one of much prioritized issues across the globe and in explaining why the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Academic Foundation attaches importance to this issue. In highlighting the issue of gender discrimination at the workplace, Mr. Gaur referred to a recent report that has come out on the occasion of International Women's Day. Quoting from the report, he stated that women's employment has increased all over the world but compared to men, women are at more vulnerable positions i.e. lowly-paid jobs. And according to this report, he further stated, 60 per cent of world's working poor are women which shows how serious is the level of gender discrimination at the workplace across the world.

However, Mr. Gaur concluded his remarks on a positive note saying that the organizers hopes that through various activities at various levels by the government, by the employers themselves, the issue of gender discrimination at the workplace could be addressed. Therefore, he urged all concerned to come forward to promote gender equality at the workplace. He hoped that participants would learn new issues and concepts from the deliberations of the discussion and they could contribute to the promotion of gender equality at their workplaces in their own ways.



Dr Abhay Kumar, Vice-Chancellor, Pratap University went on stating that many companies in India are practicing gender equality in recruitment, training, staff-utilization, promotion etc though they have no written down gender-equal policies. He said, in principle would like to see a further increase in the awareness in gender equality in every sphere of the society in general and at the workplace in particular. He expressed strong commitment to promote gender issues and equal opportunity policy at the workplace. However, he put emphasis on the role of the government in promoting and ensuring gender equality at the workplace saying, ‘we believe that to eliminate discrimination against women and establish rights and equal opportunities, the government should play a major role and ensure all possible measures to provide conducive atmosphere for women’s employment.’

At the outset of her speech, Ms Soumya Baniwal, Founder CEO, Benevo Management Pvt Limited, observed that sometimes the word ‘gender’ is wrongly perceived to be related only to women. In clarifying the term, She stated that ‘gender’ refers to social differences and relations between the sexes (men and women) that are learned, change over time and vary across cultures. Hence, gender is related not only to women rather to both men and women. She further stated that the importance of gender equality is well recognized by the United Nations and the India has been trying for long to promote gender equality at the workplace.



In explaining the women's participation in economic activities of India, Ms. Baniwal stated that there are four employment sectors in which both male and female workers are engaged in: 1. government sector, 2. semi-government, autonomous bodies and nationalized mills, factories and industries 3. private organisations, factories and industries and 4. informal sector. She said that various studies show that in the government sector, semi-government and autonomous bodies and nationalized mills and factories, the discrimination between male and female workers, though present, are not visible. But in private industries and privately-owned multinationals gender discrimination is visible.

In defining, 'gender equality', Mr Pravesh Bhardwaj, Head, Human Resource, Stanley Black & Decker Inc. stated that it means the equality between women and men which refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. He informed that equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women and other diverse groups. He observed that equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

After the presentation of Panelist, the floor was made open for comments and queries. Many participants actively took part during this open-floor discussion by commenting and asking questions. Taking the opportunity, a participant commented that it is a fact that women are discriminated. The participant stated that this could be addressed by developing personality. For example, if a woman acquires strong personality, people would give it a second thought before teasing her. To develop such strong personality, the participant observed, education can play a big role and it is encouraging that the rate of female education has been on rise. Taking the cue from this participant, another participant opined that education is a fabulous recommendation. The participant then made a query as to why men are discriminated in terms of micro-credit loans as they are given only to women in most of the cases. Another participant who was an employee of a multinational company said that according to his company's leave rules, an employee should inform the management within three days in case of unexpected absence. But, he said, sometimes women do not follow this on the ground that they were not able to inform because they are women. He further said that these women also use their "being women" as an excuse for being late for office.

In response to these queries and comments, experts said that a woman having strong personality is an exception and she wanted to deal with the issues of the ordinary people not the exceptional cases. In response to the question whether men are discriminated in terms of access to micro-credit loans, Ms. Baniwal observed that different NGOs have different goals and therefore their target groups are different. Moreover, women are given micro-credit loans in order to bring equality since they are poorest of the poor. With regard to the comment made by a participant regarding the use of "being women" as an excuse for being late for office and violating leave rules, Ms. Baniwal said that women may have especial kind of constraints but she cautioned that such constraints should not be used as an excuse to get extra advantage.

During the open-floor discussion, Dr Abhay Kumar said that flexi-timing for the women working for long hours should be ensured besides the assurance of transport facility. A participant who worked at the MNC stated that her management ensures flexi-timing and transport facility. The driver is asked to drop the female employees' right in front of their houses otherwise; he (the driver) would be punished. During this open discussion, two participants were engaged into a debate over the issue of whether women should be allowed to work at night under the existing conventions. In response to their arguments, Dr Kumar stated that it is the reality that women who work at night may be compelled by poverty and we should encourage the companies to provide them transportation and ensure their safety at the workplace.

After the discussion by the participants, Mr. Gaur concluded the event by extending his cordial thanks to the participants and assuring them that the organizers are ready to extend its support to any kind of activities related to promoting gender equality that may be initiated by the organizers.