

Impact Story Training courses

<p>Impact Story</p> <p>Training courses (different targets)</p>
<p>Intervention Definition</p> <p>Training courses communicate contents to the participating audience with the aim to achieve a behavioural change. A variety of training courses aim at promoting gender equality. From a theoretical perspective and with regard to the category of personnel development, we can broadly distinguish two training targets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop awareness regarding gender inequalities and diversity in the organisation. These courses may address a broad audience in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) as well as academia in general or focus on managers in particular. 2. To pass knowledge concerning career options and possibilities to women (Kalev et al. Dobbin 2006). <p>Not discussed here is the scope of training courses to also address gender equality topics beyond the personnel level, e.g. the role of gender in research contents.</p> <p>In detail, the intervention "Training courses" comprises an analysis of gender equality in research institutions and the derivation of concrete needs that should be met through training as well as the compilation of relevant content and development of training courses. Furthermore, it includes the execution of the training with the pre-defined target group, the evaluation of the participants' conscious and unconscious learnings; and finally, the evaluation of the social effects that were expected as the consequences of the training (Bezrukova et al. 2012).</p> <p>An example for the target of women's empowerment is the programme "The Accountability of Academic Colleagues" (AKKA) which is conducted at Lund University in Sweden. After the university's management recognised that men were overrepresented in leadership positions at the institution, it launched this internal leadership programme. AKKA is aiming to help women with the development of leadership skills as well as to motivate them to run for dean and vice-dean positions.</p> <p>The varied entrepreneurship trainings of the Women's Founder Consult (WFC) in Lower Saxony, Germany are another example. WFC wants to make the specific start-up knowledge in the STEM fields accessible to women. The programme offers workshops which train pitching in a STEM environment or prepare for self-employment and cover topics which are generally of interest for business start-ups.</p>
<p>Intervention Definition Short</p> <p>Training courses aim at achieving a behavioural change by communicating new contents to the target audience. Concerning gender equality, workshops can target improving awareness of inequalities and a lack of diversity in organisations, or inform women about further career options (Kalev et al. 2006).</p>
<p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (3) Boost professional capabilities of women to pursue promotion (4) Implement gender-fair organisational structures
<p>Output</p> <p>Conducted trainings are the direct output of the intervention "Training courses". This is indicated by the number of trainings and the number of participants (Kalev et al. 2006).</p>

Accordingly, in the example of the programme AKKA the measurable outputs are the carried out training courses in the internal leadership programme and the number of the attendees.

Output Short

The direct outputs of the intervention "Training courses" are the conducted trainings (Kalev et al. 2006).

Output indicators

3.2.1 Availability of training and workshops

3.2.1 Quality of the activities for the support of a scientific career

5.1.3 Researchers trained (inc. PhD, post-docs, gender balanced)

Outcome

The direct outcome of the intervention is an increase in knowledge, skills and awareness. Diversity trainings for all members of an organisation, especially leaders, raise gender awareness and consciousness of bias (Carnes et al. 2012). They help decrease false associations with women (Jackson et al. 2014). Trainings for female junior researchers increase their knowledge of possible career paths, build networks and teach confidence and the ability to assume leadership roles. The trainings can provide an opportunity to learn new work skills that are useful for career success (Lipinsky 2009, Archie and Laursen 2013). This outcome is indicated by assessing the understanding of the contents before and after the training.

A second outcome is that participants of the trainings use the new knowledge, skills and awareness in their professional practice (Archie and Laursen 2013). This is measured, for instance, by employees being more open to cooperating with fellows from social backgrounds other than their own (Bezrukova et al. 2012). Women who have been at trainings for career development get clarity about their goals and values and become more self-aware. They improve their self-presentation and learn to network more successfully. They can identify promising fellows to work with (Harris and Leberman 2012).

In the programme AKKA, the outcomes on the target group are their improved leadership skills and a heightened confidence in their own capabilities as well as a strengthened perception of their career possibilities. Furthermore, the general awareness towards gender equality is raised.

Participants of the WFC's trainings can experience improved leadership, business and self-promoting skills as well as a higher confidence in their ability to establish a business in the STEM fields. In combination with networking interventions, the women who attended the workshops will apply those skills by collaborating with other female entrepreneurs as well as supporting institutions.

Outcome Short

The direct effects on the attendees of the intervention "Training courses" are an increase in the knowledge of possible career paths (Lipinsky 2009) as well as greater clarity of individual goals (Harris and Leberman 2012). Participants will develop new work skills like networking (Archie and Laursen 2013) and more generally gender awareness will be raised among the members of the organisation (Carnes et al. 2012). Consequently, the attendees can apply the new knowledge, skills and awareness in their work processes, i.e. by cooperating with co-workers with diverse social backgrounds (Bezrukova et al. 2012)

Outcome indicators

3.1.1 Perception of own role being a leader concerned with supporting women's opportunities

3.1.1 Increased self-awareness

<p>3.2.1 Knowledge about own career path and potential obstacles</p> <p>3.2.1 Knowledge about leadership and university governance</p> <p>3.2.1 Improved understanding of different departments'/sections' culture and procedures</p> <p>3.2.1 Improved negotiation skills</p> <p>3.2.1 Improved voicing opinion/confidence to argue one's position</p> <p>3.2.1 Improved self-promotion skills</p> <p>3.2.2 Ability to create/enhance/sustain new networks/contacts/collaborations</p> <p>4.1.1 Acknowledgement of gender issues in team)</p>
<p>Impact</p> <p>In regard to diversity trainings, as a result of the reduced institutional gender bias, more women will be employed and promoted (Bezrukova et al. 2012). Furthermore, trainings for women's career development have an impact on competitiveness as well as promotion. Having gained insights into career development options, negotiation skills, and an increased sense of self-worth, more women will be promoted and attain high positions (Harris and Leberman 2012). Employees from various backgrounds can cooperate better and the work is more productive overall (Bezrukova et al. 2012). Trainings are assumed to affect a cultural change in the organisation Kalev et al. 2006).</p> <p>The intervention may have an impact on several organisational dimensions. The reason for this broad variety of dimensions is the dependence on the precise contents and goals of the training. Therefore, diversity, career and leadership trainings can have effects on several Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) indicators: Having become more self-aware and being in high-ranking positions, women researchers can share their perspective more often, which helps decrease gender bias. Besides, diversity of staff is useful for increasing innovation capacities because it enhances knowledge of user needs (Froese and Schraudner 2010).</p> <p>Through the programme AKKA, more women will reach decision-making positions at Lund University. Since there will be more female leaders as role models, those will also have an increased visibility. Furthermore, the organisation's cultural, structural and organisational factors may change towards a more gender inclusive setting.</p> <p>In the case of WFC, the training courses' beneficiaries will establish more female-led start-ups in the STEM sectors. Those women can then act as role models, which increases the motivation of other women to found STEM businesses.</p>
<p>Impact short</p> <p>More women will be ready to be promoted to leadership positions because of their new insights into career development options. They can therefore act as role-models for other women to aim for higher career goals (Harris and Leberman 2012). Since employees from different social backgrounds will better work together, the organisation's productivity is increased (Bezrukova et al. 2012). Staff diversity can also result in a heightened innovation capacity (Froese and Schraudner 2010). Overall, this can lead to a cultural change in the organisation towards a more gender inclusive environment Kalev et al. 2006).</p>
<p>Impact indicators short</p> <p>1.1.1 Horizontal/vertical segregation in positions</p> <p>5.1.1 Number of publications in peer-reviewed high-impact journals</p> <p>5.1.1 Percentage of women that are first authors of research papers</p> <p>5.1.1 Number of scientific papers in relation to the population size</p>

5.2.2 Number and share of female inventors

5.3.1 Number of projects led by women

5.5.1 Percentage of research institutions that document specific actions that minimise/reduce barriers in work environment that disadvantage one sex (e.g. flexibility of working hours)

5.5.1 Glass Ceiling Index

Policy Context

The overall attitude concerning gender equality in a country can have an impact on several factors of the intervention "Training courses". First, it influences the awareness of whether there is a problem with gender equality and if this claim is supported by scientific studies. Furthermore, in countries where gender equality is not seen as an important value, it might be more difficult to legitimise trainings to promote gender equality. If the share of female employees among the workforce of an organisation is already low, trainings conducted within this organisation may have a low participation rate of women and can therefore not result in an increase of women in leadership positions.

The AKKA programme was able to benefit from the Swedish policy context because, in the Swedish research system, gender equality is generally recognised as an important value. The issue of the underrepresentation of female researchers in leadership positions is well acknowledged by the Swedish government. The legislative frame in Sweden is supportive towards gender equality and exceeds the European requirements. For those reasons, the AKKA programme was established and conducted without obstacles on the policy level. However, since there are already a lot of gender equality interventions in Sweden, the AKKA programme might disappear in the larger picture. Furthermore, support for the programme may be less significant and visible because of system fatigue.

In the WFC's policy context, the project funding mainly stems from the state of Lower Saxony, the European Social Fund and the City of Hanover. The project's financial framework offers a relatively solid funding base and helps to conduct the trainings. The short-term funding periods of the project help the team to stay accountable to current political and societal needs, adjusting the topics of the workshops as needed. Yet, those short-term funding periods are an impediment for the WFC's employees who continuously have to file applications for further funding. They would also favour permanent employment contracts.

Organisational Context

Offering a training is an appropriate intervention if an organisation wants to change its culture or decrease discrimination. However, trainings are not always effective in promoting gender equality and, when evaluating a training, certain circumstances should be taken into account. By analysing seven common diversity programmes in private sector firms, Kalev et al. (2006) argued that even though trainings are widely used (in 39 % of the organisations surveyed), they often have little or even reverse effects.

The specific effects of trainings depend on possibilities to implement the content from the training in work practice. For instance, van den Brink and Benschop (2012) suggest that the success of a training on gender awareness depends on whether it is implemented into recruiting practices. Along with this goes the result of Kalev et al. (2006) that the effect of training is higher in organisations, which have clear responsibilities for measures to support diversity, e.g. an affirmative action plan or a diversity committee.

Certain types of trainings have been identified to be particularly vulnerable to producing reverse effects. Trainings to sensitise leaders for diversity may activate an unconscious cognitive bias against minority groups (Kidder et al. 2004, Rynes and Rosen 1995). Unconscious stereotypes are difficult to control rationally (Nelson et al. 1996). The existing literature suggests that such reverse effects of diversity trainings are more common if they discuss bias against one particular minority group, while trainings which discuss overall diversity have been assessed as more successful (Kalinowski et al. 2013, Bezrukova et al. 2012).

In a study at the University of Colorado, participants in training courses reported several success factors for diversity trainings: openness, good atmosphere, networking opportunities, presentation of workshop contents. Training courses on gender equality can be combined with other gender equality interventions or evaluations of short-term and long-term effects. In this case, it is suggested for evaluations to consider which effects can be attributed to training courses and which to the interventions they support (Archie and Laursen 2013).

In the specific case of the AKKA programme, the intervention had a vast support by the university management as well as among the general staff. Since the departments did not have to carry the costs of the trainings, they were gladly accepted. However, in the beginning, the courses were only directed to women, which excluded men from the leadership training and limited the programmes impact. Also, there was no time compensation for the hours spent in the workshop, which hindered the participants.

Since the WFC uses a network of local, regional and national partners to promote the trainings and reach the target group, its financial resources are spared. Nevertheless, the communication with the different partners causes high coordination efforts. In addition, the WFC's incorporation in hannoverimpuls, a public business development agency in Hanover, helps by providing various kinds of resources. This affiliation gives WFC more legitimacy because it is framed as a business development programme. Yet it makes them accountable to hannoverimpuls .

Sources

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