MRS Evidence Matters™

Where we stand:

Inclusion in the Market Research Sector

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Where We Stand:
Diversity and Inclusion Industry Report - July 2017

Of the Market Researchers we spoke to:

- 61% are women
- 8% identify as gay/lesbian/bisexual
- 69% identify as white British
- 50% work at companies with more than 250 employees
- 51% are based in London

How their organisations look:

According to our survey, women account for 59% of those employed full-time in the research sector. At senior management grades this figure is 49%, indicating a better performance for women at senior management than other creative or marketing services sectors. It is disappointing however that only 33% of women in our sample reach senior management compared to 50% of men.

27% of the men working full-time earn £70,000 or more. However, this fell to 17% for women.

The survey showed 14% of those employed full-time in the research sector identified as BAME. While at senior management levels this demographic made up 11%, with 31% of those identifying as BAME reaching senior management roles.

24% of those working full-time who identified as 'White British' were earning £70,000 or more, this fell to 15% for those who identified as BAME denomination.

The issues:

Impact of these areas on your career:	*No Impact/Not Applicable*
My Gender	69%
My Sexual Orientation	95%
My Ethnicity	74%
My Beliefs, Lifestyle and Faith	83%
My Health	77%
My Age	61%

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When asked if they have observed any kind of bias in their current company 23% say they have seen 'Negative Discrimination' and 11% say they have seen 'Positive Discrimination'. 44% do not believe that 'the best opportunities go to the most deserving employees'.

30% think that there is a 'negative perception surrounding diversity at the moment.'

In Depth:

Gender:
Of the women asked about the impact of their gender on their career, 47% said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated' against because of their gender in their current company. 4% had felt 'Positively Discriminated' against. Of the men asked 13% said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated' against and 39% had felt 'Positively Discriminated' against.

23% of men thought that someone's gender could 'unfairly affect' their level of pay, while for the women asked this figure was 60%. 38% of the men asked, thought their company was not doing enough to 'accommodate and support' people of all genders, for women this figure was 40%.

When we isolated those who had taken parental leave with their current employer, 100% of the men asked said they felt supported by their business in this decision, compared to 62% for women.

Sexual Orientation:
Of those asked about the impact of their sexual orientation on their career, 55% of those who identified as gay/lesbian/bisexual said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated' against because of their Sexual Orientation in their current company, none said they had felt 'Positively Discriminated' against.

None of those who identified as heterosexual said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated', but 17% said they felt 'Positively Discriminated' against.

64% of those who identified as Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual thought their company was not doing enough to 'accommodate and support' people of all sexual orientations. For those who identified as heterosexual this figure was 17%.

Ethnicity:
Of those asked about the impact of their Ethnicity on their career, 13% of those who identified as 'White British' said they had felt 'Positively Discriminated' against because of their Ethnicity in their current company, and 5% said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated against. Of those who identified as BAME 0% said they had felt

'Positively Discriminated' against, while 52% had felt 'Negatively Discriminated' against.

25% of those who identified as 'White British' thought their company was not doing enough to 'accommodate and support' people of all ethnicities, compared to 63% for those who identified as BAME.

Beliefs, Lifestyle and Faith:
Of those asked about the impact of their beliefs, lifestyle and faith on their career, 21% said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated' against because of their beliefs, lifestyle and faith in their current company. 19% had felt 'Positively Discriminated' against.

20% said they thought their employer was not doing enough to 'accommodate and support' people of all beliefs, lifestyles and faiths. While 46% agreed that they are sometimes put in a position that made them 'uncomfortable' or 'conflicts' with their beliefs, lifestyle or faith at work.

Health:
Of those asked about the impact of their health issues on their career, 35% said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated' against because of their health concerns or disability in their current company. 9% had felt 'Positively discriminated' against.

57% said they thought their employer 'should do more' to support them with their health concerns or disability. 21% said their employer was unaware of their health concern or disability.

Age:
Of those asked about the impact of their age on their career, 35% said they had felt 'Negatively Discriminated' against because of their age in their current company. 8% had felt 'Positively Discriminated' against.

30% said they thought their employer was not doing enough to 'accommodate and support' people of all ages.

The Views, and current Status:
Currently 56% of those asked said they are aware of their company having diversity or anti-discrimination policies, 11% are aware of their company having dedicated diversity staff officers and 15% are aware of their company having diversity training for staff.

When it comes to recruiting 57% believe that there are 'conscious and unconscious' biases at play in determining who gets a job in their business. 58% think that something needs to be done to ensure 'a person interviewing for a position is reviewed by a mixture of people from different backgrounds'.

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Only, 27% think 'that something needs to be done to ensure people from different backgrounds are prioritised when interviewing for a position'.

76% think focusing on 'flexibility and the idea of allowing work to fit around peoples' lives no matter their circumstances' would be 'beneficial' in creating an inclusive environment. 55% think this achievable. When asked if this should be approached through 'business policies' or 'managerial flexibility' the average response is to say it should be a 50:50 distribution of both.

Having run two research pieces and an in-depth focus group on this subject, it has become clear that the issues at play are complicated and highly sensitive; therefore it is hard to give broad brush recommendations as to possible solutions. It is clear, however, that companies need to review, identify and audit areas where employees are being let down or discriminated against unfairly. Many organisations do not realise that there are issues of diversity and inclusion endemic in their structure. As such we would thoroughly recommend all organisations review, contact and discuss with their staff in an open forum their concerns and focus upon identifying places where more can be done to ensure that wherever possible the working environment can fit around people no matter their background or needs, and that those being considered and given roles are done purely on merit and in a balanced and unbiased way. This is harder than it sounds as many of the biases and issues may go unannounced or may be hidden be structures and unconscious issues that ultimately result in unfair practice towards certain groups.

As representative to the industry and as a voice of marker researchers we believe the MRS should take an active role in pioneering the way forward, this may be through advice, training, events or any other means of encouraging better practises and awareness of the issues identified.

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