

Women in senior executive positions remain marginal: survey

A patriarchal culture has hindered the growth of women holding key executive positions in South Africa.



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That is according to the Grant Thornton Women in Business Survey released on Wednesday, 8 March - International Women's Day.

The report says only 28% of senior management roles are held by women in the country.

While higher than last year, the percentage of women business leaders has not changed significantly since the start of Grant Thornton's research 13 years ago, when the figure hovered at 26%.

Lee-Anne Bac, director of Advisory Services at Grant Thornton in Johannesburg, said: "Until we make a concerted effort to change our mindset to the role of women in the workplace, at home and society at large, we're going to continue to battle with inequality in the workplace."

The annual report, which surveys 5,500 businesses in 36 economies, also shows that almost a third (31%) of companies

have no women at all in senior management positions.

The report reveals it is still common for senior women to be in supporting roles, particularly as human resources directors or chief financial officers.

However, there has been a slow rise in the number of women in chief executive roles, from 7% in 2015 to 9% last year and 10% this year.

Globally, too, the pace of change towards gender equity remains stagnant.

"We shouldn't, however, be comparing ourselves against the global situation," Bac said.

"Instead, we should strive to match those countries that are performing at above-average rates."

Bac said South African businesses needed to embrace new leadership styles that allowed women to bring their own flair to the workplace.

Source: Herald

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