

secret that we live in a world where this is still a gap in equality between men and women. Before the word 'feminism' was even coined and the concept of women's rights was but blip in the horizon of our modern-day society, Indian history taught us about the fearless warrior women such as Jhansi Ki Rani and Sarojini Naidu and this is further ingrained through the worship of many Goddesses as a reverence to female strength. India has already seen highest level of women leadership in roles such as Prime Minister and President. Today Indians form the highest percentage of women commercial pilots in the world. Women are at the forefront of building India's footprint for the future. Women are excelling and breaking gender stereotypes. You can find women in all walks of life such as Space, Security, Corporate, Entrepreneurship etc.

INDIA IS A ROLE MODEL FOR GENERATION DIVERSITY

We all know with age comes a certain outlook, behaviour and challenge which needs to be managed appropriately. It is important that the Elderly generations don't feel isolated from society. It is important that generation gap does not hinder the ability to engage across generations. In India, it's common for multiple generations to live under the same roof. The elderly are not viewed upon as a burden but as a powerhouse of knowledge and experience, even though sometimes their views may not be aligned to our own. This brings many benefits to the foundations of familial life. The elderly often take on the responsibility of taking care of the young enabling women to work freely, it helps build strong bonds between grandparents and grandchildren and teaches the importance of family to newer generations. Many western countries are battling with the isolation of the elderly from our fast-paced world, often leaving them behind to fend for themselves. It would be our loss to forget the past in our race to get to the future, so it is essential to include our previous generations when planning a world for our future generations.

DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE IS ESSENTIAL

Many Indians naturally analyse a topic or situation in multiple ways enabling to come up with several solutions to one problem. I had the privilege to work with 35+ nationalities and live in several cosmopolitan cities and I strongly believe that Diversity is a need for every organisation who wants to grow. I was elected as the Chairman of Diversity Network within ING called FUSION. I worked passionately on Diversity and focused on promoting a culture of

inclusiveness, ensuring women aspire for leadership positions and safeguarding generation diversity. We established a network of mentors and organised networking sessions. In addition, we conducted various awareness programs to educate fellow colleagues on how to deal with the spectrum of Diversity.

THE WORLD IS MORE BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE OF DIVERSITY

Each one of us is unique. We all know that within the same family children born to the same parents are not the same. We all know that couples who come together to share their lives are not the same. Diversity is God's gift to mankind however some people use Diversity to Divide people and conquer. It is individual responsibility to avoid stereotyping people and groups, stand up against prejudice and avoid situations that could cause tension or stress. We should continue to focus on integration and orientation so that no one feels isolated, focus on dialogue to avoid misinterpretation, focus on ethical mediation to avoid intensification of clashes.

Diversity is a necessity, not a choice. We owe peace and harmony to our future generations. It is becoming more and more obvious to learn the art of co-existence in a multicultural environment. It's important for diversity to be included in every pillar of society, be it family, educational institutions, government, media as well as religious institutions.

Having experienced so many beautiful cultures (both within and outside of India), I believe, every culture has plenty to teach us, only if we are open to learning. Being Indian by heart and global by spirit, Indians have been able to integrate and orient ourselves to the various diversities and avoid unconscious bias. To further avoid unconscious bias, I recommend not to judge eastern world with western pair of eyes and vice versa.

DIVERSITY IS THE ART OF THINKING INDEPENDENTLY TOGETHER

In India we believe in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which means "the world is one family". This is the reason with all these diversities we still stay as a unified Indian community in the Netherlands.

We need to continue to instil openness, to accept each one's uniqueness, to be good listeners to understand the rationale behind people's words and behaviour. We need to respect our differences and embrace them with positivity. I believe if we make this our mantra, we will leave behind a world more peaceful and harmonious for our future generations, we owe it to them!