

## Summary of WAPS 9th knowledge sharing forum

**Sunil Abrol**  
Vice President, WAPS

WAPS 9th Knowledge Sharing Forum (KSF) was held on December 5, 2024 on the theme "Diversity in Productivity: Inclusive diversity\_ managing diverse teams to optimize productivity".

Following were the panelists:

1. Dr Angela Y. Lee , Professor of Marketing , Kellogg School, of Management, Northweatem University, USA.
2. Mr. Rajesh Varma, Founder, Varma Gastion, France
3. Mrs. Flora Mutahi , CEO, Melvin Marshal Intl. Ltd., Kenya

The session was moderated by Mr. Leon Bian , KSF Coordinator and a Fellow of WAPS.

The session began with an AI generated message from Mr. Chen Shengchang , President, WAPS, who highlighted the vision, mission and activities of WAPS and importance of AI.

Following were the key observations and recommendations:

Angela Y Lee :

- Diversity means having different elements like education, age, gender, culture, color etc.
- Diverse people bring different ideas and perspective therefor need for collaboration.
- Research shows that there is steep rise in collaborative research, work and publications across Globe.
- While similarity attracts, diversity increases productivity.
- Diversity leads to social integration and cohesiveness leading to growth, focus and creativity.

Rajesh Varma :

- Diversity works as good business strategy
- Transparency , diversity, gender equality lead to better leadership as seen in organization in East and West .
- Deloitte research shows that diverse organisations are more productive.
- It is good to invest in companies that have high diversity.
- Taiwan has high diversity as women have hunger for hard work.
- Indian IT companies demonstrate innovation because of diverse manpower.
- Low diversity may contribute to higher employee turnover.
- Leaders focus on quality and adopt diversity as they grow.

Flora Mutahi

- Africa is diverse with multi ethnic , skills, gender etc.
- Kenya has 36% women on Boards.
- Initiative on women in manufacturing.
- MSME hiring more women.
- Govt. pushing diversity.
- Access to funding a challenge for women.
- Women in Africa have challenge for access to education, STEM, networks .
- Gender bias needs to be managed.
- Women are more collaborative and empathetic leading to higher productivity.

Leon Bian led the discussion. Few more points were made:

- Societal culture impacts diversity.
- Need to see diversity within cultures.
- East has collaborative culture while west is individualistic.
- East has collectivity and hierarchical culture leading to dependence.
- West has autonomous culture leading to creativity.