

## A Review on Leadership Behavior of Women Executives

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**Abstract:** In the last few centuries various social trends can be identified as the structure and functioning which is reflected by the business globally. Women are powerful agents of change and the far-reaching benefits of diversity are increasingly recognized in all spheres. Significantly, there has been raise in the number of employed women in the business world or in market place their under-representation at executive level is a big concern. Number of women workforce in India constitutes an essential part; analysis reveals women entering the area of management continues to increase but aren't given opportunity to engage in leadership bodies. Although the involvement of women entrepreneurs and leaders has increased in the world in the past few years yet, various factors affect the performance of women such as the gender wage gap, lack of safety policies and flexible work offerings. The leadership behavior of women executives has pulled in consideration of numerous specialists nowadays because of its perceived significance as when hold more executive leadership positions, their companies are more profitable. Hence, it's important to attract and retain professional women with good leadership qualifications and skills in senior positions to maintain a good standard and professionalism. In this review paper, leadership style, women education and their participation, schemes of women empowerment, the need for leadership, presence and opportunities given to women are discussed. The study result can be useful for conducting future research using quantitative data on leadership behavior practices.

Keywords – women leadership, management, leadership behavior, executive position

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### INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been a predominantly masculine role through the centuries that few females have obtained (Eagly&Karau, 2002). Leadership roles have traditionally been held by men. The characteristics of leadership were also perceived as masculine in nature. There has been a general agreement that women face much more challenges and barriers in reaching leadership positions (Eagly, Karau, &Makhijani, 1995). Porterfield &Kleiner(2005) studied the beginning with early antiquity, few female leaders have stood out who performed a stereotypical masculine task. The females who did make historical advancements have helped to break down gender stereotyping and advance females within the workplace to gain equality.

With the increased investment of social capital on women, they were able to come out to compete with men for all positions. Some essential leadership traits such as ambition, self-reliance and assertiveness were also acquired by women without compromising on their gender traits. Their emotional

intelligence level has also been found to be higher than men (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Subordinates were found to be reluctant to accept a female as a leader or as a manager since they perceived women to be incapable of performing the leadership or managerial role and/or they seemed to have looked at women as people not fully qualified for the role (O'Leary, 1974; Riger & Galligan, 1980; Terborg, 1977).

The concept of women's leadership focuses on giving women strength and skills. The report states that leadership is the important function of the management that helps to maximize efficiency in achieving the goals of the organization (Dappa, Bhatti & Aljarah, 2019). According to Aldrich and Lotito (2020) implied that the leaders help others and themselves to do the right things. The report shows that women leaders always promote cooperation and collaboration to the team members. They are more likely to take risks and ignore the rules. There are many schemes launched by every government for women's upliftment. Lastly, it concludes with what opportunities a woman should have in this world (Parmar, 2016).

In this paper, literature on women leadership behavior is reviewed. The gendered nature of organizations, leadership behavioral style exhibited by women will be discussed followed by directions for future research. Several studies have been conducted in this area in India as well as in other countries. Reviews of the existing studies are highlighted below:

### **OVERVIEW OF LEADERSHIP**

Management guide (2021) evaluated the leadership is the ability to motivate a team to achieve a certain goal. Leadership is the ability of a manager to convince subordinates to work with confidence. It is the important function of the management that helps to maximize the efficiency in achieving the organization's goals. Dynamic and effective leaders lead in achieving the organization's goals. A leader is a person who starts the work by communicating the policies and plans to the subordinates from where the work starts. Leaders help others and themselves to do the right things. Leaders set the direction and work smoothly and efficiently. She/he motivates the employees with economic and non-economic rewards. As claimed by (women's leadership, 2021) a leadership style refers to a leader's behavior and methods when directing, motivating, and managing others.

### **DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEADERSHIP STYLES:**

- Democratic Leadership: leader makes the decisions based on the input of each member. Each employee has an equal chance to have their views on a project's direction.
- Autocratic Leadership: In this style of leadership, the leader makes the decisions without taking input from anyone who reports to them.
- Laissez-Faire Leadership: In this style of leadership, the decisions are in the hands of the group members and not the leader.
- Transformational Leadership: this type of leadership is mostly used by women and is about relationships, trust, and care.
- Transactional Leadership: It is more about rewards and punishment.

### **NEED OF WOMEN LEADERS**

According to Leadership & General Management (2021) reported the study of any institution whether it is society or organization cannot function effectively without women's equal participation in leadership activities. Women create a viewpoint that brings competition to organizations and teams.

Having women in leadership roles increases the communication between management and employees. Similar study found that Huffington (2018) conducted a study of women's leadership helps in increasing the view of societal transformation in the workplace and is likely to provide an integrated view of work and family that helps in promising a personal and professional future. Female leaders are more transformational than men leaders and function to their subordinates as role models. Women leaders inspire the team and spend more time giving classes to the team. Women leaders emphasize more on teamwork and communication. Diaz-Saenz (2011) studied the leadership is not meant only for accomplishing organizational goals but for transforming their followers into better people for most women leaders. Women leaders always promote cooperation and collaboration amongst the team members. They are more likely to take risks and ignore the rules. Most women are naturally empathetic, value relationships, and multitask. Women are great leaders because they can dream big and know the process to translate the big ideas into actions and give the best results. Communication is said to be women's strongest skill as female leaders know how to use it. Female business leaders can communicate, openly, and regularly. Women in leadership positions are better at providing others with fair pay and good benefits. It will close the pay gap in the organization. They tend to have high emotional intelligence. Female leaders can achieve agreements and make deals where men might fall short. But they have to be given positions and leaders. They can provide better mentorship and has the ability to wear different hats within their roles. Women leaders bring skills, innovative ideas, and perspectives that ultimately contribute to achieving organizational goals.

#### **LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR OF WOMEN EXECUTIVES**

The leadership is a gender-neutral role, yet due to some stereotypes, women are being subjected to behave in a certain way. Women and men are different, but this doesn't make women any less than men. Women executives work in a different and effective, it is proven that women are better leaders than men. Men tend to be aggressive while women are tender and promote teamwork by keeping aside their egos (APA, 2021). Mohammadi et al. (2019), women have to overcome many hurdles to get into a leadership position in the first place. This warm-up makes women more strong and positive team leaders. Women are proven to maintain a better work-life balance than men. Unlike men, women give space to their junior colleagues or subordinates. Women leaders are proven, great listeners (Hazarika, 2019). Women leaders always listen to the new ideas of their teammates and are open to changes. Women leaders can more likely be termed, transformational leaders. Women leaders focus on the work and development of their employees too. Women leaders' approach of going forward with everyone has benefited many non-hierarchical organizations. Women leaders are more dedicated to their work.

Women leaders possess soft skills which make them different from male leaders like empathy, compassion, and forever motivated moods. These things help women achieve greater height in their career too. Organizations with women leaders don't work on the control and command method. Instead, women lead organizations to work on the belief of equal participation for everyone. Women leaders are more likely to work democratically by encouraging their workers or colleagues regularly (Dzubinski, 2016).

#### **CURRENT SITUATION OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP**

After breaking several set norms and stereotypes women are now coming out of the box and proving themselves. In a world where still the most number of higher positions are reserved for men, women are fighting their battle for equal opportunities. In contemporary situations, many women leaders are

coming into the limelight with their exceptional skills. According to many studies, it has come out that now 1 out of every 4 leaders are women. This still doesn't satisfy equality but, women came a long way to gain this opportunity(Tandon, 2018). Huge companies and governments organizations worldwide are now realizing the importance of women leaders. They are keeping reserved vacancies especially for women; this will help women leaders to prove the accountability. In some situations, women have to voluntarily transform their personalities and fit into men's shoes. They have to use the control and command method to lead their teams accordingly. As stated by Mc Kinsey and Company (2021),currently due to Covid19, many people lost their jobs due to losses in the business. A study shows more women employees were fired from every sector than men. This still shows women have a long way to prove they are better leaders and not less than any man.

### WOMEN EDUCATION & PARTICIPATION IN INDIA

Women constitute 48.1% of the Indian population. Among graduates in 2018-2019, women represented as follows:

- Undergraduate degrees: 53%
- MPhil degrees: 69.6%
- PhDs: 41.8%

Hence, women are closing the higher education gap.

India's economy is growing, with an increasing GDP and a working-age population expected to climb to over 800 million people by 2050. Despite this growth, less than one quarter (20.3%) of women aged 15 and above to participate in the labor force as of 2020 (compared to 76% of men). Women account for only 19.9% of the total labor force in India. India's low labor force participation rate for women is due in part to restrictive cultural norms regarding women's work, the gender wage gap, an increase in time spent for women continuing their education and a lack of safety policies and flexible work offerings. Recent job stagnation and high unemployment rates for women, exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, also keep women out of the labor force. Increasing women's participation in the workforce by 10 percentage points could add \$770 billion to India's GDP by 2025.

### WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN INDIA

The share of women-led companies in India has stagnated. Only 3.7% of CEOs and Managing Directors of NSE-listed companies were women in 2019, a number that has increased just slightly from 3.2% in 2014. 8.9% of firms have women in top management positions. As of 2019, just 29 companies (5.8%) on the Fortune India 500 list had women in executive roles. Women make up only 31% of Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs), a role overrepresented by women in other countries such as the US and South Africa. Women account for only 13.8% of board directors from listed companies in India.

### STEREOTYPES ASSOCIATED WITH WOMEN LEADERSHIP

As stated by Goudreau(2021),there are a lot of stereotypes associated with women leaders, surprisingly a number of them came out from women only. Some of them are:

- No option left: Many women leaders are being judged on their way of work. Women who are tough to deal with or have aggressive nature in their work are said to be unsympathetic. Women

who are soft, tender, and compassionate are termed weak or too emotional for leadership work. This leaves nowhere to go for women.

- Often left alone: It is a universal stereotype that no matter how successful a woman is, she has to sacrifice her professional life to keep up with her personal life. Or else no one will agree to marry her and she will be left alone at the end.
- Manly woman: Women who are successful in their career or lead a team perfectly are said to be the man of the team. Purkayastha et al. (2018), this is a stereotype that a woman can't be strong enough to lead a team (Mandal, 2017). Everyone has leadership qualities irrespective of their gender.
- Too good to be denied: A woman who has secured her position and stable career on her own is often neglected and questions are raised on her. People have stereotypical thinking of assuming that women must have done something to get an appraisal or raise. No one is ready to accept that a woman can prove herself and achieve heights with her qualifications.

### **OPPORTUNITIES ARE GIVEN TO WOMEN LEADERS**

From Kamala Harris, the first woman and the first person of colour to hold the second highest post as Vice President of United States to Leena Nair becoming the first female as youngest-ever CEO of French fashion brand, Chanel; 2021 has been a great year for women leaders. As claimed by Heathfield(2021)irrespective of what work the company does, every sector needs to promote women's leadership. This cannot be done alone; people collectively need to uplift women by providing them opportunities to demonstrate their talent. Still, there are fewer opportunities given to women than men. Even when men and women are supposed to do the same work, a man is paid more than a woman. The pay gap needs to be reduced to encourage more women to work and show their leadership style in the corporate or political world. According to Varghese (2021) studied there are fewer women leaders or role-model in the limelight to promote women leadership. People need to praise women leaders more make other women aware of how many opportunities they are having. Women leaders execute their work from a different perspective. If given the opportunity women can make their experience a way to their success with their deep and broad thinking. As claimed by Moyer et al. (2018) evaluated one of the best ways to give women more opportunities is by seeing them more than a daughter, wife, or mother. Above all, they are human beings with separate identities and qualities. A woman's relationship status with anyone shouldn't be considered a barrier in her career.

### **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT SCHEMES**

According to Women's Web(2021), one of the best initiatives taken by the Indian Government is Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) that provides financial assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs for starting their own business. The main objective of this scheme is to promote female entrepreneurship in the country. It ensures survival, participation, and protection of women leaders. According to Sahay et al. (2017), the main focus was to create awareness and encouragement in the urban and rural areas of India.

In context with Lawnn, (2021), the Equal Pay Act was launched in 1963 with the aim to protect against wage discrimination based on sex. The act protects both men and women from the discrimination of wages. It was a great initiative taken by the Government of the United States of America. According to

Brue (2018) studied this act aimed to eliminate the pay gap which is based on gender. Equal pay includes the full range of benefits, non-salary, basic pay, bonus, medical benefits, and paid leaves.

### **RESEARCH GAP**

Here, in this research, the problems arising in relation with leadership behavior of women executives are not described. It would be fruitful in enhancing the women power as a leader and bridging up the gap between their success and problem which is hindering the women in reaching at top. Understanding these challenges can considerably assist businesses in increasing the number of women on the corporate ladder. Women, men, and organizations may all work together to increase women's involvement in the workplace. As more women enter the workforce and encounter difficulties and challenges that males do not, solutions to these issues must be developed. We hope that our research contributes to the solution.

### **CONCLUSION**

This paper concludes that leadership doesn't concern with any gender. A man and a woman can become good leaders with their skills and qualifications. Women have fought a long battle to achieve a position of leadership. Still, many women are unable to get an opportunity even when they deserve enough. Leadership is a crucial task, it is the leader who encourages and shows the right path to their team. The report concludes with the fact, need for women leaders across the globe to encourage more participation of women. This report concludes how baseless the stereotypes that are associated with women leaders are. Anyone can achieve heights in their career with skills and qualifications.

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