

# A Review on Leadership Behaviour 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 businesses globally. Significantly, there has been a rise in the number of employed women in the business world or in the market place. Total number of women workforce in India is constituted as an essential part. So many women are entering managerial positions on a worldwide basis. The analyses of India reveals that while the number of women entering the area of management continues to increase, women remain under-represented in executive positions. 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, a lack of safety policies and flexible work offerings. It is important to attract and retain professional women with good leadership qualifications and skills in senior positions to maintain a good standard and professionalism. The leadership behavior of women executives has pulled in the consideration of numerous specialists nowadays because of its perceived significance. In this review paper, leadership styles, schemes of women empowerment, the need for leadership, presence and opportunities given to women are discussed. To identify the leadership of women and its current situation in the Indian economy. It also focuses on the upcoming opportunities available to women leaders. Even though there have been so many odds in the empowerment of women there are various leaders that have inspired millions such as Indra Nooyi and Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw. This paper seeks to contribute on differences in the leadership behavioral styles of women executives and their effectiveness in achieving organizational goals.

**Keywords:** - women leadership, management, executive positions, leadership behavior.

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## INTRODUCTION

Over centuries, leadership has been mostly a male-dominated role with few females achieving it (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Men

have generally dominated leadership positions. Leadership skills were also considered to be feminine in nature. Women face far more hurdles and barriers

than men in attaining leadership roles, as per popular consensus (Eagly, Karau & Makhijani, 1995). Few female leaders have distinguished out in early times, according to Porterfield and Kleiner (2005), who performed traditional masculine activities. Women making are the great contributions to society that have helped to break down gender norms and empower women in the workplace.

Women were able to compete with men for all positions as a result of increased social capital investment in women. Women were able to acquire essential leadership qualities such as ambition, self-reliance, and assertiveness without compromising their gender traits. They have also been shown to have a degree of emotional intelligence than men (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Subordinates were found to be slow to embrace a female as a leader or manager since they believed women were incapable for fulfilling the leadership or managerial position and/or recognized women as people who were not fully qualified for the job (O'Leary, 1974; Riger & Galligan, 1980; Terborg, 1977).

The concept of women's leadership focuses on giving women strength and skills. The report positions that management is the vital task of the management that aids to make the most of 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).

The literature on women's idealized influence is reviewed in this paper. The gendered nature of firms, and also women's leadership personality characteristics, will be discussed, followed by research directions. 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**

Leadership is characterized as the capacity to motivate a people to achieve goals, and according to Management Guide (2021). A manager's ability to inspire subordinates to work with confidence is defined as leadership. It is an important managerial function that helps in increasing efficiency in accomplishing the organizations goals. Leaders who really are dynamic and effective are in responsibility of

accomplishing the goals of the business. A leader is somebody who initiates work by explaining policies and plans to subordinates, which is where the work begins. 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**

Any institution, whether it is a society or an enterprise, cannot function effectively without women's equal participation in leadership activities, according to Leadership & General Management (2021). 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 their employees and spend more time instructing them. Women leaders place more emphasis on interaction and coordination. For most women leaders, as per Diaz-Saenz (2011), leadership is not only about accomplishing organizational objectives, but it is also about transforming their followers into

better people. Women leaders tend to encourage participants to work together and collaborate. 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 has expanded, with an increasing GDP and an estimated working-age population of over 800 million people by 2050. Despite this development, by 2020, approximately 20.3 percent of all women aged 15 and above will become employed (compared to 76 percent of men). In India, women account for only 19.9% of the entire working population. The gender pay gap, an increase in time required for women continuing their education, and a lack of safety policies and flexible work offerings are all determining significantly to India's low labor

participation rate for women. In recent stagnation and the increasing rate of employment women are also being kept out of the workforce by recent economic stagnation and high unemployment rates, which were increased by the Covid-19 pandemic. By 2025, increasing women's labor force participation by ten percentage points might add \$770 billion to India's GDP.

### **WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN INDIA**

In India, the percentage of women-owned businesses has remained constant. Women made up only 3.7 percent of CEOs and Managing Directors of NSE-listed businesses in 2019, a tiny rise from 3.2 percent in 2014. Women hold top managerial roles in 8.9% of companies. Only 29 companies (5.8%) on the Fortune India 500 list featured women in leadership positions as of 2019. Women account for only 31% of Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs), a post that women dominate in other nations such as the United States and South Africa. In India, women make up only 13.8 percent of board directors of publicly traded corporations.

### **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**

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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