



Women Managers and their leadership Styles: A Study in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

We have travelled from an age where parents did not believe that girls needed education to an era where girl's education is a mandatory. Now, Women are encouraged to enter all walks of life and compete on equal terms with men. Now all companies are also following a statement that 'priority will be given to qualified female candidates'. Leadership is an ability of an individual to lead or guide other individuals, teams and entire organisation in the right way to achieve the common goals. Historically, leadership has carried a concept that the men are the better leaders than women are still common today .The study suggests that the Organizations shall regularly organize training workshops on developing different leadership styles based on the situations. Leader required knowledge of human-behavior, psychology and professional competence of the follower which helps quick actions. Hence, a leader needs to be very clear in mind about what to achieve, how to achieve and then reinforce it by a strong will- power and conviction. Women Leaders must have courage of convictions to impress their subordinates.

Keywords: Women Managers, Leadership styles, management techniques, barriers

Introduction

Women have gentleness and strength, peace and frontiers. Indian scriptures place tremendous amount of power in women. The primordial energy known as Shakti which is the life force behind entire creation is feminine. Due to this reason, scriptures honour women as the highest aspect of divinity the Aadhya Shakti. Women bring together the finest aspects of society; the ability to create and the transformational ability to make a difference. Women bring us to the planet and teach us how to live. A mother is our first guru, our first teacher. Women teach us our first behaviour, our first step in life. And then women also have a great role to play in society. She can be a strong peacemaker; at home, in the community,

in society and in the world. Women can glue differences and bring people of diverse nature together she does it in her home all the time! In this fast pace of life, we need to balance our inner peace, beauty and ethical values with the external challenges we face, and women have it in them to do it. These qualities are inherent in a woman. Women leadership is now a new subject catching attention of many researchers and aspects related to the women at the top are also an area of concern for many research bodies. Personality reflects unique characteristics in a person called as traits that can be measurable.

The belief in the society is 'Men is a better leader than women'. Previously companies are also encouraging the same



statement. But in the present days, the scenario is changing in the society and the companies are also changed their statement 'priority to be given to the qualified female candidates'. It may be the reason that the women managers have been increased in many sectors. For the success of any organization the role of manager is very important. As it is the managers 'Women Manager is women who has responsible for planning and directing the work to a group of staff, monitoring their work, and taking corrective action when necessary'. Many women has equal leadership qualities like men. Women with higher education are become leaders, programme managers in many work places like banking, education, construction, law enforcement, HR, health and education. Leadership is an ability of an individual to lead or guide other individuals, teams and entire organisation in the right way to achieve the common goals.

According to Anne there are three leadership styles i.e.

1. Autocratic – Dictator, controller. The leader will make all decisions without consulting employees and will also dictate employee roles.
2. Laissez-faire – More Liberal, throughout the responsibility on employees
3. Democratic - Democracy, employ participation, mutual under standing
4. Mixed Styles - Based on the situation

Researchers at talent management consulting firm Caliper found there are certain personality traits associated with women's leadership success, as well as challenges that hold them back. They found six personality traits that were associated with higher performance

ratings. Those are *Assertiveness*. Being straightforward in your communication style. *Aggressiveness*. Bringing in a constructive, emotional element to move projects forward. *Empathy*. Being able to understand and relate to the feelings of others. *Ego-Strength*. Being resilient and able to overcome challenges. *Stress Tolerance*. Being comfortable in high-stress environments. *Energy*. Bringing vitality and enthusiasm to your work. It seems a woman who has a straightforward communication style, is resilient and able to handle stress, and is able to relate to others may be best positioned for leadership success in the modern workplace (Snehal Rout, 2015).

For the success of any organization the role of a manager us very important. As it is the manager's job to achieve the organizational objectives through the proper utilization of its human and managerial resources. The most valuable assessts of any organization are the human resources, because tge material resources of equipment, capital, facilities, information etc., can only be used by humans. So for this a management must be highly skilled in the art of optimally utilizing tge human resources. This art is universal in nature. This art is used in large corporate enterprises, in schools, in hotels, hospitals and retail stores.

Review of Literature

Isabelle CAMES (1998) conducted a study on the Leadership Styles of Female and Male Managers in 10 Different Nationality Banks in Luxembourg. The objectives of the research were to measure and compare the perceived levels of Instrumental and Expressive traits, as well as to analyse the perceived leadership styles of the participating managers themselves their superiors and



successful managers in their respective banks. The study has been conducted with 150 female and male managers in Luxembourg. The major findings of the study are half of the managers describe themselves as feminine and 37% are androgynous. Thus, 87% of the managers in the Italian Bank show high, above-median levels of expressive traits. With respect to Instrumental traits, 49% of the managers (Androgynous and Masculine categories) perceive themselves to possess above median levels of Instrumental traits. .

Dr. B. T. Lawani & Smita Jadhav Panaskar (2009) conducted a study on women managers in pune city, India. The objective of the study is to know about the family background of women managers, academic qualifications, problems of women managers in their profession. The study conducted with 102 women managers working in different industries. Majority 95 percent of the women managers are highly satisfied with their jobs, 80 per cent of the respondents did not face any conflict in the professional life. The study also found that 80 per cent of the respondents mentioned that both the roles i.e. role in family and role in organizations is suitable for their personality. So it is concluded that the women becoming more confident and efficient. They were making themselves ready to perform any type of role in their life.

Constance Benedicta Zulu (2007) conducted a study on a comparative study of women in management in higher education in South Africa and the United Kingdom. The aim of the study is to describe the challenges, opportunities and constraints experienced by women

academic HoDs prior to advancing to middle management positions. The major findings of the study are the distinction between management and leadership is an interesting subject of debate and much has been written about it. In brief, the manager pays attention to *how* things are done and a leader pays attention to *what* the events and decisions mean to participants. Many studies have been conducted on managers in the workplace. But, very less studies are available on women managers in Andhra Pradesh. Those are also very small in the sample and area. Based the above situation this article has thrown a light on leadership qualities/ styles of women managers in Visakhapatnam. Now days women managers are working in every sector. Due to paucity of the time the researcher focused on women managers in NGOs, Banks, Educational Institutions and Municipal Corporation.

Methodology

Objectives

1. To study the socio economic demographic profile of the women managers
2. To examine the leadership styles and strategies adopted by the women managers
3. To study the gender bias between the women and men managers in the organization
4. To provide appropriate suggestions for development of the women managers

Research Design

Descriptive research design will be formulated for the study with a view to describe, compare and analyze the perceptions towards the leadership



qualities and strategies of women managers working in various organizations Visakhapatnam city.

Research Setting /Area

Visakhapatnam is one of the biggest cities in Andhra Pradesh and 17th largest city in India. It is a main business hub for Andhra Pradesh and one of the fast growing cities in India. Government of India selected Visakhapatnam as a smart city. There are many opportunities available for women managers in the different organizations. As it is difficult to cover all the organization the study limited to schools, banks, NGOs and Municipal Corporation of Visakhapatnam.

Sampling and data collection tools

The study adopted purposive sampling method to conduct the present study. The researcher identified 42 respondents through purposive sampling method. The women managers are working in banks, schools, NGOs and Municipal corporation office of Visakhapatnam. The sample size for the study is 42 women managers working in Visakhapatnam. Interview method will be used for to collect the primary data. Questionnaire was designed with 25 questions related to the objectives and administrated to the respondents to elicit information. Both open-ended and closed-ended questions will be used in the questionnaire with multiple-choice options made available according to the nature of the data needed for the study. The data fed into the computer and single and multi-variable tables will be prepared by using SPSS 20th version. Chi square test have been conducted to assess the relationship between the variables.

Findings of the study

Majority (58.6) per cent respondents are between the age group of 51-60 years and 33 per cent of the respondents belong to 35-50 years age group. They are also done many jobs previously to become managers in their organizations. In the study of Snehal Rout Pune study also stated that the women managers are belongs to 50-60 years age group. Majority (76.9) per cent of the respondents completed their post-graduation and 24 per cent of the respondents completed their graduation. Majority (88.5) per cent of the respondents belongs to Hindu religion. It is reported that only 7 per cent from Christians and 2 per cent from the Muslim religion.

Majority 53.8 per cent of the respondents born in joint family and after marriage 61.5 per cent are staying in the nuclear family. It shows that the joint family systems protect women and promote their education and leadership. The study also in line with the study of B.T. Lamani (2009) who state that majority of the women are borned in joint family and become leaders. Majority 57 per cent of the women managers have very good job satisfaction and 43 per cent of the women managers have an average job satisfaction. Majority of the respondents are doing as managers for their better salary and job satisfaction. It is also found that 42.3 per cent women managers have satisfaction on their leadership and 23.1 per cent are not having that much of satisfaction their leadership

Majority (53.8) of the women managers are using the mixed styles of leadership, about 38.5 per cent uses democratic leadership and about 7.7 per cent are lassie faire leadership style. It is interesting that no women manager is an autocratic. It means majority of the women managers are friendly with the



staff and they have less aggressiveness. It is also found that 23.1 per cent women managers are strict, 38.5 per cent women managers are friendly and 38.5 per cent women managers are result oriented. Appreciation is one of the leadership strategies. It may help to the employees to increase work. It is found that 95 per cent of the women managers appreciate their staff when they done good activities. It is interesting that majority 58 per cent of the women managers are not warn / reprimand the staff when they done the errors. It shows that women managers have less angry.

Majority 84.6 per cent of the women managers get the updated feedback about the staff and their activities. About 84.6 per cent of the women managers stated that there is no gender bias in management. The management of the organization promotes the women managers equally. But 23.1 per cent managers stated that there is a gender bias in staff. The male colleagues are having the bias and not support the women managers in the organizations. It is also reported that sometimes female staff members are also not support to the female managers. It is found that 54 per cent of women managers are not attending any social service & political activities due to their workload at home.

The major qualities of the managers are decision making, leadership styles, vision, conflict resolution and giving assignments to the staff. The study found that at the time of results and targets majority of the women managers uses (38.5%) autocratic leadership and 30.8 per cent are democratic and mixed styles of leadership. Discussion of vision of the organisation 46.2% follows democratic leadership style and 25 per cent follows autocratic leadership styles. At the time of conflicts

between the staff many (46.2) women managers used mixed styles and it is interesting that 21.4 per cent use lassie faire leadership. Giving assignments and tasks majority (61.5) follows democratic leadership style. At the time of decision making majority (64%) follows democratic leadership style only 16% are autocratic

Major Challenges

1. Small and medium level organisations give preference for male staff in promotions and while making permanent positions as they think that men can work more working hours including odd hours.
2. Women managers face problems at the time of out station programs, travelling to other stations for the trainings
3. Dual role and Family members dependency on women manager is a big challenge for the women managers
4. Sexual harassment / abuse at workplace against women. Although law is made in many establishments it is not in force.
5. Application of rules related to maternity benefits. Child care leave is not being initiated in private sector and in many public sector under takings also.
6. At higher level few women managers are there due to gender disparity in promotions.
7. Women's day is observed not in all offices
8. Women face the criticism of character assassination hence women they do not take much initiation due to the fear of society



9. In a patriarchy, it is difficult for many men employees to accept a female manager due to attitudes which is difficult to change but not impossibility.
10. Women staff should support and encourage the women managers. At the same time the female staff also required to support the female managers.

References

Suggestions

1. Organizations shall regularly organize trainings/ workshops on develop different leadership styles. It may help women managers to increase their capacities on leadership.
2. Women Leaders must have courage and convictions to impress their subordinates.
3. Sexual harassment at workplace committees to be initiated in all institutions where more than 10 employees. Many private companies are not having the committees at workplace.
4. Opportunity makes a difference between women to prove their worth and capacities by initiating special courses. Many a times, women are not allowed to go out for trainings. Hence online courses sort term can be initiated.
5. Women's day to be observed in all organizations. It may increase the respect for women. The women managers should lead to implement the women's courses for their officers.
6. Child care leave and maternity benefits be improved in implementation.
7. Counseling services to be provided by professionals for all employees so they come up with issues which can be sought out at early stages.
8. Conduct social audit on women friendly workplace by external and participatory.
9. SWOT analysis by themselves helps to improve their strengths and opportunities.

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