

How Leadership Effectiveness Impacts the Evaluation of Male and Female Leaders

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Abstract: The opinion that female leaders are not as efficient as male leaders was not true nor institutionalized (Waring, 2003). Leadership attributes were dominated by males in the field of leadership studies is common to see. There have been prior meta-analyses (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Flabbi et al., 2019) which found that women in authority positions were more democratic (or participative) and less autocratic (or direct). In today's world, women outperform men in terms of productivity (Egley & Carli, 2007). However, women's research is underrepresented, and the quantitative features of gender leadership studies remain largely similar. Research concentrating on the dialogue between male and female effectiveness should be revived, since the examination of leadership and leadership effectiveness was clearer than that of person and gender roles (Johnson et al., 2008). It is vital to have an understanding into how women lead effectively and what elements impact women leadership.

Keywords: Leadership Effectiveness; Genders; Leadership Theories

1. Statement of Problem

From certain literature assessments, the top management teams include largely of men with very few women (Emmerik et al., 2010; Waring, 2003). The disparity in the success of male and female leaders might result from the incongruity between the female sex role and the leadership role (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Most reports indicate that women leaders face more dynamic challenges than male leaders do (Eagly, 2020; Emmerik et al., 2010). According to an in-depth test of role congruity theory examining prejudice against female leaders (Johnson et al., 2008), the growth of female management is limited by a number of non-institutional obstacles, such as gender roles, traditional culture and physical and psychological features of women (Eagly, 2020). These barriers cause female leaders to (a) struggle perceiving themselves as leaders, (b) have challenges concentrating on their work, and (c) lack the appropriate skills. In the long run, the decreased leadership aspirations and poor self-evaluation of female leaders will affect the employees and the environment around them and ultimately become a social problem. It is claimed that women leaders are not as influential as men. Women leaders often feel socially excluded from the top and do not properly represent male leaders' usual expectations (Derks et al., 2016; Rink et al., 2019). In addition, one of the key reasons that women in leadership positions are under-represented is the "think male boss," which leads to men's standards for advancement in their careers (Rink et al., 2019). It reflects the strong conviction that men are more prototypical as leaders and have higher social status than women. Although views of successful leadership have over time changed toward stereotypically feminine characteristics, such as comfort and good communication (Rink et al., 2019), Women's leadership cultivation and advancement must be founded upon a proper understanding of self and empirical social perception to accomplish strategic corporate objectives and personal development (Flabbi et al., 2019). With an increased proportion of female staff, the effect of female leadership on company success grows (Flabbi et al., 2019). As a result, the role of female leadership is constructive and deserving of recognition.

This research would create a paradigm of positive gender leadership that will assist organizations in succeeding and leaders in developing positive self-worth. Leaders' competences were evaluated primarily by official textual presentations and subordinates' results. Research focusing on the discussion between male and female effectiveness should be renewed, as the examination of leadership and leadership effectiveness was clearer than that of person and gender roles (Johnson et al., 2008). It is crucial to consider (a) what factors influence women's leadership, (b) how women lead, and (c) how factors are

associated and correlated. Gender equality should be vigorously guarded, and systemic recruiting should be fair for companies looking for a clear road map to promote the role of women at work (Rink et al., 2019).

2. Research Question

The purpose of the study was to explain leadership behaviors and the associations of gender; it was also to explore the main manifestation of leadership effectiveness between male and female leaders. As a result, the study question was "Is the effectiveness of leadership significantly related to gender?"

3. Literature Review

Female leadership research focus on the composition and influence of women's leadership and on ways to strengthen the effectiveness of women leadership. There is a discrepancy between men's and women's successes due to incongruity between women's position and leadership. Research in the field of gender leadership is still relatively scarce. There is the role congruity principle of discrimination against women leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Women tend to expect leaders to be more gentle and compassionate than men do, whereas men expect leaders to be more male, powerful, and tyrannical than women do (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Comparative research on the leadership of the two gender roles is present in the current literature reviewed. Gwen and Barbara (2020) analyzed the success of male and female educator officials, including 14 principals of K-12 schools. Their findings suggest that gender does not have an effect on leadership and creates the values of reverence and confidence in the practice of leadership in schools (Burns & Martin, 2020). In addition, qualitative testing at the University of Wisconsin offered an in-depth investigation of gender congruity theory for the detection and usefulness of male and female leadership prototypes (Johnson et al., 2008). As a result, female leaders require more dimensions for leadership growth than male leaders for sensitivity and power (Johnson et al., 2008).

Different researchers are studying female leaders from diverse fields of research. Many of them are studying female leaders from a commercial perspective. For example, on the market performance point, some scholars have discussed the impact of female leaders on gender-specific pay distribution and job performance (Flabbi et al., 2019). The female leadership notices that the variance in women's incomes is growing. As a result, female politicians are more likely to pay salaries close to the average productivity of female employees, thus minimizing sexism (Flabbi et al., 2019). Another study involved using a mixed-method approach to investigate conditions that impact women leaders' accomplishment of the organizational targets of higher development levels (Markovska & Nikolovski, 2014). From a social development viewpoint, recent work has focused on the development of female leaders and their contribution to society. One example involves research on the phenomenon of alpha women and the creation of a 14-dimensional women's personality measurement tool regarding women's roles in evolving environments so that the growth of female leadership can be quantitatively endorsed (Ward et al., 2015). Additional research has examined female socially responsible leaders' effect on unity and stability and their social impact on women's compensation (Johnson et al., 2008). This study helps businesses strengthen their social priorities and improves their sense of social responsibility.

With the diversification of gender and ethnicity in the workplace, the more recent literature has focused on female representatives of race and culture. Dr. Vanessa and John (2012) published an article on contradictory research results relating to factors that affect the performance of female leaders by utilizing race (African-America). The findings of the study concentrated on the examination of ethnic disparities and factors of power between White and African female leaders (Hill & Tanner, 2012). From personal characteristics to the living environment, through the Chi-square statistical analysis, they have contributed to the growth of feminist perception and geographical culture. In addition, a study by Dr. Lina and Fidan (2014) defined the main actions of female leaders in a multicultural environment. How is a female leader supposed to behave in a multicultural context in order to be effective? Female leaders not only ought to be professional and empathetic towards followers, but they must also match the micro-behavior. Consequently, no additions to the theoretical model or withdrawal of any micro (compartmental) level requirements were required (Girdauskiene & Eyvazzade, 2014).

Although current researchers have begun investigating the impact factors of female leadership, contingency factors have not been integrated into female leadership analysis, and comparison between the influence of internal and external contexts on female leadership with male leadership has not been considered. Present theoretical and observational analysis is limited. Scholars have studied (a) the stresses, abilities, and vulnerabilities of female politicians; (b) organizational skills; and (c) other topics, but they remain at the stage of gender disparities and female leadership skills. A consensus standard and a realistic framework for female leadership cannot be achieved. Future studies should also investigate the conditions that affect the capabilities of female leaders to achieve a convincing leadership model.

4. Importance of Issue and Scholarly Research Analysis

Leadership is a word that gained huge popularity in the early 1800s to indicate the political influence and control by individuals in the British parliament in the 19th century (Eklund et al., 2017). During this period, leadership remained the most observed but least understood phenomenon. This led to enormous research and literature that has spanned over several decades up to today. In the 19th century, leadership was based on appointment, usurpation, or inheritance rather than competence (Eklund et al., 2017). Early definitions of leadership centered around the ability of an individual to influence others and organizations in the communities. Today, leadership has been defined as the ability of an individual to enable, motivate, and influence others to contribute towards success and effectiveness in an organization (Eklund et al., 2017). Therefore, the ability to control others is not indicated in the current definition of leadership.

Most early leadership theories that were coined between the 18th and 19th century focused mainly on the male gender (Appelbaum et al., 2018; Eklund et al., 2017). For example, the leadership theory termed as the “great man” was mainly applicable for the male sex (Appelbaum et al., 2018). The theory suggested that exceptional and unique qualities and features distinguished a leader from his followers. It is claimed that the great man theory cannot be attributed towards raising the profile of women to a management level, as the theory referred to the male sex when women were not visible in paid employment (Appelbaum et al., 2018). In the 20th century, behavioral studies and theories were developed in three behavioral dimensions: laissez-faire styles, autocratic, and democratic (Appelbaum et al., 2018). Later, the theory was divided into two dimensions termed as “initiating structure” and “consideration” (Appelbaum et al., 2018). These behavioral theories gained a lot of popularity as a small number of women rose into power and authority in organizations. The behavioral theories did not have a limited view of raising the profile of women in management. However, it was beginning to be noted that behavior of leadership was more typically associated with feminine characteristics. This led to leadership literature embracing both situational and individual trait aspects of leadership simultaneously. As a result, current leadership theories explain leadership with an understanding that characteristics traditionally associated with both men and women are required to be an effective leader (Appelbaum et al., 2018).

Literature from the start of the 20th century has continued to be developed on the gender differences in leadership and the extent of differences in women’s and men’s behaviors (Eklund et al., 2017). Researchers have seen the need to understand whether there is a relationship between leadership traits and behaviors. Studies by Eklund et al. (2017) noted that social behavior, cognition, and temperament are the major differences pertaining to leadership styles. Other areas that have been noted include compliance, dominance, competitiveness, levels of activity, fear and anxiety, and technical sensitivity (Jogulu & Wood, 2016; Rhee & Sigler, 2015). Differences in skills, attitudes, and work-related behaviors of women and men in management have been reported to have implications in the area of leadership. Jogulu and Wood (2016) found that both female and male leaders performed similarly in task-oriented and inter-personally-oriented styles in organizational leadership. This means that both women and men leaders are equally capable in task-oriented leadership and also equally capable in matters related to interpersonal skills.

Most organizations in the world are led by men, even though several middle-class management and supervisory positions might be dominated by females (Faizan et al., 2018). Gender plays a very important role in human society, and there is a popular belief that there are defined roles for females and males in society. However, in the modern world, gender roles are changing. How these changes affect the influence of gender makes the topic very complex. The relationship between

leaders and followers in society drives the society. However, different kinds of leaders are needed for different scenarios; therefore, there can be no universal leaders. The ability of some leaders to easily adapt to various situations and act accordingly basically makes them better leaders than others. The role of a leader is to achieve the desired goals efficiently and effectively. Therefore, if a leader is not competent enough, the whole team might collapse.

Vasconcelos (2018) proposed two types of prejudice towards female leaders that can be observed. The first prejudice arises from people's misconceptions about how gender roles are being defined. Gender stereotyping causes prejudice towards females and also creates a barrier or ceiling that blocks females from achieving their career goals (Vasconcelos, 2018). The second prejudice is the general belief that female leaders do not possess the required qualities and skills compared to male leaders (Vasconcelos, 2018). Because of these two prejudices, female leaders find it very difficult to climb towards the top leadership positions in organizations. Rhee and Sigler (2015) observed that the current male and female leader prototypes are greatly influenced by gender in leadership evaluation. Rhee and Sigler (2015) highlighted that male individuals are expected to be more oppressive, strong, and masculine compared to feminine leaders. Also, sensitivity is associated with female leadership. Women leaders need to strike a balance between both sensitivity and strength to be considered effective leaders (Radu & Frasineanu, 2017). This bias creates more barriers and ceilings for female leaders in reaching the top leadership and management positions.

The most curious statistic is that women account for over 51% of the population and about 46.5% of the labor workforce in the country (Foster, 2017). However, in 2019, women accounted for only 29% of board of director membership and only 13% of the highest cooperate officer positions (Foster, 2017). This raises a complex question of whether women's leadership styles are different from men's and whether they are likely to be less efficient than men's. Researchers have developed several theories to examine whether or not the approach of leadership is different for women and men (Radu et al., 2017).

The four elements of thought discussed in the essay are attitudinal drivers, environmental factors, gender roles, and sex. The four elements of thought are discussed from a perceptive of female and male leaders themselves, their subordinates, their superiors, and their peers.

The first element of thought is biology and sex. The basic observation in the body of research is that leadership can be biologically determined, is innate to the male species, and is behaviorally demonstrated (Karunarathna & Jayatilake, 2016). Therefore, it can be very easy to assume that the male species produces more effective leaders than the female species. However, Jogulu and Wood (2016) suggested that this approach is very wrong, because women can easily attain a position of leadership just the same way men can without any kind of biological disadvantage. Very few studies have proven that there is a difference in leadership styles with gender. The idea that women and men are biologically different in terms of leadership has been very difficult to support. Researchers have started to prove the idea that not only are women and men similar, but also women are equally efficient in leadership (Faizan et al., 2018; Karunarathna & Jayatilake, 2016). Research by Wille et al. (2018) revealed that men and women have more similarities than differences when it comes to leadership effectiveness and behaviors.

The second element of thought is the gender role. This area of female versus male leadership is inspired by the fact that biological sex has proven an unlikely determinant for (a) differences in leadership styles and (b) the persistent beliefs that female and male leadership are different. Therefore, there must be a social explanation. Several studies have been carried out to determine whether socially constructed gender roles have influenced the difference in leadership effectiveness between men and women (Radu, 2017; Rhee & Sigler, 2015; Vasconcelos, 2018). It can be observed that gender roles are a better predictor of leadership compared to sex. Stereotypical masculine behaviors are considered an important aspect in the initiation of leadership traits (Vasconcelos, 2018). Individuals who exhibited this trait or behavior rather than more supportive (feminine) traits or behaviors were viewed to constitute a higher percentage of leaders. However, this might not be the only determinant, as there might be a need for balance with other behaviors to develop leadership traits. Although masculinity can be observed as a very important trait in leadership emergence, there is a possible relationship between leadership emergence and androgyny. Leader emergence has been observed from individuals who possess feminine characteristics in balance with masculine ones, as they are very important in the perception of leadership (Vasconcelos, 2018). Individuals with masculine or

androgynous traits are more likely to be preferred leaders than individuals with feminine or undifferentiated scores (Karunaratna & Jayatilake, 2016). Despite masculine traits playing important roles in a leader's emergence, the possession of feminine characteristics does not disadvantage or decrease the chances of an individual emerging as a leader. Therefore, women are more likely to be androgynous and have a better chance of becoming leaders. Other findings have shown that masculinity offers advantages and disadvantages when it comes to leadership (Karunaratna & Jayatilake, 2016). Interactive leadership styles that are commonly utilized by women, such as energizing others, enhancing self-worth, sharing information and power, and encouraging participation are very important in improving leadership efficiency. The gender role concept helps in solving the gender dilemma, as it shows that alternative leadership styles by women help in improving women's leadership efficiency despite the lack of masculine characteristics.

The third element of thought is the environmental factors. Several factors contribute to leadership effectiveness and leadership emergence that might be impacted by male and female differences. The environmental factors that can potentially undermine women's leadership effectiveness include the corporate environment, women's prior work experience, women's self-confidence, and women's attitudes (Eklund et al., 2017). Attitudes towards leadership are a very strong predictor of leadership emergence; however, women might be at a disadvantage because of the docile impression. According to this approach, women tend to acquire negative impressions of the sex roles, and this can lead to an attitude that might later create difficulties in developing leadership traits. Most women have indications of low self-confidence, therefore resulting in disconnection from the expectation of leadership.

The last element of thought is attitudinal drivers. According to Faizan (2018), feminine values have contrast with the authoritative and competitive approach, therefore inspiring a different management approach in control, organization, negotiations, leadership, and communications. Some characteristics that are described as essentially feminine can help in developing interpersonal skills, advancing intermediary skills, and heightening communication skills. Some researchers believe that feminine characteristics are more appropriate in transformational leadership, while masculine characteristics are well suited for transactional leadership (Karunaratna & Jayatilake, 2016). Women tend to be highly rated in communication, supportive relationships, and empathy.

5. Discussion

Understanding the relationship between leadership and gender is important in solving the under-representation of women in the corporate world by (a) developing and advancing leadership theory and practices and (b) looking into skewed perceptions and women's abilities and inabilities. Also, women's leadership styles are indeed different from men's leadership styles, but men need to learn and adopt women's styles that might help improve leadership efficiencies. This discussion reveals that effective leadership is not exclusive to any gender, as both can learn from each other. The assessment that women's leadership styles are less effective than men's is not fact-based. Leader emergence and effectiveness should be linked to an individual rather than to the individual's sex. The research would help dispel earlier notions of leadership theory and women further break through the glass ceiling and eliminate any gender-caused wage gaps.

Abolade (2014) points out that women have communal characteristics which include aggression, determination, superiority, individuality, self-reliance, self-reliance, leadership and decisiveness. Women leaders appreciate circumstances and receive information and care from both directions. They believe that their subordinates are better understood, encouraged and appreciated. The hypothesis of gender advantage of female leadership has led to significant theoretical and scientific advancement in this area, with a wide array of investigations showing that women leaders exhibit more success-related styles such as personal focus, emotional intelligence, or transformative leadership (Gartzia and Baniandrés, 2019). The value of women in leadership is a major commitment to equity for men and women. But its overarching view does not call into doubt gender disparities and has traditionally ignored more nuanced contexts in which the effectiveness of gender affects leadership.

In tandem with gender studies, the important role of features in efficient leadership has been stressed for many years, and it reflects the relevance of leaders' personalities. Female inequalities in authority are viewed as being eroding from

Abolade's (2014) views. Women tend to change their social status because of their greater access to roles that are generally linked to power. Women's willingness to use participatory and sympathetic approaches at home could advance the industry. Trait theory, however, did not take leadership characteristics seriously from a gender point of view and did not define an integrative array of gender traits that could be applied into both male and female leaders (Gartzia and Baniandrés, 2019) that can bring new insights into the arena.

The leader should look away from old ideas and traditions that leaders must be militant, men, assertive, powerful and mechanistic in relationships in workplaces, but use more the feminine attribution of the communal values that have a beneficial influence on employees and the organization to achieve a productive workforce and a successful organisation. Women like their men are strong leaders and their mother and community instinctual characteristics contribute positively to their leadership roles.

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