

Addressing Contributions and Challenges of Women in Contemporary Business Management

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DOI: - <https://doi.org/10.47531/MANTECH.2021.10>

Abstract

Introduction: Management is represented as the synchronization of miscellaneous organizational activities. The major obstacle to women's success in management is the gender stereotyping of the managerial position. Women's growth in management depends on the acceptance of these intractable viewpoints. They ensure that these perspectives do not derail their accomplishments in the organization. The in-built characteristic of kindness, trust, and motivation, of women compels to consider them as born managers. But when this comes in practicality, different ifs and buts are encountered by women in their journey in the organization. Hence, the study focuses on the following objectives to present a clear picture to address the women in contemporary business management:

1. To specify different roles, women demonstrate at workplace.
2. To pinpoint the challenges faced by women at work.
3. To state the contribution of women at the workplace.

The study depends on the analysis of secondary data collected from different articles and journals. The qualitative investigation of secondary data is conducted through the systematic review technique. The emergence of women in management at different levels in the organization precipitates many discussions. The study specifies different interpersonal, informational and decisional roles women demonstrate at the workplace. The study identifies the challenges of work-life balance, work pay gap, workplace harassment, work centered opportunities etc., faced by women at the workplace. This requires the traits of empathy, emotional intelligence and engrossment by women to handle these challenges. At last, the study states the contribution of women at the workplace in terms of higher engagement, less attrition, decreased boredom and burnout, increased job satisfaction and more organizational dedication.

Keywords- *Women, Management, Roles, Contribution, Challenges, Qualitative Data, Contemporary Business*

INTRODUCTION

Management is represented as synchronization of miscellaneous organizational activities. It specifies to do a particular work in the most effective and efficient manner. The concept of Women in management seems very contemporary and fascinating, but there is nothing new in this. For centuries women are good managers. Women possess the quality to value relationships and collaborate with others which is essential for a good manager. Women also acquire certain unique qualities that make them better managers and even strong managers than their counterparts. A study conducted by the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) specified that the involvement of more women in the organization ultimately transforms an organization into a better place to work. Gender neutrality and diversity at the workplace highlight the need to employ, retain, and give women the chance to demonstrate their leadership and managerial skills. It is crucial to understand that all the management roles and requirements are framed to be fulfilled by a qualified individual devoid of any personal specifications like gender, age, sex etc.

Any establishment cannot function effectively without women's equal participation in managerial and leadership activities. Women create a perspective that brings collaboration to organizations, teams, families and societies. Many statistics show that the companies which are led by women have better financial results. Hence, women's potential and abilities are undeniable in such contexts. According to the research of McKinsey & Company in the last five years, there

is more rise of women at the top level of the management. At the same frame of time, organizations also notice the outcomes in return to the involvement of women in management. Though statistics elude the fact, it is clearly visible that there is not even a handful of organizations led by women or women as the foreman of strategic departments. But that does not mean that the situation is not in the phase of improvement. Now a day, women are selected more for jobs of authority and responsibility, specifically in the field of HR, servicing, IT or finance and less in hardcore production or marketing jobs. Nevertheless, women who are at the top are determined to stay there, and more are aspiring to reach there, glass ceiling or no glass ceiling. In fact, organizations are now more open to women as leaders. Women in management are aware of their limitations they are expected to work with and also try to make the best of the bargain. They typically experience a disproportionate amount of responsibility for home and family, which results in more demands on their time external to the office environment. Along with this, when they reach the managerial level, they showcase the possibility of hope and care in every worst situation. But they only bloom if they are allowed to do so, despite all the constraints, which are mainly societal and perceptual in perspective.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Johanna Wyn and et al. (2000), in their study, found how women are positioned as different in the management and how they negotiate for their place and position in management by using these differences as their strengths.

Hye-Ryun Kang & Chris Rowley (2005), in their study, found the possible ways to confront female managerial discrimination and to increase women's roles in management.

Pawan S. Bhudhwar and et al. (2005), in their study, found the issues concerned with gender-based stereotypes, the major obstacles of women's movement to top management level and the impact of developments in IT on women managers.

Vimolwan Yukongdi & John Benson (2005), in their study, found a holistic approach to examine whether women in these Asian countries experienced a greater acceptance of their participation in management or whether significant barriers remain till date.

The study of Mindy S. Baumgartner & David E. Schneider (2010) found six major issues women in management face to encounter the glass ceiling at a different level in the organization.

Yvonne Due Billing (2011), in his study, found that there is a need to appreciate the experiences of women at different management positions to enhance the understanding of the complexity of everyday organizational processes.

RESEARCH GAP

On the basis of the exploration done in the realm of women in management, it is stated that the major obstacle to women's success in management is the gender stereotyping of the managerial position. Women's growth in management depends on the acceptance of these intractable viewpoints. They ensure that these perspectives do not derail their accomplishments in the organization. Many studies emphasized different techniques to overcome these obstacles. But, an appropriate description of different roles women demonstrate

at the workplace and the complimentary challenges they face as a by-product of their contribution require further exploration. The study attempts to mention different roles, challenges and contributions of women at the workplace.

OBJECTIVES

The in-built characteristic of kindness, trust, and motivation, of women compels to consider them as born managers. But when this comes in practicality, different ifs and buts are encountered by women in their journey in the organization. Hence, the study focuses on the following objectives to present a clear picture to address the women in contemporary business management:

1. To specify different roles women demonstrate at the workplace
2. To pinpoint the challenges faced by women at work
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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research conducted in context to women in management signalizes this as an exploratory study. The systematic review technique is used to acquire the information for the study. It is based on the analysis of secondary data collected from different articles and journals. The qualitative investigation of secondary data is performed to attain the appropriate findings for the study.

FINDINGS

Mintzberg (1989) identifies the keys to outstanding management. The study describes about a good manager who successfully combines interpersonal, informational, and decision-making roles. However, the effectiveness of women in management not only depends on a manager's acquisition of these necessary qualities but also

requires her insight into their own work. A manager's performance depends on how he or she understands and responds to the pressures and dilemmas of the job. It is often noticed that job pressure drives a manager for superficial actions, which involves overloading themselves with work, encouraging interruption, responding quickly to every stimulus, and doing everything abruptly. The emergence of women in management at different levels in the organization precipitates many discussions. The study specifies the roles women demonstrated at the workplace in three broad categories, building on the theory of Mintzberg. These categories are labeled as Interpersonal, Informational and Decisional roles demonstrated by women at the workplace Mintzberg (1989). The further study discusses different managerial roles in different headings as classified by Mintzberg (1989). The interpersonal role involves subordinates and people outside the organization, along with different activities that are already prescribed and symbolic in nature. The further categorization under this label provides information and ideas about authority and status associated with manager's post. The roles under this category include women in management as:

- **Figurehead:** This role states the symbolic duties which are legal or social in nature. Here, the manager is seen as a symbol of status and authority.
- **Leader:** This role emphasizes to build a team, coach the members, motivate them, and develop strong relationships.
- **Liaison:** This role describes the information and communication obligations of a manager through the development and maintenance of

networks outside the office for proper assistance.

The informational role involves receiving, collecting, and disseminating information so that managers can serve as the nerve centers of their organization. The further categorization under this label provides information and ideas about the processing of information associated with the manager's post. The roles under this category include women in management as:

- **Monitor:** This role seeks to extract the internal as well as external information about the issues that affect the organization.
- **Disseminator:** This role is based on the transmission of information within the organization obtained from either internal or external sources.
- **Spokesperson:** This role represents the circulation of information about the organization and its goals to the people outside it.

The decisional role revolves around making choices in favor of the organization. The further categorization under this label provides information and ideas about resources that are collected and gathered by the managers under the above-mentioned roles to use the resources in a productive manner. The roles under this category include women in management as:

- **Entrepreneur:** This role involves the aspects associated with acting as an initiator, designer, and also encourager of innovation and change.
- **Disturbance Handler:** This role emphasizes the application of appropriate actions when the organization acquaints unexpected difficulties.

- **Resource Allocator:** This role deals with the responsibility for the optimum utilization of resources like time, machine, money, and also manpower.
- **Negotiator:** This role represents the organization in negotiations which affects the manager's scope of responsibility.

To demonstrate the above-mentioned roles in the organization, women in management face various challenges at work. These challenges are divided into the areas of work-life balance, work pay gap, workplace harassment, and work-centered opportunities faced by women at the workplace. The challenge of Work-life balance refers to the maintenance of personal and professional activities for women in management. At the same time, the challenge of the Work pay gap represents the average difference between the remuneration for men and women who are at work and perform the same duties and responsibilities. Women are generally considered to be paid less than men. The other challenge involves the workplace harassment acquainted by women in management in most of the cases. This leads to a violation of women's right to equality, life and liberty. It creates an insecure and hostile work environment, which discourages women's participation at work. The last challenge specifies the limitations of work-centered opportunities for women in management. This deals with the opportunity to work at their own pace and explore their own interest areas.

Women's style of functioning, which is essentially 'interactive leadership,' involves several characteristics which include participation from others, development of interpersonal relations, positivity for the entire team or department, to share power and information with others, to

encourage people about their work and to increase people's feeling of self-worth. From professionalism to collaboration towards a supportive management style and ultimately a shift to a cooperative problem-solving approach, women possess skills that make them irreplaceable assets. When women fuse these aptitudes to fuel their existence in management, they achieve qualitative, cultural gains and win quantitative business success alike. By productive integration and advancement of both soft and hard skills, female leaders innovate the organization itself and drive sustainable growth. Hence, the contribution of women in management leads to higher engagement, less attrition, decreased boredom and burnout, increased job satisfaction and increased organizational dedication.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of women in management at different levels in the organization precipitates many discussions. Based on prior studies, Women are underrepresented at every level in management, and for real change, organizations need to focus on where the real problem is. Now it is high time to get a fresh perspective. Organizations should look at gender balance as a bottom-line problem and not just a human resource issue. To contribute to the domain of women in management, the study concludes and states different roles women play in the organization. The study also specifies the challenges women acquire to carry these roles in the organization. Women demonstrate different interpersonal, informational and decisional roles at the workplace. The study identifies the challenges of work-life balance, work pay gap, workplace harassment, work centered opportunities etc.,

faced by women at the workplace. This requires the traits of empathy, emotional intelligence and engrossment by women to handle these challenges. This leads towards a major shift in the perspective of women from 3 Ps, i.e., Pickle, Powder & Pappad, towards 3 Es, i.e., Energy, Engineering & Electronics. At last, the study states the contribution of women at the workplace in terms of higher engagement, less attrition, decreased boredom and burnout, increased job satisfaction and increased organizational dedication.

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