

# Management theory and practice



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It is due to the traditional practices and male dominated inheritance systems that women are underrepresented in the decision making committees of most of the corporate institutions. Women are in no way intellectually inferior to men and their management and leadership behavior can be remarkably efficient in many cases.

According to the researches none of the reputable scholars of the field of management studies have ever remarked that woman's leadership style is inferior to or highly different from that of a man. Some experts have held that women conduct leadership in a different way. However, majority of scholars put forward that gender does not make any remarkable difference when it comes to leadership style (Stelter 2002).

In the contemporary corporate world, leadership is a key area of making inquiries. It can be related to both production economics and behavioral science. However, in order to reflect on the question that whether gender makes a difference when it comes to leadership styles or not, we must understand that gender stereotypes are sociological factors and not economic or administrative ones. Experts like Appelbaum, Audet, and Miller (2003, p. 43) have given rather a bold assessment as they stated, ' No, women's styles are not at all likely to be less effective; in fact, they are more effective within the context of team-based, consensually driven organizational structures that are more prevalent in today's world.' But in the same context, they have also emphasized the assumption of equally effective leadership style and behavior. ' In other words, effective leadership is not the exclusive domain of either gender' (Appelbaum, Audet & Miller 2003, p. 43) Further in this context, Andersen and Hansson (2011)

statistically analyzed the motivation profile, decision making, and leadership style of three groupings of Swedish public managers involving 385 professionals using most authentic scientific methods. The study suggested that demographic and organizational features actually modify leadership styles and behaviors; gender plays no significant role in this regard.

According to another research of a similar category:

Employees' gender accounted for a significant portion of the variance in explaining workers' ideal preferences for worker-centered leadership behaviors and mediated the relationship between gender and ideal preferences for worker-centered relational leadership behaviors. Post hoc analyses revealed no significant gender differences in ideal preferences for job-centered leadership behaviors. (Boatwright & Forrest 2000, p. 18)

In the practical world our stereotypes related to gender do not hold good. It should be understood that in a capitalistic system, profit is the main pursuit. Therefore, both the executives and the managers have to work under pressure. This pressure leads to collinear behaviorist patterns in both men and women, which focuses on the doctrine of profiting and/or social enterprise, as the case may be. In sum, we can say that women can be very efficient leaders, just like their male counterparts. Absence of women in the senior ranks of the corporate world should be explained on the basis of socio-cultural gender inequalities and related practices. There are many examples, which have shown that women can be very efficient leaders in business.

For example, Katharine Graham's leadership style is individual specific rather than gender specific. When she established herself as the Chief executive officer of the celebrated newspaper Washington Post, she took several bold steps that not only determined the functionary of her organizational behavior but also redefined the way journalism was to be done in the United States. An examination of her leadership style reveals that an ideal leader always ventures neutral with respect to the gender stereotypes (Mattern 2003).

The example of Ruth Handler also explains the successful strategy of a small business owner. Despite the attacks from both the conservatives and the radical feminists, Handler marketed her invention, the Barbie doll, in accordance with a very practical business strategy that sought to analyze public psychology and the desires of a self-assertive young generation. Her leadership style is an example of transformational leadership filled with innovation and determination.