

A Review on Women Empowerment and Leadership

Sanyukta M. Singh

Research Scholar

BSc, B. Lib, B.ED, M.A [English]

Received: July 08, 2018

Accepted: August 27, 2018

ABSTRACT

Women's empowerment is an indicator of social change and a priority of the Sustainable Development Goals. The higher the status, the more empowering that individual is perceived, whether female or male. Yet, more men than women held higher status positions. More women are needed in high-level positions to better assess leadership and empowerment. Various national and international community's have address women issue and taken various efforts empower them to so as to enhance their social and health status and involve them in developmental activities. Empowerment as delegation of power to someone has been a mechanism to increase personal and work life quality of woman in recent decades. Higher education and occupation is effective instrument to empowerment of women but culture role and creativity can't be denied in this relation. This paper identifies how to empower women from poverty through creative industry.

Keywords: *Feminist methodology Empowerment Focus groups Farm women*

Introduction

Development is a phenomenon that is taking place in all walks of life. It aims at improving the quality of life of all people regardless of their sex, colour or caste. For the process of development to be more efficient and effective, both women and men should equally participate in the decisions and processes that shape their lives. However, women being considered as a marginalized group in societies around the world, contribute very little to the process of development. One of the policy approaches that can help women contribute equally and more efficiently to development is the empowerment approach. This approach is seen as a viable policy approach for women in development.

Empowerment is the most recent policy approach to women in development. It takes into account not only both the practical and strategic gender needs of women but also recognizes their role in development. Empowerment has a number of dimensions with leadership as being one of them; it is worth mentioning here that the different approaches to women's empowerment used in development activities include economic participation, political participation, educational attainment, health and well-being etc. The major focus of this paper is to assess the empowerment of women from a perspective of their presence in leadership roles.

Review of Literature:

Kaushik Sanjay (2013) "Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in India." *International Journal of Management and Social Sciences Research (IJMSSR)* ISSN: 2319-4421 Volume 2, No. 2. Social and economic development of women is necessary for development of any country. Due to changing environment, now women are easily acceptable at the entrepreneurial opportunity. Our increasing service sector also promotes the women entrepreneurship. The purpose of the study is to find out various motivating and demotivating internal and external factor of women entrepreneurship. It will also suggest the investment and interesting working time of women.

Goyal Meenu and Prakash Jai (2011) "Women Entrepreneurship in India- Problems & Prospects." *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, Vol.1 Issue 5. The study revealed the concept of women entrepreneur; reasons women become entrepreneurs, reasons for slow progress of women entrepreneurs in India, suggestions for the growth of women entrepreneurs and schemes for promotion & development of women entrepreneurship in India.

Thapa Arjun Kumar and Gurung Leena (2010) "An Assessment of Factors Influencing Empowerment Level of Females: A Case Study of Pokhara," *Economic Journal of Development Issues* Vol. 11 Issue 1. The paper attempted to analyze the association between social, economic and demographic factors on the female empowerment level. The study underpins the importance of economic interventions to empower and uplift all round condition of women.

Choudhary Neelam "An Account of Women Entrepreneurship Development in India: Challenges, Opportunities & Future Prospects." The paper analyzed women's participation in entrepreneurial activities

to highlight the contribution of women entrepreneurs towards economic development. It examined the facilitating factors and policies and programmes of the government also exist to promote and strengthen the development of women entrepreneurship in India.

Leadership Style

The presence of differences in leadership perceptions of male and female, these differences can be seen from some of the key aspects of leadership. The conclusion is derived from differences in perceptions of their perceptions about skills and attributes which are regarded as important in leading a task, then in terms of cooperation with parties that involved in running the business (Anonim, 1997).

There are several leadership styles of women which usually implement in their own business. Women are more likely than men to motivate others by changing their personal interests a group goal, then to women to encourage participation, share power and information and increase the value of the community. Other capabilities are women more likely than men to consider they serve as the strength of interpersonal skills or personal than for the purposes of the company. Women can try to create situations that help people to change their perception to feel better about themselves in terms of workers and their jobs well and own efforts to make people feel part of the organization (Anonim, 1997).

Feminine style of leadership in general contain the nature of a democratic, participatory, caring and also more likely to encourage community involvement and motivation. While the masculine leadership style is more emphasis on individualism, duty and clear rules (Shakeshaft, 1998). Research using the survey conducted by Bass and Avolio (1994) concluded that the value of the leadership of women higher than men, judging from several criteria such as the speed of learning on organizational issues. Moreover considered better in terms of ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration, so that more responses about job satisfaction in the workplace with a woman leader.

What is 'empowerment'?

Empowerment has been used to represent a wide range of concepts and to describe a proliferation of outcomes. The promotion of women's empowerment as a development goal is based on a dual argument: that social justice is an important aspect of human welfare and is intrinsically worth pursuing; and that women's empowerment is a means to other ends. The word 'empowerment' is used in many different contexts and by different organizations. Its meaning and understanding largely depends on the context in which it is being used. To Oxfam empowerment means being able to challenge the existing oppression and inequality in society (Oxfam, 1995). Rowland sees empowerment as a bottom-up process that cannot be formulated from top-down. To Rowland, empowerment does not only mean to have access to decision-making but also being able and entitled to occupy the decision-making space (Rowland, 1995). Batliwala defining it from a feminist perspective state that women empowerment should result in (a) an understanding that both men and women are equal beings regardless of their gender. Using their full potentials can help construct a more humane society for all.

Ken Blanchard suggests that empowerment requires two things: Recognizing the importance of knowledge, experience and intrinsic motivation in improving performance, and releasing power by sharing accurate information, creating autonomy within boundaries and replacing hierarchy with self-managing teams.

Empowerment is the most frequently used term in development dialogue today. It is also the most nebulous and widely interpreted of concepts, which has simultaneously become a tool for analysis and also an umbrella concept to justify development intervention. For some, the empowerment of women is an active multi-dimensional process which enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. For others, empowerment represents the ability of women to handle responsibilities, to envision a better future and to work to overcome the obstacles that confront them.

Women's Leadership recognizes that all meaningful and enduring change begins with the internal work we do to transform our outer behaviour. Leadership skill and capacity continue to strengthen with practice, reflection and relationships that provide authentic and rigorous feedback and support. It seeks to address the larger legacy of bias and imbalance in our decision-making, organizations, enterprises and society at large.

The Indian women are no longer treated as show pieces to be kept at home. They are also enjoying the impact of globalization and making an influence not only on domestic but also on international sphere. Women are doing a wonderful job striking a balance between their house and career. Here are a few:

- Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairman & Managing Director of Biocon Ltd.,
- Ekta Kapoor, creative head of Balaji Telefilms,
- Neelam Dhawan, Managing Director, Microsoft India,
- Naina Lal Kidwai, according to the *Economic Times*, the first woman to head the operations of a foreign bank in India.(HSBC).
- Priya Paul, with a bachelor's degree specialising in Economics from Wellesley College, USA. She entered her family business and is currently the Chairperson of Park Hotels.

Women like these are an inspiration for all other women who strive to achieve great heights in their lives. Taking them as role models each one of us can be there where they are right now. All we need have is faith in ourselves, confidence and above all a fixed aim that we need work towards.

The present study is conducted on women professionals working in different fields in Udaipur city to evaluate the factors leading to women empowerment and leadership. The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed for the purpose of evaluating the factors leading to women empowerment and leadership at workplace by framing 20 statements. The questionnaire was administered on 50 respondents including corporate, academicians, and professionals. The data collected was analyzed using statistical tools such as factor analysis.

The main factors of women empowerment were identified using factor analysis by taking into account the Eigen values of factors, factor loadings, and assignment of variables. Based on the Eigen value and factor loadings, seven factors were identified based upon their characteristics.

Impact, refers to an individual, and is perceived degree of influence over outcomes in one's work and family environments. In other words, an individual must have the opportunity to exert influence in order to have an impact on outcomes at work (Spreitzer, 1995).

Self-determination refers to everyone's internal need to control the environment (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). It is also defined as women's need to choose, to initiate and regulate actions or to choose the process and work behaviours at work.

Being meaningful the work done by women employees should be treated as valuable work. They evaluate the job based on their own values and feel that they are doing something meaningful.

Professional growth refers to personal development in job and profession. Empowered women feel more professional growth in their career.

Independence in decision-making, Independent women are treated to be empowered and make decision on their own.

Competence and self efficacy points at one's work role efficacy or personal mastery; women must feel that they are competent to engage in the behaviours required by the organization or family. Thus empowerment is about self-actualization and competence. Competence and self-efficacy refer to enable the women to be confidence in their capacity to make the choices.

Trust Empowerment is connected with trust. Trust creates an atmosphere for empowerment and grows in such an atmosphere. Trust requires values like solidarity and maturity. Empowerment cannot be installed like software but must be grown.

Distinguishing Leadership Qualities:

- **Perseverance:** As a leader, women come across challenges, and they need persistence, perseverance and the ability not to take "no" for an answer.
- **A Nurturing Spirit:** "Women being a nurturer have a sense of being fair and just, and use of our women's intuition is one of the strongest traits."
- **Confidence:** One of the defining characteristics of leadership is confidence – "having unconditional belief in your own abilities." Women have the ability to cultivate confidence in their own abilities by actively seeking out and responding to feedback, taking on tough assignments and excelling at them, maintaining successful relationships and developing expertise that sets women leadership apart.

The women leaders are more likely to push back when they are overly bound by regulations and rules, engage in more risk taking and come up with innovative solutions. Women leaders are more assertive and persuasive, have a stronger need to get things done and are more willing to take risks than male leaders. Women leaders also were found to be more empathic and flexible, as well as stronger in interpersonal skills than their male counterparts. **"These qualities combine to create a leadership style that is inclusive, open, consensus building, collaborative and collegial which ensures women empowerment."**

References:

- Kaushik, Sanjay, 2013. Challenges faced by Women Entrepreneurs in India. File retrieved from <http://www.irjournals.org/ijmssr/Feb2013/2.pdf>
- Thapa, Arjun Kumar & Gurung Leena, 2010. "An Assessment of Factors Influencing, Empowerment Level of Females: A Case Study of Pokhara." Economic Journal of Development Issues. Vol.11, Issue 1.
- Choudhary, Neelam. An Account of Women Entrepreneurship Development in India: Challenges, Opportunities & Future Prospects. File Retrieved from https://editorialexpress.com/cgi-bin/conference/download.cgi?db_name=IAFFE2013&paper_id=90.
- Schuler, Sidney Ruth, Islam Farzana & Rottach Elisabeth, "Women Empowerment Revisited: A Case Study" from Bangladesh. File retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2941240>.
- Malhotra Anuj, Schulte Jennifer, Patel Payal & Petesch Patti, Innovation for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality. File retrieved from www.icrw.org/node/288.
- Kumar, Prahlad and Paul, Tinku, (2004), "Informalization and Need for Gender Sensitive Statistics" paper presented in a National Conference by Indian Political Economy Association on 'Globalization, State and the Weaker Sections' held at G.B Pant Social Science Institute on 11-12 June, 2004.