

Gender Differences in Management

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Abstract

Since the beginning of time, men and women have performed their duties by dividing their tasks according to specific subjects. While women have taken care of household and children, men have focused on the financial side of it. This situation has started to change in time and while men are keeping same role, women have become candidates for assisting in household economics. Women have started to occupy similar positions to men as a result of getting equal education. Although the gap still exists between them, women continue to work in similar positions as men including management. Since women have recently started taking up management roles, men's dominance has started to shake.

As women's role in working life, organizational practices and culture have changed, women have been perceived as equal to men. Women face a glass ceiling in their attempts to occupy high level positions. This is a result of the perception which exists among men and women. The difference in perception has resulted in a situation where women managers are considered to be inadequate, capable of managing only small groups of people and receiving limited or no support from their male counterparts.

The aim of this study is to research factors which create this glass ceiling. The literature review has shown that there are different views about this subject. And this study tries to reach a conclusion which consolidates the various information that exists. The information gathered has shown that there are two reasons behind women's inability to reach senior management positions. One is biological gender difference and the other one is behavioral tendencies of previous experiences.

Introduction

Twenty-five years after women first started pouring into the labor force--and trying to be more like men in every way, from wearing power suits to picking up golf clubs--new research is showing that men ought to be the ones doing more of the imitating. In fact, after years of analyzing what makes leaders most effective and figuring out who's got the Right Stuff, management gurus now know how to boost the odds of getting a great executive: Hire a female (Sharpe, 2000, in Business Week).

On the other hand, women often complain about the glass ceiling. Studies show that women in the U.S. still get just 77 cents for every dollar men are paid, even with increasing gender parity in higher education. And how many of the people running the biggest 500 companies are women? In 2009 only 15 were, among them Carol Bartz at Yahoo, Indra Nooyi at PepsiCo and Ursula Burns at Xerox. They are exceptions in the male-dominated ranks of C-level executives (Rein, 2009, in Forbes).

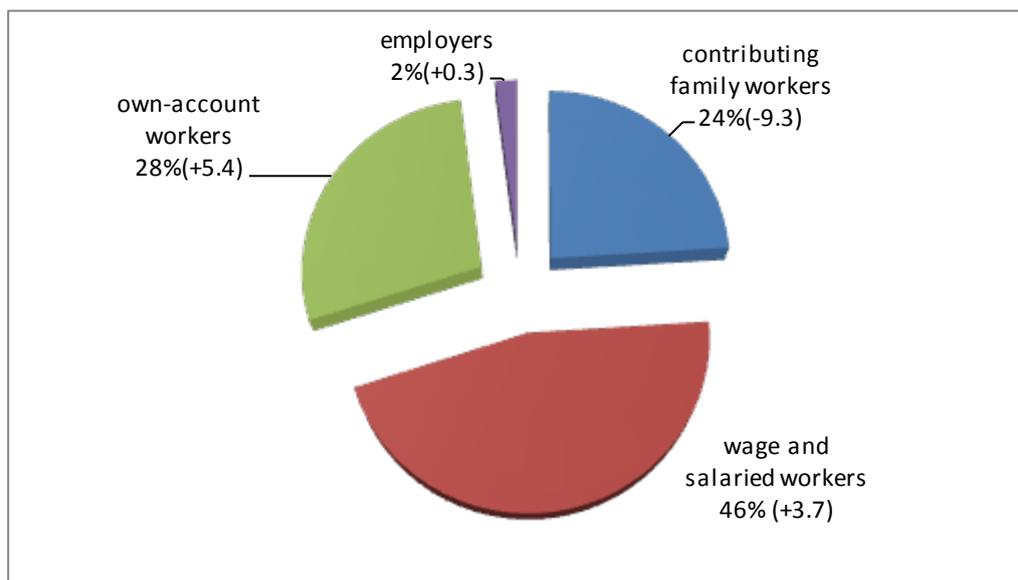
When we analyze studies on this field, different perceptions will be found for women and men in the business life. At the same time, when management is the subject, it will be obvious that the gender is a very important subject. Finding out the reasons of this situation is quite important in order to determine the main source of it.

Statistical situation about women's work life

When we analyzed statistics about employment, the employment ratio for men is % 74.3 globally, %73 in EU countries and % 64.3 in Turkey; for women it is %49.1 globally, %58.6 in EU countries and %22,2 in Turkey for 2007. As evaluating all these data in perspective of Turkey we find out that only 1 of each 4 women is working (ILO, 2009)-1.

Apart from differences in sectoral employment between men and women, there are important differences in working conditions. The move away from vulnerable employment into wage and salaried work can be a major step toward economic freedom and self-determination for many women. Economic independence or at least co-determination in resource distribution within the family is highest when women earn wages and salaries or are employers, lower when they are own-account workers and lowest when they are contributing family workers. The share of women in wage and salaried work grew from 41.8 percent in 1997 to 45.5 percent in 2007, but the status group of female own-account workers saw a stronger increase (ILO, 2009)-2.

Figure 1. Distribution of female status in employment, 2007 (percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



(Resource: ILO, Trends economic models, January 2009)

Women in Management and Glass Ceiling

The glass ceiling refers to an invisible barrier that prevents someone from advancing past a certain level in a company. That person can see where she or he wants to go but can't get there for a variety of reasons (Schaaf, 2008).

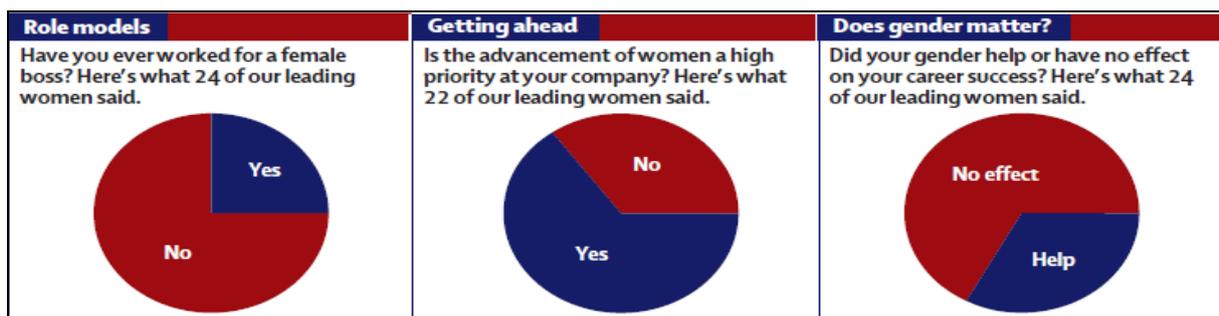
There are too many researches concerning glass ceiling concept. Generally, glass ceiling is explained in 3 ways (Durmuş, 2001):

- Women workers' behavior patterns and personal properties, which are composed as linked to socialization process, is thought inappropriate for working life and this situation becomes as a barrier for their managerial duties.
- Prejudicial and discriminative point of view depends on gender stereotypic within working life is seen as a barrier for women executives.
- Some attitudes in accordance with organizational politics effect women managers' behaviors, manners and goals. Because of prejudice concerning unsuccessfulness of women in power required works they are not perceived as inappropriate for such positions.

Today, women managers who have broken the glass ceiling in medium-sized, nontraditional organizations have proven that effective leaders don't come from one mold. They have demonstrated that using the command-and-control style of managing others, a style generally associated with men in large, traditional organizations, is not the only way to succeed (Rosener, 1990).

According to a survey which is held by (Automotive News Europe in 2008) among 25 women executives below answers were given.

Figure 2. According to 25 women executive their perceptions concerning role models, getting ahead and importance of gender



(Resource: Automotive News Europe 2008)

Literature Review

The leadership literature oftentimes paints two different pictures of leadership. The first is highly masculinized: mostly, if not exclusively, male followers; a task that draws on masculine-stereotypic skills and that is evaluated almost exclusively for its goal attainment; and a hierarchical organization that defines leadership behavior in terms of power over and power from. A second increasingly popular and more contemporary vision of leadership proposes transformational or charismatic leadership by emphasizing influence, not power, and empowerment (power to) of self and others. In contrast to first masculinized one, which tends to stress task performance as the singular or most critical indicator of leader effectiveness, transformational contexts value an array of group outcomes, including unit cohesiveness and individuals' satisfaction and development (Yoder, 2001).

(Bartol and Butterfield, 1976)'s study investigated the extent to which gender role stereotypes influence the evaluation of leadership behavior. Male and female business students were administered one of two versions of a questionnaire containing four stories, each depicting a leadership style based on one of the following leadership dimensions: initiating structure, consideration, production emphasis, and tolerance for freedom. Answers to questions for each of the leadership styles confirmed the hypothesis that gender has an

effect on evaluations of managerial behavior, although the effect varied for different leadership styles. Female managers received more positive scores than male managers on the consideration style. Initiating structure behavior was valued more highly when engaged in by male managers.

(Dobbins and Platz, 1986) performed a meta-analytic review of 17 studies examining gender differences in leadership indicates that male and female leaders exhibit equal amounts of initiating structure and consideration and have equally satisfied subordinates. Male leaders are rated as more effective than female leaders, but only in laboratory settings.

(Graves and Powell, 1988) investigated whether gender discrimination existed in recruiters' evaluations of applicants in real employment interviews and found that there is neither directly nor indirectly an effect in recruiters' evaluations of applicants, providing no evidence of gender discrimination.

(Eagly and Johnson, 1990) conducted a research comparing the leadership styles of women and men is reviewed, and evidence is found for both the presence and the absence of differences between the genders. In contrast to the gender-stereotypic expectation that women lead in an interpersonally oriented style and men in a task-oriented style, female and male leaders did not differ in these two styles in organizational studies. However, these aspects of leadership style were somewhat gender stereotypic in the two other classes of leadership studies investigated, namely (a) laboratory experiments and (b) assessment studies, which were defined as research that assessed the leadership styles of people not selected for occupancy of leadership roles. Consistent with stereotypic expectations about a different aspect of leadership style, the tendency to lead democratically or autocratically, women tended to adopt a more democratic or participative style and a less autocratic or directive style than did men.

After a couple of years, (Eagly et al., 1995) presented a synthesis of research on the relative effectiveness of women and men who occupy leadership and managerial roles. Aggregated over the organizational and laboratory experimental studies in the sample, male and female leaders were equally effective. However, consistent with the assumption that the congruence of leadership roles with leaders' gender enhances effectiveness, men were more effective than women in roles that were defined in more masculine terms, and women were more effective than men in roles that were defined in less masculine terms.

In the (Vecchio, 2000)'s study claims of "gender advantage" in the area of leadership are critiqued, and the findings from research on gender differences in social behavior and leader effectiveness are reviewed. Meta-analytic studies that have considered gender differences in leadership are examined with respect to both leader behavior and leader effectiveness.

In contrast to (Vecchio, 2000)'s arguments, (Eagly and Carli, 2003) shows that women have some advantages in typical leadership style and women are more likely than men to lead in a style that is effective under contemporary conditions. However they suffer some disadvantages from prejudicial evaluations of their competence as leaders, especially in masculine organizational contexts. Nonetheless, more women are rising into leadership roles at all levels, including elite executive roles.

Findings about gender difference in management and reasons behind

Women and management subject which is a big portion of management studies were analyzed from different perspectives for years. Is being a women a disadvantage for management? Or is women identity an element which makes the management concept broader? Different results obtained from different researches show that finding the right the answer is not so easy. (Akış, 2004).

In recent years many social scientists, management consultants, and other writers have addressed the topic of gender and leadership style. Some authors with extensive experience in organizations and the general public have argued for the presence of gender differences in leadership style.

In contrast to these generalizations about gender-stereotypic leadership styles, social scientists have generally maintained that there are in fact no reliable differences in the ways that women and men lead. Although a few social scientists have acknowledged that there is some evidence for gender differences in leadership style among research participants who have not been selected for occupancy of leadership roles in natural settings. Most have agreed that women and men who occupy leadership roles in organizations do not differ (Eagly and Johnson, 1990).

According to a managerial attitudes research results performed with 2000 women and men, there is a difference concerning management processes between women and men (Uzun, 2005).

In general, comparative research indicates that there are few differences in the leadership styles of female and male designated leaders.

Underlying this divergence in the opinions voiced in popular and social scientific writings is the fact that authors in these two camps have based their conclusions on quite different kinds of data. Authors who have written books for managers and the general public based their conclusions primarily on their own experience in organizations as well as on the impressions they gleaned from interviews with practicing managers. Social scientists typically based their conclusions on more formal studies of managerial behavior in which data were gathered via questionnaires or behavioral observations and then analyzed quantitatively. In view of these contrasting methods, it is tempting for social scientists to dismiss the generalizations that are based on personal experience and interviews, and to accept as valid only those conclusions that stem from more formal empirical research on leadership.

Two hypotheses have been developed. First one supports that there is no gender difference on managerial behavior.

Behavior may be less stereotypic when women and men who occupy the same managerial role are compared because these organizational leadership roles, which typically are paid jobs, usually provide fairly clear guidelines about the conduct of behavior. In addition, male and female managers have presumably been selected by organizations (and have selected themselves into these roles) according to the same set of organizationally relevant criteria, further decreasing the likelihood that the men and women who occupy these roles differ substantially in their style. Thus, reasonable assumptions about socialization into

leadership roles and selection for these roles suggest that male and female leaders who occupy the same organizational role should differ very little.

There are, in addition, several reasons to suggest that male and female organizational leaders, even those who occupy the same positions, may differ to some extent in their leadership style despite the structural forces for minimizing differences that we have already noted. One such reason acknowledges the possibility of ingrained gender differences in personality traits and behavioral tendencies, differences that are not nullified by organizational selection or socialization. Thus, it is possible that biological gender differences and gender-differentiated prior experiences cause men and women to be somewhat different kind of people, even if they do occupy the same managerial role.

In particular, men and women may come to managerial roles with a somewhat different set of skills. Especially the evidence meta-analyses have provided for women's social skills is: Women as a group, when compared with men as a group, can be described as friendly, pleasant, interested in other people, expressive, and socially sensitive.

Numerous studies have shown that people are often reluctant to have a female supervisor and think that women are somewhat less qualified for leadership and that female managers would have negative effects on morale. Moreover, female managers often face a less supportive environment than male managers. Female managers commonly are members of a numerically small minority, whereas their male counterparts are members of a majority group.

This distinction between task and interpersonal styles was first represented in leadership research by Bales (1950), who proposed two categories of leaders, those with an orientation to task accomplishment and those with a socioemotional orientation indicative of concern for morale and relationships among group members. This distinction was developed further in the Ohio State studies on leadership.

In this research, task orientation, labeled initiation of structure, included behavior such as having subordinates follow rules and procedures, maintaining high standards for performance, and making leader and subordinate roles explicit. Interpersonal orientation, labeled consideration, included behavior such as helping and doing favors for subordinates, looking out for their welfare, explaining procedures, and being friendly and available.

Task and interpersonal styles in leadership research are obviously relevant to gender because of the stereotypes people have about gender differences in these aspects of behavior. Men are believed to be more self-assertive and motivated to master their environment (e.g., more aggressive, independent, self-sufficient, forceful, dominant). In contrast, women are believed to be more selfless and concerned with others (e.g., more kind, helpful, understanding, warm, sympathetic, aware of others' feelings).

The only other aspect of leadership style studied frequently is the extent to which leaders (a) behave democratically and allow subordinates to participate in decision making, or (b) behave autocratically and discourage subordinates from participating in decision-making (Eagly and Johnson 1990).

On each of different kinds of studies women manifested a somewhat more democratic (or participative) style and a less autocratic (or directive) style than men did.

Other management styles are transformational, transactional and laissez-faire styles.

The new emphasis was on leadership that is transformational in the sense that it is future oriented rather than present oriented and that strengthens organizations by inspiring followers' commitment and creativity. Transformational leaders state future goals, develop plans to achieve those goals, and innovate. By mentoring and empowering followers, such leaders help followers to develop their potential and thus to contribute more effectively to their organization.

Transactional leaders, who appeal to subordinates' self-interest by establishing exchange relationships with them. Transactional leadership involves managing in the conventional sense of clarifying subordinates' responsibilities, rewarding them for meeting objectives, and correcting them for failing to meet objectives.

In addition, researchers distinguished a laissez-faire style that is marked by an overall failure to take responsibility for managing.

In general, meta-analysis revealed that, compared with male leaders, female leaders were more transformational and engaged in more of the contingent reward behaviors that are one component of transactional leadership. Also, male leaders were more likely than female leaders to manifest two other aspects of transactional leadership: active management by exception and passive management by exception. Men were also higher on laissez-faire leadership (Eagly and Carli, 2003).

Conclusion

In general, women and men show different leadership styles with the impact of both environmental and innate factors. These leadership styles are composed of all the dimensions required for management. As well as gender differences, there are other personality characteristics that differ from person to person. What is important here is not that men and women to have gender specific managerial skills. The best way is to direct them to such areas in which they can use their managerial skills and abilities.

Although there are some organizational forces which try to minimize the differences on management styles of women and men who held same positions, there are some reasons behind the perception of difference in leadership styles:

- Personality characteristics stem from biological gender difference
- Behavioral tendencies as a result of previous experiences depends on gender difference

As a result of these factors it can be stated that:

- Women executives are supported less than men executives
- Women executives lead small groups in quantity while men executives lead larger groups generally
- People think that women are less capable than men for leadership positions

In conclusion, men hold these positions for years and women have recently started taking up management roles. During this time, changing role of women in working life, changing organizational practices and changing culture have been critically important to perceive women as equal to men. Moreover, women have started to hold leadership positions increasingly day by day. When the ratio between men and women holding leadership positions gets equal, then the perceptual disadvantage will disappear.

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