
Challenges of Women Leaders in Higher Educational Institutions in Coimbatore City

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Abstract

In terms of population, the women's community is on par with the men's. It is concerning to observe that, while living in a contemporary, intelligent world, women are considered second-class citizens or subordinate to men. In today's society, when the cost of living has risen, it is becoming increasingly vital for women to engage in economic and leadership activities to support their families. The societal mindset has shifted as well. Working women's status is no longer viewed with suspicion as it formerly was. She is much more liberated, and the modern woman now has a very happy and calm family life since she is financially self-sufficient. In India, another of the focal points of the planning process has been the overall development of women. In India, the government's policy for women's development began in 1954, although genuine participation did not begin until 1974. Women flourish in a variety of sectors, including higher education. The purpose of this study is to do research into the numerous issues that women executives in institutions of higher learning in Coimbatore face.

Keywords: *Women, Leadership, Economically Independent, Higher Education.*

Introduction: Leadership

A leader is defined as "a member of a correlation matrix who has a significant impact on the group's activities and who plays a prominent role in setting group goals and determining the group's ideology" in psychological terms. Leadership is defined as the act of persuading others to work together to achieve a common goal. The ability to recruit, retain, and develop skilled professionals and creative individuals is the single most critical aspect in assuring success. Leadership is defined as "the process of encouraging and assisting people in working energetically toward specified objectives." Leadership is neither a position nor a position, but

rather a process of interaction. It's impossible to plan ahead of time. For an institution to work well, different leaders will be required due to the unique characteristics of each person, varying interactional patterns, varying aims, and means, and varying influences within and outside the organization. Leadership is the lynchpin of growth in a worldwide economy. A visionary, strategist, and most importantly, a motivator, are all qualities of a leader. The leadership issue is to figure out how to encourage others in the organization to desire to accomplish great things. Leadership has been defined as conduct that has a greater impact on the behaviour of others than it does on the leader's behaviour. It is a notion that applies to the personality-environment relationship to a desirable condition in which a personality's well-being and problem-solving acumen drive and govern others in the pursuit of a common goal. Leadership is a result of contact, not a position or rank.

Review of literature

Maheshwari (2021) stated that women leaders from developed nations and Vietnam have nearly the same obstacles as in the past, but that these challenges are diminishing in Vietnam as a result of family support. Mentoring has been proven to be a key facilitator in other industrialized countries; however, it is currently unavailable in Vietnam. Vietnam is becoming more important in studies on women's educational leadership, possibly as a result of rising female labour participation rates and GDP growth rates. Organizational, cultural, and personal impediments are the key challenges, according to Alotaibi (2020). According to Longman et al (2018), the majority Saudi Arabian women have the same employment prospects as women in other countries. Vidyashri et al. (2018) found that educating women at a higher level improves their social engagement and status, as well as provides knowledge of strong decision-making skills and resource management. Despite there being many barriers facing Saudi women who would like to lead, Fatmah Alotaibi et al. (2017) pointed out that there is still a lot of room for them to be designated as leaders in social, political, and economic arenas.

Statement of the problem

One of the most basic requirements for human growth is education. For national progress and prosperous society, education is essential. Economic growth, social reform, and improved student performance are all benefits of a robust educational system. The value of education in

India was acknowledged by the country's founding fathers and succeeding governments, and also as a result, literacy, school enrolment, and higher education institutions have all been given significant attention in the decades since independence. Institutions of higher learning are quickly establishing themselves as the primary driver of a country's socio-economic development. As a result, higher education institutions must understand students' views of the quality of service and identify the difference between individual expectations and perceptions in the age of competition. The person in charge of such an institution devises plans, takes risks, and organizes them. The industry will not be able to flourish without managerial ability and leadership. Women entrepreneurs create industries for a variety of reasons, including their ability, expertise, talents, and abilities in business, as well as a driving desire to accomplish something beneficial. Women's status is inextricably linked to their economic standing, which is determined by their access to the country's productive resources and chances for economic engagement.

Leadership has been described as the "seedbed" of an economic structure, a significant location for the incubation of new products and technologies, and it plays an important part in the development of any country, including India. It is becoming increasingly apparent that enterprising women possess a wide range of skills that can be used to transform them from 'work searchers' to 'job providers.' In recent years, it has seen explosive commercial and industrial growth. It has additional resources to support women's leadership development. Coimbatore has the highest number of female managerial executives in Tamil Nadu, including heads in institutions of higher learning such as colleges. In light of the foregoing, the purpose of this study is to find a solution for the accompanying research goal:

1. To examine the difficulties that women face in exercising leadership within higher education institutions.

Research Methodology

The study relies on primary data gathered through a questionnaire from female leaders in Coimbatore's higher education institutions. A sample of 50 female executives in autonomous arts and science institutions was chosen and questionnaires were delivered to them. Because only women leaders are being picked, the study's sampling technique is judgment sampling. The

study's secondary data was gathered from books, websites, a few publications, as well as company reports and news articles.

Analysis and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic profile

Variables	Classification	Frequency
Age (In years)	Less than 35	02
	Between 36 & 45	21
	Between 46 & 50	19
	More than 50	08
Educational Qualification	Doctorate	31
	Non doctorate	19
Experience (In Years)	Less than 15	08
	16 - 20	22
	21 - 25	16
	More than 25	04
Current Position	HOD	33
	Vice – Principal/Principal	11
	COE	04
	Managerial/Administrative Head and Others	02
Monthly Income (INR)	Less than 50,000	25
	Between 50,001 and 75,000	16
	Between 75,001 and 1,00,000	08
	Above 1,00,000	01

Source: Primary data

The above table denotes the demographic profile of the respondents who are the leaders of higher educational institutions in Coimbatore. It is clear from the table that;

- A total of 21 respondents are aged between 36 & 45, followed by 19 respondents at the age group between 46 & 50, 08 respondents at the age group of more than 50 and finally 02 respondents are in age group less than 02.

- Majority of the respondents have their doctorate education comprising of 31 in numbers and 11 respondents are non doctorate.
- 22 respondents have experience of between 16 and 20 years, followed by 16 respondents have between 21 and 25 years of experience, 08 respondents have less than 15 years of experience and 04 respondent have more than 25 years of experience.
- 33 respondents are HOD in various departments, 11 respondents are Vice Principal/Principal, 04 respondents are COE and 02 respondents are Managerial/Administrative Head and Others.
- 25 respondents have their monthly income of less than 25000, 16 respondents have their monthly income between 50,001 and 75,000, 08 respondents have their monthly income between 75001 and 100000 and 01 respondents have her monthly income above 100000.

Table 2: Problems Faced by Women Leaders

S. No	Problems	Mean Score	Rank
1	Co-ordinating the subordinates towards growth of the institution	6.21	1
2	Problems in planning for the course of action	5.40	4
3	Problems in managing academic and administration schedule	5.68	2
4	Feel difficult to associate with management	5.62	3
5	Problems in association with inspection committee (NAC/UGC/AICTE)	5.16	5
6	Sexual harassment	4.52	8
7	Nepotism (based on Political Affiliation ethnicity, religion, etc)	4.95	6
8	Lack of family support	4.69	7
9	Conflicts with family responsibility	4.22	9
10	Natural problems with being a woman (.E.g. Giving birth)	4.08	10

Source: Primary data

The table above denotes the problems faced by women leaders in higher education institutions. It is clear from the table that the rank for the various problems are given based on the mean score. Better the mean score better will be the rank for the problems. The problem Co-ordinating the subordinates towards growth of the institution is ranked first based on mean score, followed by Problems in managing academic and administration schedule, Feel difficult to associate with management, Problems in planning for the course of action, Problems in association with inspection committee (NAC/UGC/AICTE), Nepotism (based on Political Affiliation ethnicity, religion, etc), Lack of family support, Sexual harassment, Conflicts with family responsibility and Natural problems with being a woman (.E.g. Giving birth) respectively in the succeeding ranks.

Analysis of difference between problems and demographic profile of the respondents

H₀₁: The difference between the problems faced by women leaders in higher educational institutions and the demographic profile of the respondents is not significant.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance

Variables	<i>F</i>	P-value	S/ NS
Age	23.971	0.002**	S
Educational qualification	152.128	0.005**	S
Experience	65.008	0.032*	S
Current Position	98.420	0.000**	S
Monthly Income	11.524	0.046*	S

*Significant at 5 per cent level **Significant at 1 per cent level

Source: Primary data

The table above represents the analysis of difference using analysis of variance between the problems faced by women leaders in higher educational institutions and the demographic profile of respondents. It is clear from the table that the all the demographic profiles are found significant at 1 per cent and 5 per cent respectively. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that the difference between problems faced by women leaders in higher educational

institutions and the demographic profile of the respondents is significant viz, age, educational qualification, experience, current position and monthly income.

Recommendation and Conclusion

In India, women leaders including women-owned enterprises have emerged, making major contributions to the economy and these businesses are poised for future expansion. The younger breed of women-owned firms is aggressively seeking finance for their ventures, utilizing modern technologies to discover and establish a position in both domestic and international markets. In today's world, women are increasingly seeking gainful jobs in a variety of professions as a result of industrialization, urbanization, globalization, and the advancement of education. Women in India have made significant contributions to management in recent years. The Indian government has also emphasized particular programs for women to improve their socioeconomic standing. Women are acknowledged as playing a critical role in the country's overall economic development, making them an important target demographic for boosting entrepreneurship. Women enjoy taking on new tasks, and when they see the potential to earn money, they jump at it and start up a business. This study is significant in that it identifies the problems that women face in their leadership roles in the field of education. All of the issues are inextricably linked to their demography, and women must be cautious and seize all opportunities to advance on their path to success.

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