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# Do Women Manage Well?

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M. KALPANA

Women are becoming increasingly well-qualified and active participants in the world of work. They have overtaken the men counterparts in acquiring formal qualifications. Women are found in large numbers in several non-traditional jobs. An occupation that has opened up late to women is "Management." Though women's entry into management is recent, it is seen as an ideal job for women (Marshall, 1984). It was believed that women would bring the positive attributes of inter-personnel skills, team work and negotiation which would add to the strengths of the organization. The "Female" ways of organizing and managing was predicted to be appropriate for the organizations of the new Millenium (Rosener, 1990). However, though men and women start off in a uniform level, men are found to move faster through the hierarchy and are over represented at Senior Levels (Long, 1984).

An important reason for the lack of women in Senior Management positions is the general attitude about women. The stereotyped attitude about women, that they are emotional, non-assertive, and lack the ability to work under stressful conditions spillover to the workplace (Palmer, 1996). Moreover, organizations are still governed by rules and regulations that were laid down when the workforce was predominantly male. Nothing is done to develop an androgynous orientation among the workforce. In the days to come, women are likely to contribute more to work life. The present study aims at developing insight into the attitude towards women

in management, among men and women managers. Going by the stereotyped attitude about women developed during early socialization, it is likely that men may have reservations about accepting women in managerial roles. The research question thus generated is,

"Do men and women managers differ in their attitude towards women in management?"

## Method

**Sample:** The sample consisted of 33 women and 40 men working in nationalized banks at Coimbatore.

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*M. Kalpana is Lecturer in Humanities, Government College of Technology, Coimbatore*

The managers were all in the middle management cadre. The managers were all graduates, their ages ranging from 39 to 47 years.

**Instrument:** Data were collected from the respondents using the 'Attitude towards women in Management Scale.' The scale was designed for the purpose of the present study. The scale consisted of 38 statements. The statements were to be responded on a 5-point scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". The maximum possible score was 78.

## Discussion of Results

As shown in Table 1, 40 percent of the men respondents are in the age group of 42 – 44 years. There are 12 respondents (32.5 percent) in the age group of 39 – 41 years. Only 27.5 percent of men respondents are in the age group 45 – 47 years. Of the women respondents, 55 percent belongs to the age group of 45 – 47 years. Only 12 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 39 – 41 years. There are 11 respondents (33 percent) in the age group of 42 – 44 years. The reason for most of the women respondents falling into the higher two age groups may be due to the break in careers because of family commitments like child birth. In addition, the inability to relocate during their younger years might have taken them more number of years to reach their present position. This finding is consistent with the contention that women managers are less likely to be promoted than their men co-workers. (Balu, Ferber, 1987)

As shown in Table 2, men and women respondents differ in their educational qualifications.

67.5 percent of the men respondents have completed their post-graduation. Among women, only 24 percent are post-graduates. A large majority (76 percent) of women respondents has only a basic degree. When these figures are analysed with those

of Table 2.1, it becomes evident that men respondents have been able to pursue their education while on job. The women on the other hand have not concentrated on enhancing their formal educational qualifications. This could probably be due to the fact that women often have the sole responsibility for household management,

which is likely to leave them with little time to pursue higher studies.

As revealed in Table 3, 80 percent of the men respondents and 73 percent of the women respondents are married. 27 percent of women respondents are unmarried compared to 20 percent of men. This may be due to the dual responsibilities that women have to shoulder. Relatively more number of women may have decided to stay single to pursue their career aspirations whole heartedly. This is consistent with the earlier research finding that women managers are less likely to marry and have children (Greenglass, 1988).

As shown in Table 4, men and women respondents are found to differ significantly on their attitude towards women in management. Women are found to be more favorably disposed than men towards women in managerial roles. This may be because women through upgrading their formal educational skills have become ready to take up the challenges of top management positions. Men

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however are still bound by the stereotyped role behaviour acquired during early socialization of their lives.

## Conclusions

The results of the study lend themselves to the following conclusions:

- i. Men and women respondents differ significantly on their attitude towards women in management.
- ii. Men respondents are found to be relatively younger, married and with higher educational qualification than women.

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## Recommendations

The following recommendations are placed to develop a positive attitude towards women managers:

- i. At the time of induction, employees should be given an attitude and behaviour change training. This would help them develop an androgynous sex-role orientation.
- ii. New women recruits should be specifically enlightened about the problems they are likely to encounter in career advancement, and the methods to overcome them.
- iii. Organizations should periodically assess their policies regarding recruitment, promotion, performance appraisal etc, to ensure that they do not discriminate against women.
- iv. Management schools should conduct assertiveness training programmes, achievement orientation training programmes, and

leadership workshops to prepare women for workplace challenges.

- v. Organizations should use assessment centers to help women identify their managerial capabilities. Those found to possess the potential should be trained for higher responsibilities.

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group (In years)	Number of Respondents	
	Men	Women
39 - 41	13 (32.5)	4 (12)
42 - 44	16 (40)	11 (33)
45 - 47	11 (27.5)	18 (55)
	40	33

(Percentage in Brackets)

Table 2: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Educational Qualifications	Number of Respondents	
	Men	Women
Basic Degree	13 (32.5)	25 (76)
Post Graduation	27 (67.5)	08 (24)
	40	33

(Percentage in Brackets)

Table 2.1: Educational Qualification of Respondents at the Time of Joining the Organization

Educational Qualifications	Number of Respondents	
	Men	Women
Basic Degree	29 (72.5)	28 (85)
Post Graduation	11 (27.5)	05 (15)
	40	33

(Percentage in Brackets)

Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents

Educational Qualifications	Number of Respondents	
	Men	Women
Married	32 (80)	24 (73)
Unmarried	08 (20)	09 (27)
	40	33

(Percentage in Brackets)

**Table 4:** Mean, Standard Deviation and Z-Value

Category of Respondents	Mean (X)	Standard Deviation	N	"Z" Value
Women	56.88	2.355	33	21.842 *
Men	44.43	2.507	40	

\* Significant at 0.05 Level.

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