

A Study on Influence of Demographic Factors on Sociological Barriers Faced by Women Leaders with Special Reference to Coimbatore

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Abstract

There is a paucity of women leaders and women in senior management positions who could be taking up leadership positions later and thus it is the right time to address the issue of and encourage and support women to take up leadership roles. One of the basic challenges for societies involved in intractable conflict which aspire to embark on the road of peace is to overcome the sociological barriers and begin to construct a new repertoire that facilitates the process of making more women in leadership positions. The present study discusses the sociological barriers faced by in women leaders.

Keywords: *Women Leaders and Sociological Barriers.*

Introduction

There has been a growth in the women holding senior and leading positions around the world in comparison with previous years. Women leadership has grown recently, due to the fundamental gains women have achieved in the workplace. There had been several definitions for leadership; leadership is a complex phenomenon that touches on many other important organizational, social and personal processes. It depends on a process of influence, whereby people are inspired to work towards group goals, not through coercion, but through personal motivation. Research demonstrates, however, that despite an increased presence of female employees in mid-management positions, executive positions across the globe continue to be Women's advancement in the workplace has taken significant strides in the past 50 years.

Gender roles are instead socially constructed classifications that are inspired and furthered by the overarching influence of patriarchy within society, communities, and families. The fundamental structure of society depends upon that males are superior, more powerful, and that they represent the “rule,” whereas women are implicit as inferior, lacking in power and autonomy, and secondary. The power of socialization that underlies this system cannot be ignored. In fact, sexist, patriarchal values are so deeply engrained in society's consciousness that they are largely invisible. The very fabric of social organization has been woven by males, for males, to support males. In much officialdom, whether they are governmental or corporate, most of the upper positions are held by men. Women are generally concentrated in the lower, supportive positions necessary to keep this male leadership in power. Thus, the power, prestige, and privileges of those in positions of power, generally males, depend on the subordinate position of women. This ordering of power thus has serious consequences for women's leadership.

Sociological barriers are cultural barriers, societal issues, and corporate structure issues. Traditional attitude prevailing in the society is that women are weaker gender. These views are affecting women's career progress. Women are facing cultural bias, societal issues like negative social norms and organizational structure interferes and inhibits female advancement. Cultural attitude some women are able to transcend and rise to positions of leadership but more often than not, it means having to juggle cultural expectations with their leadership roles. At various times throughout history, working women were viewed as immoral and unfeminine objects of pity. Some critics accused working women of being negligent mothers. Frequently, women employees were not taken seriously by their bosses, colleagues, or society. Having a career posed challenges for women due to their family responsibilities. Women were expected to perform duties as wife and mother, in addition to fulfilling their professional responsibilities, some women experienced feelings of guilt or selfishness if they put their career interests first, because women's work and family demands were simultaneous, these demands had a significant impact on women's careers.

Review of Literature

- **Adefolaju (2016)** examined the role of Nigerian women in Trade Union activities by exploring the internal workings of five industrial unions in the country among 640 selected workers. Both questionnaire and in-depth interview methods were used to elicit information. The study identified that despite their interest, a little fraction of

women workers actively participates in Trade Union activities in Nigeria due to a number of socio-cultural factors which inadvertently affect formal work place practices.

- **Margaret (2012)**, investigated the effect of social cultural beliefs on career progression of women in Kenya's civil service, the data was obtained through a descriptive survey involving 324 women in middle and senior management in selected government ministries a structured questionnaire with Likert scale questions was used to collect data from the respondents. An interview was also conducted with the human resource managers. The study used the feminist theory to explain the status and experience of women in organizations across organizational structure. The findings of the study revealed that cultural barriers are among the most difficult to remove, as they are often subtly enforced by both men and women. They are seen as immutable. The study provides evidence on the effect of social cultural beliefs and offers recommendations on what the society as well as individuals can do to change their perception on women in society.

Objectives of the Study:

- To identify the various sociological barriers faced by in women leaders.
- To analyze the significance of demographic profile of the respondents towards the sociological barriers faced by women leaders.

Research Design

- **Type of Research:** The present study is descriptive in nature.
- **Area of the study:** The study was conducted in Coimbatore.
- **Population** includes women leaders who are working at administrative level, executive level and operative level of various Companies or Own enterprises in Coimbatore.
- **Sampling technique:** Convenience sampling technique is used to select the sample. Primary data collection was done through survey method using a well-structured questionnaire. The Sample Size of 157 women respondents from the companies in Coimbatore was chosen through convenience sampling method.
- **Tools used for analysis:** Analysis of Variance (Anova)

- **Analysis and Interpretation:** The collected data is processed, classified, and interpreted using the following statistical analysis:

✚ **Reliability:** Reliability is the extent to which the measurement of the constructs gives consistent results. The Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the reliability of the constructs. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the overall instrument was found to be 0.858, which depicts that the reliability of the coefficient value is at acceptance level.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.858	.855	20

✚ **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA):**

The principle of ANOVA is to test for differences among the mean of the populations by examining the amount of variation within each of these samples, relative to the variation between the samples using SPSS software version 16.0.

▪ **ANOVA: Marital status and Sociological barriers**

Null Hypothesis H0: There is no significant difference in the dimensions of Sociological barriers of the respondents and marital status groups.

Alternate Hypothesis H1: There is significant difference in the dimensions of Sociological barriers of the respondents and marital status groups.

Table 2 : ANOVA Marital Status and Sociological barriers

ANOVA						
Sociological barriers		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
AVGCB	Between Groups	4.503	1	4.503	6.502	.012*
	Within Groups	107.353	155	.693		
	Total	111.856	156			

AVGSI	Between Groups	2.168	1	2.168	2.444	.120
	Within Groups	137.500	155	.887		
	Total	139.669	156			
AVGCSI	Between Groups	.089	1	.089	.099	.753
	Within Groups	139.646	155	.901		
	Total	139.736	156			

*5% level of significance

Findings: From the analysis it is found that there is significant difference between the sociological barriers dimension of cultural barriers and different marital status group ($F=6.502$, $p=.012$ is $p<0.05$). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted.

The societal issues and corporate structure issues p values are more than the table value of 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Thus it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between marital status and sociological barriers dimension of societal issues and corporate structure issues.

▪ ANOVA: Educational Qualification and Sociological barriers

Null Hypothesis H0: There is no significant difference in the dimensions of Sociological barriers of the respondents and Educational Qualifications.

Alternate Hypothesis H1: There is significant difference in the dimensions of Sociological barriers of the respondents and Educational Qualifications.

Table 3: ANOVA Educational Qualifications and Sociological barriers

ANOVA						
Sociological barriers		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
AVGC B	Between Groups	16.462	4	4.115	6.557	.000*
	Within Groups	95.395	152	.628		

	Total	111.85 6	156			
AVGSI	Between Groups	7.828	4	1.957	2.256	.066
	Within Groups	131.84 1	152	.867		
	Total	139.66 9	156			
AVGCSI	Between Groups	8.442	4	2.111	2.443	.049*
	Within Groups	131.29 3	152	.864		
	Total	139.73 6	156			

*5% level of significance

Findings: From the analysis it is found that there is significant difference between the sociological barriers dimension of cultural barriers, corporate structure issues and different educational qualifications (F= 6.557, p= .000 and F=2.443, p=.049 are p<0.05). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted.

The societal issues p value is more than the table value of 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Thus it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between educational qualifications and sociological barriers dimension of societal issues.

▪ **ANOVA: Levels of Management and Sociological barriers**

Null Hypothesis H0: There is no significant difference in the dimensions of Sociological barriers of the respondents and Levels of Management.

Alternate Hypothesis H1: There is significant difference in the dimensions of Sociological barriers of the respondents and Levels of Management.

Table 4: ANOVA Levels of Management and Sociological barriers

ANOVA						
Sociological barriers		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
AVGCB	Between	10.151	2	5.075	7.685	.001*

	Groups					
	Within Groups	101.706	154	.660		
	Total	111.856	156			
AVGSI	Between Groups	2.330	2	1.165	1.306	.274
	Within Groups	137.339	154	.892		
	Total	139.669	156			
AVGCSI	Between Groups	2.982	2	1.491	1.679	.190
	Within Groups	136.753	154	.888		
	Total	139.736	156			

*5% level of significance

Findings: From the analysis it is found that there is significant difference between the sociological barriers dimension of cultural barriers and different levels of management group ($F= 7.685$, $p= .001$ is $p<0.05$). Hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted.

The societal issues and corporate structure issues p values are more than the table value of 0.05. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Thus it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between different levels of management group and sociological barriers dimension of societal issues and corporate structure issues.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The results of this study show that cultural barriers and corporate structure issues are the most affecting sociological barriers faced by women leaders in their career. So the women need to be trained in coping strategies and design media programs on women development for changing the society attitudes towards the value of women in top workforce through exposure of training programs, workshops and education curricula and the role models of successful women in different phases and leadership positions to improve women leadership skills. The study suggests policy changes, systemic and cultural changes, as well as various programs to encourage women to take up leadership position.

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