

# *Gender Leadership and Impacts*

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**Abstract:** The text focuses on female and male leadership characteristics and images. By demonstrating the relationship between gender and leadership and exploring the current state of the gender gap as an introduction, gender is linked to leadership, demonstrating that male leadership is a transactional leadership style, task-orientated, goal-orientated when in power, able to be decisive, possessing a winning attitude, and likewise possessing the disadvantages of being authoritarian and a climber. In contrast, females predominantly use transformational leadership styles and can diversify their leadership demonstrations to change the Management styles. Women's leadership is based on empowerment, and they can also demonstrate humanistic care in organisations by being democratic and collegial, gaining insight into the needs of their subordinates, and developing and mentoring their staff. Although female leaders also have advantages in intuition and communication, they are more sensitive to things, easily emotional, and less recognised in stereotypes, and these shortcomings can be a hindrance to the promotion of women like executives. Furthermore, different gender combinations can have different impacts on organisational performance. Finally, since male and female gender leadership will tend to be homogeneous with the development of the times, suggestions are made on how to narrow the gender gap and how to use gender leadership according to the three aspects of society, company and individual, to achieve the enhancement of organisational performance.

**Keywords:** gender, leadership, performance management, organizational behavior

## 1. Introduction

In the second half of the 20th century, gender studies became an important area of research in the humanities and social sciences and crystallised the differences between genders [1]. Many researchers also divided men and women according to different performances on the job with different impacts [2]. However, implicit leadership again solidifies the notion that male leaders are better than female leaders due to traditional male tendencies. Therefore, different genders have different levels of leadership, and gender is one of the factors people use to judge leadership. Despite the fact that male and female leadership behaviours tend to be homogenised as time progresses, there are still women who are questioned when it comes to being a leader due to gender bias. This article will elaborate on the respective characteristics and impact of male and female leadership based on gender bias and gender leadership and propose feasible solutions to gender bias based on research findings.

## 2. Analysis and Discussion

### 2.1. Relationship Between Gender and Leadership

In terms of traditional perceptions and division of labour, research has shown that the traditional social division of labour positions women as family caregivers and men as social competitors, as modern society has inherited traditional gender role expectations [3]. For implicit leadership theory, people's characteristics about leaders in long-term memory are cognitively structured with multidimensional commonality [4]. Hence, in the process of leadership assessment, people believe that women's perception of leadership is generally lower than men's, under the effect of gender preference in implicit leadership theory and long-term perception of male orientation [5]. The above literature suggests that gender and leadership possess a specific relationship, which is disparate and rich in tendency so that embodiment of leadership varies with the difference of gender. It varies, and there is no uniform pattern.

Moreover, under the comparison of gender leadership, early theoretical studies have also confirmed that according to the leadership trait theory, leadership is better embodied in men than in women; however, the theory of leadership behaviours suggests that women can demonstrate their leadership better than men [6]. In addition to the embodiment of leadership in the workplace society, a survey of the current status of women's rights participation in Hunan Province surfaces that males account for approximately 10% more than females in corporate management positions, and despite the gradual shift in the deeply rooted notion of male managerial tendencies, this notion of the society's lack of perceived women's leadership ability still dominates the society [7]. Maria, Akanksha and Benson demonstrated that very few women can lead as first authors and make the publication of papers [8]. Therefore, gender and leadership are not just correlated but more of a gender bias that women are not as good as men at leading. Thankfully women's roles in society are beginning to diversify, creating many possibilities for studying leadership traits rather than from the male personality perspective of leadership. Consequently, there is a relationship between gender and the display of leadership, and there is a gender bias that leads to traits in males that make both leadership and distribution superior to females.

### 2.2. Current Situation of Gender Bias

#### 2.2.1. Social Consensus

The main reason for gender bias is society's perceptions and expectations of gender. Whereas our desire for the will to lead is moulded mainly by society, modern society has inherited traditional gender role expectations [3]. Furthermore, the gender dichotomy has ironically necessitated that the contribution of women's work be ignored in order to maintain male autonomy at home and in the workplace [9], which has led to a situation where many people do not take women's influence on their work seriously, which coupled with the fact that women are confined to the private sphere and do not have knowledge of the public sphere. When women have knowledge, society devalues and denies their knowledge [9]. Therefore, the inability to rectify gender perceptions and gender division of labour with solidified ideas that cannot be subverted at a moment's notice has led to traditional ideas shaping society's perception and expectations of women as housewives, uneducated, and even inadequate for one of the roles of executives.

Furthermore, under the influence of social arrangements, Chodorow asserts that women develop deep-seated motivations to have children [10]. Men develop the ability to participate in the alienated work structures of developed capitalism, emphasising gender differences rather than social structures. This ultimately led to men being seen as individuals and women as women. Positively though, as Chodorow [10], Eichenbaum and Orbach [11], Gilligan [12] and Miller [13] articulate

the emergence of femininity as emphasising the specificity of women and the richness of women's inner experience with the central theme of encouraging women's culture and celebrating women's unique qualities through inter-female relationships to move away from greater societal sexism gradually.

In modern society, there are still people who have a stigmatising attitude towards female leadership; perhaps some of them are men or women who are jealous of others, but there is no shortage of people who have been educated with gender perception deficiencies. Similarly, parents are the first to establish gender stereotypes, research in China have shown that 2.5-3.5-year-olds believe that boys should help their dads with their work, and that girls should ask for help [14]. This shows that parents play a role as role models for their children in the initial development of gender awareness. Additionally, on-campus, male doctors and female nurses, this difference in gender and profession on the same profession carries a strong image of gender bias, and therefore there are also male nurses and female doctors [15]. In general, the female image in education is mainly centred around caring for the family and being patient, whereas the male roles show more vital professionalism and occupation.

Although the current law is trying to ensure that men and women have equal rights to education, feudalism still binds people, making women have fewer education opportunities, and the concept of "a woman's lack of talent is a virtue" is deeply rooted in people's minds [16]. Therefore, when a woman becomes thoughtful and strong, there will be doubts, stigma and discrimination. This indirectly leads to gender differentiation and limits women's career development, making the "scales of opportunity" a tendency.

The formation of social gender perception is also inseparable from the media; the continuous broadcast of films and short videos has solidified people's perception of gender. For example, there can be a "housewife" in society, but there can never be a "nanny", and men should make money to support the family. Women should be good domestic helpers, which ignores many cases of women becoming corporate executives.

The glass ceiling is also worth mentioning in gender bias. It describes the situation where women or racial minorities can only hold bottom positions or find it difficult to be promoted after reaching a certain position, like the glass ceiling, which is visible when looking up but difficult to break through [17], it is invisible but an insurmountable barrier. Its existence restricts women's development and makes it difficult for women to reach leadership positions and get reasonable promotions regardless of their qualifications, which is why women leaders are scarce.

### **2.2.2. Self-imposed Role Contradictions**

Women's role transformation is also one of the reasons for the formation of gender bias. In more detail, women's mode of approaching work and role transformation [7] are women's struggles with gender bias.

Women themselves are too emotional in their approach to work. The gentle image of women can pay attention to details and create a favourable working atmosphere when dealing with daily work. However, women tend to think in many ways when making decisions, and this emotional state of work leads to so many concerns and constraints that it slows down the progress of the work and harms it. Men, however, have a more rational mindset, making work more planned and logical. This includes men's adventurousness and ambition have an insurmountable advantage when competing for managerial positions [18]. Gilligan [12] has also elaborated that men's nature lends itself to them being in paid work and public life and making abstract logical analyses based on universal ethical principles, whereas women, due to their emotional and relationship-oriented and base their inferences on detailed analyses based on event situations, their work patterns are sufficient to exacerbate this gender bias at the onset of traditional perceptions. Secondly, there is female

self-recession [3], i.e., women's reluctance to engage in competition. Therefore, this low interaction in organisations leads to gendered organisations, defaulting to men's ability to act as leaders, allocating more resources and power in organisations to men, and consequently creating gender segregation.

The choice between family and career is a problem that everyone faces. However, for women, as mothers and wives, the roles are in line with the body, facing the serious "involution" of the work environment and having to be distracted from the family. The family's responsibility is like an invisible shackle that restricts the development of female leaders and makes it challenging to face role change [19]. Therefore, this role conflict of "female domination" also creates gender bias.

However, Herr Mastin's alpha and beta views [9] are worth mentioning, although the alpha bias exaggerates the differences between men and women as different and opposing views, dichotomous. In contrast, the beta view sees little difference between men and women [3], ultimately Herr Mastin's deconstruction of everyday ways of working and self-testing scales of gender perceptions show that masculinity and femininity are both present in the deep within a person [3] and that what you show is your actual traits and not just limited to gender.

To summarise, in modern society, leadership still changes according to gender. Hence, men and women still become alpha states, i.e., there is still a gap between men and women, whether in terms of leadership or other aspects. However, instead of describing the difference between men and women as a gap, we should state that it is the different characteristics in them that have different impacts on leadership and, therefore, on organisations, so in the next section, the characteristics and impacts of gender leadership will be better elaborated.

## **2.3. Male Leadership**

### **2.3.1. Management Level**

In terms of management, male and female leaders have very different embodiments.

Men's management style is mostly transactional [3], i.e., an active-passive management mode with clear-cut rewards and punishments. This contractual form of transactional is more evidence that male leaders are fair and just in their dealings, do not get emotionally involved, and treat their work in an orderly and compliant manner. At the same time, this type of transactional leadership places great emphasis on performance, with control, evaluation and results to push subordinates to complete their goals, which can be called task-oriented, i.e., the task prevails. They will only stop once the goal is achieved, focusing on production [20], with rewards for completion and penalties for failure to do so. Transactional leadership also proves that male leaders prefer to be in power. The overriding power can be more effective when it is in their hands [21], facilitating their control over the organisation and then penetrating every step of the employees in completing the tasks, supervising and reviewing the work status, managing the employees under the premise of completing the tasks and achieving the state of simultaneous improvement of performance and management.

### **2.3.2. Individual Level**

The male leader in a task-oriented management model is, at the personal level, highly goal-oriented and by no means lacking the ability to act decisively. Unlike women, men are decisive because they are faced with multiple choices and the ability to make decisions on important matters; unlike women, they do not overthink but rather judge the most appropriate choice based on the current situation and the organisational goals and implement it immediately. Furthermore, men's decisive approach does not make employees feel aggressive and even demonstrated that employees perceive the leadership of male managers' perception as higher than female managers [5]. Therefore, this

masculinity can enhance organisational efficiency and improve organisational performance. In addition to the decisiveness of male personal actions, for the conflicts arising from the incident, male leaders also deal with them with the solution of treating the incident as a matter of fact [3], a situation that shows that male leaders may have criticised and blamed their employees during the process, but only dealt with the incident and never rose to their personal feelings. The advantage of this is that it is a win-win outcome in ensuring the incident is perfectly resolved without damaging the organisation's interests and atmosphere. Therefore, men's rational and logical thinking and unemotional personal characteristics can contribute well to organisational performance. Lastly, male leaders' competitiveness can also be valuable in organisations [20], assisting male leaders in decision-making, doing and task-oriented performance outputs, and to a certain extent, motivating employees and creating a "want to win" atmosphere, which in turn, contributes to organisational performance.

### **2.3.3. Drawbacks**

As mentioned above, in management, men in power appear less radical with modifying task-oriented and transactional leadership. However, when power is taken too far and not delegated, it becomes authoritarian, as Zhao [21] and Faizan et al. [22] mentioned. Although authoritarianism can produce more work, it tends to make the organisational atmosphere tense, make work more passive, and limit the imagination of the employees; perhaps the leader's "do as I say" or make the employees obey at once will be a blow to the employee's psyche, and the tense work atmosphere can lead to aggressive behaviour and disrupt the organisational discipline. An authoritarian leadership climate negatively impacts organisational performance [23] because it significantly inhibits accountability and flexibility and disrupts the organisational climate, making it difficult to improve organisational performance. In the case of competitive individuals, if they are too competitive, it will create a situation of comparison, affecting the whole team's culture, distorting values and negatively affecting the organisation's output. Therefore, too much utilitarianism will be counterproductive.

## **2.4. Women's Leadership**

### **2.4.1. Management Level**

Firstly, compared with the male management style, Xu [3], Faizan et al. [22] proved that female leaders are more diversified and able to change their management style according to different situations. In the research of the four scholars mentioned above, it was found that the common management style of female leaders is transformational, i.e., through personal charisma, perceptiveness, and caring, female leaders can make their employees realise the importance of the responsibilities and tasks they have undertaken, thus maximising their potential to achieve the highest level of performance. In other words, through personal charisma, perception, and caring, female leaders make employees aware of the importance of their responsibilities and tasks, and stimulate their deep-rooted needs, to maximise their potential and achieve the highest level of performance. Meanwhile, for the adaptability of management style, Faizan et al. [22] further elaborated that it can close the gender-based leadership gap, which implies that with the common goal of improving organisational performance, the gap between females and males is gradually narrowing, and females can also exhibit the same leadership traits males possess to improve organisational performance.

Second, compared to men, women prefer empowerment, i.e., decentralising individual rights and giving each employee the right to self-direct tasks. This democratic and participatory model of rights management enhances organisational cooperation, reduces information gaps, and increases



employees' self-worth. In addition, in the process of participation, it can better identify the vulnerability of the employees, check and fill the gaps, as well as insight into the needs of the employees, according to the employee deficiencies and needs to develop further and know the employees, and to improve the performance from the organisation as a whole. Women's self-monitoring in management, attention to detail and democracy can be a good combination of external pressures, balancing the relationship between employees and production [24].

#### **2.4.2. Individual Level**

Regarding women's personalities, the collectivity they show is the ability to infect others and focus on employee care. Moreover, collectivity refers to helpfulness, friendliness [5], optimism, and confidence [3]. Employee care in this female-led environment can give employees a sense of belonging and recognition of the leader, increasing willingness to work, which in turn helps to improve organisational performance. Secondly, compared to men, the study concludes that women have strong verbal skills and are more effective in social and communication performance. Similarly, subordinates' perception of leadership is directly proportional to leaders' interpersonal skills [5]. Therefore, good communication will make employees feel the leader's presence. Women's communication is emotional, primarily empathy, and transpersonal thinking, coupled with their management, is the insight ability, which can be very good for obtaining employees' trust and improving team cohesion. In addition, effective communication can set up long-term goals and clarify strategic planning [25], including performance communication mentioned as one of the ways to improve organisational planning and performance through good communication, which confirms female leaders can focus on the integration of organisational and personal goals [21]. Finally, it is worth mentioning women's intuition. As leaders inevitably need to make quick decisions, and sticking to the rules may slow down the progress of decision-making, so rapid decision-making, based on experience and relevant knowledge of the comprehensive judgement of intuition, can play a decisive role, and Darwin has pointed out that women's intuition is more acute than men, so the chances of this kind of decision-making is also greater [25]. Correct decision-making plays a positive role in the organisation's development.

It is worth mentioning that while men are task-oriented, women are also task-oriented. However, the difference between the two is that women run the organisation as a whole in a "spider web" of multi-line communication [21], incorporating their humanistic concerns into their leadership, which makes it possible for them to be strong and gentle based on authoritative management, which is conducive to improving work efficiency and effectiveness and improving organisational performance. It is conducive to improving efficiency and effectiveness, and organisational performance.

#### **2.4.3. Drawbacks**

Women do not only have the above characteristics that positively affect organisational performance but also have some characteristics that hinder organisational development; for example, as well as being collective, women's multifaceted thinking can slow down organisational processes, which can be called overthinking, including their sensitivity and suspicion, which can even lead to unnecessary disputes. Although women have a high degree of empathy and can relate to the feelings of their subordinates, this same emotion can make events emotional or lead to their own emotions being too tremendous and making wrong judgements about events, which can cause irreparable trauma to organisational development or organisational performance. In addition, women are less bold and less daring than men, which is a disadvantage when it comes to innovative or groundbreaking tasks. Finally, as mentioned above, women are still confined by stereotypes. For

female leaders, both male and female subordinates, this stereotype leads to low recognition of the leader by the subordinates.

## 2.5. Replenishment

The above texts talk about the characteristics and impact of male and female leaders on organisations but ignore the specifics of the same and different genders of subordinates and superiors, thus in the study of Faizan et al. [22], it was proved that both men and women perform well and have more excellent performance under female style leadership. Furthermore, same-sex “leader-subordinate” combinations might generate jealousy and mutual strangulation [20]; thus, risky same-sex combinations lower or hinder organisational performance, while opposite-sex combinations can complement each other’s strengths and exploit each other’s potential, thus enhancing organisational performance. Then, enhance organisational performance.

Furthermore, the analysis in these breakdown situations is inseparable from the characteristics of leadership when gender is used as a benchmark. However, due to the gender gap, there are still different impacts on organisational performance due to the current trend of homogenisation of behavioural performance between men and women in top management as a whole [26], so reducing the gender gap in leadership is the mainstream of the development of management in the workplace, which not only equalises female opportunities but also narrows down the negative impacts due to gender. Therefore, the next part of this section will provide feasible recommendations to reduce the gender gap in leadership.

## 2.6. Suggestion

In terms of the development of gender leadership, the homogenisation of male and female leadership is the primary development trend at present. However, as the road is long and the change of concepts and displays cannot be achieved overnight, this part of the report focuses on how to narrow the gender gap at this stage and how to use gender leadership at this stage.

### 2.6.1. How to Close the Gender Gap

At the social level, establishing a sound social security system can create a favourable social environment and reduce inequality. Since gender is now tendentious, improving social security can also gradually reduce this stereotype. Additionally, women’s development also represents society’s development [7]. Hence, the equal treatment of gender and the equal opportunities that society can provide are ways to reduce the gender gap so that women can successfully catch up with men and have equal rights. Secondly, in order to avoid the front line of extremist discourse, it is possible to change people’s attitudes through education, video media and various communication channels, which in turn will spread in society, improve people’s old attitudes, promote the development of society and reduce the gender gap.

At the company level, it is vital to ensure equal opportunities for men and women in terms of promotion and not to restrict women to the basic ranks; and to mark discrimination or unfair treatment in the company’s rules and regulations and set up solutions. Secondly, as women need to balance family and work, adjustments should be made according to the situation of women in the company, such as the mixed working mode of home base. Finally, it is to provide different training for women in different positions or set up training programmes to drive women’s development. Wang [27] highlights what Schneider’s CFO once said that modern companies should promote women’s development rather than favour women and that they should set up systems and cultural perceptions to promote gender equality and cultivate soil suitable for women’s continuous development, which will, in turn, allow women managers to grow up. Therefore, improving their

governance policy reflects the enterprise's care for society; it is also one of the entry points for gender equality.

On a personal level, increased awareness can also narrow the gender gap. Modern internet rumours that "the Zi Wei Xing of 2023 will be the awakening of thousands of women", including the existence of Schneider's Chief Human Resources Officer Haiwen Le and Huawei's Vice-Chairman Wanzhou Meng, are proof of women's increasing awareness and the gradual relaxation of women's minds. The growing personal empowerment of women has proved that women can expand the company's territory as executives and that the gap between women and men is narrowing. Secondly, men need to be more tolerant of women. In modern society, there are still men who objectify women, believing that women should act as mothers and wives and focus on their families; some male executives also find it challenging to agree with women's abilities, so a change in men's thinking should be included in the critical points of narrowing the gender gap.

### 2.6.2. How to Utilise Gender Leadership

As it is difficult to shorten the gender gap and change stereotypes overnight, it is imperative to make good use of the current gender leadership. As mentioned above, the combination of the opposite sex can promote organisational performance, so enterprises can consider the balance of men and women in the organisation and take advantage of the complementary strengths of different genders to promote each other within the organisation, thus improving organisational performance. Secondly, organisations should be divided into genders according to the types of tasks [20], i.e., physical or energetic tasks should be given to male organisations. In contrast, tasks that focus on quality and rigour should be given to female organisations. Lastly, there is mutual learning between the genders, i.e., men can learn from women's strengths and vice versa. Based on the above, it can be deduced that although there are common characteristics between men and women, they still have their strengths, so learning from each other can optimise themselves, check their deficiencies, and then improve their organisations and enhance their performance. For example, once an authoritarian male leader learns from a female leader's collective nature and begins to focus on decentralisation and humanistic care, he or she will be able to create a friendly working atmosphere and ease the tension of his or her employees, thus enabling them to be more comfortable with their tasks.

## 3. Conclusion

In summary, this paper discusses that gender and leadership have a certain relationship and clarifies the reasons for having gender bias and the results caused by gender bias, and then summarises and concludes based on the characteristics of gender leadership for men and women and the impact on organisational behaviours and performances, as well as suggests how to close the gender gap in the future and how to make use of the gender gap at present. However, this paper is based on the extensive gender framework and society's current situation for research and does not break down gender leadership to each industry. Therefore, the gender leadership and advantages of different industries differ, so the follow-up can still study the gender leadership of different enterprises.

Lastly, in modern society, as times change, the series of problems caused by gender will also change with the development of society. The narrowing of the gender gap, the elimination of stereotypes, and the homogenisation of gender leadership are also manifestations of social progress. The journey of this change is arduous and lengthy. However, it will be worth the effort when society unifies to say no to gender discrimination, fair development of male and female leaders, and elimination of the gender gap in leadership.



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