

Women Leadership - A Study of Select Women Leaders in the IT Sector in Bangalore city.

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Summary

Leaders are one of the most precious resources of this world. An empowered leader is like a catalyst for transformation required in organizations from time to time. Remarkable amount of time, effort and money have been devoted to the study of leadership, yet there is little agreement about what exactly constitutes leadership. However, what is known to all is that excellent leadership always makes a huge difference to an organization. It creates an overall impact resulting in better outcomes for the organization as a whole. Leadership has evolved with time leading to major changes in society and cultural set up, with a big make over in today's corporate thought process.

The cusp of the 20th and 21st century was witness to a steady increase in the participation and involvement of women in leadership activities in businesses all across the globe, bringing with it, a whole new perspective to the role of women in employment and leadership.

As more women get employed in business and industry, it is paving the way for them to assume leadership roles because a woman leader's profile is said to have the vision for all the modalities on management and leadership, be it at home or in a business organization. It is often said that there is no such thing as a ***"Leadership Gene"***. Leadership is a skill and like all other skills takes time to develop. A lot of experience is also required to become a "True Leader" and exhibit true leadership in the organizational setting. Life is a self-renewing process involving intellectual, emotional and volitional competencies for leaders irrespective of gender. New age women are overcoming all negative and pre-conceived notions and proving themselves worthy of leadership roles. This has also brought into focus that human values like compassion, cooperation, nurturance and a sharing & caring attitude, so pronounced in women go a long way in helping them become successful leaders.

Women executives in the IT sector aspire to set new trends, exercise influence, navigate required changes and build on new strategies for value addition with incredible contributions to impact not only their immediate families but their communities and organizations. Research has shown that women bring a special brand of leadership which translates into superior financial performance, robust organizational growth and long-term sustainability of business. In keeping pace with the changes across the levels of leadership hierarchy, women leaders in

IT paved the way for economic empowerment and development. Most women leaders think of long term consequences, drawbacks and benefits of the decisions they take in the organization. They are generally humility personified and strive for fairness besides taking responsibility and demonstrating integrity. They serve as role models for all their followers by internalizing values and translating the same to actions. Women leaders *“walk the talk”*, because of which the level of trust, respect and likability generated amongst their followers increases multi-fold. With this, Indian women as leaders in the IT sector have turned the tide and transformed the way of leading organizations.

Any study on leadership is also about human relationship and interactions. The hallmark of all human relationships invariably are power; influence, vision, obligation and responsibility. By understanding and building strong and stable relationships, a new meaning to leadership is derived which is considered important to succeed as a leader. According to conventional wisdom, IQ and personality traits of an individual determine leadership success. However the growing body of research on emotions and volition emphasizes their significance in the work place to succeed. It is important to be heart smart than book smart as IQ accounts for only 20% of a person's success while the remaining 80% depends on the person's EQ and VQ. High emotional intelligence and increasing volition competence are highly essential and important for all leaders irrespective of gender in order to be successful in any given field. Thus, it is recognized and reiterated that high emotional intelligence and enhanced volition are both vital for women leaders in the IT sector. Women leaders are compelling images of the future in the IT sector as they do not gravitate towards mediocrity and are known to amplify strong signals that can lead to success by honing their perceptual skills through developing better EQ & VQ. Relating to employees with empathy and using emotions wisely based on the situation and giving importance to people and relationships can be the differentiator between good leadership and exemplary leadership. Women leaders generally read and assess people to understand their needs and emotions as much as being aware of their own emotions and needs because of their strong sixth sense or what is called *“endowed women intuition”* which contributes greatly to foreseeing the future and thereby take suitable steps to arrive at desired actions.

As seen in the study, demographics and psychographics of women leaders are also essential ingredients of EQ and VQ assessment. An appropriate fusion of EQ and VQ will enable women leaders to get along with people and build deep relationships in their organizations. It is important to note that the variables other than EQ and VQ fall outside the scope of this research investigation. Perhaps that line of thinking could be based for further research.

Taking good and beneficial decisions with limited inputs is vital for leadership in any field. Enhancing ability to take right decisions is of prime importance in business and hence leaders must build on their volition competence. With the right blend of EQ and VQ women leaders can establish themselves as not only good and humane leaders but also as practical leaders.

The Study has revealed salient findings in the back drop of the data sets with respect to the target group of women leaders. Strong relationships between IQ, EQ & VQ exist. Some composition of the traits of personality combined with the demographics, psychographics & family relationships influence the success of women leaders both at home & in the organization. The study has also clearly established the relationship between EQ, VQ and demographics and the personality variables. The positive influence of the family initiating the woman executive is established at the workplace. Further based on the inherited and acquired values women executives establish a work culture that is challenging and vibrant with harmony.

The influence of family in acquiring EQ & VQ is well established with high levels of significance. These results are true in the context of organizations in India where family as an institution still remains a strong unit in shaping up the personality of an individual. Women leaders exhibit EQ that is reflected in higher self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, social awareness and noteworthy social skills & relationships. As far as VQ is concerned the results indicate strong agreement on self-motivation and women leaders appear to have more faith in motivation rather than on focus on task and attention. Women leaders cope well with failure and majority of them have a strong family culture backing them. In addition, it is interesting to note that values of the family of women leaders are blended with high organizational values.

The relationship between EQ & VQ is strongly established. As regarding the organizational effectiveness a high degree of correlation exists between vision and values, values and culture and culture and morale. The results of the hypotheses demonstrate the influence of demographics and psychographics on the notional IQ, EQ, VQ as well as OE. This means that performance in an organization is a holistic non-linear relationship depending upon IQ, EQ and VQ levels in addition to external support factors such as demographics and family in the Indian context. This study has established the presence of VQ and its effect on organizational performance. Notional IQ and EQ also contribute in a great measure. The presence of VQ & the relationship of VQ along with EQ & Notional IQ is established. However, the strength of notional IQ needs to be further ascertained by doing more rigorous studies.