

The Effectiveness of Women as Managers and its' impact on Organizational performance: A Study on Educational Sector in Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

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Abstract

The focus of the study is to explore the relationship between women's managerial effectiveness and organizational performance in Government Schools in Jaffna. Individual's managerial skills and characteristics of management are necessary to improve managerial effectiveness and achieve the organizational performance. This study was conducted to find out the general concept of the woman educator and her role as a school administrator in the society. The objective of the study was to identify the fit between the women managerial effectiveness and the **organizational** performance. The Central research question here is "To what extent managerial effectiveness of women managers'/principals' lead to organizational performance?" To answer this question, data were gathered from Women principals, Vice principals, Deputy Principals and sectional heads in fifteen government primary and secondary schools. A total number of 65 questionnaires were sent out but a total of 43 responded. Simple statistical method of data analysis was used and it was discovered that female school managers can perform with skills which leads to school performance. The study also showed that in terms of skills and characteristics in all areas reviewed, women able to attain effective management positions and can perform well to get good performance in the school. It was concluded that managerial effectiveness and organizational performance has positive relationship and the managerial effectiveness also one of the factor other than customer satisfaction, service quality, competitiveness which determine the organizational performance.

Key terms: Managerial effectiveness, skills, characteristics, organizational performance.

1 Background of the study:

Today the organizational performance depends mainly on managerial effectiveness. Every achievement of management is the achievement of a manager. Every failure is the failure of a manager. So, in any organization, the managerial effectiveness is an important concept to the successful performance. Women as managers and their roles in management has become a topic of special interest and

importance in present decade. In Sri Lanka, women have been promoted to visible positions of responsibility at all levels. The effectiveness of principals is very important to the schools' performance. However the women managers are performing their duties on various levels in Sri Lankan's Organization as well as other countries the number of women managers are very low than men managers. Authorities focus more on educational output and schools are given greater autonomy in the way they strive to reach the national goals which focus on effectiveness.

The focus of the study is to find out female principal's skills such as supervision abilities, their knowledge of teaching methods, and assistance of teachers and their awareness of student's problems. It also focuses on female principals' relationship with students, parents and the school community. The Organizational performance depends upon various factors. The managerial effectiveness is one of the important factors to determine the organizational performance. Further, the study focuses on how the female principals' general school administration and other teachers who are in the position of vice principals', sectional heads' skills lead to schools' performance.

In the last fifteen years women have stood as exemplary leaders at policy level as well as community level. This commitment has been incorporated into the Sri Lanka Action Plan 2008 – 2015 in the SAARC Social Charter is given as Sri Lanka Plan of Action for women's Empowerment. Lately, women are making efforts to step out of their traditionally assigned roles as kitchen managers and human producing machines to that of people who can meaningfully contribute to development in various aspects of life, particularly in educational institutions and the management of human resources. Sri Lanka is a country that is standing up firmly and constantly for women's rights and equality. It is interesting to know in Jaffna that the Major of Jaffna Municipal Council, the Vice Chancellor of Jaffna University and Government Agent of Jaffna District are women. Some schools have women principals in the Northern part of the Sri Lanka. It is known that women are given prominent chance to compete with men in managerial role.

2 Purpose and significance of the study:

The aims of the study to examine the relationship between womens' managerial effectiveness and schools performance and the impact of the managerial effectiveness represented by the conceptual skill, human skill and technical skill and characteristics of the women managers on organizational performance in Primary and Secondary Schools in Jaffna. Findings of this study could enable

organizations to make suitable alterations or take corrective action to increase their women managerial effectiveness, which will assist them in reaching good performance in the schools and other organizations. And also it is helpful to manage the challenges facing by women in the organization and empowering women through managerial role.

3 Research Problem:

Generally, female managers are faced with certain kinds of conflicts. The first real problem she must handle is a domestic one. More often than not, she is a mother and a wife with the responsibilities of the house. New priorities at home have to be established at this time and the person most affected is her husband. The spouse situation is often the most difficult problem of all. Since the woman manager usually has little encouragement from outsiders, it is imperative that her spouse must be by her side all the way. If she is not supportive, she has two obvious choices: either to give up the goal of being a manager or give up the spouse. Usually, the former alternative is chosen, which has implications for the woman's career. According to Jerry L. Allen, Edward J. Rybczyk, Ben Judd, Males had more relaxed, friendly, impression leaving communication styles, and were perceived as more effective managers.

What is more significant is that few women are principals of co-education schools which constitute the majority of schools in the country. Overall, only around 25% of all principals are women. In Sri Lanka Education Service which comprises administrators and principals of schools, there are no women at the top in class I. This study was conducted to find out the general concept of the woman educator and her role as a school administrator in the society. The central research question here is”

“To what extent women managers/Principals perform in their various managerial skills and characteristics to achieve good organizational performance?”

4 Context and Literature.

4.1 Managerial Effectiveness

Managerial effectiveness is very important for the survival and growth of the organization. It is difficult to define managerial effectiveness in concrete terms. A skill is an ability to translate knowledge into action that results in desired performance. The most truly important ones are those that allow managers

to help others become more productive in their work. Robert. L., Katz classified the essential skills of managers into three categories: technical, human and conceptual. (Robert,L. Katz, 1974)

In the last two decades, increases in the number of women in the work force has been accompanied by increases in the number of women in managerial positions, but the number of women promoted to management has been disproportional to the number entering the workforce. (Neher, 1997) In 1980, 70 percent of managers were male, but by 1990 that figure has declined to 57 percent (St. George, 1995). Yet, in 1995 women occupied less than five percent of senior level and executive positions in Fortune 500 companies (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). While the number of women entering managerial positions has steadily increased, the position of “manager” continues to be identified in masculine terms (Ivy and Backlund, 2000; Reardon, 1997; Wheeless and Berryman – Fink, 1985). Research reveals that because masculine characteristics are identified with managerial effectiveness, men are perceived as more capable, more acceptable, and are preferred for management positions (Berryman-Fink & Wheeless, 1987; Reardon, 1997) Some conclude that women are too prone to communicate and behave in ways that hold them back (Dowdall, 2003). It is argued that women tend to avoid boasting of successes, and are often too quick to apologize or accept blame (Dowdall, 2003; Hogan, 1990; Tannen, 1994) Some researchers have found that corporate decision-makers often hold the sex – role stereotype that women lack the personality characteristics necessary for top leadership roles. This stereotypical judgement is based on the ascertain that women are naturally affinitive and nurturing, and cannot make tough decisions (Ivy & Backlund, 2000; Stewart and Clarke-Kudles, 1993).

Researchers have attempted, with varying results, to separate myth from fact concerning the perception that members of one sex versus the other make better managers. In the Minnesota studies of twins, obvious differences in temperament were found between women and men. Men were more aggressive and less fearful or harm avoidant, while women were much more sentimental, and had strong feelings of empathy for other people. Yet, while there were substantial differences in occupational interests among women and men (eg. engineering versus pediatrics), no differences in status were found. Women and men expressed about equal interests in most professions, and there was substantial overlap between the sexes (eg. some women wanted to astronauts or truck drivers, and some men wanted to be nurses, potters, etc. (Lykken, 1999)

Both male and female managers perceived that women possess three communication skills necessary for effective management: listening, verbal/writing skills, and nonverbal communication skills. In addition, both males and females perceived four areas in which women managers need training: assertiveness, confidence building, public speaking/making presentations, and dealing with males. An examination of the total number of items supplied by male and female respondents to each research question revealed that females had more detailed perceptions about women managers' communication skills and training needs than did males. These data suggest two possibilities: either male managers perceived female managers to have fewer communication skills and training needs than the females perceived for themselves, or male managers had not given as much thought to the questions. ([Berryman-Fink, Cynthia](#), (2005), "Perceptions of Women's Communication Skills Related to Managerial Effectiveness").

4.2 Organizational Performance:

Effective management is at the heart of organization development and improved performance. The quality of management is one of the most important factors in the success of any organization. Managers need a balance of technical social and conceptual knowledge and skills, acquired through a blend of education and experience (Mullins Laurie, J ,(1999). P 511)

Kaplan (1983) also identified a range of performance areas which organizations have to control and measure. His work referred specifically to manufacturing but the following dimensions are also applicable to services: Profitability, cost control, competitiveness, product leadership, productivity, quality, delivery performance, innovation and flexibility.

Little empirical work explores the impact of female managers on organizational performance. This paper uses Miles and Snow's management strategies to empirically determine if female and male managers use different strategies and what influence these strategies have on organizational performance. Using data and superintendent survey responses from Texas school districts from the years 2000 through 2005, differences between male and female managers are discovered. Female managers and the strategies they use have a positive influence on performance. These results are discussed in the context of the gender and management literature and in the general field of public management. (Morgen, S Johanson)

5 Method:

5.1 Sample:

The sample consisted of 43 respondents working the Government schools however the questionnaires were issued for 64 respondents. This study was thus based on the sample of the people who are responsible for manage some activities from Primary and secondary schools. In Jaffna there are 5 Zonal Education Offices of which from 2 Education Offices (Valikamam and Jaffna Zonal Education offices) 22 Schools were selected out of 101 Schools and information collected from 43 respondents who were women principals, deputy principals and sectional heads etc., Primary and Secondary data were used and the information was gathered by using questionnaire which carried out structured, semi-structured and open-ended questions. The sample size consisted of executives in various positions (principals, deputy principals, Vic principals, sectional heads). The data were collected personally by the researcher and also by using direct interviews with respondents. The sample size was obtained on all management levels, but most respondents were from the middle and lower level management, with an assumption that they would possess an accurate skills and characteristics. Organizational information relating to the schools was gathered through a questionnaire survey, personal interviews with principals and teachers, and secondary data i.e., published reports, and documents etc.

5.2 Techniques of data collection

The questionnaire consists of 38 items, which regarded: (1) Conceptual skill consists of 9 items, (2) Human skills consist of 8 items, (3) Technical skills consist of 7 items, (4) characteristics consists of 4 items, and (5) organizational performance consists of 10 items.

5.3 Measure of Managerial skill:

For the purpose of measuring the Managerial Skill, the questionnaire developed as 5 Likert Scale. The items were scored on 5-point scale with the response categories being:

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Undecided
- 4 - Agree

5 - Strongly agree

From the above 33 persons out of 43 are identified that they possess effective managerial skill by measuring the effectiveness ≥ 4 . The Average of ≥ 4 of total score was used to find out the effective managers. Then the statistical model has been used to find out the relationship between the managerial effectiveness and the organizational performance. This model further analyzed the impact of managerial effectiveness on organizational performance.

5.4 Conceptual Model:

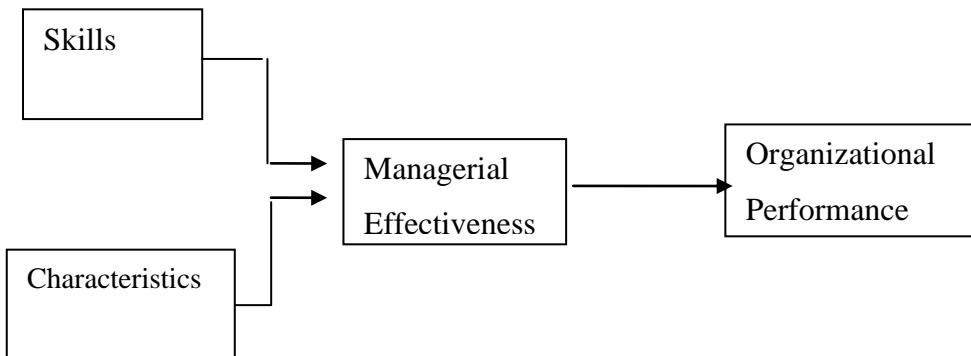


Figure 5.1 Conceptual framework:

The above figure 5.1 illustrates the independent variable and dependent variable. The managerial effectiveness is independent variable and organizational performance is the dependent variable. The managerial effectiveness may be influenced by characteristics and skills of managers. Based on the assumed causal relationship given in the conceptual model, the following hypotheses were developed for testing.

H₁: Managerial effectiveness and organizational performance are positively correlated.

H₂: . Managerial effectiveness has strong impact on organizational performance.

6 Limitations:

- The sample size will be pre-selected in order to have access to suitable information from schools Jaffna Zonal education office and Valikamam zonal education office.
- The selection of School was from among Zonal Education Offices in Jaffna Peninsula for practical implementation reasons.
- Teachers other than managerial level are not considered to gather information regarding managerial effectiveness and organizational performance.

7 Discussion and Results

The study investigated the contribution of the managerial effectiveness of women executives to schools performance by using correlation and regression analysis. In the largely theoretical literature and conventional wisdom among executives, there is a growing consensus that the Skills and Characteristics provide a significant contribution to managerial effectiveness and influence on organizational performance. This study provides broad evidence in support of these assertions: From the data collected and analysed with the help of statistical package of SPSS it focused the relationship between Managerial effectiveness and Organizational Performance is as follows:

Table 7.1: Level of Managerial effectiveness and Organizational Performance

Variables	Skills	Characteristics	Organizational Performance
Skills	1	.296	.594(**)
Characteristics	.296	1	.138
Organizational Performance	.594(**)	.138	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation test was made to examine the relationship between variables and results are tabulated. The managerial effectiveness is represented by the skills and characteristics and the skills have more influence on organizational performance than characteristics. Table 1 shows that there is a positive relationship between managerial effectiveness and organizational performance at 0.01 significant level. From these results the hypothesis of “Managerial effectiveness and organizational performance are positively correlated” is proved clearly.

Table 7.2: Correlation for Conceptual, Human and Technical skill with Organizational Performance

Variables	Organizational Performance
Conceptual Skill	.248

Human Skill	.593(**)
Technical Skill	.552(**)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 indicates that the correlation between conceptual, human and technical skill and organizational performance is 0.248, 0.593 and 0.552 respectively. The correlation between human and technical skill and organizational performance is 0.593 and 0.552 respectively which is expressed that the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. From the above discussion the human and technical skill has strong relationship with organizational performance. However, the conceptual skill and organizational performance has very low relationship which is 0.248 at 0.01 significant level.

**Table 7.3: Regression analysis for Managerial effectiveness and organizational performance:
Dependant variable: Organizational Performance**

a Predictors: (Constant)	R	R Square
Skills & Characteristics	.594(a)	.354
Conceptual skill	.248(a)	.038
Human skill	.593(a)	.352
Technical skill	.552(a)	.304

Regression analysis was carried out to test the impact of managerial effectiveness on organizational performance. In this study skills and characteristics are the independent variable and Organizational performance is the dependant variable. From these independent and dependent variables, the following relationship is formulated.

Organizational Performance (P) is dependent upon the Skills and Characteristics (SC). It is represented as follows:

$$P = f(SC)$$

To test the impact of Skill and Characteristics on Organizational Performance, the following equation can be formulated.

$$P = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (SC)$$

Where β_0 and β_1 are the regression coefficient

P = Organizational Performance

SC = Skills & Characteristics

From the Table 7.3, we can observe that the Organizational Performance is influenced by managerial effectiveness represented by Skills and characteristics by 35% and remaining 65% are determined by other factors such as customer satisfaction, service quality, competitiveness and asset utilization etc., Further, the table illustrates the organizational performance depends upon conceptual, human, technical skill 6%, 35% and 30 % respectively and the remaining 94%, 65% and 70% are determined by other factors. The organizational performance is mostly affected by human and technical skill other than conceptual skill.

9 Conclusions:

The study attempted to demonstrate the role of women in school management issues. The analysis from this study women managerial effectiveness leads to better performance of the schools. The organizational performance is mostly influenced by the human skill which is the important skill to behave with subordinates and others. The conceptual skill is important to top level management and the human skill is essential to all level of the management that is the reason for the positive relationship between the variables. The technical skill which is important to the lower level management also has more impact on organizational performance which was revealed by the computer skills, sports activities and other activities. The paper concludes by recommending that it is the duty of society to perceive and insist that the female children should receive the very best preparation for adult life as their male counterparts. Girls should therefore be taught to grow up as women who will shoulder responsibilities on equal footing with men in all spheres of life. In Sri Lanka equal opportunity is given to men and women in all spheres so the women should participate at all themselves. We appreciate the effective principals and heads in the schools and the students should consider those teachers as a role model for their life.

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