

**INFLUENCE OF GENDER ON LEADERSHIP STYLES AND  
EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADER – (STUDY BASED ON GOVERNMENT  
UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OF SRI LANKA)**

**By**

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## **1. Abstract**

*The number of females in higher management positions are very low in Sri Lanka. Women in management positions have to face prejudice according to the literature. Current male and female leader prototypes are associated with gender in evaluating leaders.*

*Is there a scientific base to justify those entry barriers and prejudice against female managers? Is there actual difference in male and female managers as leaders and does the effectiveness of the male and female managers differ according to their gender are the problems?which are discussed in this study.*

*The objectives of the study are to categorize male and female managers to Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire leadership styles using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and to compare the effectiveness of leadership in male and female managers and compare the strengths of male and female managers in each leadership style. The target population for the study is the administrative staff in the university system in Sri Lanka.*

*The results show that there is no significant difference in Transformational and Laissez-faire leadership styles of male and female administrators in government university administrative staff of Sri Lanka. However female administrative staff have more Transactional leadership qualities compared to male administrators. Other than that there were no significant difference in the effectiveness of male and female administrators in government university administrative staff of Sri Lanka*

*Findings of the study pointed out that there is no scientific base to justify prejudice against female managers since there is no significant difference in male and female managers as a leaders. Also female administrators scored more in some leadership styles comparing to their male peers.*

**Key Words:** Gender, Leadership, Administrators and Effectiveness.

## **2. Introduction**

Gender plays a vital role in human society. The popular belief is that males and females have different roles in society. However, gender roles in society are changing as the world changes. How these changes affect the socio economic factors of the world is very complex.

Modern day society is far more complex compared to old, traditional society. The main relationship which drives any society is the relationship between leader and followers. Leaders can be found in many forms. They can be managers, entrepreneurs, spiritual guides or they just can be a simple employee of an organization. At the same time as there is no consensus on the definition of a leader across the world, a leader may be distinguished from a follower by his or her qualities.

Different kinds of leaders are needed for different scenarios, so there is no such a thing as a universal leader. However some leaders can adapt to various situations and act accordingly. The role of a leader is basically to guide followers to achieve goals effectively and efficiently. If the leader is not competent enough to do the task efficiently and effectively, the whole team will collapse. Therefore the leaders of modern society are considered the top level and are the driving power of the society. Since the leaders are considered as a valuable assets to society, demand for superior leaders are at a height in any organization. Therefore people try to cultivate leadership qualities and skills inside them and be leaders in organizations. Leaders are the individuals who live with better life standards in any society since the demand for leaders is high.

According to the Howell (1997) modern leadership theories and models, leaders are now assessed on the basis of the satisfaction and performance of their subordinates. However, these theories and models are based on the assumption that the leadership style of the leader can be changed according to the situation most of the time, and that some leadership style can be applied to any situation.

Some findings have pointed to the fact there are a number of substitutes available for leadership. Literature in this field provides evidence that to maximize organizational outcomes, the members of an organization seek to obtain both guidance and good feelings from that organization. Guidance is offered in the form of both direct instructions and written guidelines such as work sheets. On the other hand, good feelings can be cultivated using various other workplace-related aspects. According to Howell (1997) leaders do not necessarily need to be involved in providing all of these factors. Even though all of those things can be done without managers, the importance of the leaders in any organization is still considered as a one of the most important aspects in the success of any given organization. What an organization needs to be successful is the people who can drive the organization effectively.

The existence of leaders is mainly dependant on the followers. To be a leader, the leader should have at least one follower. This relationship should be based on mutual understanding and respect on the part of both the leader and the follower. Some organizations attempt to force this relationship by giving the hierarchical power of authority to the leaders but this type of leader-follower relationship is not stable in the long term. To have a healthy relationship, the trust and respect of the followers needs to be earned by the leader.

There are plenty of social barriers to becoming a leader of certain group of individuals which depends on the situations, beliefs, cultures and opinions. Therefore, some individuals in society have to put an extra effort

compared to others to be a leader in a society or an organization. Most of the time, the reasons behind those hurdles are baseless.

Leaders in most of organizations in the world are mainly male, even though some of the middle level management positions and supervisory positions in the organizations are dominated by females. Female leaders have to face and break the glass ceiling when they are trying to advance their position towards top level positions in an organizations. The cause for this barrier can vary from the organization to organization and also culture to culture(Palacio, 2010).

Eagly & Karau (2002) propose that two types of prejudice toward female leaders can be identified. Generally, prejudice arises from misconceptions formed by the way people view and define gender roles and characteristics in society. This gender stereotyping causes prejudice towards females and also creates barriers in the career advancement of female manager's worldwide. The other reason for prejudice toward female managers is the general belief that female managers do not possess the required leadership skills and qualities compared to male managers. Because of the prejudice towards females, female managers have to exert extra effort when climbing towards the top level positions in an organizations.

Johnson et.al (2008) claimed that current male and female leader prototypes are associated with gender in evaluating leaders. They also pointed out that male individuals expect that leaders are more masculine, strong, and oppressive than feminine individuals. And also sensitivity was more toughly associated with feminine leadership. According to the researchers, female leaders needed to prove both sensitivity and strength to be considered as effective in the other hand male leaders only needed to demonstrate strength. This biasness create extra barriers to female leader to become top level managers.

Even when female managers become top level managers in an organization, some of the male subordinates do not like to follow the directions given by the female managers due to various reasons (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Male subordinates do not like to work under the direction of females since most cultures in the world are male dominant. Hence the female leader has to put an extra effort to maintain her followers compared to the male leader with same leadership ability. Because of that, the shareholders and the stakeholders of an organization positioned in this type of cultural background do not like to advance female leaders to the top level positions. This creates a huge gender imbalance in top level positions all around the world. This problem is especially present in Asian countries since almost all the Asian cultures are male dominant.

The number of female managers in Asia is increasing slowly but steadily due to various reasons (Palacio, 2010). Since the effect of Asian's economy on world economy has increased in the last two decades, the money flow and living status of Asian families is slowly increasing. The improvement in economy has ensured access to better healthcare and education for people in Asian countries. Access to better education is one of the most important causes for the increase in the number of female leaders in organizations. Since accessibility to schools and the money required to attend schools was higher compared to the income of the families in the past, most families could only afford to give education to male children. Because of the improvement in the economic status of Asian families, they can now provide education to all the children of the family (Strachan, Adikaram, & Kailasapathy, 2015)

Other than better access to education, there is another reason for the increase in the number of female leaders. Throughout the world, fertility rates are falling. Because of falling fertility rates, the number of children in a family is low even in Asia. The lower the number of children in a family, the less the female needs to participate exclusively in household duties. This has led to an increase the women's participation in the labour force. Due to these reason, the number of women managers in Asia is expected to be rise further over the next decade.(Wen-Chi et.al 2008). However, though the number of female leaders has increased, they still have to face prejudice in the working place due to their gender.

The lack of women in management roles in Asia is influenced by culture and religion. Most of the studies conducted on the effects of gender on management are done in western cultures (Wen-Chi et. al., 2008). Since culture plays a vital role in management styles and human relationship between leaders and followers, it is essential to study gender related management issues in Asian countries.

Since the popular belief is that the abilities and skills of male and female leaders are different, it is important to understand whether there is a difference between the leadership styles of male and female managers and also to understand whether gender has an effect on the effectiveness of leadership. The findings in this field will be important since the gender balance of managers is changing around the world. This phenomenon can affect the management of organizations, since men's and women's behaviour is different. It is very important to understand whether there is a significant relationship between preferred leadership styles and the effectiveness of the leaders with regard to the gender of managers. The study can be used by human resource effectively even if the effectiveness and leadership styles of the managers vary with the gender of the managers.

Only 4.8 percent of women were working in top positions in Sri Lankan decision-making bodies in 2005 (Palacio, 2010). When it comes to the top positions of organizations, there were only 3 female CEOs which is 4.3 per cent, out of a total of 69 CEOs in the country. According to the International Labour Organization survey conducted in thirteen companies in 2013, only one women CEO was there on active duty. (Palacio, 2010)

On the one hand, male managers already in the top level positions in organizations discourage potential female candidates from applying top level positions. On the other hand, female managers in some organizations face problems in building trust and confidence among male subordinates due to the belief that males possess more leadership qualities compared to women even though the female leader may have more experience, education and other qualifications.

Studies carried out in the western world have pointed out that there is no significant difference between leadership qualities and the effectiveness of female managers compared to male managers(Eagly & Carli, 2003). However, these findings are not relevant to Asian countries since females in Asia have less access to education and less opportunities.

### **3. Research Problem**

*Is there a differences in male and female managers as leaders considering their leadership styles and how effective it makes them as leaders according to their gender?*

According to Palacio(2010), the number of women in the top management positions in Sri Lanka is low. Women in management positions still face a lot of entrance barriers and prejudice according to the literature. Also some researchers claimed that current male and female leader prototypes are associated with gender in evaluating leaders(Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Equal treatment for Sri Lankan women is guaranteed by the constitution. They have equal opportunities and access to free education as male children do. According to Article 12 of the constitution of Sri Lanka “no citizen shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, place of birth or any such grounds”. However when it comes to leading positions in the private sector and government sector, only a few female managers can be found.

Most of the studies has done in this field were conducted in European countries or USA. Since culture plays vital role in developing leaders, findings of those countries might not be applicable to Sri Lankan context directly. This study is designed to fill these gap by doing study among the leaders nurtured under Sri Lankan culture which has some major differences comparing to the Western culture.

### **4. Research questions and hypothesis**

#### **4.1 Research questions**

- Whether there is a significant difference between leadership styles of male and female administrators in government university administrative staff of Sri Lanka?
- Whether there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of male and female administrators in government university administrative staff of Sri Lanka?

#### **4.2 Research hypothesis.**

H1: There is a significant difference between the Transformational Leadership style of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka.

H2: There is a significant difference between the Transactional Leadership style of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka.

H3: There is a significant difference between the Laissez-faire Leadership style of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka.

H4: There is a significant difference in the effectiveness of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka.

### **5. Research Objectives**

The objective of this research is to identify the effect of gender on leadership. Two main areas of leadership are considered in this study. These are leadership style and the effectiveness of a leader.

- To identify whether there is a significant difference in the Transformational Leadership style between male and female managers

- To identify whether there is a significant difference in the Transactional Leadership style between male and female managers
- To identify whether there is a significant difference in the Laissez-faire Leadership style between male and female managers
- To identify whether there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of management in male and female managers

## **6. Significance of the study**

57 percent of 21 million estimated population in Sri Lanka is female. However only 8.5 million people of that 21 million is economically active. From that, only 33.4 percent are women (Palacio, 2010)

According to Eagly & Karau (2002) two types of prejudice toward female leaders can be seen in general. The first one is general prejudice towards women as subservient to men. This stereotyping causes prejudice towards female and also creates barriers in career advancement of female manager's worldwide. The other reason for prejudice toward female managers is the belief that female managers do not possess the required leadership skills. A lot of studies in this field have been conducted in Europe and the United States. Since the leadership styles and characteristics of a person is subject to the cultural background, beliefs and economical perspective of the environment that the person lives, the findings of those studies cannot apply to the Sri Lankan context directly.

The objective of the study is to identify whether there is significant difference in leadership styles and the effectiveness of male and female managers in the administrative staff of Sri Lankan Universities. This study is designed to identify whether there is a basis for the common belief that male managers have more leadership qualities compared to female managers. The findings of this study may lead to breaking the glass ceiling for women and decrease the prejudice against emerging female managers in Sri Lanka. Also these findings can be used to properly utilize the human capital in Sri Lanka.

Target population of the study is the administrative staff in the Sri Lankan university system. Those are one of the most important employees in the Sri Lankan public sector. These managers were selected using very competitive test followed by a comprehensive interview conducted by the University Grants Commission. The sample population gives a proper representation of all the population in the country since the members of the administrative staff are selected from all over the country. So the sample might give a better representation of the population of Sri Lanka.

## **7. Research Methodology overview**

Methodology of the research is quantitative research methodology. Research hypothesis was developed and variables and dimensions were designed according to the theoretical framework. Four variables are measured using a questionnaire. Those variables are:

- Transformation Leadership Style
- Transactional leadership Style
- Laissez-faire leadership Style
- Effectiveness of the leader

The sample population of the study is the Administrative staff of the government universities in Sri Lanka. The population size is nearly 350 since there is no up to date data available to be found out. The data available

in the University Grants Commission web site is up to 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2015 (Tufte, 1992). The selected sample size is 175 from 350 staff which is approximately 50% of the total population.

The questionnaire consists of 52 items with a five-point Likert-type scale. The first part of the questionnaire is primarily designed to categorize the leaders into the three leadership categories. The first part of the questionnaire was adopted from Multifactor leadership Questionnaire (4X format). Four variables are used to determine how strong the participants are as transformational leaders. Two variables and one variable respectively are used to determine Transactional and Laissez-faire leadership.

Other variables including Innovator, Broker, Producer, Director, Co-ordinator, Monitor, Facilitator, Mentor are the attributes that need to be possessed by the effective managers according to the Quinn's model.

The sampling method is random sampling. The delivery method of the questionnaire used is online questionnaire. The link for the online questionnaire is delivered using email to the target sample of the population. Telephone calls were given to the participants to explain the questionnaire and the significance of the study.

Analysis is done using SPSS software. The statistical method used to identify whether there is a significant difference in leadership styles of each gender and whether there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of the leader is Independent Samples T-test.

## **8. Results**

The four main hypotheses are tested in this section. Hypotheses are tested using Independent Sample T tests. Other than the main Hypothesis, major factors which are used to determine each main variable are tested with the independent variable here to elaborate the findings of the study. Findings will be compared with the literature in the discussion section.

### **8.1 Hypothesis 01**

Results showed that the female administrators (N78) had scored 3.1377 for Transformational leadership in a scale of 0 to 4 while male administrators (N64) had scored 3.0072 for Transformational leadership. Two-tailed significant value for the T Test for equality of means (**p**) is **0.058** for two samples. Therefore there is no significant difference in Transformational leadership between male and female managers even though female scored high in this leadership style.

Hypothesis one tests whether there is a significant difference between the Transformational Leadership style of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka. According to the results Hypothesis 01 has to be rejected.

Four factors are considered to measure the Transformational leadership. First factor is idealized influence. According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare factor, idealized influence between male and female, there was not a significant difference in the scores for female (M=2.917, SD=0.60) and male (M=2.75, SD=0.65) conditions;  $t(140) = 1.538$ , **p = 0.126**. Therefore both males and female administrators have no significant difference in confidence, power, focusing on ideals and ethics.

The second factor is inspirational motivation. This attribute of Transformational leadership focuses on how the leaders motivate their followers and how to communicate his vision to the followers. An Independent-samples

T-test conducted to compare Inspirational motivation between male and female administrators. According to the calculations, there was not a significant difference in the scores for Female (M=3.13, SD=0.495) and Male (M=3.09, SD=0.61) conditions;  $t(140) = 0.481$ ,  $p = 0.631$ .

The third factor considered for Transformational leadership is intellectual stimulation. According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare the factor intellectual stimulation between male and female, there was not a significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.18, SD=0.60) and male (M=2.97, SD=0.74) conditions;  $t(140) = 1.825$ ,  $p = 0.70$ . Therefore there is no significant difference between males and females on the ability of leader to direct followers to think creatively and solve problems in a different way

The fourth and final factor considered for Transformational leadership is individualized consideration. According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare factor Individualized consideration between male and female, there was a significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.26, SD=0.58) and male (M=3.01, SD=0.62) conditions;  $t(140) = 2.505$ ,  $p = 0.013$ .

This factor shows the ability to support and give attention to the needs of followers. The result of this factor claimed that female leaders consider more about their followers on an individual level and provide support when necessary.

*Table 1: Summary of the Group Statistics of the Factors effecting to Transformational leadership*

Group Statistics							
Factor	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-tailed)	Significant?
Idealized influence	Female	78	2.92	0.61	0.07	0.13	No
	Male	64	2.75	0.65	0.08		
Inspirational motivation	Female	78	3.13	0.49	0.06	0.63	No
	Male	64	3.09	0.61	0.08		
Intellectual stimulation	Female	78	3.18	0.60	0.07	0.70	No
	Male	64	2.97	0.75	0.09		
Individual consideration	Female	78	3.27	0.58	0.07	0.01	Yes
	Male	64	3.01	0.62	0.08		

According to the findings, females scored high in all the factors effecting to Transformational leadership but the only factor which has a significant difference between males and females is individual consideration.

Literature in this field claims different findings with regards to the Transformational leadership. Some researchers claim that female leaders are significantly more Transformational than male leaders while some of the past studies backed the findings of the study.

According to the creator of the full range leadership theory, women leaders can be more Transformational than male leaders (Bass, 1999). (Eagly & Johannesen-schmidt, 2001) also claimed that female managers are rated higher in all three leadership styles even though the Transformational leadership style is somewhat considered as a male stereotype leadership style.

However, some other researchers' studies are backing the finding of the study. According to Bruke and Colins, there is no significant difference in four factors in five factor Transformational leadership style (Burke & Collins, 2001). (Judeh, 2010) also claimed that there is no significant difference in Transformational leadership between male and female.

The same result were observed by a study conducted by (Bass, et al, 1996) using Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. They claimed that there is no difference in the Transformational leadership style in males and females. Influence and Style also claimed that there is no significant difference in Transformational leadership style between men and women in the study conducted in Sweden and China. (Influence & Styles, 2006).

However, Sebastian Bailey, a contributor of Forbes magazine suggested that the male managers claimed higher rating in self-rating studies as effective transformation leader while other rating systems claimed the opposite result. ("Who Makes A Better Leader: A Man Or A Woman? - Forbes," n.d.). Since the study was conducted using self-rating this factor might affect the results.

According to the theory, aligning the members towards the interests of an organization is a duty of Transformational leaders. This type of leaders inspire and intelligently motivate the followers. These leaders can be directive or participative. Because of the attributes they possess, Transformational leaders are considered as proactive and help followers achieve targets. Therefore this leadership style is considered as a most favourable leadership style for most of the situations. However the findings of the research indicated that there is no significant difference between male and females in the Transformational leadership.

## **8.2 Hypothesis 02**

Hypothesis two tests whether there is a significant difference between the Transactional Leadership style of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka.

According to the Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Transactional Leadership for between male and female there was a significant difference in the scores for Female (M=3.08, SD=0.45) and Male (M=2.87, SD=0.52) conditions;  $t(140) = 2.54$ ,  $p = 0.012$ . The results claimed that females have more transactional leadership qualities comparing to the males.

Two factors are considered to evaluate the transactional leadership of administrative staff. One is Management-by-exception, which is designed to find out whether the leader is always focused on the goals, and objectives are met and the leader intervenes only when a mistake happens.

There was no significant difference in the scores of the T-test conducted to compare Management-by-exception of males and females. Scores for female (M=2.89, SD=0.64) and Male (M=2.78, SD=0.59) conditions;  $t(140) = 1.072$ ,  $p = 0.286$ . The results showed both males and females focused on the goals and objectives and intervene when the followers are deviating from the original goals.

The other factor effect for transactional leadership is Contingent reward leadership which can be used to measure whether the leader provides material or psychological rewards to the followers who fulfil the tasks or obligations.

There was a significant difference in the scores of the T-test conducted to compare Contingent reward leadership of males and females. Scores for Female (M=3.301, SD=0.55) and Male (M=2.98, SD=0.70) conditions;  $t(140) = 3.000$ ,  $p = 0.003$  0.286. The results claimed that the female managers give rewards if the followers achieve target.

When it comes to transactional leadership, female administrative staff have more transactional leadership qualities compared to male administrators. However, both male and female managers give equal importance in achieving targets but female managers tend to give rewards to followers more than males.

Some literatures backs the findings of the study. Belasen and Franks (2008) claimed that female's strength of leadership styles mostly in the transactional leadership style by using the result of a study conducted among the senior staff on transactional leadership. The researchers suggested that women are not always willing to do Transformational activities such as nurturing and relationship building with their followers. (Belasen & Frank, 2008)

Jones & Rudd (2008) also reported that males scored higher in transactional leadership than females. They also claimed that male managers are more Transformational than female managers.

### **8.3 Hypothesis 03**

Hypothesis 01 tests whether there is a significant difference between the Laissez-faire Leadership style of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka. The hypothesis was tested using one factor. According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Laissez-faire leadership between male and female, there was no significant difference in the scores for female (M=1.15, SD=0.96) and male (M=1.24, SD=0.91) conditions;  $t(140) = -0.536$ ,  $p = 0.593$ .

However the result for laissez-faire leadership style of both male and female administrators are significantly low comparing to the other two leadership styles. This is a positive observation since this leadership is considered as the most passive leadership style of all the three leadership styles in the model. This type of leader does not like to use the authority. They do not involve themselves in making decisions. Basically this type of leader avoids taking actions. Male administrators showed higher mean comparing to the female administrators but the difference is not statistically significant. And the means are very low compared to the scores observed for the other leadership styles.

#### **8.4 Hypothesis 04**

Hypothesis 04 of the research is developed to test whether there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of male and female managers in government university administrative staff in the universities of Sri Lanka. The effectiveness of the leadership is measured quantitatively using Quinn's Competing Values Framework. According to the framework, managers should possess key competencies to play eight roles to be an effective manager. Effectiveness is measured using how often the administrators display those eight roles.

According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Effectiveness of the leader between male and female, there was no significant difference in the scores for female ( $M=3.05$ ,  $SD=0.45$ ) and male ( $M=2.94$ ,  $SD=0.48$ ) conditions;  $t(140) = 1.412$ ,  $p = 0.162$ . The results displayed that there is no difference in the effectiveness of both female and male administrators.

Literature in this variable also showed conflicts. Researchers such as Eagly & Johannesen claimed that female managers scored significantly higher in effectiveness than the male managers (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001)

However (Dawley et al., 2013) claimed that even the leadership styles of both male and female managers are different, the effectiveness of their leadership had no significant difference in each gender.

As claimed by (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014) the effectiveness of the managers also changed according to the type of review carried out by the researcher. According to some of the meta-data analysis conducted, men rated themselves higher in self-rating while other ratings suggested that women are more effective as leaders but they claim that there is no significant difference in gender ratings in combined studies.

Other than the main hypothesis, independent sample T-test was carried out to check whether there is a difference between each role in male and female administrators.

#### **Innovator Role of Administrators**

According to the results of the Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Innovator Role between males and females, there was no significant difference in the scores for Females ( $M=2.624$ ,  $SD=0.825$ ) and Males ( $M=2.697$ ,  $SD=0.719$ ) conditions;  $t(140) = -0.563$ ,  $p = 0.575$ .

To be an innovator in an organization a managers need to be able to live with change, think creatively and create changes in their organization. According to the results for the role both female and male have these qualities to the same level and the means of both females and males are high for this role.

#### **Broker Role of Administrators**

An Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare **Broker Role** between male and female. According to the calculations, there was no significant difference in the scores for Females ( $M=2.765$ ,  $SD=0.640$ ) and Males ( $M=2.697$ ,  $SD=0.627$ ) conditions;  $t(140) = 0.853$ ,  $p = 0.532$ .

According to the model, building and maintaining a power base, negotiating agreement and commitment and presenting ideas are the competencies that should be possessed by a manager to be an effective broker. Since there is no significant difference in the scores of males and females for this roles administrators of both genders should be equally effective and competent in this role.

### **Producer Role of Administrators**

According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Producer Role between males and females, there was no significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.256, SD=0.642) and male (M=3.099, SD=0.755) conditions;  $t(140) = 1.343$ ,  $p = 0.182$ .

Therefore both male and female administrators might equally work productively, foster a productive work environment and they could manage time and stress in the organization. However female managers have a slightly higher mean for this role.

### **Director Role of Administrators**

According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Director Role between males and females, there was no significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.333, SD=0.608) and male (M=3.161, SD=0.639 conditions;  $t(140) = 1.638$ ,  $p = 0.104$ . Visioning, planning and goal setting, designing and organising, the roles of male and female administrative staff do not have any difference according to the findings.

### **Coordinator Role of Administrators**

According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Coordinator Role between males and females, there was a significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.269, SD=0.753) and male (M=2.9583, SD=0.660 conditions;  $t(140) = 2.808$ ,  $p = 0.006$ .

According to the findings on this role, females can manage different projects in an organization better than males and also they are more competent in managing across various functions in an organization.

### **Monitor Role of Administrators**

This role demonstrates how effective managers are in monitoring and managing individual and organisational performance. The manager should be a good monitor to maintain the overall effectiveness of the people and organization. According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare the monitor role between males and females, there was no significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.153, SD=0.728) and male (M=3.015, SD=0.706 conditions;  $t(140) = 1.141$ ,  $p = 0.256$ .

### **Facilitator Role of Administrators**

According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Facilitator Role between males and females, there was a significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.107, SD=0.707) and male (M=2.802, SD=0.717 conditions;  $t(140) = 2.538$ ,  $p = 0.012$ .

The results indicate that female administrators are better than male administrators in team building, taking subordinates to decision making and conflict management in the workplace. The result can be accepted since female administrators scored significantly high in individualized consideration factor in leadership. That factor shows the ability to support and give attention to the needs of individual followers.

### Facilitator Role of Administrators

According to the results of Independent-samples T-test conducted to compare Mentor Role between males and females, there was no significant difference in the scores for female (M=3.261, SD=0.665) and male (M=3.125, SD=0.709) conditions;  $t(140) = 1.173$ ,  $p = 0.243$ . The results indicate that both male and female administrators are good facilitators.

### Result Summary of the effectiveness of managers

Table 2: Group Statistics of the Roles of an Effective Managers

Role	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Significant?
Innovator	Female	78	2.624	0.826	0.094	<b>0.575</b>	No
	Male	64	2.698	0.719	0.090		
Broker	Female	78	2.765	0.640	0.073	<b>0.532</b>	No
	Male	64	2.698	0.628	0.078		
Producer	Female	78	3.256	0.642	0.073	<b>0.182</b>	No
	Male	64	3.099	0.755	0.094		
Director	Female	78	3.333	0.608	0.069	<b>0.104</b>	No
	Male	64	3.161	0.640	0.080		
Coordinator	Female	78	3.269	0.654	0.074	<b>0.006</b>	Yes
	Male	64	2.958	0.660	0.083		
Monitor	Female	78	3.154	0.728	0.082	<b>0.256</b>	No
	Male	64	3.016	0.706	0.088		
Facilitator	Female	78	3.107	0.708	0.080	<b>0.012</b>	Yes
	Male	64	2.802	0.717	0.090		
Mentor	Female	78	3.261	0.666	0.075	<b>0.243</b>	No
	Male	64	3.125	0.709	0.089		

The result of this variable claimed that there is no statistically significant difference in the effectiveness of male and female administrative staff in the universities. However, female administrators scored significantly higher in two out of eight roles which are used to determine the effectiveness of the leaders. There was no significant difference between male and female administrators in the other six roles considered to measure the effectiveness.

The gender gap in management positions is reducing year by year because the number of female managers in the top and middle management level is increasing slowly. However, the number of women in the top management levels is very low. According to the International Labour Organization survey conducted in thirteen companies in 2013, only one women CEO was on active duty in Sri Lanka (Palacio, 2010).

## **9. Summary and Discussion**

Since gender plays a considerable role in leadership style, the influence of gender to the leadership style of managers has a significant influence on the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational decisions. There are plenty of studies done in this field in western countries but very few studies have been done in Asia. Since leadership roles of the leaders are developed based on various factors such as gender and cultural background of the manager, it is important to conduct a research in Sri Lanka rather than rely on the information provided by western researchers.

It is observed that the number of female managers is considerably low in the country even though the female population is larger than the male in Sri Lanka. (Eagly & Karau2002) proposes that two types of prejudice toward female leaders can be identified. Generally, prejudice arises from misconceptions formed by the way people view and define gender roles and characteristics in society. This gender stereotyping causes prejudice towards females and also creates barriers in career advancement of female managers worldwide. Also some other researchers such as Johnson et al.(2008) claim that current male and female leader stereotypes are associated with gender in evaluating leaders.

The study is designed to identify whether there is a significant difference in each leadership styles between male and female managers and also to determine whether there is a significant difference in effectiveness of the leadership in the two genders. The findings of past studies on this matter are not consistent. Several studies indicated that women are better in Transformational leadership styles more than men (Bass, 1999)(Eagly & Johannesen-schmidt, 2001). Others claimed that there is no gender difference in leadership style (Bass, et al, 1996), (Influence & Styles, 2006) and no difference in the general effectiveness of men and women as manager either (Eagly & Johannesen-schmidt, 2001), (Dawley et al., 2013), (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014)

The findings of the study claim that there are no significant difference in Transformational leadership between male and female managers. Females have scored high in all the factors affecting Transformational leadership. However, the only factor which has a significant difference between males and females is the individual consideration. Therefore the female managers care more about their individual subordinates compared to male managers.

When it comes to transactional leadership, female administrative staff have more transactional leadership qualities compared to male administrators. However both male and female managers give equal importance in achieving targets but female managers tend to give rewards to followers more than males. There was not a significant difference in the scores of male and female managers for Laissez-faire leadership. However both males and females scored low in this leadership style.

The effectiveness of male and female administrative staff in the universities is similar according to the findings. Eight leadership roles were considered to determine the effectiveness of a leader. Female

administrators scored higher in two out of eight of those roles. There was no significant difference between male and female administrators in other roles.

The results claim that there is no significant difference in Transformational and Laissez-faire leadership styles of male and female administrators in government university administrative staff of Sri Lanka. However female administrative staff have more Transactional leadership qualities comparing to male administrators. Other than that, there were no significant differences in the effectiveness of male and female administrators in government university administrative staff of Sri Lanka

The findings of the study pointed out that there is no scientific base to justify prejudice against female managers since there is no significant difference in male and female managers as a leaders. Female administrators even scored more in some attributes of leadership styles compared to their male peers. The effectiveness of the male and female managers is no different. Therefore both male and female managers should have equal opportunities to advance their careers in non-biased competitive corporate environment.

Transformational leadership is considered as the most effective leadership style for most scenarios since Transformational leaders inspire and intelligently motivate the followers (Bass, 1999). Since there is no significant difference in the male and female managers in this leadership style, prejudice against female leaders based on the traditional approach is baseless. Since female managers scored high in Transactional Leadership, they can be utilized more effectively in the fields which transactional leaders can achieve more results comparing to Transformational leaders.

### **9.1 Suggestions for Future Research**

This field of research is comparatively new. This research can be taken as foundation for further researches in the following areas:

Since the survey only focuses on administrators in the higher education sector, it is difficult to apply results to the entire population of Sri Lanka. The research needs to be extended to private sector organizations. Future researchers can compare the findings in private sector and public sector to provide better narration. Research in the private sector will provide a larger sample and it would give a more generalized result.

The data collection method for this study was through self-rating. However some researchers show that male managers rate themselves high in self-rating. Since this might affect self-rating, the same study can be conducted using both the self-rating and peer and subordinate rating. Since gender bias affect the results of peer and subordinate ratings, future researchers can compare results of peer rating and subordinate rating with self-rating to observe a better picture.

Another field that can be subjected to future research is to check whether there is a difference in the leadership of male and female in other leadership theories such as bureaucratic and autocratic leadership.

Also the research is conducted using quantitative techniques most of the time. Since some aspects of the leadership should be measured using qualitative methods, future studies can be done using both methods.

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