“An Analytical Study of Barriers for Women to become Leaders in Private and Public Sectors of Pakistan”

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ABSTRACT

During the last decade, we have started to see more women at mid-level management positions in Pakistan, however, the number of women holding leadership positions in public or private sector remains insignificant when compared to men. When explored, this is normally attributed to the individual, societal and organizational barriers that women face in Pakistan. This research attempted to validate and study these barriers in public and private sector organizations of Pakistan against the career opportunities that exist for women. The aim of this exploratory research was to study these barriers that impact women's career advancement towards leadership positions in public and private sectors and to finally conclude how, if, these barriers can be removed or bypassed by women to become leaders.

To carry out this research, detailed literature has been reviewed on related variables. A mixed research approach was used including, a quantitative survey conducted among 50 random managers from four different organizations and for qualitative data collection, interviews were conducted with four leaders. Data was sampled from both public and private sectors organizations in a ratio of 40 (Male):60 (Females). The data was analyzed based on the discussion points extracted from objectives and hypothesis of this research. The results exhibited that women have very few opportunities to grow into leadership positions in Pakistan. On top of that, our common family values actually add to the social, individual and organization barriers women face while in pursuit of leadership roles. Among these, societal barriers are most common in Pakistan. While comparing the two sectors studied, public sector has shown evidence to facilitate women more on the basis of their gender, however, at private sector the leaders are treated as professional rather on the basis of gender. Reluctance in hiring females was seen more in private sector of Pakistan, on the perception that women can't reliably handle work pressure along with family responsibilities. The research concludes that all barriers exists in Pakistan at different frequencies, but if a woman is determined, she can cut through these barriers. In the end

recommendations have been given for women and organizations that can help in creating equal opportunities for women career advancement into leadership roles.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”

Helen Keller

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DEDICATION

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