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Leadership skills of male and female students

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Abstract

The classic debate about leadership revolves around the question: “are leaders born or are they made?” (Avolio, 2005). Previously it was believed that leaders are born but now the current concern is ‘developing leadership’. Management courses believe that leadership is something that can be taught. Leadership is considered as a process rather than skill. These kinds of programmes tend to consist of a variety of practices that aim to facilitate leadership on a number of levels. It includes public speaking ability, management techniques, ability to process complex ideas, training, knowledge development, and capacity building. On the basis of random convenient sampling, the survey was conducted. A sample of 400 respondents was considered and study was conducted amongst the student in Delhi, Gurgaon and Ghaziabad. The sample was administered in person. A self-structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. The results clearly indicate that there is significant difference between male and female students for leadership skills.

Keywords: Leadership skills, Management courses, Process, Training.

Introduction

Leadership remains a complex issue that generates plenty of interest and discussions. Leadership can be defined as a process in which a person tries to influence a set of individuals in the pursuit of achieving individual, group and organizational objectives. Leadership is not confined to people who occupy top positions in organizations. Leadership is needed at all level of organization and can be displayed even by a person who has not been assigned a formal position in the organization. The ability to lead others is a rare quality. It is very difficult at senior position as it requires the interplay of lots of different skills. Leadership is one of the most important challenges facing corporate India and the problem becomes acute when we talk about the leadership quality in females. It seems that the training provided in business schools fall short of preparing individuals to face challenges later in the corporate world. This study is an attempt to find the gap of leadership skills amongst male students and female students.

Leadership and Leadership Skills

A leader works with others to make a difference. He exhibits positive energy, creates something of value that did not exist before and encourages change. Leaders have the quality of initiative integrity, intelligence and perceptive. A skill is an acquired talent that a person develops related to a specific task. Different leadership skills for which a leader can be trained are as follows:

- **Administrative Skills:** A good leader has the skill to organize the work more effectively and make high quality decisions. Administrative skills provide the ability to handle the difficult situations effectively.
- **Communication Skills:** One of the most important of leader is communication skills. When one communicates effectively; he/she can reach to everyone with ease. It also strengthens the capability of influencing and persuading others. Overall it develops good rapport with everyone.

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- **Interpersonal Skills:** It refers about the knowledge of human behavior. It includes empathy, charm, diplomacy and persuasiveness. The leader with high interpersonal skills are readily accepted by others.
- **Conceptual Skills:** It includes inductive and deductive reasoning, logical thinking and analytical ability.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to compare the leadership skills of male and female students.

HYPOTHESES

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in administrative skills between male and female students.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in communication skills between male and female students.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in interpersonal skills between male and female students.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference in conceptual skills between male and female students.

Research Methodology

A survey was conducted in Delhi, Gurgaon and Ghaziabad. The institutes which have post graduate courses in management programmes in these three regions constitute universe of the study. 18 institutes have been taken as per convenience by the researcher. Out of total 18 institutes a sample of 400 students was selected (200 were male and rest 200 were female students).A self-structured was developed to check the leadership skills learnt and also to compare the leadership skills amongst male and female students. Administrative, communication, interpersonal and conceptual skills were checked through the questionnaire given to the respondents.

Analysis and Interpretations

Table 1: Mean and SD of Male and Female students

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t value
Male	200	58.58	19.85	6.14
Female	200	46.15	20.42	

Table 2: Mean and SD of Male and Female students for Administrative Skills

Leadership skills	Male		Female		t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Administrative skills	15.10	5.08	11.90	5.15	6.28

Table 3: Mean and SD of Male and Female students for Communication Skills

Leadership skills	Male		Female		t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Communication Skills	15.07	5.10	11.65	5.14	6.67

Table 4: Mean and SD of Male and Female students for Interpersonal Skills

Leadership skills	Male		Female		t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Interpersonal Skills	14.40	5.28	11.45	5.45	5.45

Table 5: Mean and SD of Male and Female students for Conceptual Skills

Leadership skills	Male		Female		t value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Communication skills	14.28	5.86	11.20	5.85	5.28

Table 1 shows male have high mean value for leadership skills. Table 2,3,4,5 shows that the calculated 't' value is higher than the table value. There is significant difference between the male and female students on the basis of leadership skills. So our null hypotheses (H₀₁, H₀₂, H₀₃, H₀₄) are rejected and alternate hypotheses that there is significant difference between the male and female students for different leadership skills are accepted.

Conclusion

The above results revealed that there is gap between leadership skills between male and female students. Better grooming facility and exposure will provide a platform to excel in leadership skills. This will enable women to realize their full potentials. They will have greater ability to plan their career, life and greater control over circumstances.

Limitations of the Study

The sample elected for the study suffers from many constraints. Sample was selected at micro level. The selection of respondents was based on their willingness to participate and their convenience consequently resulted into constraints. Present study chooses only four factors for leadership skills; however, future researchers can consider the other dimensions. They can opt for more appropriate sampling techniques.

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