



Leadership Effectiveness And Gender

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents a theoretical framework on ever changing competitive dynamics of Indian General Insurance Industry. The insurance sector is highly concentrated with the large number of private and government insurance companies in India. The growth of the insurance sector in India has been phenomenal, offering a diversified product portfolio and excellent services. Many insurance companies in India have managed to make their way into almost every Indian household. The main theme of this paper is to expose the ever changing approach of General Insurance Industry in the era of LPG and especially after detariffing. Detariffing allows an industry to price its goods or services at market value, as regulation is discontinued to promote market equilibrium. Detariffication opened new ways for companies to be more efficient, refocusing again in the traditional insurance business basics and sound underwriting practices.

Introduction:

Leadership is —the process of influencing an organized group toward accomplishing its goals.”

-Roach & Behling, 1984

Leadership is a topic that comes up in most discussions at least weekly in our professional lives, yet this topic has been the dealt with mainly in terms of using male role models and studying field generals from past wars. This has left a void in the development of many potential senior female Govt, leaders, and thus the purpose of this paper, which is to examine the correlation between leadership effectiveness and gender, —fact or bias.”

Qualities of Effective Leaders:

There are certain basic qualities or characteristics that most people associate with leadership. Some of these include self-reliant, independent, assertive, risk taker, dominant, ambitious, and self-sufficient. Most people would agree that people whom posses these attributes are often labeled as —leaders.” Effective leadership can be categorized in the following way. An effective leader is someone who motivates a person or a group to accomplish more than they would have otherwise accomplished without that leader’s involvement. We can liken this to the sporting arena where a team is comprised of individual players; each with certain skills, but the team is honed into a finely tuned instrument by virtue of the coach orchestrating them into a cohesive unit. In this manner, and only with the proper motivation and care, will this group of individuals gel into a team and accomplish more together than they ever could on their own merits. With this framework set in place, one would argue that leadership effectiveness is not gender-specific, but there seem to be many attributes that are found in both males and females that lend themselves to becoming an effective leader.

After researching many references on this topic, and reading many of the empirical data available on leadership effectiveness and gender, one is left with the opinion that there is still ample opportunity for research and case studies in this area. We must come up with some definitive facts on the key ingredients of effective leadership and determine if gender plays a pivotal role in this.

This paper is limited by time and scope and does not pretend to be an all-encompassing review of leadership and gender

issues. It merely serves to bring to the fore some recent findings and some current articles concerning this topic as food for thought. There will be references to several studies and current findings as they were documented, and this paper will provide some interpretations of this data as it relates to the confines of this study. The goal of this paper is to stimulate the thinking of the reader as he/she participates in the Govt, forces in either the leader or the follower role, and to assist in clearing away some of the bias that still clouds the rise of females into top leadership roles.

Why does this matter?

At this point in the reading, one will wonder why this topic has been broached in an academic setting. One reason is that there needs to be a more equitable approach in the leadership training of our mid-level officers, we will continue to deprive our female officer role models they can look up to and identify with, as they climb the ladder of success. We must start looking at alternative models of leadership, and provide both our men and women with models of leadership that transcend gender.

There is a large body of evidence that firmly states that leadership is in large part, gender neutral, and today’s Govt, officers a vast array of opportunities for both men and women to seek and to excel in a myriad of leadership positions. Therefore, the goal of this paper is to open the door to alternative views on leadership effectiveness and gender. Hopefully, this will enable the reader to come away with a much broader vision of what Govt, leadership effectiveness is, and we can start to peel away the onion of bias still found throughout our Govt, environment regarding leadership and gender issues.

Leadership and Gender Perspectives:

Throughout history, many have come to believe that leadership is a traditionally masculine activity. Judith A. Kolb talked about this in her article when she stated that —Kanter observed that if women in organizations are to emerge as leaders, it is important that they be perceived as individuals who can influence or motivate others. A look at research on this dating back to the 1970’s indicated that there was a tremendous amount of gender bias regarding women’s achievements in the business sector. Research has demonstrated that there are far more similarities than differences in the leadership behaviors of women and men, and that they are equally effective.

Historical Conclusions:

In the above studies, the stage has been set for subsequent dialog by providing a quick glimpse of some of the more recent data on leadership emergence and gender. Although not even remotely exhaustive in nature, this does beg the question of looking at some modern leadership theories, while providing a foundation from which to look at the rest of the topics that will be presented as we delve further into this issue.

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