

CONGRUITY ANALYSIS ON GENDER AND LEADERSHIP ROLES AMONG COMMUNICATION MANAGERS IN JAKARTA

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Abstrak

Berdasarkan teori *role congruity* (Eagly & Karau, 2002), sebagian besar atribut karakteristik laki-laki dikategorikan sebagai *agentic*, seperti tegas, percaya diri, dan berkuasa; sementara sebagian besar atribut karakteristik perempuan adalah komunal, seperti menyenangkan orang lain, atraktif dan dapat dipercaya. Sifat *agentic* umumnya diartikan bahwa laki-laki lebih banyak memiliki sifat sebagai pemimpin, dibandingkan perempuan. Akibatnya, perempuan cenderung tidak diangkat sebagai pemimpin dibandingkan laki-laki karena stereotip laki-laki adalah sebagai pemimpin. Penelitian ini berusaha mengeksplorasi kepatuhan bawahan kepada atasan laki-laki atau perempuan. Wawancara mendalam dilakukan terhadap 40 manajer komunikasi di Jakarta. Hasil penelitian mengkonfirmasi teori dimana atribut sifat manajer laki-laki adalah *agentic*, dan atribut sifat manajer perempuan adalah komunal. Pada awalnya sebagian besar responden menyatakan bahwa mereka tidak memiliki preferensi manajer berdasarkan jenis kelamin, tapi hasil wawancara menunjukkan berbeda. Hasil penelitian dianalisa menggunakan teori *role congruity*. Penelitian ini dapat dijadikan dasar untuk penelitian lebih lanjut terkait ketimpangan tenaga kerja di Indonesia yang disebabkan perbedaan gender.

Kata Kunci: *role congruity*, kepemimpinan, perolehan kepatuhan, *agentic*, komunal.

Abstract

According to the role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), most characteristics attributed to men are categorized as *agentic*—assertive, confident, and powerful; while most characteristics attributed to women are communal—pleasant, likeable and trustworthy. However, *agentic* traits usually define leadership as men are viewed as having more leadership traits than women. Consequently, women are less likely to be approved as leaders compared to men because the male stereotype is more similar to the leader stereotype.. This research intends to find out the relationships of employees' compliance towards male and female boss. In-depth interviews are conducted to 40 communication managers in Jakarta. Results show that the traits attributed to male managers are indeed *agentic*, while the traits attributed to female managers are communal. Most respondents claim to not have a preference between female and male managers, but eventually contradict their answers throughout the interviews. Results were analyzed using the role congruity theory. This study serves as a foundation upon which much needed research on gender discrepancies in the Indonesian workforce can be built.

Keywords: *role congruity*, leadership, compliance gaining, *agentic*, communal.

Background

Communication management is often regarded as a female industry. Young women predominate the student body in communication courses at universities, and many women are setting up their own communication consultancies. The number of female practitioners in the industry has led to the notion that women are no longer experiencing gender discrimination in Indonesia. However, the feminization of any industry should be understood and monitored as it may be disguising gender inequity.

Grunig, Toth, and Hon (2001) confirmed the assumption that young women are considered attractive by employers because they are often a cheaper, more flexible, and less ambitious option, compared to confident and ambitious young men. The perception of women as possessing superior communication skills may, however, be an advantage for them, especially as communication fields become more “feminized” (van Zoonen, 1998; Wrigley, 2002). However, German professor Romy Fröhlich (2004, p. 67) calls the socialization of women into feminine role expectations a “friendliness trap,” in which the women’s demonstration of caring and intuitive communication skills opens doors to entry-level jobs (and may get them more substantive interviews with sources), but these attributes become disadvantageous when these women seek promotion because these same skills are associated with lack of assertiveness and weak leadership.

The persistent stereotype that associates managerial activities with stereotypically male qualities should be taken into account. The characteristics and behaviors linked to masculinity are considered necessary to achieve success in managerial positions. Consequently, female leaders continue to behave in accordance with the expected male behavior associated with professional success in leadership positions (Cuadrado, 2004). When doing this, women deny the desirable feminine behaviour for fear of being evaluated negatively and not get respect and compliance from their

subordinates, as the role incongruity theory by Eagly and Karau (2002) explains.

However, according to Eagly (2003), the current need for diverse settings have led to an increase in the number of women in leadership positions, and along that, and improvement in the evaluation of stereotypically feminine qualities (Barberá et al., 2005). These are important factors that will favor female presence in leadership positions. Therefore, such changes—though slow—in the content of gender stereotypes (Barberá & Ramos, 2004) and the decrease of incongruity between leadership roles and the feminine role drive organizations to be more receptive to female leaders.

So, do the women who make it to the top management level also have difficulties in gaining compliance from their subordinates because they are considered as weak leaders? Research into leadership based on gender difference, especially through the lens of the role congruity theory, could probably shed some light on the differences in compliance gaining among communications managers

Therefore, the researcher hypothesizes in accordance to the role congruity theory:

1. Female respondents would be associated to communal attributes, and male respondents would be associated to agentic attributes.
2. Female respondents who behave according to their communal roles are evaluated positively, and so are male respondents who behave according to their agentic roles.
3. Because communal roles are the opposite of the leadership roles expected by society, female leaders have more difficulties than male leaders in executing leadership.

Literature Review

Communication Management

Communication management deals with systematic **planning**, implementing, monitoring, and revising communication channels

within an organization and with other organizations. Thus, communication management is a managerial function that helps secure the long-term existence of an organization in the society (Dozier, 1988).

The fact that the goal of communication management is to reach a consensus and dialogue, and the preconceived notion that women are better communicators than men, makes female applicants traditionally be preferred at the entry level because of the very skills they have (Christmas, 1997). Ironically, these skills do not necessarily help women stay long or advance in their careers. Instead, the same attributes that get women into the communication industry – sensitivity, caring, honesty, fairness or morality – are also considered weaknesses when it comes to leadership skills because they exude a lack of assertiveness (Cline, 1989). This, as Fröhlich (2004) argues, will result in women falling into the “friendliness trap.” Feminist theory argues that the reason women do not possess sufficient organizational power is because of a ‘glass ceiling’ (Van Ruler & de Lange, 2002), which describes the more or less invisible mechanisms that prevent women from climbing to the top of the organizational ladder (Dozier, 1988). Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that although not in power, women do predominate the communication management industry in number.

Defining Leadership

Leadership, management, and administration are often defined in a mutually exclusive manner: Leadership is the process of externally conveying the visions and identity of the organization and the changes that occur; management explains these visions and identity internally; and administration is the science of developing standardized and routine practices that apply to all members of the organization (Buzzanell, 2000). The behaviors of leaders and managers are often portrayed as “a power game,” and the goal of the players and influencers is to control organizational decisions and actions (Buzzanell, 2000).

Many literatures have long argued that the nature of organizations is gendered, because not only do organizational structures emphasize the male ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, but they also degrade their female counterparts (Buzzanell, 1995). This is strengthened by a combination of social relationships and activities involving men and women, in which socially-imposed cultural stereotypes have been personally internalized (Buzzanell, 2000).

Leadership based on Gender Differences

Leadership based on gender differences emphasizes the differences between feminine and masculine stereotypical expectations. Because masculine traits are traditionally considered identical to leadership (i.e., being direct, assertive, commanding, and powerful), discussions about gendered leadership often portray feminine leadership as the opposite of what is regarded ideal. Thus, women who were in managerial positions were encouraged to adopt the direct and assertive masculine style (Harragan, 1977).

However, along with globalization, comes diversity that has made the business world more team-structured, and the feminine style previously judged as weak started to be viewed as an effective tool for reaching organizational goals. This feminine style includes such characteristics as display of support, prioritization of relationships, inclusivity, and orientation on details (Borisoff & Merrill, 1998).

Feminine leadership is portrayed as a communicative web (Helgesen, 1990). Within that web, leaders create structures in which aspects of work and life, spontaneity, emotion expression, and others are embedded. Instead of being at the top, leaders are at the heart of the activity, and these leaders ‘power’ is perceived as a result of their group connection and information sharing (Buzzanell, 2000).

Role Congruity Theory

One theory that aims to test the effect of gender differences on the effectiveness of

compliance gaining strategies (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995) is the role congruity theory, which builds on three key propositions.

First, the majority of beliefs about the sexes pertain to ‘communal’ and ‘agentic’ attributes:

“Communal characteristics, which are ascribed more strongly to women, describe primarily a concern with the welfare of other people – for example, affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, nurturing, and gentle. In contrast, agentic characteristics, which are ascribed more strongly to men, describe primarily an assertive, controlling, and confident tendency – for example, aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, self-sufficient, self-confident, and prone to act as a leader,” (Eagly & Karau, 2002: 574).

Second, in order to be effective in compliance gaining, the behavior of men and women must be in accordance with their gender roles. Thus, women using communal strategies are likely to be more successful in gaining compliance than women using agentic strategies, and the use of agentic strategies will be more disadvantageous for women than for men. It must be noted, however, that unlike other gender role theories, the role congruity theory only argues that behaviors that are accepted for a man may not be accepted for a woman. This theory does not make assumptions about gender differences in specific kinds of compliance gaining behaviors.

Third, women in leadership positions may find that their gender roles are likely to conflict with their managerial roles. If a woman has to use agentic strategies as a leader, she is likely to get negative reactions and noncompliance from her subordinates because of her ‘defiance’ against her expected gender role. Thus,

“women in managerial positions can avoid negative reactions associated with taking a masculine-oriented role by combining the assertive, confident, and decisive behaviors required in this role with a more communal or feminine style” (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Role congruity theory has been applied successfully to explain gender-related variations in the effectiveness of compliance gaining in organizational and experimental settings. Carli (2001) found that women have greater difficulty exerting influence than men do, particularly when the influence tactic they use conveys competence and authority – traits that are usually attributed to male interpersonal behavior. Consequently, women are less influential when the influence or communication strategy they use is perceived as dominant (Carli, 2001).

Because role incongruity is defined as a mismatch between the female gender role and the managerial or leadership role, the researcher suggests that role congruity theory can be extended to the context of communications management. More specifically, the researcher argues that working women, in this case female communications managers, experience incongruity on their gender role and their role as communications managers.

Working women using agentic compliance gaining strategies (e.g., forcing) enact the traditional agentic provider model, and will therefore be likely to elicit negative reactions and non-compliance from their male partners because by doing so they deviate from their communal gender role. Conversely, working women who instead use communal compliance gaining strategies (e.g., problem solving, accommodating) to resolve time allocation conflicts with their partner will be more successful in resolving the conflict to their advantage.

While research suggests that women tend to receive positive evaluations when their leadership roles are defined in feminine terms, on traditional, masculine measures of leadership women’s leadership effectiveness is

often perceived to be lower than that of men (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly et al., 1995). Moreover, attitudes in the workplace reveal that workers prefer male supervisors to female ones (e.g., Simon & Landis, 1989) and that many men and male managers remain unconvinced about the effectiveness of women leaders (Sczesny, 2003). These attitudes come from, and contribute to, what Schein (2001, p.675) refers to as a “think manager — think male” bias.

Women in Indonesia

The movements for the betterment of women’s role and status in Indonesia began long time ago. In each historical period—colonial, post-independence, New Order, and post-New Order—the women’s movement has revealed its own enthusiasm, whether the initiative has emerged from the people or from the government. The movement was founded by a spirit of struggle—against polygamy, and for the education of women. Since 1999, when the era of transition to democracy began, the main agenda has changed to empowering women to achieve gender equity and equality (Parawansa, 2002).

Indonesia’s history is marked by heroic battles and achievements of women leaders and tough queens renowned for their wisdom, including Tri Buana Tungga Dewi; and a few well known women who participated actively in the fight against colonialism, among them Cut Nyak Dien, Cut Mutiah, and Nyi Ageng Serang (Parawansa, 2002). Their efforts have enhanced the quality of Indonesian women’s lives and opened doors for women in the public field. Non-government organizations (NGOs) play an important role in the advancement of women, and the number of NGOs representing women’s interests and demands significantly increased, reaching more women than ever before, and touching on a much broader array of issues. Most NGOs concentrate on a specific issue, such as protection of women’s rights, elimination of violence against women, provision of crisis and trauma centers, assisting women migrant workers or lobbying for political and legislative

change (Hermawati, 2001). This is also due to the post-New Order freedom of speech, especially in urban areas.

However, in the social system of Indonesia with its strong patriarchal values, women, who comprise half of the Indonesian population, bear the heaviest burden, having to struggle enormously in facing poverty, violence, and injustice. Political and economic discourse often put aside women’s concerns because these problems are considered exclusively females’ problems, irrelevant to the developing political context. The government and the community commonly ignore women as political and economic agents in the Indonesian system. Consequently, improvement of women’s living conditions is somewhat slow compared with that of the other community members (Zulminarni, 2001). For instance, sentence for a rapist, tend to be minimal, and there is no law on witness protection in rape cases.

In the health sector, even though the number has been decreasing from year to year, the maternal mortality rate is still relatively high and the worst in Southeast Asia, with a 228 deaths per 100,000 live births ratio. Most of the time, the death is due to pregnancy problems such as bleeding, poisoning, and infection. Poverty has prevented pregnant women from access to health services, and has caused malnutrition (Departemen Kesehatan, 2008). This condition is preceded by a level of infant mortality rate that also remains high, with 20 per 1000 births (Departemen Kesehatan, 2008). Abortion is legally restricted in Indonesia and only allowed to save a mother’s life. Still, a large percentage of maternal deaths are linked to unsafe abortions (Arivia, 2006).

In 1999 the State Ministry for the Role of Women changed its name to State Ministry for Women’s Empowerment, with a renewed resolution to achieve more just treatment for women in the family, society, and nation. The ministry faces such obstacles as patriarchal social values embedded in such legislation as the Marriage Law, Law on Citizenship, and Law on Population, particularly in the national family

planning program (Hermawati, 2001). The 1974 marriage law, for instance, permits men to commit polygamy but not women, in the case of a wife's infertility or inability to perform her 'wifely duties,' and also allows 16-year old girls to marry, even though in other statutes, they are still considered to be children. The regional autonomy policy also created discriminative regulations against women, such as the 2005 regulation in Tangerang, Banten, which stipulates that any woman seen alone in public after 7 PM could be considered a prostitute and thus be arrested, as well as the various regional laws, such as the one in Malang, which requires women to obtain permission from their husbands to work at night (Hermawati, 2001).

Such patriarchal values are also evident in the bureaucratic structure, both civil and military. Women hold only 7 percent of executive positions in the civil service - echelons I and II- and there are very few high-ranking women in the military. Women's leadership in political parties comprises only 12.5 percent in the 2004 elections. In politics, women's representation stands at 11.09 percent in the House of Representatives, and 8.5 percent in the National Parliament (Soetjipto, 2004). There is no woman appointed as chair or vice chair in any of the religious appellate courts. This is especially disadvantageous for Muslim women, because many legal disputes concerning women and children such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance rights are resolved via religious courts. For Indonesian citizens of other religions, it is the general civil court that resolves such matters (Soetjipto, 2004).

In times of economic distress, girls, not boys, would usually be taken out of school by their parents because girls are responsible for the household duties in the case that their mothers must work outside the house. In some areas in Indonesia such as Pulau Buru, sexist traditions still play a major role in society. Common practices among the indigenous people include *kawin piara*, where daughters as young as eight years old are married to older

men. Young girls basically are treated as commodities (Arivia, 2006).

Method

This study used a qualitative exploratory approach, using in-depth interviews. Prospective respondents were gathered from the Public Relations and Communicators Directory 2005, and 2006-2007 published by Public Relations Society of Indonesia (PRSI).

At the end, In-depth interviews were conducted to 30 female and 10 male communication practitioners and educators in Jakarta area. These participants come from a variety of industries: Media, agencies, government, education, and corporations, including banks, fast moving consumer goods, transportation, gas and oil, property, hotels, and insurance companies. Nevertheless, these fields often overlap. It is hard to determine every respondent's specific field since one, for instance, may currently work in an agency, but has also had extensive in-house experience. Or, some respondents who work at an agency also teach communication at a university. However, the difference in the positions, years of experience, and levels of education were fairly balanced in order to reduce bias as much as possible.

All in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face by the researcher and were audio taped for later transcription. The interviews lasted an average of 50 minutes. The interview questions covered factors related to the role congruity theory. The researcher also wanted to know whether female communication managers experienced gender-based disadvantages, such as lack of power and influence and decline in status and remuneration.

The audio data were compared with field notes to highlight aspects that had special relevance to the participants, which the researcher perceived, based on emphases made during the interviews. The annotated transcriptions with marginal notes and questions were provided to each of the participants for

clarification. The revised transcriptions with clarifying comments were then compiled for the second phase of the data analysis—interpretation analysis.

In the interpretive analysis, transcriptions based upon in-depth interviews were examined, and notes were made in the margins where the researcher had questions about comments made by participants that may require clarification. The edited transcripts were then used as the basis for contact summary sheets, which facilitated identifying key themes.

Results and Discussion

First, role congruity theory assumes that most of the beliefs regarding the sexes relate to 'communal' and 'agentic' attributes. Respondents in this study also attributed communal characteristics to female leaders and agentic characteristics to male leaders. When asked about whether they thought male and female managers have different leadership styles, the following were the most common traits attributed to male managers: Realistic, rational, well-organized and structured, better strategic thinkers, straightforward, objective, quick and brave decision makers, wise, objective, and view things from 'the bigger picture'.

On the other hand, the most common traits attributed to female managers were as follows: Understanding, emotional, takes things personally, intuitive, empathetic, more communicative, open and personable, subjective, honest, firm, honest, motherly, and have a higher level of tolerance. As one female communications analyst from a major telecommunication company put it:

"In general, women lead more emotionally. From my observation, female supervisors often mix their emotions with rationality and often make decisions based on subjectivity, not objectivity. Whereas male supervisors tend to be more rational and objective".

Second, it argues that in order to gain compliance, men and women should behave according to their gender roles. Therefore, a woman would be more successful in gaining compliance if she used communal strategies, whereas the use of agentic strategies will be more disadvantageous for women than for men. One female communications manager in this study attempts to make it in the top level by joining the 'boys club' and blending in with the journalists, who are mostly men, and meeting them late at night over coffee and cigarettes. As a manager, she also leads using agentic characteristics, which she claimed is to gain respect – most of the other managers in her workplace are male. She said that she gained a lot of respect from her subordinates and journalists. Ironically, she also said that she has not received a promotion in more than a decade. It seems that she was successful in gaining compliance from the subordinates, but not from her superiors.

Third, for women in leadership positions, their gender role is likely to clash with their managerial role, to the extent that the managerial role of women have to fill is agentic, but they are likely to draw negative reactions and noncompliance from others because they deviate from their expected gender role. In an interview with a male communications manager of a foreign automobile company, the respondent said:

"The top management should be a man...because as far as I've observed, it's always been a man. I've never seen a woman on top, so I can't compare, I can't learn from that. But why mess with perfection if the men are already doing a good job? I think this is the best way, because communications and top management are different. The top management has to deal with others, not just communications...especially in this company; we have many technical issues because we're in the

automobile industry. If we were talking about the perfume industry, maybe it would be different, there should be more ladies there, or in cosmetics and so on. But this is a car company, with many technical issues and instruments and where many men work. The top management has to be quick in making rational decisions, women are too emotional”.

Another male respondent, a government officer agreed,

“Where I work, communications management work under pressure, all the time, and we are required to remain rational, especially if you’re a leader. A communications manager, once he’s not rational, it’s hard, it will affect everything else. And the fact is, the women in our workplace have never been able to do that. Because I have had female bosses. They just can’t stay rational!”

The researcher finds it almost ridiculous that men find women incapable of remaining rational, and thus cannot possibly be good leaders. Yet, this perception may very likely be one of the reasons female leaders in Indonesia are often underestimated.

However, all except for one respondent claimed that they do not have a preference between female and male managers, saying that these differences only lie in their leadership approaches. They claim to value their leaders regardless of their gender, and they do not hesitate to comply with female leaders. When it comes to their ability to leader, female and male managers are considered equally capable by all but one respondent.

Therefore, it is not confirmed that women in leadership positions who adopt stereotypically masculine ways are less favorably evaluated than men (Eagly & Karau,

2002). Like in other studies, the assumption on which the role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders is based is not confirmed (e.g., Davis, 2004; Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005; van Engen et al., 2001; Rojahn & Willemsen, 1994). What can be the explanation of these results?

It could be that the respondents did not want to offend the researcher because the researcher is a woman. Therefore, their responses regarding their preference of the leaders’ gender contradict their previous answers, which seem to underestimate the competence of female leaders. Or, it could also be what Dozier and Broom (1995) have long argued: “Our presumption is that healthy humans and competent managers are highly androgynous, possessing attributes stereotypically associated with both men and women. We view with skepticism any scholarship that traffics in gender stereotypes” (p. 20).

In short, respondents claim that female leaders do not necessarily receive less favorable evaluations than males when they adopt stereotypically masculine styles (i.e., autocratic), nor is there a biased tendency in men to favor leaders of their own sex, as Eagly et al. (1995) found in their meta-analyses. In view of these results, one could wonder why women are not sufficiently represented in leadership roles. In other words, the scarcity of women in these positions is difficult to understand if, as revealed by the result of this study and other works (Barberá & Ramos, 2004), the adoption of stereotypically feminine styles is more highly valued than masculine styles and more congruent with current organizational demands.

In this discussion, some suggested that an androgynous communications manager would be ideal,

“In my observation, the higher the position, the more the practitioners are expected to have masculine traits, because the position requires that person to act independent in making strategic decisions... Women

Table 1. Role Congruity Theory on Gender and Leadership Role among Communication Managers in Jakarta

Role Congruity Theory	
Propositions:	Research Findings:
1. Most of the beliefs regarding the sexes relate to 'communal' and 'agentic' attributes.	1. Most common traits attributed to male managers: Realistic, rational, well-organized and structured, better strategic thinkers, straightforward, objective, quick and brave decision makers, wise, objective, and view things from 'the bigger picture'.
2. In order to gain compliance, men and women should behave according to their gender roles.	2. Most common traits attributed to female managers: Understanding, emotional, takes things personally, intuitive, empathetic, more communicative, open and personable, subjective, honest, firm, honest, motherly, and have a higher level of tolerance. Female leaders who use agentic style find it easier to gain compliance from the subordinates, but not respect from the superiors, e.g. no promotion in over a decade.
3. For women in leadership positions, their gender role is likely to clash with their managerial role, to the extent that the managerial role of women have to fill is agentic, but they are likely to draw negative reactions and noncompliance from others because they deviate from their expected gender role.	1. Female leaders use agentic style to gain support. 2. Still, most male respondents find women incapable of remaining rational, and thus cannot possibly be good leaders.

Source: Author's analysis

who are feminine tend to be weak and are easily wooed. Men who are very macho, tend to have a short temper. Women who are aggressive intimidate clients. So it seems that the best practitioners are women who are masculine, and men who are feminine. Because you need to keep smiling even in times of crises. In the meantime, women have to be tough figures, not weak and feminine figures who usually move really slow, and cry in times of crises".

Indeed, this blended management approach is often viewed as ideal.

Biological sex has a major influence on the communication between men and women. Nevertheless, Gould (1972) shows that biology is not destiny, and that even though a person's sex cannot be easily changed, but a person's concept of gender is much more open to change and development.

Some people are even more comfortable claiming themselves as androgynous, meaning that they have a mix of traits typically associated with one sex or the other. *Androgyny* is derived from the Greek *andros*, meaning man; and *gyne*, meaning woman, and the term was made popular by gender scholar Sandra Bem (1974). Androgynous women are not necessarily masculine or sexless; similarly, androgynous men are not necessarily effeminate, gay, or

asexual. This kind of gender identity merely involves a combination of sex-associated traits, instead of only those traits linked with femininity or masculinity (Lippa, 2002). Such identity also apply to leadership, as evidenced by the respondents from the interviews, who claim that they prefer leaders who possess both feminine and masculine

However, what often happens is that human find comfort in being able to expect and predict how others will behave, hence making these expectations and predictions powerful motivators in human communication. On the basis of their past and ever-expanding experiences, people strive to anticipate a situation, predict how certain behaviors will lead to certain reactions from others, act accordingly, and reap rewards from the situation. Such expectations and predictions often lead to stereotypes.

Conclusion

The researcher feels that organizations should take into account the contributions and the value of feminine styles, instead of blocking women's access to traditionally masculinized settings. Likewise, they should consider the importance of the feminine styles when training managerial skills. It is very likely that these aspects, together with the growing access of women to leadership positions—which will gradually modify the content of gender stereotypes—will prevent the devaluation of female leaders and allow egalitarian access of men and women to positions of responsibility. Not only women, but also organizations and society in general can achieve important benefits.

Findings from this research show that the traits attributed to male managers were: realistic, rational, well-organized and structured, better strategic thinkers, straightforward, objective, quick and brave decision makers, wise, and only looks at the big picture, while the traits attributed to female managers are as follows: detail-oriented, understanding, emotional, take things

personally, intuitive, empathetic, more communicative, open and personable, subjective, honest, firm, honest, motherly, and have a higher level of tolerance. Most respondents, however, claim to not have a preference between female and male managers.

The researcher believes there are differences between men and women, not only based on biological traits, but also on gender role orientations that predict behavior. However, the researcher also believes that societal stereotypes have fostered far more differences. Women have attributes and abilities that help their organizations, just as men do. Nevertheless, perhaps more importantly, there is more variation within than there is between men and women. Women have been confined to specific traits and expectations. And while one sign of progress in achieving gender equity is the fact that increasingly more women are holding managerial positions, the fact that female leaders may have more difficulties than their male counterparts in gaining compliance from their subordinates is another obstacle that the society must still deal with.

In order to bridge the gender gap organizations must embrace female leadership and recognize that it is different. Female leadership means shared decision-making, employee relationships and empowerment, and building teamwork. This leadership style may result more beneficial in transforming the corporate environment, and confirming that women are an integral part of an organization's success.

Because of the gender-role expectations that women communicate better, young women increasingly choose this profession because it is considered appropriate for their sex. However, as a consequence, the same gender-based expectations may also trigger a corresponding demand by employers, which in turn reinforces these supposed gender-specific expectations. And because the gender-role expectations for women are not consistent with the gender-role expectations for leaders, women do not have the

same chances as men in communication management. In other words, what is supposed to be their career advantage as the better communicators does not seem to help.

Research into sex roles could shed some light on the reasons men and women operate at certain levels within the communication management industry. It remains to be further analyzed whether either gender is actually predetermined to a specific role or whether in fact, men and women just select the roles that best suit their so-called 'natural' gender skills and competencies.

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