

International Conference
on
Women's Empowerment, Laws, Feminism,
Gender Discrimination, Gender Space and
Women's Leadership: Issues and
Challenges in 21st Century
(Naareevaad - 2019)

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AN EXPLORATION OF LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN BILASPUR DISTRICT OF CHHATTISGARH STATE

Dr. Jyoti Verma

*Assistant Professor, Department of Education
Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (A Central University),
Bilaspur – 495009
E-mail: jyotiverma2010ggv@rediffmail.com*

Abstract—Women are under-represented in school leadership positions and most of the time they are under-estimated or misrecognize as a school leader. As a teacher, they are accepted but when coming to school leadership positions they are leverage for the selection. The under-representation of women in educational management and leadership is not only experienced in India, but many other countries in the world too. Thus, the present study was tried to identify and explore the leadership barriers faced by women secondary school principals in Bilaspur District of Chhattisgarh state. A semi structured-interview schedule, which was prepared by the researcher and it, was ten women secondary school principals of the Bilaspur District of Chhattisgarh State. The respondents were selected through convenient sampling method. Qualitative data analysis methods were employed in order to turn up at the results. The finding of this exploratory study suggests that, even though the number of women in leadership roles is growing, leadership is still identified with men. All woman principals who were participated in the study posit that the balance between work and family life was an important task for them. Some of them also posit that they continue to face caste-discrimination, exclusion from the male staff members' specially senior teachers, lack of support from their staff members, negative attitude towards women, few role models for them, and lack of professional network, scarcity of training opportunities and support services. However, all of these women principals took advantage of every opportunity to prove their capabilities as leaders who deserve to serve effectively besides men principals.

Introduction:

"Teaching is a good job for a woman but a career with prospects for men".

—H. Burgess (1989, p. 90)

In the world of education, where women tend to numerically predominate, it is easy to assume that their representations in educational leadership need to be more on above. However, findings from research related to women in educational leadership shows that this is far from the case, and the identification of leadership with men and a male stereotype of

leadership in education, as elsewhere, is still the underlying norm [12]. Many studies ([1] [2][5] [12] [22] [24] [26]), confirm this fact and found that in the school context where the majority of principals are male and very few are women. This gender disparity in educational management and leadership is not only experienced in India, but in many other countries too. Hence, many researchers ([1] [3] [5] [10] [18] [21] [24]) have attempted to find some explanation for nonparticipation of women in elite leadership positions, usually by focusing on the obstacles women face attempting to obtain a positions of power and influence and the literature review reveals several different obstacles for women's lack of success in entering elite leadership positions. N. Mithali also written in her book entitled "women in school leadership" that 'in India women are under-represented in school leadership positions and most of the time they are under-estimated of misrecognize as a school leader [21]. As a teacher, they are accepted but when coming to school leadership positions they are leverage for the selection'. Thus, we know about women in leadership roles, how they obtain their positions, and how they have become successful, the greater the likelihood of increasing the numbers in the field. Hence it is suggested that 'there is a growing need for research on women in educational leadership in developing countries and there is little literature available in India who explores the gender perspective in educational administration functioning in educational organizations' [22]. Hence, it is worthwhile that examining traditional definitions of leadership, women's experience in leadership positions and their leadership functioning are important to understand in the scenario of modern educational reforms. Special attention to women's leadership experiences in leadership was considered by many researchers worldwide. However, there is a dearth of Indian studies, in this regard. Thus, the present study was tried to identify and explore the leadership barriers faced by women secondary school principals in Bilaspur District of Chhattisgarh state.