# Women Executives and C-Suite

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**Abstract:** *Corporate India is still struggling to bring women to the top, currently at only 3%. It has been observed that the status of women in paid employment is improving gradually from the past few years in India but at the same time progression of women in a position of leadership is not growing at the same pace. Women are finding it very difficult to hold their executive leadership position in such a male dominant society where the environment is highly dominated by women. However, women who are holding strong executive positions are contributing to the effective achievement of organizational objectives. Many organizations are adopting the strategies for the facilitation of gender diversity that is contributing towards the economic growth and broader performance of women. This is also helping business organizations to retain the quality of women managers in the company and effectively optimizing the available women resources in an organization. In a highly competitive world, the C-suite level is the new path for the career developers who are seeking to develop strong career growth. Women are also reaching this high level of C-suite by performing the roles of leaders and playing the role of COOs, CFOs, CMOs, CIOs, if women in the pipeline do not increase we will never find enough CEO material at the top. The leadership behaviors of women executives believed essential to their success in an executive level position are: develop self-awareness, get results, value relationships, recognize and reward performance, foster collaboration, take risks, be resilient, learn to assimilate, value lifelong learning, and find balance. Women are gradually reaching this level of C-suite executive irrespective of the gender disparity present in the society.*

*The paper includes the societal impact over the influence of the status of women in the society. The paper focuses the way in which due to male-dominating society, the status of women is not able to come up. The critical analysis of the paper states that there are many people in the society who are jealous of the high positions and status of the women. These people restrict women from taking challenging positions in the industry. Multiple barriers*

*are stopping women to reach and perform the role of elite leadership in the business industry and society. The status of women in leadership is strongly affected by the underrepresentation of women in leadership. This underrepresentation is prevailing from multiple reasons like gender disparity, structural barriers, attitudinal barriers, double bind and the most challenging maintaining work life balance. The total sample taken for the research analysis is 200 using the random sampling method.*

**Keywords:** *Women Underrepresentation, leadership behavior, double bind, women executives*

**Introduction**

In today's global era, much technological and human advancement is taking place across the world. This has allowed people both male and female to contribute to the growing sector. Female is considered as good leaders in comparison to males (Harvard Business Review, 2020). This has led to an increase in the number of working women at a global rate. In context to this, there are many places in India where women are still dominated and taken for consideration. Women executives are on one hand growing at large scale but still, they are struggling to show their capabilities and gain high-level posts in the businesses. Women are considered for low- level jobs or household chores in India (Stead, 2017).

**Problem Statement**

The main problem of the research topic is the issues that women face to gain high-level posts or become c-suite executives. These issues have affected the motivational level and morale of the women and have forced them to withdraw their positions from the businesses. Few males provide better opportunities to women executives and try to work hand in hand. On the other hand, few male employees find it a matter of shame to work under women executives or work with them in the same field. They find themselves more superior and consider them more intelligent than women employees. The women of India are hardworking and always ready to take care of their work whether corporate job or household work. They have proved themselves as best house-makers as well as performing the role COOs, CFOs, CMOs, CIOs, CEOs in the corporate world (Harvard Business Review, 2020).

**Objectives : The main objectives of the study are discussed below:**

- To identify the number of women executives at C-suite level.
- To determine the main issues faced by women at the c-suite level.

**Literature View**

As per Gay (2016), women are growing across the world but discrimination can be seen at any point in time. Male employees may resist working with female employees or feeling de- motivated to see women as managers or executive officers. This problem is occurring because of the gender disparity prevailing in the society. Women have to suffer a lot as they have to leave their jobs because of marriage, household work, and family responsibilities and to take care of children. It becomes difficult for them to divide their time equally between family and work. Moreover, there is a stereotype that women cannot handle work pressure. Many women find it unsafe to work in night shifts that restrict them to take new opportunities.

As mentioned by Neumeyer, et al. (2019), society is also impartial towards female workers as they consider male as business executives and female as homemakers. It can be critically analyzed that the society is the male dominating society, which restricts many women from going out of home and work in the corporate field. This discrimination is seen from years but the time is changing and in the coming year's women will come up as executives and entrepreneurs.

In the views of Welsh, et al. (2016), it is necessary to provide knowledge to people and motivate male employees to accept women as their seniors. Women are good risk-takers and managers, which forces them to provide a safe and comfortable environment where they can work safely day and night without any problem. They should be provided with proper surroundings, working environment, facilities such as clean toilets, maternity leaves, breaks, and facilities of a comfortable dress code. In context to this, male employees should be provided with training and seminars where they can get the opportunity to work with female employees and understand them. For example, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairperson at leading biotech firm Biocon, Mary Barra (CEO - General Motors), Shikha Sharma (CEO - Axis bank), Mallika Srinivasan (CEO - Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited), Ekta Kapoor (CEO -Balaji productions) and many more. Women in corporate need more mentors, both female and male mentors as it gives a perspective and sponsorship to extent needed.

**Research Methodology**

Materials and Methods:

Both primary and secondary types of data collection methods are used. The primary method focuses on the use of survey methods and secondary focuses overuse of journals, scholarly articles, books and online links (Quagrainie, 2016).

Under the survey method, the data is filled in the form of a questionnaire containing all important topics and questions related to the research topic. The scale is used where the ratings from 1 to 5 are provided. The highest one scores the 5 rating and lowest ones score the 1 rating. It will help to determine the status of women in India which is between the 1 to 3 ratings in the scale.

**Research Design**

Exploratory research design is used as it will help to fulfill the research gap. It will help to conduct in-depth analysis of the research. It will move from general to specific theme. The sample size is 200 where women executives in companies fill the questionnaire across India. This is the best in the process of data collection. These women will be from age group of 20 years to 50 years. They will help to provide correct information and make the research process meaningful. No discrimination will be made in the selection process of the women participants.

**Data analysis and interpretation**

The respondents are chosen with the help of a random sampling technique where randomly they are given a questionnaire to be filed. The data is analyzed with the help of a graphical representation method where graphs are presented to show the data collected.

**Women Executives at C-Suite**

The leadership behaviors of women executives believed essential to their success in an executive level position are develop self-awareness, get results, value relationships, recognize and reward performance, foster collaboration, take risks, be resilient, learn to assimilate, value lifelong learning, and find balance.

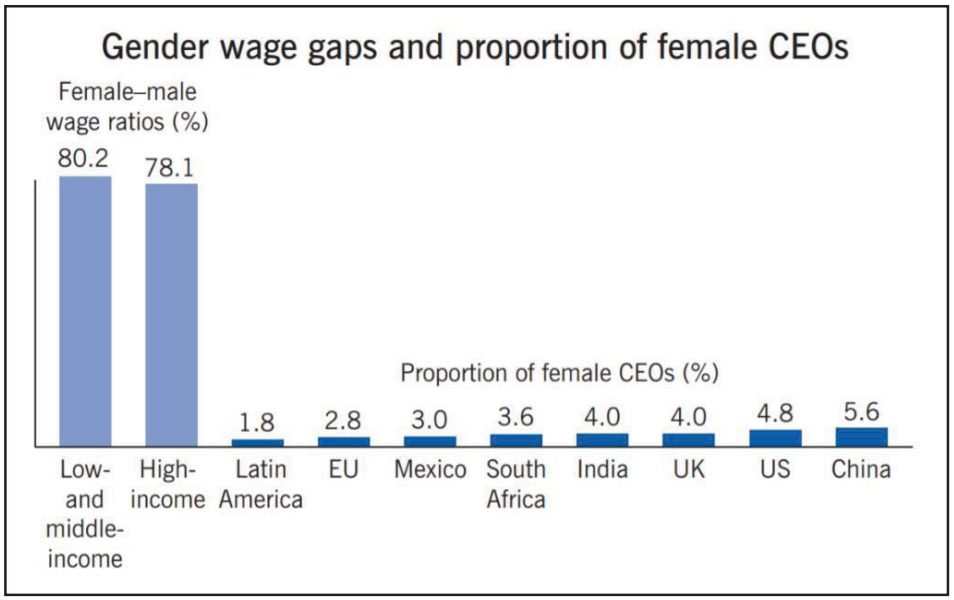
The hindering factors affecting the women executives are gender disparity, structural barriers, attitudinal barriers, double bind and the most challenging maintaining work life balance. The women is the one to suffer in their professional lives as males do not take responsibility for family and do not leave their jobs in case of marriage and birth of a child. Women have to leave jobs if their husbands are transferred to a different city or any other issue. Working makes a woman strong, confident and financially independent. It gives the family financial security when both the family members are earning (Parihar, et al., 2016).

**Results**

The results show that women are not given equal opportunities in the corporate world as compared to male employees, as shown in figure 1. They are often

discriminated against and always made insecure about their jobs. At the time of recession or lay off, the top-level choose to lay off their female staff more comparing to male as they find the latter could be rotated at other positions or places.

***Figure 1: Gender wage gaps***




*Source: www.wol.iza.org*

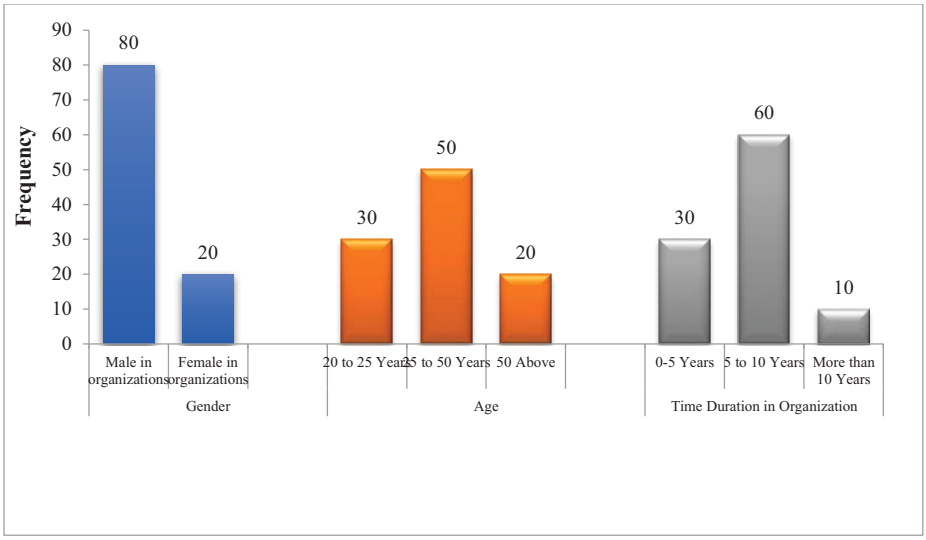
Table1 shows the demography of the data collected and it denotes how the number of female decreases over the period.

***Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents***

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | |
| Male in organizations | 80 | 80% |
| Female in organizations | 20 | 20% |
| **Age** | | |
| 20 to 25 Years | 30 | 30% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 25 to 50 Years | 50 | 50% |
| 50 Above | 20 | 20% |
| **Time Duration in Organization** | | |
| 0-5 Years | 30 | 30% |
| 5 to 10 Years | 60 | 60% |
| More than 10 Years | 10 | 10% |

*Figure 2: Bar graph of Demographic Profile of Respondents*




## Conclusion

It can be concluded that female employees should be given equal powers and duties. They should not be neglected in terms of salaries and working opportunities. The salary of a female employee is forced to be less from male employees doing the same task to make the male employee satisfied and happy. Organizations need to appoint more women at superior positions and make sure that they are satisfied. A satisfied women employee is always happy to take care of work at home and office. The female employees if given proper opportunities prove to be the best employees. They have the best management skills, which they apply to balance their lives. The harassment of women in the working environment may force them to give up their jobs and sit at home. This minimizes

the productivity of the country as a country will be developed when all the people will work together to attain global goals.

**Limitations of this research**

The main limitations of the research work are that the interview method is not selected where a detailed analysis of the questions and research topic can be done. The questionnaire contains just yes or no or objective type of questions but a detailed study is to be conducted with the use of the interview method and a detailed questionnaire using statistical analysis.

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