WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract
Indian higher education sector has witnessed a phenomenal growth in enrolment of women students. However the similar increment has not been observed in case of women working at top level of academia. Senior positions in higher education are still seen as the preserve of men.The present paper attempts to understand the position of women in Indian higher education sector discusses barriers to their advancement in leadership. It reviews measures undertaken to change power structure. It also recommends strategies for creating fair environment to address current gender deficit in senor leadership. Various barriers have emerged such as gender stereotyping, work-life balance, lack of transparency in recruitment, mobility, lack of networking, lack of role model, fear of inability incoming with unionization and litigation and absence of women- friendly policies and legislation. Gender sensitization, transparency in the appointment process, provision of legislative and infra-structure support and investment in women's capacity-building programs are few measures which can help ensure better opportunities and more representative leadership of women in the higher education sector.

Key Words: Higher Education, Women Leaders.

Introduction
Women's near absence in leadership positions across the board is reality. In-spite of advances which women have made in many areas, their participation at decision-making levels is dismally low. In the higher education (HE) sector, too, they are almost invisible at the top all over the world. Though large number of women chooses teaching as their profession, most of them are at the bottom of the hierarchy. It is obvious that they are under-represented in key decision-making bodies, including committees, boards and recruitment panels.

In India, HE sector has witnessed the dramatic increase in the enrolment of women students since independence. The share of women enrolment which was less than 10% of the total enrolment on the eve of independence has been increased to 45%. However, this increment has not been matched by growth in the number of women in senior leadership roles in universities and colleges.Grossly under-represented; there are very few women at top levels such as Vice Chancellor/Director of Public Instruction/Principal/Dean. Though there are sufficient numbers of qualified and capable women to take up leadership in higher educational institutions, they stagnate and remain relatively disadvantaged when it comes to leadership positions. Consequently, while women are beginning to 'break the glass ceiling' in all sectors of industry, leadership in HE is still dominated of men.

This paper makes an attempt to understand the reasons why do women academics remain at lower levels in spite of upgrading their qualifications suitable for senior positions. It also reviews the measures undertaken to change the power structure in higher education sector. In order to bring more women academics in leadership roles, few recommendations are made.

Objectives of Study
The purpose of this study is to
- Understand the positions women educators in HE
- Discuss the barriers to the full participation of women in HE leadership.
- Review the measures undertaken to increase leadership by women in HE
- Recommend strategies to create more supportive environments for development of women leadership in HE

Significance of Study
Women constitute 46% of total student enrolment. In order to up-held their rights as individuals and to offer opportunities for fulfilling their aspirations, more women need to be in HE leadership. The view points and experience of women leaders can help in meaningful and balanced decisions in HE.

Research Methodology
The present paper is based on secondary data. Reports and documents of national and international regulatory bodies and research institutes as well as research papers by scholars have been referred.

Literature Review

Tradition, culture, and social norms play an important role in determining whether girls are born, educated, enter the workforce, and, ultimately, exercise leadership. Moreover, traditional gender roles remain strong, particularly for married women, who are expected to bear the bulk of domestic responsibility towards children, spouses, and ageing parents. For women who aspire to be leaders, this means navigating a complex personal and socio-cultural journey to leadership (page 13,Astrid S. Tuminez).

Even though many women have started to benefit from their countries' improved education systems, they face barriers to the same work opportunities available to men. Women continue to confront discrimination in jobs, disparities in power, voice and political representation and the laws that are prejudicial on the basis of their gender. As a result, well-educated women often end up in jobs where they do not use their full potential and skills.(UNESCO 2012, page 65).

Women account for only 29% of the world's researchers (UNESCO, 2010). Traditionally, higher education leaders need to be able to demonstrate excellence in publishing and research (Deem, 2003; Fletcher et al, 2007, Morley, Page 11). But, very few women academics are able to do research, or writing, acquire doctoral or post-doctoral degrees or other academic distinctions required to be elevated to positions of leadership.

It is women who invariably "navigate between parental and employee roles, they have to pay the 'toll' for crossing the boundary between work and family". A dominant view is that time expended on role performance in one domain depletes time available for the demands of the other domain. (Runte and Mills 2004, Morley, page 10).

Networking plays crucial role in climbing ladder in HE. All-male networks are effective for lobbying and facilitate securing memberships of important committees and leadership roles. All this helps men in the recruitment and selection process. They are also better placed in terms of promotion prospects; to gain research experience; to get invited to conferences for paper presentations and, ultimately, for publications. They are visible in a university's academic administration at the higher levels. In country after country it has been shown that when traditional appointment and promotion practices are put under a microscope it becomes clear that women are being excluded for reasons that are peripheral and unrelated to their capacity to do the job. Again it has been shown that when formal procedures are introduced to ensure that irrelevant criteria are excluded from the process, women are much more likely to be selected for positions on merit. (UNESCO 1993, Page 25)International Labour Organization 2015.

As women constitute half the world's population, they have much to contribute, but given that their gender role assigned by society is primarily as caregivers, perceptions in the workplace of their potential and capability as managers can be limited. "Mind-sets" can be influenced and changed through awareness workshops and training on the concept that women, like men, are not a homogeneous group; that diversity, including gender balance, can contribute to more creativity and innovation as well as harmonious work teams(page 29,ILO,2015).

Williams and Harvey cite amongst barriers to the advancement of women the absence of structures and policies to deal with discrimination or to support women in their multiple roles of wife/mother/ professional woman. Some of the writers recognize that the position of women has been enhanced in countries which have legislation and regulation in place to provide organizational support structures for women. (UNESCO 1993, Page 24).

Indian Scenario

A study of women scientists in Delhi indicated that only one sixth of the respondents found career development more satisfying. For more than half of the married respondents, primary source of satisfaction in life is growth & development of children. For one third of respondents, happy family life is more important whereas one fourth respondents are happy being a help mate of husband. Family commitments and social norms restrict their mobility which retards their ability to communicate informally and network with other scientists.(SED 1998).

A study by The National Institute of Educational and Public Administration (NIEPA) in 90s, indicated that women principals function as confidently as their male counterparts. Difficulty in exercising authority over male subordinates, disciplining women subordinates, corruption and political pressure were some of the challenges faced by these leaders. Fear of Defamation was expressed by many as obstacle to withstand and fight these pressures. Balancing professional and family life was major difficulty experienced by them. (UNESCO 1993, Suma Chitnis, Page 87).

According to a global gender report 2015, on a scale of 1 to 7, ability of Indian women to rise to position of leadership is 3.3

and only 9% of firms in India have females as top managers.(The Global Gender Gap Index 2015, page 199). McKinsey report 2015 (Page 8) also identified a gender gap in leadership among Indian women. Only 7 percent of tertiary-educated women have jobs as senior officials compared with 14 percent of men.

A study by Commonwealth Secretariat and UNESCO in 90s found that 7% of professors, 22 % associate professors, 38 % assistant professors and 56 % lecturers were women in HE in India. At university-level institutions, only 6% had women vice-chancellors (VCs), 21% had women senior administrators and 10% had women heads of departments and principals of affiliated colleges.

According to AISHE report of 2012-13, total number of VCs was 354 and of them, only 6% (18) were women. Of 24,074 people holding Principal posts, 49 % were women and of total professor posts, 32% were women. Out of 64 Pro-VCs, only 12 were women.

In the year 2014-15, of the 42 Central Universities in the country, just two have women VCs. In the 62 institutes of National importance including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), there are only two women Directors. Among the 16 National Law Universities, only two have women VCs (Sahu Diana, 2015).

Scheme of Capacity Building of Women Managers in HE
In order to induct a sizable number of women in the system who can make this perception known and understood at various level of decision making, the program was initiated in 1997 under the auspices of the University Grants Commission (UGC) in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, London. After the first collaborative workshop in 1998, the UGC took over the responsibility of training women faculty. A National Consultative Committee was constituted in January 2003 to oversee the program and ensure uniform qualitative standards in all the regions of the country. Since 2004, it has been continuing in the different regions of India. The focus of the workshops is dual, i.e. on the self and the institutions. On the one hand, the institutions do not provide an enabling environment and, on the other, women themselves also do not play a proactive role in moving up. It focuses on five dimensions: women's study perspective, governance, academic leadership, personal and professional roles, and on research-all with a focus on women. The program encompasses training and skills workshops as follows:

SAM (Gender Sensitization and Motivation) workshops, ToT (Train the Trainer) workshops and MSEM (Management Skills Enhancement Modules). The participants of the SAM workshops are women academicians and administrators at middle and higher levels in university departments and colleges interested in exploring the possibilities of taking up leadership positions. . In SAM workshops the focus is on understanding the self in a social context; to motivate the women and to reorient their thinking; and to help them understand the systemic barriers faced by them. Among the above, potential trainers are identified by the Coordinators of the program and given training skills in Training of Trainers Workshops in order to spread the program within their own institutions and outside. After the first level workshops, those who have decided they would wish to become managers, or they are already managers in the higher education system, are offered specific modules on management skills within the gender context.

The initiative yielded results with around 7,000 women faculty members being appointed as either principals, deans or heads of departments in colleges or VCs in a period of seven years. Currently, the women faculty members and administrators who were associated or had benefited from the program, are networking through a closed Google Group where information, problems and suggestions on the issue are shared.

The Scheme of Capacity Building for Women Managers in Higher Education has been merged under the Scheme of Development of Women's Studies in Indian Universities and Colleges in the 12[th]plan. At present there are 156 Women's Studies Centers in various Universities and Colleges.

Observations of Study
Total Enrolment in HE has been estimated to be 33.3 million with 17.9 million boys and 15.4 million girls. Girls constitute 46% of the total enrolment.

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in HE in India is 23.6. GER for male population is 24.5 and female it is 22.7.The trend is of higher males than females in almost every level. Student enrolment at Under Graduate level has 53% male and 47% female. Post Graduate level has 49% males and 51% females.Ph.D. level has 60% male and 40% female.

The total number of teachers is 1418389. Out of which more than half about 61% are male teachers and 39% are female teachers. At all-India level there are merely 64 female teachers per 100 male teachers.

Female teachers per 100 Male teachers based on their posts
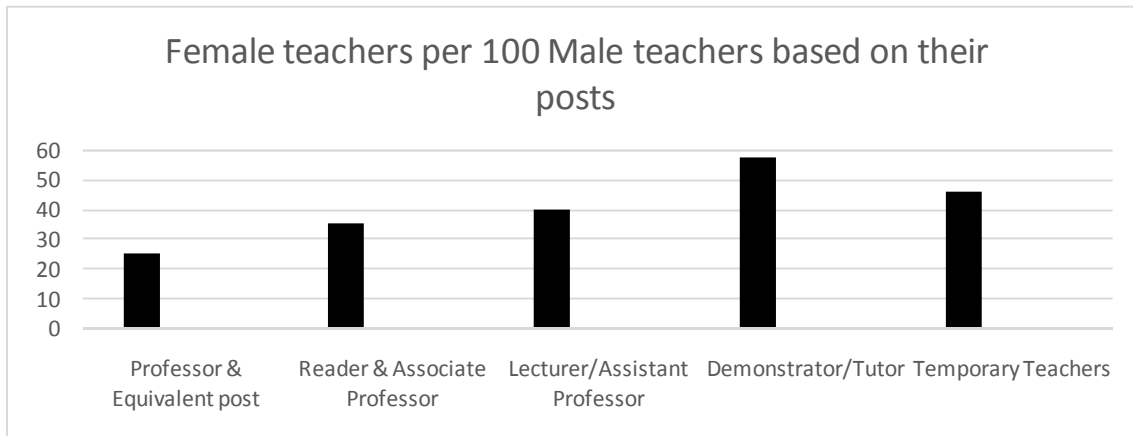
Source: AISHE 2014-15(P)Diagram 1

Out of total professors and equivalent posts, 25% are taken by females. Out of total reader and associate professors, only 35% are taken by females. Out of total lecturers/assistant professors, 40%are taken by females

Female Teachers based on their posts
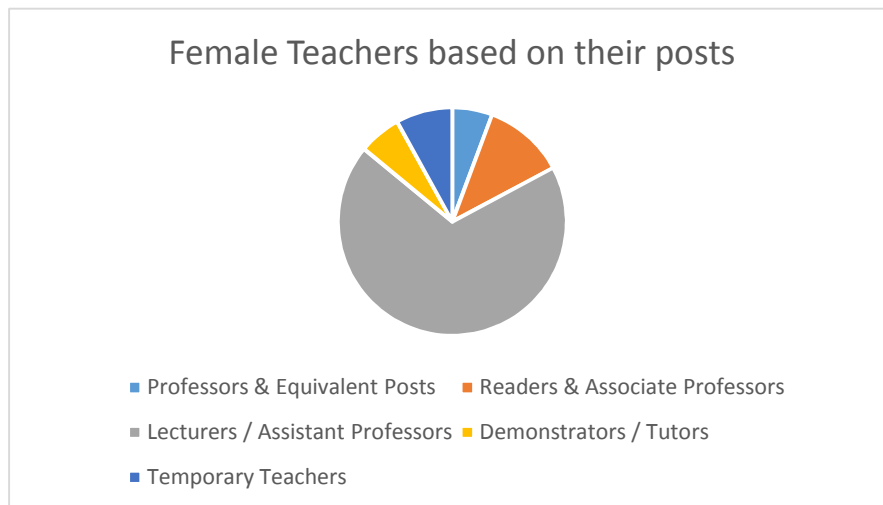
Source: AISHE 2014-15(P) **Diagram 2**

Of total female teachers, only 5.64% are at professor & equivalent level, 11.53% are readers & associate professors, 68.68% are lecturers/assistant professors, 6% are demonstrators/tutors and the rest are temporary.

Findings
There has been only a marginal increment in number of women as leaders in HE in India in past two decades. Women are best represented in lower level academic and middle management positions and their participation relative to men decreases at successively higher levels.

Barriers to participation of women in HE Leadership
Patriarchal system
Indian society, in general, is patriarchal and that attitude is observed in HE as well. Woman's role as homemaker is prime, believes society. Women in Indian culture find it difficult to exert authority over male subordinate. When women are at the receiving end of men's chauvinistic attitudes, they back down and do not attempt to capture opportunities for leadership positions.

Balancing Career and Home

In HE, to reach higher levels, academics need to carry out research, present and publish papers, acquire doctoral and post-doctoral degrees, attend seminars, workshops and so on. The burden of carrying, simultaneously, responsibilities on both the fronts- home and educational institution, makes it difficult, sometimes impossible, for women to make the extra investment required for upward career growth. Women frequently progress haltingly in their careers because of breaks for childbearing and child-rearing. Lack of affordable quality child care is one of the primary reasons women, cannot climb progress ladder. Leadership positions are less popular among women academics since these are often non-vacation posts which do not fit in with their responsibilities as home-makers. The fear of longer works hours and the prospect of throwing their work-life balance keep women away from senior positions.

Lack of transparency in Recruitment

The appointment of leaders in higher education is often a political process. This requires lobbying and construction of highly visible public profile. Women being women are often excluded from influential networks. The selection committees mostly comprise men, who do not give much weightage to women candidates. When women do aspire for leadership, they are frequently rejected from the most senior positions. A lot of women are being ploughed off at the level of head of department and are not allowed to grow.

Lack of Mentoring and Role Model

Young male academics who join higher education have the advantage of seeing men in positions of leadership, decision-making and authority. In addition, they are also under the tutelage and sponsorship of male professors who are their role models and mentors. It is also easy for them to get into the 'old boys' networks and to have access to these for support. The sponsorship of senior male professors has a positive impact on the self-esteem and confidence of younger men academics. This is not the case for women academics as there are very few women at the top.

Lack of networking

Women academicians are not readily accepted into the informal networks which serve to bond males, and though they frequently have their own very effective community-based female networks these are not functional in advancing their professional careers.

Mindset

Most women in academic posts consider their role as professionals as one that helps supplement their husband's income, and therefore they lack the drive to move up. Although this mindset is changing, the change is visible only in metros and bigger cities.

Mobility

One of the most frequently mentioned barrier is mobility. It is more difficult for women than for men to visit Government offices for administrative matters. They move around less, are less able to socialize, and are, therefore, less informed on relevant issues than their male counterparts.

Lack of Administrative and Legal Knowledge

Leaders in higher education have to face situation arising out of the increasing unionization of the non-academic staff, the faculty and the students. Being academicians they are not really equipped to handle the complex labour laws by which universities and colleges are governed. Many a times, these issues are generated by political vested interests. Academicians find it frustrating to handle the problems as there is strong nexus between government and the politician in higher education. Often, women academics are not ready to take on the responsibility due to lack of confidence.

Passion for Teaching and Research

The leadership positions in higher education are more of administrative than academic in nature. It involves correspondence with the government, building relationships with the industry, alumni, branding the institute and so on. Women academicians are more passionate about teaching than running institutions, which is why many of them, although qualified, do not choose to apply for such posts and stay with pure academics.

Absence of Policies and Legislation

Though the Companies Act of 2013 mandates that every public company should have at least one female director, there is no such legislation for universities and colleges in India.

Strategies
National database
There should be a statutory requirement for public as well as private universities to provide statistics based on gender- for students, doctoral students, teachers and professors, heads of departments and deans. The co-ordination and compilation of a national database on female senior leaders in HE is highly necessary.

Women studies
Role of women only universities, colleges and women study centers in developing leaders needs to be reviewed. Continuous analysis of existing practices such as leadership programs is necessary. Research in global inquiries into the enablers and impediments that women experience in career progression and into the experiences of women leaders needs to be taken up at regular intervals

Review Appointment and Promotion Procedures
Transparency in the appointment process can benefit women academics. Influential groups tend to recruit in their own image as they want to minimize risk by going for the familiar. So often women's capacities and competencies are misrecognized.

Provide Legislative and Infrastructure Support
The provision of legislative and infra-structure support by organization such as child care facilities in the premises of the institution, transport, and housing can make a great difference to the capacity of women to manage multiple roles. Special bodies to deal with women's issues have also been effective in changing deep-rooted cultural bias against women. Success of policies and legislations more assured if equity targets are set with success. Success is more assured if equity targets are set and mechanisms are established for appropriate implementation. Effective guidelines, clear reporting procedures and monitoring agency are essentials for desired results.

Provide Special Programs for Women
Increase in investment in women's capacity-building programs such as guidance to acquire doctoral degrees, continuous professional development opportunities etc. are essential. Special training programs are needed to ensure that women are well equipped to handle technical aspects of the job. Such programs provide the opportunity to network with other administrators, to identify role-models and mentor. It gives a clearer vision of the responsibilities of their leadership position. It also fosters a sense of community. The attitudinal factors which limit women as well as the special forms of discrimination to which they are subjected, can best be addressed in special programs for women. Such programs can create a lasting impact on the way in which women perceive themselves and give them confidence in their own capacity to be effective leaders.

Limitations of Study
Gender is an absent category of analysis in most of the HE policy documentation in India. There is an absence of research-based evidence to assess impact of scheme of capacity building of women managers in HE.

Future Scope for Study
Globally, a number of studies have been conducted identifying barriers and facilitators to women's advancement in leadership but research on women who have been leaders in HE almost does not exist. In case of Indian HE, research on success stories of women accessing authority and facilitating change is almost nil.

Conclusion
Women's near absence in leadership positions in HE is a result of combination of various factors. Many a times, women academics are rejected from such posts through discriminatory recruitment and promotion process. But women not aiming for these positions as they find it as unattractive, onerous are also a reality. Large number of women considers their role as a homemaker as prime and career is accommodated while fulfilling these responsibilities. Lack of women in senior positions means that currently the expertise and skills of a significant part of the HE workforce are being least utilized. Women leaders in HE can play a distinctive role in fostering the development of their students, empower by acquainting them with their social and political rights, to widen their horizons and to demonstrate the possibility of pursuing dual careers.

There is an urgent need to identify, motivate and train women academicians to change the hierarchy of power structure. Besides execution of policies and legislations, change in the mindset is required to ensure equal opportunities and a more representative leadership in the HE.

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