
**Women In Management In India :
A Review Of Literature And
Identification Of Research Issues**

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Abstract

Inspiration of this paper is to review the academic literature on the subject of women from an Indian perspective in any given organization. Another reason is to provide a comprehensive bibliography and suggest a method of categorizing that literature. Several online databases were explored to provide ample listing of doctoral theses and journal articles on women in management. Consecutively, to measure the direct significance to women in management, several hundred articles were ascertained and evaluated. A select list of articles were thus selected each of which were further examined and categorized. All papers were distributed to the main and sub-categories based on the major focus of each paper. Research on women in management falls into three broad categories: work-life balance; gender inequality; and glass ceiling effect. Each of these categories has a few sub-categories each. The most popular research area on the subject of women in management in India is work-life balance.

Keywords

Women in management, women in management in India, work-life balance, gender inequality, glass ceiling effect.

Introduction

Research on women in management seems to be an area of study that is slowly catching the attention of researchers in India. For the purpose of review of literature, a number of secondary sources of information were accessed. Among these are the library databases ProQuest's ABI/Inform Global, EBSCO's Academic Search Complete, Emerald Fulltext Plus, ScienceDirect, and Social Science Research Network; search engines such as Google Scholar and Directory of Open Access Journals; and Indian theses and dissertation databases such as *Vidyanidhi*, *Shodhganga*, and *Shodhgangotri*. The review is structured into three broad categories of work-life balance in the Indian context, gender inequality in the Indian context, and glass ceiling syndrome in the Indian context.

II. Work-life balance in the Indian context

The complexity of the work life balance (WLB) subject creates very specific demands on the individual's role system. Although support network, quality of health and time management are definite interpreters of WLB, dependent care issues and role overwork are negative interpreters. Although the vast majority of women managers and entrepreneurs tussle with WLB issues, there exist considerable discrepancies in the understanding of WLB among the diverse groups of women entrepreneurs, depending on age group, education level, income and

marital status. Women entrepreneurs get strained to balance between work and private life as their occupation and personal and domestic roles quite often contradict each other. Therefore, work-life imbalances and struggle has become a common feature of the lives of many optimistic Indian women.

The foremost challenge dealt by women managers today is managing their twin role of executive managers and home makers. Women are under tremendous pressure caused by either work burden or under load. Women's burden comes from the pressure to work harder to establish them. While Indian men do not mind having women as assistants, they disapprove them as bosses. Discontentment from assistants is a cause of concern for women managers, which they see as a challenge to tackle. (Budhwar et al., 2005)

The Ph.D. thesis of Mehtha (2012) focuses on the WLB among women employees in the service sector in Pune city. The researcher notes with concern that increasing working population and changes in perceived company commitment and loyalty has led to WLB becoming a real issue for employers and employees alike. At the same time that the participants rate WLB as very important concern for them it was rated lowest for the amount of attention being paid to it through the workplace. This indicates a serious gap between the perception of employees and employers. The findings of the thesis show that just 4 % of the respondents feel that they have the right balance at present. Those of the 96% who reported imbalance were of the opinion that work dominated their life. A host of factors impact the WLB of the women employees in the service sector at Pune among them are

demographic variables such as age, social variables such as family size, and the nature of job and organisation they work in. Both individual means as well as organisational mechanisms are used to deal with imbalance. The thesis concludes that much leaves to be done to restore balance to the work and family life of the women employees. (Mehtha, 2012)

The article by R Nalini (2009) *Women Managers in the emerging urban spaces*, also throws light on the dilemma Indian women managers face in balancing their work and personal life responsibilities. Researchers have found this to be a very interesting question to study the gap between the performance and the positions of the Indian women managers. Is it the structural and psychological barriers women managers face or is it the biased organizational culture which is an impediment in their path to the top management hierarchy. Another observation that comes across is that there are more women managers in the public sector as compared to the men managers. Women in business have been both hidden and silenced by the male models of career and masculine stereotypes of male managers. The business sectors in India were also dominated by men.

When discussing the role conflicts of women managers R Nalini (2009) elaborates that the primary conflict of a woman manager is balancing the multiple traditional roles. Managerial success demands self confidence, assertiveness, taking up responsibility while the traditional female role suggests submissiveness, supportiveness and dependency. These totally opposite role expectations often block a woman's career progress, whereas for a man there are no such

deviations in role expectations. Hence men in the managerial positions are able to move ahead with confidence and firmness.

An empirical study on married women workforce of diverse industry in Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India on Indian corporate women and work-life balance points out that women managers face the challenges of balancing work and life when the time and energy demands forced by the different roles cannot be proficiently met and as contribution in one role is made all the time more difficult by partaking in another. Women managers face obstacles while scaling up the corporate hierarchy owing to the Indian community structure, preconception and myths. But fortunately women have established themselves and succeeded in conquering those obstacles and made major efforts towards organizational brilliance. (Chauhan, 2010)

A study is on women administrators of All India Services including Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service and Indian Forest Service centres on the position of women in the all India services, the experiences of women officers, their outlook on other women in the services, prevailing prejudiced issues in the services, the outlook of their male counter parts in services and at home and their fulfilment and contentment with their family life. Significantly, the study reveals that after the entry into the all India services, the main problem the women officers face is to balance their work at home and office. (George, 2011)

The study by Mathew & Panchanatham (2011) incorporates the work life balance concerns faced by the women entrepreneurs of South India. The study of the data revealed a

number of issues related to WLB. Some of the major ones included the fact that women entrepreneurs make effort to deal with highly challenging domestic, entrepreneurial, personal and societal duties and needs. The major WLB issues that they face are role burden, health maintenance problems, poor time management, dependency and lack of adequate support system.

Earlier female workers in India were largely employed in non-managerial, subordinate or low profile works. Now, they are engaged in almost all types of positions in the place of work. These transformations in work culture have increased the women's household tasks to their family as well as to the world (Mathew & Panchanatham 2009). In spite of this new work culture and even though increasingly women are joining the workforce, women in entrepreneurial roles are restricted. The apparent rationale for this phenomenon is the conflict between challenging work demands and domestic needs.

According to Nayyar et al., (2007), women have been acknowledged as successful entrepreneurs because they have virtues desirable in and applicable to entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, in a society where women have different roles to play, role burden may occur when an individual is expected to perform numerous roles within a limited time.

Marriage is a relationship between a man and woman, but interestingly the implications of it are entirely different for both the partners. It is a blessing for the man since it adds to his stability and lessens his household burden. There is someone to take care of his responsibility at home front and

this means that he has more time and energy to get involved in his work. But for a woman it means loads of responsibility at the home front along with a career which has its own demands. When motherhood follows much of the focus of a woman shifts from being a manager to being a mother.

Motherhood creates a tussle between professional aspirations and motherhood is known to affect women's careers about all over the globe. Reluctance to travel, getting relocated and living away from families are some of the other restraining factors. Motherhood itself remains an important obstacle for dedicating herself to exclusive contribution to her career. (Gupta, et al., 1998)

When concern for promotion gains light maternity comes at the forefront. A woman manager's upward movement is restricted due to her biological clock. She has to accept delays in promotions for reasons which become an inseparable part of her life after marriage. Indian woman is a best example of role conflict. At the home front they are dependent restricted doers and at the office front they are independent assertive decision makers.

There are a lot of stereotypes which women resist. Since there are few women at the higher cadres they are considered as examples for the other ones. This throws a light on them because of which they become very conscious in their work sphere and any mistake comes into a magnified light. A woman is always better prepared when she comes to a meeting. A woman manager is much more understanding and better at listening than a man would be.

Another angle that comes across while

studying women managers is that they themselves opt for careers which are not very demanding. They are busy supporting their family needs that many a times their career needs take a back seat. In spite of possessing the requisite calibre and skills they choose to stay out of promotions since they involve transfers, travelling and residential training.

Man as a whole being is a popular concept in management. To elaborate a little on that, it means that when an employee comes to work he brings with himself his emotional being as well. Related to this concept is the idea of job related emotional behaviour. The responses elicited by women and men are very different. A man's shouting on a subordinate in an organization is appreciated and is considered as his involvement in work while a woman's is criticized for being disrespectful. Thus women in management have to deal with a lot of prejudices, biases and stereotypes.

Overall, the issue of work-life balance boils down essentially to three sub-issues as below.

a. Work influence on personal life Work life balance is disturbed by interferences from multiple directions. Thus, the first aspect that could be considered in work-life balance is to explore the interference that work does with personal and family life of women managers. This may arise in several forms such as pressure of work and completing assignments on time on finding lesser time for personal and family matters.

b. Personal life influence on work Looked at the other way round, personal life may also play havoc with work life. A disturbed family life, bad relations with husband and in-laws, and loss of control over children are often

situations that burden a woman's mind. This leads to her finding it difficult to concentrate on her work and career.

Work/personal life enhancement Just like interference among work and family life may lead to deterioration of capacity to deal with either of them there might be a happy situation where satisfaction derived from work may enhance the quality of personal life or a well-settled personal life may contribute to effectiveness at work

III. Gender inequality in the Indian context

India ranks 113th out of 157 countries on the Gender Development Index (GDI) according to the World Economic Forum (2011). The GDI is calculated using three (3) variables - life expectancy, education, and estimated earned income. India still lags behind in terms of GDI though there is progress of gender scores in recent years. For instance, in Kerala, women comprise 39 per cent of all organised sector workers (DGE&T). The States with a low distribution of women's employment in organised sector jobs are Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir and Orissa.

Amartya Sen, Indian author and winner of the Nobel Prize in economics, talks about gender inequality in his book *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity*. He points out that the social movement for Indian women had been, until recently, mostly determined on accomplishing better treatment and well-being for women: "In the course of the evolution of women's movement [...] women are not passive recipients of welfare-enhancing help brought about by society, but are active promoters and facilitators of social transformations. Such transformations influence the lives and well-being of women,

but also those of men and children—boys as well as girls. This is a momentous enrichment of the reach of women's movement" (Sen, 2005)

Maliye (2011), in her sociological study of women managers in Hyderabad, relies on a discussion of the capitalist nature of the corporate structure in modern times to reveal the dichotomy of boasting of an ideology of equality and objectivity and of performance being given more importance rather than sex, caste, class or race and, in reality, creating gender inequality. She opines that the patriarchal organizational structure based on gender leads to discrimination, job segregation and sexual power play. Her research findings reveal that few women managers have had a marriage of their own choice; a majority of them settled for arranged marriages. Maliya underlines the irony that those who are supposed to take important decisions regarding profit and loss of the firm, labour problems and recruitment, sales and marketing, finance etc. have put the major decision of marriage into the hands of either family members or relatives.

The study *Gender Inequality at the Workplace* by Sharma & Sharma (2012) revealed interesting factors for gender inequality at the workplace. The prominent among them were sociologically-driven role provisions that are common in India, patriarchal form of social structuring which is also displaced at workplace and stereotyping image of female, restricted to domestic roles and which directly leads to role conflict if they opt for employment. Likewise there are some reasons which have ambiguous reasons such as not trusting the decision making capacity of women in general. Customarily they are

believed to be more emotionally complex and hence are charged with having less rationality in their employment performance. In the Indian context, the prejudice begins at an early stage of socialisation and becomes evident in the place of work.

The sex-role orientation of women managers in India comes into sharp focus in the study by Buddhapriya, 1999. The significance of gender is heightened in the case of women as the usual perception of managerial positions is masculine in nature. Thus, women managers too tend to conform to the perceived roles in the belief that the adoption of such roles would lead them to more effective managers. This study is comprehensive in scope and besides the issue of gender inequality, leadership styles, fear of success by women, organisational role stress and coping strategies are also discussed at length.

One could expect women in white-collar jobs to fare better than their less fortunate sisters in blue-collar jobs. But the study by Sinha & Prabha (1988) makes an interesting insight into the kinds of gender differences that prevail in organizations. The restrictions imposed on working women were found to be more pronounced in white collar jobs. They comment that the majority of women working in white collar jobs come from upper castes and belong to nuclear families. But the trend shows that men with non-urban background and non-English medium background can also make it in the managerial position, whereas in case of women, they should have better schooling, education and exposure to the professional culture, to make it to the same level. Therefore; women seemingly have to work much harder than men to fulfil their aspirations.

It can reasonably be expected that attaining the status of working women may lessen the stress placed on women. But it may not be so. Sethi (1988) comments that the employment of women does not necessarily lead to a change in her work patterns at home. The traditional role of a woman as home-maker and carer of children remains unaltered despite her new role as an economic earner. The fact that many women these days are making a financial contribution to the family income does not lead to a change in her existing role structures and power position within the family. Husbands continue to remain as the main decision-makers in a patriarchal family structure.

The study by Sharma & Sharma (2012) made some very relevant suggestions to tackle gender inequality. Gender equality in its true wisdom can only be reached when other career alternatives are created and institutional rules are applied in the appropriate way, which ultimately brings down the space between perception and reality. As a promising economy, India does present an opportunity for government to propose policy regarding this area. Also, significantly, the technology explosion in the education sector is creating a difference to the opinions of younger generation that might propagate equality in a real sense. Constitutionally, growing awareness about legal aspects will help to achieve gender equality.

Jha and Tiwari (2011) conducted a very interesting study on three sectors namely, Health Care, IT and Defence where an assessment whether or not disparity subsist in a society that have modern men and women working together with respect to nature of tasks and related problems were

studied. The results showed notable results that linked gender differences and team work. There are considerable gender differences in terms of views about ability and penchant to do a job in certain areas. There are differences among men and women in taking up diverse tasks and that the competence and potential of men and women vary from each other at least in their common faith. Certainly a very high proportion of jobs are in fact gender unbiased and only a few responsibilities may actually be performed more competently by men or women. While building teams in Health care sector, IT sector and Defence sector even prominence should be placed on the type of tasks to be executed, so that each member can contribute according to their capabilities. Since men and women vary in terms of their physical, emotional and possibly mental capabilities, hence such variance should be given due consideration while handing over tasks. This study was helpful to all the three areas in evaluating the gender based dissimilarities in both nature of tasks and their related problems.

An enlightening fact comes across the study on women in administrative services in India by George (2011). Women were barred from enrolment to Indian Police Service (IPS) till 1971 and in the year 1972 this prejudiced rule was disconnected and the first woman came into the IPS. The data in the Police Lists published by the Department of Home Affairs shows the low depiction of women in IPS. Similar to this kind of a condition, the entry of women into the Indian Foreign Services (IFS) also was very late. It was only in the year 1980 that the first women came into the service. The Indian Forest Service Civil Lists, the Ministry of Environment and Forest, and the Government of India show that the figure of women in these services is also very short.

Some studies have investigated the experiences of women faculty members in institutes of science and technology, to realize the nature of the dual complexity faced by women. A study notes three major issues faced by female academic scientists were: general male dominance in the work surroundings; feelings of seclusion; and feelings of conflict between being a woman and a scientist. Ideology focused on the father side prevails at the workplace and in the family. Women's potential is doubted in the early stage of their career. There were no women deans in any institute and the idea of a female director was not quite thinkable. Research suggests the need for concerted effort to evaluate the experience of women scientists so that combined efforts can be made to solve their issues (Gupta & Sharma, 2003).

Singh (2003) investigated the socio-cultural factors of the low account of women in top managerial places in Asian organizations. Findings exposed that both male and female respondents perceived that societal culture has a significant leaning on both thought aspects and nature. Managers reported work culture to be encouraging to men. Male respondents believed more in hierarchical associations, which sustain the notion that Asian societies are hierarchical in character, and affects interpersonal relations of people. In Asian Society, men are perceived to be assertive and authoritative, whereas women are expected to conform and be submissive. The study concluded that if efficient work-life strategies are embraced, which maintain dual-earner couples, employers would get benefited.

Khandelwal, in his study on *Gender Stereotypes at Work: Implications for Organizations* has talked about the stereotypes and opinions of Indian women in the workplace. They emerge to have a considerable negative impact on the situation of women managers.

The study indicates that male Indian managers are seen, typically, as working in the areas of sales, marketing and production; being good leaders, decision makers and bosses; and managing challenging tasks. On the other hand, Indian women are seen as working in HR and administrative positions at low to junior levels, and in fields such as fashion and beauty. Women in Indian organizations felt that such stereotypes emerge from not being given challenging tasks. Yet, male managers saw women as being dealt with compassion than men when making mistakes (Khandelwal, 2002).

Interesting statistics disclose that organised sector employment comprise a small share of total employment in India and women's share of organised sector employment is only 17%. Even within the organised sector, most women are located in the bottom of the hierarchy (Joseph & Prasad, 1995) and very few are decision makers or bosses. (Agrawal & Rao, 2004; Menon - Sen & Kumar, 2001).

Several organizations had an unbiased performance management and reward terms, still many women interviewees testified that they had to work very hard to prove their worth. They had to personally drive to achieve and develop their strengths along with their capability to acclimatize to the work culture and being determined played a vital role in their triumph. (Nath, 2000)

The exclusion of women from informal networks acts as hurdles to career progression for women (Gupta et al., 1998). Women's virtual exclusion from these networks which have been male domains prevents them from developing the ability to handle the dynamics of organizational politics as these. The incidence of such politics arises more in a diverse, multi-lingual, and ethnic and caste based Indian society.

The learning of Gupta et al., (1998) highlighted the commonly weaker situation of women in management. Some of the conclusions included: fewer male managers believed that women are capable of acquiring the required managerial skills than did female managers; fewer male managers believed that women managers possess the required objectivity for evaluating business interaction properly and possess the essential self-confidence; a large percentage of male managers and a third of female managers thought that women managers would let their emotions persuade their managerial performance; women are considered less confident, less competitive and less assertive in meeting the demands of business communication.

Bhatnagar & Nair (1988) investigated women managers' insight about the different facets of running their organizations and also their aspirations from them. These women managers were working in different functional areas in both public and private sector organizations. The study pointed out that women managers insisted on challenging tasks, more participation in policy and decision plan, creating a healthy work atmosphere, equal workload, and

appreciation from bosses. Most of the respondents expected their bosses to acknowledge their efforts, seek their opinion while making decisions, treat a female employee as an individual and not as a woman, trust in the effectiveness of female employees, and accept recommendations from female assistants. Further, female managers wanted due respect from their male counterparts, free exchange of information, tolerance towards appreciation of women's good work, and a feeling that a female manager is one of them rather than an 'alien'. Women managers did not want their subordinates to feel it is below their self respect and level to be supervised by a woman. The study also revealed some grave concerns like, expectations of amenities such as childcare, arrangement of accommodation when posted to remote areas, starting child-oriented welfare schemes, and understanding for special medical examination for serious diseases such as breast cancer.

Some of the interesting interpretations about gender dissimilarities reveal that there are often grievances from women graduating from premier educational institutions that boys are chosen over girls in academic appointments despite girls having better educational accomplishments (Chadha, 2002). Women managers in India have to tackle with the male ego also, which is seen as a critical barrier to women moving up the managerial hierarchy. When women managers give instructions, men in general and older men in particular, feel emotionally challenged. (Budhwar et al., 2005)

A high absorption of men exists in software exporting companies whereas women are present in a higher percentage of domestic low-end and IT-enabled services (Suriya, 2003). This points us towards the inclination

that at the entry level itself there is an obvious gender discrepancy in admittance to employment in this sector. Research indicates that women professionals are still marginal in this sector with a clear inclination towards clustering at the bottom end of the work hierarchy leading to feminization of particular service performance.

The social typecasts, gender role expectations, individual preconceptions and society which promote the image of women as inferior to that of men also discourage women to seek top ranks (Kulkarni, 2002). However, the considerate treatment and approach towards women at work results in not allocating them difficult and key assignments. Thus avoids gaining useful experience and developing skills that are imperative for working in senior positions.

Overall, gender inequality seems to manifest due to the under-mentioned four factors.

a. Dysfunctional organisational culture

Gender inequality may arise from many different sources. Among these, a dysfunctional organisational culture could often be a root cause. Men managers, owing to prior socialisation or inherent biases as a culture, may treat women managers as not worthy of key assignments, difficult errands, or higher positions is dysfunctional in the sense that it is not reasonable.

b. Occupational segregation

Perceptions about a woman's appropriate occupations or functional areas in organisations may limit them in achieving their full potential. Thus, occupational isolation, as an offshoot of gender isolation, may be a potential cause for gender inequality.

c. Sexual harassment at work

Women

managers might be subjected to sexual harassment at work by chauvinistic male managers who may be accustomed to treat women as a matter of disrespect. This may be a cause of gender inequality as it places women managers on a different and lower level than men managers.

d. Pay differential Unequal pay for equal pay is a fact that is present in many circumstances. Thus, discrimination may be based on gender by paying women managers lesser than their male counterparts even though they may be performing quite similar tasks. Many research studies point out to pay disparities as a main aspect of gender inequality.

IV. Glass ceiling syndrome in the Indian context

For a country that boasts of having had a woman president, a woman prime minister, and having a woman *Lok Sabha* speaker, a woman president of the largest political party, a woman leader of opposition and a woman chief minister in the state of New Delhi it is ironic that the corporate world does not reflect such a positive attitude to woman managers. It has been observed that the number of women in the area of managerial occupation have improved, though their appointment at the top hierarchy is still limited. It is important as well as a subject of concern to study the reasons for this kind of occurrence.

This trend which is popularly called the Glass Ceiling has many dimensions and different angles to measure and analyze it. Some research studies have focussed on the structural barriers and some implied at the personal barriers. Structural barriers are composed of inequalities at the management level of the organizations. Personal barriers

are differences in the career progress of women than that of men because of reasons like education, training and experience.

Sujhata (2008) in her study *Barriers to Career Growth of Women Managers: An Indian Scenario* makes an interesting study about the factors that create barriers in the path of women manager's road to the top hierarchies in an organizational structure. These factors were categorized as structural barriers, managerial stereotypes, normative pressures, depersonalization process, family pressures and space for private lives. Structural barriers are those perceptions which are institutionalized in the organization within a male dominated social context. Managerial typecasts form a negative notion for women managers and affect their performance. Normative pressures are the ones that hint towards the fact that women are confined to the conventional role of a homemaker; it is kind of an endorsement from the social norms. Depersonalization process refers to the isolation of self from the workplace. Women look forward to preserve relationships at the personal as well as the professional level. Most women at the workplace face pressures like balancing both the family and work responsibilities Space for private lives is the term used to depict the inability of women to work beyond the office hours along with the maternity leaves women tend to take during their course of work which become unavoidable for them.

Very intriguing inferences were made by Sujhata (2008) in the study quoted above. Her research posited that there are noteworthy differences in the challenges faced by women and men at the workplace. The hurdles can be

removed when there is an effort from both the individual as well as the organization. A little more weight is given on the efforts by the organization's side. A deeper impact which organizations do not realize but is an important concern is that it takes away a pool of talents, skills, intelligence, experience and commitment. In order to avoid such kind of wastage, organizations should provide a bias free environment and more supportive human resource policies towards women managers. According to the major findings of the survey conducted by *Tata Consultancy Services* (2012) women continue to face many hurdles on their path to the top, which are exclusive to their gender. They are often under-represented in organizations, especially in senior management roles and corporate boards. The report states that leadership development programs are key retention measures for women. However, very few organizations provide such programs. Generally, organisations are not assigning their budgets, funds and targets to support the mandate on gender inclusion.

Nath (2000) in her paper *gently shattering the glass ceiling: Experiences of Indian women managers* analyzes the impact of social, organizational and individual prejudices on the evolution of professional women in India. According to her, women managers in India have been usually successful in growing to the executive suite in Indian organizations, despite a culture that might imply otherwise. These women were successful because of the interplay of organizational and domestic support, bundled with the individual drive for success each woman demonstrated.

Any kind of discrepancy hinders the development of organization and calls for

assessment and achievement. The subsequent result of this kind of a trend is that it leads to lack of inspiration and low efficiency thus damaging the goal of the organization. As far as the structural hurdles that hamper women manager's growth are measured, various researches lead towards the human resource policies of the companies which seem to be prejudiced in nature.

Although attaining access to a professional career, women in India have remained isolated in largely female occupations, at lower ranks of organizations and excluded from moving up the hierarchy because they do not meet the promotion criteria. Kulkarni (2002) found that traditional and cultural reservations attained by women from childhood, nurtured by parents, and reinforced by their socialization was the key obstacle that prohibited their urge to be in an executive or leadership situation. This is further enhanced by a lack of self-direction, independence and self-motivation to enter the male-dominated world.

Kulkarni's findings are reinforced by another study by Maliye (2011) that found occupational isolation in the managerial field. This occupational isolation is at the horizontal as well as vertical levels. Maliye proposed that that in the departments of personnel management and industrial relations, a majority of women managers achieved the alleged 'soft' functions such as health, insurance, welfare and training while men were allocated the 'tough' job of managing industrial relations. Very few women managers were seen managing domains such as corporate planning and finance. Such gender prejudices were also considered in matter of promotion to higher

ranks where senior key positions are not usually offered to women even though they are extraordinarily similar to men in their educational levels, their years of experience and their capability. Most of the women managers stagnate in the middle level positions with the same level of qualification and service.

Budhwar, et al. (2005) in their study examine the reasons of women not entering higher management. Interestingly they pointed out men's presumptions towards women, women's segregation from informal networks, and lack of essential general management and line experience on the part of women managers.

The findings of a research by Anand (2002) depict that many women employees do not aim to managerial positions and are content with being lower level staff or in support positions. For example, a high proportion of women graduates from one of the premier institutions – the Indian Institute of Management, do not pursue a career. Some of the main reasons for this include the lack of inspiration and commitment on the part of women employees for fear that it will disrupt their family life. For Indian women family responsibility generally takes precedence. Middle to lower level jobs such as clerical positions are less subject to transfer; therefore, many women prefer them. In addition, women find the work environment more hostile and 'women-unfriendly' as they move up the career path resulting in their decision to abstain from seeking higher managerial positions in the organizational hierarchy (Roy, 2004)

A contemporary research by Naqvi, 2011 on the perspectives of women managers in public enterprises highlights several issues including leadership. Commenting that the women in India have struggled to establish an identity and create a space for themselves at their workplaces, especially in terms of leadership. The study investigates women's perceptions and dilemmas when confronted with the ideas and expectations of traditional society simultaneously conforming to a modern-day code of conduct at work.

Overall, it is observed that studies in Indian context follow the patterns discerned in the studies conducted elsewhere as reported in the previous sub-section. Thus, the glass ceiling syndrome could be encapsulated in terms of three deficiencies:

a. Lack of career exposure opportunities by women either due to their inadequate qualifications, low level of motivation, unsupportive organisational policies, or a combination of such factors hindering their upward movement in the organisation.

b. Lack of training opportunities for women either due to their own lack of interest in taking advantage of such opportunities or because of overt or covert organisational policies discouraging women to enrol themselves in such training programmes. Other reasons could also include the inability of women to be away from their family for extended period of time or even their reluctance to travel unescorted due to their conservative family background or a genuine concern for personal safety.

c. Lack of promotion opportunities for women may be the cause of a glass ceiling

operating in an organisation. This might be due to a genuine lack of promotion chances for most people including men. But this might also be caused by passivity of top management of an organisation in considering women for higher positions or inherent biases among men managers. Sometimes, the women themselves may forego opportunities for promotion especially if it may lead to transfer to other places where they might not feel comfortable living.

V. Concluding comments

Academic interest in women's studies, gender studies, feminist studies, and other interdisciplinary areas related to women has been there for quite some time. Worldwide there has been concern for focusing attention on issues that relate to women. A host of institutions related to women's studies including specialised universities, research institutions and centres, and the like have come into existence.

Research in the area of women in management has been reported since the last about four decades. Globally there is a wealth of information available related to women in management. Research has been reported in the form of doctoral and master's level work, journal papers and articles, work by consultants, and survey reports.

Research interest in women in management in Indian context has yet to pick up. There are but a few academic research projects reported in women in management studies. These are mostly in the area of entrepreneurship, management, human resource management, and marketing. This is a clear indication that research in Indian

context has yet to move up from the exploratory level.

A cursory analysis of the thesis available in the online national repository of electronic thesis and dissertations hosted by INFLIBNET of the University Grants Commission, India (<http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/>) is indicative of the sparse availability of research on women managers' issues. Tables 1.1 & 1.2 present the theses available in the area of women in management and the work under progress respectively. These theses have been submitted during the period of 2010 – 2013. There were precious few theses available prior to 2010 that related to substantive issues in the area of women in management. As can be observed from the list of theses submitted (Table 1.1) research work has focused on women entrepreneurship, profile of women managers and on work life balance and gender discrimination. The current work in progress shows three of the four theses reported relating to women entrepreneurship (Table 1.2)

As the review of literature in the preceding sections makes it clear, there are myriad issues related to women in management that have been reported. Eight issues have been identified here of which three issues seem to be of special interest as evidenced by reports by Indian researchers.

(Note: This research article is excerpted and adapted from a doctoral study in the area of women in management and forms a part of the review of literature for the study.)

Table 1.1. Theses available on Shodhganga repository related to women in management (2010 – 2013)

Issue Date	Title	Researcher	Guide(s)
3-Aug-2010	A study on women entrepreneurship in Kerala	Embran, Krishnan M K	Joseph, Tharsis
24-Mar-2011	Women managers in Hyderabad: a sociological study	Maliye, Sandhya	Bhat, Chandrasekhar
29-Apr-2011	Women's participation in South-Asia's civil services	Kabir, Syeda Lasns	Palshikar, Suhas
6-Sep-2011	Role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload of women executives in organizations	Beena, C	Poduval, P Ramachandr
8-Nov-2012	A study on gender discrimination among construction workers and the means of empowering women construction workers with special reference to Tiruchirappalli	Annette, B	Joseph Anbarasu D
20-Dec-2012	A study of Work Life Balance WLB among women employees in service sector with special reference to Pune city	Mehtha, Vijayshri Rameshkumar	Shinde, Rajashree
28-Feb-2013	Work-life balance: a sociological study of women professionals in Kerala	Thomas, K Claramma	Joseph, Ramola B.
1-Mar-2013	The critical analysis of the statutory policies for women empowerment and its impact on women entrepreneurship	Khair, Rupali Jitendra	Sharma, Gulnar
5-Aug-2013	Role of women in family finance management in urban Punjab	Sushma Rani	Miglani, O P

Source: Shodhganga website. Retrieved August 14, 2013 from <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in:8080/jspui/>

Table 1.2. Theses available related to women in management on ShodhGangotri: Repository of Indian Research in Progress

Issue Date	Title	Researcher	Guide(s)
4-Jul-2013	Corporate sustainability and gender diversity: a study of women on board of directors of Indian companies	Sikand, Puneet	Batra, Gurdip Singh, Dhami, Jasdeep Kaur
8-Jun-2012	A study of role of women entrepreneurship in service sector	Keleskar, Rakhee	Nejkar, Deelip
17-Sep-2012	An analytical study of the impact of women entrepreneurship development measures promoted by the Government and Financial Institutions in Kerala	Bose, Vinisha	Mathew, Roy C
17-Sep-2012	Women Entrepreneurs and Manufacturing Sector - a case study of Thrissur district	Sunandha K A	Lizy M A

Source: Shodhgangotri website. Retrieved August 14, 2013 from <http://shodh.inflibnet.ac.in/>

Table 1.3 Research directions in women in management in India at a glance

Broad research issue	Sub-categories of issue	Examples of meta level issue	Examples of meso level issue	Examples of micro level issue
Work-life balance	Work influence on personal life Personal life influence on work Work/personal life enhancement	Comparison of work-life balance across different sectors of Indian economy	Work life balance across the professions of law and medicine in India	Work life balance across the functional areas of marketing and production in Company C
Gender inequality	Dysfunctional organisational culture Occupational segregation Sexual harassment at work Pay differential	Gender inequality in business organisations in the Western Indian States	Gender inequality in rural-based non-governmental organisations in India	Gender inequality in public sector enterprise P
Glass ceiling syndrome	Lack of career exposure opportunities Lack of training opportunities Lack of promotion opportunities	Glass ceiling effect across selected industries in India	Glass ceiling effect in Indian management consultancy organisations	Glass ceiling effect in Company G

The future directions for research in the area of women in management in India could focus on the three broad issues of work-life balance, gender inequality, and the glass ceiling effect and the related sub-issues. An indicate agenda is presented in Table 1.3. These issues could be explored at a meta level in different regions of the country, among the different sectors (public / private) and industries. Meso level studies could be in different professions such as law and medicine. Comparative studies, contrasting women employees at different levels within the organisations as also across different functions and roles could be a direction for research at the micro level. Overall, 'women in management' is a promising field of inquiry in India.

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