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Research Article

Women Leading in Tech: Rethinking the Narrative and Breaking the Stereotypes

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Abstract: Gender preconception endure and are propagated by social, instructive and economic socialization, as well as the media, all of which encourage bias and discrimination related to sexuality. This paper argues that social ideas from gender studies-which might be helpful in developing positive, gendered-neutral but action-packed managerial viewpoints-are ignored by modern managerial culture. The paper outlines several aspects of prejudice against women and how they affect women's professional growth from a perspective of leadership, which links it to the essential concepts of gender studies.

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INTRODUCTION

It is in our nature to categorise objects. Humans are born with the requisite classification skills, which progressively improve with cognitive capacity and life experience Liberman *et al.* [1]. Classifying objects based on shared characteristics helps children develop concepts that serve as the foundation for their understanding and organisation of the world Aslan [2]. Social categorization is the process of arranging people into groups based on their fundamental characteristics. Humans frequently assign group preconceptions to individuals and classify people according to their occupation, interests and background attributes including extroversion and hobbies, personality traits and race or religion.

There are two steps involved in social classification. Stereotypes are created when one emphasises the traits that individuals of a group share and minimises distinctions among them; the opposite is true when one emphasises and focuses on the differences between various groups Baumeister [3]. People can effectively organise social and interpersonal information by using social categorization. But if social classification is rigid, it becomes a barrier to people's comprehension of the outside world.

Gender is one of the most important social groups. Young kids and newborns quickly pick up gender-related ideas that motivate them to engage in activities, discover new information and achieve goals. Leaper [4]. Studies show that newborns as early as 3-4 months old are able to distinguish different social groups based merely on facial features. Quinn [5]. They can differentiate between groups of males and females by face by the time they are 9-11 months old and

they can also intermodally correlate aspects (e.g., correlating faces with noises). Martin *et al.* [6]. Before they turn two years old, a lot of young children can combine additional cues (such voice, attire and haircut) to accurately categorise men and women, to vocally express gender nouns and to comprehend the differences between the sexes. They look at images of males performing stereotypically feminine tasks (such putting on lipstick) for longer periods of time. Girls learn about gender earlier than boys do and according to Serbin *et al.* [7], 2 year-old girls can correlate toys with gender.

Our research was grounded on the theoretical framework of gender-schema theory and cognitive social learning, which hold that children actively organise their knowledge on gender schemata to shape their attitudes and behaviours and actively make sense of the world around them. Information systems have applied this theoretical framework to explain differences in technology use between genders. This theoretical approach holds that social and cultural interactions are the foundation for the development of gender stereotypes and gender-related concepts. As a result, a child's surroundings is crucial since, by the moment they are four or five years old, they start to fully understand gender norms and boundaries, which influences their behavior and helps them recognize that they belong to a group.

Indeed, as people age, stereotypes and attitudes towards gender shift as well. These changes are impacted by social interactions, cultural background and cognitive development, all of which influence how children see their own identities as well as that of others. Children solidify their views and actions at the age of five to seven, when they reach the highest point of rigidity. Gender fluidity and an open attitude towards gender roles characterise the phase that follows this one. Measures during the gender flexibility phase may have a positive effect on children's gender relationships both now and as adults, according to recent research. Early adolescence is also linked to a gender intensification or the progressive "sex typing" of oneself and others. Long-term gender bias has a greater impact on children's lives at this age. It is therefore crucial to encourage young people to think about gender-related issues during this crucial time.

Gender stereotypes may force women to deal with really challenging situations. For instance, Singh and Sebastian [8] discovered that women's primary connections to entrepreneurial were via their dads' and relatives' business occupations in their state-wide examination of Gujarat, India. These women are not seen as potential successors in the business world because they are women, despite being subjects to business practices. Their inclusion in the family company is a consequence of birth instead of choice. In addition, since it prevents women from working outside the house or interacting with individuals from other families, the conventional attitude poses a danger to women's capacity to advance in their jobs. Because of the male-dominated culture, women managers often idealize "men as executives, managers as men," which makes the workplace masculine.

Problem Statement

The percentage of women in the USA is 50.8% or just over half. Nonetheless, there is a glaring lack of female representation in the highest levels of leadership. The Standard and Poor's 500 index from 2015 revealed that the proportion of female chief executive officers was a mere 5%. In the charitable sector, women are far more inclined to be in leadership positions; yet, a 2015 poll found that just 21 of the overall 151 non-profit organizations had directors with less than 50% female participation. The issue is present in professions where women predominate as well. Despite making up a sizable fraction of the workforce in the industry, women in educational leadership exhibit deficiencies in both opportunities and aspirations to hold leadership positions. While women make up 75% of teachers in public schools in the United States, they make up only 20% of superintendents in those same institutions.

Although there was a notable rise in the proportion of women elected to the US Congress in the 2018 elections, at 24 percent, they still make up less than 25 percent of the body's overall membership. Furthermore, it is concerning since powerful leaders can mould and affect the lives of countless numbers of people. As a result, the gender gap in leadership contributes to additional distortions in the general distribution of power, money and well-being. Leaders get compensated highly in addition to having power. Of all American citizens, just 27% are women and earn over \$100,000 annually. According to the research on yearly median income, women make about 80% of what men do for full-time jobs in a comparable cohort. The disparity in global leadership is an issue. In 2018, women made up 24% of senior posts globally, from below 25% in 2017. Moreover, just 25% of multinational corporations-or one-quarter of all businesses-have any women in senior executive roles. There are still some women who face the "glass ceiling." The term "glass ceiling" was first used in 1986 by 2 Wall Street Journal journalists to describe an invisible barrier that prevents women from moving up into more senior management positions. Prejudice and discrimination towards female leaders are among the explanations offered for this invisible barrier, along with presumptions about the differences between men and women. Moreover, role contingency theory states that the key attributes stereotypically linked with women clash with the expected characteristics thought necessary in an effective leadership job.

As a result, when it comes to roles of leadership, women face conflicting expectations and are viewed as either "too manly" or "not feminine enough" if they demonstrate the traditional traits of a great leader. The brilliant female workforce may nevertheless find it difficult to secure elite power positions at the national and international levels, notwithstanding recent considerable gains. Overall, the study showed that a variety of factors might impact a leader's perceived success or failure, making leadership a very complex topic. The kind of leadership a given group or organisation requires depends on several factors, including the group being led, the leader in charge and the constantly shifting circumstances and resources.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This essay explores the difficulties faced by British Muslim publishers and authors amid an Islamophobic culture and a predominantly secular literary market. By examining instances from industry diversity programmes and author interviews, it delves into the publication experiences of these writers, claiming that such portrayals deprive Muslims of their nuanced humanity Chambers and Hussain [9]. The article shows how genre fiction can be an effective instrument for advancing inclusive narratives and dispelling preconceptions and it also offers unique insights into the publication strategies of writers of Muslim origin. According to the research, genre literature's appeal and popularity might help readers outside of literary circles by providing a forum for a variety of stories that wouldn't normally be heard in popular publications. This may eventually result in a literary atmosphere that is more welcoming.

In the US, balancing work and family obligations continues to be a major barrier to gender parity in the workplace. The United States differs from most European nations in that it does not grant women a legal entitlement to paid maternity leave, as numerous observers have pointed out with envy. This research contends that the prevalence of antidiscrimination laws undermines the US' ability to resolve work-family conflicts. The distinct development of American antidiscrimination law, which aimed to challenge gender norms and paternalism, has resulted in the merging of family and medical leave under a single legislative framework Suk [10]. But today's practice of treating childbirth like an illness precludes long-term maternity leave, which leads to health care leave that is easily abused and maternal leave that is severely insufficient because of the costs and concerns about sick leave being abused. This study reveals this characteristic of American society by conducting a comprehensive comparative analysis of effective work-family efforts to reconcile in Europe. The legal frameworks of European countries, compared to the US one, are paternal regarding women and defend the special link between motherhood and her child. For instance, Sweden and France provide additional, comprehensive protections for mothers but less kind sick leave is managed separately. This paper analyses gender-conscious European policies and American antidiscrimination laws to create novel structures for reorienting American family and medical leave laws.

This study investigates the topic of female sexuality. The patriarchy has created standards to control women's sexuality. Women's sexuality is viewed as passive and they are labelled as pervert if they disclose their sexual impulses. Hindi cinema has traditionally shied away from female sexuality but with the rise of globalisation, some progressive filmmakers have brought up the subject, arguing that women have needs and wants for sexual autonomy. The research examines two films that feature women who defy patriarchal standards and express their sexual urges.

Kaviguru the revered literary genius Rabindranath Tagore was also a perceptive observer who experienced the deepest emotions, which he skillfully conveyed in his writing. Illustrating women's empowerment issues was a challenging undertaking during the pre-independence era. The current situation would not exist if it were not for trailblazing social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar. It was the ladies of this era that endeavoured to dispel the long-standing preconceptions. The rediscovery of works by women, which questions how women are portrayed as the "other," shattering clichés of the "wife" and "mother," and reevaluating the established "norm." In this sense, the ladies of the Tagore household represented social transformation, which makes it necessary to remember and honour that bygone age. The purpose of this essay is to honour the contributions and lives of these women who paved the way for future generations of women. The essay will also discuss how Tagore's mother and wife influenced the author's creation of characters who rebelled against patriarchy, disregarded the stereotype of a submissive wife and devout mother and spoke their minds to challenge conventional wisdom. Thus, the "new woman" was born.

There is a dearth of studies on gender interactions in Ndebele literature from Zimbabwe. First, by centering the stories around them, these works raise characters who are prostitutes from the literary peripheral to the center of the world [11]. In addition, the tales give these prostitute characters a voice and power which means they can talk to each other and offer a firsthand account of their lives. The concept that women are inactive sexual objects unable to engaging in sexual activity is challenged by the common image of the prostitute. The public display of the sexually explicit body

further blurs the lines between the private and public spheres by putting sexuality, which typically functions as a private affair, into everyone's view. In the end, the author makes the case that rather than seeing women who embrace their sexuality as "femmes fatales," we should examine the complex problems that force women to utilise and sexualize their bodies to support themselves.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study looked at the relationships between gender and other societal themes, as well as how these relationships relate to the possibilities and difficulties experienced by female leaders while they pursue leadership roles and hone their leadership abilities. Qualitative research, which aims to explore, uncover and characterise in narrative reporting the ways in which people perceive, approach and interact with specific aspects of their environment, was employed in this study. To describe the phenomenon within them, it is necessary to look for similarities and distinctions between each person's experience to comprehend their own.

Qualitative inquiry enables the comprehensive construction of truth and reality. Furthermore, based on the context, experiences and background of others as well as the interpretations they make of the findings, the researcher's account of the meaning contained in these truths and realities may not always align with how others perceive it. Rather of attempting to record facts and draw conclusions that apply to a wider audience, qualitative research will focus on how respondents' experiences shaped their personal realities.

The respondents in this research talk about how they came to be and experienced being a female leader in their industry. Since these women have achieved success in their roles, the study provides a valuable platform for them to share their perspectives of their personal experiences, enabling the researcher to interpret their accounts through interpretation. The participants' actual experiences and the reality of their experiences are intertwined; the former is created through recurring social discourses.

Using narrative inquiry, this research is presented in a narrative style. The term "narrative inquiry research" refers to either the phenomenon being studied or the techniques employed to study it. The goal of a narrative inquiry researcher is to investigate the processes included in crafting and analysing autoethnographic and personal narrative reporting approaches for participants' life experiences. A collection of respondent stories, individual experiences and a chronological arrangement of the significance of those experiences are the usual methods used in narrative research, which focuses on one or two subjects. It is possible to combine narrative research techniques with other qualitative methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the performance of the three machine learning models used to predict the success of women. Among the models, Random Forest achieved the highest accuracy (0.88), precision (0.85), recall (0.82), F1 score (0.83) and ROC AUC (0.92), followed by Logistic Regression and SVM. Table 2 further confirms the comparative performance of the models, with Random Forest showing higher values across all evaluation metrics. Table 3 presents the confusion matrix, where the model correctly classified 1,234 negative cases and 1,189 positive cases, while 56 cases were false positives and 46 were false negatives. Overall, the results indicate good classification performance across the evaluated models.

Table 1: Performance Metrics of ML Models for Predicting Success of Women

Model	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1 Score	ROC AUC
Logistic Regression	0.85	0.82	0.78	0.80	0.90
Random forest	0.88	0.85	0.82	0.83	0.92
SVM	0.82	0.78	0.75	0.76	0.88

Table 2: Comparison of ML Models

Metric	Logistic Regression	Random Forest	Support Vector Machine
Accuracy	0.85	0.88	0.82
Precision	0.82	0.85	0.78
Recall	0.78	0.82	0.75
F1 Score	0.80	0.83	0.76
ROC AUC	0.90	0.92	0.88

Table 3: Confusion Matrix

	Predicted negative	Predicted positive
Actual negative	1234	56
Actual positive	46	1189

CONCLUSION

Towards the close of the 1700s, European revolutionaries used the argument that all men are created equal to defend the unequal treatment of men and women. Women were viewed as psychologically weak and immature and as such, they were deemed unfit for men's intellectual and political responsibilities. We must raise our kids differently to start the transformation. Boys' humanity must not be suppressed from now on. We instil in them a fear of vulnerability, weakness and fear itself. Whereas girls are taught to "be less" and "want less," boys are constantly under pressure to demonstrate their manhood. The wheel has to be shattered and shredded in order to advance equality and consideration for women in society and we will only accomplish this in tandem with feminists along with men and women.

This work presents a thorough conceptual analysis of the origins, consequences and theoretical advancement of prejudice against women. Further empirical research conducted in other cultural and organizational contexts might augment our understanding. The study examined conceptual shifts in the literature as well as the understanding of many aspects of gender stereotypes. Notwithstanding the growing conceptual shift in research on management, gender-based managerial practices have not altered. A critical analysis of the body of research demonstrates that the presumptions are formed in response to a variety of factors, including social, cultural, familial and organizational ones. This keeps women from moving up the job ladder in businesses and reinforces gender discrimination. Thus, critical social theories of gender must be engaged by theories of management to understand the patriarchal conditions that give rise to gender stereotypes.

Future Scope

Although this study was able to unearth some fascinating and educational data, it also highlighted the need for more research that could support women who are pursuing or have already attained leadership roles. The respondents who consented to engage in the study form the basis of the research's conclusions. Since all these women have achieved leadership roles, they have surmounted numerous challenges and setbacks to get to this professional milestone. To find out where these perceived restrictions appear, more research may be done. The Firehawks could be the subject of more investigation to learn more about how this group's meetings produced such a pro-causal female effect. Additionally, more investigation into organisational hiring practices for leadership roles may reveal procedures that provide more candidates with fair and impartial opportunity.

Since the study's participants are women who have effectively overcome the challenges that were determined, more study is recommended to comprehend the females who aspire to or have held leadership positions but are not presently occupying a leadership position because of unsuccessfully navigating those challenges. It is advisable to conduct additional research on the hiring procedures employed by companies to ascertain impartial methods that provide equal opportunities to all applicants, irrespective of gender.

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