

# Comparison of two Leadership Styles between Female and Male Entrepreneurs

## Abstract

The aim of the research was to study the difference between female and male entrepreneurs on two leadership styles : Task Oriented (TO) and Nurturant (N), and its impact on employee behaviour. Managerial Behaviour Questionnaire (MEDS) by CN. Dafatuar (2002) was used to identify leadership styles and Leadership Effectiveness Dimension Scale (LEDS) by Dr. Asha Hingar & Dr. Sangeeta Sharma was administered to identify management practices among entrepreneurs. Nine different instruments were used to measure various employee dimensions such as Organizational Role Stress (ORS), Role-Efficacy (RES), Stress Tolerance level (STL) (Depression, Anxiety, Anger & Type-A), Organizational Commitment (OC), Motivational Orientation (MO) and Conflict Management Style (CMS). The study intended to answer two questions : Which style of leadership has positive impact on various dimensions of employee behaviour? And; whether the impact is experienced positively under female leadership or male leadership. Null hypothesis was generated and was verified by an investigation which was based on interpretation and analysis of the instruments that was obtained through empirical research from 12 female entrepreneurs with 144 employees under them and 12 male entrepreneurs with 144 employees under them, in Mumbai city- India, making a sample size of 312. Study revealed that employees under female entrepreneurs with Task Oriented (TO) leadership style scored significantly lower on ORS, Depression and Anger; whereas higher on Management Practices, RES, OC, MO and Type-A Behaviour. In comparison to that employees under male entrepreneurs scored exactly the opposite to female entrepreneurs. No significant difference was found on the Anxiety dimension between both the groups. For CMS, maximum employees scored higher on compromising, competing and collaborating approach under TO male entrepreneur group, as compared to the other group. For Nurturant (N) leadership style, employees under female entrepreneurs scored significantly higher on ORS, Depression and Anger ; whereas employees under male entrepreneurs scored the opposite and scored higher on Management Practices, RE, MO and Type-A Behaviour dimension. For CMS, maximum employees scored higher on accommodating and collaborating approach under female entrepreneur group and on competing approach, male entrepreneur group scored higher. No significant difference was found on the Anxiety and OC dimensions between both the groups. So we can conclude that employee behaviour under TO leadership style by female entrepreneur has positive impact on employees and employee behaviour under N leadership style by male entrepreneur has positive impact on employees.



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## Introduction

Studies on leadership styles of female entrepreneurs (Dorothy Moore & Holly Butter, 1995) though outside India, revealed that:

1. Interactive style of leadership is preferred and greater value is attached to relation,
2. Women entrepreneurs adopt democratic behaviour more than men entrepreneurs,
3. Women entrepreneurs encourage more teamwork,
4. There is less credit to formal power than personal power,
5. Women entrepreneurs believe in empowering subordinates and
6. Women entrepreneurs are found to be very good managers and are capable of playing multiple roles at the same time.

They tend to have a desire to build than a desire to win (Debra Burrell). Their strengths lie in empowering teams and staff, encouraging openness and responding more quickly to call for assistance. They are more tolerant of differences and so are more skilled at managing diversity, are able to identify problems quickly and more accurately. They are more accessible and better at defining job expectations and providing valuable feedback.

Studies on leadership styles in India by M. Gangadhar Rao & Surya, 1995 suggest that:

1. Most managers are authoritarian,
2. Aged managers prefer autocratic style while young managers prefer participative style and
3. Leadership styles of managers are basically linked with the kind of organizations they work in.

As can be seen from the review of literature, that leadership has been researched and discussed quite extensively. It is increasingly realized that leadership cannot exist without the full inclusion, initiatives and the cooperation of employees. That is to say that one cannot be a great leader without followers. (Warren Bennis 1999). Uday Pareek (2002) therefore very succinctly puts leadership as an act, making an impact on others, in a desired direction.

Studies have indicated that subordinates affect leadership and their behaviour as much as leadership and their behaviour affect subordinates (Barrow, 1976 & Greene & Schriesheim, 1980). Leadership therefore is not just about the leader, but it is also about followers. It is a reciprocal process as it occurs between people. Successful leadership depends far more on follower's perception of the leadership. It is therefore necessary to understand which leadership styles and management practices of the leaders positively influence the behavior of the employees, as organisational performance is critically dependent on employee performance.

Daniel Goleman (1998) cites that "Emotional Competence is central to leadership, a role whose essence is getting others to do their jobs more effectively. Interpersonal ineptitude in leaders lowers everyone's performance. It wastes time, creates acrimony, corrodes motivation and commitment, and builds hostility and apathy. A leader's strength or weakness in emotional competence can be measured in the gain or loss to the organisation of the fullest talents of those they manage."

The present study tries to investigate whether there is any impact on employee behaviour as a result of particular leadership style. Having this in mind, two leadership styles :

Task Oriented and Nurturant have been taken for the present study. Researcher wants to compare these two styles among female and male entrepreneurs and how they impact employee behaviour.

#### **Purpose**

The study was undertaken to compare two leadership styles among female and male entrepreneurs and its impact on employee behaviour.

#### **Methodology**

In order to determine the effect of leadership style in employee behaviour, qualitative research method was used. Entrepreneurs were identified through reference mechanism with specific selection criteria such as:

1. Having employee strength of 90-100 in number,
2. Having investment of 1 - 1.5 crores, and
3. Having made some level of profit since last 5 years.

22 female entrepreneurs and 25 male entrepreneurs agreed to be part of the study and gave permission to interact with their employees. Managerial Behaviour Questionnaire (MEDS) was given to both female and male entrepreneurs, to identify their leadership style. As Task Oriented and Nurturant leadership style was found common between the two, 6 female and 6 male entrepreneurs having TO leadership style and 6 female and 6 male entrepreneurs having Nurturant leadership style were then randomly selected for the present study. 12 employees from each enterprise were then selected, making a total sample of 312.

Employees were selected on the bases of following criteria

1. Employees who had been with the organization since last 2 years and
2. Employees who had the status of permanent rather than short term, temporary employees in the organization.

Each employee under these entrepreneurs was then given a set of 9 questionnaires to be completed within the time frame of 3 hours. They were: Organisational Role Stress Scale developed by Pareek (1981), Role Efficacy Scale developed by Pareek (1981), Depression Scale developed by Zung (1979), Self Rating Anxiety Scale developed by Zung and Cavenar (1990), State-Trait Anger Scale developed by Spielberger (1981), Type-A-Behaviour Scale developed by Gmelch (1982), Organisational Commitment Scale developed by Khokhle (1997), Motivational Orientation Questionnaire developed by Rao (1987), and Conflict Resolution Scale developed by Thomas Kilmann (1974).

#### **Data Analysis**

To study the difference between these two styles and its impact on employee behavior 't' was calculated on the basis of Levene's test for equality of variance. The data determined was statistically analyzed by calculating mean and SD for each dimension under each leadership style. In order to test the difference between mean scores of the two leadership styles, ANOVA and was calculated.

#### **Results and Discussion**

Two Leadership styles: Task Oriented (TO) and Nurturant (N) was found common between female and male entrepreneurs and employee behavior under them was then compared for the present study.

#### **Comparison of Task Oriented (TO) Leadership Style between Female and Male Entrepreneurs**

Table 1-A shows difference between TO female and TO male entrepreneurs on the variable of

management practices where significant difference was found between both the groups. TO female entrepreneur group scored comparatively higher than TO male entrepreneur group, except for Emotional Stabilizer (ES) and Team Builder (TB). This indicates that the female entrepreneur group adopt to TO leadership style, are more Performance Orientors (concerned with the accomplishment of task in stipulated time, has task achievement motive, adherence to high standards of performance, work efficiency, improvisation, prioritization of work and regular reorganization); are more Potential Extractors (focuses on development and utilization of skills and abilities of individuals, are concerned with identification of potential, proper canalization of an individual's potential, provide proper opportunities to employees, delegate adequate authority and confidence builders); are more Value Inculcators (nurtures fundamental and operative values in the organisation, shows commitment to work, organisation loyalty, punctuality, trust-based relationships, acceptance for mistakes and failures and superordinate goals) and are more Socially Intelligent (adapt their own behavior according to the situation, has minimum facial reflection of feelings, good listeners and analyzers, clarifying limitations and constraints, resolving conflicts tactfully and keeping track of latest developments); as compared to male entrepreneur group.

Table 1-B indicates that employees under TO female entrepreneur group scored higher than employees under TO male entrepreneur group on Inter Role Distance (IRD) and Role Overload (RO) dimensions of ORS. Whereas on other dimensions such as Role Expectation Conflict (REC), Role Isolation (RI), Personal Inadequacy (PI), Self-role Distance (SRD), Role Ambiguity (RA), Resource Inadequacy (RIN) and on total ORS, TO male entrepreneur group scored higher than TO female entrepreneur group. Overall ORS was found significantly higher amongst employees under TO male entrepreneur group, indicating that employees experience high level of role-stress, compared to that of the employees under TO female entrepreneurs.

Kindler and Ginsberg (1990) stated that high level of stress affects performance. Kahn et al (1964) found that increased role stress (Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity) results in decline in the frequency of communication. Thus to control ORS among employees it is important for organisations to be more productive and effective.

On Role-efficacy (RE) dimension (Table 1-C) employees under TO female entrepreneur group scored higher than TO male entrepreneur. It can be construed that employees under the female group are higher on factors such as role-making, self role integration, pro-activity, creativity, confrontation, role-centering, centrality, influence, personal growth and role-linking, inter-role-linkage, helping relationship and superordination. It is important how the role of an employee in an organisation is designed. If the role does not allow the employee to use his own

competence, abilities and skills it may lead to frustration and this will eventually make him/her less effective. Thus RE can be seen as the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness (Pareek). Pareek, Dixit & Rao (1992), documented negative relationship between role stress and role efficacy.

On Depression and Anger dimensions of STL, employees under TO male entrepreneur scored higher than TO female entrepreneur, whereas on Type-A-Behaviour dimension, TO female entrepreneur group scored higher than TO male entrepreneur group (Table 1-D). This may be due to high ORS and low level of RE felt by this group. If the entrepreneurs of this group adopted more of management practices such as ES, TB, PE, PO, SI and VI; than the level of depression and anger could be controlled and brought down. Sharma & Sharma (1983) found negative correlation between RE and job anxiety in case of gazetted officers.

On dimensions of OC (Table 1-E) and MO (Table 1-F), TO female entrepreneur group scored higher compared to TO male entrepreneur group. Results from previous studies have shown that organisational commitment is significantly related to improved performance indicators like job preference (Amsa & Puneekar, 1981, 1988, Gupta 1983, Larson & Fukami, 1984; Van Meanem 1975; Porter, Crampond & Smith, 1976; Steers 1977), turnover (Srivastava 1977; Marsh & Mannari 1977; Singh & Das 1978; Angle & Perry 1981; Chelte & Tausky 1986; Koch & Steers 1978; Arnold & Feldman 1982), absenteeism (Smith 1977; Steer 1977; Koch & Steers 1978), tardiness (Angle & Erry 1981) and adaptability (Salanick 1977).

High MO under female entrepreneurs group may be the result of high RE which may be due to less ORS and high level of commitment. McClelland has demonstrated the importance of achievement motive for entrepreneurship and marketing (McClelland & Winter 1971). As far as the dimension under motivation orientation is concerned, Pareek (1968) suggests that extension motive is important for social development. Mc Gregor (1966) recognized the positive value of dependence, and Kotter & Schlesinger (1979) gave importance to this dimension in their studies. Habibullah & Sinha state that leadership style is more likely to generate affiliative orientation in the organisation which may lead to compatible conflict management strategies. Sen (1982) found positive correlation between internality and operational effectiveness of five motives namely, achievement, influence, extension, affiliation and dependence. Pareek in his study found that dependency had negative correlation with supportive (Nurturing Parent) and normative style.

In managing conflict (Table 1-G), maximum employees scored higher on compromising, competing and collaborating approach under TO male entrepreneur group, as

compared to the other group. No significant difference between the two groups was found in avoiding and accommodating approach.

#### **Comparison of Nurturant Leadership Style between Female and Male Entrepreneurs**

Table 2 shows difference between employees under N male and N female entrepreneurs. It can be seen that on the variable of total management practices (Table 2-A) significant difference was found between both the groups on all the 6 dimensions, where N male entrepreneur group was found higher than the other group on Emotional Stabilizer, Team Builder, Potential Extractor, and Socially Intelligent dimensions of management practices, whereas female N entrepreneur group was found higher than the other group on Performance Orientor and Value Inculcator dimensions. In the overall management practices, N male entrepreneur group scored significantly higher than the other group.

Table 2-B indicates total ORS score, where N female entrepreneurs group scored higher than N male entrepreneurs group. On IRD and PI dimension N male entrepreneurs group scored higher, whereas on RS, RE, RO, RI, SRD, RA and RIN dimension, N female entrepreneurs group scored higher. This means that the employees under female entrepreneur group experiences higher ORS compared to the male entrepreneur group.

On Role-efficacy (RE) dimension (Table 2-C), N male entrepreneurs group scored higher than N female entrepreneurs group, on all the

dimensions (role making, role-centering and role-linking). This may be due to low level of ORS felt by the employees and more adaptation of management practices such as ES, TB, PE and SI; by their leaders.

On Depression and Anger dimensions of STL, employees under N female entrepreneur group scored higher than the other group, whereas on Type-A-Behavior dimension N male entrepreneurs group scored comparatively higher (Table 2-D). No difference was found among both the groups on the dimension of Anxiety. Level of depression and anger was experienced more by the employees under female entrepreneur and this may be due to high level of ORS and low level of RE.

No significant difference was found among employees of both the groups on the dimension of OC (Table 2-E). On achievement, affiliation, and aggression dimension as well as on total MO (Table 2-F), employees under N male entrepreneurs group scored higher than N female entrepreneurs group. This group is motivated more as their level of depression and anger is low and level of RE is high.

In managing conflict (Table 2-G) maximum employees scored higher on accommodating and collaborating approach under N female entrepreneur group, as compared to the other group. On competing approach male entrepreneur group scored higher. No significant difference between the two groups was found in avoiding and compromising approach.

**Table -1: Comparison of Male and Female Entrepreneur on Task Oriented Leadership Style**

Sr. No.	Variable	Gender of Entrepreneur				Sig (2 tailed)	Mean Difference
		Male		Female			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
<b>A</b>	<b>Management Practice</b>						
1	Emotional Stabilizer	19.429	1.0579	20.43	1.0579	0.102	-1
2	Team Builder	22.429	1.0579	22.43	1.0579	1	
3	Potential Extractor	22.429	1.0579	26.43	1.0579	0	(*)-4
4	Performance Orientor	24.429	1.0579	26.43	1.0579	0.004	(*)-2
5	Socially Intelligent	22.429	1.0579	24.43	1.0579	0.004	(*)-2
6	Value Inculcator	24.429	1.0579	22.43	1.0579	0.004	(*)2
7	TOTAL	135.57	6.347	142.6	6.347	0.016	(*)-7
<b>B</b>	<b>Organisational Role Stress</b>						
1	Inter Role Distance	6.129	0.761	8.589	0.761	0	(*)-2.46
2	Role Stagnation	6.629	0.761	6.259	0.761	0.38	0.37
3	Role Expectation Conflict	4.829	0.761	3.089	0.761	0.001	(*)1.74
4	Role Erosion	10.157	0.574	9.429	0.761	0.066	0.729
5	Role Overload	4.029	0.761	5.759	0.761	0.001	(*)-1.73
6	Role Isolation	5.229	0.761	4.259	0.761	0.034	(*)0.97
7	Personal Inadequacy	5.829	0.761	2.429	0.761	0	(*)3.4
8	Self-Role Distance	4.929	0.761	3.429	0.761	0.003	(*)1.5
9	Role Ambiguity	4.1286	0.761	1.589	0.761	0	(*)2.54
10	Resource Inadequacy	6.629	0.761	4.259	0.761	0	(*)2.37
11	TOTAL2	58.514	7.4161	49.09	7.6034	0.037	(*)9.4243
<b>C</b>	<b>Role Efficacy</b>						
1	RES	25.686	0.7988	31.23	0.6831	0	(*)-5.544
2	REI (%)	76.14	1.334	85.38	1.14	0	
<b>D</b>	<b>Stress Tolerance Limit</b>						

1	Depression	27.686	0.7221	25.02	0.7221	0	(*)2.67
2	Anxiety	26.586	0.7221	26.39	0.7221	0.614	0.2
3	Anger - S	21.186	0.7221	18.36	0.6849	0	(*)2.8271
4	Anger - T	27.886	0.7221	23.22	0.7221	0	(*)4.67
5	Type of Behaviour	8.986	0.7221	11.67	0.6754	0	(*)-2.687
<b>E</b>	<b>Organisational Commitment</b>						
1	Affective Commitment	3.67	0.1143	4.27	0.1143	0	(*)-0.6
2	Normative Commitment	3.5	0.1143	3.33	0.1143	0.017	(*)0.17
3	Continuance Commitment	2.85	0.1143	2.83	0.1143	0.749	0.02
4	TOTAL3	3.3343	0.1231	3.47	0.1143	0.054	(*)-0.1357
<b>F</b>	<b>Motivational Orientation</b>						
1	Achievement	20.3	0.668	22.56	0.668	0	(*)-2.26
2	Affiliation	17.9	0.6683	20.56	0.6683	0	(*)-2.66
3	Aggression	12.6	0.6683	10.06	0.6683	0	(*)2.54
4	Extension	19.1	0.6683	22.4	0.6683	0	(*)-3.3
5	Dependence	17.5	0.6683	23.24	0.6914	0	(*)-5.7443
6	Control	16.5	0.6683	21.09	0.6774	0	(*)-4.594
7	Total4	103.66	4.4219	119.9	4.1496	0	(*)16.1943
<b>G</b>	<b>Conflict Management Style</b>						
1	Avoiding	4.1	0.245	4.027	0.1824	0.54	0.0729
2	Accommodating	5	0.245	5.027	0.1824	0.818	-0.0271
3	Compromising	8.5	0.245	7.357	0.1824	0	(*)1.1429
4	Competing	5.0714	0.269	4.527	0.1824	0.001	(*)0.5443
5	Collaborating	8.3	0.245	7.501	0.195	0	(*)0.7986

\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

**Table -2 : Comparison of Male and Female Entrepreneur on Nurturant Leadership Style**

Sr. No.	Variable	Gender of Entrepreneur				Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
		Male		Female			
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
<b>A</b>	<b>Management Practice</b>						
1	Emotional Stabilizer	24.9	0.6519	21.9	0.6519	0	(*)3
2	Team Builder	24.9	0.6519	21.9	0.6519	0	(*)3
3	Potential Extractor	25.9	0.6519	23.9	0.6519	0.001	(*)2
4	Performance Orientor	22.9	0.6519	25.9	0.6519	0	(*)-3
5	Socially Intelligent	25.9	0.6519	22.9	0.6519	0	(*)3
6	Value Inculcator	22.9	0.6519	24.9	0.6519	0.001	(*)-2
7	TOTAL	147.4	3.912	141.4	3.912	0.042	(*)6
<b>B</b>	<b>Organisational Role Stress</b>						
1	Inter Role Distance	5.1	0.6285	4.1	0.6285	0.036	(*)1
2	Role Stagnation	3.1	0.6285	4	0.6285	0.053	(*)-0.9
3	Role Expectation Conflict	2.028	0.7053	2.9	0.6285	0.073	-0.872
4	Role Erosion	5.988	0.6311	8.6	0.6285	0	(*)-2.612
5	Role Overload	1.708	0.627	3.2	0.6285	0.006	(*)-1.492
6	Role Isolation	1.37	0.615	4.5	0.6285	0	(*)-3.13
7	Personal Inadequacy	6.428	0.5286	2.9	0.6285	0	(*)3.528
8	Self-Role Distance	1.6	0.6285	3.7	0.6285	0.001	(*)-2.1
9	Role Ambiguity	1.47	0.62849	7.5	0.6285	0	(*)-6.03
10	Resource Inadequacy	2.208	0.627	4	0.6285	0.002	(*)-1.792
11	TOTAL2	31.006	6.23211	45.4	6.2849	0.007	(*)-14.394
<b>C</b>	<b>Role Efficacy</b>						
1	RES	32.88	0.5484	27	0.5431	0	(*)5.88
2	REI (%)	88.05	1.022	78.33	0.908	0	(*)9.72
<b>D</b>	<b>Stress Tolerance Limit</b>						

1	Depression	25.176	0.55288	28.66	0.5595	0	(*)-3.484
2	Anxiety	24.68	0.55946	25.46	0.5595	0.059	-0.78
3	Anger - S	19.18	0.55946	20.16	0.5595	0.024	(*)-0.98
4	Anger - T	23.93	0.55946	25.86	0.5595	0.001	(*)-1.93
5	Type of Behaviour	10.56	0.5595	8.06	0.5595	0	(*)2.5
<b>E</b>	<b>Organisational Commitment</b>						
1	Affective Commitment	4.248	0.08075	4.298	0.0576	0.292	-0.05
2	Normative Commitment	3.86	0.114	3.878	0.0807	0.781	-0.018
3	Continuance Commitment	3.118	0.08075	3.26	0.114	0.053	(*)-0.142
4	TOTAL3	3.742	0.08075	3.81	0.0752	0.205	-0.068
<b>F</b>	<b>Motivational Orientation</b>						
1	Achievement	23.08	0.466	21.48	0.466	0.001	(*)1.6
2	Affiliation	22.58	0.4658	17.58	1.2398	0	(*)5
3	Aggression	11.33	0.46583	9.78	0.4658	0.001	(*)1.55
4	Extension	20.95	0.46583	20.98	0.4658	0.921	-0.03
5	Dependence	21.33	0.46583	21.28	0.4658	0.869	0.05
6	Control	19.468	0.4687	19.88	0.4658	0.201	-0.412
7	Total4	118.74	2.79449	111	3.4252	0.004	(*)7.76
<b>G</b>	<b>Conflict Management Style</b>						
1	Avoiding	3.728	0.1006	3.86	0.1034	0.075	-0.132
2	Accommodating	2.478	0.1006	3.978	0.1006	0	(*)1.5
3	Compromising	6.858	0.1006	6.828	3.2493	0.985	0.03
4	Competing	5.728	0.1006	4.858	0.1006	0	(*)0.87
5	Collaborating	7.728	0.1006	8.68	0.1483	0	(*)-0.952
* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level							

**Practical Implications**

The results imply that female and male entrepreneurs need to give considerable weightage to their styles of functioning as it has serious implications when it comes to their employees. If this is not done than it can negatively affect the employees and indirectly influence their performance and productivity. Human Resource professionals need to work on reducing the role stress and stress tolerance limit of the employees as it negatively affects the role-efficacy, organisational commitment and motivational orientation of employees. They need to work on more of collaborating approach for resolving conflicts as it works as a motivational force and increases the commitment level. With the help of these findings HR professionals can understand how male and female leadership influence employees and affect the organisational climate and structure. Keeping this in mind they can develop organisational development modules to strengthen employee behaviour for better performance.

**Conclusion**

Two leadership styles, Task Oriented and Nurturant were found common between female and male leaders and so comparative study was conducted. Results revealed that TO Male entrepreneur group was high on Organizational Role Stress, Depression, Anger, Compromising, Competing and Collaborating approach to conflict management style; whereas TO Female entrepreneur group was high on Management Practices, Role-Efficacy, Organisational Commitment and Motivational Orientation. Results of the comparison between N Male and N Female entrepreneur group revealed that N Male entrepreneurs group was high on

Management Practices, Role-Efficacy, Type-A Behaviour and Motivational Orientation; whereas N Female entrepreneur group was high on Organizational Role Stress, Depression and Anger.

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