

## **Gender in Management: A Sociological Perspective**

**Gill Palmer**

Professor of Management  
University of Wollongong  
AUSTRALIA

**Tamilselvi Kandasami**

Department of Management  
University of Wollongong  
AUSTRALIA

### **Introduction**

This paper starts with an overview of the literature on gender differences in managerial behaviour. Much of the research on management ignores or denies any difference between genders. On the other hand, research on management style and gender stereotypes demonstrates that there are real differences in culturally approved communication and interpersonal influence methods used by men and women (Palmer, 1993; Willis, 1990). Empirical findings from a study on women small business owners is used to explain androgyny. We review the evidence for the existence of a 'glass ceiling' causing discrimination against women in management. We then suggest a theoretical framework of the management process which can be used to analyse the various ways that gender stereotypes impact on the management processes used within management.

When we talk about gender in management, few people would say that women have made great strides in every walk of life. Since the 1970s women have succeeded in combining careers with families and are moving into male-dominated professions such as law, industry and commerce, but are still not well represented in the more senior positions (Grimwood & Popplestone, 1993). In order to explain this phenomenon we will be discussing the sociological construction of women and men as genders. 'women' and 'men' and 'masculinity' are socially and culturally produced and vary with the society and the social context (Symons, 1992). For many years, men were able to hold power at all levels because they were free of childbearing and child rearing responsibilities and so available to participate in social and political life.

This paper begins by discussing the two assumptions of women in management which can be labeled the 'equity model' or 'complementary contribution model'. The first model is based on assumed similarity and the second

one based on assumed differences (Adler & Izraely, 1988, pp. 5-6). According to them, 'the equity model is most pervasive in United States and women are identical to men, as professionals, and therefore are capable of making different, but equally valuable, contributions to the organization. In equity model, there is one best way to manage and women should be given the equal access to that way. From the second perspective, there are different ways of managing and the best way is to recognize, value and combine the differences to produce a synergy. However, in the present day context, though women in management is not something new, they still seem to be '*running on a foreign track*', under conditions of initial handicap.

### Similarities or Differences

This section analyses the similarities and differences that were noted in the research done in the past. These research findings have been grouped under five categories: leadership, self-confidence, commitment, supervisor-subordinate relationship and motivation.

#### *(1) Similarities (The "Equity Model")*

##### Leadership

In the area of leadership behaviour, Nieva and Gutek (1981) have concluded in a review of literature that no sex differences have been uncovered by research focusing on behaviour. Some of the studies found that there is no difference in the leadership style whether the leaders are being described by themselves or being described by their subordinates (Bartol, 1978; Dobbins & Platz, 1986) and in Greek organisations Bourantas & Papalexandris (1992) found the same; when the influence of age, education and experience are controlled (Osborn & Vicars, 1976; Brenner, 1972). and Tkach (1980) have stated that there is no difference in the psychological mental make-up of male-up of male and female managers. Donnell and Hall (1980) and Powell (1990) found that female and male managers did not differ in task-oriented or people-oriented behaviour towards subordinates. Trempe *et al.* (1985), from their survey on pharmaceutical manufacturing company in Montreal reported that both male female managers had the same level of concern for their employees. According to them, when the power resources were held constant, the supervision approach was the same for both men and women. The results of an Australian study revealed that there is no significant difference in the way male and female supervisors exert influence on their staff (Vilkinas, 1988, p. 157). Kazemek, (1991) has concluded that most research supports the position that gender is not a significant variable in a discussion of leadership. A man and woman who were described as equal leaders did not differ in the strength of agentic and communal traits (Gerber, 1988). In another study by on 137 men and 115 women managers in

public service, Carter *et al* (1980) found no significant difference in expressed assertiveness.

### Self-Confidence

The stereotype against women is that they lack in self-confidence when compared to men. In a study on self-confidence of 437 managers (in Florida) in work and social situations, Chusmir *et al* (1992) found that men and women managers were not significantly different in self-confidence in both work and social situations, but both were higher in self-confidence at work than the same gender was in the social/family environment. Earlier, Carr *et al* (1985) reported that self-confidence scores did not vary significantly when performing masculine, feminine and neutral tasks, but women scored considerably higher on feminine and neutral tasks than on the masculine ones.

### Commitment

Aven, Jr. *et al* (1993) have reported that gender has virtually no impact on an individual's belief in and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values or an individual's willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation. In their meta-analysis, they found little support for the positive relationship between gender and organisational commitment. This reiterates the view of Powell (1990) who mentioned that there is no consistent evidence regarding difference between genders. According to Brenner (1982), when education levels are controlled in the organisation, there is no difference between men and women managers.

### Supervisor-Subordinate Relationship

The sex differences that have been found are few, found in laboratory studies more than field studies, and tend to cancel each other out. According to Bartol & Butterfield (1976), once subordinates have worked for both male and female managers, the effects of stereotypes disappear and managers are treated as individuals rather than representatives of their sex. Seifert & Miller (1988) in their study found that the willingness of the subordinates to work with the leader did not differ as a function of the sex of the leader. As far as the performance on problem solving is concerned, it is not affected by either the sex or sex-type (Beckham *et al*, 1988). Place (1981) argues that the style does not depend on the sex of the manager but on the sex of the managed. Goktepe & Schneier (1988) in their study found no differences between effectiveness evaluations received by male and female leaders, nor among ratings received by leaders with masculine, feminine or androgynous gender role orientations. Chusmir and Parker (1991) based on their study on 258 managers found that both women and men managers reported strikingly similar work values, but personal value ranking showed substantial differences

## 2. Differences (*The "Complementary Contribution Model"*)

The previous section dealt with the research on similarities ("Equity Model") between male and female managers. The following section will give an insight into the research that had the perspective of "Complementary Contribution Model" and explain the differences that were observed between male and female managers. Research about possible differences between men and women as managers is meager and what there is, is sometimes conflicting (Beckstrom, 1989, p. 9). Some researchers (Rosener, 1990; Bardwick, 1980; Gilligan, 1982) say that there are differences between genders in management styles. Brown's (1979) review reported that only three out of thirteen studies found sex differences in managerial behaviour between the sexes. "Men and women do differ in terms of the values, they attach to various organisational rewards, their commitment to work, the satisfaction they receive from work, and the sources of that satisfaction, the extent to which they are motivated by achievement, affiliation to power needs, and the sources to which they and others attribute their success or failures" (Harriman, 1985, p. 145). Traditional sex-role stereotypists such as Ruble & Ruble (1982) have stated that males are masculine (e.g., self-reliant, aggressive, competitive, decisive) and females are more feminine (e.g., sympathetic, gentle, shy, sensitive to the need of others).

### Leadership

The perception that women are less effective managers may reflect reality, that men and women may be equally effective managers but may not be perceived as such because of certain differences in style or approach. A basic underlying premise to be tested, then, is the notion that men and women may arrive at the same end by slightly different routes (Statham, 1987). She also questioned the traditional management style topologies, based largely on men's behaviour. Very few studies have considered the possibility that women may in fact behave differently as managers in ways that enhance their performance (Statham, 1987).

Rosener (1980) has presented some evidence concerning women's strength as managers, as did Nickles and Ashcraft (1981). Grant (1988) asserted that women have unique qualities such as affiliation and attachment, cooperativeness, nurturance, and emotionality. Males are favoured (stereotypical difference) in effectiveness ratings studies in laboratory settings. In dealing with the poor performer, stereotypical difference exists in that males use norm of equity and women use norms of equality. With regard to influence strategies, stereotypical difference exists. Males were found to be using wider range of strategies, more positive and less negative strategies. Instone *et al* (1983) have reported that their results demonstrated that males tended to make more influence attempts than females and used a wider

range of strategies. However, this difference diminishes when the women have high self-confidence.

### Confidence

Women had significantly lower confidence in an investment task than men, after controlling for all other relevant variables and characteristics including the amount of the decision itself (Estes & Hosseini, 1988). Women with high self-confidence differed less from men in their use of influence strategies than women with low self-confidence, suggesting that sex differences in influence strategies may disappear as women gain experience in managerial positions (Powell, 1988, p. 157) and supported by Tang (1992) in his study of Taiwan women managers.

### Commitment

In a study of nearly 2,000 managers, women managers reported lower basic needs and higher needs for self-actualisation (Donnell & Hall, 1980). Gender research also has concentrated primarily on attitudinal commitment to the organisation, but the results are mixed (Aven, Jr. *et al*, 1993). Mowday *et al* (1982) cited four studies indicating that women are more attitudinally committed than men. Women managers possess traits superior to those of their male counterparts (see Davidson & Cooper, 1987) because they have to overcome stereotypical attitudes about their unsuitability for management. Contrary to this, other studies have found women to be less attitudinally committed than men in professional associations (Graddick & Farr, 1983) and in the accounting profession (Aranya *et al*, 1986). Support for this view is partially confirmed by a meta-analysis showing a slight relationship between sex and attitudinal commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

### Superior-Subordinate Relationship

As far as subordinates' responses are concerned, in laboratory settings, stereotypical differences are found. Subordinates favour styles that match appropriate sex role stereotypes. In the field studies, there is no difference found. Sex of the leader and sex of subordinates may interact with various other factors to influence how subordinates view themselves relative to their leader. Subordinates showed a preference for continuing to work with a successful leader rather than an unsuccessful one (Seifert & Miller, 1988).

Cook and Mendleson (1984) have compared the power dimensions for men and women managers. They found that women scored higher in the categories labeled experimenting and venturesome, while men scored higher in tough-minded, assertive, and self-sufficient. Both groups scored equally in the category titled expedient.

Gregory (1990) discusses the gender differences under three streams: personality, motivation to manage, and leadership. The four personality traits commonly measured are dominance, responsibility, achievement and self-assurance (e.g., Donnell and Hall, 1980). Mostly research done in laboratory settings reveal that women managers have a lower level of self-confidence (Gregory, 1990). Managers, whether male or female tend to exhibit masculine characteristics (Powell & Butterfield, 1984). Although there are few if any personality differences between male and female managers, the perception still exists that women rank lower in the possession of qualities important for managers (Massengil & DiMarco, 1979; Rosen & Jerdee, 1978)

## **Stereotypes**

In the earlier sections, the literatures on gender differences in management suggest that more studies favour what we discussed as "equity model" and the differences that have been cited were mostly due to stereotypes. The following section gives an over view of the studies on sex role stereotypes and the managerial stereotypes.

### *(1) Sex Role Stereotypes*

Social scientists define stereotypes as sets "of beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people". Sometimes these attributes or traits are generalised from direct experience, at other times they are based on culturally transmitted information, because they refer to groups with which perceivers have little direct experience (O'Leary & Ickovics, 1992, p. 9). Stereotyping is the process of categorising an individual into a particular group, and attributing a set of characteristics to the individual on the basis of group membership. Sex role stereotypes related to management seem to evolve from the common views of males as more task-oriented, objective, independent, aggressive, and generally better able than females to handle managerial responsibilities. Females on the other hand are viewed as more passive, gentle, consideration-oriented, more sensitive and less suited than males for positions of high responsibility in organisations (Marshall, 1984).

The existence of sex role stereotypes has been documented by numerous researchers (e.g., Maccoby, 1966). When a person engages in sex role stereotyping, that person tends to attribute a respective set of characteristics to an individual based primarily on whether the individual is male or female..... The existing stereotypes also exert some pressures on females to engage in a task oriented leadership style, despite evidence in the leadership literature that the appropriateness of leadership styles varies with the situation' (Davidson & Cooper,

1992, p. 90). According to Eagly (1989), gender role stereotypes are reflections of the specialisation of the sexes in different types of productive activity - men have greater economic responsibility (as well as status and power), women greater domestic responsibility. Managerial stereotypes can arise solely in response to sexual division of labour.

## *(2) Managerial Stereotypes*

Successful manager is stereotypically defined as one who has got qualities, attitudes, behaviour and temperament that were more commonly ascribed to men than to women (Schein, 1973, 1975, McGregor, 1967)<sup>1</sup> The words McGregor used also reflected on the gender bias in management theories. The stereotypical model of McGregor still remains a forceful contributor in shaping the unconscious attitudes toward men, management, and women in management. Hennig & Jardim (1977) have reported that men are more aggressive when vying for promotions than women. According to Rizzo & Mendez (1992), because of this lack of reinforcement and limited acceptability for aggressive behaviour, women had little chance for successfully breaking the traditional, male-dominated job barriers.

According to O'Leary & Ickovics (1992, p. 11), "most stereotypes of women managers can be roughly classified into two types: women managers behave too much like women (i.e., too sensitive, emotional, family rather than career oriented) or women managers behave too much like men (i.e., too competitive, deceitful, aggressive). When a woman manager is feminine, she is criticised for being too "soft" on decisions, too emotional, and lacking leadership skills. Ironically when a woman succeeds aggressively, she is often criticised for failing to live up to the feminine image (stereotypically defined)".

A number of studies provide evidence of the existence of traditional gender role stereotypes of women as managers (Massengil & DiMarco, 1979; Powell & Butterfield, 1989; Sutton & Moore, 1985). Sex role stereotypes persist, despite clear evidence that male and female managers are similar in a wide variety of personality traits and job-related skills and behaviours (e.g., Brown, 1979; Dobbins & Platz, 1986; Powell, 1988). Evidence for the pervasive belief that men make better leaders than women remains strong (Powell, 1988). According to Shore (1992), gender bias still exists in the workplace though the occurrence of blatant bias may be less frequent today because of the legislation and social awareness of the problem.

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<sup>1</sup> McGregor (1967, p. 23) said that "The model of the successful manager in our culture is a masculine one. The good manager is aggressive, competitive, firm and just. He is not feminine; he is not soft or yielding in the womanly sense". This is a very sexist comment not only against women but also men who are effective managers having some essential feminine qualities.

Sex role stereotypes suggest that men, being masculine, will be higher in task-oriented behaviour and women, being feminine, will be higher in people-oriented behaviour. However, sex role stereotypes are not supported when the results of different studies are considered as a whole (Powell, 1990). Powell asked a question as to whether there are basic differences between male and female managers. According to him, traditional sex role stereotype theorists such as Ruble and Ruble (1982) have stated that males are masculine (e.g., self-reliant, aggressive, competitive, decisive) and females are more feminine (e.g., sympathetic, gentle, shy, sensitive to the needs of others). Grant's (1988) views of male-female differences mirrored these stereotypes. However, there is disagreement over the applicability of these stereotypes to managers (Powell, 1990).

On reviewing literature, it may be understood that the stereotypes are not exactly reflecting traits based on sex but the sex typing. For example, high femininity in females has consistently been correlated with high anxiety, low self-esteem, and low social acceptance, and high masculinity in males has been correlated with high anxiety, high neuroticism, and low self-acceptance (Cosentino & Heilbrun, 1984).

### (3) Androgyny

Korabik (1990) has proposed that adopting androgynous management style may help women to overcome the negative effects of sex stereotyping in the workplace. There is a confusion over the issue of who will make a good and effective manager and the need is already felt for incorporation of feminine skills in the essential managerial characteristics. Androgynous management is defined by Sargent (1981, p. 12) as '*a style that blends behaviours previously deemed to belong exclusively to men or women*'. This raises a question whether androgyny will be the answer for the problems of women in management. Androgyny style is considered to be a balanced one with equal number of feminine and masculine characteristics. An androgynous manager may be combining the styles of female and male management styles. (e.g., both competent and caring). According to Still (1988), 'while feminine qualities are valued in women managers, androgyny still does not provide the solution to their acceptance problem. This contradiction may be due to the different expectations of the management and the subordinates on how a woman manager should behave. There has been a series of research to find whether an effective or successful manager is androgynous or not (Powell, 1988; 1990).

Bem (1974) contends that androgynous people will be more effective than sex-typed individuals due to their broader repertoire of behaviours and greater flexibility. In the area of leadership, both task-orientation and social-emotionality are seen as necessary for good group functioning (Bales, 1951) and both initiating structure and consideration have been determined to be essential to leadership



effectiveness (Fleishman, 1973; Stogdill, 1974). Similarly, according to theories of conflict management (Blake & Mouton, 1978) the best (i.e., win-win) outcomes result when approaches which are high in both concern for self and concern for the other party (Korabik, 1990). According to Fateri & Kleiner (1992), recent evidence supports the ideology that a good manager needs to have both feminine and masculine traits.

Bem (1974) has proposed a theory of sex-role orientation in which masculinity and femininity are viewed as two uncorrelated bipolar dimensions. Masculine characteristics are those related to instrumentality and agency, whereas feminine traits are those in the interpersonal and expressive domains. 'Psychological androgyny is a personality structure involving high levels of masculine (instrumental/assertive) and feminine (empathetic/expressive) behavioural attributes' (Baril *et al*, 1989, p. 235). However, there are many conceptual and measurement problems associated with androgyny.

Korabik (1990) has stated that androgynous men are as masculine as masculine men, but they are also much higher in femininity and so is the case with females too. There are several parallels between Bales' theory of leadership (1951, 1953) and Bem's androgyny theory (1974). According to Korabik (1990), both are dialectical models which are based on the same two underlying dimensions - instrumentality and expressiveness. The idea of androgynous leadership has been discussed frequently in management literature (Sargent, 1981).

Bem (1974) presented evidence for males not being masculine and women not feminine. Korabik (1990) says that leadership is a function of sex-role orientation rather than of biological sex. Individuals with androgynous gender role orientation gave significantly higher effectiveness evaluations than individuals with masculine or feminine gender role orientations (Goktepe & Schneier, 1988).

#### *(4) Study On Women Small Business Owners*

From the study on women small business owners in Illawarra, Kandasaami (1993) observed that these women were androgynous. The androgyny score was obtained by using the Bem's (1974) Sex Role Inventory. This reflects the relative amounts of masculinity and femininity that the person includes in her self-description, and this characterises the nature of that person's sex role. The respondents of this study were more androgynous than Bem's (1974) students and they had high masculine characteristics. The latter finding was similar to Waddell's (1983) study on women entrepreneurs in the UK.

Scale	Bem's Research ( Students)	Illawarra Study (Women Entrepreneurs)
Masculine Items	3.46	5.33
Feminine Items	5.55	4.78
Neutral Items	3.98	3.78
Androgyny Score*	2.09	1.36

\* *Androgyny score is the absolute difference between the scores on masculine and feminine characteristics. The lower the score the more androgynous the nor.<nn is*

### *(5) Implications For Women In Management*

Women managers are a selected group of women who are high in masculinity (Fagenson and Horowitz, 1985; Korabik & Ayman, 1987) because of the masculine/task-oriented stereotype of the ideal managers (McGregor, 1967; Massengil and DiMarco, 1979; Powell and Butterfield, 1979, 1984; Schien, 1973, 1975) still persists. This type of hidden requirement for women to conform to masculine ideal, often puts them in a double bind situation. However, the subordinates do not evaluate positively women who do not conform the sex stereotyped roles (Watson, 1988). Women managers therefore have a problem balancing the expectations of the superiors and subordinates. Androgyny could be a possible solution for solving this dilemma as androgynous persons have both feminine and masculine characteristics. Powell and Butterfield (1979, 1984) have shown that the general perception of the stereotypic "good manager" is one of masculinity (high in assertiveness/instrumentality) rather than androgyny. Powell and Butterfield's results have been consistent across time and for very large samples of subjects. Baril *et al* (1989) surveyed 72 first line supervisors and their 759 subordinates in seven organisations. This study found that being relatively high in masculinity is important for the success of female managers and that this in combination with the maintenance of an average (for females) level of femininity makes the successful female manager androgynous in a general sense.

The sample of supervisors was chosen from small organisations in a metropolitan area where traditional values and attitudes seem to be emphasised. In this type of social context, both responses to androgyny and the actual form it takes are likely to be more negative than in other situations. Task structure, stress, and how traditional the cultural climate is seem to be particularly likely candidates to be variables in future research.

Davidson and Cooper (1992, p. 95) has remarked that that the concept of androgyny (that is the combination of both masculine and feminine qualities such as emotional expressiveness and decisiveness), originally devised by Bem (1974), would prove most beneficial for women in management. Powell and Butterfield (1989) advocated that the 'androgynous management style' implies a flexibility of

response associated with situational theories of leadership. Maupin (1989) has reported that the level of employees' satisfaction increases as his or her supervisor becomes more androgynous.

## **International Figures On Women In Management**

The following section reviews the status of women managers in different countries by reviewing the research done and summarise the statistics on women managers and the barriers faced by them in their career. We try to compare the position of women and see whether any common pattern emerges out of this and if not, what are the causes for the difference?

### *(1) Women Managers In Asia*

Singson (1985) has observed that women hold 1 percent or less of senior posts in the largest corporations in Southeast Asia. However, Williams (Sydney Morning Herald, 9h March 1993, p. 8) has quoted the words of Professor Licaunna of Phillipines that 'female representation in the top level management has reached about 20% in Singapore and the Philippines, the highest in the region'. In Singapore, the ratio of women in the employment force has risen from 7% in 1970 to 17.8% in 1983. This increase is mainly due to the launching of two developmental policies by the Singaporean Government. (Chan, 1988, p. 60). These were supported by economic conditions and women's career aspirations. As per the figures available for 1976 in Indonesia, 22.5% of the administrators/managers in the age group of 25-44 years were women of which only 1.4% from private sectors. as against a 39.5% men in the administrators/managers category (Crockett, 1988). Women constitute 39.7% of the workforce in Japan. However, in Japan, there is only a 0.8% of women managers in Government and is more than twice the 0.3% of women managers in the private sectors. The poor representation of women has been attributed to the Japanese management culture (Steinhoff & Tanuka, 1988). The notable corporate barrier faced by Singaporean women managers is the hesitation of the management to employ women for top management positions (Chang, 1988). Crockett (1988) has also mentioned about the "invisible barrier" that Indonesian women managers might have to face when they go up in the hierarchy. The poor representation of women managers in Japan is due to the Japanese managerial culture.

### *(2) Women Managers In Other Countries*

women. The female labour participation in Canada is 54% in 1984 and in 1981, 9% of all senior managers were women. 38% of the working population is represented by women in Germany. The German laws give primary importance to women in domestic role and secondary consideration to women at work (Antal & Krebsbach-Gnath, 1988). According to Blochet-Bardet *et al* (1988), in Switzerland,

36% of the workforce is constituted by women. Four general types of barriers are identified amongst German women managers: socio-economic, educational, socio-psychological and systemic barriers. Antal & Krebsbach Gnath (1988) stated that socio-psychological barriers faced by German women do not differ significantly from those faced by women managers in Western Countries. Switzerland is conservative in terms of the rights of women and their place in society. Most of the women here are concentrated in least prestigious occupations and at the lower levels of the organisational hierarchies (Bardet *et al*, 1988). At present, the number of women managers in top positions in UK are only nominal but there are signs of improvement (Hammond, 1988). The glass ceiling is invisible but in UK women experience it as a very real barrier when they vie for promotion to top jobs (Davidson & Cooper, 1992, p. 15).

### *(3) Women Managers In U.S.A*

In 1989, nearly 40% of all US managers were women, according to US Department of Labour. Although women have made great strides in entering management, the proportion of women who hold top management positions is less than 3 percent (Powell, 1990). This shows clearly that there is some difference between male and female managers. This difference may be due to the differences in the personality traits or the environmental factors. Most of the studies have addressed this issue and reported that there is no difference in their personality traits (eg., Donnell & Hall, 1980). Carr-Ruffino (1991) studied the issues women managers believe as crucial to future success, the reasons for the lack of women at the top, ways of achieving a more equitable balance, specific barriers women face in attempting to move into senior positions, strategies they believe are successful in overcoming such barriers and specific concerns regarding the dual roles of wife/mother and manager. The reason for the under representation of women in top management is the reluctance of men to share power. "Many women managers refer to the lack of women managers at the top or imbalance problem as a "glass ceiling" (Morrison *et al*, 1987) between their mid-management positions and the top; "glass" because it is invisible. They do not see it, but they experience it as a very real barrier when they vie for promotion to top jobs' (Carr-Ruffino, 1991, p. 10)

### *(4) Women Managers In Australia*

According to the facts and figures released by the Bureau of Census and Statistics under the classification of manager/administrator 23.9% are women, which is an increase of 15.3% from 8.6% in 1985. Still (1986) has reported that the number of women in top management is only 2.4% with the majority of female managers being in service industries. Vilkinas (1991) has developed a force field diagram giving the factors which have contributed and hindered their progress in management. A number of changes that helped women to progress in management

arena are: legislation, action of women, changes in the structure of work, infrastructure, role models and educational streaming (Vilkinas, 1991). Lot of support groups such as social and professional groups and educational institutions encourage women in pursuing a career in management.

To summarise the literature on women in management world-wide, it may be observed that more or less the same percentage (around 36-40%) of the workforce is constituted by women in different countries. The percentage varies for women in senior managerial positions in different countries (though we do not have the data for all the countries) and this difference is probably due to the different kind of legislation protecting the rights of working women such as Equal Employment Opportunity Laws. It may also be observed that the so called invisible barrier "glass ceiling" exists all most in all the countries (both developed and developing) which we discussed earlier. The following section is on tracing the causes and on theorising the problem.

The figures from across the world therefore confirm the belief that in spite of increase in the proportion of people accepting women managers, there are some barriers too. The barriers or restraining forces (Vilkinas, 1991) have been identified as: attitudes of women (Ilgen & Youtz, 1986), missed opportunities (Still, 1986), few developmental opportunities (Still, 1986), conflict of needs, not enough child care facilities (Facts & Figures, 1991)), positions occupied (Bryson, 1987), different perceptions (Bryson, 1987), doubts about long term commitments (Still, 1988), slow to modify work environment (Still, 1990), and old boy network (Still, 1990). Vilkinas (1991) has concluded that as more women take up managerial positions, they will no longer be considered an oddity.

### **Gender And The Management Process**

Attempts to find theoretical explanations for the glass ceiling effects and gendered differences in management style have taken several forms. Gregory (1990) groups existing work into three categories: *person-centred* represented by Horner (1968) and Hennig and Jardim (1977). This type of explanation blames women's limited progression on factors that are internal to women (see for example, Fagenson and Horowitz, 1985). The second category is *organisation-centred*, and the best representative of this approach is Kanter (1977). The third category, *gender contest*, combines three streams of research: gender stereotyping, gender numerical proportions and gender ascribed social status (e.g., Marshall, 1984).

These studies suggest that organisational variables need to be considered if we are to gain a comprehensive view of the issues surrounding the impact of gendered stereotypes on management. In this paper we now turn to focus on managerial processes within organisations. If we are to understand the role of

socially constructed gender stereotypes in management, then we need to consider not only women and their styles of behaviour, or perceptions of appropriate behaviour by organisational members. We also need to turn our attention to the complex process of management itself.

Recent organisation theory has noted the value of multiple perspectives to analyse the extraordinary complexity of organisational life (Morgan 1980, 1986).

"Any realistic approach to organisational analysis must start from the premise that organisations can be many things at one and the same time. A machinelike organisation designed to achieve specific goals can simultaneously be: a species of organisation that is able to survive in certain environments but not others; an information-processing system that is skilled in certain kinds of learning but not in others; a cultural milieu characterised by distinctive values, beliefs, and social practices; a political system where people jostle to further their own ends; an arena where various subconscious or ideological struggles take place; an artifact or manifestation of a deeper process of social change; an instrument used by one group of people to exploit and dominate others; and so on. Though managers and organisation theorists often attempt to override this complexity by assuming that organisations are ultimately rational phenomena that must be understood with reference to their goals or objectives, this assumption often gets in the way of realistic analysis. If one truly wishes to understand an organisation it is much wiser to start from the premise that organisations are complex, ambiguous and Paradoxical" (Morgan, 1986 p321-2).

Morgan used metaphors to view organisations from a number of perspectives, and he analysed organisations as machines, as organisms, as brains, as cultures, as political systems, as psychic prisons, as logics of change of flux and transformation, and as instruments of domination. This multiple perspective approach has been adopted by others to help to understand the *managerial* processes within organisations (Bolman and Deal, 1991, Reed, 1989, Palmer and Dunford, 1993)

Palmer and Dunford studied the extent that managers valued the use of multiple perspectives, or 'reframing' as an analytical tool. They concluded that it was not the use of *particular* frames of reference, but the generic use of a multiple perspective approach, that was useful (Palmer & Dunford, 1993). What frames of reference, what perspectives are best for exploring the impact of gender stereotypes on management? Bolman and Deal (1991) distinguished between structural, human resource, political and cultural perspectives on organisations. Reed (1989), used a contrast between technical, political and critical perspectives of management.

In this paper we distinguish between bureaucratic, political and cultural perspectives, or frames of reference, on management. These have been developed from the classification first used in Gardner & Palmer (1992, pp 195-200). We use these three quite different perspectives on management to discuss the ways gender stereotypes might affect, or be affected by, the managerial processes.

### *1. The Bureaucratic Process of Management*

Our first perspective on management focuses on administration and the establishment of the programs and procedures that are designed to control organisational life. Administrative controls lie at the heart of our ability to build formal organisations in which the activities of large numbers of people are co-ordinated towards the achievement of specified goals. Reed (1989, pp. 2-6) referred to this perspective on management as the 'technical' perspective, which sees management as a formal structure of rationally designed technical, bureaucratic and financial controls. Under this perspective management is seen as an instrumental tool, a means to obtain the efficiencies needed to achieve organisational goals. Morgan's metaphor of an organisational machine, and Boreman and Deal's structural perspective are associated with these ideas. We prefer to use the label of 'bureaucracy' to describe this perspective, because it can then be related to the long tradition of organisational analysis that stemmed from Weber's classic analysis of rational administration (Weber, 1947 translation).

Arising from Weber's analysis, bureaucracy can be seen as a set of organisational controls designed to make explicit, formalized structures of duties and rewards. Weber discussed various bureaucratic techniques, which we can divide into two sets. First are those which establish hierarchies of work responsibilities, specialised work roles and detailed systems of supervision and performance monitoring. Second (and often ignored in later organisational theories) are those which specify equitable and meritocratic policies on recruitment, promotion, dismissal, retirement and the rewarding and disciplining of employees (see Palmer, 1983). If we view management from the bureaucratic perspective, what light does this throw on issues of gender and management?

### *Bureaucracy And Gender*

Weber's theoretical work has been reviewed by Sydie (1987) in the context of modern feminism, who notes that Weber's action framework, and his definition of power are 'sex neutral'. However Weber's ideal type model of patriarchy rested on what were regarded as 'natural' structures of male dominance. Sydie argues that patriarchy lay at the base of the other ideal types of domination that Weber identified, and therefore that includes the ideal type model of bureaucracy (Sydie, 1987, pp 83-87).

The research into management style, reviewed at the beginning of this paper, demonstrates how notions of authority have been associated with personality and behavioural characteristics traditionally regarded as exclusively male. Weber's concept of bureaucracy rests the notion of rational-legal authority. This should be socially neutral, but wider assumptions about gender or race held by a community may conflict with the notion of a totally neutral, rational-legal authority. If external social attitudes do define certain groups as inappropriate for positions of organisational authority, then those groups will find they are not granted the normal legitimacy associated with their office. Their authority may be subject to more attack than normal. Sexual or racial harassment and political attack may be successfully used as strategies to reassert the status quo and challenge the legitimate authority of people who do not come from the dominant social groups (eg. Di Tomasco, 1989 and Sheppard, 1989).

On the other hand, given sufficient political strength, groups suffering social discrimination can use bureaucratic techniques to challenge that discrimination. Disadvantaged groups have often used 'rational - legal' argument to support campaigns for social change. Trade unions found their economic claims gained greater acceptance and were more likely to result in the establishment of institutional negotiations if they were sold with bureaucratic arguments, for example on precedent, comparability and seniority. Such arguments could be used to incorporate union demands into new structures of shared or negotiated control that altered, but did not replace, the bureaucratic regulations (Palmer 1983, chapter 10 and Gospel & Palmer 1993, p 194) <sup>2</sup>. Discriminated groups argue efficiency and justice to back their claims for equity. They seek the imposition of bureaucratic regulations, bureaucratic selection criteria and formal appointment systems to enforce non-discriminatory decision making.

Pringle (1992) has analysed the strategies used by women to work within masculine organisational cultures. She notes the reformist strategies adopted by Australian femocrats <sup>3</sup>. These "constantly monitor the perils of co-option and assimilation against their feminist agenda for change through some (but how much) compromise". Women who work in this challenging but somewhat uncomfortable position describe three tactics as follows: 'camouflage' whereby they hide an activist agenda by first working hard to gain respect from the organisation; the 'double agent' tactic, and finally, the 'pincer' movement between the pressure within the organisation to conform to old standards, and the pressure without the organisation to promote reform <sup>4</sup>. Similar problems faced the early union representatives who

<sup>2</sup> Gospel & Palmer 1993 p194, or Palmer (1983) chapter 10 for a discussion of the impact of precedent, seniority and rationality in the collective bargaining that structured work.

<sup>3</sup> Femocrats have been defined as women whose bureaucratic organisational roles have been created by the various state and federal Equal Opportunity laws

<sup>4</sup> See also McKinlay R, (1990) "Feminists in the Bureaucracy" *Women's Studies Journal*, 6 (1/2) pp72-95.



worked to establish industrial relations systems of collective bargaining or compulsory arbitration. They balanced radical and reforming agendas against a perceived need to gain legitimacy and acceptance from those they were trying to influence. Rational-legal arguments were backed by economic sanctions. Finally, new industrial relations structures were built to establish new rules that were mutually agreed by the old protagonists, on issues like the price of labour and hours of work.

Advocates of gender equality have used bureaucratic, rational legal arguments and have mobilised political rather than economic sanctions in their campaigns. The significance of such bureaucratic and political action is apparent in the figures comparing the position of woman in management in different countries. In the gender, rather than the industrial relations area, this action has resulted in new legislation and administrative policy-making, rather than collective bargaining or market mechanisms to implement change.

## *2. Political Processes In Management*

The bureaucratic perspective has often been criticised for ignoring or simplifying issues surrounding the use of power within work organisations. Bureaucratic prescriptions allocate formal authority in a hierarchy of responsibility and supervision. Formal authority is seen as the rational and therefore acceptable or legitimate exercise of power, and the bureaucratic perspective therefore focuses almost exclusively on power as formal authority. Other power bases, and other forms of influence are either ignored, or seen as a problem. They are likely to be regarded as illegitimate power plays, verging on disloyalty or corruption, which correct administrative procedures are designed to eliminate. The bureaucratic frame of reference carries a moral preference for a certain view of politics, and this moral stance closes off the analysis of the full range of political activity that actually exists in organisations.

The value of a political frame of reference is that it focuses attention on the exercise of power. The political perspective inevitably questions certain bureaucratic assumptions. It challenges the assumptions that organisational objectives can or should be unambiguous, and that once organisational goals are set, those in positions of organisational authority have all the power they need to implement the objectives without having to consider any other interests or goals.

A political perspective on management therefore focuses on the political processes involved in establishing negotiating positions and gaining support for different policies. "In this view management is concerned to resolve conflicts between stakeholders in an organisation in a situation where there is considerable uncertainty about the criteria used for judging organisational effectiveness. In place

of the rational, co-ordinated machine this perspective sees a plurality of competing groups and coalitions." (Gardner & Palmer, 1992:196). A political perspective looks for a plurality of interest and assumes the different interests will have a variety of resources with which to press their claims.

### Politics And Gender In Management

A political perspective is particularly useful for the analysis of organisational change. In the section 'Bureaucracy and Gender' we discussed the use of bureaucratic arguments to overcome problems of social discrimination. It was apparent from that discussion that successful change requires both bureaucratic and political skills.

For bureaucratic arguments to be successful in establishing equitable policies, some political strength seems necessary. Femocrats network within the organisation. They lobby for political support outside. Political activity is needed if any group is to successfully challenge established norms of behaviour. (Rizzo and Mendez, 1990). Comparative statistics on the proportion of women in managerial positions in different countries show differences which can often be associated with differences in legislation and other forms of political activity.

The political perspective on management therefore provides a ready channel for studying the political resources that accrue to gender. It focuses on the extent that organisational resources are used to further interests and objectives that derive from sexual identities. Using a political perspective on management, several gender-related issues can be thrown into focus. In this paper we briefly note that political issues may occur at several levels. Individual, group and institutional levels of analysis may be needed to fully explore the impact of power and political processes on the status of women in management.

### Gender and individual or Personal Power

The power that an individual can exercise is likely to be affected by their organisational and social status, their physical attributes and their behavioural style. Organisational status should, in a bureaucratically administered organisation, be gender neutral. Social status, and the perceived appropriateness of physical and behavioural attributes are likely to be heavily influenced by the gender stereotypes, discussed earlier in the paper, and various forms of cultural discrimination which can act to disempower women, or detract from their ability to manage successfully have been extensively documented<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Kanter R (1977) *Men and Women of the Corporation*, New York, Basic Books, Marshall J. " Issues of Identity for Women Managers" in Clutterbuck and Divide, 1987, Davidson M & cooper, C (1992) *Shattering the Glass*

The concept of management style is being developed by researchers to explore differences in male and female managers' personal methods for influencing and leading others. Grimwood & Popplestone (1993) have noted that management style is rarely discussed in detail in management literature, although for many women managers, style is a fundamental component of effective managing because they are aware of conflicts between their own, and the stereotypically acceptable styles (White, 1989). 'Style' seems to be a holistic concept that permits elements such as teamwork, decision making, use of power and authority, leadership, interpersonal skills, and so on to be interwoven with it, and that women do find that their styles are different from the stereotypically 'male' managerial style (Grimwood & Popplestone, 1993, p. 105).

Loden (1985) lists the managerial styles of men and women, as she sees them, as follows:

### Management Styles of Women

Style of Functioning	Masculine Model	Feminine Model
Operating Style	Competitive	Cooperative
Organisational Structure	Hierarchy	Team
Basic Objective	Winning	Quality Output
Problem Solving	Rational	Intuitive/Rational
Key Characteristics	High Control Strategic Unemotional Analytical	Lower Control Empathic Collaborative High Performance Standards

Source: Loden (1985) *Feminine Leadership: How to succeed in Business without being one of the boys*, Times Books, New York. (pp. 26 & 63).

Differences in management style of women and men have been found in studies in both the private and public sectors (Eley, 1986; Loden, 1985; Marshall, 1984). Phillipson & Riley (1988) used three ways of measuring the style of women managers. These were based on the women managers' self-description of their style; an example of their work for analysis later; and an analysis of their perceptions on the use of power.

Still (1988) studied perceptions of managerial style through a survey of 1093 Australians from six different groups. She found that 65.1% of the respondents

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*Ceiling: The Woman Manager*, London, Paul Chapman Publishing, Baker, M (1991) "Reciprocal Accommodation" *The Journal of Business Communication* 28.2.

stated that the styles of male and female managers differed as against a low 28.4% saying that there is no difference in styles. 51.8% of the total sample respondents have stated that they prefer to have a male boss (Still 1988, p. 49) . From the responses she received she classified the typical perceptions of female and male and ideal management styles as follows:

### Male, Female and Ideal Management Styles

Male Management	Female Management	Ideal Management
Self-confident	Competent	Competent
Competent	Determined	Knowledgeable
Knowledgeable	Self-Confident	Dependable
Determined	Knowledgeable	Innovative
Competitive	Thorough	Self-Confident
Aggressive	Dependable	Logical
Logical	Competent	Honest
Dependable	Innovative	Fair
Enterprising	Logical	Thorough
Firm	Honest	Friendly

Source: Still, L.V (1988) *Becoming a Top Woman Manager*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, p. 50.

Gender stereotypes are found to limit the culturally approved communication and interpersonal influence methods used by men and women, and these cultural expectations are so strong that they influence the way identical behaviour is perceived. There are several studies of differences in communication style, which are similar to the studies on management style referred to above, but have a more specific focus. Several researchers suggest that in discussions in mixed groups of women and men, men at work exercise personal power in a number of ways, even if they are in a minority.

Firstly, it is suggested that men talk more than women. Martin Willis (1990) observed that in a meeting with an equal number of women and men, the men made ninety eight contributions, the women forty. In addition, the men tended to speak for longer than women. Zimmerman & West (1975), found that 8% of interruptions in mixed gender conversations were made by men. If women usually allow themselves to be interrupted this can be seen as a successful technique for men to gain more in air time for themselves and to silence women. Tannen (1992) takes issue with the generality of these findings, arguing that gender stereotypes may create different situations in the public and private domain. The gendered control of airtime may advantage men at work, and they may have dominance over issues and judgments

associated with world events or instrumental action. However control of airtime may be reversed in the private domain, with women granted more speaking rights on domestic issues, and dominance over the voicing of moral and emotional judgments.

Other studies suggest that the voice used by men and women may differ because of the social roles they play, and the persona they are expected to project. Women's voices are more likely to be reassuring and placatory, while men's voices are expected to be forceful and confident. Willis (1990) noted that men in the group he observed tended to express an authoritative opinion or make a factual statement, rather than ask questions or express a personal point of view.

The growing research on communication and management styles, and on gender differences in the ways male and female managers exert managerial influence and leadership, will add to our understanding of the personal political resources that managers employ at work.

### Gender and interest Group Lobbying

Individuals increase the personal power that they can exercise by mobilising to gain support from others. Lobby groups and pressure groups have been used by women in management to increase their influence in achieving results.

The successful implementation of the non-discriminatory policies that are put in place by corporate or government policy makers may require the pressure of group support within the organisation. Collinson *et al* (1990) studied the effectiveness of the British anti-discrimination laws twenty years after they were first established. They noted that political alliances between professional EEO officers, personnel management professionals and trade unionists were often necessary if a grievance brought under the law was to be successful <sup>6</sup>.

Numbers are needed to provide the social support to claim legitimacy for unfamiliar assertions. Numerical strength lends credibility to an argument both to waverers on the claimant's side and to the more sympathetic of outsiders. Isolated women or minority representatives do not have the social resources to resocialise groups to accept or conform to different points of view. The value of pressure group lobbying can be seen in the dramatic rise in the figures for women managers in Singapore. The Association for Women for Action and Research (AWARE) in Singapore launched research projects and held forums covering important aspects of women's lives and experiences, such as careers, sexual harassment, portrayal in the media, and women's legal status. This activity is credited as having had a significant impact in promoting change. (Chan, 1988)

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<sup>6</sup> Collinson, D. Knights, D & Collinson, M (1990) *Managing to Discriminate* Routledge, London p197

As women mobilise to remove what they see as discriminatory policies and practices at work, their relationship to the earlier pressure groups with similar functions has proved ambiguous. Trade unions are structured to represent class and occupational interests that sometimes assist and sometimes conflict with gender issues. Women have therefore tended to focus their political activity on attempts to change government legislation or organisational administration, rather than use the industrial bargaining of traditional industrial relations activities (Palmer 1993a).

### *3. The Cultural Process of Management*

Our final perspective on management is concerned with culture. A cultural perspective emphasises moral order. Instead of management being concerned to establish systems of *bureaucratic* administration or *political* accommodation, managers of *culture* prescribe the construction of moral systems of meaning and value. The cultural perspective encompasses Bolman and Deal's 'symbolic' frame of reference (Bolman & Deal, 1991, part 5).

The recent interest in culture has been stimulated by two major social changes lead to the questioning of traditional assumptions and beliefs. First, in the economic sphere, is the globalisation of world markets and competition from newly developing nations. Early academic comparisons between western management and Japanese management (for example see Abegglen, 1958; Dore, 1973) threw into relief the importance of culture, and of significant differences in the cultures of different groups. The second major change that we believe has stimulated recent interest in the management of culture, is the subject of our paper. The movement of women into non-traditional work areas, in particular into management, again focuses attention on the impact of traditional assumptions and beliefs. Problems surrounding women in management have stimulated work on the possibility that traditional images, meanings, expectations, values, assumptions and belief systems may need to be changed (for example see Kanter 1977 & 1983)

Prescriptions for managing or changing organisational culture have become a major feature of management thought in the 1980s and 1990s. These prescriptions emphasise the importance of creating supportive, positive, cultures that emphasise organisational rather than sectional goals. (Peters and Waterman 1982. Kanter 1983, 1989).

### Cultural Management And Gender

As culture is associated with beliefs, images and values, its relevance for the study of gender in management is self evident. Our discussions of gendered stereotypes and the impact of gender on the bureaucratic and political elements of

management, have all dealt with aspects of culture. Cultural attitudes that support sex discrimination can act to render useless the equal opportunity policies established by bureaucratic or political forms of management action. Gardner and Palmer (1992) document the many studies which show the impact of sexist values and beliefs on managerial processes that are intended to be gender neutral. Recruitment and selection<sup>7</sup> job evaluation or performance appraisal<sup>8</sup> as well as on the division of labour and remuneration can all be influenced by culturally reinforced assumptions that discriminate on the basis of gender.

Many managerial decisions appear to be taken in the light of strong, socially conditioned, assumptions about natural or appropriate behaviour for women or men<sup>9</sup>. The evidence is so powerful that it has been suggested that much can be gained by reassessing our traditional ideas of organisational theory in the light of an improved understanding of the impact of cultural notions of gender (Mills, 1988).

Studies of organisational culture are providing women with new understanding, and new strategies for use at work. Studies of gender bias in management are resulting in prescriptions, eagerly sought by female managers, designed to change the implicit assumptions that women do not seek public power, or that their influence strategies are affiliative rather than instrumental. Techniques are advocated to overcome the problems associated with such assumptions (Baker, 1991)

Indeed, much prescriptive managerial literature now takes the establishment of non-discriminatory assumptions and beliefs as the hallmark of achieving new, improved organisational cultures (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992).

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the studies of women in management are developing in a way that enables us to explore many aspects of management. There are many studies that attempt to explore whether women are similar or the same as men, or whether there are differences in their behaviour and style. Any study of gender in management needs to consider the question of gendered stereotypes, and look at the evidence which suggests that problems of discrimination still exist. Management is a complex process and it is useful to adopt multiple perspectives to encompass the different aspects of the process. Using the multiple perspectives of bureaucratic, political and cultural management, we have sought to show that the studies of women in

<sup>7</sup> Collinson, D. Knights, D & Collinson, M (1990) *op. cit.* pp 193-5

<sup>8</sup> Burton, C, Hag, R & Thompson, G (1987) *Women's Worth, Pay Equity and Job Evaluation in Australia*. AGPS, Sydney. see also Gardner & Palmer, *op cit.* pp 296-300

<sup>9</sup> Many studies are summarised in Baker, M "Reciprocal Accommodation: a model for reducing gender bias in managerial communication" *The Journal of Business communication*, 28.2, tables 1 and 2, pp 116, 120, 121.

management can be used to illuminate some of the complexities of the management process itself.

The studies on gender in management is proving of considerable interest to women, as they seek strategies to overcome the problems that they see. The implications of this work for *men*, and for our notions of *management* could be equally significant, but they have yet to be fully explored. Culturally approved dependency models may make the traditional, stereotypical woman dependent on men for economic and physical protection, but they have also made the traditional, stereotypical man dependent on women for the maintenance of ethical and emotional values and domestic support. It is in these areas that studies of the influence of gender on organisational culture still has some way to go, before the full impact of gender on the study of management is clear.

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