

Psychology

Gender Aspects of Leadership

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ABSTRACT. The problems of gender inequality in management and women's potential for leadership are considered in the paper. © 2009 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

Key words: *gender equality, gender asymmetry.*

The problem of gender equality has been a matter of argument for ages. Even in those countries where gender equality is authorized by the constitution women's rights still appear to be a mere avowal. Actually, gender equality has not been achieved in any country yet [1]. Recently, relatively high degree of gender equality has been achieved in the countries of North Europe, where more than 35% of women take part in decision-making processes. Also, in the Netherlands and Germany there are more than 30 % of women in Parliament [1,2]. But women make up only 6% of deputies in the Parliament of Georgia. Such a fact of gender inequality is anomalous for a country where historically the cult of woman was always topical.

In Georgia the most flourishing periods of history are associated with women. Woman's name symbolizes the most powerful Georgia. This is the name of Queen Tamar. As far back as the 12th century the greatest Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli uttered the words expressing gender equality: "The lion's whelps are equal, be they male or female".

Today the national tradition of respect for women is merely of symbolic character. Actually, women are deprived of equality in Georgia as well as in other countries of the world. Firstly, they are the principal free (domestic) labor force and, secondly, they are mainly employed for low-salary jobs. Consequently, women have

achieved an underprivileged status in Georgia. And modern progressive humanity considers poverty to be a violation of human rights.

Historically, gender inequality arose as the result of economic dependence on gender. Thus, in conditions of matriarchy men's rights were impaired and in conditions of patriarchy those of women were infringed upon. It should be noted that the avowed rights of women will always be of symbolic character until women become economically independent. But, are women ready for gender equality?

The problem is that the secular background of gender asymmetry left its imprint on the mentality of women, reflected in national traditions and practices. The stronger the national tradition the stronger the people (including women) believe that the social role of women is limited to chamber work.

Gender asymmetry is a social phenomenon caused by the social formation of society. But is gender asymmetry a normal social phenomenon? It is appropriate to present biological arguments on the role of men and women from V. Geodakyan's point of view [3].

All living beings live in intimate contact with the external environment rather than isolated. Therefore, every living being is bound to adapt to dynamic environment. On the other hand, living organisms tend to maintain their genetic organization.

Nature rationally solved the problem having created two genders dedicated to fulfill the alternative evolutionary objectives.

- Evolution (male gender)
- Maintenance (female gender)

Thus, male gender is an evolutionary vanguard of the species looking ahead. Its principal role is to make attempts, to carry out experiments and make mistakes in order to find successful solutions, laying out a future trail of the species.

Female gender does not have any other evolutionary role. Women must not take risks. Due to their great adaptability to the environment their principal role is to maintain successful solutions achieved by male gender and to transfer them to future generations.

From the cybernetic point of view male gender should be considered as a temporary memory of the species and female gender as the permanent memory of the whole local system. Male gender is more sensitive and less resistant to the external environment compared to female gender. Accordingly, their death rate is greater. The birth rate of both genders is regulated by nature so that in the most critical period of sexual maturity of the given biological system the ratio of both genders is always 1/1.

The above-said gives rise to a logical question: if in the process of propagation of descendants nature equally divides both genders why not preserve such equality in the social formation of those descendants?

From the aspect of psychosocial standards there are two alternative ideologies in relation to women. According to the first one, women are less clever and intelligent than men, so their social role must be limited to chamber work. Indeed, such a viewpoint is nourished by the practice of masculine mentality and is especially strong in conditions of tyranny and oligarchy. The other ideology is pro-women arguing that in female genus there is still great resource of unfulfilled and unused mental potential [4].

The viewpoint of the German philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche about women is of interest: "Women's intellect is manifested as perfect control, presence of mind, and utilization of all advantages" [5].

Supposedly, to realize their genic resources of mental ability women have not had appropriate social environment, where human rights and social role do not depend on gender. It is known that individual innate difference of a human being greatly depends on socio-economic conditions. Therefore, logically, the very social environment is the mechanism for solution of the problem of gender inequality.

The viewpoint is becoming more and more widespread that women can fulfill the manager's function at least none the worse than men. Nevertheless, they are still the minority in the management on the middle and higher levels (5 and 1%, respectively, in the USA). In Georgia only 0.2% of women are managers, while every second man is a manager.

The first researches on gender aspects of leadership were carried out in the USA.

Active work in this direction began in the 1970s under the influence of feministic psychology. A. Giddens (1995) cardinally differentiated the genders, arguing that institutional differentiation between genders meant differentiation between reason and emotion.

Three directions can be identified in the research into gender aspects of leadership. According to the first one, gender factor is considered to be principal (B. Gutek), the second one gives advantages to leadership merits (J. Bowman, S. Sutton), and the third considers both aspects as equal (R. Cantor, E. Jones, R. Liden, T. Mitchell) [6].

With respect to the progress of feminist movement and development of facts (global democratization) stimulating the increase of women's opportunities it is of great interest to study the "golden section" of gender equality. Women's great social activity can cause transformation of men's "diktat" into women's "diktat", which is abnormal as men's.

Recently, the coefficient of "golden section" (Ptolemy) is often used in different fields of human activity in estimating their harmonic development. Every new stage of socio-economic development of mankind provides greater physical and social scope for human beings [7-9]. Hopefully, in our age women's potential for leadership will be maximally used in economic and political activity.

ფსიქოლოგია

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სტატიაში განხილულია გენდერული უთანასწორობის პრობლემა და ქალის შესაძლებლობები მმართველობითი ფუნქციების შესრულებაში.

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Received January, 2009