

**Identification of Personality Traits and Glass Ceiling Barriers Faced by Women Leaders in Pakistan**

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**Abstract:**

Worldwide, women constitute half of the world's population. They are socialized as inappropriate for certain leadership roles. Previous research demonstrated that women have been believed as less ambitious than men, therefore, they have to face invisible barrier of glass ceiling to their way of occupational promotion. This study comprised two phases, researcher focused on 5 leadership domains and 2 participants from each domain were selected through purposive sampling technique. The personality profile of female leaders was explored by two personality assessment tools including; Myers-Briggs Trait Inventory (MBTI) and Big Five Inventory (BFI). In the second phase, in-depth interviews were conducted to explore the unseen barriers in the life of women leaders. The result of the study I, revealed that the personality preference types were associated with the nature of the job of the leaders, while thinking and judgment were the most prevailing preferences among the female leaders. Also, Big Five Inventory showed that every leader's characteristics verily are highest for specific indicator, depending on their profession. The analysis of study II identified following hurdles and challenges faced by women leaders in different facets of political, academic, entrepreneurial, organizational and student leaders throughout their lives in Pakistan, i.e. lack of confidence, gender discrimination, in justice system, professional jealousy, unsupportive family, and work-family imbalance.

**Keywords:** Pakistan, personality traits, glass ceiling barriers, women leaders, student leaders, gender discrimination

**INTRODUCTION**

Individuals are different from each other in many ways, including styles of thinking, values and attitudes, decision making and personality (Draft, 2012). Socially defined female characteristics have been more or less likely associated with stereotypical leadership roles and duties (Isaac et. al., 2012). The effective leadership characteristics have been found to be more specific with individual

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differences i.e. power, self-confidence & monitoring, and energy that are theoretically linked to role of personality traits (Hoffman et al., 2011). Various organizations in society have been showing greater interest to increase female representation at top managerial position and make them convenient to access equitable opportunities that might be helpful in advancing in critical roles associated with organizational leadership (McKinsey & Company, 2015; Noland et.al., 2016).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

For reaching top positions in any organization, women have been facing difficulties and hindrances that are not due to male power or female inhibition. Logically, power is dedicated to men as recognition, fame and domination while female consider it as source of glory and social appreciation. Glass ceiling is one of the gender based stereotypical cause that has hindered a woman's leadership career. Women are prevented to get higher managerial position due to invisible barriers. Women always have been considered emotionally hyper, lack of combating, involvement and initiative skills. Due to their misogynistic portray, most of the decision makers have been reluctant to objectify them as competent as men (Abdallah, & Jibai, 2020).

Women's leadership starts primarily with challenges of gender disparity that have been associated with traditional characteristics linked with women leaders. According to Nohrin and Khurana (2010) leadership characteristic such as; assertiveness, authoritative and dominant behaviors are typically not associated with women. In the US Democratic presidential race in 2008, Hillary Clinton was criticized for lacking people skills resulting in slogans such as "Hillary Clinton is a man and I won't vote for Him". When she started expressing care and compassion, people started questioning her authenticity and her toughness (Nohrin & Khurana, 2010).

The picture in Pakistan is also no different. Indeed, women are seen in different fields and they are at top executive positions, but unfortunately they hold only 5percent of the positions of corporate leadership (Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014). If we see the political scenario 20 percent of women are in lower house and 16 percent are in upper house in national parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2013, women in national parliaments). Like many other countries, Pakistani women also face barriers sometime visible and sometime invisible towards their progress. According to Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) glass ceiling is defined as unrecognizable wall that hinders the improvement of a profession that has been affecting especially career oriented women and minorities around everywhere (Mobin & Lodhi, 2015).

Moreover, glass ceiling has officially been considered as a symbol towards the unseen barriers that resemble with glass through which women could look at higher position and opportunities, but unable to move forward just like ceiled promotion. The outcome of this phenomenon could be that women feel that they are not capable of having high rank positions and lack the skills needed for progress and advancement (Omran, et. al, 2015).

In a research conducted on working women and the impact of glass ceiling in Karachi, Pakistan by Mobin and Lodhi (2015) it was seen that glass ceiling still exist in 21st century. The results of the study showed that gender discrimination, social norms, and family related pressures are the factors causing hindrances towards women progress. Generally, it is found to be more difficult for women to access leadership whether they are successful having higher education, trained and experienced

than their colleagues, the only reason behind this discrimination is gender based stereotypical mindset (Abdallah & Jibai, 2020).

Personality of women is more adaptable as they might be more concerned about well organizing of ongoing things in current scenario, call for cooperation, and acceptable attitude toward diversification. Mostly, women have been adopting different leadership styles, and sometime they might be showing equal or more effective leading style and approaches. Numerous studies on leadership styling showed that women have been more democratic as compared to men who used to appreciate autocratic attitude. Furthermore, when women are appointed to a leading position, they have to request and negotiate in exercising of their attributes while men most often receive those advantages automatically (Sanfilippo, et. al, 2018).

In Pakistan, women are contributing almost in all spheres of life and there is an eager need to explore different dimensions of women and leadership. Mostly research work has been done on military leadership, relationship of emotional intelligence with leadership and academic leadership. People in the field of management also work on leadership by focusing more on the leadership styles (Malik, et. al., 2016).

Leadership is not a new concept among the field of psychology but few efforts have been made to search its different domains. Numerous external barriers have been found in the society for women, there is need to explore whether these are the only barriers causing hindrances in women progress or there are some others too which are the part of their upbringing. Social role theory stated that men and women are raised in certain ways which determined their future roles. The present study is one of its own kind on Pakistani Female Leaders and will open new horizons in the area of leadership. The current study will help professionals to understand the personalities of political, academic, entrepreneurial, organizational and student leaders and to explore different facets of leaders' personalities.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Leadership theories based on traits approach comprise two major schools of thought. First is the Great Man Theories of leadership which states that great leaders are born and not made, whereas Trait Theory asserts that certain traits whether inherited or developed are preconditions for effective leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008). Great Man theorists view history as molded by the leadership of great men. Carlye and Galton were writers who studied and stated about Great Men Theory in their own perspective. According to Carlye, great men have divinely given features from which the masses around benefit (Caryle, 1841) whereas Galton (1869) studied the hereditary context of great men to assess the extent to which ability was transmitted on the basis of heredity and to identify the likelihood of a well-known person having eminent relatives. Over a century and a half later the influence of great man or hero leadership can still be perceived in the domains where responsibility for having the answer to some of world's most complex problems is placed on the shoulders of individuals, such as presidents, prime ministers and CEOs.

After the Great Man Theory, trait perspective focus on identifying the inborn characteristics and attributes possessed by great political, social, and military leaders (Northhouse, 2010). According to Moss and Johansen (1991) there are some attributes which are found to be common in successful

leaders. Based on 20 psychologically oriented studies Bird (1940) listed 79 relevant traits which were considered measurable and predictable (Bass & Bass, 2008).

### **Personality characteristics**

In the present study, researcher identified personality traits of female leaders by using two personality assessment tools; Myers-Briggs Trait Inventory (MBTI) and Big Five Inventory (BFI).

### **Glass ceiling effects**

In the light of theoretical framework, e.g. Great Man Theory and Trait Theory, women leaders' hurdles and challenges were identified throughout their journey toward success.

### **Rationale of the study**

In earlier studies on leadership, researchers mostly used quantitative methodology while few researches adopted a more qualitative strategy. Thus, the current research used a mixed design approach to study different in-depth domains of leadership in indigenous context.

This study aims to identify the characteristics of women leaders within their indigenous context.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study was based on both quantitative and qualitative research design.

### **Sample/ participants**

About five leadership domains were focused by the researcher included academic, politics, entrepreneur, organization and student population. Two participants from each domain were selected through purposive sampling. All the female leaders selected were serving at leading positions in their related fields. The demographic information was collected from each participant i.e. age, education, birth order, marital status, number of children and siblings. Following tables represent the demographic profile of all female leaders.

**Table 1** The demographic profile of female leaders

| <b>Demographical profile</b>                    |  |
|---|--|
| Leadership domains (2 leaders from each domain) | Political, Entrepreneurial, Academics, Organizational, Student population  |
| Leaders position                                | All the leaders were working at leading positions in their related fields. |
| Average age range                               | 16 to 75 years   |
| Education                                       | Bachelors and master degrees.  |
| Birth order                                     | five out of ten female leaders were 1st born                               |
| Marital status                                  | 5 =married,4 = single and 1 =divorced                                      |
| Children  | Most of the leaders have 3 children  |
| Siblings  | 4 number of siblings on average  |

### **Quantitative study**

#### **Tool**

The personality profiles of female leaders were analyzed by two personality assessment tools Myers-Briggs Trait Inventory (MBTI) and Big Five Inventory (BFI).

**Myers-Briggs Trait Inventory (MBTI)**

Myers-Briggs Trait Inventory (MBTI) was developed by Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Briggs (1962) based on the psychological theory of C. G. Jung. The personality assessment tool is Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) which is widely used to explore the leader's personality. MBTI gives a certain profile type for each individual that helps to see the closer look into the life of a leader. Lots of research conducted showed that there are specific profile types that is common in leaders. The inventory gives 16 distinctive personality types based on four dichotomies that are Extraversion (E) or Introversion (I), Sensing (S) or Intuition (N), Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), and Judging (J) or Perceiving (P). There are tools available which help when psychological hurdles posed by gender or other stereotypes impact one's performance or self-perception in the workplace. For instance, psychometric instruments like the Myers-Briggs Type Instrument assessment can help employees across all levels.

**Big Five Inventory (BFI)**

The Big Five Inventory (BFI) was developed by John, Donahue, and Kentle in 1991. It is a self-report inventory designed to measure the Big Five dimensions. It is quite brief for a multidimensional personality inventory (44 items total), and consists of short phrases with relatively accessible vocabulary. Participants rate each BFI item on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly).

**Inclusion criteria**

Females, who were owners of the organization and business, at executive post, In charge of educational institution, head girl/council were included in the study.

**Exclusion criteria**

Males belonging to any academic, political, entrepreneurial, organizational and student population were excluded in the present study.

**procedure**

The study I was based on quantitative research method. The researcher identified different women leadership personalities from different domains through various means, and called them to take time for data collection. The researcher selected two different HODs of educational institutions, two MPAs of different political parties active in Pakistan, two women business owners, two women owing their NGOs and university presidents of student council. Researcher visited to each place of leaders which were situated far away and requested to owner of the respective organization and showed them the university permission letter for data collection for research work and distributed questionnaire to all owners. Data was collected through survey research method by using already developed questionnaires. Meanwhile, the informed consent was taken by the participants and they were briefed about the purpose of the research and ensured the confidentiality of their information. After collecting information, the researcher felt grateful for valuable time spared by participants.

**RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

The outcome of the study revealed that both the academic leaders had similar MBTI preference type that was INTJ whereas both the organizational leaders had Extraversion, Thinking and

Judgment preference. In the findings it was also seen that the personality preference types also supported the current nature of the job of the leaders. Thinking and Judgment were the most prevailing preference among the female leaders. Whereas the scores of Big Five Inventory showed that political leaders scored high on Neuroticism=3.2, Academic leaders scored high on Agreeableness=4.6, Organizational leaders scored high on Extraversion=4.5 and Conscientiousness=4.8, Entrepreneurial leaders scored high on Agreeableness=4.3, Political leaders scored high on Agreeableness=4.2 and Student leaders scored high on Openness=4.5.

**Table 2**

Table Representing MBTI Scores of Female Political, Entrepreneurial, Academic, Organizational and Student Leaders

Thinking, judgment and intuition were the most prevailing characteristics found among female leaders whereas, introversion-intuition-thinking-judgment (INTJ) was found to be most dominant.

| Sr. no | Participants | Leadership Domains | MBTI            |               |               |                 |
|--------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1      | Y. R         | Political          | I<br>Moderate   | S<br>Moderate | F<br>Slight   | P<br>Very clear |
| 2      | M.G          | Entrepreneurial    | I<br>Very clear | N<br>Slight   | T<br>Clear    | J<br>Very clear |
| 3      | M.U          |                    | I<br>Slight     | N<br>Clear    | F<br>Slight   | P<br>Very clear |
| 4      | N.I          |                    | E<br>Slight     | S<br>Moderate | F<br>Moderate | J<br>Clear      |
| 5      | H.T          |                    | I<br>Slight     | N<br>Slight   | T<br>Slight   | J<br>Moderate   |
| 6      | B.M          | Academics          | I<br>Slight     | N<br>Slight   | T<br>Moderate | J<br>Slight     |
| 7      | Y.Z          |                    | E<br>Clear      | S<br>Slight   | T<br>Moderate | J<br>Clear      |
| 8      | A. H         |                    | E<br>Clear      | N<br>Clear    | T<br>Slight   | J<br>Clear      |
| 9      | A.R          | Organizational     | I<br>Slight     | N<br>Clear    | T<br>Moderate | J<br>Slight     |
| 10     | Q.A          |                    | E<br>Very clear | N<br>Slight   | T<br>Clear    | P<br>Clear      |

**Table 3** Representing Big Five Inventory Scores of Female Political, Entrepreneurial,

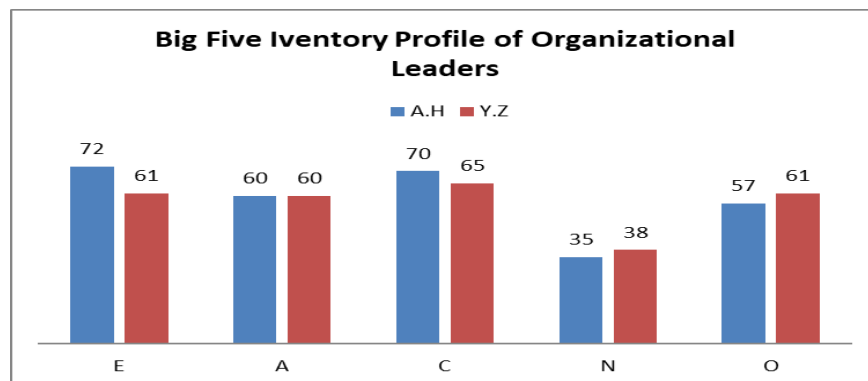
Academic, Organizational and Student Leaders

| Sr. no | Participants   | Leadership Domains | BIG FIVE |        |        |        |        |
|--------|----------------|--------------------|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|        |                |                    | E<br>M/T | A      | C      | N      | O      |
| 1      | Yasmeen Rehman | Political          | 2.5 /41  | 4.6/63 | 3.3/45 | 3.3/53 | 3.2/42 |
| 2      | Mary Gill      | Entrepreneurial    | 2.2/37   | 3.8/50 | 3.1/42 | 3.1/51 | 4.1/55 |
| 3      | Maria Umer     |                    | 3.5/53   | 4.0/53 | 2.6/35 | 3.8/60 | 3.6/48 |
| 4      | Nazli Iftikhar |                    | 3.2/50   | 4.7/65 | 5.0/70 | 2.6/45 | 4.2/57 |
| 5      | Hina Tayyaba   | Academics          | 3.3/51   | 4.8/66 | 4.8/67 | 2.0/37 | 4.7/64 |
| 6      | Bushra Mateen  | Organizational     | 4.5/66   | 4.5/61 | 3.5/48 | 2.8/47 | 3.7/50 |
| 7      | Yasmin Zaki    |                    | 4.1/61   | 4.4/60 | 4.7/65 | 2.1/38 | 4.5/61 |
| 8      | Aysha Hamid    |                    | 5.0/72   | 4.4/60 | 5.0/70 | 1.8/35 | 4.4/57 |
| 9      | Azka Rafay     | Student            | 3.0/47   | 3.0/36 | 3.7/51 | 4.2/65 | 4.8/65 |
| 10     | Annie          |                    | 4.6/67   | 3.4/43 | 3.1/42 | 2.2/40 | 4.3/58 |

E=Extraversion, A= Agreeableness, C=Conscientiousness, N=Neuroticism and O=Openness

Results showed that political leaders scored high on agreeableness and openness to experience; academic leaders scored high on agreeableness, conscientiousness, and extraversion; organizational leaders scored high on conscientiousness, and extraversion; entrepreneurial leaders scored high on neuroticism, conscientiousness and agreeableness and student leaders scored high on openness to experience and extraversion.

Following is the graphical representation of the T –scores of BFI of female leaders.



**Figure1** Graphical representation of T values of organizational female leaders



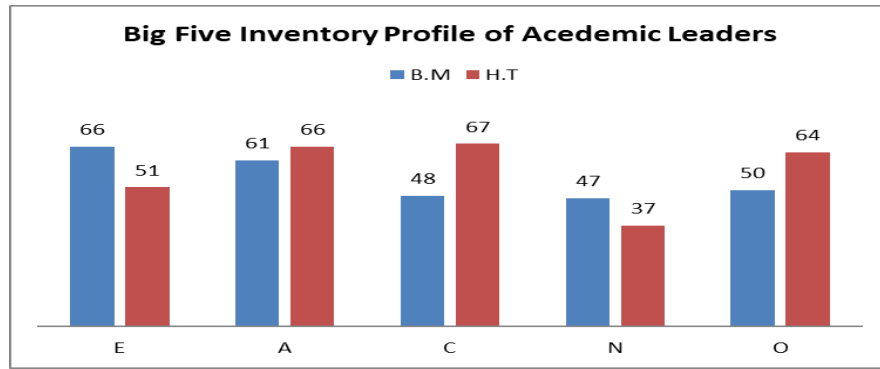


Figure 2 Graphical representation of T values of academic female leaders

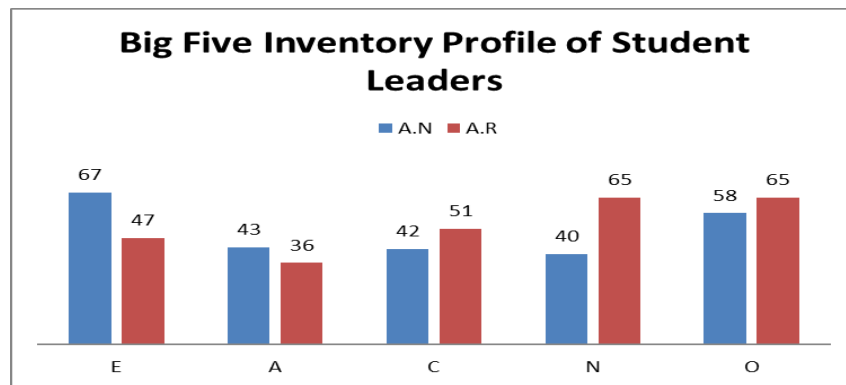


Figure 3 Graphical representation of T values of student female leaders

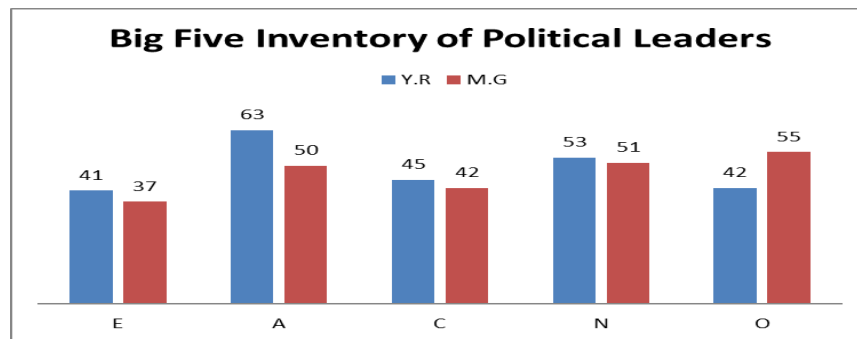


Figure 4 Graphical representation of T values of political female leaders

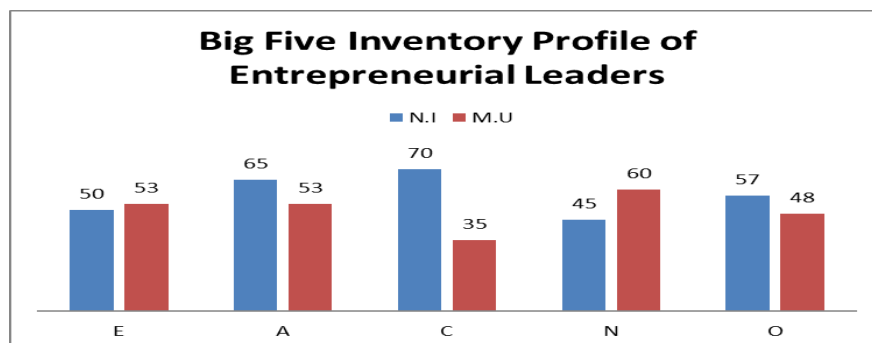


Figure 5 Graphical representation of T values of entrepreneurial female leaders



## Study II

In the study II, qualitative research method was employed by the researcher to explore the hurdles and barriers faced by female leaders during their progress.

### Research Question

Are there any hurdles and barriers faced by female leaders in their life during professional career?

### Tool

Self-constructed semi structured interview protocol was used as a research tool to explore the unseen barriers faced by female leaders throughout their lives.

### Sample

For the qualitative part of the study, 10 female leaders from 5 different domains were included through purposive sampling technique different from study I. All the members were known as senior experts, knowledgeable and qualified officials in their respective institutions.

### Procedure

Similarly, qualitative research method was used for the study II, the researcher identified different female leadership personalities, two HODs of educational institutions, two MPAs of different political parties, two business owners, two CEO of NGOs and two university presidents of student council. The researcher collected data by organizing interviews according to feasibility of all leaders through semi-structured interview protocol. Researcher visited each place of leaders. Meanwhile, the informed consent was taken by the leaders and they were briefed about the purpose of the research and ensured about the confidentiality of their information. Interview was tape recorded by the researcher. After collecting information, the researcher transcribed all the data. Afterwards codes, connecting themes and major themes were generated through thematic analysis.

## RESULT AND ANALYSIS

For the qualitative analysis the verbatim related to the barriers in the life of female leaders were collected through thematic analysis. According to themes the second order theme were labeled.

**Table 4** Table representing the verbatim and common themes.

|     | Verbatim   | Common themes         |
|-----|--|-----------------------|
| Y.R | As I told you that I am from conventional environment, as typical traditional in which women are supposed to be vigilant when move in public. I think one should move with vigilance I am thankful to God due to honor with the name of women there is more responsibility on women. When even you speak little load you are penalized for that. Women are observed with microscope and male are free to do everything.in assembly when women come with designers bags media highlighted it even men come with designer ties but they were not focused. It is gender discrimination which should not be there. | Gender discrimination |

|     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| M.G | <p>I think the biggest challenge that I have faced is gender. On my birth my grandmother was very unhappy. She literally cried till her last breath. She kept saying she will be the first and only girl who will go outside and work with men". She always pinched my mother with taunts but my parents were supportive. They said we value our daughter more than our sons and it is their confidence that I have made so many achievements. There was a time when I had to decide my career. My mother said send her to nursing school for becoming a nurse, my father said no. My mother always said what is the use of her getting higher education send her to the nursing school and she will get higher salary but my father said no way I want her to be a lawyer.</p> <p>I am being stigmatized by gender discrimination but I think women need to be more empowered.</p> <p>I think only, your work can speak for you, that what I do, nothing else, you can counter the narrative built against you and you can counter the narrative only by your work.</p> | <p>Gender discrimination<br/>Social norms</p>           |
| Y.Z | <p>The problems I faced were professionally. I have faced problems. People tried to create hindrances in my life. Professionally, they tried to let me down.</p> <p>There was a hard time for me when I was diagnosed with cancer.</p> <p>But I have strong belief in God. Whenever I pray, He listens to me.</p> <p>I take tasks as challenges.</p> <p>It is sometimes very difficult to handle female staff as compared to male.</p> <p>Many successful males even can't see women go far with progress.</p>   | <p>Gender discrimination,<br/>Professional jealousy</p> |
| A.H | <p>I have faced so many challenges. When you live your life with your parents, life is so protective, so comfortable but when I got married I struggled hard to run my home to adjust with family it was a challenge. You have to scarify your wishes, and then you get reward of appreciation from your in-laws there is no comparison of that thing. My challenges started when I started my job after coming back to Pakistan. There is lots of politics here. It is a rat race.to let down the other. I was not familiar with this kind of environment. I became isolate. People are with double standards. There is leg pulling here. I faced lots of gender discrimination which was not easy to change. People insulted me a lot. But I fought for my right. I was so determined and faced the challenges.</p>  | <p>Gender discrimination, Leg pulling</p>               |
| B.M | <p>Once I went to the director he said it is the right of the boys you girls ultimately have to do the household (handi roti karni hoti hai)</p> <p>They have the biased attitude.</p>   | <p>Gender discrimination</p>                            |

|     |  |                                    |
|-----|--|------------------------------------|
|     | <p>Again same story happened they posted me somewhere else against the rules to benefit someone. They said what you will do I said I will again submit the rit.</p> <p>He said if you want to work here there should be some SIFARASH otherwise you have GUTS to face.</p> <p>SIFARISH TO MAIN KABHI KI NAI.</p> <p>I fought for my right.</p> <p>It is the hurdles and challenges that political movement pressurize you and the thing that is against your temperament.</p> <p>I have overcome these thing by fighting against the system.</p>   | Injustice in system                |
| H.T | <p>I often read Hazrat Ali quotations in that it is written that there is one thing and that is destiny that is not you. What is in your destiny must happen to you. And there is a journey for which you struggle. And in my life I think I am following my destiny. And I saw in my life that if you follow your circumstances your life becomes easy and God grant you so much too. But when you go against the flow you are not satisfied mentally and you get no kind of reward.</p> <p>The reason of my Success is:</p> <p>There is nothing ultimate for me. I have learnt from my life don't be so close to anything in your life that it hurts you later on. If you lose something let it go to GOD. If you have believe in GOD, He will definitely show you the right path.</p> | Social norms                       |
| M.U | <p>My mother always had a lot of pressure on her and my father's family was more conservative. My mother was the first women in Waziristan who actually went to good school, so there was that pressure not to let her family down Although my cousins were doing lot of things but we were not allowed to do go outside and work.</p> <p>After that I realized that I should do a lot more and stop putting down myself.</p>  | Social norms<br>Lack of confidence |
| N.I | <p>I think I didn't face any. Just at the time when my kids were young I thought not to neglect them. When I started I had two kids then they were four after sometime, there was a period I worked full time till last date of my delivery time. But I think I managed with time management. That was difficult for me.</p>   | Work family balance                |

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|     |  |              |
|-----|--|--------------|
| Q.A | <p>In my childhood, my paternal family was not so supportive. I was always told that you have to prove yourself. Means if someone says you that you are a girl you have to prove yourself.</p> <p>I am thankful to God that I never faced any hindrances in my life.</p> <p>Yes, I have faced family pressure but not from my immediate family. My grandfather's family (father side) are not supportive may be there are more boys in their family that's why. They do not see girls in a way that girls also do something.</p> <p>Now the time has come that whenever I win something they congratulate.</p> <p>In the start it was more they raised questions such as that will she go outside alone? Will she go out with friends?</p> | Social norms |
| A.R | <p>My mother always said that people who are on top positions they face troubles. People used to mentally bully me and I really had to struggle for being first. There, was a girl who was extraordinary and I actually beat her I was very happy. There was like the best thing and the worst thing in my life because of the competitors. They actually give you challenges. But challenges are good for you. Challenges make you strong, so you must face as game player.</p>   | Jealousy     |

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## Discussion

### Study I

In the present study I, the validity of the data increased when compared with already available literature. In present research the results of MBTI revealed that both the academic leaders had a similar MBTI preference type that was INTJ, whereas both the organizational leaders had Extraversion, Thinking and Judgment preferences. McCauley (1990) stated that among the executives mostly found preferences are extraversion and intuition. Thinking and Judgment were found to be the most prevailing preference among all the women leaders in present research. According to Moraski (2001) four personality types are common among effective leaders. In one of the research the result showed that ISTJ which is a combination of intuition, sensing, thinking and judgment, along with ESTJ, ENTJ and INTJ were present in almost seventy-eight percent of flag rank officer of middle grade in the military of the United States. In most of the studies, leaders' self-ratings indicated that extraversion, intuition and perceiving preferences were found to be more relevant with transformational leadership (Hautala, 2006).

Whereas the scores of Big Five Inventory showed that Political leaders scored high on Neuroticism, Organizational leaders scored high on Extraversion and Conscientiousness, Student leaders scored high on Openness while Academic leaders, Entrepreneurial leaders, and Political leaders scored high on Agreeableness. According to Goldberg the big five traits extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness are basic traits that determine dimensions of personality. It was also seen by the researchers that these traits are relatively stable and can be generalizable across cultures (Judge et al., 2002). It was found that stable individual traits do exist

that are related to leadership styles. In one of the studies it is reported that among Big five factors, only extroversion was related to perceptions of charismatic leadership (Zaccaro, et. al., 2009).

According to Zhao and Seibert (2006), a study on business ownership found that entrepreneur score was significantly higher on conscientiousness and openness and lower score on neuroticism and agreeableness. The findings of a study revealed that conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability played a significant role in the emergence of ethical leadership (Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2009).

## Study II

In the present research, the research transcribed the verbatim and thematic analysis was applied to generate most common themes. The outcomes of the study revealed that the women leaders have been facing numerous hurdles and challenges throughout their journey toward success. Most of the problems women faced in their lives were; (i) lack of confidence, (ii) gender discrimination, (iii) injustice in system, (iv) professional jealousy, (v) non-supportive family and (vi) work-family imbalance.

The first theme was *lack of confidence* that is one of the barriers for females while on their leadership journey. A study was carried out to identify whether locus of control of the women executive could possibly improve the relationship between the personality traits of the female executive and employees' performance. The results indicated that internal locus of control could be moderator in improving the relationship between personality traits of women leaders on improving employees' performance (Alam, R., 2021).

The second theme was *gender discrimination that* created barrier in the success of women for achieving higher position in any organization. A research was carried out to analyze profiles of women manager and leadership styles adopted by women. The serial of gender differences are presented and characterization of the main obstacles faced by business women, and solution to overcome them and their promotion on hierarchy of managerial position. It was showed that leadership skills are not associated with a single gender therefore personality traits were investigated (Abdallah & Jibai, 2020).

The third theme was injustice in system that is due to unfair distribution of resources between male and female is all set with the practices of stereotypical social norms. Women leaders have to raise voice for getting opportunities which are given to men on the basis of their gender. A study was conducted on French and Turkish mid-level women managers, to perceive their career advancement opportunities and organizational advancement. The results revealed that women have more difficulty than men to get promotional authoritative hierarchies within workplaces environment (Akpinar-Sposito, 2013)

The fourth theme was professional jealousy; women have to face leg-pulling to grow in their field of interest. Most of the professions have been specifically considered as suitable for men. If any competent women would be able to achieve that rank, people especially male and society try to let them down, create hindrances to achieve goals and make work environment suffocated for them. A study in Jordan explored the practice of male culture, family influence, social commitment, female career achievements and the impact of glass ceiling barrier. The findings revealed that the glass

ceiling has affected more significantly on progress of women career as compared to social and family commitments (Al-Manasra, 2013).

The fifth theme was *non-supportive family*, once a female gets higher position after huge struggle the unsupportive attitude of family let them down. This create major hindrance for them to move forward. In Pakistani society, females have various pressures and restriction.

The sixth theme was work-family balance. For women it is challenging to maintain work life balance, allocation of different resources i.e. time, money, scope of decision making, and physical, emotional, and social resources, that are essential to be interacted and maintained for individual personality. A study explored the challenges of work-family balance for women leaders; time-consuming child care, responsibility for family life, and a woman's tendency towards understatement were barriers to career development. It was found that work family enrichment has a positive spillover effect that spreads positive energy and helped in balancing the work life relationship (Schueller-Weidekamm & Kautzky-Willer, 2012).

### **Limitations and Recommendation**

The current research work covers some areas that need additional exploration. The present research only focused on five leadership domains to make it more specific. The future efforts can be made to include more leadership domains. The difference between leaders and non-leaders can also be explored in future research.

### **CONCLUSION**

In Pakistan, women constitute almost half of the population. Due to abrupt increase in inflation, women employment rate has been considerably increased. However, their promotion to management and leadership positions has not been very tangible. Women have the same characteristics and qualities of leaders regardless of their gender, these are only socially perceived gender roles and characteristics that have been associated with them on the basis of their sex. In the present study researcher assessed personality characteristics of female leaders by using two different tools i.e. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Big Five Inventory being widely used and studied psychological tool in the area of leadership and personality. Research data presented support the findings that we can distinguish leaders from non-leaders on the basis of Extraversion. The thinking and Judgment were the most prevailing preference among the female leaders. The present research, brought into limelight the most common hidden barriers faced by Pakistani women leaders. Due to social restrictions and gender based expected roles and duties women lack confidence. Moreover, gender inequalities at the workplace are due to prevailing gender discriminatory attitudes that might result in lack of efficient use of potential capacities of women. Even though the previous research demonstrated that women are not less ambitious than men, wrong beliefs that attribute management to men make a kind of invisible barrier, known as glass ceiling, which prevents women's promotion to top organizational positions. The analysis explored that existing social norms are occupied with injustice system regarding the positioning of women in the structures of power and responsibility. It also includes a characterization of the main obstacles a woman has to overcome including non-supportive attitude of family and dual responsibilities, work-family imbalance that might be started due to personal relational issues, irrational social mindset and family system.



Women's manager profile and the leadership styles adopted by women presented a series of differences in a way that make woman extraordinary leader. Women provide solutions for promoting more women in management positions to achieve gender balance and varied and diverse management teams proportionate to all levels in a hierarchy that would automatically produce positive work atmosphere, that will only bring performances to organizations.

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