

# Women Leadership in Padmakanya Multiple Campus: An Empirical Case Study

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## Abstract

The objectives of the study are to determine the recognition and assess the status of women leadership in the Padmakanya Multiple Campus in Kathmandu. This study adopted a descriptive research design and applied qualitative techniques with a case study approach. Primary data were collected using a purposive sampling technique. This study adopted an interview approach to get an experience of women. Data were analyzed based on thematic analysis. Women have a feminine leadership style, not a masculine style. Thus, women show a flexible and cooperative leadership style. Sometimes, women are dominated by men in leadership roles due to women's non-directive style of leadership in the organization. Women's leadership style is linked with their feminine traits and features. However, women leaders are committed, devoted, and dedicated to the organization besides being flexible. They tend to be tolerant, kind, and cooperative among leaders in academia. It can be concluded that female employees want to get leading roles and tackle difficulties and issues challenges within the organization. It was also concluded that female academics get the opportunities of leadership and create their own identities in the academic system; however, it is full of challenges. Women academics have the challenges of male domination, less cooperation, and teamwork at work, less power over their academic abilities, and a heavy workload.

**Keywords:** *academia, feminine, masculine, recognition, status, women leadership*

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## Introduction

As a society, we've made outstanding progress in academia over the last century. With this higher jump, we have experienced male leadership strongly however

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women leadership shifting noticeably. There is evidence that Nepalese society has gone through changes in women's leadership in the academic sector. Women have great contributions to uplift the academic platform even though still not recognizable. In the educational sector, it can ordinarily be said that women are involved in teaching and men in management (Greyvenstein & Westhuizen, 1992) despite varied attempts to manage gender imbalances in the management of education. Women's leadership has been playing a significant role to modify and establish a new version of leadership. Internationally, tertiary education has enhanced its focus on equality, diversity, inclusion, and leadership. Gender roles and relations are culturally defined in South Asia. Men controlled and maintained to dominate society, while women played a secondary role. Various sector like politics economy religion society is ruled by men and another important sector academia is not far from male domination. The connection between gender and caste/ ethnicity is particularly important in Nepal, where over 80 ethnic groups, each with their own rules, responsibilities, traditions, languages, morals, and values, reside. Gender-related difficulties are greatly aggravated for women from ethnic minorities and low-caste groups.

Gender-related difficulties are greatly aggravated for women from ethnic minorities and low-caste groups. There is a dearth of women leadership in tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe, both locally and in various nations (Chabaya et. al., 2009). Globally, the proportion of women academics in tertiary education has increased by 3.9 points from 39.2% in 2001 to 43.1% in 2019 Mar 5, 2022. Nepal's history of women's academic leadership is noticed with the first female campus of Nepal, Padmakanya Multiple Campus (PKMC), which was established in 1951. Over the years, this campus has produced many women leaders. As a result, women have evolved into a change of stereotypical practices. Women started leading young women, men, and even children to raise their voices for their rights. Gender rights, languages, geographic regions, and religious minorities, calling for representation and equality through the law and the democratic process, are the main areas where women have played a significant role in change. Women leaders have to create recognition and establish. However, it is easy for them in male-dominated structures and practices. Keeping this view, this study aims to assess the status of women leadership and to determine the recognition of women leaders at Padmakanya Multiple Campus in Kathmandu.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions have been raised in this study:

1. How do women leaders recognize themselves as leaders at Padmakanya Multiple Campus in Kathmandu?
2. What is the status of women leadership at Padmakanya Multiple Campus in Kathmandu?

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To determine recognition of women leaders in Padmakanya Multiple Campus in Kathmandu.
2. To assess the status of women leadership in Padmakanya Multiple Campus in Kathmandu.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study will give a clear vision of how women are performing and leading in PKMC. This information can provide answers to the questions of how women can lead and work in a better way. The research will be supportive for readers, academicians, and researchers for further study. The finding of the study is also useful for the concerned campus, universities, students, and governmental bodies.

### **Limitation of the Study**

The limitations of the study are given below:

1. Only one campus i. e., PKMC was taken under study as a case study due to time constraints.
2. Due to limited data analysis techniques and sample size, the conclusion drawn from this study cannot be generalized.

### **Review of Literature**

According to leadership scholars, the leadership style of males is different from females. The leadership style of men is autocratic, masculine, and assertive type whereas females are flexible, submissive, and indecisive type. The society inspired a man-centric leadership style, thus estimating females to practice conventional leadership approaches. Female leaders in Asia need further control, as they require a balance between their individual and occupational identities. Work-life -balance and flexible employment arrangements are an urgent need for them. Males and females participate in leadership practices. Females may contribute equal roles to males, yet males evaluate themselves as more suitable and successful and perceive females as failure and unsuccessful managers in comparison to males. It indicates

that feminine features are the least important for performing leadership roles in academia.

The situation of women in developed, developing, and under-developing countries is different. Women in developed countries have more opportunities than women in developing and underdeveloped countries. Women in developing and underdeveloped countries face too many problems in their houses and society and are forced to do what their stereotypical society says. The society is dominated by son preference cultures due to religious beliefs in Nepal.

### **Leadership Styles**

Transactional leadership is autocratic and passive. They use rewards or punishments to fulfill the task. They are strict in attaining the goals of the organization. This kind of leadership is mainly passive and the status quo in nature (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). They state that transformational leaders develop and change their followers to the level of leadership roles and attain higher performance than standards or objectives. They are open-minded, treat employees as a friend, and try to understand employee problems. Transformational leadership is democratic.

### **Empirical Reviews**

A study by Cahyati et. al., (2021) concluded that it is still an obstacle to accomplishing a high level of leadership for women in higher educational organizations in Indonesia. However, there is almost a lack of discrimination in Indonesia. Women are provided equal opportunities as men to play the role of leadership. A patriarchal culture, family and child obligations, and the unsupportive role of a spouse are major obstacles.

A study by Madsen et. al., (2020) revealed that the presence of women in colleges and universities is very poor. They have opened the door narrowly to higher education.

A study by Sharma (2022) found that women leaders in commercial banks in Nepal are facing challenges and opportunities as well. Women are successful in attaining leadership roles in these banks. Men and women are ready to make challenging decision-making. Women are sometimes unsuited for a powerful job that needs a powerful personality. Women are usually judged by their looks rather than their talent. It is not still clear which gender is better, both genders have their leadership abilities to lead and perform (p. 51).

### **Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive research design and applied qualitative techniques. This paper is based on an experience of women and men performing leadership roles at Padmakanya Multiple Campus as a case study located in Kathmandu. Primary data were collected using a purposive sampling technique. This study adopted an interview approach to get an experience of women. Data were analyzed based on thematic analysis.

## Results

This section includes direct interviews of employees especially women employees and findings of the study.

While asked about how women employees perceive leadership in academia, an administrative employee replied:

*“I believe that leadership demands working as a team where each member has distinctive abilities, and a leader must identify and utilize multiple skills and resources to achieve defined goals. Unlike male colleagues, I am not enjoying on leading role. I am concerned with executing rules and regulations”.*

One employee/research participant in a face-to-face interview viewed:

*“It is described in the leadership sphere as a glass ceiling -- the symbolic obstacle women hit at mismanagement -- barriers to women’s advancement could, in the context of academia, also be thought of as a labyrinth. Women are not simply denied top leadership opportunities as the result of a long career, but rather such opportunities seem to disappear at various points along their paths. And even when women attain leadership positions, we face challenges inserted within institutional structures and systems -- and perhaps most importantly, mindsets -- that require transformative change”.*

Similarly, a participant/male leader suggested:

*“Leadership requires individuals to utilize numerous abilities to deal with their followers because they have distinctive socio-cultural and psychological backgrounds. Therefore, as a leader, she corresponded with her team with competence and developed an ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of her subordinates”.*

*In an in-depth interview with a woman lecturer of PKMC, she remarked:*

*“In my opinion, leadership has two viewpoints; first, leading one’s life in one’s way, and second, helping others in determining and achieving their specific life goals.*

*Leaders should identify their skills and resources to prepare them for leading others. It helps them to decide their own life goals and develops the confidence to lead from the front. This realization of personal abilities allows others to get inspiration from them. Good leaders are always prepared to mentor others; consequently, people also start recognizing them as successful leaders”.*

When asked about the status of women leadership at PKMC, a research participant working in an administrative role added:

*“I believe in a non-directive style of leadership. I frequently arrange meetings with my faculty and administrative team to discuss professional objectives and keep facilitating them in achieving the desired outcomes. I enable my team to do their work effectively by providing them with a nice atmosphere, where they can perform well”.*

Another research participant commented:

*“ Women may feel obstacles because of their non-directive styles of leadership compared to male counterparts”.*

### **Finding and Discussion**

By its nature, women have a feminine leadership style, not a masculine style. Thus, women show a flexible and cooperative leadership style. Sometimes, women are dominated by men in leadership roles due to women’s non-directive style of leadership in the organization. Women’s leadership style is linked with their feminine traits and features. However, women leaders are committed, devoted, and dedicated to the organization besides being flexible. They tend to be tolerant, kind, and cooperative among leaders in academia. They look patient emotionally intelligent and stable. Furthermore, they seem to be aware of developing their career and getting new opportunities in academia. The major issue for women's leadership is that there is a dearth of opportunities for management development. Women employees in Padmakanya Multiple Campus want leadership of a non-directive style. Research study proves that female leaders who demonstrate feminine traits and features, for example, dedication, respect, patience, flexibility, and devotion are an equally good performer as leaders. Unlike male colleagues, women do not enjoy leading roles. However, employees should be concerned with executing rules and regulations. Women may feel obstacles because of their non-directive styles of leadership compared to men counterparts. This study is similar to Sharma’s (2022) study. This study contradicts the studies of Madsen et. al., (2020) and Cahyati et. al., (2021).

## Conclusion

Women's leadership style is linked with their feminine traits and features. However, women leaders are committed, devoted, and dedicated to the organization besides being flexible. Women are ready to accept leadership roles, but these opportunities are not readily available for women. Leadership requires individuals to utilize numerous abilities to deal with their followers because they have distinctive socio-cultural and psychological backgrounds. Even when women attain leadership positions, they face challenges in organizational structures. They seem to be aware of developing their career and getting new opportunities in academia. Women's leadership style is linked with their feminine traits and features. However, women leaders are committed, devoted, and dedicated to the organization besides being flexible. They tend to be tolerant, kind, and cooperative among leaders in academia. It can be concluded that female employees want to get leading roles and tackle difficulties and issues challenges within the organization. It was also concluded that female academics get the opportunities of leadership and create their own identities in the academic system; however, it is full of challenges. Women academics have the challenges of male domination, less cooperation, and teamwork at work, less power over their academic abilities, and a heavy workload.

## Recommendation

This study helps to conduct further research as an important literature. There is almost a dearth of research studies in educational institutions on women's leadership in Nepal. Research studies on women leaders in educational organizations are lacking in Nepal. Moreover, this research study found a lack of opportunity and expertise for females to perform leadership roles. Even considering time and situation, women leaders should be recognized, prioritized, and valued in leading academia in their feminine roles and characteristics. For this goal, universities' policies and strategies should also be amended. It is suggested that further research can also be conducted on other sectors such as civil service, public sector enterprises, and even private sector organizations.

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