

Project

Public Opinion of Women as Corporate Leaders in Bulgaria

Names of researchers:

Project leader	Professor Russinova, Vesselina, PhD.
Researchers	Professor Hristova, Antoaneta, PhD. Research Assoc. Nedeva, Viktoriya, PhD.
Research assistant	Expert Economist-Psychologist Chavdarova, Milena

Non-technical Summary

Abstract

The manager plays the leading part in a success realization of an organization. In the course of time much more women interpret this role but it is still believed that it is a men's job. The study of a "public opinion" of women managers in the present research examines the two basic components of the concept – **interpersonal perception** (evaluation of a direct supervisor) and **stereotypes** (evaluation of the image of a typical manager).

The aim of the empirical study is to analyze the specificities of stereotypes and perceptions of woman and man managers prevailing in the Bulgarian society and to define their mutual influence.

This problem always sounds up to date, because women managers are still less than man managers - the average percentage for EU27 countries is 30%. That refers also to the situation in Bulgaria.

Methods

In the **first stage** of the study **The Method for an Investigation of Characteristics of the Ideal Manager** was applied. It was addressed to 32 experts and the result is that: 21 characteristics of the ideal manager are determined.

In the **second stage** **The Method for an Evaluation of Perceptions and Stereotypes of Woman and Man Managers** was applied. It was addressed to 751 employees. This method was realized under the form of a questionnaire, compounded of four identical scales with 21 antonymous couples of adjectives, which describe different characteristics of the ideal manager.

Findings

By finishing with the applied analyses the following results were indicated:

- stereotype of woman manager is evaluated higher than stereotype of man manager according to some gender typified characteristics
- there is no difference between perceptions of woman and man direct supervisors
- there is a mutual influence between stereotypes of woman and man managers and corresponding perceptions of direct supervisors from both genders
- employees' gender, education degree and home place influence on stereotypes of woman and man managers, but do not influence on perceptions of them

- level of perceived physical attractiveness influences on perceptions of woman and man managers; the attractive direct supervisors is evaluated higher

Conclusions

On the base of the obtained results it could be generally summarized that:

- there are not revealed any negative prejudices towards managerial capabilities of women managers
- the similar evaluation of perceptions of direct supervisors from both genders confirms that there is not any influence of negative prejudices on perceptions of the professional skills of these managers

It is possible that these results may reflect the existence of the Bulgarians traditionally positive attitude towards the capabilities of women in a position of responsibility. Hence, the public opinion of women managers could not be a reason for their low presence in the managerial sphere. Finding out the reasons for this fact could be a good base for future researches. This policy, which regards to women's career development, should be oriented towards some changes in the women's perceptions of their performance on managerial positions.

Keywords: women managers, men managers, public opinion, gender role stereotypes, interpersonal perceptions, professional career of women, physical attractiveness