

Contribution of Female Leaders in Sports and the Attitude of Males towards Promoting Gender Diversity in Beijing, China



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ABSTRACT: This study aims to explore the perceptions and attitudes of male leaders in Chinese sports organizations regarding gender diversity. The research will involve male teachers, instructors, and organizational leaders at Beijing Capital Institute of Physical Education. A questionnaire will be used to assess the demographic profile of the respondents, the leadership role of women martial artists, and the contributions of women in the martial arts community. The study targeted around 150 respondents. The results show a significant correlation between male leaders' attitudes towards martial arts education and their perception of the contributions of female leaders in the industry. This suggests that male leaders can play a crucial role in creating an equitable and representative leadership landscape in the sports industry. Their positive attitudes towards gender diversity can foster an environment where all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to succeed and contribute to the growth and success of the sports industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

In China, gender diversity in leadership positions has become increasingly emphasized in various industries in recent years. The attainment of gender parity in leadership roles in the field of sports, has been a gradual process. Despite the notable successes achieved by women, in sports, leadership roles in Chinese sports continue to be predominantly passed on to males.

Notwithstanding the endeavors of the feminist revolution to question conventional gender norms, women continue to encounter substantial obstacles in assuming leadership positions inside organizations. Even with hiring and recruitment stipulations, structural inequities, unconscious biases, and other factors continue to influence decision-making, preventing women from rising to leadership roles. (Walker & Aritz, 2015)

Sports perception in China differs from Western nations due to the country's emphasis on women's sports and their higher medals in international competitions. Chinese sports enthusiasts categorize sports based on physical demands, risk, and popularity. Research shows that media consumption influences gender typing, with those who consume more sports media being more inclined to gender-type sports. (Xu et al., 2020)

Female physical education teachers and coaches played a crucial role in early women's intercollegiate athletics, emphasizing participation and education. However, the shift towards competitive women's sports led to the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) and the enactment of Title IX in 1972, which eventually led to the NCAA taking over the AIAW in 1982, displacing many women program administrators and coaches. Despite policy efforts, gender disparities in leadership positions persist, underscoring deeply ingrained biases and cultural norms. Promoting women's involvement in sports offers benefits such as gender parity, economic growth, and empowerment but still faces challenges related to stereotypes and inequalities in opportunities and representation (Hatfield et al., 2009; Aman, 2020; Namie & Warne, 2017; Edmonds et al., 2019; United Nations, 2007).

College athletics still lacks female coaches and administrators. Discrimination, gender biases, and job growth barriers are to blame. The sports industry and patriarchal masculine culture have restricted participation. Title IX has affected student-athletes more than female coaches and administrators. Male hegemony and exclusion reinforce this situation. Homophobia and the old boys' network affect hiring, and women have fewer coaching possibilities. (Van Kirk, 2023)

Xu (2018) highlights the Chinese government's support for women's sports, contributing to their dominance in international sporting events. The 1978 market economy in China transformed media portrayals of Chinese female athletes, emphasizing femininity over athletic prowess. This shift reflected societal shifts and reevaluation of traditional gender roles, leading to a multifaceted identity where athleticism and femininity coexist, reflecting China's evolving cultural and economic landscape.

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The findings of a 2014 study by Yan and Liu regarding the portrayal of female athletes in Chinese sports media indicate that their physical attractiveness and gender identity are frequently prioritized over their athletic prowess. Additionally, it was shown that female sports receive a lesser amount of media attention compared to male sports, indicating that Chinese sports media may contribute to the continuation of gender roles and stereotypes. Recognizing the perceptions and attitudes of male leaders is of utmost importance in tackling the matter of gender diversity in leadership roles in Chinese sports establishments. The point of this study is to find out how you can promote gender diversity in Chinese sports organizations by looking into what makes male leaders want to support women's leadership development.

Research Objectives

This study aimed to:

1. Assess the perceptions of leaders in a professional context regarding the contributions of individuals from underrepresented groups in terms of stereotypes, bias, role congruity, and stereotype threat.
2. Assess the attitudes of male leaders in a professional setting towards promoting diversity in leadership positions, including considerations of equity, inclusivity, representation, balance, and progressive mindset.
3. determine the correlation between leaders' perceptions of contributions from underrepresented groups and their attitudes toward promoting diversity in leadership positions.

Ho: There is no correlation between leaders' perceptions of contributions from underrepresented groups and their attitudes toward promoting diversity in leadership positions.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This quantitative, comparative, and correlational study will examine how male sports executives see gender diversity in leadership roles. The participants of the study will be male teachers, instructors, and organizational leaders at Beijing Capital Institute of Physical Education, located in Beijing, China with a total population of 230. A researcher-made questionnaire will be used as a primary instrument in this research. The researcher will use printed and google form in administering this instrument. Part 1 of the instrument will cover the demographic profile of the respondents. Part 2 will cover the leadership role of women martial artists. Part 3 will cover contribution of women in the martial arts community. The researcher used the purposive sampling method. The process involved selecting participants who had a particular characteristic or experience that was relevant to the topic. The study targeted around 150 respondents.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Male leaders in sports generally exhibit a progressive mindset and reject gender stereotypes regarding women leaders' capabilities. The overall mean falling within the "Disagree-Unlikely" range indicates that, on average, male leaders disagree with the notion that women leaders are less competent, emotionally driven, or ineffective decision-makers. While some statements received moderately higher mean scores, suggesting some reservations about certain stereotypes, the overall trend indicates a willingness to challenge and reject gender-based assumptions. This suggests that male leaders are open to promoting gender diversity and inclusivity in sports leadership positions. Similarly, in terms of gender biases, male leaders in sports reject the beliefs that men are more qualified, more natural leaders, or more respected in sports leadership roles. The "Likely" interpretation of the overall mean suggests that male leaders are aware of the potential impact of stereotype threats on women's confidence, opportunities, and performance in leadership positions. This finding implies a sensitivity towards addressing these barriers to create a supportive and inclusive environment for women leaders to succeed. Overall, the data portrays male leaders in sports as having a progressive and inclusive attitude towards promoting gender diversity in leadership positions. While some subtle biases or reservations may exist regarding certain stereotypes, the overall trend indicates a willingness to challenge gender-based assumptions and create an equitable leadership landscape. By acknowledging and addressing these challenges, male leaders can play a crucial role in fostering an environment where all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to succeed and contribute to the growth and success of the sports industry.

2. Data reveals that male leaders in sports generally hold an inclusive mindset towards promoting gender diversity in leadership positions. It was determined that they reject gender stereotypes, biases, and role congruity that limit women's opportunities to assume leadership roles. Male leaders exhibit a strong endorsement of equal opportunities for leadership positions, irrespective of gender. They recognize the positive impact of gender diversity on organizational performance and are willing to actively support and mentor female leaders to help them succeed. In addition, male leaders in sports understand the importance of achieving equal representation and gender balance in leadership positions. They believe in providing equal opportunities and breaking down gender barriers to ensure a balanced representation of both genders. Moreover, they acknowledge the significance of addressing biases that might hinder women's advancement in leadership roles and actively participating in gender diversity training to contribute to an inclusive leadership landscape. The data indicates that male leaders are open to fostering an inclusive and diverse leadership culture within the sports industry. However, there is still room for further appreciation of the unique perspectives and strengths that female leaders

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can bring to leadership roles. Overall, by continuing to promote a progressive mindset, male leaders can play a crucial role in creating an equitable and representative leadership landscape in the sports industry. Their positive attitudes towards gender diversity and inclusivity can contribute to fostering an environment where all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to succeed and contribute to the growth and success of the sports industry.

3. Based on the data the p-value of 0.004 is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, indicating that there is a significant correlation between male leaders' attitudes towards martial arts education and their perception of the contribution of female leaders in the industry.

IV. CONCLUSION

Male leaders in sports generally exhibit a progressive mindset and reject gender stereotypes, biases, and role congruity regarding women leaders' capabilities. The data suggests a willingness to challenge gender-based assumptions, indicating their openness to promoting gender diversity and inclusivity in sports leadership positions. Additionally, they endorse equal opportunities for both men and women in leadership roles and recognize the presence of stereotype threats, showing a sensitivity towards addressing barriers faced by women leaders. Data reveals that male leaders in sports hold a progressive and inclusive mindset towards promoting gender diversity in leadership positions. They actively support and mentor female leaders, believe in providing equal opportunities, and acknowledge the importance of addressing biases and promoting diversity training. However, there is still room for further appreciation of the unique perspectives that female leaders can bring to leadership roles. There is a connection between how these male leaders view martial arts education and their assessments of the accomplishments and contributions of female leaders in the sports field. By continuing to promote an inclusive mindset, male leaders can play an important role in creating an equitable and representative leadership landscape in the sports industry. Their positive attitudes towards gender diversity and inclusivity can contribute to fostering an environment where all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to succeed and contribute to the growth and success of the sports industry. Addressing and overcoming biases and barriers can further enhance efforts towards achieving leadership equity and a more inclusive sports industry.

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