

Women in Logistics and Transport: Concept, Capacity, Conceptual Model and Commendation

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Article Info

Volume 81

Page Number: 5799 - 5803

Publication Issue:

November-December 2019

Abstract

Developing and broadening the skills, talent, experience, and knowledge of women workers in any industry are among the primary goal of United Nation and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Countries (APEC). Investing in women is considered as a great stimulus to economic growth as women is known to be more productive and hardworking compared to men. The purpose of this paper is to propose a conceptual model for women's key barrier in the unexplored industry, logistics and transportation. This paper has four main objectives: first to review the concept of women in organization, explore the capacity building of women in logistics and transport, developing conceptual model for women leader's critical challenge in logistics and transport, and lastly to recommend some area for future development with regards to women in logistics and transport study. This paper is a literature review based paper that integrates both scholarly research on women leaders and facts and figures from the industry report worldwide. This paper considers looking at various researches into leadership barrier and developing conceptual model for women key barriers in a sector of logistics and transport. This study is aligning with United Nation agenda, APEC and Women in Transport (WIT) to develop women leaders in various industry including logistics and transport. The originality of this paper is on the key barrier for women leader model in the area of logistics and transport. This paper contributes to the literature in the women leadership domain and gender equality area of research. Conceptual model on key barrier for women leader in logistics and transport established in this study could be the main reference for all women to overcome the obstacle and improved their current performance.

Article History

Article Received: 5 March 2019

Revised: 18 May 2019

Accepted: 24 September 2019

Publication: 27 December 2019

Keywords: *Women, Logistics, Transport, Women in Logistics, Women in Transport, Women Capacity Building, Women Challenges*

1. Introduction

Women are recognized as a potential workforce that has ascertained value that drives the organizational success. The establishment of women as a leader in many industries are increasing such as in education, nursing, banking, tourism, medical, manufacturing, construction, automotive as well as logistics and transport. Even in five main regions namely Eastern Europe, Asia Pacific, The European Union, North America and Latin America is growing. As reported by catalyst (2019), percentage of

though the number is increasing, but it still considers low compared to men involvement especially in the logistics and transport industry. As highlighted in Catalyst (2019), women participation in senior roles is increasing with 29% of senior management position are held by women. As reported, the proportion of women in senior leadership senior roles held by women is lead by Eastern Europe, followed by North America 31%, Asia Pacific and The

European Union 28%, and Latin America 25% (see below Table 1).

Table 1: Women senior leadership percentage in five regions.

Region	Women senior leadership percentage (%)	Remarks
Eastern Europe	32%	In year 2039, it is expected that women leaders in this region will reach parity
North America	31%	Low number of women in senior level management post
Asia Pacific	28%	Fewer women in leadership position
The European Union	28%	Only one out of three managers in the EU is women
Latin America	25%	Fewer women in senior management roles

Source: The author

From the other perspective, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries were established in 1989 to further enhance economic growth and prosperity of the Asia Pacific region. APEC consists of 21 countries or known as economies (see Table 2 for details of APEC economies member). APEC recognizes the importance of women leader potential in various industries including logistics and transport. According to APEC (2017) through its policy partnership on women and the

economy (PPWE), there are approximately 600 million women in the region's labor force with 60% of them are engaged in the formal sector. In APEC PPWE, they have five main objectives. The five pillars of developing women are including access to capital; access to market, skills and capacity building, women leadership and agency, as well as innovation and technology (see Figure 1 below).

Table 2: APEC economies member

Country	Commencement	Region
Australia	1989	Australia/ New Zealand
Brunei	1989	Southeast Asia
Canada	1989	North America
Chile	1994	South America
China	1991	East Asia
Hong Kong	1991	East Asia
Indonesia	1989	Southeast Asia
Japan	1989	East Asia
Malaysia	1989	Southeast Asia
Mexico	1993	Central America
New Zealand	1998	Australia/ New Zealand
Papua New Guinea	1989	Melanesia
Peru	1998	South America
Philippines	1989	Southeast Asia
Russia	1998	Eastern Europe
Singapore	1989	Southeast Asia
South Korea	1989	East Asia
Taiwan	1991	East Asia
Thailand	1989	Southeast Asia
United States	1989	North America
Vietnam	1998	Southeast Asia

Source: Drawn by the author

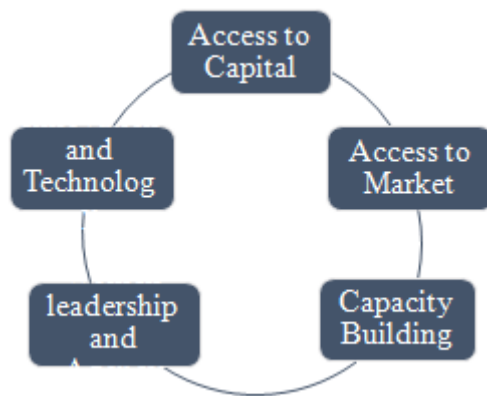


Figure 1: Five Pillars of Developing Women
Source: Drawn by the author

APEC also has established Women in Transport (WIT) taskforce to coordinate and develop women activities, knowledge and capacity building in the transportation sector, which consist of women in rail, women in aviation, women in marine and women in road. Developing and broadening the skills, talent, experience and knowledge are among the APEC’s goal in WIT framework in all sector including rail, marine and aviation. Under WIT taskforce, APEC has developed a framework for benchmarking and tracking the participation and influence of women as transportation workers, entrepreneur, leaders and travelers. Under WIT transportation framework, it consists of five pillars namely education, entry into the sector, retention, leadership and access and use. Under these five pillars, it has 18 main focus or called as priority outcomes. Figure 2 below illustrate the five pillars and 18 priority outcomes under WIT.

Education	Entry into sector	Retention	Leadership	Access and Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and first step • Secondary education and TVET • Higher education • Apprenticeship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stereotype & perception • Equality and eligibility • Recruitment • Entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compensation • Flexibility • On the job safety • Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment • Opportunity • Recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data • Planning & investment • Passengers safety

Figure 2: The five pillars and eighteen priority outcomes in APEC Women in Transport (WIT) Framework
Source: The author

In concordance with recent call from previous scholars and also practitioners to determine the leadership traits for women in logistics and transport, this study intends to dig further on the key barriers of women leader in logistics and transport. The next section will review on the literature on past studies with regards women in logistics and transport.

2. Literature review

Past studies on Women in Logistics and Transport

As highlighted by Elmuti et al (2009), the role of women in many industries has changes in the last five decades. In 1970s, it is acknowledged that women in top management were nearly no existent (Helfat et al., 2006). The number of women received higher education; obtaining postgraduate degree has increased intensely. The number of women holding a higher management position is also increasing, parallel with the development of women in capacity building. Having reviewed the literature, even though the number of women participation in industry has

increased, however there are still many barriers that preventing women to go to the higher level of management in the organization, especially in the industry that is dominated by male or men, such as logistics and transportation industry.

According to Madariaga (2013), the first paper explored in women in transportation is in year 1970s, where the research is focusing on the city planning and architecture of the city. Logistics and transport is known as service industry which women are now active participants in both develop and developing countries. In earlier decade, logistics and transportation is known as industry that dominated by the men or male workers. At present, the number of women involved in this industry is increasing. However, even though the number of women in logistics and transport industry has not many compared to other sector, women are still become a focus on the managerial position issue (Peus et al, 2015). According to Mavin et al (2014), on of the women leaders big challenge is to compete with men in scarce resources.

Resources in any organization is limited and it may refer to the technology used, training capital etc.

There is still dearth of research with regards to women in the logistics and transportation sector which becoming the main gap for future research to focus on. Borrowing a literature from women leader's challenges from other sector, this study intends to developed the proposed framework for understanding the key barriers in becoming a women leader in a logistics and transport sector. In this study, the researcher explores on the seven key challenges for women leader in logistics and transportation. There is selection process, lack of resources, lack of empowerment, cultural, workplace relationship, leadership style, and internal motivation. These seven main barriers are recognizing to be the key barrier for women leaders (Al Ahmadi, 2011; Elmuti et al., 2009). Next subsection will explain further more details on these seven barriers.

Key Barrier of Women in Logistics and Transportation Sector and the Development of Conceptual Model

As highlighted earlier, there are seven factors that identified as a main obstacle for women leaders in a logistics and transportation industry. There are acknowledged as selection process, lack of resources, lack of empowerment, cultural, workplace relationship, leadership style and internal motivation.

a. Selection Process

One of the key challenging barrier in career advancement is the selection process in any organization. As highlighted by Burke and Nelson (2000), more than 80% of firms are not promoting women because of they assume that women are not capable because of lack of general management skills.

b. Lack of resources

A lack of resources is one of the critical factor that holding back women to go to the higher level inside the organization. A lack of access to organizational resources such as training purpose, financial issue, as well as technology perspective, male leader is more dominance to receive the resources compared to women (Goff, 2005).

c. Lack of empowerment

There is a lack of equality between men and women in the workplace, especially higher up on the career leader (Mavin et al. 2016). In principal, even though women at present is well educated and have a good knowledge and potential in the organization, but because of the patriarchal system, male leaders are highly valued compared to women leader.

d. Cultural

In many organizational culture, it is not common for women to be in a higher level position or in a leadership position (Mavin et al., 2016).

e. Workplace relationship

Elmuti et al (2009) stress that women are inhibited in the workplace because of their limited connection with the capable mentors. In fact, many women prefer to have the similar gender mentor as they need more encouragement to complete the task.

f. Leadership style

Leadership is connected to the common perception of women leaders (Goff, 2005). The leadership characteristics of male and female leader has different. Women is tend to be more social leader compared to male leader tend to be more task-oriented leader.

g. Internal Motivation

Emory (2008) states that many women especially from the senior level management and top management do not have desire to excel in their current job position. While Annis (2008) in her research found that most of women leader lose their desire to go to the higher level because of the challenges they facing along the path of becoming the manager.

Figure 3 below shows the seven key barriers for women leaders in the logistics and transportation sector.

Figure 3 below shows the conceptual model on the key challenges for women leaders in the logistics and transportation sector

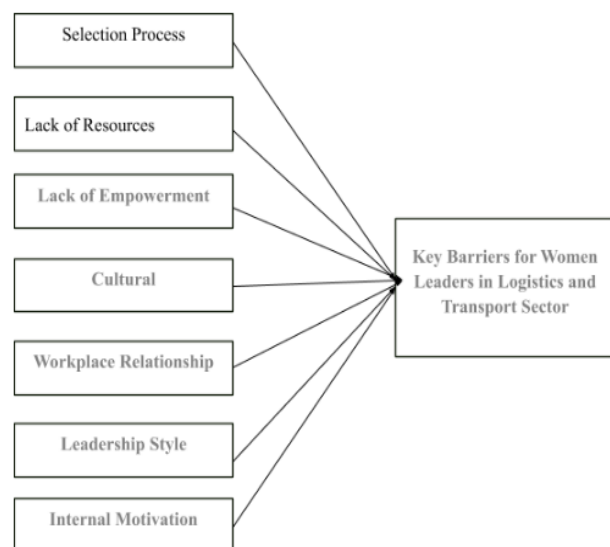


Figure 3: Proposed conceptual model on key barriers for women leaders in logistics and transport

Source: The Author

3. Conclusion

This study constitutes one of the few to examine women participation study in the logistics and transport sector. This research call for more research, both conceptual and empirical to investigate women characteristic and women challenges specifically in aviation, maritime and rail.

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