

# WOMEN TRAINERS IN THE WONDERLAND OF INDIAN CORPORATE: PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Smriti Narendran<sup>1</sup> & . Rajeshwari Narendran<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** *Changing business conditions and changes in organizational structures have compelled human resource departments to increasingly alter their perspectives on their role and function. Human Resource practitioners are trying to become business partners and be more strategic in their approach. This affords particular opportunities for the training function in the well known axiom, of the inherent nature of change (in-built-into-human-existence) it would be apparent that continuous training and retraining is a requirement of human survival. It also leads to a repositioning and redefinition of its role.*

*In today's progressive training climate, top management has a right to expect a professional trainer whose main choice lies between acting as a strategic facilitator and as a deliverer. The former role must be filled somewhere in the organization. The ability to exert an influence in the organization beyond formal authority is the most important skill the trainer requires. Other skills needed are strategic awareness, diagnostic capacity and technical awareness. Both male and female trainers are equally competent and possess these qualities. Indian women professionals are definitely on a rise and are paving way for future generations. In spite of being a constellation of so many qualities, women are few in number in the training profession, but slowly their number is increasing. The opening up of Indian economy, the increased role of the private sector and the increase in the number of multinationals springing up has facilitated a slow but definite rise in the number of women trainers in the corporate sector.*

*This empirical research paper is focused on issues, problems and prospects of women trainers in corporate world. It attempts to define the challenges and problems as perceived and faced by women trainers based on the responses of both male and female corporate trainers. It also proposes certain specific solutions for aspiring female corporate trainers.*

---

<sup>1</sup> SVKM's NMIMS University, Mukesh Patel School of Technology & Management Engg, Babulde, Bank of Tapi River, Mumbai Agra Road, Shirpur-425405, Dist. Dhule, Maharashtra, smritin91@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Department of Business Administration, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur-313001, Rajasthan, rajeshwari18@yahoo.com

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*“Women by nature are the first trainers of the universe”*

In the post recovery slump era, the corporate world has recognized that it must lay much more emphasis on Training and Development. Being a very lucrative, highly rewarding and very creative occupation, more and more people would now opt for this profession. To achieve the value addition in human resource, the strategic role of women and their participation thus becomes unquestionably important. The role of women should be taken as an exemplary source of inspiration to fight back any challenge: economical, social, technological, cultural, and educational or anything for that matter. But this is possible only by bringing women to the mainstream.

By their nature women are seen to be more people focused, with a special knack of recognizing performers and facilitating their career advancements. (*Bharti Sharma, PhD. Thesis*)

Also they are good at objectively collecting feedback and offering career counseling. The kind of competency HR demands today includes understanding people's requirements and ensuring employee recognition. Women are better equipped to gauge these as they are more people oriented and so mentoring, soft skills, counseling, consoling, convincing and training come easy to women.

### ❖ **Relevance of the study:**

- This paper is an attempt to analyze the present lagging status of women trainers because in most domains today women are in a position to walk toe to toe with men.
- It will help in discovering unexplored capabilities of women professionals engaged in the field of training and development.
- It would also explore behavioral aspect of women trainers including their presumed ability to inspire learners and their capacity to communicate utilizing various training and development skills in an effective way.
- The attitude of trainees, male counterparts and organization towards training programs conducted by women trainers would likely be better understood.
- This paper proves that in spite of numerous gender based barriers, the efficiency of women trainers is equivalent as well as challenging and competitive to that of male trainers.

- This small but important study when completed would contribute towards the socio-cultural-economical-professional development of women trainers as well as specify the overall development of a nation as such.

2. A brief on Research Methodology:

- i) Type of study- Pilot study (descriptive)
- ii) Sample- convenient/ stratified random
- iii) Size of sample- 50 male and 50 female trainers directly associated with training institutes, freelancers and professional bodies like Indian Society for Training and Development trainers' forum etc.
- iv) Survey tool – structured questionnaire and personal interviews of 20%of the sample.
- v) Data analysis- simple statistical tools like Chi – square, percentile method and rank correlation.

On the basis of a review of literature such as listed under bibliography it was found that there is a clear gap in the studies related with problems focused on women trainers. Particularly a comparative study is missing on acceptability, problems and challenges identified for women trainers as seen respectively by male and female trainers. On the basis of such gaps identified the co-author has set the following objectives and hypotheses for the pilot study.

Objectives

- ❖ To examine the reasons of few women opting for training as their full time profession
- ❖ To measure the acceptability of women trainers in corporate as perceived by trainers
- ❖ To investigate and evaluate problems and challenges faced by women trainers and accordingly give suggestions to promote women trainers in Indian Corporate world.

Hypotheses

- ❖ Women trainers are equally competent and as effective experienced as male trainers are.
- ❖ There is no significant difference between the acceptability of female and male trainers

- ❖ Women trainers face significant amount of problems that adversely affect their career in training

### **3. WOMEN TRAINERS**

Since the 80's, the status of women in India has been changing as a result to growing industrialization and urbanization, spasmodic mobility and social legislation. Over the years, more and more women are going in for higher education, technical and professional education and the proportion of women professionals in the workforce has also been increased. With the spread of education and awareness, women have shifted from the kitchen, handicrafts and traditional cottage industries to non-traditional higher level activities. Many financial institutions and banks have set up special cells that now specifically engage women trainers. However, for women there are several handicaps impeding their entry into training field and managing the reason seems to be the deeply embedded traditional mindset and stringent values of the Indian society.

The reality is that women trainers are highly effective and efficient, as they possess qualities such as quick rapport building, patience, tolerance, sincerity, honesty, and loyalty as well as communication skills, often lacking in a male trainer.

Such problems and constraints experienced by women have resulted in restricting and inhibiting the expansion of women trainers engaged by organizations. Women are experienced in managing one of the most complex organizations imaginable the household, with its many human interfaces and interplay between the sexes, different age groups and different stakeholders. Women have learnt over centuries the art of negotiation and reconciliation and the qualities of patience and understanding, along with an inherent attribute emotional intelligence. All these transferable skills can be brought to bear upon the workplace making it the richer. Women are working in this multifaceted world. The organizational scenario changes like kaleidoscope with every responsibility, accountability and multiple pulls and pushes, which women have faced and came out with success.

### **4. CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN TRAINERS**

When one probes into women's issues and their work life related problems, one can see that there is a great disparity in the distributional imbalance of women's employment between urban and rural areas. No society can develop morally, socially, culturally and economically

without the broad participation of women. Gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the working environment are the two problems that almost every professional women trainer faces. Male trainers easily establish a lot of contacts in the field but female trainers have to be very careful in demarcating the boundaries for interaction. Another factor of discrimination between male and female trainers is the difference in their salary structure. This can be only rectified by the implementation of the Wage Policy.

❖ **Data analysis**

• **Qualification of Trainers**

**Table 4.1**

	Male (%)	Female (%)
<b>Professionally Qualified</b>	68	61
<b>Non-Professionally Qualified</b>	32	39

The data reveals that 68% male are professionally qualified while 61% female are professionally qualified. After analyzing the data of qualification separately for male and female, chi square test was applied to it. The Chi-Square test reveals that profession is independent of sex ( $\chi^2=0.418$  at 5%,  $df=1$ ). In other words we can say that male and female trainers are equally professionally qualified.

Hence, hypothesis 1 i.e. “Women trainers are professionally as competent as male trainers” is partly proved.

**Experience as a Trainer**

**Table 4.2**

Experience	%
<b>0-10 years</b>	64.00
<b>10-20 years</b>	27.00
<b>20-30 years</b>	9.00
<b>Total</b>	100.00

The above table gives the data that 64% of the female respondents possess 0-10 years of experience in the field of training, 27% possess 10-20 years of experience and 9% have 20-30 years of experience in the respective field.

**‘t’-Test**

On applying t-test we found that there is insignificant difference between experience of male and female trainers ( $t=0.28$  at 5%) i.e. there is no difference between number of years of experience among male and female trainers. So, we can conclude that male and female trainers are equally experienced. With this we prove our hypothesis no. 1 i.e. “Women trainers are professionally competent as male trainers”, completely.

Women trainers face several barriers when entering into this field and recognize challenges such as - behavioral, personal, socio-cultural, educational, economic, political, financial, managerial and marketing barriers. Despite these issues the women trainers opt for training as their first option for full time career due to several reasons as stated in Table 4.3:

**Table 4.3**

Reason	Average(out of 5)	Rank
Competency/efficiency	3.47	2
Increase in their acceptability	3.67	1
Effectiveness	3.37	5
Organization's motivation	2.85	10
More opportunities	3.47	2
Attractive/challenging field	3.33	6
Attractive remuneration	2.98	9
Recognition	3.43	4
Facilities available	3.18	7
Experience	2.73	12
Fashion/ Passion	2.58	13
Name and fame	2.82	11
Reservation	2.07	14
Gender equality	3.12	8

No doubt, women trainers are taking more interest in management/ corporate field. Data reveals the fact that their growing interest is mainly due to increase in their acceptability. Secondly, respondents feel that it is due to their competency and efficiency. Thirdly, it is due to growing opportunities in this field that number of women trainers are increasing. Fourthly, it is due to attractive and challenging field as well as due to the recognition, it offers. Fifthly,

it is their effectiveness which is inducing them to enter into management/ corporate field. The next reason is due to the facilities available in this field. Another reason that respondents cite is attractive remuneration, and while the next weightage is given to maintain gender equality, the fact that why women trainers are taking interest into management/corporate field. Next ranking is given to the organization's motivation to women trainers. Respondents have next given weightage to the reason that there is name and fame in this field. Next number comes of the experience these women trainers have into this field, fashion/ passion has been given the second last weightage and at last comes the reservation factor, which is the reason given by respondents for increasing number of women trainers into this field.

**Parameters for measuring effectiveness of Women Trainers**  
*(Data as collected from both the trainers as well as the trainees)*  
**Table 4.4**

Parameters	Average	Rank
<b>Confidence</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quick rapport building</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Sensitivity to understand people</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>EQ</b>	<b>3.38</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>IQ</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Sincerity</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Sense of discipline</b>	<b>3.48</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Communication skills</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Sympathy of colleagues/participants</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Cooperation of colleagues/participants</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>8</b>

The above table signifies that, the effectiveness of women trainers can be attributed to sensitivity to understand people more, secondly to their confidence level, thirdly it is attributed to quick rapport building with participants, fourthly participants feel that it is their sincerity which is the reason for the effectiveness of women trainers, respondents have given the next weight to sense of discipline, then to communication skills of women trainers, at the next level, respondents have kept emotional quotient of women trainers, at the third last level comes IQ, second last level comes cooperation of colleagues/participants, lastly respondents have given weightage to sympathy of colleagues/participants to which their effectiveness can be attributed.

## Problems faced by women trainers

Table 4.5

<b>Parameters</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Non cooperation of fellow trainers</b>	2.22	10
<b>Non cooperation by participants</b>	2.10	13
<b>Less acceptability by participants</b>	2.03	16
<b>Less acceptability by fellow trainers</b>	2.05	15
<b>Less acceptability by corporate trainers</b>	1.98	18
<b>Lack of encouragement by family members</b>	2.35	7
<b>Lack of motivation by fellow trainers</b>	1.98	18
<b>Lack of motivation from organization</b>	2.25	8
<b>Family/ Social commitments</b>	2.80	1
<b>Cultural taboos</b>	2.55	3
<b>Personal tensions/Stress</b>	2.50	4
<b>Discrimination in allotted time for training</b>	2.13	12
<b>Restriction of time</b>	2.47	5
<b>Limitation of outstation programs</b>	2.73	2
<b>Inadequacy of basic amenities</b>	2.47	5
<b>Harassment by trainees</b>	1.98	18
<b>Harassment /teasing by colleagues</b>	2.02	17
<b>Ego problems/ gender bias for trainers</b>	2.18	11
<b>Official obstacle for imparting training</b>	2.07	14
<b>Fairness in equality of opportunities</b>	2.23	9
<b>Physical strain</b>	1.98	21

Our interviews further revealed that women trainers always face some common problems which ultimately become hurdles in their career path. A study reveals the fact that male

trainers also agree that women trainers face considerable amount of problems which hinders their career path. Family/Social commitments, limitation of outstation programs, cultural taboos, and personal tensions/stress all such highly occurring problems stop the growth of women in general and trainers in particular. As the result, they are often unable to expand their knowledge base. Furthermore they are restricted for outstation programs, they lay behind their male counterparts during performance appraisal. Due to such reasons, their career may be at stake.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. Women possess skills and special characteristics to be top trainers but they should continuously develop professional skills and competencies to meet the needs of a changing educational, cultural, economic and political climate. They should create opportunities for themselves to gain valuable experience. They should learn to work with remarkable elegance that they are endowed with by nature.
2. Women trainers possess a unique interactive management skill but it needs to be utilized fully in the organizations of the future if the economies of tomorrow are to be prepared for competing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A woman trainer should be treated as a trainer without the notion of her being a woman.
3. Women trainers should learn to be strategist. They must limit their priorities and must stay focused. They should devise short term and long term career strategies.
4. Women trainers need to be professional in their outlook in order to develop their subject knowledge and their confidence, committed to make a difference to the lives of their trainees. They should develop within themselves risk taking ability. Women trainers need to be comfortable with their own body language.
5. A long lasting solution for empowering women trainers will be to identify the determinants of women's potential in this field and to help design comprehensive policy measures that better address the problems related to women trainers and their contributions to society.
6. There should be website news and forums created for women trainers to share their experience and expertise. There should be some Association of Women Trainers and such a professional body should organize educational, training, development and research on gender issues, solutions to problems faced by women trainers, probable factors which can help in growth of women trainers in technical and functional field.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. Bano Afsar, "Indian Women: The changing face ", New Delhi, Kilsa books, 2003
2. Bhatnagar, O.P., "Evaluation methodology for training: theory and practice", New Delhi, Oxford company, 1987
3. Bhowmik, Krishna, "Indian Women: The Ushering of a New Dawn", New Delhi, Mittal Pub.,2006
4. Dube,L.&Palriwala, R.(Ed.),"Structures and strategies: Women, Work and Family", New Delhi, Sage,1990
5. Lynton,RP & Pareek U., Training for Development, New Delhi, Vistaar Pub.,1990
6. Murthy Ranjani,(ed.), Building women Capabilities: Interventions in Gender Transformation, New Delhi, Sage, 2003
7. Pattanayak, Biswajeet,HRM, New Delhi, Prentice Hall, 2006
8. World Bank, Enhancing Women Participation in economic development, policy paper, Washington DC, The word Bank, 1994