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## **SUMMARY of the Article “Women in leadership,” Hadia Majid, Dawn, August 23rd, 2024**

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The article addresses the significant underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in Pakistan, where only 5.7% of managerial roles are held by women. Despite a common belief that this is due to a lack of qualified women, the reality is more complex, involving both supply-side issues and deeper societal factors. Women in Pakistan, even those with higher education, often opt out of high-pressure jobs due to caregiving responsibilities, societal expectations, and gender wage gaps. These factors, compounded by the “motherhood penalty,” result in fewer women ascending to leadership roles. The article also highlights how women, on average, earn less than men even with similar qualifications and experience. This wage gap is exacerbated by women’s limited access to professional networks and mentoring opportunities due to societal segregation and discrimination. The article discusses the systemic nature of gender discrimination in the labor market, where women are often confined to lower-paying, female-dominated professions, such as teaching and nursing, and even within these fields, men tend to occupy higher-paying, senior positions. The lack of women in leadership not only perpetuates gender inequality but also deprives organizations and society of the unique leadership styles and priorities that women bring. Women leaders tend to adopt a transformational leadership style, emphasizing collaboration, communication, and ethical behavior, which contrasts with the more transactional, task-oriented approach typically seen in male leaders. The article argues that increasing women’s representation in leadership and policymaking roles could lead to better governance, lower corruption, and more inclusive policy outcomes, particularly in areas such as health, education, and social welfare. The absence of women in these roles not only undermines gender equality but also hampers societal progress towards a just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

## **Easy/Short SUMMARY:**

The article discusses why so few women in Pakistan hold leadership positions, despite being qualified. It explains that women often leave high-pressure jobs due to family responsibilities and the lower pay they receive compared to men. Discrimination and limited access to professional networks also make it harder for women to advance. The article argues that having more women in leadership roles would benefit organizations and society by bringing different leadership styles and priorities, leading to better governance and more inclusive policies.

## **SOLUTIONS of The Problem:**

### ***Improve Work-Life Balance Policies***

Introduce and enforce policies that support work-life balance, such as flexible working hours and parental leave, to help women manage their careers alongside family responsibilities.

### ***Promote Equal Pay Initiatives***

Implement measures to ensure equal pay for equal work, including regular wage audits and transparency in pay scales, to close the gender wage gap.

### ***Enhance Access to Professional Networks***

Create and support networking opportunities specifically for women, enabling them to build diverse professional relationships and access mentoring for career advancement.

### ***Combat Discrimination in the Workplace***

Strengthen laws and policies against workplace discrimination, including harassment and bias in hiring and promotion, and ensure strict enforcement to protect women's rights.

### ***Encourage Women in Non-Traditional Roles***

Encourage and support women to enter and succeed in male-dominated fields by offering scholarships, training programs, and mentorship specifically targeted at women in these areas.

### ***Increase Representation of Women in Leadership***

Set targets or quotas for the inclusion of women in leadership positions within organizations and government to ensure their voices are heard at decision-making levels.

### ***Support Female Entrepreneurs***

Provide resources, such as funding, training, and mentoring, to women entrepreneurs to help them start and grow businesses, contributing to economic empowerment.

### ***Raise Awareness and Change Cultural Norms***

Conduct campaigns and educational programs to challenge and change societal norms that limit women's roles to caregiving and discourage their participation in leadership.

### ***Foster Transformational Leadership in Organizations***

Encourage organizations to adopt and value transformational leadership styles that focus on collaboration, ethical behavior, and empathy, traits often associated with female leaders.

### ***Implement Gender-Sensitive Policies***

Ensure that policies at all levels, from organizational to governmental, are gender-sensitive and address the unique challenges women face in the workplace and in leadership roles.

## **IMPORTANT Facts and Figures Given in the article:**

- Only 5.7% of managerial positions in Pakistan are occupied by women.
- Labor force participation rates for women with tertiary education are about 32%.
- Women face a “motherhood penalty” and high-time poverty, leading them to opt out of high-pressure roles.
- Gender wage gaps are prevalent across all labor market sectors in Pakistan.
- Women have less diverse networks and fewer mentoring opportunities compared to men.
- Gender-segregated society and discrimination limit women’s access to opportunities and networks.
- Women are often confined to lower-paying, female-dominated professions like teaching and nursing.
- Women leaders tend to have a transformational leadership style, focusing on collaboration and ethical behavior.
- Inclusion of women in governance and policymaking is associated with better policy outcomes and lower corruption.

## **MCQs from the Article:**

**1. What percentage of managerial positions in Pakistan are held by women?**

- A. 10%
- B. 15%
- C. 5.7%**
- D. 20%

**2. What is the labor force participation rate for women with tertiary education in Pakistan?**

- A. 20%
- B. 50%
- C. 32%**



D. 45%

### 3. What is the “motherhood penalty”?

- A. A tax on mothers
- B. A disadvantage women face in their careers due to caregiving responsibilities**
- C. A financial penalty for having children
- D. A reward for working mothers

### 4. Which leadership style is more commonly associated with female leaders?

- A. Transformational**
- B. Transactional
- C. Authoritative
- D. Laissez-faire

### 5. Which fields are women in Pakistan typically confined to?

- A. Engineering and Medicine
- B. Law and Business
- C. Teaching and Nursing**
- D. IT and Finance

### 6. What effect does the inclusion of women in governance and policymaking have?

- A. Increased corruption
- B. Less effective governance
- C. Better policy outcomes and lower corruption**
- D. No significant effect

## VOCABULARY:

1. **Managerial** (adjective) (□□□□□□□□): Relating to management or managers.
2. **Tertiary** (adjective) (□□□□): Of third rank, importance, or value; higher

- education level.
3. **Penalised** (verb) (مُعَذَّب مَعْذَبَات): Subject to a penalty or punishment.
  4. **Pervasive** (adjective) (شَائِع مَشَائِع مَشَائِع): Spreading widely throughout an area or group.
  5. **Segregated** (adjective) (مُفْرَق مَفْرَقَات): Set apart from the rest or from each other; isolated.
  6. **Disaggregation** (noun) (تَفْرِيق): The process of breaking down data into smaller components.
  7. **Harassment** (noun) (مُضْطَهَد مَضْطَهَدَات): Aggressive pressure or intimidation.
  8. **Institutionalised** (verb) (مُعْطَب مَعْطَبَات): Established as a norm in an organization or culture.
  9. **Prejudice** (noun) (مُحْضَب مَحْضَبَات): Preconceived opinion not based on reason or actual experience.
  10. **Stereotyping** (noun) (مُضْطَهَد مَضْطَهَدَات): Oversimplified and fixed ideas about a person or group.
  11. **Systematically** (adverb) (بِطَرِيق مَطَرِيقَات): Done according to a fixed plan or system.
  12. **Remuneration** (noun) (مُجْزَأ مَجْزَأَات): Money paid for work or a service.
  13. **Transactional** (adjective) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): Relating to an exchange or interaction.
  14. **Transformational** (adjective) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): Relating to a complete or major change.
  15. **Collaboration** (noun) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): The action of working with someone to produce something.
  16. **Governance** (noun) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): The action or manner of governing.
  17. **Cultural Norms** (noun) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): The standards we live by within our culture.
  18. **Mentoring** (noun) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): The process of advising or training someone.
  19. **Marginalised** (adjective) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): Treated as insignificant or peripheral.
  20. **Empathy** (noun) (مُتْرَافِع مَتْرَافِعَات): The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

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**dawn.com**  
**Women in leadership**  
**Hadia Majid**

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ONLY 5.7 per cent of managerial positions are occupied by women in Pakistan. A common argument for explaining this low statistic is that there are just not enough qualified women. True, women on average see lower educational achievement than men. Similarly, women also enter and remain in the labour market at much lower rates. But, labour force participation rates for women with tertiary levels of education are about 32pc. Why then do such low numbers make it to managerial (and higher) positions? Is this really a supply-side problem or are there other factors at play?

Conducting in-depth interviews with women in Lahore shows women opting out of high-pressure jobs and roles. Here, most of the higher-income, highly educated women interviewed cited care burdens, mother's guilt and a desire to spend more time with family as some of the primary reasons why they have cut back on working hours or passed up on promotions. This 'motherhood penalty' has been well-documented within the literature. The high-time poverty faced by such women also means that when given the choice, they would be unwilling to enter and stay in the labour market unless they are well-compensated. Unfortunately, gender wage gaps are pervasive across all labour market sectors.

Using 30 years of the Pakistan Labour Force surveys, we found evidence of wage



differences between men and women with similar levels of education who occupy similar positions on the occupation ladder. Can differences in experience help explain these wage gaps? Women on average take more breaks in their career and avail less training opportunities, negatively affecting their on-the-job experience. Besides, higher care work burdens and frequent career breaks translate into less time spent both at work and work-related events. This, in turn, affects the types of social contacts and networks women are able to build. Indeed, women have lower, less diverse networks. This negatively impacts the extent and type of mentoring that they receive as well as the information flows that they can tap into for career advancement. That these differences would then be penalised in the form of lower lifetime earnings relative to men is unsurprising.

Yet, women may also be purposely locked out of opportunities and networks. This gatekeeping is partly driven by the gender-segregated nature of our society and the separation in social activities and circles that this inevitably leads to. But, also by the high incidence of discrimination against women documented for the Pakistani labour market.

Gender wage gaps are pervasive across all labour market sectors.

Careful disaggregation performed on labour market outcomes shows that gender gaps cannot entirely be explained by such characteristics as age, education, experience, etc and that there are unobservables such as biases and sociocultural norms at play. Obvious examples of discrimination include harassment, institutionalised lower wages for women, or prejudice against hiring or promoting women because of stereotyping. More covert examples are seemingly well-meaning policies that perpetuate cycles of disadvantages specific to women and market segmentation where we find women (and men) confined to certain professions based on their gender.

In Pakistan, we typically find women's concentration in careers that are extensions of their caregiving roles such as teaching and nursing. What is telling here is that not only are female-dominated professions systematically lower paid than male-dominated ones, a difference which cannot be entirely explained by considering observable characteristics, but that even in these female-dominated fields we often find men in more senior positions and at higher pay. Thus, there is an additional layer of discrimination embedded within the already segmented market.





## SUMMARY of the Article Women in leadership, Hadia Majid

That women are locked out of certain professions, and equally qualified women are paid lower wages than men, goes against the pillars of just remuneration: Employment and equal pay for work of equal value are internationally recognised as fundamental human rights. Yet, aside from speaking to questions of justice, a systemic absence of women at positions of power has wider and deeper consequences.

Women leaders and managers have been shown to have a markedly different set of preferences and behaviours when compared to their male counterparts. Women have been found to have a more transformational leadership style, focusing on motivating their followers, fostering collaboration and emphasising ethical behaviour. In contrast, men have been found to have a more transactional leadership style, which is more task-oriented and based on rewards. This is not to say that one style of leadership is better relative to the other. Rather, the difference means that an organisation can be that much more well-rounded in its approach to various situations when both genders are represented up the ladder.

These differences across men and women continue when we look at responses to crises or even approaches to design because of a higher tendency among women to emphasise communication and empathy. The gendered variations in approaches, style, and preferences become especially relevant when we look at the case of policymaking. Women have been shown to prioritise separate sets of issues, such as those related to health, education, the environment, peace and security and social welfare, when compared to men. Women also tend to advocate at higher rates for marginalised and vulnerable populations.

Moreover, the inclusion of women in governance and policymaking has not only been associated with better policy outcomes but also with more effective governance as well as lower levels of corruption. A dearth of women in leadership and policymaking roles then means under-representation of not just significant areas of intervention but also of specific populations; leaving all of us worse off when we have fewer women in power. Indeed, if we are to make consistent moves towards a just, peaceful, and sustainable world, we must do better to include and champion our women.

The writer is chair of the Department of Economics at Lums.

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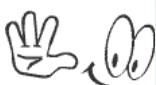
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