

# **Women Of Today And Organizations Of Tomorrow**

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## **Major Theme:**

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leadership styles, globalization age

## **ABSTRACT**

Working women have significantly increased in Pakistan while no significant research is found locally on the subject at a similar scale, and international research usually relates to a specific western culture.

We are entering into 'Globalization Age' that brings with it a new set of rules and requirements for which especially the women of Pakistan need to equip themselves in order to survive, compete and excel.

It is proposed that as women leaders have to deal with issues which are specific to their gender, they must acquire specific leadership skills to meet the needs of future - flat and lean – organizations, where every individual will be a leader.

This work researches Pakistani working women’s leadership skills; this is then analyzed in the light of international research and specific requirements of ‘Globalization Age’ and the context of Pakistani society and culture within which women live and work.

The current research study first identifies the leadership skills required for working women in the future organizations. Furthermore, a questionnaire is developed to assess how ready are the working women of Pakistan to meet the challenges of future organizations. These findings coupled with the issues identified and prioritized is then used to conclude how the women leaders of Pakistan are prepared to work effectively and efficiently in the organization of tomorrow.

This research paper builds on existing surveys to provide a foundation for future research. We aim to present a road map for working women in Pakistan to enable them in meeting the challenges of future organizations.

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# 1 Introduction:

International researchers such as Eagly have worked extensively on women leadership and management issues, where sample size and data was taken from USA surveys. Numerous studies on women issues exist in Pakistan conducted by UN organizations, Government sponsored surveys and organizations such as Women Action Forum, but they fall short of any conclusive research findings and stop at the helm of a survey. This research paper attempts to carry forward existing research, international findings and national survey's in addition to data collected as part of this research to identify if women leaders of today in Pakistan are ready and equipped for playing effective roles in organizations of tomorrow.

The main source of Social and Gender Statistics in Pakistan is the population census conducted after every 10 years. The first census was conducted in 1951 since then four population and housing censuses have been conducted. The last census was conducted in March, 1998. The other major source is the Pakistan Demographic Survey regularly conducted on annual basis<sup>1</sup>. Forty eight indicators for the report of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) do not cover skill level and type of skills acquired. The data collected during the labour force survey, again focuses on agriculture and wage earners, which is not the focus of this study<sup>1</sup>.

The population of Pakistan is estimated to reach 156.77 million<sup>2</sup> with a 51% male and 48.9% female with only 8% female and 34% male employment (employment including all categories and sectors of employment and employment age taken 10 and above<sup>3</sup>. If we go by the enrollment in the educational institutions<sup>1</sup> that:

### **INSERT TABLE 1**

Is indicative of the fact that not only to acquiring the right skills, Pakistani women need to step forward and play their role in the center stage of the globalization era, not tomorrow or day after, but now while the world stands at the helm of this new and exciting age, to make history rather than be history.

Literacy rate of 48.7% for men and 22.5% for women in 1995<sup>4</sup> aptly put '*Globalization of local knowledge and localization of global knowledge are the pre-requisites of knowledge based economy*<sup>2</sup>' which 'is the only gateway for Pakistan'.

The demographic data collected in Pakistan is firstly divided into Urban and Rural due to specific dynamics of both divides. Within the Urban areas of Pakistan the employment data still relate to previous employment areas such as construction, trade, agriculture, while data related to information technology, software houses, telecom industry, consultancy, non-government offices etc are not available<sup>2</sup> although these sectors are mentioned in the emerging employment scenario in Pakistan section<sup>2</sup>. There is a need to collect such data relating to men and women employed in the emerging sectors. To analyze the merits of Government of Pakistan's initiatives such as 'Skill Development

Councils SDCs'<sup>2</sup> and other similar schemes for skill enhancement would be beyond the purview of this work but it would be interesting to see if it is in line with the skill requirement of globalization age.

Most of the data collection, surveys and analysis are on social issues. With the last census (first census 1972, second census in 1981) conducted in 1998, authentic figures for the population are all based on projected figures. In the absence of data relevant to this study, the research focuses only on literature review and limited survey conducted in Islamabad.

This work starts by identifying issues by women in workplace to manage as effective participants towards change within Pakistani perspective. The findings from the two sources are then analyzed to support our proposal.

## **1.1 Hypothesis**

### **Proposal:**

Are women of today in Pakistan ready for organizations of tomorrow where globally there is a shift towards flat organizations with lean management which implies that all employees are leaders and leaders in an organization lead leaders.

H0 (1) Pakistani working women can not handle change at their work place.

H1 (1) Pakistani working women can handle change at their work place.

H0 (2) Pakistani working women can not work independently and without supervision.

H1 (2) Pakistani working women can work independently and without supervision.

H0 (3) Pakistani working women are not good in working with people from diverse background.

H1 (3) Pakistani working women are good in working with people from diverse background.

H0 (4) Pakistani working women do not practice participative decision making.

H1 (4) Pakistani working women practice participative decision making.

H0 (5) Pakistani working women do not deal amicably with complexity in work.

H1 (5) Pakistani working women deal amicably with complexity in work.

## **1.2 Assumption:**

This paper takes forward the work done by other management researchers and builds on their findings that are:

- There is a difference between leaders and managers

- Issues faced by men and women are different.
- Men and women have different leadership styles.
- Issues faced by Pakistani women are similar to those researched into by international researchers.
- A global phenomenon has arisen where organizations of today are evolving into a flat organization where every employee is a member and a leader in the organization and leaders are expected to lead leaders.
- Organizations of tomorrow need different skills for effective leaders.

### **1.3 Sample:**

The sample size for our survey was of 67 women within Islamabad –Pakistan. The sample represented women of different age brackets and from different work environments so that the effect of age, organization size and management tier could be nullified and focus is on findings to see their skill set if supportive of organization of the future. The responses received (32 out of 67) was indicative of general apathy in Pakistan towards research and a general attitude of only doing the needful – which is not a trait to get any nation to excellence and ready for the challenges of tomorrow. However, keeping the awareness level in mind about research in Pakistan and the fact that the survey was launched only in Islamabad (and excluded larger cities like Lahore and Karachi), the response was very encouraging and shows that these 32 could lead the rest of the 35 non-responsive sample out of the quandary.

Statistically, 68% of the sample was within the 20-30 age bracket and 23% within the 31-40 age bracket.

Education level of 41% women was post graduate and 36% were graduate while only 18% had higher education, which shows that the sample was of high standard and maybe not representative of the other majority of women workers who are below graduate level.

The research findings regarding professional experience shows that the sample were moderately experienced with 55% women having 2-5 years work experience, 23% having 6-10 years and 14% have more than 15 years of work experience.

Most of the sample was drawn from education sector (32%) and Information Systems (27%), the other major category was consulting with 9%. This shows that the survey was conducted with a sample who were well versed with the use of technology in workplace.

## **1.4 Research Method:**

The research method adopted used a multi pronged approach to capture maximum information and findings related to the subject, which includes:

- Liberal use of technology for data collection to :
  - reach maximum number of participants of the survey
  - reach a sample which was aware of technology and its use in workplace
  - facilitate them by answering to the survey at a time convenient to them

- Survey,
  - Questionnaire was developed which captured responses in yes/no and 7 – point likert scale
  - Questions within the survey were so framed so that the answers are cross verified from other answers in the questionnaire
  - Web application was developed to assist the respondents in selecting their answers and sharing their answers with the surveyor
  - The results/ findings from the questionnaire formed the basis for a qualitative and quantitative analysis.
  
- Literature review was conducted based on published papers available on the internet, books on management and women leadership and other articles from journals.
  - Computer based information searches were conducted with the key words, *leadership, women leaders, future organizations, globalization, Women issues, women in Pakistan, organizational management , leadership styles, globalization age*
  - Criteria for including the studies were that they defined the issues faced by women leaders, defined the organization of future and required skills, defined women leadership styles, difference between leaders and managers and established the difference between women and men leaders that subsequently formed the basis of assumptions taken in this paper

## 2 Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Leadership Defined

#### Leaders

Leaders are understood to be people within the organization typically someone who sets standards, others look up to, is able to lead others around, while managers are able to get work done but are unable to inspire others and lead. The two terms are used interchangeably in Pakistan to refer to that hierarchy of people in the organization who have a staff that reports to them, they have authority and exercise some form of power within and outside the organization. This contradiction was also noted in various management books.

Zalenik argues<sup>5</sup> that leaders and managers are different and goes on to compare and contrast through different factors such as: Managers versus leader personality, attitude towards goals, conceptions of work, relations with other, senses of self, development of leadership. For this research we take women leaders to mean “leaders add the action ingredient to the planning, it involves influencing and inspiring others, encourage innovation, catalysts for change, motivators, decision makers and analyzers”

#### Leadership

Leadership defined as the *“process of influencing others to achieve organizational goals”*. Critics of leadership have explored prospects of leadership substitutes by an approach attempting to specify some main situational factors likely to make leader behaviors unnecessary or to negate their effectiveness (p417)<sup>6</sup>.

Alice H. Eagly and Blair T. Johnson<sup>7</sup> also conclude that '*...The view widely accepted by social scientists expert on leadership, that women and men lead in the same way should be very substantially revised ....books on management, that female and male leaders have distinctive, gender-stereotypic styles also requires revision....*'. They further note that '*... Male leaders tend to be more task oriented than female leaders to the extent that a leadership role was more congenial to men; female leaders tended to be more task oriented than male leaders to the extent that a leadership role was more congenial to women...'*. This simultaneous presence and absence of differences are interpreted in terms of a social role theory of gender differences in social behavior. Gender differences are very profound in Pakistan, which is also pronounced in study and observation of women leadership styles and roles.

### **Women Leadership**

In the concluding remarks Dr. Eagly notes that transformational leadership may be especially advantageous for women because it is consistent with the female gender role. Prejudice has been noted a key factor in suffering some disadvantage at evaluation as leaders especially in masculine organizational context<sup>8</sup>.

The meta-analysis<sup>9</sup> conducted by Eagly brings forward the finding that '*...female leaders were more transformational than male leaders and also more engaged in more of the contingent reward behaviors that are a component of transactional leadership....*' Eagly finds the results encouraging for women leaders in the light of other research that established that 'all of the aspects of leadership style on which women exceeded men

relate positively to leaders' effectiveness whereas all of the aspects on which men exceeded women have negative or null relations to effectiveness '(such as active and passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership). Exploring the leadership style of women leaders in Pakistan is beyond the scope of this work. However, we find many academics supporting the two opposite spectrums of opinion – each work equally convincing showing that men and women leaders differ and that leadership is not gender based rather personality and trait based which indirectly also is influenced by gender among other factors such as situation, environment, culture etc.

### **Gender Issues**

In an invited address at the American Psychological Association 2006<sup>10</sup>, Dr. Eagly notes that considerable progress has been made in gender equality in United States coupled with the lack of 'complete attainment of this goal'. As noted in the address that in United States women are praised for excellent leadership and skills nevertheless men are the ones preferred for the coveted jobs of leadership. If that is the observation for America, one need not say more about Pakistan. Although there are women leaders emerging in Pakistan and taking coveted slots as well such as the Governor of State Bank of Pakistan, Leader of largest political party, Ambassadors to politically important countries, CEO of multinationals in Pakistan in addition to many middle tier and junior management positions.

### **Glass Ceiling**

*An unseen barrier to growth and to achieve deserved promotion and opportunity to advance in career*

An acknowledged fact, glass ceiling exists for women in workplaces, some differ to the extent and position of the ceiling. It has been observed that glass ceilings are encountered only to reach the top tier of management, while other observations have been made to the effect that the ceiling comes into focus once benefits, rewards or recognition for hard work is in due.

In an interview at 'Talking to Divas' Ary One 21-3-2007, Pakistan's Ambassador to UK Dr. Maleeha Lodhi in her advise to women leaders commented that gender bias exists and is there, but at the same time there is no need to hold a grudge and a chip on ones shoulder – women need to work more and harder than the men in the same field. How much harder? And how much more? No one answers. And if 'more' is the key to survival and not to excellence for women then we need to have different barometers of success for men and women.

## **2.2 Women Leadership Defined**

### **Perceptions**

For the purpose of setting the context of research work in view some of the common perceptions about women working in offices in general in Pakistan are summarized. In Pakistan, women leaders are viewed as stubborn and indecisive at the same time. Their emotional weakness is seen as their management weakness and 'frailty thy name is woman' is closely referred to. Women are also perceived as hard working, always found at their desk and thorough in details on the one hand and lacking in network, getting bogged down in detail and too perfectionist is also a common perception. As can be seen

from contradictory perceptions, these are just but perceptions without any concrete research and data to back it up; understood without the cultural context would have make a distorted view of the case. Perceptions form behaviors, and need to be addressed if progress is to be made.

We in Pakistan are far from the debate ensuing on international platforms since the debate was brought to center stage in a 1990 by an article in the Harvard Business Review by Judy B. Rosener, a professor at the University of California at Irvine. Her article, "Ways Women Lead," based on a study of successful male and female business leaders, concluded that in the earlier years of growth of women's leadership, the answer was probably no<sup>11</sup>. The current trend to more participation and greater sensitivity to relationships by management is not a coincidence but the result of the growing influence of women's style. [Let's Talk Business - Prairie Public Television]

### **Leadership Skills**

In the book: "Standing at the Crossroad: Next Steps for High-Achieving Women"<sup>12</sup>, the author suggests that professional women should view themselves holistically, constantly reassess and redesign their life structure as conditions change and incorporate time for reflection and spirituality. Also women who are willing to confront and change social and organization structures have greater power, at least in the US.

The heart of the book is the use of five principles to plan and evaluate one's career and personal growth over time. These include:

1. Act authentically – understand proprieties and emotional values.

2. Make connections – establish relationships and develop a sense of empathy.
3. Control one’s destiny – take initiative, advocate their rights and be resilient.
4. Achieve wholeness –understand that women have multiple roles and identities in their personal and professional lives.
5. Gain self clarity – know who they are and how they fit in the world of work.

Leadership books such as: “Confidence” by Harvard Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter and “KNOW-HOW – The 8 Skills that Separate People Who Perform from Those Who Don’t” by Professor Ram Charan, also give insights on women leadership energizing forces such as: Enhancing Self Mastery, Building Interpersonal Relationships, Facilitating Empowered Teams, Collaborating across Functions, Integrating Organizational Outcomes and Creating Strategic Positioning.

The book: “Leadership Skills for Women”<sup>13</sup> builds on the fact that to be a successful leader one must focus on self improvement. from the characteristics of effective leaders, to leading your team to planning tools and leaders are problem solvers, the tools for self improvement do not show special skills to be adopted by women to be leaders nor are there any areas to show that women need to do more here. There is a brief pointer towards balancing home and work but nothing gender specific. This brings us to another point that is the word’ women’ used as a sale point? a gimmickry for sale ? and in that we are loosing focus on breaking or overcoming the glass ceiling ?

“Finally, as OD practitioners we need to bring others in the organization along through both modeling and sponsoring learning. Being key players in shaping the trend setting

organizations of the year 2020 means that we engage in continuous improvement of our personal characteristics, knowledge, skills, positions, and networks. In addition, it means pushing toward creating the conditions in which large numbers of people learn and grow together continuously.”<sup>14</sup> This establishes a key factor for success for women leaders in Pakistan would be adaptability and self improvement. Women leaders in Pakistan need to continuously improve.

## 2.3 Future Organizations

### Organization

An Organization is defined by PMI as “ A group of persons organized for some purpose or to perform some type of work within an enterprise”<sup>15</sup> Further PMI divides organizations into organizational systems (project-based and non-project-based) and organizational structure into functional, weak matrix, balanced matrix, strong matrix and projectized. While all these will be true for the future organization also, but there will need to be new definitions, structures and systems for future organizations based on its composition, how it conducts business and is organized by the *group of persons* (emphasis based on PMI definition of organizations).

In the article “A Look into the future: The 2020 organization”<sup>14</sup> John and Reid term the organization of the future as “*Self Cleaning Ovens*”, their study is based on a panel discussion using Delphi technique to gauge what the future organization would be like and in turn what the organization development practitioner needs to do to be able to play an effective role. For the purposes of this paper we focus on the identification of the

future organization only. The outcome of panel discussion was that the 2020 organization would:

- place a premium on timely information
- information would flow multidirectionally, using state of the art technologies
- strong emphases on flexibility in organizational and job design and on performance
- Quality, continuous learning, competence and customer emphasis as key values
- be capable of anticipating and reacting to change
- have the capacity to thrive on change and will be clearly an indicator of the organization's competitive strength
- be information saturated and feedback focused
- Its people will be shaping its future through team activity and learning
- Change facilitators will influence its functioning by coaching its leaders to enroll people in actualizing vision through active participation in decision making, problem solving, action planning and change
- Not be engaging in long-term planning and having enlightened reward systems

From the aforementioned discussion, we establish that women leaders for future organizations must possess the following skills:

- Time management
- Communication skills
- Continuous learning
- Customer focus
- Team players

- Adaptability and change agent
- Quick and short term result oriented planning
- Forecasting and proactive

While some deep rooted and old characteristics of organizations, it was noted in the study that some factors would not change such as:

- All employees not having financial ownership in the organization.
- All employees will not be leaders.
- Hierarchies will exist.
- Organization will most likely not sponsor spiritual growth among its people.

“Globalization and ICT, in conjunction with each other, have considerably heightened the *concentration* of power and decision-making authority within the organization.”<sup>16</sup> This establishes the fact that women leaders of tomorrow must have decision making power, able to use new technology and ready for change.

Organizations of today are moving towards a ‘Flat Organization’ set up, which is defined as: *an organization where hierarchy and authority is distributed horizontally*. It is anticipated that this trend will be widespread and will be more pronounced in the years to come.

### **Diversity**

It has been noted by the authors of the book Management – A Pacific Rim Focus that “in *the coming millennium managers themselves will reflect the emerging diversity and at the*

*same time, will need to be able to utilize effectively an increasingly diverse workforce.”*

They go on to emphasize that in addition to diversity, organizations must assume a global perspective; which implies that managers (and leaders – clarification added) must have more knowledge about international business. Members of different organizational cultures may often have different norms, values and policies, which may lead to misunderstandings, hidden agendas, uncertainty and conflict<sup>17</sup>. Thus women leaders of tomorrow must be ready to deal with diversity and introduce new and innovative techniques to deal with changing situations.

## **2.4 Skills required for Future Organizations**

“*Business leaders* have much more in common with artists than *they* do with *managers*”<sup>Error! Bookmark not defined.</sup> a very powerful statement, but if true and if the stereotyping is also true that women are more artistic, then inherently if men are stereotyped to be better leaders then women too are better leaders.

Zalenik, Abraham notes in his paper about the America that “.....*The myth is that people learn best from their peers.....*” which he argues to be incorrect although many organizations are focusing their attention and effort to peer learning. In Pakistan it is perceived that people learn after formal (and extensive trainings) class room trainings, where extensive material is given and instructor led specific course is covered, the other facets of learning is totally ignored and overlooked. Learning spreads many facets and has many dimensions, which include training, experience, peer-learning, observation, exposure, and mentoring to name a few. If skills are to be enhanced it is imperative that

the exact needs are first assessed, the best medium of imparting knowledge selected and ensured that a platform exists where such acquired skills will be utilized and applied. Learning patterns- just as organizations and other realities- will change in the future where technology will play a very vital role. Women must be ready for self directed learning (personal as well as professional), it is perceived that web based and distance learning will be the chosen medium for a self paced study.

Advanced technical decision making systems in addition to expert judgment<sup>18</sup> will be how decisions will need to be taken. Women leaders need to have the right skills to take informed decisions.

### **3 Survey Findings:**

It was noted that most of the answers received from women were not assertive, with few choosing to reply with “strongly agree/disagree” which is an indication that they fit well within a participative organization culture since only 5% on average were indecisive, which again indicates that women have decision making skills.

9% of the sample didn't feel they could handle changing scenarios at their workplace, none disagreed nor were undecided, which shows a vast majority showing adaptability (36% somewhat agree, 32% agree and 23% strongly agree). We conclude that alternative hypothesis **H1 (1)** holds true.

Regarding the question about autonomy at work, 5% were undecided, 36% somewhat agreed, 41% agreed and 18% strongly agreed that they liked autonomy at work. This supports the hypothesis that women working of Pakistan have the skill to work independently. We conclude that hypothesis **H1 (2)** holds true with a small margin of indecisiveness. Not only the women were willing for more autonomy but they liked it and were self motivated and could work without supervision, reflecting the skill requirement that organization of the future will require leaders to lead leaders.

With only 5% somewhat disagreed, all women showed comfort in working with people of diverse background (14% somewhat agreed, 52% agreed and 29% strongly agreed). This finding supports our hypothesis **H1 (3)** and reflects the fact that Pakistan itself is multi-cultural and multi-ethnic, therefore working with more culturally, ethnically and religiously diverse people would not be an issue. These women not only showed a great comfort level in working with diverse cultures but also reflected an equally proportionate level of trust and respect for diverse cultures, which is the building block for success especially within a virtual work environment and organization of the globalization age. Carmel states, *“Each individual is a member of multiple cultures: one or more national/ethnic cultures, one or more professional cultures, a functional culture, a corporate culture, and a team culture”*<sup>19</sup>.

Based on the survey findings, we may conclude that the working women of Pakistan encourage authentic powerful conversations and engage customers and other partners on design, development and decision making (somewhat agree, agree and strongly agree 23%, 50% and 23 % respectively). Hence our hypothesis **H1 (4)** also holds true.

14% women were not decided about their level of communication skills, while all other were confident of their communication skills to varying degrees (somewhat agree, agree and strongly agree 24%, 33% and 29%) thereby demonstrating ease of dealing with complexity in work. Pakistani women are not confident of their skills (especially communication skills) which hamper dealing with complex tasks. On the other hand, they had no doubt that they were skilled at collaboration and inclined to work in complex collaborative environment. A very small minority of women (somewhat disagree 9% and undecided 5%) reflected the lack of confidence and skill. We may conclude here that our hypothesis **H1 (5)** holds true here to some extent and **H0 (5)** also holds true to varying degree.

#### **4 Conclusion:**

Based upon the literature reviewed organizations of tomorrow may be summarized to (be it 2020 organization, globalization age organization or by any other name), be globally dispersed organizations, working in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-lingual, a geographically, politically and socially dispersed environment; bringing in with it the challenges of diversity and adaptability and tolerance. Time will be of the essence and planning phases will feel the axe of time where short term goals and short term plans will be preferred within the ambit of the organization's larger objectives and vision. Decision making will need to be based on scientific and technical methods in addition to expert judgment.

The leader of tomorrow (men and women) need to be geared for the challenges and above all be self motivated. Personal and professional skills advancement will have to self directed. As lean flat organizations of the future will neither have the time nor the resources to invest in long term relations with their resources.

The present research study conducted suggests that women leaders of Pakistan have the 5 key skills identified for the organization of the future:

- Decision makers
- Participative approach
- Work in complex collaborative environment
- Customer oriented
- Adaptability to work with diversity
- Working with change

Considering the research findings, we propose the following model based on key skills identified for working women in Pakistan to cope with the challenges of future organizations.

### **INSERT FIGURE 1**

It is, therefore, suggested that Pakistani working women do not lack the skills necessary to work in the future organizations in the globalization age, but will need to acquire new skills to excel.

Critical review of these findings will contribute towards the research and take the work further.

## 5 Future research:

It is anticipated that future research on women leaders in Pakistan will explore the following areas:

- Re-evaluation of various models (made mostly by men) to ensure that the issues and factors specific to women have also been taken into account. Bruce Nixon<sup>20</sup> in his book 'Making a Difference' notes that it would be interesting to see how a model developed by women would differ (2001, pg:54)
- Correlation of management models to type of personalities rather than gender, race, colour, geographical location or language.
- The leadership model needs to be broadened to encapsulate the specific dimensions of both men and women – *nar and nari, ying and yang, he and she*.
- This work can be taken further by building on the findings and by identifying women management style and leadership style using the Managerial Grid and Theory XY analysis technique.

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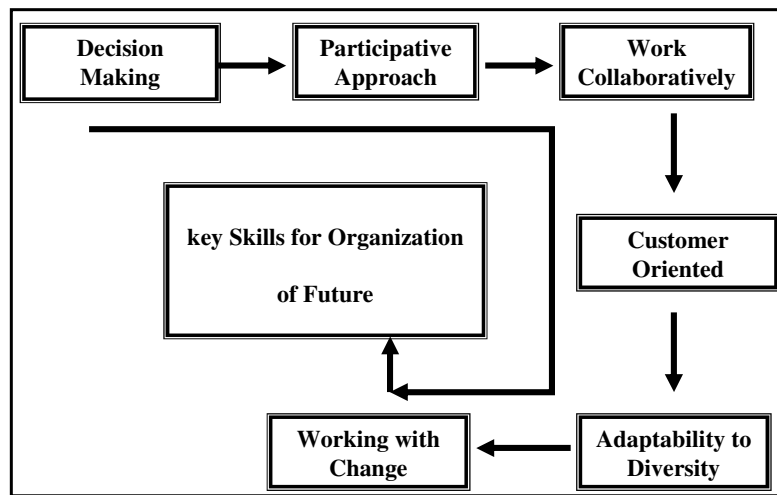
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Fiscal year	Arts And Sciences		Professional Colleges		Universities	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
2005-06	630000	211000	75786	18902	61857	1667

**Table 1: Women Enrollment in the Educational Institutions**

*Source:* Federal Bureau of Statistics



**Figure 1: Key Skills For Organizations of Future**