

# Gender Centric Psychology in Career Opportunities

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## ABSTRACT

The MNCs in Present India are facing difficulties in engaging females in sales and marketing jobs as the number of female candidates opting for marketing specialization in their business management course is very low. The same need to be understood by taking the views of female graduates who are not opting for marketing specialization while completing business management courses. The researcher in this paper has taken the help of a mixed method research with Grounded theory approach to find out the factors affecting gender disposition leading to female psychology while not choosing marketing or specialization in the management courses. The Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis have been conducted to establish support to the exploratory study. This paper tried to address the major problem Business-Schools, those who are facing problems while counselling students to take appropriate specializations as per the industry trend and need. This paper will be helpful for the concerned authorities to understand the components affecting female psychology why they do not select sales and marketing as a career and it will also guide them to take necessary corrective measure in future.

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## 1. Introduction

Sales & promotions are primarily a male dominated activity. The twentieth century had proved this wrong. Whereas recent trends are proving some other ways. Less number of female graduates from business schools are opting for marketing specialization and this has confined the number of women to take sales and marketing as a career. The shortage of female candidates opting for sales jobs has been observed and informed by recruiters to the business school authorities. The recent studies related to Indian corporates find less female representation in different functional areas. It has been a major area of concern for healthy work environment and overall balance of gender representation in Indian corporates. The issue can be addressed in two ways: (a) first of all we can look at the jobs that balance gender representation and (b) secondly we can address those jobs that traditionally neglected by the gender. These all starts from the specializations offered in business schools and the less representation of female students in certain functional areas. The Business school administration can't do anything about this as the career decisions reserved by female students are their personal and sometimes they hardly change their requirements before selecting a specialization. Hence the study highlights the factors that explain the female psychology in discarding marketing specialization and further a sales job.

## 2. Review of Literature

The literatures related to female workforce and sales career has been very contentious. Majority of the studies have been conducted in western context and the issues discussed are situation specific. There are some researches that address the relationship of female psychology, progression of sales as a career and the motivation behind it. The Sales and marketing as a career has been able to challenge the male and female psychology and this is visible when we are not on the same page for gender participation.

Females prefer public relations, advertising and retailing rather looking for sales profiles (Cook and Hartman, 1986). This negatives related to sales job had gone away and there are positive indications from female college students in western countries to take sales as a career (Muehling and Weeks, 1988). There is an importance of personality traits in selection of right career path (Kothari and Pingle, 2015). The gender stereotype in sales jobs and sales managers must address this issue for better results (Comer and Jolson, 1991).

With the adoptive selling is concerned, gender is a major factor that affects the sales people performance and initiate changes as they move in their age and experience (Levy and Sharma, 1994).

The gender related differences in many organizational parameters and found that female are better performers in customer-oriented selling than male. Further, in case of industrial selling females are worthy equal performers' in comparison with males (Siguaw and Honeycutt, 1995).

The male and female are consistent in performing many sales related activities including sales performance, trust issues, product information and adaptive selling (Dion, Easterling and Javalgi, 1997). The gender is not a significant differentiator in the sales organization. They had proposed a gender classification raised on gender balance in sales force as well as in customers (Moncrief et al. 2000).

The female sales people are more loyal to their organization. The high performer saleswoman is more committed to the organization and their chances of leaving the same job is very low (Ladik et al. 2002).

With the above literature, it indicates that male and female involvement in sales job and performance are almost similar. Most of these studies are in western countries context and

some attention need to be there while generalizing in Indian context.

The literature review provides direction to this study. Here we find the importance of gender in sales management and its role in developing a better sales organization with gender at the base of discussion. But the bigger question is that how far the situation we have reflected justify in the Indian mind-set.

### 2.1 Objectives of the study

There are two major objectives of this study:

1. To find out the factors prohibiting female students to take marketing specialization in a business school
2. To find out the extent to which gender predisposition is affecting a female student's decision reading specialization selection in a business school.

### 3. Methodology

The research required a complex and multi-dimensional approach to study the female psychological complicacies. A mixed method along with the qualitative and quantitative research techniques are used to support the research objectives. An exploratory research was conducted to find out the proportion of female students opting for marketing specialization in local universities and management institutions. Followed by the Grounded Theory (GT) was applied to initiate capturing specific factors affecting a female student's decision not to opt for marketing specialization. The exploratory study a questionnaire was developed to conduct a quantitative study to validate the factors defined in GT. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis(CFA) have been conducted to justify the female psychology in selecting marketing as the specialization in business schools. The first part of the study takes the support

of grounded theory to identify the factors. The female management graduates of different business schools of Bhubaneswar have participated in different phases of this study.

#### 3.1 Pilot study

For conducting a pilot study, 22 business schools were selected based on data availability and support extended by the institutions in Bhubaneswar. The exploratory research (qualitative) under Grounded Theory 63 samples was considered and they were exhausted.

#### 3.2. Sampling

For Sampling in case of grounded theory the convenience sampling was adopted, but researchers have taken extra care to approach for collecting information from those respondents who better understand the purpose of this study and willing to provide information. With this process 63 responses were collected which was exhausted and sufficient for this study. With the quantitative study of EFA and CFA, 305 responses were taken. The Data rejection rate was 2% and most of the respondents were able to answer questions without any difficulties. A convenience sampling technique was used. The Data were collected via personal interaction, telephonic interaction and e-mail interaction

#### 3.3 Exploratory Study

The Initial study shows that out of 22 institutes selected for the study in 19 institutes the proportion of females opting for HR specialization (other specialization) is more than females opting for marketing specialization.

**Table 1: Institution-Wise Data of Female Students Proportion in Different Specializations**

SI	Institute Name	Total	Girls	Boys	No of girls in Mkt	No of girls in HR	No of girls in Fin	Proport ion Mkt	Proport ion HR	Proport ion Fin
1	Regional College of Management (RCM)	360	147	213	37	63	47	0.25	0.42	0.31
2	Institute Of Management & Information Science	300	84	216	21	35	28	0.25	0.41	0.33
3	Asian School Of Business Management	120	51	69	15	21	15	0.29	0.41	0.29
4	KIIT School of Management (KSOM)	248	94	153	33	35	26	0.35	0.37	0.27
5	Astha School of Management	120	47	73	16	21	10	0.34	0.44	0.21
6	Interscience Institute of Management and Technology	60	19	41	4	9	6	0.21	0.47	0.31
7	Rajdhani College of Engineering & Management	92	38	54	12	16	10	0.31	0.42	0.26
8	Cime	107	42	65	14	20	8	0.33	0.47	0.19
9	United School of Business Management (USBM)	60	33	27	9	15	9	0.27	0.45	0.27
10	Krupajal Management Studies	240	145	95	35	47	63	0.24	0.32	0.43
11	The Techno School	60	22	38	6	12	4	0.27	0.54	0.18
12	Global Institute of Management	45	23	22	6	8	9	0.26	0.34	0.39
13	IIM Sambalpur	48	10	38	4	3	3	0.4	0.3	0.3
14	IMI Bhubaneshwar	64	23	41	10	3	10	0.43	0.13	0.43
15	Hi-Tech Institute of Technology	120	69	51	26	30	13	0.37	0.43	0.18
16	Vignan Institute of Technology & Management	80	31	59	9	11	11	0.29	0.35	0.35

17	Gandhi Institute of Management Studies	120	62	58	22	18	22	0.35	0.29	0.35
18	IIPM School of Management	120	42	78	8	14	20	0.19	0.33	0.47
19	Madhusudhan Institute of Cooperative Management	60	35	25	11	14	10	0.31	0.4	0.28
20	Brm Institute of Management & Information Technology	120	46	74	17	18	11	0.36	0.39	0.23
21	P.J. College of Management & Technology	60	27	33	6	11	10	0.22	0.40	0.37
22	Rajdhani College of Engineering and Management	120	49	71	13	21	15	0.26	0.42	0.30

### 3.4 Grounded Theory Approach

Grounded Theory approach has been considered to do the further investigation includes the interviews of 63 female students. They were non-marketing specialization students from 22 Business schools. The Researchers conducted the analysis each response concurrently which provided the basis and argument for conducting further interview and searching for the varied responses. This part of analysis has helped in finding factors. The study has identified various factors with the support of index card sorting method also assist in linking the concepts and factors and sub-factors with the support of axial coding. During conducting the interviews the researchers always confirmed the ideas they have generated with the last interview with the new respondent which acted as the confirmation phase. With conducting the 63 interviews the researchers have found the saturation and no further investigation was conducted.

### 3.5 Index card sorting

With this method the researcher determines how the respondents group the concepts and sub-concepts. The same is done with the respondents as well as with the placement teams who better understand the concepts. A collection of Six respondents and six placement team members were consulted for better understanding of the concepts and sub-concepts. An axial coding was done to relate the sub-concepts with the main concept. In the same manner a selective coding was undertaken to find out the central themes or concepts. A sample of 63 respondents the study could found the comprehensive and exhaustive concepts and no new concept could evolve. A major concepts generated by this study were:

1. The Personality Traits,
2. The Nature of the Job,
3. The Work Place,
4. The Social Status
5. The Job Satisfaction.

- 1) For Personality Traits the sub-concepts are: lack of communication skills, lack of convincing skills, introvert, health issues, lack of patience, can't tell a lie, no manipulative, lack of high emotional intelligence and lack of local language proficiency.
- 2) For Nature of the Job the sub-concepts are: travelling issues, field works issues, high work pressures, higher targets, hectic schedules

- 3) For Work Place the sub-concepts are: unstable work place, unstructured work place, volatile job, no fixed office time, job insecurity, challenging work place, risk
- 4) For Social Status the sub-concepts are: disrespect, lack of consent from parents, self-esteem issues, lack of social approval, social insecurity
- 5) For Job Satisfaction the sub-concepts are: no self-motivation, lack of support from peer, lack of time for family, higher job pressure, stressful, boring and monotonous
- 6) The above mentioned concepts have been tested with the help of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

### 3.6 Questionnaire Design and Pilot Study

Above identified sub-concepts have been used to develop a questionnaire for quantitative analysis. The Relevant statements were formed and further content validity was completed by an expert from a reputed university. for this 56 samples, a pilot study was conducted and the results of the pilot study presented no major deviation which indicated the acceptance of developed instrument for further data collection.

## 4. Data Analysis and Results Interpretation

### 4.1 The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted with the help of Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Promax Rotation. As per Gorsuch (1983) this rotation is preferred as it is oblique it is assumed that there are high correlation among factors extracted. Parasuraman et al. (1988) have recommended that the purification of the items activates with the calculation of item-to-total correlation and Cronbach's alpha. An alpha value of 0.7 or higher is recognised as acceptable (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). This study followed five factors which were extracted with 24 (Variables) items. While analysing the alpha if item deleted, three more items were found to have greater alpha if item deleted than the coefficient alpha indicates the removal of those three items from the analysis. The (Variables) items were Item 21, Item 3 and Item 17. And finally 21 items were considered for next level of factors analysis.

**Table 2: Item Purification**

Latent Variables	Items	Item- to- total correlation	Alpha if item deleted	Coeff. Alpha
Factor 1 Personality Traits	Item30	.953	.962	.970
	Item31	.880	.967	
	Item32	.887	.966	
	Item14	.867	.967	
	Item24	.884	.966	
	Item5	.877	.967	
Factor 2 Job Satisfaction	Item7	.938	.940	.959
	Item9	.887	.948	
	Item10	.885	.949	
	Item8	.857	.953	
	Item28	.853	.954	
Factor 3 Work Place	Item1	.962	.949	.966
	Item13	.921	.955	
	Item20	.890	.960	
	Item6	.908	.957	
	Item21(remove)	<b>.839</b>	<b>.968</b>	
Factor 4 Nature of the Job	Item22	.878	.896	.931
	Item29	.875	.897	
	Item2	.839	.909	
	Item3(remove)	<b>.759</b>	<b>.935</b>	
Factor 5 Social Status	Item26	.889	.879	.923
	Item25	.839	.895	
	Item18	.838	.895	
	Item17(remove)	<b>.738</b>	<b>.932</b>	

The Exploratory Factor Analysis is repeated with the 21 items to approve the likelihood of the data supported in the purification phase. On Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sample adequacy, it was 0.898 and on Bartlett’s test of sphericity the significant Chi Square value of  $p = 0.00$  suggest that the covariance structure was positive for the EFA. The Five factors with 75.347 % of shared variance were extracted.

1. First factor is considered as Personality Trait. Here six items describing this factor have factor loading range from .974 to .888 and they are:

- I am introvert,
- I can’t tell a lie
- I can’t be manipulative
- I have health issues
- Lack of communication skills
- Lack of convincing power

2. Second factor is considered as Job Satisfaction. Here five items describing this factor have factor loading range from .962 to .905 and they are:

- Expected higher expectations from boss
- Lack of time for family
- Expected low self-motivation in sale jobs
- Expected low support from peer
- Sales job is stressful

3. Third factor was considered as Work Place. Here four items describing this factor have factor loading range from .980 to .931 and they are:

- Challenging work place in sales jobs
- Job insecurity in sales jobs
- No fixed office time
- More risk involved in sales jobs

4. Fourth actor was considered as Nature of Job. Here three items describing this factor have factor loading range from .946 to .932 and they are:

- I can’t handle high-pressure job
- I can’t achieve high targets
- I can’t do field work

5. Fifth factor was considered as Social Status. Here three items describing this factor have factor loading range from .958 to .918 and they are:

- People disrespect sales people
- My society doesn’t allow a fo sales job
- Sales job makes me socially insecure

Here Factor loadings in the EFA have been presented in the Table-3.

**Table 3: Factor Loadings**

Item30	.974				
Item31	.932				
Item32	.924				
Item14	.897				
Item24	.910				
Item5	.888				
Item7		.962			
Item9		.929			
Item10		.928			

Item8		.909			
Item28		.905			
Item1			.980		
Item13			.960		
Item20			.953		
Item6			.931		
Item22				.946	
Item29				.943	
Item2				.932	
Item26					.958
Item25					.939
Item18					.918

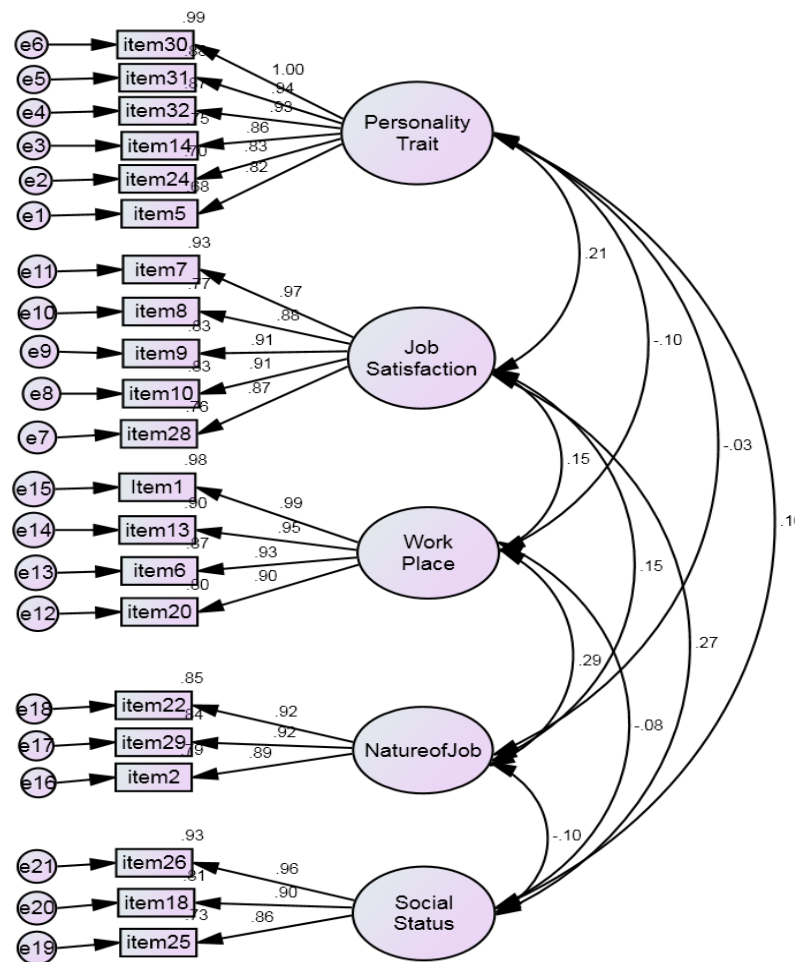
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. & Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

**4.2 The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)**

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted with the help of AMOS 18. All the identified factors were diagrammatically presented and later ran the model. To assess

the convergent and discriminant validity of the model, the measurement model was evaluated.

Figure 1 shows the Measurement Model



Convergent Validity of the five factors was judged by means of Fornell and Larcker's (1981) technique. The technique examines Critical Ratios (CR) and Average Variances Extracted (AVE). On the basis of acceptance level for a Convergent Validity, CR values must be more than 0.7 and AVE values must be more than 0.5. on the basis of another thumb rule, the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) and Average Shared Variance (ASV) should have values less than AVE. Here the findings revealed that the CR values were more

than 0.7, AVE values were more than 0.5, and the Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) and Average Shared Variance (ASV) had values less than AVE.

Discriminant Validity exposed extremely converging results, and assisted to conclude that the factors are quite different. Results of the Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity are demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 4: Convergent and Discriminant Analysis

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	Work Place	Personality Trait	Satisfaction	Job nature	Social Status
Work Place	0.969	0.888	0.083	0.030	0.942				
Personality Trait	0.963	0.811	0.045	0.020	-0.102	0.901			
Job Satisfaction	0.959	0.825	0.073	0.040	0.145	0.211	0.908		
Nature of Job	0.935	0.828	0.083	0.029	0.288	-0.034	0.146	0.910	
Social Status	0.934	0.825	0.073	0.029	-0.080	0.159	0.271	-0.103	0.908

This Measurement Model was measured and the model fit indices were observed. The Chi-squared to the degree of freedom ratio was found to be (CMIN/DF) as 1.52, which was within the acceptable range. It is found that other model fit indices are also within the acceptable range. CFI was .986, IFI was .985, TLI was .983, NFI was .956 and RMSEA was .045. These all indices were satisfying the relationship dimensions explored in the EFA.

## 5. Findings

In this study, it is found out that female students understanding of sales job and career in sales is more of biased and too personal. The Five major factors are affecting their decision in selecting a sales job and selecting marketing specialization. All these factors are part of female psyche and they must overcome these preconceptions to achieve heights in sales jobs and marketing as a career. The researcher finds that the standardised correlation estimation of Social Status and Job Satisfaction is .271, whereas between Work Place and Nature of Job it is .288 and between Personality Trait and Job Satisfaction it is .211. The Female students are linking job satisfaction with social status and they find sales job more challenging and less attractive for their social esteem. The same kind of thought process has both social and cultural

aspects involved with it. The socio-cultural aspect is more linked to gender disposition.

## 6. Managerial Implications

Outcome of this research can help the business schools to better guide female students in deciding the career options not by becoming more sentimental but by becoming more realistic. The researcher finds that some of the factors restricting female students in selecting marketing specialization are personal personality traits and social status. The factors restrict them in not selecting the marketing specialization are inherent and mostly situational. The factors like nature of the job, work place, job satisfaction are similar in all other functional areas.

## 7. Conclusion

Concerning the career, female psychology is more of defensive in nature. The study has found that less female students are selecting marketing specialization due to five major factors affecting their understanding of sales job and career associated with sales and marketing. It is a very critical point in any budding female management graduate. Hence the kind of disposition they carry must be observed carefully and must be consulted and counselled carefully, otherwise good and bright female candidates might miss better career and life in sales and marketing.

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