Leadership Accountability: Gender Doesn't Matter

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Abstract. *This research article aims to reveal leadership accountability based on gender differences. This research was conducted by using an explanatory research design for students as subjects of research who were taking an Organization Development course at the Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Malang. In this course, they examine the roles of leaders, especially in terms of intervention programs for organizational development. The results of the study revealed that there were no differences between male and female students in terms of leadership accountability. There is no reason to differentiate between males and females for leadership positions, especially for those who have taken organizational development courses.*

Keywords. *Leadership Accountability, Gender.*

I.   Introduction

The problem of gender inequality in terms of selecting leaders has been well documented through various extensive publications around the world. The research results reveal that women occupy less than a quarter of senior leadership positions in companies worldwide. In general, research shows that the role of a manager is often associated with preferences for masculine characteristics, behaviors, and traits (Gipson et al., 2017; Diehl and Dzubinski, 2016). Despite the problem of stereotypes, in many studies on gender and leadership, statements about women with emotional characteristics have been ignored (Eagly and Heilman, 2016).

The results of research by McClean et al. (2018) show that there are differences between men and women regarding promotive and prohibited actions, namely promotive actions are higher for men than for women, and conversely, the act of prohibition for men is lower than for women. Similar results were shown in the study by Badura et al. (2018) that men tend to appear more frequently in leadership roles than women. In contrast, the findings of research conducted among CEOs of Fortune 500 companies between 2001 and 2010 regarding the influence of gender on corporate governance strength, diversity strength, product strength, and community strength suggest that companies with a gender-diverse female CEO or board tend to be highly associated with gender diversity practices, stronger business practices, and higher equity values. In addition, research findings reveal that gender-diverse leadership teams show better business performance results and stronger equity values compared to teams with homogeneous gender characteristics (Glass and Cook, 2017).

This research was conducted on students who were taking organizational development course. This course is presented as a sixth-semester compulsory subject for undergraduate (S1) students majoring in management at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Malang. In this course, students conduct studies and discuss matters related to intervention programs implemented for organizational development. The topics studied discussed the role of leaders with their various functions and responsibilities in efforts to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and competitiveness of organizations relevant to local, regional, and global contexts, and capable of developing in their environment. Students study the role and accountability of leadership in organizations towards internal and external stakeholders and business clients, including studies on gender diversity and human resources in key positions within organizations. Study material comes from the main textbook, namely Organization Development and Change (Cummings and Worley, 2015), and various research articles published in reputable international journals.

II.   Literature Review

Empirical evidence shows that employees are aware of their communications being seen by leaders through the use of communication technology. They may self-censor for fear of being criticized in a way that limits the discussion of information that is useful to the organization (ter Hoeven et al., 2021). This awareness is found in authentic leadership in establishing relationships with followers. Authentic leadership is a pattern of leader behavior characterized by strong self-awareness, internalized high moral standards, balanced information

processing in decision-making, and transparency in fostering interpersonal relationships between leaders and followers. Deep transparency organizational communication refers to the overall organizational communication system, the climate that emphasizes information dissemination, and the stakeholders' role in identifying organizational needs. The extent to which managers demonstrate authentic leadership abilities plays an important role regarding how likely it is that an organization practices transparent communication. This happens when managers show awareness that they understand strengths and weaknesses, communicate ideas, share information openly, show consistency between beliefs and actions, and encourage employees to voice alternative opinions (Jiang and Men, 2017).

Accountability pressures can be mediated through social structures or social situations that influence individual behavior, alerting leaders to the need to act and comply with applicable norms and correct behavior that deviates from the norm. No organizational social system can function sustainably without accountability to the organization's citizens (Wood and Winston, 2007). Integrity, internal control, and leadership practices have an important impact on public organizational accountability so public institutions must monitor and encourage the running of organizational systems that have accountability and responsibility to the public (Bonsu et al., 2023).

Researchers have begun to account for and acknowledge that gender stereotypes vary across racial groups in society and that these differences influence reactions to women as leaders. From the perspective of women who have faced particular challenges to women as they seek to reach higher positions, discrimination appears to be a major barrier to their entry into leadership positions. The existence of this discrimination is the strongest narrative related to the causes of the low representation of women in leadership roles. Thoughts about interventions to increase women's representation in leadership will be more effective if conveyed through scientific studies (Eagly and Heilman, 2016).

Research Hypothesis

1. There are no differences between male and female students in the responsibility dimension of leadership accountability.
2. There are no differences between male and female students in the openness dimension of leadership accountability.
3. There are no differences between male and female students in the answerability dimension of leadership accountability.
4. There are no differences between male and female students in all dimensions of leadership accountability.

III. METHOD

Research Design

This study was conducted with an explanatory research design, intended to examine the measurement scale of leadership accountability variable. This variable has three dimensions in terms of responsibility, openness, and answerability dimensions. The measurement of the leadership accountability variable was carried out by modifying the work of Wood and Winston (2007). This study's respondents are undergraduate students taking the Organizational Development Course offered for students in the sixth semester at the Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Malang. This course presents organizational materials and leadership aspects that are very important to the organizational development intervention process. Research instruments were set down in a kind of Google Form and sent via WhatsApp social media through their community, and 49 students participated in the study. The number of respondents is 25 male and 24 female students.

Item Analysis

Each of the dimensions consists of ten items. Item analysis of the responsibility dimension revealed that all items have the same measurement performance shown by the coefficients of corrected item-total correlation above 0.60 and the coefficient of Cronbach Alpha is 0.919. The item analysis of this dimension is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Item Analysis: Responsibility Dimension (Cronbach Alpha=0.919; No. of Items=10)

Statement of Items	Item Statistics			Item-Total Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted

The leader demonstrates a sense of obligation to constituents when making decisions	4.18	.755	49	38.96	26.207	.638	.914
The leader holds himself/herself to an accepted standard of performance	4.22	.715	49	38.92	26.160	.689	.911
The leader accepts responsibility for his/her actions within the organization	4.39	.731	49	38.76	26.189	.667	.912
The leader clearly defines for constituents where his/her responsibilities end and theirs begin	4.24	.804	49	38.90	25.052	.746	.908
The leader realistically reckons with problems and challenges	4.39	.731	49	38.76	25.980	.697	.910
The leader is willing to face the truth, even when it does not fit his/her personal preferences	4.18	.882	49	38.96	24.623	.720	.910
The leader accepts responsibility for the future direction and accomplishments of the group	4.43	.677	49	38.71	26.125	.741	.908
The leader accepts ownership for the results of his/her decisions and actions	4.31	.769	49	38.84	25.764	.685	.911
The leader accepts responsibility for the direction of the group he/she leads	4.41	.674	49	38.73	26.241	.725	.909
The leader accepts responsibility for reaching organizational or team goals	4.39	.640	49	38.76	26.814	.677	.912

Item analysis of the openness dimension revealed that all items have the same measurement performance shown by the coefficients of corrected item-total correlation above 0.60 and the coefficient of Cronbach Alpha is 0.939. The item analysis of this dimension is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Item Analysis: Openness Dimension (Cronbach Alpha=0.939; No. of Items=10)

	Item Statistics			Item-Total Statistics			
Statement of Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The leader fulfills the commitments he/she makes to constituents	4.35	.723	49	38.49	31.588	.798	.930
The leader lives out the values of the larger organization	4.45	.709	49	38.39	32.201	.733	.933
The leader demonstrates consistency in public and private behavior	4.29	.736	49	38.55	32.294	.689	.935
The leader identifies personal actions – popular or not – as his/her own	4.06	.922	49	38.78	29.261	.851	.927

The leader openly listens when people offer perspectives that are different from his/her own	4.45	.679	49	38.39	32.409	.741	.933
The leader "walks his/her talk"	4.39	.731	49	38.45	31.544	.794	.930
The leader openly explains his/her decisions	4.33	.826	49	38.51	31.172	.731	.934
The leader lives up to his/her stated values	4.10	.823	49	38.73	31.157	.736	.933
The leader communicates what he/she expects from constituents	4.24	.723	49	38.59	31.788	.772	.932
The leader openly shares information about organizational resources with constituents	4.18	.834	49	38.65	31.356	.701	.935

Item analysis of the answerability dimension revealed that all items have the same measurement performance shown by the coefficients of corrected item-total correlation above 0.60 and the coefficient of Cronbach Alpha is 0.955. The item analysis of this dimension is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Item Analysis: Answerability Dimension (Cronbach Alpha=.955; No. of Items=10)

Statement of Items	Item Statistics			Item-Total Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The leader openly communicates about the progress of his/her commitments to constituents	4.33	.774	49	38.43	39.083	.780	.951
The leader apologizes to constituents for his/her mistakes	4.22	.963	49	38.53	37.254	.770	.953
The leader explains the reasons for his/her decisions	4.37	.782	49	38.39	38.992	.780	.951
The leader explains his/her beliefs to constituents	4.22	.872	49	38.53	37.421	.848	.949
The leader talks to constituents about the values of the larger organization	4.14	.791	49	38.61	38.367	.841	.949
The leader explains to constituents why suggested action was not taken	4.16	.825	49	38.59	38.080	.831	.949
The leader provides regular progress reports about personal commitments he/she has made to constituents	4.27	.670	49	38.49	39.838	.821	.950
The leader welcomes constructive feedback on his/her actions	4.33	.718	49	38.43	38.917	.870	.948
The leader openly admits his/her mistakes to constituents	4.29	.913	49	38.47	37.879	.758	.953
The leader takes quick action to deal with the consequences of a mistake	4.43	.791	49	38.33	38.641	.810	.950

IV. RESULTS

Profiles of Leadership Accountability Dimensions

Based on the responses obtained, the results of the study revealed that the leadership accountability profile of the research subjects was on average in the high (49.0%) and very high (42.9%) categories. This shows that participants in the course of Organizational Development have very good leadership accountability profiles. The leadership accountability profiles of the research subjects are presented in Figure 1 below.
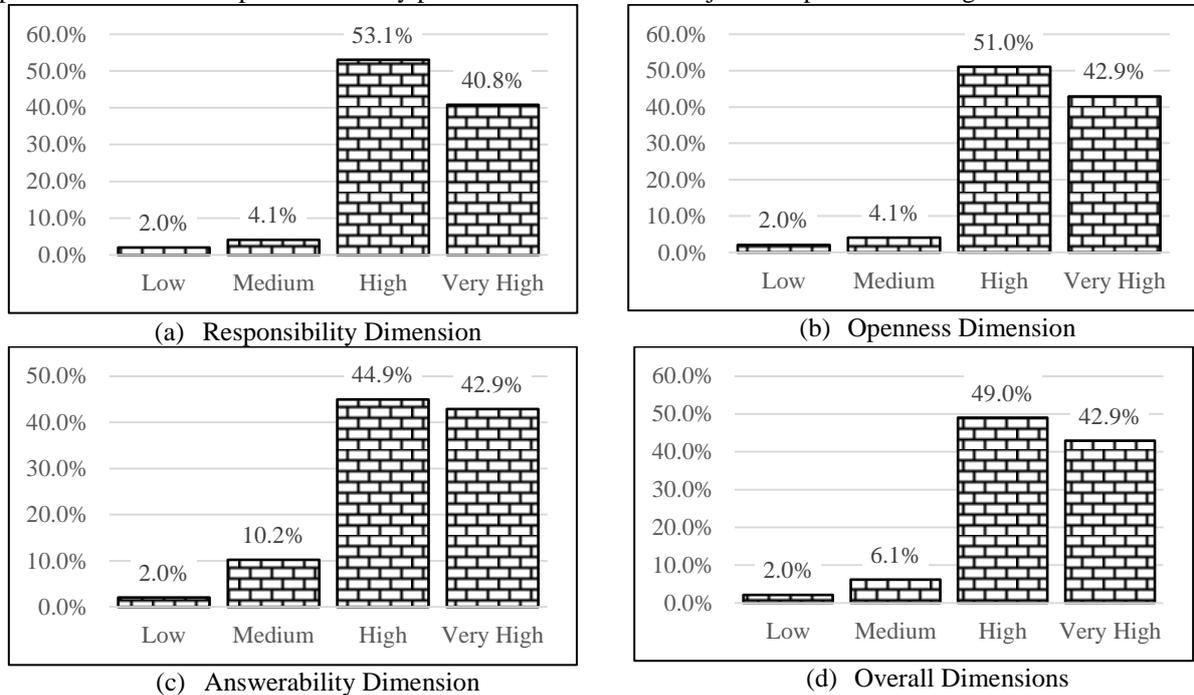

(a) Responsibility Dimension

(b) Openness Dimension

(c) Answerability Dimension

(d) Overall Dimensions

Figure 1. Dimensions of Leadership Accountability Profiles

Hypothesis Testing – Differences by Gender

To test together the differences between male and female students regarding the dimensions of responsibility, openness, answerability, and overall it is carried out using Oneway Anova as presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Oneway ANOVA Leadership Accountability Dimensions Between Male and Female

Leadership Accountability Dimensions		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	ANOVA					
Responsibility Dimension	Between Groups	.045	1	.045	.140	.710
	Within Groups	15.175	47	.323		
	Total	15.220	48			
Openness Dimension	Between Groups	.001	1	.001	.002	.967
	Within Groups	18.526	47	.394		
	Total	18.527	48			
Answerability Dimension	Between Groups	.120	1	.120	.250	.619
	Within Groups	22.551	47	.480		
	Total	22.671	48			
Overall Dimensions	Between Groups	.032	1	.032	.087	.769
	Within Groups	16.935	47	.360		
	Total	16.966	48			

Based on Table 4 above, research findings revealed that all of the F coefficients are not significant. Meaning that there are no differences in leadership accountability between male and female students in all aspects, in terms of responsibility, openness, answerability, and all three dimensions as a whole. The results of hypothesis testing are shown in the following table.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	F	Sig.[*]	Decision
1. There are no differences between male and female students in the responsibility dimension of leadership accountability.	.140	.710	Confirmed (there are no significant differences)
2. There are no differences between male and female students in the openness dimension of leadership accountability.	.002	.967	Confirmed (there are no significant differences)
3. There are no differences between male and female students in the answerability dimension of leadership accountability.	.250	.619	Confirmed (there are no significant differences)
4. There are no differences between male and female students in all dimensions of leadership accountability.	.087	.769	Confirmed (there are no significant differences)

[*] Significance at 0.05 level, two-tailed test.

V. DISCUSSION

Organizational leaders who exhibit authentic leadership behaviors can shape organizational cultures characterized by dialogue, transparency, and organizational learning. Authentic leaders internalize moral values such as integrity, fairness, kindness, altruism, and accountability, which guide their leadership behaviors and daily communication practices. These core ethical values provide a common foundation for leadership that emphasizes accountability and transparent organizational communication (Jiang and Men, 2017).

Authentic leadership is a pattern of behavior of leaders including those in leadership positions that utilize and promote the positive psychological capacities and positive ethical climate of their followers, to foster greater self-awareness, internalization of moral values, balance in information processing, and transparent interrelationships between leaders and those with whom they work, including their followers, and encourage positive self-development. Authentic leaders reveal to others that they want to understand how to use their leadership to provide service more effectively. Important characteristics of a leader with authentic leadership include self-awareness, relational transparency, process balance, and having a moral perspective (Shannon et al., 2020).

It is important to develop leadership to be able to adopt collaborative ideas that show unity and the need to apply approaches relevant to the subject in research. Collaborative activities in leadership must be directed to understand the meaning that can be felt by stakeholders as a whole between one another. Developing leadership to carry out collaborative processes that reflect togetherness is through shared awareness. This represents the existence of knowledge about leadership that is owned and can be explained through dialogic and diagnostic practices within the organization (Hastings and Schwarz, 2021).

VI. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that overall more than 80% of students participating in the course of Organizational Development have leadership accountability profiles in the high and very high categories. The results of the study also revealed no difference between male and female students in the dimensions of leadership accountability, including the dimensions of responsibility, openness, and answerability. There is no reason to treat men and women differently in leadership positions, especially those who have taken organizational development courses, where they study the roles of leaders, especially in terms of planning, implementing, and evaluating organization development intervention programs.

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