



## Study on Women Empowerment & its Impact on Enhancing Organisational Effectiveness in Singapore

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### Abstract

This study explores the relationship between women's empowerment and organizational effectiveness in contemporary organizations in Singapore by employing theoretical frameworks derived from empowerment theory, human capital, and organizational behaviour. The paper analyses how different facets of women's empowerment—such as economic, educational, psychological, and political/decision-making aspects—influence organizational outcomes like productivity, employee engagement, innovation, and retention. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach that combines a cross-sectional survey of employees across various sectors with qualitative interviews of organizational leaders, the research reveals positive correlations between women's empowerment initiatives and key indicators of organizational effectiveness. The paper concludes with practical recommendations for managers and policymakers, while also discussing limitations and proposing directions for future research.

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### Introduction

The empowerment of women has become a crucial subject in global development efforts and corporate strategies. Beyond the imperatives of social justice and human rights, organizations are increasingly recognizing that empowering women enhances decision-making, fosters greater creativity, and improves financial performance. Organizational effectiveness — defined by the extent to which an organization achieves its goals, sustains performance, and adapts to changes — depends not only on structural resources but also on how employees perceive their agency, voice, and opportunities.

The notion of women's empowerment in the workplace includes access to equal opportunities, leadership roles, skill development, fair compensation, and participation in decision-making processes. Context: Global movements advocating for gender equality (SDG 5), the increasing involvement of women in the workforce & the recognition of diversity as a competitive advantage.

Women empowerment has emerged as a pivotal topic in global development agendas and corporate strategies. In addition to motives rooted in social justice and human rights, organisations are increasingly acknowledging that empowering women leads to improved decision-making, greater creativity, and enhanced financial performance. Organisational effectiveness — which is defined as the degree to which an organisation meets its objectives, maintains performance, and adapts to changes — relies not only on structural resources but also on how employees perceive agency, voice, and opportunity. This paper investigates how various dimensions of women empowerment influence organisational effectiveness. We adopt a comprehensive definition of empowerment that encompasses access to resources (such as education and training), economic independence, increased involvement in decision-making, and psychological empowerment.

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### Research Objectives

To assess the degree of women's empowerment in specific organizations.

To investigate the relationship between women's empowerment and the effectiveness of organizations.

To evaluate the impact of female leadership on innovation and employee satisfaction.

To propose strategies for improving practices associated with women's empowerment.

### Purpose of the study

This study aims to empirically analyse how the empowerment of women through inclusivity, flexible work arrangements, representation, and a supportive culture affects organizational effectiveness in Singapore.

### Research Questions

In what ways does women empowerment affect productivity and profitability?

What impact does female leadership have on the enhancement of organizational culture?

Does gender diversity in decision-making processes lead to improved strategic outcomes?

### Problem Statement

Ongoing disparities in gender representation within leadership roles, compensation, and opportunities persist. The underutilization of women's capabilities can negatively impact innovation, employee morale, and overall organizational performance.

### Literature Review

Singapore demonstrates robust indicators of gender equality, holding the 7th position in the Global Gender Gap Index (GGI) as of 2021, with female labour-force participation at 61% in 2020. However, women are still underrepresented in leadership roles, with only approximately 15% of CEOs in Singapore being women, according to the Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth. Key policies and institutional support, such as the Council for Board Diversity, the Workplace Fairness Bill, and flexible work guidelines, provide structural momentum, as noted by the Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth.

Theoretical Framework Global and regional evidence: Research indicates that organisations with greater gender diversity tend to achieve better financial results and experience lower risks, as evidenced by studies conducted on U.S. and European firms. In small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the presence of female directors is associated with enhanced performance, such as increased return on assets (ROA), while diverse boards help alleviate corporate governance challenges.

Singapore-specific insights: Findings from Great Place to Work, which surveyed 900 organisations and approximately 400,000 employees, reveal that workplaces prioritising gender equality and inclusion are more productive and excel in attracting and retaining talent, as reported by The Straits Times. Michael Page's Talent Trends 2024 report indicates that flexible work is the second most valued job attribute after salary, particularly significant for women's retention and equity.

Deloitte's Women @ Work survey highlights that fewer than 25% of women believe they have sufficient flexibility; those with flexible work arrangements exhibit greater loyalty, yet

many are reluctant to request such arrangements due to concerns regarding promotion and perceptions of workload. Barriers: Unconscious bias remains a challenge, exemplified by the limitations of meritocracy, while sexual harassment adversely affects job satisfaction and retention. Additionally, gaps in workplace inclusivity persist, with unmet needs such as breastfeeding rooms often overlooked, as noted by the Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth.

The empowerment of women contributes to a more robust talent pool. Social Role Theory – Challenging traditional role expectations can reveal previously untapped leadership styles. Diversity and Inclusion Theory – A diverse workforce promotes innovation and enhances problem-solving capabilities. Previous Studies McKinsey's "Diversity Wins" (2020) establishes a connection between gender diversity and increased profitability. Research from Catalyst indicates that a higher representation of women in leadership roles correlates with enhanced organizational performance. Investigations into gender-balanced teams reveal improvements in decision-making efficiency. Research Gaps There is a scarcity of region-specific studies across various industries. There is a necessity for longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term effects of empowerment.

In the last ten years, Singapore has made notable advancements in reducing the gender disparity in the workforce. The unadjusted median gender pay gap for full time resident employees aged 25 to 54 decreased from 16.3% in 2018 to 14.3% in 2023.

The representation of women in leadership roles has also seen improvement—currently, women hold 22.7% of board positions in the top 100 SGX-listed companies (an increase from 7.5% in 2013), and the employment rates for women aged 25–64 have risen from 69.2% to 76.6% over the past decade in CAN.

Policy reforms have been pivotal. The Workplace Fairness Act (2025) prohibits discrimination based on factors such as sex, marital status, and caregiving responsibilities.

### MSF Development

The new Tripartite Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangements (effective December 2024) promote increased flexibility in the workplace MSF Development. Furthermore, initiatives like the Council for Board Diversity advocate for merit-based gender diversity on boards, resulting in a threefold increase in female representation since 2014

### Improved Business Results through Diversity

Organizations with gender-diverse executive teams tend to be more profitable. Research by McKinsey indicates that top-quartile gender-diverse leadership is associated with significantly enhanced earnings and value creation

UOB Fin Lab - Powered by United Overseas Bank (UOB) supports the notion that empowering women in the workforce contributes economic value, potentially adding up to S\$26 billion to GDP, or even S\$95 billion if female entrepreneurship reached parity with male levels

### Increased Innovation, Creativity, and Decision-Making

Companies such as DBS have illustrated the benefits: following the introduction of targeted recruitment initiatives like Hack2Hire-Her, female applications surged by over 30%, and the hiring of female tech talent increased fivefold. These changes have introduced diverse viewpoints and enhanced problem-solving capabilities

In various workplaces, diversity fosters improved decision-making and innovation.

### **Positive Influence on Organizational Performance**

A research article published in the Journal of Innovations revealed that gender equality, the empowerment of women, and their safety have a statistically significant positive impact on organizational performance. In particular, women's empowerment was associated with increased productivity and higher employee retention rates, while ensuring women's safety led to lower occupational health expenses and improved workplace performance. Furthermore, women's self-efficacy was linked to better organizational performance, as women who possess strong self-belief foster workplace success and personal well-being.

### **Impact on Leadership Effectiveness**

A study examining the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Lebanon investigated the effect of female empowerment on leadership effectiveness. The research aimed to comprehend how empowering women in leadership roles can influence organizational results, emphasizing the significance of gender equality in leadership roles. Improvement of Employee Engagement and Commitment

### **Empowerment Strategies in Decision-Making and Development**

An investigation conducted in Ethiopia examined the impact of women's empowerment on organizational performance, concentrating on strategies such as involvement in decision-making, information dissemination, training and development, and recognition and rewards. The findings indicated that these empowerment strategies positively influenced organizational performance, underscoring the importance of inclusive practices in improving organizational outcomes.

### **Methodology**

This research utilizes a quantitative approach to investigate the correlation between women's empowerment and organizational effectiveness. A cross-sectional survey method is implemented to gather data from employees in various organizations. Population and Sample The target population for this study comprises employees from medium to large-sized organizations that have established policies or initiatives focused on empowering women. A stratified random sampling method is utilized to guarantee representation from diverse departments and hierarchical levels.

**Data Collection Instrument** Data is gathered through a structured questionnaire that is segmented into three sections: Demographic information (age, gender, job title, years of experience). Women Empowerment Scale – assessing dimensions such as decision-making authority, access to resources, involvement in leadership positions, and support in the workplace. Organizational Effectiveness Scale – measuring aspects like productivity, employee satisfaction, teamwork, and organizational commitment. The items in the questionnaire are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

**Data Collection Procedure** The questionnaires were distributed both in person and electronically over a span of four weeks. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity to promote candid responses. The data collected

was analyzed using statistical software (e.g., SPSS). The analysis encompasses: Descriptive statistics to summarize demographic information and responses. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) to evaluate the internal consistency of the scales. Correlation analysis to explore the relationship between women's empowerment and organizational effectiveness. Regression analysis to assess the influence of women's empowerment on organizational effectiveness.

This paper explores how various dimensions of women's empowerment influence organisational effectiveness. We adopt a comprehensive definition of empowerment that encompasses access to resources (education and training), economic independence, increased involvement in decision-making, and psychological empowerment.

A mixed-method approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Population and Sample: 200 Employees from different levels within selected organizations, utilizing stratified sampling to ensure gender representation.

### **Data Collection Tools**

Survey questionnaires designed to measure indicators of empowerment, including training opportunities, chances for promotion, pay equity, and participation in decision-making. In-depth interviews conducted with women leaders alongside their male counterparts. Metrics for organizational performance, such as turnover rates, innovation indices, and trends in profitability.

The data were synthesized to evaluate the impact of women empowerment initiatives on organizational outcomes.

Employing correlation and regression analysis to explore the relationship between empowerment indicators and effectiveness metrics. Qualitative: Conducting thematic analysis on the data gathered from interviews.

**Correlation Results:** An examination of how empowerment scores correspond with performance outcomes. **Qualitative Insights:** Sharing narratives that illustrate how women empowered positively impact team morale, creativity, and decision-making processes. **Industry & Cultural Differences:** Identifying variations in impact that arise from different sectors or organizational cultures.

**Case Examples:** Highlighting successful empowerment initiatives and their resultant outcomes.

### **Data Analysis**

**Quantitative:** Employing correlation and regression analysis to explore the relationship between empowerment indicators and effectiveness metrics. **Qualitative:** Conducting thematic analysis of the interview data.

**Correlation Results:** An examination of how empowerment scores correspond with performance outcomes. **Qualitative Insights:** Narratives illustrating how women empowered positively affect team morale, creativity, and decision-making processes. **Industry & Cultural Differences:** An analysis of variations in impact based on industry sector or organizational culture. **Case Examples:** Illustrations of successful empowerment initiatives and their resultant outcomes reflects how women empowerment enhances organizational effectiveness in Singapore.

### **Research Gaps**

There is a lack of studies that are specific to different regions across multiple industries. There is a need for longitudinal research to assess the long-term impacts of empowerment.

### Conclusion

Empowering women within organizational environments not only promotes gender equality but also leads to considerable improvements in organizational efficiency. By embracing inclusive approaches such as advocating for gender equality, empowering women, and guaranteeing safety, organizations can enhance performance, foster innovation, and attain sustainable growth.

### Recommendations

Implement mentorship and leadership development programs specifically designed for women.

Ensure that compensation and promotion policies are clear and transparent.

Create work-life balance initiatives that support all genders while addressing the specific challenges encountered by women.

Set measurable diversity and empowerment objectives that are connected to performance incentives.

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