

# The impact of gender transformation on the leadership qualities of men and women

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**Abstract** During the 2000s and 2010s, Russian Federation is undergoing significant socio-economic transformations that entail changes in all spheres of public life, including in the sphere of leadership. There is a tendency to expand the gender roles of women in many areas. Women increasingly claim their rights to realize their professional and personal potential. The “I-concepts” of the sexes, the ratio of traditional “female” and “male” qualities, the attitude to leadership change. The article examines how over the past decade, the roles of women and men have changed, their ability to achieve leadership through the use of an analysis tool similar to the well-known Kuhn and McPartland’s “Who am I?” test.

By testing, the roles and personality, we identify the characteristics and provide a comprehensive an assessment of the roles and qualities of women and men in a group is shown. Group analysis of testing allowed us to understand how certain trends evolved and how they are expressed. These results and findings are presented in our paper.

## 1 Introduction

There are many interpretations of the notion of “leadership” in scientific discourse. From the traditional point of view, leadership is a way to influence others through certain personality traits. Let us look at leadership as it is changing. Socio-economic conditions, the transition to digitalization of various spheres of society, the formation of automated control systems, the development of robotics, flexible work and rest, etc. dictate other priorities. Being a leader means inspiring people to do everything in their power to achieve the desired result (Huffington et al. 2018). Leadership as a process becomes more flexible, meeting the demands of modern times.

From the point of view of a gender approach, leadership is an opportunity to develop the potential of women and men as workers in social, labour and other fields. Changing statuses and roles in the modern world generate new opportunities for men and women to express themselves, to form and develop leadership qualities.

Let us consider how men and women are willing to become a leader, demonstrate leadership qualities, what conditions are created for this. This paper presents an analysis of the “Who am I?” test, which helps to identify current trends in the process of becoming a leader, especially female leadership.

## 2 Methodology of research

The Kuhn and McPartland test were created in order to study personality attitudes and is widely used to identify meaningful characteristics of identity, including gender. The authors of the test proceed from the fact that the question “Who am I?” is a question that is logically connected with what an individual identifies himself with, with social status and roles. The respondent builds an associative row of 20 points, arranges the answers in the order in which they occur to him, without worrying about their consistency or importance. When the subject finishes answering, he is asked to put signs: “+” - the plus sign is put if the subject personally likes the characteristic in general, “-” the minus sign - if the subject does not like the characteristic in general; “±” - “sign” plus or minus - if this characteristic is both like and does not like the subject at the same time; “?” -

“question mark” - if the subject does not know at the given moment of time, how he relates exactly to the characterization, he does not yet have a definite assessment of the answer being considered.

Response processing of the test is carried out by the method of content analysis and is complemented by statistical analysis. Researchers believe that the formulations given define the "personal I" tested as a kind of expressiveness of an individual position in the social system, and the order of answers is a reflection of the "I-concept" model (Kuhn and McPartland 1954; Kuhn 1984). Such an approach suggests that differences in the identification of the “personal self” are equivalent to differences in the way men and women in society associate their activities with a number of possible social groups.

We adhere to a mixed interpretation of the test developed by Kletsina (2003). As noted by domestic researchers, this technique is not formalized. Therefore, depending on the processing method, it can be adapted to any theory on which the author relies (Kuzmin et al. 2015; Ivanova and Kulaeva 2011). According to Zucher and Kon, there are certain blocks of “I-concepts”, such as the activity “I”, the physical “I”, the communicative “I”, etc., which form the basis for interpreting the answers of the subjects (Zucher 1977; Kon 1999). According to the version of Kletsina, subjects are offered to allocate six positions for analysis: family roles, professional roles, other social roles, feminine characteristics, masculine characteristics, neutral characteristics (Kletsina 2003). The first three points constitute the content of the social identity of the subjects. The following three positions are considered as components of personal identity. After processing the results, the number of characteristics in each of the listed positions is calculated, the results obtained are recorded in a table.

The study was conducted in the period from 2009-2019 among Bachelor and undergraduate students (in retraining) in the areas of "Personnel management", "State and municipal management" in the course "Gender processes and management relations" of the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation. A total of 434 people took part in the study. Of these women were 221 and 213 men, respectively. The age range for Bachelors was 18-22 years, undergraduates were 23-40 years old, and the students 35-50 years old. Respondents represented different regions of Russian Federation.

### **3 Analysis of results**

Our results show that each group had its own unique distribution of roles and characteristics, but for a fairly large amount of research time (ten years), the main trends were identified and the essential characteristics of the personality traits of men and women, their “I-concepts” were revealed.

We provide a content analysis of the most common words and phrases for the first five positions. It is considered that those characteristics that a person uses at the beginning are most actualized in his consciousness, are more aware and significant for the subject.

If we generalize the distribution of answers in groups, then mostly respondents, regardless of age, in the first position demonstrate a neutral identification of themselves, associating with the word “person”. But this answer is typical for a time range of approximately 2009–2017, now the respondent’s name includes the word “man” or “woman”, as well as the name of his name, both full and abbreviated. Women, in addition to associating themselves with a “woman,” distinguish themselves by relating to a “girl,” whereas the word “boy” is rarely mentioned in men.

In the second position, the respondents reveal, as a rule, their roles. In 2009-2017, more responses were revealed towards the indication of family roles. So many women claimed that they were “wives”, “daughters”, young women “granddaughters”. Fewer associations with the role of mother. The mention of “I-mom” is twice as rare as the “daughter” in the first five positions. Women recall this role in 15-20 positions. Less often, men showed their belonging to family roles, highlighting the positions of "son", a little less than mentioning the role of "husband" and "father".

For the last three years, the trend is changing both in men and women, so professional and other social roles appear in second positions. ” Therefore, women more often began to write that they see themselves in the roles of "student", "leader", "blogger", "leader", "traveller". The frequency of such mentions over the past three years has increased by 40%, the man also sees himself in professional and other social roles, but more neutral “driver”, “specialist”, “worker”, “officer”, and also “student”. Men often see themselves as “friends” (second to fifth positions in the responses). Women less see themselves in the role of "friends", more often in the role of "hostess".

In women, adjectives or participles in the fourth and fifth positions predominate, which characterize them from feminine and masculine positions. Thence, women often mention “cheerful”, “smart”, “result oriented”, “active”, “purposeful”, “decisive”, “fair”. The frequency of such associations is found in every third. Men are more focused on neutral characteristics, such as "humourist", "well done", "formalist", etc.

Men are less likely than women to cope with the full listing of associations to twenty. As a rule, they write up to 10-12 points, women line up the entire associative array.

Very rarely responding negatively assess themselves. Basically, when evaluating themselves, they put a “+” sign. This indicates balance and emotional stability of the subjects. It is also a sign of an adaptive state of identity, self-confidence.

As for the interpretation of the test developed by Kletsina (2003). This distribution indicates that the subjects have sufficiently developed all social roles, and they also actively demonstrate their gender identity. The age distribution principle shows that young people (bachelor students) do not choose the positions of family roles very often, often associate themselves with other social roles and with “neutral characteristics”, such as “I-Grutt”, “I am a part of the Potter world”, etc. While undergraduates and trainees show belonging to professional roles and personal characteristics more realistic and thoughtful.

## 4 Main provisions

All subjects included in our research demonstrated a conscious and direct relationship to their gender. In the first positions, they took into account sexually positively coloured sexes, which indicates that the category of sex is relevant and significant for the respondents and it occupies a central place in the “I-concept”. The respondents have fully formed gender identity.

The subjects expressed family roles, but inferior to the roles of the public sphere. This is dictated by the fact that the sample of subjects already assumes their general attitude towards education and self-realization (the tests were conducted with bachelors, undergraduates, and additional education students). Women are more passionate about professional than family roles.

Self-evaluation of the subjects shows their attitude to the world, to those around them through social and professional activities. Therefore, the responding women and men showed their desire for self-realization, and women show this more actively than men. Women more often than men show the whole range of professional and social roles, emphasizing their desire to be a “leader”, “leader”, “mistress”. The leadership position in women stands out more clearly than in men. Women want self-realization in this direction. The large number of indications of social roles in women speaks of their overload and the desire to have time for everything, although in life this often comes to role conflicts.

Now, due to the change in the socio-economic way of life, the organization of labour, especially in large companies, with the formation of corporate cultures in organizations that focus on a person with a gender component, women actually have more opportunities for self-realization, managing their time, building an individual career path. growth. The answers of women and men change over time, since 2017, women are more focused on professional roles than on family roles. Since 2017, Russian Federation has embarked on a digitalization of the economy, on working with information, artificial intelligence and the creation of a digital platform for public administration. It began to change the lives of Russians, especially large cities. These external factors began to change the “I-concept” of the sexes.

According to personal characteristics, there is also an activity of women that has been observed. They more clearly emphasize “masculine” characteristics in themselves than they distinguish from “feminine” ones. Thence, their responses often feature “active”, “purposeful”, “resolute”, “fair”, “responsible”, “initiative”. All these qualities constitute the components of leadership qualities.

As noted by Bauer (2018), the leader’s characteristics now stand out: the ability to inspire confidence, justice, modesty, sensitivity to the new, the ability to feel people, the ability to feel situations, initiative, common sense, open-mindedness, flexibility and adaptability, the ability to accept quality and timely decisions, ability to motivate, efficiency (Bauer 2018). We see that women-subjects even more closely correspond to the image of a modern leader than men. Women more “try on” male roles, while men do not expand their range of roles. Some of them prefer along with masculine characteristics and neutral.

Economic and sociocultural transformations change the type of leader. According to researchers, in modern society, women's management style in many situations is preferable to men’s, business is increasingly focused on democratic principles of management. The demand for women's management style is also determined by changes in the management itself, which is now acquiring a socio-technical, innovative, person-centred character. Answers of respondents show that women demonstrate the qualities of a democratic leader: “sociable”, “initiative”, “mistress”, “fair”, “responsible”. However, at the same time, the woman also shows readiness to act as an authoritative person: “result-oriented”, “purposeful”, “determined”, “initiative”. It can be concluded that female leadership is a mixed type. Depending on the goals and tasks to be solved, companies equally need both management styles, both female and male. Harmony in management is very much in demand and it is precisely by merging two different styles that success is achieved in the management and development of any organisation.

Our own data and findings are consonant with a survey conducted by PwC. Over 60% of respondents noted high performance, responsibility, good communication skills and strategic thinking (PWC 2019) as the most important professional traits inherent in a female leader in Russia.

The experience of a narrative essay conducted with undergraduates of the same university also shows that the social roles of women are expanding, and this leads to the transformation of the perception of women and men in society. The image of a female leader is endowed with positive content. (Korostyleva and Kovaleva 2018).

It appears that women have more pronounced activity "I". Note that the active "I" includes the designation of activities, hobbies, as well as self-assessment of abilities to work, self-assessment of skills, abilities, knowledge and achievements. Women's answers are more meaningful and diverse. The developed activity "I" says that a modern woman is capable of bearing responsibility for the work being done, a balanced approach to the execution of actions, is emotionally stable. The man also demonstrates the activity "I", but judging by the answers, men are more "squeezed", their associations have less reflection than women. This speaks of the identity crisis of men.

As for the communicative "I", it is measured by two indicators: friendship or circle of friends and communication, features and assessment of interaction with people. It should be noted that both men and women are equally communicative, but men are more active in communicating with friends than women. For women, the parameter of assessing oneself as a "hostess" is more preferable and includes both a characteristic of personal space, family comfort, and a feature of publicity.

The physical "I" includes the following aspects: a subjective description of one's physical data, appearance (strong, pleasant, attractive); the actual description of their physical data, including the description of their appearance. It should be noted that in the tests personal appearance parameters are almost absent, there is a more positive self-perception through descriptiveness: Men are characterized by positions: "strong", "sporty", "young", "healthy". For women, more characteristic features: "charming", "clean", "beautiful", "attractive." The physical "I" emphasizes the dichotomy of the sexes; the markers clearly trace gender differences. But assessments of the physical "I" are not in the first positions; they appear on the tenth to fifteenth numbering in the list of the "Who am I?" Test.

When it comes to the linguistic analysis, it shows that men want to preserve the status quo more. As a result, in their answers nouns usually predominate. In women, adjectives and nouns prevail. The use of nouns speaks of the need for certainty and constancy, and adjectives speak of emotionality.

## 5 Conclusions

The "Who am I?" Test vividly showed the transformation of gender roles in Russian society, which has become more active in the past three years, as there are changes in Russian society related to the emergence of a digital state, the emergence of optimized forms and methods of work (it becomes more intellectual). and less physically costly) and a change in values, where, along with traditional concepts, flexible, adaptive forms of accepting the new coexist. This affects the "I-concept" of the sexes, especially women.

According to the data obtained by the test, women have a rich potential for the disclosure of their abilities. Women interested in the public sphere. Many of them want to self-actualize. They demonstrate a wide range of professional and social roles, sometimes to the detriment of family roles. The female range of personal and professional qualities revealed during testing meets the modern requirements of a leader's image. They have a better expressed activity "I", which indicates a positive self-assessment of competencies, skills and abilities, opportunities for growth and self-development.

The "Who am I?" Test data showed the inconsistency of the stereotypical thesis that the world of governance and leadership is fixed to the male sex and is dictated by the "male" norms of behaviour and lifestyle. However, in Russian society there are still gender attitudes, the basis of which is conservative view that management is a purely male sphere, that only a man can be a leader. This is his natural right, and a woman should protect the hearth and deal exclusively with the home and family.

Many gender economists show the benefits of involving women in management. According to McKinsey, if the "gender gap" could be completely closed by 2025 (that is, the roles of women and men in the labour markets would no longer be different), the global economy would have increased by \$28 trillion by this point. The logic is obvious - humanity is underutilizing half of its talented representatives (RBC 2015).

Overall, we might conclude that in order for Russian Federation to more actively approach the issue of gender equality, a well-considered gender policy is needed. This policy should encompass a fully-formed national mechanism for ensuring gender equality. Unfortunately, this is still the task and a plan for the future.

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