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The Impact of Power Distance between Gender Differences on Labor – Management Relations in Apparel Sector in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Increase in the women participation in the organizational management is the trend in the world. This is common in Sri Lanka also. In the present, there are many women are working in managerial positions. It can be a factor to change the power balance in an organization. Furthermore, by changing power balance in the organizations the organizational workers might be a factor to change the labour – management relations among the workers. However, there are no theoretical knowledge and empirical facts about these study phenomenons. Therefore, the problem of the study is: how do gender differences on power distance between the superior and subordinates determine the labour – management relations in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. The main objective of the study is to find the impact of gender differences on different power relations between the superior and subordinates in determining the labour – management relations in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. Using 120 pairs (120 superiors and 240 subordinates), primary data were collected. The data collection method is a structured questionnaire and it consisted of questions on power distance, gender differences and labour – management relationship. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were measured by using test – retest method and Cronbach alpha. Univaraite and bivariate analyze were used to analysis the primary data. The main findings of the study are, the power distance between all kinds of superiors and subordinates in this sector remain at low a level and the labour – management relationship between superior and subordinates depended on the low power distance rather than the high power distance.

Key worlds: Gender, Power distance, Labour – management relations

Introduction

Every organization needs to utilize their resources efficiently and effectively to achieve the organizational objectives. Human resources, which highly affects to the organizations' success is the one and only live resource available in the organization. In the current context the female employment has increased globally. When considering the Sri Lankan context it is the same. Therefore a lot of females hold high position in organizations. They tend to handle male subordinates as well as female subordinates/ employees. It is necessary to build a relationship among the superiors and the subordinates. Relationships between two people are determined by many factors. One of the major factors that affects interrelationship is gender. Interrelationship is not a merely a relationship. It also maintains the power distance. This is true in any organizational context, as far as the relationship between managers and subordinates is

concerned (Luthans, 2000). Gender is not the one and only factor that affect the relationship. There are quite a large number of factors such as organizational culture, and organizational context that affect the labour relations. Among these factors, gender differences of superiors and subordinates may be a significant factor to determine the labour – management relations in an organization.

Basically, gender is differed biologically as male and female. Historically, men tend to carry out hard work but females to perform soft work. Men and women tend to choose different occupations. Women occupy jobs which are paid lower, more insecure, less likely to bring promotions than men (Barrette, 1985). Women often become nurses, teachers, social workers, secretaries, shop assistants and hair dressers. Men become engineers, managers, builder's farmers, scientists, and lawyers (Michael, 1997). Men are stronger than women and are therefore better suited to physically exacting work, such as laboring or hunting. Some people maintain that biological factors are responsible for personality and temperamental differences between the sexes and thus women are widely considered to be more emotional than men and have an innate desire to nurture or care for others. These qualities suit women to such work as nursing, teaching, and caring for children (Robbins, 1987). Traditionally gender generally acknowledges that women are likely to confirm to influence attempts than men because of the way they were raised, there is now evidence that this is changing. As women's and societies' view of the role of women are changing there is less of a distinction by gender of influence ability (Luthans, 1995).

In the practices of Labour Management Relationship (LMR) of an organization, there are many factors to determine the quality of LMR. Gender of the employee (male and female or masculinity or feminist), education level of the employee, marital status of the employee, ethnicity of the employee, and age of the employee as demographic factors affect the practices of LMR in a given context. Among the demographic factors, gender is a significant factor to determine the LMR in an organizational context. There are no empirical and theoretical facts and figures for the impact of power distance between genders on labour management relationship. This study is aimed to discuss these phenomenons.

Problem of the study

Compared to the traditional management system of Sri Lanka, presently there are many female employees involved in the labour force. Following tables illustrate the different aspects of gender participation to the labour force in Sri Lanka. The contribution of labor force in Sri Lanka is given in table No 01.

Table 01: The contribution of labor force

Year	Male	Female
1996	66.1%	30.7%
1997	64.8%	32.3%
1998	67.7%	35.5%
1999	67.5%	33.6%
2000	66.7%	32.5%
2001	66.0%	32.4%
2002	68.5%	33.9%
2003	68.0%	32.0%
2004	67.0%	31.7%
2005	67.1%	30.9%

Source: Annual Report – 2005, Central Bank of Sri Lanka

The table No 01 indicates that the male and female employees' contribution for the national development of Sri Lanka. According to the figures 1/3 of the total working population is represented by the female employees in Sri Lanka in all years. In 1996 it was 30.7 % and in 2005 it was 30.9 %. The percentages of women employees to total employees by major occupational categories are given in table No 2.

Table 02: The percent of women employees to total employees by major occupational categories

Major occupational categories	Percentage of women						
	1975	1980	1985	1990	1993	1998	2002
Administrative and managerial workers	6.6	9.6	12.8	16.9	16.4	20.6	23.6
Professional, technical & related workers	11.1	18.1	18.2	25.3	23.9	29.0	28.4
Clerical and related workers	17.1	22.7	28.3	38.8	40.5	39.0	37.5
Sales workers	13.2	21.1	28.9	32.3	35.4	29.1	27.1
Foreman & supervisors	12.9	12.5	13.6	19.9	24.6	21.2	20.5
Skilled & semi skilled workers	34.9	26.3	34.2	48.2	56.6	52.4	48.4
Un-skilled workers	41.0	40.7	44.0	48.8	51.9	48.6	45.7
Total	34.8	33.7	36.6	44.3	48.3	44.8	41.2

Source: Employment survey 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1993, 1998, 2002. Social conditions of Sri Lanka, www.statistics.gov.lk

According to the table No 2, the administrative and managerial female employees were 6.6% at 1975 and it was increased to 23.6% in 2002. In the professional, technical and related work categories, female contribution was 11.1% in 1975 and it was increased up to 28.4% in 2002. In 1975, there were 17.1% of female employees working in clerical and related jobs and it was increased to 37.5% in 2002. Female sales workers were 13.2% in 1975 and it was increased to 27.1% at 2002. In foreman and supervisory categories, female contribution was 12.9% in 1975 and it was increased as 20.5% in 2002. In comparing all the figures it shows that there is a huge increase in administrative and managerial workers (6.6% to 23.6). It shows that there will be a higher degree of female supervisors in future.

Labour relation in an organization is a critical factor to run the business smoothly. In the Sri Lankan context, the labour relation practices are not healthy (Kottawatta, 2008). There were many conflicts between the management and labour parties such as trade union and association of trade unions (Kottawatta, 2008). However, there are no any research findings relating to the power distance of gender between the supervisors and subordinators. Therefore, there is a theoretical and knowledge gap between the nature of labour relations on the power distance between different genders of the supervisors and subordinators in an organizational context. Then, the problem of the study is: How do gender differences on power distance of superiors and subordinates affect to determine the labour relations in an organization. The main objective of the study is to identify the impact of gender differences in the supervisor - subordinates relationship on their distance of power to determine the labour – management relationship. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the power distance between the male supervisor and male subordinates in the apparel industry.
2. To identify the power distance between the male supervisor and female subordinates in the apparel industry.
3. To identify the power distance between the female supervisor and male subordinates in the apparel industry.
4. To identify the power distance between the female supervisor and female subordinates in the apparel industry.
5. To identify the nature of labour relations in a situation where the low or high power distance exits between male supervisor and male subordinates in the apparel industry.
6. To identify the nature of labour relations in a situation where the low or high power distance exits between male supervisor and female subordinates in the apparel industry.
7. To identify the nature of labour relations in a situation where the low or high power distance exits between female supervisor and male subordinates in the apparel industry.
8. To identify the nature of labour relations in a situation where the low or high power distance exits between female supervisor and female subordinates in the apparel industry.

Literature Review
Power Distance
Power distance is a measure of the interpersonal power or influence between bosses and subordinates as perceived by the less powerful of the two subordinates. The term power distance is taken from the work of Mulder (1977). Mulders' theory is based on a long series of laboratory and field experiments with simple social structures (Mulder, 1977). Mulders defined power as the potential to determine or direct the behavior of other person more so the way round and power distance as the degree of inequality in power between a less powerful individual and more powerful others (Mulder, 1977).

Judy Rosener in a Harward Business Review article noted that 'men are more likely to use power that comes from their organizational position and formal authority (whereas

women) ascribe their power to personal characteristics like charisma, interpersonal contacts rather than to organizational stature. Gender difference may significantly affect the power distance between superior and subordinates (Hofstede, 1991). The term power in management literature has many definitions. Hillman reports that power's rather innocent definition is simply the agency to act , to do, to be, (Hillmas, 1995) coming from the Latin potere; to be able Power can be defined as sheer potency or potentiality, not the doing , but the capacity to do. David defined power as the ability to induce a person to do something he or she would not otherwise have done (David, 1995). Stephen suggest power refers to a capacity that A has to influence the behavior of B, so that B does something that he or she would not otherwise do (Robbins, 1987). Power differences among the countries relate to social class, education level and occupation. Mostly power distance arises in the family, at school, in the work place, in the state, with ideas in the future.

Power cannot be understood as the unique source of the social forces that change organizations (Dorriots & Johansson, 1999). The theoretical and practical value of studying organizations from the perspective of power and influence has been frequently underlined (Bruins, 1999). Power has become a widely studied phenomenon in organizations and several perspectives, sometimes opposing, have been formulated (Brandshaw, 1998). In fact, Hardy and Clegg (1996) in their review chapter suggest that the study of organizational power has been dominated by two approaches. One, based on the work of Marx and Weber, conceptualizes power as domination and the challenges to power as acts of resistance. The other that of mainstream management sees power as formal legitimate authority and is directed at the rightful suppression of conflict or resistance.

From this second approach, *influence* is conceptualized as a change in behavior, opinions, attitudes, goals, needs and/or values of a person (P) as a consequence of an action by another person (O). The word *Power* refers to O's potential to influence P" (Mulder, de Jong, Koppelaar, & Verhage, 1986) or to the likelihood of getting one's way even against opposition. *Control* is the compliance of the target with the demands as a result of effective power from the agent. Finally, *authority* refers to power associated with a position in an organization or legitimate power. Taking into consideration all these conceptual distinctions several attempts have been made to classify personal power along different dimensions like formal versus informal, direct versus indirect or influence versus authority (Cohen & Bradford, 1990). They emphasize that agents (A) of power for a target (T) are not only those incumbents holding positions of hierarchical positions over him/her but any member of his/her role-set (Katz & Kahn, 1978) who benefits from any source of power (French & Raven, 1959) even if they are low in the hierarchy (Mechanic, 1962).

As Moscovici (1984) pointed out every member of a group, independent of his/her position in it, is at the same time a potential agent and target of influence. Thus, the dependence relationship cannot be emphasized as the main factor of influence success. This author states that it is necessary to dissociate power from influence phenomena. However, from an interpersonal perspective, power has been considered in a broader sense as potential social influence, or the ability to influence others to behave in line

with our wishes (Boulding, 1999). In fact, Lewin defined it as "the possibility of inducing forces of a certain magnitude on another person" (Lewin, 1935) and French and Raven (1959) as the potential ability of an agent to influence a target within a context. Raven (1993) has developed a Power/Interaction model focusing primarily on the perspective of the influencing agent. According to this model, the influencing agent: (a) has some motivation to influence, (b) assesses its available power bases and the costs of differing influence strategies, (c) makes the preparation for the influence attempts, (d) selects the mode of influence, (e) assesses its effects, and (f) readjusts following feedback on the effects of the influence strategy.

French and Raven (1959) examined different sorts of resources a person might have to draw upon to exercise influence. They identified five sources of social power: coercive, rewarding, legitimate, expert, and referent. Later on, Raven (1965) added a sixth source described as informational.

Meliá (1984), building on the concept of power as interpersonal exchange, formulated a Bifactorial Theory of Social Power that integrates a set of results and propositions about the structure and properties of power bases for several interrelated agents within organizations. The Bifactorial Theory of Power in organizations includes propositions about (a) the structure of the bases of power, e.g. how bases of power are in fact grouped in organizations, (b) the relationship between dimensions of power and hierarchy, (c) the relationship between sent and received power and (d) the relationship between these dimensions and interpersonal conflict. Furthermore, the consideration of all these relationships in the frame of role-set theory opens a wider approach to the study of interpersonal power. Power can be understood both as a social condition and a personal ability.

Power distance is the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 1993). Power distance describes also the extent to which employees accept that superiors have more power than they have. Furthermore that opinions and decisions are right because of the higher position some has. In countries with high power distance employees are too afraid to express their doubts and disagreements with their autocratic and paternalistic bosses. The index for power distance describes the dependence of relationships. The power distance concept is clearly more far-reaching than the work place along. The power distance is often reflected in the hierarchical organization of companies (http://users.tkk.fi-vesanto/fudge/culture-part2.html.[Online][12/10/2007])

Power distance is the extent to which less powerful members of organizations accept the unequal distribution of power, that is, the degree to which employees accept that their boss has more power than they do. Hofsted examined employees from 50 countries in terms of individualism and power distance, he found cultural clusters. United States has high individualism and small power distance (employee do not have grant their bosses much power) (1993). This is in contrast to Mexico while has high collectivism and large power distance a lot of power granted to the boss. In general Hofsted (1993) found that wealthy countries have higher individualism scores and

poorer countries have higher collectivism scores. Mainly four dimensions they are as follows.

- Small power distance low individualism.
- Small power distance high individualism
- Large power distance low individualism
- Large power distance high individualism (Robbins, 1987).

For the study purpose, power distance is defined as is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unevenly (www.wps.prenhall.com/wps/media/objects/213/218150/glossary.html, [Online] [01/06/2007]). For this study, the power distance is dimensioned as organizational structure, status of symbols, face to face saving and participative management (Hofstede, 1991).

Labour Relations

The concept of labour relation is viewed differently by different authors. Glueck defined the concept of labour relation as a continuous relationship between a defined group of employees (represented by union of association) and an employer (Glueck, 1979). The dictionary of Personnel Management defined labour relation as relations between management and workers or between groups that represent them (Ivancevich, 1992). Opatha in 2009 defines labour management relation as perceived degree of how well labour unions and managers in an organization feel and behave towards each others. As noted by Barbash (1984) and Cooke and Meyer (1990), the union-management relationship has traditionally been characterized by higher wages and benefits, a well-developed grievance procedure, strong adherence to seniority, and restrictive work rule and job classification procedures. Furthermore, labour-management relations have been largely adversarial and power-oriented; with both parties viewing the relationship as distributive and accepting the position that management was responsible for increasing the wealth of the organization while the union's responsibility was to bargain for a share of the wealth. However, some organizations are moving away from the adversarial approach to collective bargaining toward a relationship that is more cooperative (Smith 1993; Kochan and Osterman 1994; Betcherman et al. 1994; Walton, Cutcher-Gershenfeld and McKersie 1994).

On the one hand, at least some conflict between labour and management appears to be inevitable. Godard (1994) identifies three "underlying" sources of conflict: (1) the legal alienation of employees who do not own or control the process and proceeds of their work, (2) management's goal of profit maximization, which requires obtaining the most favourable ratio of employee output to labour cost, and (3) the authoritarian nature of the employment relationship and the subordination of workers. In addition, Godard argues that the indeterminacy of the employment contract, as well as "contextual" factors (such as income and status of most workers relative to management, uncertain or undesirable work and labour market conditions, minimal opportunity for personal fulfillment or growth), generate to conflict in the workplace On the other hand, some scholars, industrial relations practitioners and union officials believe that organizations should retreat from the traditional approach to management characterized by hierarchical decision making, repetitive jobs and rewards based on individual

performance in favour of an "involvement" or "commitment" approach to designing and managing organizations (Lawler 1988, 1992). While there has been considerable discussion and debate about the "transformation" (Kochan, Katz and McKersie 1986) of industrial relations, evidence from the United States (Osterman 1994) and Canada (Smith 1993; Godard 1994; Leckie and Betcherman 1994) indicates that "workplace innovations" and work reorganization are by no means occurring in every organization.

From a conceptual perspective, Cooke (1989, 1990a, 1990b) has developed a framework for examining labour-management relations. He asserts that the collaborative structure, the relative power of the company and union, and organizational constraints affect the intensity of collaboration efforts. In turn, the intensity of collaboration efforts (as well as the relative power of the company and union, and organizational constraints) affect measures of organizational performance (such as quality, productivity or employee-supervisor relations).

In addition, Dastmalchian, Blyton and Adamson (1991) present a model for studying the industrial relations climate. The Dastmalchian et al. model begins with "inputs", including the organizational context (age, size, ownership, technology, dependence and change), the organizational structure (such as degree of specialization, centralization, participation, etc.), and the human resource management context (changes in HRM, internal labour markets, training). The second component of the model is "processes", which include the workplace industrial relations climate and a number of contextual influences (for instance, bargaining structure, union density, membership commitment, previous relationship between the parties, and so on). The final element in the model is the "outcomes" (IR incidents such as strikes or walkouts, turnover, absenteeism, and union and management perceptions of IR outcomes). The major argument is that understanding the workplace IR climate is critical in examining the determinants of industrial relations outcomes.

For the study purpose, labour relation is defined as a continuous relationship between management and employee, employees or group of employees in the scenario of achieving organizational objective. There are five dimensions such as disputes, understanding, co-operation, partnership (Beach, 1985; Tripathi, 1992; Pinto, 1995; Fret and Walsh, 1998) and grievances (Chandra, 1978; Steel, et al., 1992; Nkomo, et al., 1996; and Bender and Sloane, 1998) which were concerned to measure the labour relation in this study.

LMR and Power Distance between Superior and Subordinates
LMR depends on the relationship between different particles in the organization as well as outside of the organization. Relationship between different parties may be 1) superior – subordinates, 2) superior – trade union, 3) superior-group of subordinates, 4) trade union – trade union, 5) trade union – employee, 6) employer – government, 7) trade union – government and 8) employee – government. However, among these relationships, superior – subordinators' relationships makes significant impact to maintain and develop the LMR in an organization. Superior – subordinate relationship depends on many factors such as power distance, nature of work, time period, knowledge of each party for the task/job and so on. Then, among these factors, power

distance is significant and important to determine the relationship between superior and subordinates relationship.

It is clear that power distance plays a significant role to keep the LMR in an organization. According to the nature of the power distance, quality of LMR can be determined. Therefore, there is a relationship among the concepts of power distance and LMR in the organizational scenario.

Method

The objective of the study is to examine the impact of power distance on gender differences between the supervisors and subordinates on the labour relations in the apparel industry. The type of investigation of this study is correlation. Correlation is a statistical technique for quantifying the strength of association between variables (Rosenberg and Daly, 1993). In a correlation study, the research is conducted in the natural environment of the organizations minimizing the researcher's interference in the natural flow of events (Sekaran, 1981). This study is analytical in nature rather than exploratory or descriptive, because, according to Sekeran (1992) studies that engage in hypotheses testing usually explain the nature of certain relationships, or establish the difference among groups or the independence of two or more factors in a situation.

This is a field study because it examines the relationship between the gender and the power distance in the organization. None of the variables are controlled or manipulated. The data for the study are collected within a particular time period and there is no subsequent extension of the research contemplated. The unit of the study is individual superiors and the subordinates of the appeal organizations.

The survey method characterized by a mail and e-mail questionnaire was selected as the method of data collection in this study. This study is purely based on primary data. The non-contrived field-setting environment will be used to collect these primary data. Therefore, the survey method is found to be more suitable to collect required original data because of its comparative advantageous position in terms of time and cost. The present study involves formulation and testing of hypothesis with a view to establish the correlations between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The study needs more reliable and original data to test hypotheses. The data will be collected pair/couple wise. Therefore, the population of the study will be limited to the pair/couples of superior and subordinators. The sampling method is judgmental (purposive) sampling under the non - probability sampling. Non – probability sampling is a sampling technique in which units of the sample are selected on the basis of personal judgment or convenience (Zikmund, 2000). Then, the judgmental sampling is a non – probability sampling technique in which an experienced researcher selects the sample based upon some appropriate characteristic of the sample member (Zikmund, 2000). According to purposive sampling method, working population or sampling frame of this study can be defined as couple of superior and subordinator. Then, the couple of superior and subordinator are selected as following ways.

> Male superior and male subordinator
> Male superior and female subordinator
> Female superior and male subordinator

Female superior and female subordinator

The total sample size was 120 couples/pairs. Then total numbers of superiors were 120 and subordinates were 240. The research is purely based on primary data, which are collected from a large sample scattered in many parts of the country. A questionnaire will be used for data collection. The questionnaire was prepared by the researcher and the questionnaire method is chosen to collect data for number of reasons particular to this study. According to the spread of the companies in Sri Lanka, it is not possible to meet the respondents individually. On the other hand, managers are very busy people. Therefore, the questionnaire method was found to be more suitable way of collecting information from respondents. The anonymity of the respondents is considered to be very crucial. Then, the questionnaire method is the only possible method of gathering more reliable information while assuming the anonymity of the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of 34 questions to measure the concept of power distance and 27 questions to measure the concept of labour relations. All questions were used after assessing the validity and the reliability. The bivariate analysis techniques were used to analyses the primary data and SPSS version 16 was used to analysis the data.

Empirical Data

The reliability and validity of the research instrument is illustrated by table No 03.

Table 03: The reliability of the research instruments

Variable	Internal reliability (Test – retest coefficient)	External reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Organizational structure,	0.876	0.974
Status of symbols	0.783	0.876
Face to face saving	0.953	0.823
Participative management	0.792	0.781
Disputes,	0.793	0.804
Understanding,	0.701	0.859
Co-operation,	0.785	0.903
Partnership	0.714	0.809
Grievances	0.834	0.708

The external reliability of the instruments used in collecting data was examined by Test – retest method. This test was carried out using 10 respondents (10 workers) from the apparel industry in Sri Lanka with two weeks' time interval between two administrations. As shown in the table No 03, the coefficients of the Test-retest of the instruments indicate that each instrument has a high external reliability (all values of coefficients of test – retest are more than 0.700). The inter item consistency reliability was examined with Cronbach's Alpha test. The results of Cronbach's alpha test are given in the table No 03, which suggests that the internal reliability of each instrument is satisfactory (all values of coefficients of Cronbach's alpha are more then 0.700). The content validity of the instruments was ensured by the conceptualisation and operationalization of the variables, and indirectly by the high internal consistency reliability of the instruments as denoted by Alphas.

The analysis of primary data can be explained using three separate parts. Part one is the power distance between of the supervisors and subordinates of different gender. Part two is the overall labour relations perceived by the subordinates in the apparel industry, and part three will be devoted to identify the nature of labour relations on the situation of power distance depending on the gender difference of the supervisors and subordinates.

Part One: The power distance on gender differences

The table No 04 illustrates the power distance on the gender differences of the supervisors and subordinates in the apparel industry.

Table 4: The power distance and gender differences of supervisors and subordinates

	Male – male*	Male – female*	Female – male*	Female – female*	Overall*
Small scale	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Medium scale	Low	Low	Low	High	Low
Large scale	Low	Low	High	High	High

*Mean value of the power distance

According to table No 04, the power distance between male supervisors and male subordinates is small in all scales of organizations in the apparel industry. This is common in the situation of male supervisor and female subordinates in this sector. However, in the situation of female supervisor and male subordinates' relationship, power distance is small in small scale organizations and medium scale organizations. Power distance is large in the large organizations in the apparel industry when the pair is female supervisor and male subordinates. In the relationship between female supervisor and female subordinates in small scale organization remains the small power distance and it is high in the medium and large scale organization.

Part Two: The labour relations in the apparel industry

The labour relations between the supervisors and subordinates in the small, medium and large scales organizations in the apparel industry are given in table No 05.

Table 5: The labour relations in the apparel industry

	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. deviation	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis
Small scale	2.14	2.00	2	1.133	1.342	0.121	-1.353
Medium scale	2.42	2.00	2	1.213	1.536	0.569	-1.217
Large scale	2.45	1.00	1	0.460	0.464	1.533	1.690

According to table No 05, the labour relations in the small scale organization is good or positive and medium scale organization is average. However, the labour relation in the large scale organizations in the apparel industry is poor or negative.

Part Three: The labour relation and power differences between the different gender oriented supervisor and subordinates

Table No 06 illustrates the nature of the labour relations among the supervisor and subordinates whose gender is differed as male and female.

Table 6: The labour relation and power distance on gender differences

Power distance	Small scale		Medium scale		Large scale	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Male – male relationship	3.4562 Good	1.1475 Bad	3.9843 Good	2.0021 Bad	4.2310 Good	2.5432 Bad
Male – female relationship	4.3243 Good	2.5431 Bad	4.2314 Good	3.4216 Good	4.5328 Good	2.4375 Bad
Female – male relationship	3.9859 Good	1.4397 Bad	3.5237 Good	2.4531 Bad	3.7253 Good	2.3145 Bad
Female – female relationship	4.5678 Good	1.9504 Bad	3.5286 Good	2.0954 Bad	3.5267 Good	2.0018 Bad

* Figures are the mean value of labour relations perceived by the subordinates'

According to the table No 06, there is clear inclination of behaving the power distance and the labour relations among the supervisor and subordinators. When the power distance is low, then the labour relation remains in a good manner and when the power distance is low, the labour relation remains in a bad manner. This is divergent to only one situation which is the relationship between male and female relationship in the medium scale organizations.

Empirical Findings

Main findings of the study can be summarized as below.

1. Power distance between male supervisor and male subordinates in the small scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
2. Power distance between male supervisor and female subordinates in the small scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
3. Power distance between female supervisor and male subordinates in the small scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
4. Power distance between female supervisor and female subordinates in the small scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
5. Power distance between male supervisor and male subordinates in the medium scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
6. Power distance between male supervisor and female subordinates in the medium scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
7. Power distance between female supervisor and male subordinates in the medium scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
8. Power distance between female supervisor and female subordinates in the medium scale apparel organizations is relatively high.
9. Power distance between male supervisor and male subordinates in the large scale apparel organizations is relatively low.
10. Power distance between male supervisor and female subordinates in the large scale apparel organizations is relatively low.

11. Power distance between male supervisor and male subordinates in the large scale apparel organizations is relatively high.
12. Power distance between female supervisor and female subordinates in the large scale apparel organizations is relatively high.
13. Labour relation in the small scale apparel organization is relatively good.
14. Labour relation in the medium scale apparel organization is relatively good.
15. Labour relation is the large scale apparel organization is relatively good.
16. When the power distance is low between the male supervisor and male subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
17. When the power distance is high between the male supervisor and male subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
18. When the power distance is low between the male supervisor and female subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
19. When the power distance is high between the male supervisor and female subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
20. When the power distance is low between the female supervisor and male subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
21. When the power distance is high between the female supervisor and male subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
22. When the power distance is low between the female supervisor and female subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
23. When the power distance is high between the female supervisor and female subordinators in the small scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
24. When the power distance is low between the male supervisor and male subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
25. When the power distance is high between the male supervisor and male subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
26. When the power distance is low between the male supervisor and female subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
27. When the power distance is high between the male supervisor and male subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
28. When the power distance is low between the female supervisor and male subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.

29. When the power distance is high between the female supervisor and male subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
30. When the power distance is low between the female supervisor and female subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
31. When the power distance is high between the female supervisor and female subordinators in the medium scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
32. When the power distance is low between the male supervisor and male subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
33. When the power distance is high between the male supervisor and male subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
34. When the power distance is low between the male supervisor and female subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
35. When the power distance is high between the male supervisor and female subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
36. When the power distance is low between the female supervisor and male subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
37. When the power distance is high between the female supervisor and male subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.
38. When the power distance is low between the female supervisor and female subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively good.
39. When the power distance is high between the female supervisor and female subordinators in the large scale apparel organizations, the labour relation remains relatively bad.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study aimed to discuss the impact of power distance on gender difference to determine the labour relation in the apparel industry. According to the empirical data, the power distance between supervisor and subordinates in this sector remained at a low level. Then, it is similar to the findings of Disnaka in 2008. According to Disnaka in 2008, the power distance between the supervisor and subordinates in telecommunication sector, banking sector and manufacturing sector in Sri Lanka remained at a low level. He further explained that his study had identified the low power distance between different gender of the supervisor and different gender of the subordinates. These findings are equal to the findings of this study. Therefore, in Sri Lana, the power distance between supervisor and subordinates remain at relatively low level. In addition, low power distance exists between the male supervisor and male

subordinates, male supervisor and female subordinates, female supervisor and male subordinates and female supervisor and female subordinates.

The nature of labour relationship in the apparel sector in Sri Lanka is relatively positive or good. Then, it concludes that the disputes of the employees with the management in this sector are relatively good. Understanding of each party in this sector is relatively good and leads to developing good relationship among the employees and the management. Co-operation among the management and employees is good and it also leads to develop mutual management system in this sector. Partnership of employees to the management under the nature of the employee affairs is also kept as good level. Grievances in this sector record a fair level in this sector. However, there are no research findings to compare the labour relationship with these findings.

The major finding of the study is that there is a positive relationship between the low power distance and the positive/good labour management relationship in this sector. Therefore, it concludes that the high power distance between the supervisor and subordinates leads to negative or bad labour management relationship. In addition to this main research finding, there is an important finding which is that there is no effect of the gender of the supervisors and subordinates to determine the labour management relationship in this sector. However, there are no research findings to compare the findings of this study.

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