

**STRUCTURAL EMPOWERMENT AT WORK:
THE STUDY OF FEMALE BRANCH MANAGERS OF LOCAL PUBLIC
SECTOR COMMERCIAL BANKS OF SRI LANKA**

BY

THELGE NAYOMI SHANUKA DE PEIRIS

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Thesis submitted to the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in partial fulfillment of the Degree of Master of Science (Management) on 30th January 2014.

DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

The work described in this thesis was carried out by me under the supervision of Mrs. J.S. Senevirathne and a report on this has not been submitted in whole or in part to any university or any other institution for another Degree.



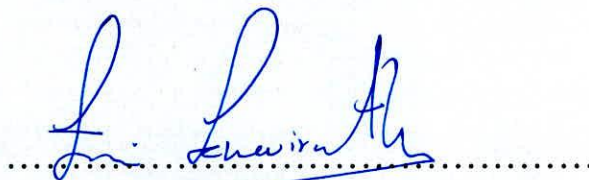
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DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

I certify that the above statement made by the candidate is true and that this thesis is suitable for submission to the university for the purpose of evaluation.



Mrs. J.S. Senevirathne

Thesis Advisor

25-07-2014

Date

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AI	Access to Information
AO	Access to Opportunity
AR	Access to Resources
AS	Access to Support
BOC	Bank of Ceylon
CWEQ -I	Conditions of Work Effectiveness Questionnaire – I
FP	Formal Power
HR	Human Resource
IP	Informal Power
JAS	Job Activity Scale
LCB	Licensed Commercial Bank
ORS	Organizational Relationship Scale
SE	Structural Empowerment

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I am highly indebted to Mrs. J S Senevirathne and Mrs. P D H D Gunathilake, senior lecturers of the Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, who helped and guide me in completing this research study.

I would like to express my gratitude towards the two State Banks which I selected for this study, and specially Mr. G De Silva, Mr. Duminda, Mrs. Thushara, Mrs, Tamara and Mr. Ranjith Somasiri who helped me in the data gathering process and all the female branch managers of the two banks who helped in responding to the questionnaires.

My thanks and appreciations also go to Ms. Lakmali Kalpage, Mr. Manoj Rodrigo and Mr. Amila Wickramasinghe, the lecturers of the Department of Decision Sciences, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, who helped me in the data analysis stage of the study.

Furthermore I would like to thank all the staff members of the Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, who helped me by giving valuable advices and support to make this study completed.

Finally, in the absence of the support of my family I would not be achieve this milestone of completing this research and I am deeply indebted them to the all support and the bearing up with me during the entire course of my research study.

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T N S De Peiris

ABSTRACT

The participation of women in the work force has changed the structures of families, role of women in a family and finally the whole social structure. With the patriarchic values in the society, Sri Lankan working women have confronted difficulties in organizations, irrespective of their representation in organizations. With these difficulties, working women may require at least equal treatment without discrimination within the respective organizations that they are working.

Discrimination is prohibited in most parts of the world. In organizations, there are policies and practices that are aiming at preventing discrimination and securing equal rights of employees. Empowerment can be considered as a strategy aiming at giving control over the issues and problems that concern individuals and groups by eradicating discrimination practices. Women empowerment is one such strategy adopted in different contexts including organizations all over the world. However, women are still facing difficulties at organizations and glass ceiling effect is an evidence for those difficulties. Even with the increased number of female representation in the organizations, their representation in the top level of management is still low. Sri Lankan public sector commercial banks are such organizations where the female representation in the total number of employees is high and low in the top management.

The study is aimed at studying the perceived level of structural empowerment of female branch managers of the Sri Lankan public sector commercial banks. Therefore, the main objective of the study is to assess the perceived level of structural empowerment of the female branch managers of Sri Lankan public sector commercial banks by studying the systematic power factors. Accordingly, data was gathered from 118 respondents of female branch managers of public sector commercial banks using three standardized questionnaires to assess the perceived level of structural empowerment and systematic power factors, and 116 responded questionnaires were selected for the analysis. SPSS 16.0 version is used to analyze the data and accordingly, several analysis including univariate analysis, bivariate analysis and multivariate analysis were carried out in order to achieve research objectives and to test the hypothesis. The results of this study was significant and it was found that the perceived level of structural empowerment was high among the female branch managers of public sector commercial banks in Sri Lanka. Further, in the findings with respect to the hypotheses, it was found that the formal power compared to informal power is significantly influencing on the perceived level of structural empowerment of female branch managers of public sector commercial banks in Sri Lanka.

Considering the managerial implications of the study, it has been identified that necessary steps need to be taken to improve the level of informal power of female branch managers of public sector commercial banks in Sri Lanka which will subsequently result in career advancements and further increasing the level of structural empowerment according to their perception.