

## **Leadership and Womanhood: Probing the Paucity of Female Academics' Leadership Roles in Sri Lankan State Universities.**

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Female leadership has been a part of women's studies since the manifestation of women's rights in the former consecutive political movements. Yet in terms of the number of female leadership roles, there is a hindrance. It is visible in any field. Nonetheless, this study specifically looked at the leadership roles that women hold in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) of Sri Lanka. Among them, the focus was given to Sri Lankan female academics in the state universities. The data collected by the University Grants Commission and Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka clearly showed the difference between the number of leadership roles held by males and the females. Thus, the objective of this study was to explore the reasons behind this. Though they can be varied from one context to the other, the influence of the social expectations on each gender has a great part to play on the less number of female leadership roles compared to that of male roles. The lack of psychological freedom caused by this has made it difficult for the female academics advance to be the leading personals in the state universities according to the findings of this research. However, the remedy for this is in the hands of both genders. Female academics who aspire to become leading roles should be able to lead a balanced life between womanhood and leadership and be qualified to be placed as a leader academically and personally, be passionate and grow a desire towards a difference. On the other hand, men including academics and policymakers have the responsibility to sense the inconsistencies faced by female academics due to the stereotypes linked with womanhood and create an equal space to both genders to hold leadership roles in the HEIs.

**Keywords:** academics; imbalance; leadership; social expectations; womanhood.