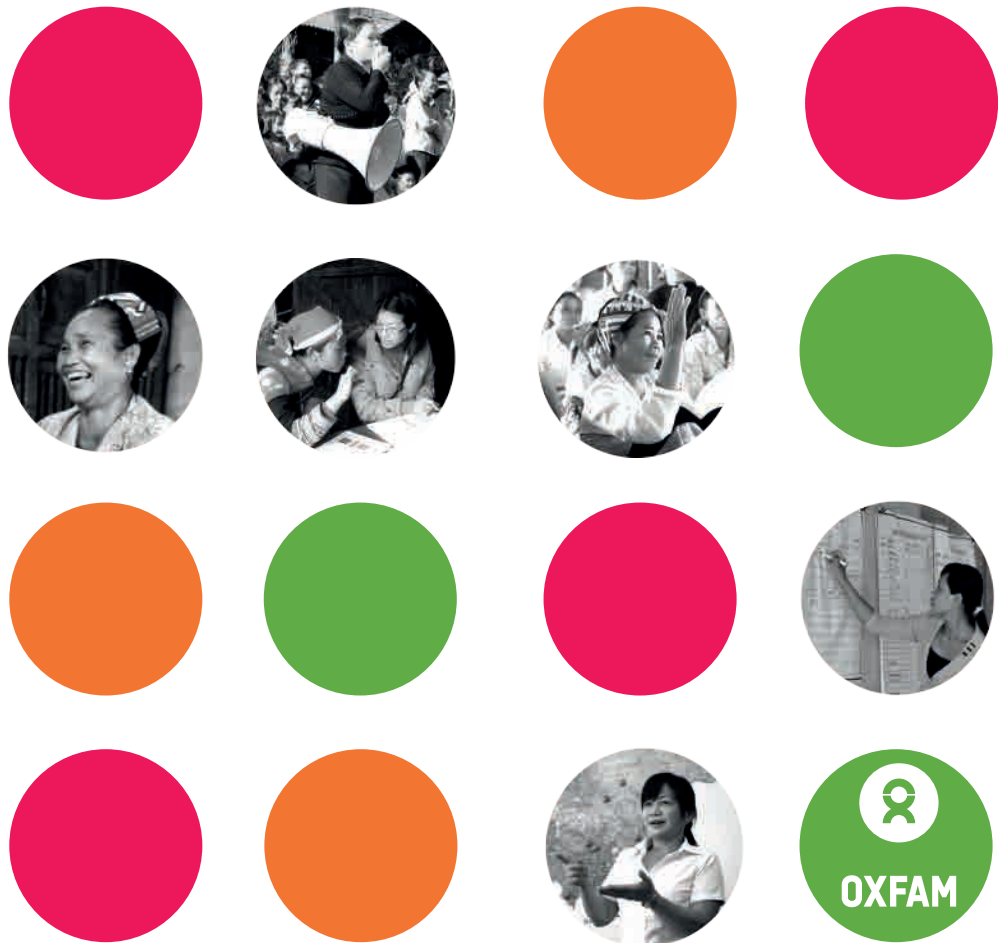


TRUST AND CHOICE OF THE PUBLIC



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN POLITICS



INTRODUCTION

Women play an important political role in ensuring equality and enhancing full representation of various groups to form policies and decisions that influence society as a whole. Beside the institutional regulations that encourage women to participate in politics, social awareness and people's election choices are also important to promote women's leadership.

In terms of institution, Vietnam has achieved remarkable progress during the recent years. The 2013 Constitution contained regulations on gender equality and non-discrimination in politics. The Law on Gender Equality and National Strategy on Gender Equality for the period from 2011 – 2020 were granted. The 2013 Constitution also regulated gender equality and non-discrimination in politics. In addition, the national mechanism on gender equality and women's progress is being completed. However, statistics on leadership at different levels show that the percentage of women leaders is much lower than the set objectives of Vietnam. For example, women members of the Communist Party in 3 tenures did not reach 9% at central level and 12% at provincial/city level, while the set objective was 15% for each level¹. For the National Assembly, the percentage of women members decreased from 27.3% (the 11th National Assembly) to 25.76% (the 12th National Assembly), and then to 24.4% (the 13th National Assembly)². The percentage of women members in People's Councils of three levels only increased about 2 – 3% in every tenure. This did not meet the target of 30% in each level³. The only improvement made was the percentage of women leaders at commune and district levels, while there was no change or even a decrease with that at provincial and central levels⁴.

WHY DO WOMEN LEADERS ACCOUNT FOR A LOW PERCENTAGE, DESPITE THE AVAILABLE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS?

This study will contribute to answering the above question, based on analysing the perceptions of various population groups about women leaders as well as the barriers that keep people from electing women leaders. This study is expected to provide information and premise for relevant interventions that could enhance women's leadership in politics.

SPECIFICALLY, THIS STUDY FOCUSED ON THE FOLLOWING:



¹Central Organizing Committee 2007, 2011 and Women's Union 2012

²Office of the National Assembly, 2011

³Ministry of Home Affairs, 2007, 2011

⁴UNDP, 2012

Global studies on women participating in politics indicate that a key barrier for women's leadership is the stereotyping of women's roles and capacity⁵.

Based on this finding, the study has been conducted with a combination of qualitative and quantitative tools to obtain a broad understanding about the public's perceptions toward women's leadership and analyse the gender-stereotypes from these perceptions. The study was implemented in three provinces of Thai Nguyen, Binh Dinh and Vinh Long that represent three regions of North, Central and South of Vietnam. The selected criteria on population structure, income, and education were close to the national overviews⁶. There were two main methods used in this study including questionnaire survey for 576 respondents who were randomly selected from various population groups. In addition, in-depth interviews and group discussion were conducted with 213 people who had different ethnicity, age, and occupation. This study was implemented in 2014 by Oxfam in cooperation with the Centre for Education Promotion and Empowerment of Women (CEPEW)⁷.

THEMES FOR DISCUSSION AND POLICY INTERVENTIONS

The below themes for discussion are based on the findings of the study project. They are put in a linear order and aim at answering specific questions as follows:

- 1. DOES THE PUBLIC TRUST WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP?**
- 2. WHAT IS THE BASIS OF THE PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION ABOUT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT IS THE REASON WHY THE PUBLIC TRUSTS/DOES NOT TRUST WOMEN'S LEADING CAPACITY?**
- 3. ARE THERE GENDER-STEREOTYPES IN THE PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION AND OPINIONS ABOUT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP? IF SO, WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES?**
- 4. WHO POSSESSES THE MOST OR IS THE MOST INFLUENCED BY GENDER-STEREOTYPES TOWARD SELECTION OF WOMEN LEADERS IN POLITICS?**
- 5. WHAT ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENCOURAGING CHANGE IN PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION AND BEHAVIOUR TOWARD WOMEN LEADERS IN POLITICS?**



⁵Linda L. Carli & Alice H. Eagly (2001): Gender, Hierarchy, and Leadership: An Introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 57, No. 4.

⁶There are both Kinh people and ethnic minority groups living in these provinces. According to the Vietnam Household Living Standard Survey of 2012, the average income per capital of Thai Nguyen province was 1,747,100 VND, while the percentage of literate people from 10 years old onward reached 92.4%. The same data for Vinh Long province were 1,743,000 VND and 90.8% respectively. The average income per capital at the national level in 2012 was 1,999,800 VND, while the percentage of literate people from 10 years old onward was 93.1%.

⁷There were 789 respondents from various groups of age, ethnicity, occupations and family status provided information through questionnaires, group discussion, and in-depth interviews. Among them, 25.5% were civil servants; 50.9% engaged in agriculture occupations; 23.4% were retired officers and those doing trades. Documents about theories and relevant studies on current status were collected and analysed.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY



1.

PEOPLE TRUST IN WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

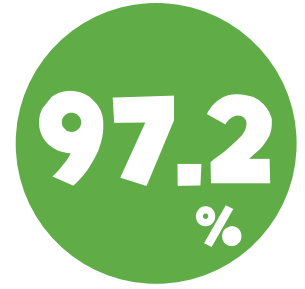
The Study showed that 97.2% of the interviewed women and 91.4% of the interviewed men (including 98.7% female civil servants and 95.6% male civil servants) trusted that women can be good leaders.

4.7% of Men and 1.9% of Women said they do not trust Women leaders. 3% of Men and 0.9% said they don't know.

WHY?



OF MEN IN THE STUDY TRUST WOMEN LEADERS



OF WOMEN IN THE STUDY TRUST WOMEN LEADERS

57.4%

Say women can manage work well

32.9%

Say women are responsible and enthusiastic

23.5%

Say women are close to people and can manage their staff

20%

Say women are good communicators

19.3%

Say women are less exposed to negative influences

These results represent the reasons why people trust in women's leadership.

More than a half of the respondents believe that female leaders could manage their work well. One third of the respondents shared that female leaders are responsible, enthusiastic and devoted to their work. For every four respondents, one trusted in women's leadership, as women are close to people and their staff. One fifth of the respondents highly appreciated the communication skills of female leaders. Similarly, about 20% of the respondents thought that female leaders are less exposed to negative influences and alcohol.

When comparing the leadership capacity between men and women, 61.5% of female civil servants and 48.5% of male civil servants, 51.4% of women and 50.8% of men, stated that women and men can be the same good leaders.



- * 20 - 30 age group
- * 31 - 50 age group
- * Above 50

PEOPLE OF YOUNGER AGE WERE LESS GENDER BIASED

There were people (30%), especially men (33.8% of male civil servants and 38.5% of men) who believed that men can be better leaders than women. A minority (14.9%) perceived that women can be better leaders than men.

In general, most of the respondents trusted in women's leadership. Moreover, people could also list the reasons why they trusted women leaders in politics.

DESPITE THE FACT THAT PEOPLE COULD QUICKLY REPLY THAT "MEN AND WOMEN CAN BE THE SAME GOOD LEADERS", THEY STILL ATTACHED "FEMININE" AND "MASCULINE" FACTORS WHEN COMPARING MALE AND FEMALE LEADERS.

When describing male leaders, people often stated the characteristics of decisiveness, strength, temper, and treating guests with alcohol. On the contrary, people often mentioned that women leaders are gentle, flexible, and adroit.

2. FEMALE LEADERS IN POLITICS ARE NOT VERY WELL-KNOWN. FOR THOSE THE PUBLIC KNOWS, IT WAS AGREED THAT WOMEN ARE CAPABLE LEADERS

There are a low percentage of female leaders at various levels. This explained why people faced difficulty when they were asked to name a female leader. The results of quantitative data showed that people could name famous female leaders at national level, e.g. Md. Nguyen Thi Binh, Md. Nguyen Thi Dinh, or those who are often seen in media like Md. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Md. Nguyen Thi Doan, or Md. Tong Thi Phong. However, people could not name any female leaders of their locality. Despite this, group discussion and in-depth interviews showed that local respondents or entities with female leaders highly appreciated the female leaders in regards to socio-economic development and contribution to new rural development. Female leaders are seen to be successful in mobilizing people's participation and ensuring quality of rural infrastructure projects.

"We recognized the capacity of female leaders. Out of 22 communes selected for piloting new rural development, there are only 2 reaching the criteria. These two communes are having female Party Secretary"

From an in-depth interview with a male leader at provincial level of Vinh Long province.

"Ms. Tam, the Party Secretary is more reputable than the village head. As people believe her, they stand more on her side"

From a group discussion with women in Cao Son commune.



"We want female leaders in order to improve the current situation of negativity, wasting and corruption"

From a men's group discussion in Co Lung commune.

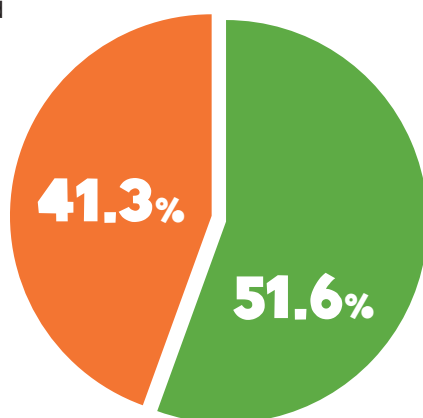
There were opinions that female leaders could bring positive changes to their entities and community, like financial savings, good management of expenses, transparency, good vision for human resources and attention to female cadres.

3. SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS AND CRITERIA ARE IMPOSED ON FEMALE LEADERS

PEOPLES EXPECTATIONS OF LEADERS

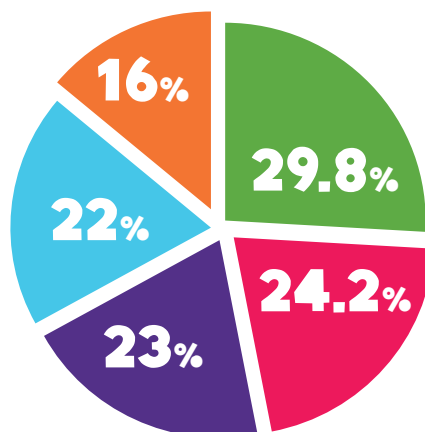
PRIMARY

- Technical capacity and work management skills
- Caring about people



SECONDARY

- Being close and understanding people's needs
- responsible for his or her work
- Listening to people's opinions
- Equal
- Not engaged in negative influences and corruption



From the analysis of qualitative data it could be seen that people's first expectation to a leader was his/her technical capacity and work management skills (51.6%), the next was caring about people (41.3%), followed by being close and understanding people's needs (29.8%). A leader was also expected to be responsible to his/her work (24.2%), listening to people's opinions (23%), equal (22%), and not engaged in negative influences and corruption (16%).

The above analysis showed that the public possess the same expectations for capacity and qualification of leaders, whether they are male or female. The expectations included technical capacity, responsibilities, equality, and transparency. It could easily lead to a sense of "no gender bias", based on the above data of people's criteria. However, in-depth analysis of the qualitative data indicated differently.

TOGETHER WITH THE CRITERIA OF GOOD TECHNICAL CAPACITY, MORALITY, POLITICAL BRAVERY, HIGH SKILLS FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND WORK MANAGEMENT THAT A FEMALE LEADER SHOULD "EXCEL AT WORK" LIKE ANY MALE LEADER⁸, A FEMALE LEADER IS ALSO EXPECTED "TO BE PERFECT AT HOME" AND TO HAVE FEMININE CHARACTERISTICS.

The analysis of in-depth interviews and group discussions showed that dual criteria were put on women leaders. The technical qualifications were placed on a secondary level. The public perceived that on top of everything, a female leader should fulfil traditional criteria for women. This included the four virtues⁹, ability to take care of housework, caring for children and husband.

⁸People perceived that in addition to the technical qualifications, a leader in politics must be creative and strategic, learning and looking for progress even from staff and the public. In terms of morality, a leader must be sincere, honest, placing people's interest on top of everything, decisive and accountable, and uncorrupted. With regards to political qualifications, leaders must possess solid ideas and be loyal with policies of the State and Central Party. In terms of building relationship, they must obtain reputation to their upper leaders as well as local people. They are required to be open and friendly, persuasive, able to cohere community, listen to people's concerns and meet people's needs. For work management, they must be devoted and able to handle their work in a scientific and flexible manner that is appropriate to specific groups instead of giving administrative orders.

⁹Translator: Confucianism's definition of four virtues for women including home-making skills, appearance, speech manners, and good behaviours.

“Of course I am fine with my wife’s success. However, I requested that housework must be completed. Even though I am willing to help, I am still conservative and thinking that housework is the main job of women...”

In-depth interview with a male leader at provincial level of Thai Nguyen province.

“If my wife is a leader, I would lose some hours a day for having a good time with friends. She will not have much time for family, and this would affect me”

From a men’s group discussion in My Hoa commune.

“General speaking, it (leadership) is for the public. For family, a woman must fulfill the four virtues of homemaking skills, appearance, speech manners, and good behaviors. Women must excel at work and be perfect at home”

From a men’s group discussion in Quoi Thien commune.

Differences between the quantitative and qualitative analysis indicate that the public are aware of the advantages of women leaders, as long as those women are not their family members in order to maximize the traditional role of wives and mothers.

GENDER STEREOTYPES DO NOT ONLY AFFECT WOMEN’S “EXPOSURE” TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, BUT ALSO ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN IN THEIR LEADERSHIP ROLE.

In addition, gender stereotypes mean that women were not assessed by their job performance. More importantly, it affected women’s “exposure” to high ranking leadership positions and their participation in the process of decision making.

For those women who are already in a leader position, gender-based criteria are also used to judge them. These include appearance, clothing styles, together with professional criteria and their role in family. According to the group discussion and in-depth interviews, leaders and civil servants (both male and female) perceived that a women leader must possess good looking appearance in order to attract others for effective communication.

“You can meet with our female leader. She is good looking and dresses up nicely” - From an in-depth interview with leader of Son Cam commune.

“Only those who are not good looking used their capacity to develop, while other women could use money or relationship” - From a group discussion with female provincial cadres in Thai Nguyen province.

The qualitative analysis showed that criteria regarding appearance are widely applied to women leaders. This is evident even among the leaders themselves (regardless of men or women). It was observed that comments on appearance, skin, and clothes were made during group discussions and interviews. This has led to gender-biased criteria as well as negative influence on the confidence of women leaders.

“Do you think I am not beautiful? My boss requested that I have to wear make-up and dress up upon delegation visits. I made strong efforts in execution of my work. I am the one who have the most interactions with localities”

In-depth interview with a female leader in Vung Liem district.

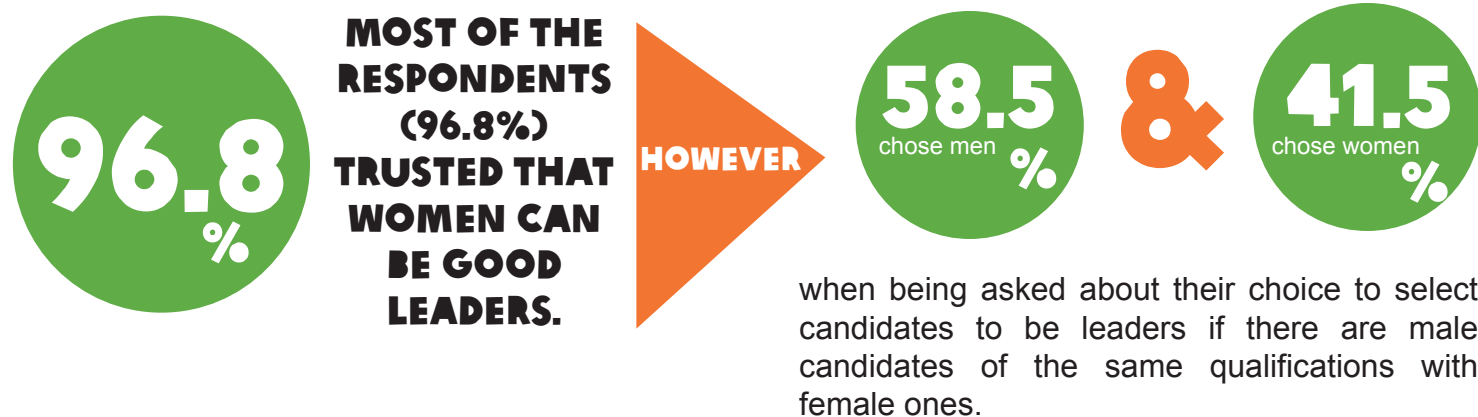


“What do you think about me? I was doing small business in the market before taking this job. I often dress like this in normal circumstances”

In-depth interview with a female village leader in Thanh Binh commune.

4. GENDER STEREOTYPES TOWARD FEMALE LEADERS NEGATIVELY AFFECTED PEOPLE'S CHOICE

One of the study's objectives was to find out how gender stereotypes in people's perception about women political leaders affected their behaviour, choice and support for female candidates or female leaders.



This showed a big gap between people's trust and behaviour in choosing female candidates to be leaders, because of gender stereotypes. The results of qualitative analysis also indicated similarly.

The public perceived that it is more burdensome for women to be leaders, because their key role is to take care of the family. This creates barriers for women to fulfil their secondary role of being political leaders.

“WE DO NOT VOTE FOR WOMEN BECAUSE THEY ARE BUSY WITH FAMILY AND CHILDREN, AND HAVE NO TIME FOR WORK. IT IS MUCH HARDER FOR WOMEN TO BE LEADERS, BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO FULFILL BOTH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AND PUBLIC TASKS”.

From a group discussion with women in My Hoa commune



5. GENDER STEREOTYPES HIGHLY AFFECTED THE SELECTION OF WOMEN LEADERS AMONG CADRES, CIVIL SERVANTS, AND PEOPLE

According to the quantitative analysis, educational level, age, and occupation were the three factors that highly influenced people's choice of female leaders. It should be noted that all of these three factors did not affect people's trust in women's leadership.

It could be seen from the regression analysis that educational level¹⁰ and age¹¹ have a positive relationship with the ability to select a male candidate and a negative relationship with that to select a female candidate.

This means that the older age and the higher educational level people possess, the lower the possibility is that they will select female candidates.

Based on the qualitative analysis, the lowest percentage for choosing female candidates to be leaders was found with civil servant groups (both men and women). Of the civil servants interviewed, 66% shared that they would choose male candidates. It was 55% for those engaged in other occupations¹². The groups of civil servants are the one with the highest educational level, i.e. 80% of them graduated universities or higher levels.

We often thought gender stereotypes were formed by low education and awareness levels, or formed by those groups of people with less exposure to policies of the State and Central Party.

HOWEVER, FINDINGS FROM THIS STUDY HAVE SHOWN THAT GENDER STEREOTYPES TOWARD FEMALE LEADERS EXIST AND SEEM TO BE MOST PREVALENT WITHIN THE CIVIL SERVANT GROUPS WHO ARE CONSIDERED PROGRESSIVE.

As civil servants participate most in the process of leader nomination and decision-making, they could make certain influences to women leaders. The CEPEW and ActionAid study on women's participation in politics also showed that a higher percentage of women leaders are found if the leaders have strong commitment, progressive awareness and viewpoints. On the contrary, the percentage of women leaders does not increase, or even decrease¹³ if leaders and cadres are lacking in gender awareness in personnel work.

¹⁰($\beta = .19, p < .001$)

¹¹($\beta = .11, p < .05$)

¹² $\chi^2(1, N = 483) = 4.72, p < .05$

¹³CEPEW, ActionAid, Study on women's political participation in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh city, Quang Ninh, Dak Lak, and Tra Vinh, 2012.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CHANGE OF PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE AND TRUST IN WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH ELIMINATION OF GENDER STEREOTYPES



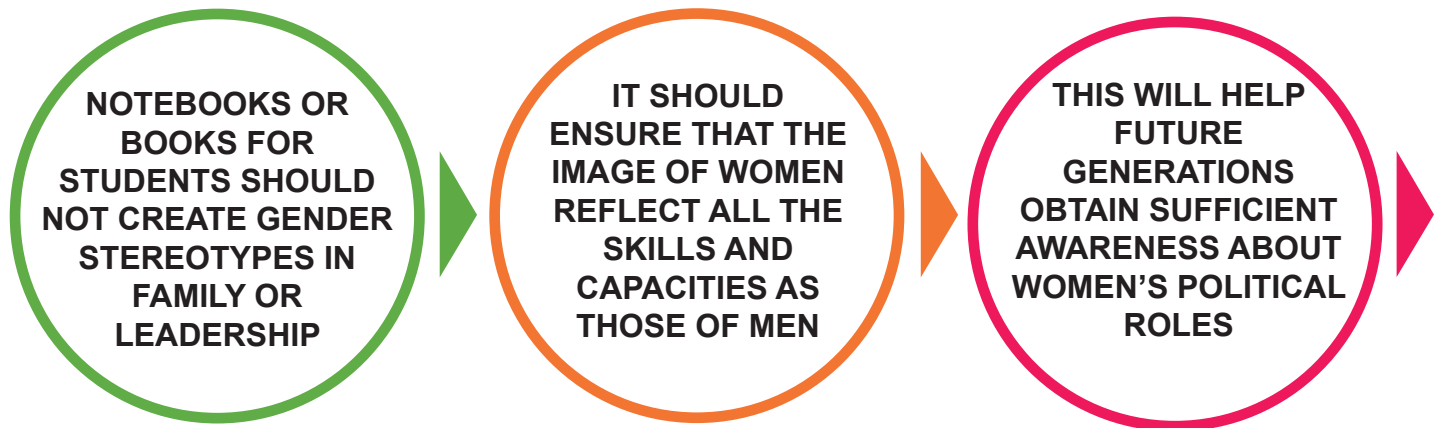
Attributed to its large coverage¹⁴, mass media (TV, newspapers, bulletins, radio, etc.) can change gender stereotypes through creating images of women leaders. Images of women in mass media should not be linked to their gender roles like family responsibilities, or traditional criteria applied to women. Especially, it should stress the importance of fulfilling public tasks for the capable women rather than consider it their secondary role. It can be seen from global studies that through mass media, gender needs to be included not only in bulletins or reportage, but also in entertainment or commercial advertisements in order to strengthen gender family and social roles¹⁵.

THE COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENTS CAN BE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE LEADING TO GREATER IMPACT AS THEY ARE BROADCASTED WITH HIGH FREQUENCY¹⁶ .

Capacity building with gender emphasis should be provided to journalists and those working in mass media through training, workshops, or documents about female leaders. This activity is to ensure that media messages can positively affect people's attitude and trust towards female leaders throughout the country.

Women's political leadership should be integrated in communication activities throughout all steps of election for members of the National Assembly and People's Council - at various levels (the steps included candidate introduction, consultation, interaction with people). This could be considered a special temporary solution or a solution¹⁷ for gender equality promotion¹⁸ that did not violate the rule of equality in the election process.

1.2. TO CHANGE GENDER AWARENESS IN EDUCATION ENVIRONMENTS



THIS COULD ALSO SPREAD POSITIVE IMPACTS OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH STUDENTS

1.3. TO STRENGTHEN INTRODUCTION OF WOMEN'S CAPACITY, FOCUSING ON THE OUTSTANDING EXAMPLES OF WOMEN LEADERS

It can help change the public's perception through direct communications with women political leaders.

This could be an effective way of introducing women leaders who are capable and close to community. In addition to increasing the number of women leaders at local level, large communication campaigns are also needed to explore and promote women leaders at various levels.

To mobilize capable women to take leader positions by enabling them to recognize the benefits of that to the society, their family and themselves.



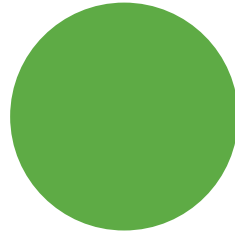
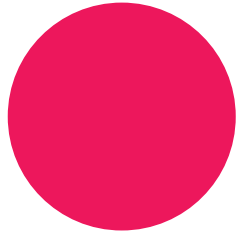
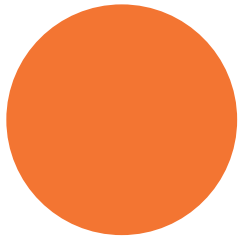
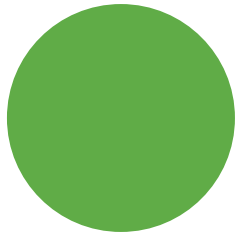
¹⁴Alexander, D., & Andersen, K. (1993). Gender as a Factor in the Attribution of Leadership Traits. *Political Research Quarterly*, 46(3), 527-54

¹⁵Gauntlett, D. (2008). *Media, gender and identity: An introduction*. Routledge.

¹⁶Lafky, S., Duffy, M., Steinmaus, M., & Berkowitz, D. (1996). Looking through gendered lenses: Female stereotyping in advertisements and gender role expectations. *Journalism & Mass communication quarterly*, 73(2), 379-388.

¹⁷Article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) regulated that member countries are to implement special temporary solutions to quickly enhance equality between men and women.

¹⁸Regulated in Article 6 of the 2006 Law on Gender equality.



2. BEHAVIOUR CHANGE IN SELECTION OF WOMEN FOR LEADER POSITIONS

- 2.1. To institutionalize gender targets that have been regulated in the Resolution No. 11-NQ/TW dated April 27, 2007 and the national strategy on gender equality for the period from 2011 – 2020¹⁹ in the amended election law for members of National Assembly and People's Councils. Accordingly, the percentage of every gender in the candidate nomination list is not less than 45%. This will ensure that the election of every gender would not be below 35%. It should ensure harmonization of education levels and work positions among candidates in the same election unit.

- 2.2. To focus on attitude and behavioural change communication in entities and organizations, targeting those who are relevant to women political leadership. To work out specific policies for encouraging cadres and civil servants to change their attitude and behaviour in selection of women for leader positions.
- 2.3. To work out mechanisms to those entities, organizations, and top leaders who did not implement gender targets in their human resource work as stated in the Resolution 11 and the National strategy on gender equality. To solve the matter of gender discrimination in cadre assignment and candidate nomination.

Those entities and organizations that did not reach the set gender targets will not be considered solid Party Cells and will not be recognized for successful completion of tasks.



¹⁹Resolution 11 and the National Strategy on gender equality stated that female members of the National Assembly and People's Council at different levels should reach 35-40% by 2020.

2.4. TO IMPLEMENT REGULATIONS OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU ON ENSURING THE PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING PROGRAMMES CARRIED OUT AT POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTES/CENTRES OF DIFFERENT LEVELS²⁰

THESE ARE PLACES FOR TRAINING FEMALE LEADERS AND POTENTIAL WOMEN

- 2.5. To implement programmes and solutions on leadership capacity building for potential women. To build women's confidence on their professional capacity rather than appearance and family.
- 2.6. To remove barriers and review competition programmes for women at local and national levels that contain gender stereotypes and impose criteria on women. The study indicated that there are such programmes at both local and national levels, as well as within sectors. Below are two specific examples of such programmes.

The movement of women “to excel at work and be perfect at home”

was initiated by Vietnam General Confederation of Labour for female workers, labourers and civil servants²¹ and the

Propaganda project on “Four moral qualities of Self-confidence; Self-respect; Faithfulness; and Resourcefulness”²²

implemented by the Vietnam Women's Union in 2010 to all the Union members throughout the country. These movements have contributed to the “dual role” of women. The propaganda carried out by Vietnam Women's Union and Vietnam General Confederation of Labour has extended the “Resourcefulness” quality of women as fulfilling both public tasks and housework²³.

The campaign: “Building the family of 5 Without-s and 3 Clean-s”²⁴

promoted by the Vietnam Women's Union throughout the country in 2010²⁵ to complete 19 criteria of new rural development is another example that imposes criteria on women.

As these campaigns and movements were implemented by the entities for protection of women's rights and benefits, they could create new criteria for women by stressing their role in the family. A woman shared during her interview as follows:

"NONE OF US COULD MEET ALL THE CRITERIA (EXCEL AT WORK AND BE PERFECT AT HOME). MAYBE ONLY THOSE WOMEN WHO HAVE GOT DOCTORAL LEVEL COULD DO"

From a group discussion with female leaders of Thanh Binh commune.



²⁰The Resolution 11 and the National strategy on gender equality have set targets that by 2020 female members of Party Cells at different level should be at least 25%; entities and organizations must have at least 30% of female cadres and there must be women for key leader positions.

²¹The movement initiated by the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour in 1989 for female workers, labours, and civil servants.

²²Propaganda project on moral qualities and qualifications of Vietnamese women during the industrialization and modernization period from 2010 – 2015. This project was approved in promulgation with Decision No. 343/QĐ-TTg dated 12 March 2010 by the Prime Minister.

²³According to the final report on 20 years of implementation of the above mentioned movement by the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour, many good and innovative activities have been carried out. For example, the movement of three good by Transport and Communications sector; the movement of aviation women: Knowledgeable, Polite, and Resourcefulness". In addition, these movements often cooperated with other competitions, e.g. "Building cultural families", "Mother works well and children study well", "Representative family of Vietnam".

²⁴ Without-s included without poverty, law violation and social evils, domestic violence, giving birth to the third child or more, having malnourished and school drop-out children. 3 clean-s mean clean house, clean kitchen and clean surrounding lanes.

²⁵The campaign aimed at implementation of 19 criteria for new rural development, based on the Decision No. 800/QĐ-TTg dated June 4th, 2010 by the Prime Minister to approve the national targeting programme on building new rural areas for the period of 2010 – 2020.



**" IN VIETNAM,
IN THE UNITED STATES
OR IN ANYWHERE
AROUND THE WORLD,
WOMEN HAVE BEEN
EMPOWERED TO
FULLY PARTICIPATE
IN ALMOST ALL SECTORS OF THE
ECONOMY – SOCIETY,
BUT STILL FACE MANY CHALLENGES
OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE.**

**WOMEN SHOULD
ESCAPE THE OBSESSION
TO ACCOMPLISH
IRRATIONAL
PERFECTION
STEREOTYPED BY SOCIETY.
INSTEAD, WOMEN SHOULD STRIVE
TO REACH THEIR
FULL POTENTIAL
AND SUSTAINABLE
CONTENTMENT."**

Madam Ton Nu Thi Ninh, Former Ambassador of Viet Nam to the EU, Luxembourg and Belgium; Former Vice – chair, Foreign Affairs Committee, Vietnam's National Assembly, Central Committee of Viet Nam Women's Union.



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