

THE CHALLENGES OF THE FEMALE EXECUTIVE CAREER**OS DESAFIOS DA CARREIRA EXECUTIVA FEMININA****LOS RETOS DE LA CARRERA EJECUTIVA FEMENINA**Lia D'Alessandro Pazin¹
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ABSTRACT

This work has aimed to assimilate the obstacles faced by women to achieve success in their professional careers. To achieve this aim, at first, a literature review was carried out with the themes of women working in medium and large companies, female leadership, gender inequality, the division between personal and professional life, and double working hours, enabling the bases of theoretical frameworks for research. Then, the empirical data were gathered from qualitative research through interviews with a semi-structured script. Based on these data, a content analysis was carried out based on the theoretical review and the results of the interviews, and, subsequently, an interpretative assessment based on the reports of the interviewees. Through this analysis, traits that interfere with and assist the female executive career were observed. Behavioral factors linked to organizational guidelines (e.g., machismo) were identified, and that there is still an apparent arduous path for women to reach higher positions in organizations. Another issue encountered is the issue of double working day.

Keywords: Executive Career. Women. Female Leadership.

RESUMO

Este trabalho teve como objetivo assimilar os obstáculos enfrentados pelas mulheres para alcançarem sucesso em suas carreiras profissionais. Para atingir tal intuito, em um primeiro momento, foi realizada uma revisão da literatura com os temas de mulheres atuantes em médias e grandes empresas, liderança feminina, desigualdade de gênero, divisão entre vida pessoal e profissional e dupla jornada de trabalho, possibilitando as bases teóricas para a pesquisa. Os dados empíricos foram reunidos a partir de uma pesquisa qualitativa por meio de entrevistas com roteiro semiestruturado. Com base nesses dados, foi realizada uma análise de conteúdo, tomando por base a revisão teórica e os resultados das entrevistas, e, seguidamente, uma avaliação interpretativa com base nos relatos das entrevistadas. Através dessa análise, foram observados traços que interferem e/ou auxiliam a carreira executiva feminina. Identificou-se fatores comportamentais vinculadas a diretrizes organizacionais (p.ex.: machismo) e que há ainda um aparente caminho árduo para a mulher alcançar cargos mais altos nas organizações. Outra questão encontrada é a questão da dupla jornada de trabalho.

Palavras-chave: Carreira Executiva. Mulheres. Liderança da Mulher.

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RESUMEN

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo asimilar los obstáculos a los que se enfrentan las mujeres para alcanzar el éxito en sus carreras profesionales. Para lograr este objetivo, en un primer momento se realizó una revisión de la literatura con los temas de mujeres que trabajan en medianas y grandes empresas, liderazgo femenino, desigualdad de género, división entre vida personal y profesional y doble jornada laboral, posibilitando las bases marcos teóricos para la investigación. Los datos empíricos se obtuvieron a partir de una investigación cualitativa a través de entrevistas con un guión semiestructurado. A partir de estos datos se realizó un análisis de contenido, a partir de la revisión teórica y los resultados de las entrevistas, y, posteriormente, una valoración interpretativa a partir de los relatos de los entrevistados. A través de este análisis, se observaron rasgos que interfieren y / o favorecen la carrera ejecutiva femenina. Se identificaron factores de comportamiento vinculados a lineamientos organizacionales (p. ej., machismo), y que aún existe un aparente arduo camino para que las mujeres alcancen posiciones más altas en las organizaciones. Otro problema encontrado es el tema de la doble jornada laboral.

Palabras clave: Carrera Ejecutiva. Mujeres. Liderazgo Femenino.

1 INTRODUCTION

On August 18, 1920, the reconnaissance of the 19th. Amendment to the US Constitution by the State of Tennessee marked the achievement of women's suffrage in the US. Only in 2020, in the US, that Kamala Harris, California senator, was the first woman elected as Vice President. Between one event and another we have an exact period of 100 years. Similarly, the role of women in large companies is conquered in short steps. Historically excluded, women suffer from gender bias and lack of credibility to lead large groups, projects or solve major organizational problems.

It is indisputably clear to everyone that the big positions in companies are, for the most part, held by men. Women are distant from positions such as CEO (Chief Executive Officer), CFO (Chief Financial Officer), COO (Chief Operations Officer), presence on Boards of Directors and management positions. According to the Brazilian Institute of Corporate Governance, in Brazil, between 2010 and 2012, only 7.2% of management members were female. In the same survey, the percentage of women in key executive positions did not reach 4% and 73.3% of the companies surveyed did not have women occupying executive positions.

Major and concrete careers for women is not something that has been seen for a long time: this achievement is still growing and strengthening since 1960, when the feminist movement resurfaced and had as its main struggle the end of discrimination and the right to equality (legal , political and economic) between the two sexes.

In the 1960s, the “second feminist wave” emerged in the United States and spread to other industrialized countries, until, in 1968, it was considered a political movement. Among the various claims, the movement fought for the salary range between the two sexes to be equivalent. At that time, the movement considered that cultural and political problems stemmed from gender inequality and therefore had to fight against sexist structures of power.

The ILO (International Labor Organization, 2016) measured the gender discrepancies in the contribution to the workforce in ten years and concluded that job opportunities for women were from 27 (in 1995) to 25.5 (in 2015) points below of opportunities for men. Furthermore, the overall female activity rate ranged from 52.4% to 49.6% while the male rate ranged from

79.9% to 76.6% during these years. According to the IBGE, in a survey carried out in 2018, women continue to receive about 75% of what men receive.

Women have been overcoming barriers imposed by the sexist society. With clear goals, ambition and a high level of education, the female gender has been assuming value, as concluded by a survey by PwC together with the Optimum Research Institute: women are less and less insecure about their careers. In Brazil and India, the confidence index is 76% and in Portugal 68%.

The General Objective of this research is to analyze the obstacles faced by women in the executive career. The specific objectives are: a) To analyze sociocultural, political and corporate factors that lead to the occurrence of gender inequality in companies. b) To present the daily life of women in relation to the double shift of work, c) To identify other types of prejudice due to the occupation of high positions in different business segments.

Thus, the central question that supports this research is: Considering the issue of gender, in organizations, what are the difficulties faced by women to rise in the corporate market?

Although this research is qualitative, it proposes to go into the field armed with theory and hypothesis, open, to question it. Thus, the central hypothesis is: There are obstacles and prejudices for the rise of women in the labor market.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

There are several works on the impact of women in leadership positions. Carter et al. (2010) in their research did not find a significant relationship between gender or ethnic diversity on boards of directors, or important committees, and financial performance for a sample of large US corporations. Our evidence also suggests that board gender and ethnic minority diversity and company financial performance appear to have endogenous causes. Works such as that by Nielsen and Huse (2010) specifically address women on company boards. We can observe initial steps towards the rise to participation in Boards of Directors (IBGC, 2016).

Ryan and Haslam (2005) show us that there has been a lot of research and conjecture about the barriers women face when trying to climb the corporate ladder, with evidence suggesting that they often face a "glass ceiling" while men are more likely to benefit from a "glass escalator". The authors worked with the following questions: But what happens when women achieve leadership roles? And what kind of positions are they given? The article argues that although women are only now rising to higher positions, they are more likely than men to find themselves on a "glass cliff" such that their positions are risky or precarious. . This hypothesis was investigated in a study that analyzed the performance of FTSE 100 companies before and after the appointment of a male or female board member.

The study found that during a period of general stock market decline, companies that appointed women to their boards were more likely to have experienced consistently poor performance over the last five months than those that appointed men. These results expose an additional, largely invisible, hurdle that women must overcome in the workplace.

Dezso and Ross (2012) argue that female representation in top management brings informational and social diversity benefits to the top management team, enriching the behaviors displayed by managers across the company and motivating women in middle management. The

result should be better performance of the managerial task and, therefore, better performance of the firm. The research used 15 years of panel data on the top management teams of companies in Standard & Poor's S&P 1500 (or S&P Composite 1500 index). Research has revealed that female representation in senior management improves firm performance, but only to the extent that a firm's strategy is focused on innovation, in which context the informational and social benefits of gender diversity and behaviors associated with women in management are likely to be especially important for the performance of managerial tasks.

To analyze the role of socially constructed gender stereotypes in entrepreneurship and their influence on the entrepreneurial intentions of men and women Gupta et al. (2009) collected data on characteristics of men, women and young entrepreneurs in three countries. As a hypothesis, entrepreneurs were perceived as having predominantly male characteristics. Additional survey results revealed that, although men and women perceived entrepreneurs as having similar characteristics to men (masculine gender-role stereotype), only women also perceived entrepreneurs and women as having similar characteristics (masculine gender-role stereotype). feminine gender – feminine gender-role stereotype).

Yet the research by Gupta et al. (2009) point out that although men and women do not differ in their entrepreneurial intentions, those who saw themselves as more similar to men had higher entrepreneurial intentions than those who saw themselves as less similar to men. Such a difference was not found for people who saw themselves as more or less similar to women (female gender identification). The results were consistent across the three countries.

Post and Byron (2015) in a meta-analysis of the literature show us that although a large body of business literature examines the relationship between women on boards of directors and the financial performance of the firm, the evidence is mixed. To reconcile the conflicting results, the authors statistically combined the results of 140 studies and examined these results which vary according to the legal/regulatory and socio-cultural contexts of the companies. They found that female board representation is positively related to accounting returns, and that this relationship is more positive in countries with stronger shareholder protections—perhaps because shareholder protections motivate boards to use the different knowledge, experiences, and values they hold. each member brings.

The authors also found that although the relationship between female board representation and market performance is close to zero, the relationship is positive in countries with higher gender parity (and negative in countries with low gender parity)-perhaps because social gender differences in human capital may influence investors' assessments of the future earning potential of companies that have more women at the top of their companies.

Ruderman et al. (2002) examined the relationships between multiple life roles, psychological well-being, and managerial skills in two studies of female executives. Qualitative results suggested that the roles women play in their personal lives provide psychological benefits, emotional counseling, multitasking practice, opportunities to enrich interpersonal skills, and leadership practice that increase effectiveness in the management role. Quantitative results also indicated that multiple role impairment is positively related to life satisfaction, self-esteem and self-acceptance. Commitment to multiple roles was also related to interpersonal and task-related managerial skills.

There are more specific works such as women business owners (GUNDRY, WELSCH, 2001), conflicts in family businesses between men and women (KINNUNEN, MAUNO, 1998) or generational differences in psychological traits and their impacts in the workplace (TWENGE, CAMPBELL , 2008). The challenges and conflicts of women in the search for career advancement are studied by researchers in Brazil, such as the work by Reis et al. (2018).

2.1 Female Leadership

The business literature presents works on female leadership such as the works of Eagly (2005) and her later work on the “maze” faced by women towards leadership (EAGLY, CARLI, 2007). The difficulty found by women to lead is a reality: there is constant questioning, testing and prejudice. For a woman, managing men, especially older ones, can be a challenge, it is not common and people are still not used to this type of relationship (VIANNA, HRYNIEWICZ, 2018). Given this, the woman sees leadership as a greater challenge than it should be, often acquiring discomfort and insecurities. For Lima (2009), the difficulty of women's progression to executive positions occurs because they do not present a leadership style corresponding to an environment predominantly dominated by “values considered masculine”.

The definition of the stereotype of male behavior traces characteristics such as aggressiveness, strategic decision, rationality, critical analysis, while the female presents characteristics such as kindness, affection, delicacy, attention and interpersonal relationships (NASCIMENTO, 2015). This stereotype issue is addressed in works such as Powell, Butterfield and Parent (2002) and Rudman and Phelan (2008). With the implanted male leader culture, it is confused that a leader should always act tough, making the actions of a female leader imprecise. According to Monteiro (2015), women adopt behaviors considered masculine of aggressiveness and independence in order to be respected.

The female leader or the one who aspires to high positions in an organization finds herself molding and “dressing up” to meet male standards of leadership, as a rule of being a competent representative. According to Monteiro (2015), this situation ends up inhibiting women's interest in leadership positions for fear of being labeled as masculine.

Executive women need to prove their competence all the time because they face a lot of resistance from prejudice in the field they work in: predominantly male (ANTUNES, NETO, LIMA-SOUZA, SANTOS, 2018). The path of a female career must add the obligation to show every day how women are as competent as the opposite gender. As a result, the sexual division of labor continues to strengthen.

2.2 Gender inequality

Gender inequality is still real and encompasses the entire range of social relations, including organizations. Although there are no more legal obstacles to women's access, the scenario of male domination still codifies the values of all societies (LIMA, 2009). Implemented decades ago, the professional inequality of the sexes comes from the moment when women could have the same work as men and, even so, their trade was less recognized and overloaded and their salary was lower.

One of the first steps for women to gain their professional space took place during the Second World War, when female labor was needed in industries and factories, after all, men were on the battlefield. At that moment, the woman became the economic breadwinner of the family. Many men died in combat or returned mutilated, physically and psychologically, so it was up to the woman to continue to assume this new role as breadwinner of the family (NASCIMENTO, 2015).

Men's work is regarded as fundamental, it is considered as the “owner” of work, while women's work is considered complementary, seen as “participation” (MONTEIRO, 2015). Despite being equally competent, the women must still make triple efforts to be seen with the

same respect and admiration by colleagues and company subordinates. Paradoxically, highlights Lima (2009), inequalities in pay between men and women also increase as the level of education of women becomes higher, instead of decreasing. The high educational level that women achieved is not directly related to the positions they occupy in the labor market (MONTEIRO, 2015).

2.3 Double work shift

Historically, the division of society is associated with men as the main economic provider of the family and women as in charge of the home, husband and children. Nowadays, the woman, in charge of the home and economic provider, has one more challenge: the double shift. According to Nascimento (2015), even though the participation rate of women in the labor market has increased, there is no increase in the participation of men in domestic help and care in the same proportion.

According to Monteiro (2015), the literature on dual-career couples (where both partners have a career to manage) seems to indicate that it is women who give up more of their interests and personal goals than men, so that marital relationship works and for the education of children to happen. Viana and Hryniewicz (2018) state that, in an interview with a group of women, in the husband's unconscious, housework is still her responsibility, even if she has responsibilities outside the home. In this way, she has a double – and often even triple – journey that men simply do not notice, whether due to lack of attention or convenience.

Despite this, in the second half of the 20th century, the emergence of the contraceptive pill gave women the power of choice regarding motherhood. The fertility rate drops significantly (IBGE, 2015), going from 6.26% in 1960 to 1.74% in 2014. The reduction in the number of children is an important factor to make it easier for women to enter the labor market. According to Monteiro (2015), the drop in the fertility rate and the increase in the level of education of the female population have accompanied the evolution of women in the market and the evolution of their income.

In an interview with a group of women, Lima (2009) concludes that advancing in the organizational hierarchy requires, for these women, sacrifices of a personal nature, a considerable part of the interviewed managers attribute to work the postponement of motherhood and the difficulty of establishing a loving relationship with a partner, because they are not willing to accept the unavailability that an executive career requires.

3. METHOD

The method begins with its justification.

3.1 Justification of the Method

In order to carry out this work, it was necessary to use the qualitative method, since the main objective is to observe, analyze and interpret collected data. Still, this type of research is

concerned with transmitting reality and delving into the universe of meanings of human actions and relationships that cannot be quantified (MINAYO, 2001).

With an interpretative approach, qualitative research is concerned with the process beyond the results. In this work, this process will be the study of women reaching high positions in organizations and the verification of the entire process in which this fact occurs, thus describing and evaluating the situations encountered. According to Bauer, Gaskell and Allum (2002), social events must be covered by different methods and data. However, it is important to point out that when we make use of methodological plurality, we must take into account the world views, knowledge production of each approach and person.

Gil (1994) classifies the research, regarding the objective, into three basic categories: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. Descriptive research describes a given population or phenomenon. Exploratory research comprises a little-studied phenomenon or specific aspects of a theory. Explanatory research, on the other hand, identifies the determining factors that contribute to the occurrence of such a phenomenon, explaining them.

The research in this work is considered descriptive because it has well-defined objectives and complete understanding of the studied phenomenon.

3.1.1 Content Analysis

The use of a qualitative method is widely used in social research applied to organizations (CÂMARA, 2013), and this research will present the Content Analysis data treatment technique, proposed by Bardin (2004). In this type of analysis, the researcher aims to understand characteristics that are behind the messages under consideration, that is, the statements of the interviewees.

Content analysis is divided into three phases: pre-analysis, material exploration and treatment of results.

The pro-analysis phase can be considered a phase of organization, goal setting and material preparation (such as the fully transcribed interview). In the second phase, of exploring the material, we will follow the coding stage (cutting out the record and context units), enumeration (through presence, intensity, direction, among others) and categorization (following the criteria of semantic, syntactic, lexicon or expressive). The third and final phase, treatment of results, will be done through controlled interpretation, analyzing the message and the channel on one side, sender and receiver on the other.

The final interpretations work in such a way that, analyzing the content of the interviews, what is hidden between the lines must be sought, that is, translating in depth some superficial information.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection for this work was done through interviews, an appropriate way to better obtain in-depth information, explanations and experiences. Thus, this choice required perceptions of women in senior positions in companies and women who aspire to reach them.

The approach is non-probabilistic, a convenience sample, accessible to researchers, and made up of four women, all with higher education, aged between 32 and 60 years old, occupying medium or managerial positions, whether or not they are married. The investigated group underwent a semi-structured and scripted interview, between August 23 and 31, 2020, which

allowed a free composition and fluidity of responses. With this, a more comprehensive and detailed interview was initiated. All interviews were transcribed for further analysis.

3.3 Survey questionnaire

The information contained in this work was obtained through open and free interviews and, through an interpretative bias, data analysis was carried out. In view of the interview responses, factors associated with the interviewee's professional success (happiness and achievement, for example), obstacles in the job market and how this impacts on their personal lives were identified.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts, containing the identification of aspects of the interviewee's profile (schooling, marital status, children) and, in the second part, raised professional questions.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Through the answers of the interviewees, it was possible to identify five categories that help the discussion and understanding about how women are incorporated in a medium or large company, or not, from the processes of recruitment and selection of people to the day-to-day business and the duo journey. The aforementioned categories are: (4.1) Studies and academic training; (4.2) Marital status and children together with professional life; (4.3) The division between business and home; (4.4) Day to day business; (4.5) Women in leadership. Chart 1 presents the interviewees and their appropriate characteristics to start the study.

Table 1 – Features of the interviewees

Interviewee	Age	Level/position	Company/Segment
I1	60	Manager	Bank / Bookkeeping
I2	32	Coordinator	Bank/Investments
I3	54	Managing Partner	Medium Size Company/Weaponry
I4	50	Manager	Large Company/Dairy Products

Source: Research data

4.1 Studies and academic training

In surveys carried out by IBGE and the Catho group with managers and executives, Brazilian women have the same level of qualification in relation to men, both in educational purposes (24% graduated from universities, 40% have an MBA, 28% have a Master's and 8% have a Doctorate), and in foreign languages. According to Monteiro (2015), there is a greater investment in education by women, this is explained: for their wages to be compatible with the wages of men and for them to have the same opportunities as men in the world of work, they need to prove more knowledge, ability, competence, agility, skill and intelligence.

With the exception of Interviewee 1 (I1), all the other interviewees completed their higher education in courses focused on administration and organizational control, all of which in private colleges (with the exception of I3), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Course and institution

Interviewee	Major	Educational institution
E1	Data processing	Mackenzie
E2	Economy	Faculdade Santana
E3	Business Economics and Controllership	USP Ribeirão Preto
E4	Administration	Uni Sant'Anna

Source: Research data

Among the interviewees, only E3 and E4 have a postgraduate degree, which are, respectively, in Tax Management (Fipecafi) and Marketing Administration (Uni Sant'Anna).

4.2 Marital status and children together with professional life

Women were historically portrayed as a mother, devoted wife and “queen of the home”. Thus, the limits of representations of the feminine are confined to the maternal and domestic space. For men, the public space was destined; to women, the private (COLLING, 2004).

I see that people have this difficulty rearranging their time between work and their children. I have an advantage over them, I have no problem working until 9:00 pm, 10:00 pm [...] when they need to take the child to the doctor, deal with school problems, etc., these are things that the mother ends up having a more presence stronger than the father. I've heard from male and female bosses, “but again are you going to walk away? Why is your husband not going this time?” I2, coordinator.

With the exception of I3, all women are married or built their professional careers while married. In analyzing the interviewees' reports on this, extremes are observed between the husband who gives the necessary help so that the woman can go through her professional career, while he helped with the housework and children (as happened with I4), or the interviewee who takes marriage as a weight in professional life, making further study or professional deepening impossible (the case of I3).

I3 tells us that “I am married. I got married very young, when I was 18, and that made it impossible for me to dedicate myself more to attending other colleges or having a postgraduate degree, studying other languages, traveling [...]. I3, managing partner”.

I4 adds, “Being married helped me at certain points, because my ex-husband supported me in everything and helped take care of the house and our daughters. I4, manager.

The literature on dual-career couples (where both partners have a career to manage) seems to indicate that women are the ones who give up more of their interests and personal goals than men, so that the marital relationship works and so that education of the children happens (MONTEIRO, 2015).

With regard to children, all interviewees have perceptions that they delay a woman's professional career. Interviewee I3 is the only one who has not yet had children, but has witnessed several situations where co-workers have suffered some type of difficulty or reprisal because of the descendants. Therefore, it is considered a professional advantage to those who have a family to manage, as presented by I3: "For women, it is always more complicated, because we are committed to playing the best role as a mother and professional and this demands a lot psychologically and physically". I3, managing partner.

The next day, the manager and the deputy manager called me to say that I couldn't do that [...], that my daughter was already of legal age and could go alone. Then I found out that, according to the bank's rules, I was entitled to 1 day a year to accompany my children to the doctor. I went to them and showed them. I1, manager.

In research carried out by Betiol and Tonelli (1991) found evidence that executive women, although they have risen considerably in the work environment, continue to be represented by the role of mother and wife, since they have social support to fail in the organization and return home. This interpretation creates a contradictory climate of gaps and mistrust about women's effective investment in work, impacting their possibilities for professional advancement.

E1, for a while, considered herself guilty of not having time available for her daughters and this harmed her performance at work. Her daughters as a priority, being a mother made it impossible for I2 to pursue personal physical and aesthetic care, work for fewer hours and make her dreams come true. Even with her youngest daughter of legal age, I1 still hears from her bosses questions such as "Take her to the doctor? Why doesn't your husband go?" and sees them upset or angry.

4.3 The divide between business and home

According to Nascimento (2015), there is currently a reconstruction of the idea of gender due to the increased participation and importance of women in the labor market. Despite this, now the woman faces a new obstacle: the double journey, which generates an overload of responsibilities.

All the interviewees, on this point, agree: life on a double shift is complicated. I1 sought, most of the time, to leave her daughters with maids or with her mother, as did I4. I2, on the other hand, requested the help of her youngest daughter to clean the house while she was at work.

I'm having lunch at home, so during the night I have to think about what I'm going to have for lunch [the next day] and during the day, between one meeting and another, I'm preparing lunch. During my lunch break I eat, clean the kitchen, tidy up the house. I2, coordinator.

With no children, I2 also lives with a double shift: even with the help of a cleaning lady for one day of the week, on other days she still has to clean the house. Currently working at Home Office, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviewee looks for any time gap at work to focus on homework. In short, the weekend is the only time she can dedicate herself entirely to the house, thus, once again, not being able to take advantage of her free time.

4.4 Business day to day

As stated by Antunes, Neto, Lima-Souza and Santos (2018), work relationships are permeated by images and beliefs about masculinity and femininity and this reproduces gender inequality, asking whether the rise of women to hierarchical positions equals that of men in organizations would not bring changes in the female historical image.

In I1's company, women's empowerment is valued, but she mentions that she has not yet experienced this in practice. Despite this, I1 sees that women are often seen and manipulated as objects. The interviewee makes it clear that she has always seen a preference for men in positions of leadership, management and promotions in all the companies she has worked for, comparing that, among ten people for senior positions, nine were men and one was a woman.

I've seen [...] women get attention for the clothes they wore, but at the same time, I've seen them use women with low-cut and short clothes to get attention from customers. This also happens. In agencies, women are decoys for men. I1, manager.

As for I4, "Men want to impose their will, going over the department's internal rules and norms simply because they think they are stronger". I4, manager.

Regarding the previous section, as cited by Betiol and Tonelli (1991), there is still a male chauvinist conception that generalizes and creates stereotypes for genders. One of these prejudices is the idea that women use sexuality as a way to climb positions in the organizational hierarchy.

I3, as a managing partner of an armaments company, still seen as dangerous or a male place, works every day to demystify this taboo, trying to make it clear that sport shooting, in addition to sport, is aimed at men and women. The interviewee says she is often disrespected for being in charge of a company in this segment. One of the explanations for this is that women need to make more effort at work, because the path within organizations is not open, so the investment they have to make is greater than most men seeking the same position. (BETIOL and TONELLI, 1991).

A woman in leadership causes surprise, especially for some macho men who think they are superior and do not admit that a woman can be in the direction of a segment until then led by most men. [...] Some issues explained by me suffer suspicion due to the fact that it was spoken by a woman and, when explained by a man in the company, it becomes more credible. I3, managing partner.

I2 still considers being in a sexist environment, which has many more men than women, mainly because it is about banking, investments and the financial area. The interviewee mentions that, in meetings, women are always seen as “secretaries”, even though they hold the same position as the men present at the same meeting. This means that, when something needs to be written down, for example, the woman is always appointed as responsible for the activity.

4.5 The woman in leadership

According to Frankel (2007), women are spontaneously leaders and their attributes are what make the difference in the current concept of leadership, characteristics already observed by organizations that seek new leadership styles. [...] Women have their own qualities and manage to influence people without coercing them, making the work environment more pleasant and conducive to the development of common goals.

There is no doubt that, yes, every company should have a female leader. Among the explanations and opinions, there are adjectives such as “careful”, “concerned”, “multitasking” and “sensitivity”, as presented by I2, “I’ve heard things like “wow, you’re a woman and you did a very good calculation!” or “you’re a woman and you managed to explain this accounting part very well”, as a joke, obviously, but it’s a boring joke. I2, coordinator.

Although this participation is shy compared to men in more prestigious positions, such as the presidency, the vice-presidency and the board, it is surprising when compared to a few decades ago. (BETIOL and TONELLI, 1991).

E1 mentions that the female leader is fundamental. In several past experiences, the interviewee determines that there are two types of female leaders: the motivated and the insecure, but that both have concerns for their subordinates and understanding with the care for the family. According to the interviewee's reports, the motivated leader captivates and encourages all employees to be better; the insecure leader, on the other hand, becomes terrible, because she herself does not believe in herself. As a result, according to Antunes, Neto, Lima-Souza and Santos (2018), women are excessively cautious and excessive caution can inhibit the willingness to take risks, consequently impairing the ability to make decisions.

The woman, in order to rise in the job, has to assume a posture considered “masculine” as a way of showing authority and acquiring the respect of subordinates. To be respected, she has to think, act and work “like a man”. However, she cannot fail to have a “feminine” posture, of docility and delicacy. This demand is paradoxical, as there is no way to combine all these attributes at the same time: being emotional, sensitive, rational and aggressive. (BETIOL and TONELLI, 1991).

She [the female leader] manages to multitask, has a much sharper look, ‘feeling’, sensitivity to deal with several subjects at the same time. I3, managing partner.

I3 makes it clear that, for a woman, being a leader is much greater than for a man: personal achievement and the fact of being independent are reflected in her performance.

According to Nascimento (2015), one of the biggest challenges for modern leadership refers to adaptability to the growing diversity in the workplace, in large organizations the environment is becoming increasingly feminine and multicultural.

When a woman screams, the woman is hysterical; when man gives a shout, he is the born leader. We need to break this in the organizational world [...]. I think women can work better under pressure than men, control themselves more, not to be seen as “the crazy one”. I2, coordinator.

I2 considers that the woman has an interpersonal relationship and a maternal side that collaborates much more for the functioning of a company. The sensitive side leads her to more hits. Even with pressure, this one manages to do better. In sum, the female leader will always want to see her gender grow along with her, which is considered good for the interviewee and the other women in the organization, claiming that she noticed her own growth when she had a female boss: she gave management tips and even about personal growth. According to Vianna and Hryniewicz (2018), male comments about female performance are perceived and, despite feeling offended, many prefer not to intervene. This generates the normalization of prejudice, disseminated as a “harmless joke”.

On the other hand, I4 considers a woman leader important, but believes that the main point for high-level positions is commitment, character, professionalism and ethics, any gender being important for the leadership of a company. Until society accepts more women as leaders, with new leadership styles, some will have to adapt to the prevailing style and perhaps be more aggressive than they normally would be to be considered good leaders. Even if this has a negative impact on the perception of your personality. (VIANNA, HRYNIEWICZ, 2018).

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present study had as general objective to seek to identify the behavior of women inserted in the labor market, mainly those who work in medium and large companies. For this, a ten-question interview was applied to four women, about work, personal life and how they go together.

In this context, behavioral factors were identified that make clear some organizational cultural guidelines. Factors that may be machismo and its affluents still present in Brazilian culture and how it -still- influences the female career, the female leadership style, the double journey (managing your professional life and home and children), among others.

In view of the above, one of the motivations for carrying out this research was the opportunity to seek information and delve into it in such a way that the interpretation of interview results or researched and studied academic texts makes understanding easier about how and why that women are, only now and in short steps, reaching their places in large organizations. When analyzing the information obtained through the application of the research instrument, the responses of the individuals indicated that it still seems to be quite difficult for women to reach a high and respected position in a company without going through the triple barriers faced by the opposite sex, as pointed out by Oakley (2000).

It is concluded that, even through applied research, most women have conflicts in relation to the double journey, however, they seek to manage such conflicts day by day and

begin to subject themselves to this reality, so that, in this way, they can enter the labor market and achieve financial independence.

The result of this research was not restricted to the analysis of the experience of four women, but to a reflection of the entire historical process in which the female career was developed and continues to be developed and all the relationships that permeate such an achievement.

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