



# The Power Gap: How Women's Archetypal Personalities Impact Their Leadership and Career Growth

A Research Report From Powerfulife Solutions



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## About

Powerfulife Solutions is a leading learning and development firm committed to enabling people to unlock their full potential. We have worked with over 35000 people in corporate India across 60+ organizations over the last 20 years. The Powerfulife Women Leadership program is a signature offering through which we provide coaching, mentorship, and facilitation for women-only leadership development interventions.

A key element of these workshops and coaching is the Powerfulife Assessment, the only researched, validated assessment for women in South Asia. The Powerfulife Assessment is based on the wisdom of archetypes and provides a feminine and cultural lens to personality types.

The assessment has successfully passed the reliability and validity tests and has been created in partnership with Lena Research & Consulting, a leading global provider of psychometric assessment and testing services.

More about Powerfulife Solutions can be found at [www.powerfulife.in](http://www.powerfulife.in)

## Foreword

When I wrote **Powerful**, *The Indian Woman's Guide To Unlocking Her Full Potential*, I did not think it would lead to a movement to help thousands of women enhance their self-awareness and step into their power. I have coached and engaged with women in corporate India across different career stages and have seen certain patterns emerge as we delved deeper into women's archetypal personalities. Can women's inherent strengths be leveraged in the corporate world, or do they become derailers for career growth? What really holds women back, even when structures and systems seem to support them? Does inner work hold the key to outer success? These are the questions we explored through this research. It is my hope that this helps individual women and organizations identify and address issues that can support women to grow and lead with confidence and clarity.



**Founder & CEO  
Powerfulife Solutions  
Nirupama Subramanian**

## Acknowledgments

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We are grateful to all the women who have shared their thoughts through the course of our interventions and the women who have shared how they used the Powerfulife tool to learn and grow.

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# 1. Executive Summary

The proportion of women in leadership roles in India is abysmal.

As per the Marching Sheep Inclusion Index 2025, while companies with more women in leadership report up to 50% higher profit margins, a staggering 63.45% of Indian companies still have no women in key managerial roles.

According to a 2025 analysis of NSE-listed companies, women occupy approximately 21% of corporate board seats in India as of March 2025. The weakest representation for women is among Key Managerial Personnel (KMP): For every seven male KMP, we found less than one female KMP. Almost two-thirds of the sample companies have no female KMP.

Additionally, female directors earn significantly less than their male counterparts, with male directors' remuneration being 3.6 times that of female directors.

UN and WEF data show that it will take 123 years to bridge the global gender gap and achieve full parity.

External barriers, legislation and systemic initiatives create roadblocks for women to progress at the workplace.

In the Voices of Women study, 2024 by Aon Plc, 42 percent of the women surveyed mentioned facing bias or potential bias at work and 37 percent revealed they've experienced insensitive behaviour. In addition, six percent of the women (more than 1,400 women) in the survey responded that they had faced sexual harassment at least once, yet less than half officially reported the incident to their employer. Working mothers had their own challenges, with 75 percent responding that they faced a career setback of one-to-two years after maternity leave and close to 40 percent said going on maternity leave had a negative impact on pay and their role changed to something they did not prefer.

There are also internal issues that prevent women from aspiring to leadership roles and claiming positions of power. Years of gendered conditioning and external barriers have resulted in mindsets and behaviors that serve to impede women's progress at the workplace.

*“I am not sure whether I am ready for the next role. It comes with too much responsibility and more travel.” Participant- Women Leadership program conducted by Powerfulife Solutions.*

*“I am not very ambitious. It is enough for me to do a good job and discharge whatever responsibility is given to me.” Women Manager is a large manufacturing company.*

Do the mindsets and behaviors of women unconsciously keep them from pursuing greater responsibility and taking charge at the highest levels? How do women’s personality types enable or block them from leadership?

In a world where the template for leadership is male, how do women’s innate strengths help or hinder them?

Over the past four years (2022–2025), Powerfulife has assessed over 4,000 women across corporate India through the Powerfulife Assessment, a first-of-its-kind psychometric tool designed to identify archetypal patterns through the lens of the Six Feminine Powers: **Rani, Veera, Ma, Rishika, Kanya and Apsara.**



This white paper presents the insights, trends, and implications emerging from this dataset, exploring how women leaders think, feel, and behave. This helps us identify how women express power, manage challenges, and navigate leadership transitions.

## 1.1 Objectives of the Study

This research aims to:

- Identify behavioral patterns among women in corporate India that impact their leadership abilities.
- Compare the leadership behaviours of early-career, mid-career, and senior-career women.
- Provide actionable recommendations for organizations and leadership development programs.

## 1.2 Key Insights at a Glance

- **Most Developed Powers:** Rani (Execution & Structure) and Ma (Empathy & Nurturance)



- **Least Developed Power:** Apsara (Influence & Visibility) the key to presence and advocacy



- **Top Challenge:** Translating competence into visibility and influence

Women leaders possess a strong task and people orientation, demonstrate the behaviors and skills for leadership success, but do not focus on building visibility for their work and negotiating for themselves. They also need to invest in their own learning and growth, develop strategic thinking abilities and create a strong vision for their career.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Context

Despite significant investments in diversity initiatives, the number of women in senior leadership positions in India remains low, hovering around 17–18% across sectors. While skill and capability are no longer barriers, visibility, confidence, and systemic bias often derail career progression.

Dr. Alexis Kanda-Olmstead in her TEDx talk ( The science of women leadership) shared that 1 in 3 girls actually fear leadership. Studies show that women do not self-identify as leaders even as they score highly on demonstration of leadership abilities.

The Hewlett-Packard study shows that men apply for a job or promotion when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women apply only if they meet 100% of them.

Recently, many organizations, especially multinational companies, have also pulled back on Diversity and Inclusion initiatives across the world.

Salesforce, Google, and consulting giant Deloitte are some of the most recent examples, joining companies including Amazon in announcing the rollback of DEI initiatives. Tech companies such as Microsoft, Meta, and Zoom cut DEI programs last year, and law firms, including Winston & Strawn, faced lawsuits for affirmative action.

These changes have also slowed down the advancement of women and the promotion of gender diversity in the workplace.

Women need to enhance self-awareness and take actions to overcome both internal and external barriers to growth and advancement.

The Powerfulife framework redefines leadership through a holistic lens, combining behavioral data, emotional intelligence, and archetypal psychology. It offers an innovative way to understand women's leadership beyond competencies, focusing on how power is expressed, balanced, and internalized.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Scope & Segmentation

The Powerfulife Assessment has been administered as a part of several leadership programs conducted for women in the corporate sector from 2022- 2025.

The questionnaire comprises 72 validated questions with 12 questions related to each of the six powers.

The data selected for this study were based on a clear identification of career stages for the women leaders.

Results were analysed across these 3 segments:

- Early Career (0- 6 years of work experience) N=611
- Mid-Career (7- 15 years of work experience) N=466
- Senior Leaders (15 + years of work experience) N=610

### 3.2 Sample

Data was analyzed from 1,687 women ( assessments conducted from 2022 -2025) working across diverse industries in the corporate world. The women employees cover 50 companies in India that have conducted direct programs with Powerfulife Solutions or through open programs such as those from XLRI/CGEIL and women's networks like BAGGGEL.

Data Source

- Tool: The Powerfulife Assessment – a validated instrument measuring Six Feminine Powers
- Approach: Quantitative data from assessment scores + qualitative insights (open-ended responses, coaching reflections, and verbatim quotes)
- Period: (April 2022 to November 2025)

## 4. Overview of the Six Feminine Powers

Each woman leader embodies all six powers, but to varying degrees. Their dominant powers shape their leadership strengths, while underdeveloped or shadow powers reveal areas for growth.

An overview of the powers is provided below. Each power brings strong strengths to the workplace. However, each power has potential derailers stemming from several limiting beliefs.

The powers, like any tool can be used for growth and development while preventing the derailers.

## 4.1 Rani: The Noble Queen

- **Strengths:** Discipline, accountability, organization, execution
- **Power Blocks and Derailers:** Overcontrol, rigidity, micromanagement
- **Value:** Ensures operational excellence and dependability
- **How it shows up:** “I’m great at getting things done, but I struggle to delegate.”
- **A Limiting Mindset:** “I have to be perfect and responsible for everything.”
- **Key Driver and Orientation:** Task accomplishment



## 4.2 Veera: The Rebel Warrior

- **Strengths:** Determination, grit, resilience under pressure
- **Power Blocks and Derailers:** Aggression, overdrive, burnout
- **Value:** Drives results during change or crisis
- **How it shows up:** “I push myself hard to succeed, I could burn out soon.”
- **Limiting Belief:** “Results are more important than relationships”.
- **Key Driver and Orientation:** Task accomplishment



## 4.3 Ma: The Nurturing Caregiver

- **Strengths:** Empathy, compassion, inclusion, relationship builder
- **Power Blocks and Derailers:** Emotional overextension, unable to set boundaries, guilt
- **Value:** Builds psychological safety and team trust
- **How it shows up:** “I’m empathetic and giving, but that also means I neglect my needs.”
- **A Limiting Belief:** “I am valued only if I do things for others”.
- **Key Driver and Orientation:** People engagement



## 4.4 Kanya: The Good Girl

- **Strengths:** Openness, adaptability, approachability, ease
- **Power Blocks and Derailers:** Naivety, people pleasing, seeking validation
- **Value:** Enhances trust, provides positivity, ethical and dutiful
- **How it shows up:** “I am pleasant and diligent- but I often doubt my own worth.
- **A Limiting Belief:** “ I have to be nice and get along with everyone for acceptance.”
- **Key Driver and Orientation:** People engagement



## 4.5 Rishika: The Wise Seeker

- **Strengths:** Strategic thinking, visioning, problem solving, innovation, learning
- **Power Blocks and Derailers:** Over-analysis, detachment from action, arrogance
- **Value:** Adds wisdom, long-term clarity, expertise
- **How it shows up:** “I can see patterns others miss, but I hesitate to act fast.”
- **Limiting Belief:** I have to be the smart one with all the answers.
- **Key Driver and Orientation-** Self focus



## 4.6 Apsara: The Charming Influencer

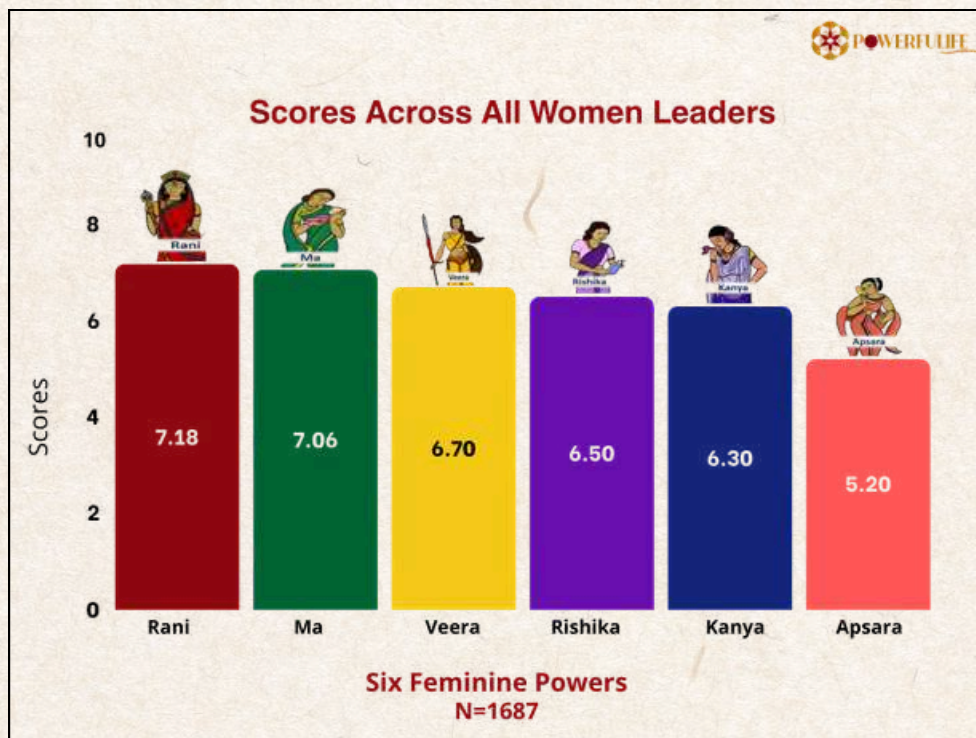
- **Strengths:** Charisma, creativity, self-expression
- **Power Blocks and Derailers:** Selfish, dramatic and volatile
- **Value:** Enhances brand presence, visibility, relational capital
- **How it shows up:** I shine in the spotlight but lose focus and discipline.
- **Limiting Belief:** I need to get the attention and admiration of everyone all the time.
- **Key Driver and Orientation-** Self focus



## 5. Key Findings: Overall Scores Across Career Stages

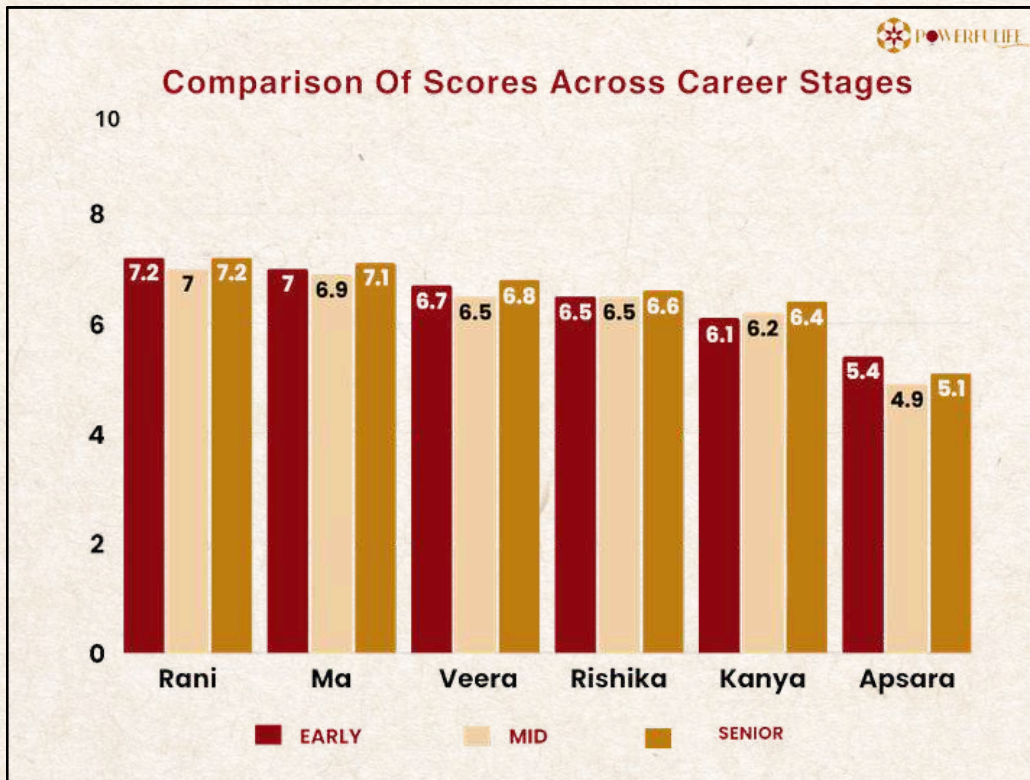
### 5.1 Overall Scores Across Powers For Women Across Career Stages

How the powers show up across all working women in corporates. These are the average absolute scores across the database.



### 5.2 Comparative Lens: Archetypal Powers Across Career Stages

Power	Early	Mid	Senior	Score Range
Rani	7.2	7	7.2	High
Ma	7	6.9	7.1	High
Veera	6.7	6.5	6.8	Moderate
Rishika	6.5	6.5	6.6	Moderate
Kanya	6.1	6.2	6.4	Moderate
Apsara	5.4	4.9	5.1	Low-moderate



### 5.3 Interpretation of the Scores

Women across career stages show a similar pattern with minor variations. There is no significant change in the powers over the 7- 20 year period that was considered for the 3 career stages. The archetypal personalities are deeply rooted and women show up in a similar way across a 20 year career span.

#### 5.3.1 High Scores

**The Highest Scoring Archetype Is The Rani- The Noble Queen.**



Women leaders rely on the Rani power- the ability to execute, organize, bring order to chaos, and provide stable structures. The Rani archetype helps them to manage both the office and domestic load and brings a strong task orientation.

Women leaders not only need the Rani archetype to manage their work, but they also get recognised for their detail- orientation and ability to follow the process. Women leaders are appreciated for their diligence, sense of responsibility, and multitasking abilities. Rani leaders bring stability and sanity to the organization and work environment.

*“I am often trusted to take strategy into implementation, by getting things done on the ground, with punctilious attention to detail, while also influencing stakeholders and bringing everyone along”. Says **Sathya Sriram, Former CEO Apollo Preventive Healthcare- about her core Rani power***

### **The Second Highest Scoring Power Is The Ma- The Nurturing Caregiver.**



The core Ma behaviors of caring, connecting, giving, and growing others are demonstrated by women across all levels. Women leaders show a genuine concern for others, empathy during conversations, and the ability to build strong relationships. The Ma power enables women to bring a collaborative, coaching style to work. Their way of influencing others is to tend and befriend, using personal connections and accommodating others' requests to build trust and long term relationships.

*I am fascinated by the six archetypes. It's clear that I use my strong Ma power to nurture and build institutions and teams. The Ma energy has helped me lead with empathy and care.*  
**Anuradha Das Mathur, Founder and Dean, Vedica Scholars Program**

### **A Strong Combination**

A combination of the Rani and Ma powers indicates that women bring a great blend of task and people orientation to their work. Getting the job done while taking people along are key leadership attributes, and leaders who demonstrate these should be rising to the top very soon.

These power archetypes define a strong woman leader's DNA- She is a great executor who also cares for people.

### **The Pitfalls**

However, for many women this combination could also become a derailer in a world where the template for leadership is still dominantly male.

- A strong Rani Ma combination indicates that many women are focusing on execution and caregiving as key skills and competencies. Years of gendered conditioning also make these qualities seem laudable.
- This combination keeps women in a state of constant activity, as they balance the work to achieve goals with the work to take care of people. Women perform the Rani and Ma roles both at work and at home.
- The double load entailed by this combination can leave little room for other aspects of leadership.

## 5.2.2 Moderate Scores

The scores for Veera, Rishika, and Kanya are in the moderate range.

This shows that many women leaders are able to use and access these powers as needed, though this may not be a core part of their personality.

### Score Interpretation Of Veera- The Rebel Warrior



The Veera scores are the third-highest scores across the powers

This score indicates that women leaders are goal oriented and assertive in driving towards goals. They have the ability to focus on results backed by a strong result orientation.

*I use my strong Veera power to get stuff done and move a project from idea to execution. The Veera energy has helped me to have the doer mindset and not overthink on the planning but learn while I am in action mode. Priya Nijhara- former Country Head, Disney Consumer Products and Licensing*

Veera's scores are highest at the early career stage and senior levels. They show a dip for mid-career women.

During interviews and sessions, the two Veera areas of growth that women spoke about were expressing ambition and taking risks.

*"I am not really very ambitious. I don't want to be the CEO or anything like that." Participant in a mid career women leadership program.*

*"I am not power hungry." Senior woman leader in a large pharma company*



## Score Interpretation For Kanya- The Good Girl



The Kanya score is also in the moderate range. This score indicates that women leaders are approachable, diligent, dutiful, good-natured, and adaptable. Many women leaders see themselves as respectful and responsible. They are trusting, optimistic, and bring some lightness into the workplace. The moderate Kanya score allows them to be connected to others and ethical in their dealings.

*My Kanya power allows me to work sensitively with people, important in my profession as an Executive Coach. **Smriti Goel, Executive Coach***



Many women leaders are admitted to some Kanya power blocks. The two leading power blocks came from a fear of saying no and self-doubt.

*“ I find it difficult to say no, especially to seniors. It is almost a reflex action when I am asked to do something or take on additional responsibilities.” **Young woman leader at a large automobile company.***

*“ Sometimes, I hesitate to speak up in meetings. I have many moments of self-doubt. Then later, I wish I had spoken up earlier before the male colleague.” **Mid-level supply chain manager.***

## Score Interpretation For Rishika- The Wise Seeker



The moderate Rishika scores indicate that women leaders are curious knowledge seekers who value expertise. They are willing to take the time out and invest in their learning. The moderate scores show that when required, women leaders step up to challenges and learn what is required. They are able to conduct research and solve problems through innovative approaches.

Women leaders did not report significant power blocks related to the Rishika.

Two areas that were most common were over-reliance on expertise and fear of exposure. Rishikas go deep and value mastery, but this might close them off to other avenues of growth. Sometimes, Rishika leaders admitted that they panic before high-stakes presentations if they have not prepared fully. They are worried that they may not know the answers to some questions. This keeps them away from the spotlight.



*“I have been in the same role for many years and now I know everything about my area. While my expertise has been valued, I feel that I didn’t get the exposure that many other colleagues got.” **Mid-level manager at a professional consulting firm.***

*“I feel that I am taking a long time to contribute to my team. Other colleagues are speaking up in meetings even if they don’t know much. I think a lot about what I should say so that I don’t sound stupid.” **Junior manager in a research role in a pharmaceutical company.***

### 5.3.3 Low Scores

#### Score Interpretation For Apsara- The Charming Influencer



The lowest scoring power is Apsara. The scores are in the Low- Moderate range. The scores are similar across career levels, except for a slight dip at the mid-career levels.

The Apsara archetype is about free self-expression, bold pursuit of your own needs, and a preference for the spotlight. At work, the Apsara energy helps in building a strong personal brand, networking for career growth, and advocating for oneself. Apsaras have a strong performative energy and use a combination of charisma, personal charm, and intuitive influencing skills to further their agenda.

*The Veera and Apsara energy have served me quite well in terms of taking bold decisions, choosing courage over comfort, always raising my hand and being confident to walk into a room holding my head high. It has helped me to be myself freely. **Apoorva Aggarwal, Partner and Managing Principal, ZS Associates.***

Low Apsara scores show that most women leaders do not use this power adequately at work.

Women are rewarded for modesty, humility and silence. Deep conditioning and fear of being judged prevents women from self promotion, networking and actively seeking career growth opportunities. The connotation of the Apsara as a dark seductress, shame about the body and looks inhibits women from claiming space and taking space.

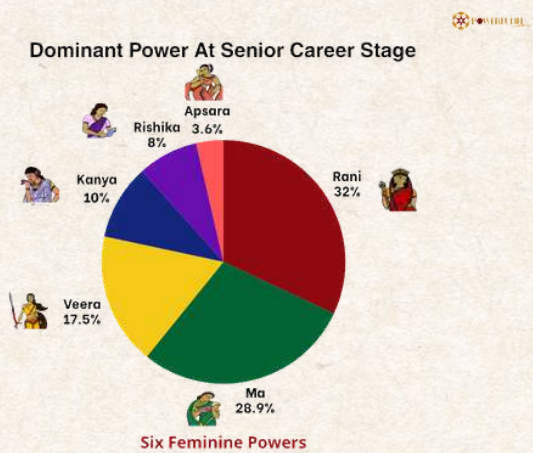
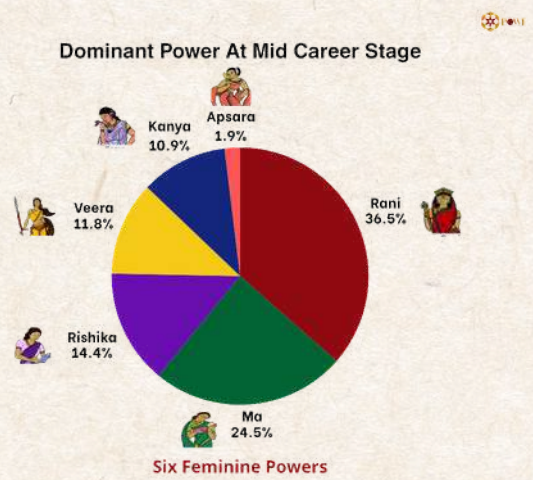
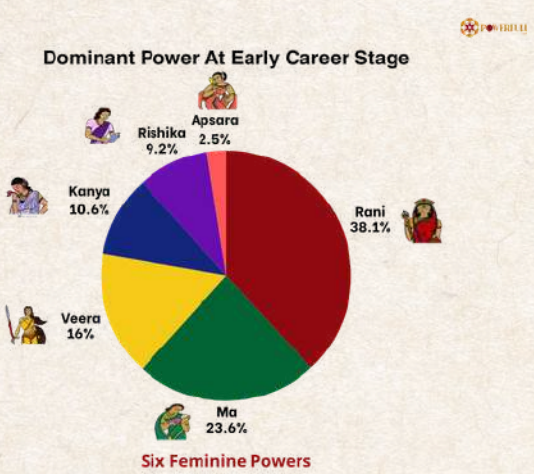
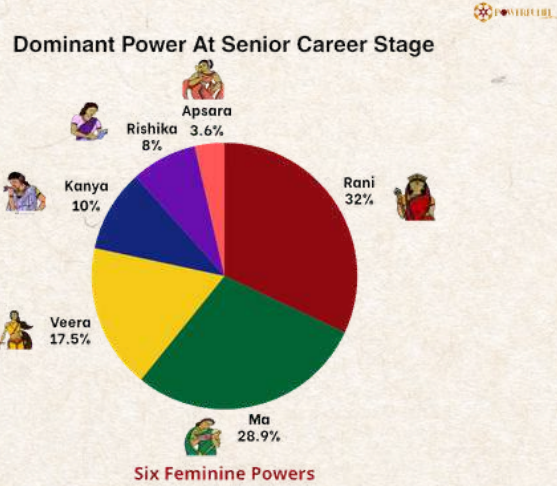
*My upbringing has made me believe that I should not be a manipulator. So I hesitate to ask people to help me for my personal gain.' **Senior leader in a media conglomerate.***

*" I believe that my work should speak for itself. I don't want to market myself." **Senior woman leader in a multinational bank.***

*" I am not good at networking. I know that it is important for career progress in my organisation but I am very uncomfortable with it." **Mid career woman leader in a consulting firm.***

# 6. Key Findings- Dominant and Latent Powers Across Career Stages

## 6.1 Dominant Power Scores Across Career Stages



## The Dominant Power Across Career Stages

The Dominant power is the power with the highest score. The Dominant power shows that this is the most preferred and used power as compared to the other 5 powers.

The Dominant power used most often is the Rani power. The next most dominant is the Ma. The Veera emerges as the third most preferred power for women.

The broad patterns remain similar across the career stages.

As women move from early career to mid-career, the Veera power shows a dip among mid-career women, where Rishika or the Seeker energy emerges as the third most preferred power.

The Apsara, as a dominant power, also shows a marginal dip for mid-career women. Interactions with mid-career women show that this phase gives them less time to focus on themselves as they juggle multiple priorities. While the mid-career stage is the time when men focus on career building, women often focus on family building. As Indra Nooyi stated, *the career clock and biological clock are always in total conflict.*

Women at midcareer levels face transitions and changes at a personal level, often through motherhood or marriage, and a professional transition from an individual contributor to a team leader or transition to a new role.

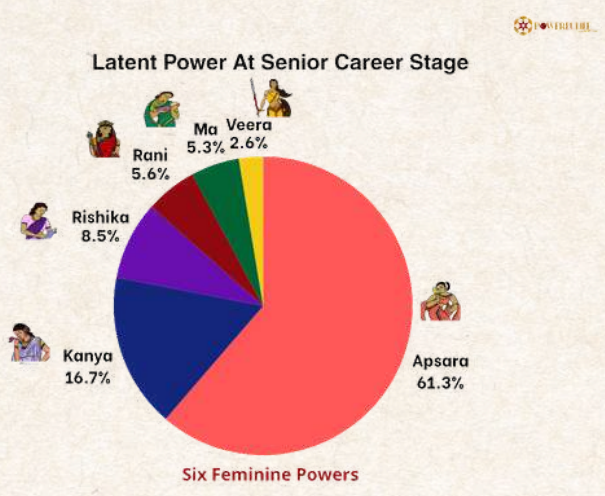
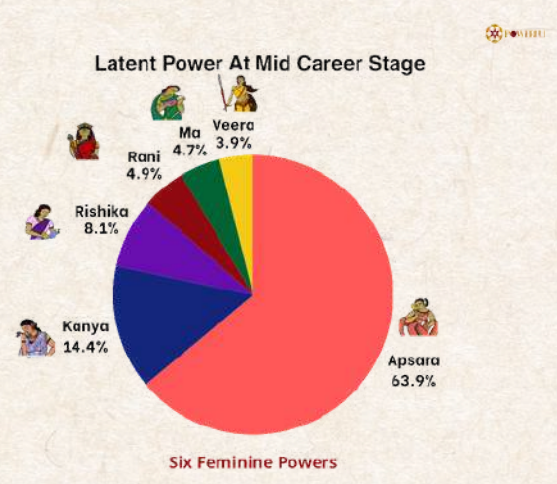
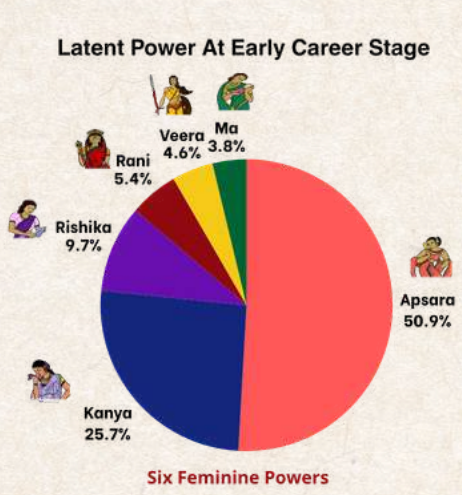
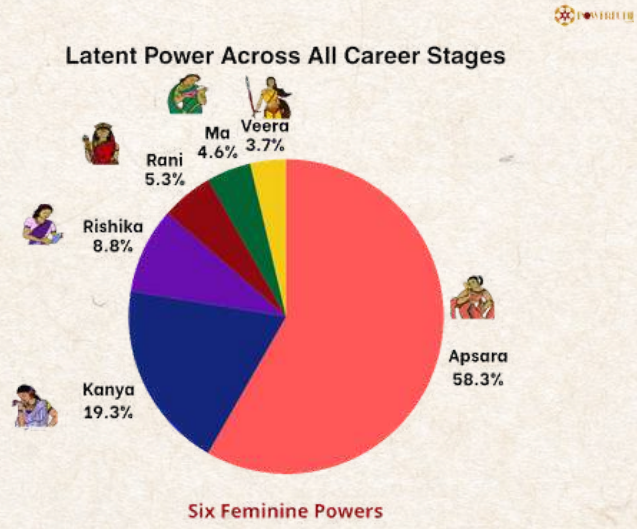
They need the Rishika power to learn more, upgrade, and grow, while the Warrior energy for personal ambition and career drive takes a back seat.

While women move from mid-career to a senior career stage, where they have worked for 15 or more years, we see a slight shift. The Ma power shows up as dominant for 28.9 % of women, compared to 23.6% and 24.5%. for previous stages.

This is the time when most women leaders manage a team and are responsible for the growth of others. They continue to leverage the Rani power while they use their natural relationship-building skills to nurture their team members.

There is a slight reemergence of the Veera as the third most dominant power, as senior leadership roles demand a result orientation and ability to perform under pressure. A strong task orientation, while exercising the nurturing caregiver powers, gives senior women the strength and confidence to stay in the race.

## 6.2 Latent Power Scores Across Career Stages



## The Latent Power Across Career Stages

The Latent power is the least used power. Inability to access and leverage the latent power leads to power blocks. This is often the missing link for sustained growth.

The Apsara power scores amongst the least used power access career stages. The Low Apsara scores across the sample population are reflected in the latent power scores.

This is followed by the Kanya and Rishika powers.

The Apsara scores are less latent at the early career stage, with 50% against 61 and 63% later. Younger women, especially those in their late twenties, feel more free, self-expressive and focused on their needs. Our interactions with early career women show that there is more energy for investing in their career growth and building a brand. The younger women at the GenZ stage use the outspoken self-focused Apsara more. It remains to be seen if this continues as they reach the mid career stage.

The Kanya energy is less preferred and remains latent since many women at the workplace have learnt that Kanya behaviors are not rewarded at work. Kanyas are trusting, optimistic, and pleasant. These behaviours do not support career growth. The focus on the dominant Rani and Ma also means that the ease, harmony and lightness of the Kanya energy is not demonstrated or valued across the different stages of the career.

While many women at the workplace display Kanya characteristics, this is not an energy that is preferred or used compared to the Rani, Ma, and Veera.

Many women share that 'they are no longer the good girl' since getting ready to be at the workplace and growing to leadership levels required them to be more task-oriented.

The Kanya energy is associated with ease, relaxation, and the innocent energy of childhood. Many women leaders are usually exhausted and constantly preoccupied, and find it difficult to have the easy-going, relaxed being of a Kanya.

The other latent power is the Rishika, which enables learning, strategic thinking, visioning, deeper exploration, and contribution.

The Rishika scores remain latent across career stages. Our interactions with women and stakeholders show that strategic thinking, visioning, and big picture mindset are important at a senior leadership level. However, this requires time investment for learning, upgrading skills and stepping away from the dance floor to the balcony.

A dominant Rani power combined with a latent Rishika power indicate that women focus more on daily execution and details rather than futuristic big picture thinking.

The Apsara and Rishika powers have a self-orientation where the key drivers are self expression and personal growth.

Across career stages, women focus more on Task accomplishment and People engagement. There is less focus on investing in yourself and growing for the future, as seen in the lower Rishika and Apsara scores.

*“ I am so busy managing my work and home that I have no time for myself!” **Senior woman leader in a Media firm.***

*I know I need to focus on my learning and development, but I am not able to prioritize that. I also need a long-term vision for my career. **Mid-career woman leader in a financial services organization***

## 7. Conclusion

Women leaders are able to demonstrate all the skills and capabilities required as leaders in the corporate workplace. The top three scores of women leaders- Rani, Ma, and Veera bring a very balanced blend of all powers required to lead at the highest levels. The scores in the high and moderate range indicate that women have the ability to combine execution rigor, result orientation, and a strong people orientation.

Yet, in a world where the leadership template is still coded as male, the core strengths of women leaders may not be enough. Sometimes, their strengths can also become blockers. As many women leaders have reported, the focus on perfectionism and detail orientation of the Rani may not work when big picture thinking is required. Overusing Ma power, at work and outside, puts the burden of caring and managing other people's needs and emotions.

The areas which consistently show up as least used archetypes are Kanya, Rishika and Apsara.

The biggest area for growth is to harness and use the Apsara power. Women need to build strong networks, put their needs first and be ready to take the spotlight that comes with leadership at the highest levels.

Unlike the 'old boys' networks and the bro code that men use to engage and support each other, women lack structured networks and sponsorship. Research indicates that women with sponsors are 20% more likely to be promoted than those without sponsors. However, 71% of sponsors choose protégés of the same race or gender, reinforcing existing inequalities in access to opportunity. Importantly, women with sponsors are 167% more likely to be offered high-profile, stretch assignments, highlighting the critical role sponsorship plays in advancing women into leadership positions.

Years of conditioning and gendered norms has made it difficult for women to gain visibility and aggressively push their agenda. Women who attempt this are perceived negatively by both male and female colleagues.

## 8. Solutions and Recommendations

There are several systemic and legislative changes that support women to become a part of the workforce. Organizations want to retain female talent and provide equal opportunities for growth even as they grapple with biases and blind spots.

However, there are still several challenges to be overcome both at an individual and collective level.

The road to equal distribution of power is a hard and long one. No incumbent group wants to give up power and position easily. It falls to the disadvantaged minority group to work towards changing the status quo.

What can women do to empower themselves?

- Enhance self-awareness and reflection
- Invest in their growth and development
- Connect with other women and form strong networks
- Enlist the support of allies, coaches and sponsors
- Exert their influence at work and home to create a supportive ecosystem
- Become career intentional rather than career incidental

Women leadership programs provide a platform for introspection, inspiration and ignition. As women come together and learn from each other, it builds confidence and connection.

*“I now feel that I am not alone. We all are in the same boat. We can row together.”*  
**Participant in a large Open woman leadership program.**

Our research shows that self-awareness, followed by intentional actions help women move ahead and take charge of their careers and lives.

Knowledge of their power profiles helps women identify the specific areas to leverage and powers to evoke through a gender and culture lens that connects at a deep, visceral level.

One of the main areas of work for women is to evoke and enhance self-orientation through the Apsara and Rishika powers.

Apsara has the power of the Charming Influencer. This power helps women to build visibility for their work, find a balance between their needs and others' needs, and create a sphere of influence. This is the power needed to negotiate for themselves, show up in an authentic way without the fear of judgement and create a strong personal brand for themselves.

The Rishika- the wise seeker is needed for strategic thinking, upgrading skills, and instilling confidence through expertise.

Women may also need the Rani, Veera, Ma and Kanya at different stages and contexts. There is no 'One size fits all' formula for success.

Greater self awareness helps women to consciously make the shifts they need to grow in their careers and take on larger leadership roles.

Many women have used this deeper self-awareness to make the shifts they need to fully unlock their potential and adapt to changing contexts. These women have reported small wins and significant career growth by staying authentic and using their powers as tools to help them.

*I recently discovered how much of the Rishika essence I carry. My confidence no longer comes from 'faking it till I make it,' but from deep, genuine knowledge. Preparing for a recent demo, I went beyond my usual tech focus and broadened my understanding out of pure curiosity, not fear. When I finally took the mic in front of the SVP, I felt calm, centred, and confident, and the presentation went really well. Thank you for helping me tap into this powerful shift.*

**Sangeetha Shanmugam, Technical Lead, Cisco systems**

*Different stages of institution building need different energies. Discovering my power profile has helped me to invoke my much needed Veera. I can drive outcomes with much greater ease and walk 'taller.' **Anuradha Das Mathur- Founder & Dean Vedica Scholars Program***

*My knowledge of the power profile has helped me to evoke my Ma power, the empathetic side of me to accept mistakes and failures as a part of the process and allow my team to stumble and grow with a generous allowance of empathy and compassion. I have come to realise that while my Veera energy will allow me to sprint to the metaphorical brick wall, to be able to cross the wall will require my Ma to soften like water that seeps through the wall. This is how I now try to lead with grit and grace- **Priya Nijhara- Former Country Head-Disney consumer products and Licensing***

*I have a strong Rani power which helps me to bring structure and depth and consistently deliver outcomes. I now also use Rishika and Apsara consciously to reach out, seek guidance and build authentic relationships with senior leaders through proactive one on one conversations. This shift has helped me to move from execution led delivery to influence led leadership, unlocking stronger cross functional partnerships and enabling me to contribute meaningfully in a role that sits at the center of the eco-system.*

***Neetika Choudhry, Vice President, Entertainment AdSales Brand Solutions, JioStar India***

*Over time, I have also started using my Ma power as I coach, guide and pay it forward to other professionals at work. **Apoorva Aggarwal, Partner and Managing Principal at ZS Associates.***

*I consciously evoke my Rishika power to think and plan strategically when faced with tricky problems.' **Smriti Goel, Executive Coach***

What organizations can do to enhance women's leadership?

- Create strong Women Resource Groups to enable women to find sisterhood and support
- Run Allyship and Unconscious Bias workshops to create a more inclusive environment
- Build internal mentorship and sponsorship programs for women
- Provide systemic support through childcare and flexiwork opportunities
- Invest in female talent by providing coaching and learning opportunities

Our research shows that even when organizations and systems provide growth opportunities, the deeply internalised power blocks and social conditioning can deter women from leadership roles. As we shift the leadership template from being dominantly male to a more balanced model, women need to find the time and space to reflect and relearn.

The archetypal personalities of women employees can be a source of power and inspiration which propels them to leadership roles and in time, helps to build more inclusive and innovative workspaces.

*We cannot change what we are not aware of, and once we are aware, we cannot help but change. **Sheryl Sandberg, Author Lean, Former COO- Meta***

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