UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Gender Differences in Leadership Styles

By

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The above student has satisfied the requirements of English Language competency.

See attached English Editors Certificate

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Abstract

Gender is perhaps the most significant social category in human society. According to Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), the influence of gender is apparent in all known languages, past and present, and serves to distinguish the role differences in society. Gender may be seen as the primary basis for human differentiation and serves as a powerful incentive for this study.

The study was conducted at the University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN) to gain a better understanding of the differences in leadership styles and the significant role that gender plays in leadership. The aim of the study was to highlight gender differences in leadership styles, gender discrimination, the break in the 'glass ceiling' and the stereotyping of male and female leaders. The objective of this study was to determine if there were any differences in leadership styles based on demographics, perceptions and past research.

The questionnaire was designed around the objectives of the study. Participants were invited to participate in a web based survey using the on-line software programme QuestionPro. The University of Kwazulu-Natal employs 4361 staff. In terms of a number of sample size tables, 384 is the recommended minimum sample size. Links to the online questionnaires were sent to all employees however, only 64 people responded even after numerous attempts were made to increase the sample.

The findings revealed that 64.4% of respondents preferred to be led by a male leader and 35.6% of respondents preferred to be led by a female leader. In contrast, 67.31% of respondents disagreed that they respond more positively to male leaders and 17.13% strongly disagreed. A salient feature of this study is that, while participants still prefer to be led by a male leader, the majority of the participants felt that there was no difference in the leadership styles of men and women and that the gender of their manager did not impact on their work performance. The study can be of benefit to anyone that is currently in a leadership role or someone that is has been identified by the organisation to be placed

in a leadership role in the future. It is also of great value and benefit to women in leadership roles as this study addresses gender discrimination and the obstacles that women face in the workforce.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The study focused on gender differences in leadership styles, employee preferences of male and female leadership, gender stereotyping, women in leadership roles and gender discrimination. Women in leadership have always been of paramount importance, have progressed in leaps and bounds, and have finally broken the "glass ceiling". This chapter will describe the motivation for this study, the research questions, objectives and a brief discussion of the literature review.

1.2 Background, rationale and purpose of the Study

1.2.1 Background

For many years, a great deal of attention has been paid to gender being a determinant of leadership styles, stereotyping and gendered leadership. A number of studies have been undertaken and have become increasingly refined to explain the different gender theories. According to Rad & Yarmohammadian, (2006) as cited by Randeree and Chaudry (2007:221), theorists of leadership have long maintained that there is no single effective leadership style. The ideal leader would have to shift from one style to another, depending on each situation. According to Hymowitz & Schellhard (1986) and Eagly and Carli (2007), as cited by Van Eupen, (2003:4), women have made tremendous progress in attaining leadership roles but even though the 'glass ceiling' has broken for some, there are still the majority of women who have not been able to secure high–level leadership roles in organisations.

1.2.2 Rationale

The rationale for this study is to document the extent to which gender affects leadership. It also seeks to identify those factors that prevent women from advancing themselves in organisations due to gender discrimination. The aim is to reach a better understanding of the "gender belief system" and how it affects leadership. The study also aimed to determine the extent to which gender matters in leadership, the factors implicated in the social perceptions of gender, discrimination of women in leadership and the impact that stereotyping has on leadership.

1.2 Motivation for the study

The motivation for this study originated in feminism and the awareness of the equality of women in the workplace, understanding leadership styles, understanding differences in the way that men and women lead, and the difficulties that women face in leadership. It was necessary to obtain the viewpoint of the respondents in finding out whether they perceived male leaders as being more effective than female leaders, and what qualities they thought that male and female leaders needed in order to provide effective leadership. The understanding of the possible negative perceptions of women leaders by the respondents could provide insight into the challenges that women face in securing leadership roles.

1.4 Focus of the study

The study investigated gender differences in leadership styles and gender stereotyping. The study was conducted at the University of Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa. After the analysis of the data, the results of the survey would reveal gender preferences to leadership styles and gender stereotyping at UKZN. The survey examined the participant's perceptions via their responses towards the research study. In addition, the study investigated gender discrimination and the barriers that women face in leadership roles.

1.5 Problem Statement

Women in organisations have faced many challenges which has affected their employability, their promotability and the level of respect they command from their peers both male and females. The role that women play in an organisation especially the leadership role has been criticized especially the styles that women adopt when leading subordinates. This study will attempt to highlight the gender differences in leadership styles.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research is:

- To determine the gender preference of leadership

- To determine if employees responded differently to male and female leaders

- To determine factors that could make a particular gender better leaders.

This study aimed at building a conceptual framework based on masculine and feminine stereotypes, as well as the leadership styles associated with gender. To fulfill the objectives of the study the perceptions and preferences of the participants were examined.

1.7 Research Questions

- Why are women disproportionately represented in leadership roles, especially high-level roles in the workforce?

- How does gender influence leadership segregation? Women leaders are often clustered in certain positions and at certain levels, which highlights gender discrimination.

- Why do employees respond differently to male leaders as opposed to female leaders?

- How can female leadership be showcased in organisations?

- What are the perceptions that exist in organisations with regard to gender stereotyping of male and female leaders, and how does this affect leadership?

1.8 The value of the study

The results from the study can be used by the organisation to identify whether employees respond more positively to male or female leaders and whether the gender of leaders affect work performance at UKZN. The findings can be used as a guideline, so that appropriate measures and strategies can be developed to ensure that there is a positive interaction between leaders and subordinates. The study will also allow managers to understand their subordinate's preference for leadership styles, so that they can develop mechanisms for subordinates to change their perceptions to avoid gender discrimination and gender stereotyping.

1.9 A brief discussion of the literature review

The literature review investigated the different components of leadership; and highlighted gender, stereotyping and the barriers that women encounter in the workforce.

The literature review also explored the concept of male leadership as opposed to female leadership and examined the notion of the 'Glass Ceiling' and women in leadership. The

chapter also analysed gender being a determinant of leadership styles and the effects of stereotyping on female leaders. In addition, the chapter discussed any further research needed to be conducted, which will help to clarify the research question further.

1.10 Research Methodology

Data was obtained from an online survey questionnaire and employees were invited to participate. The total sample size was 4321 of which 64 questionnaires were completed, the sample size was sufficient to draw statistically valid conclusions, Askew (2005). The data collected is presented in the form of graphs and tabulations. This research study made use of the quantitative data analysis.

1.11 Pilot Study

A pilot study was not conducted. The research was carried out in isolation. A pilot study may have addressed a number of logistical issues; however, time constraints meant a pilot study was not feasible.

1.12 Limitations of the Study

A limitation of the study involved the issue of trust. According to the Webster Online Dictionary (1999:1344), trust is defined as "an assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone," and "a charge of duty imposed in faith or confidence". The sensitive nature of the research topic resulted in many respondents not completing the questionnaires thereby resulting in a low sample rate. A possible cause could be the issue of trust whereby employees perceived that the results would be divulged and hence compromise their work situation. Employees were sceptical about their answers being kept confidential from their managers even though respondents were informed that their responses would be kept confidential.

The study had been confined to the permanent employees of University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN).

The small sample size of 64 employees out of a total of 4321 employees that completed the survey was a limitation to the study as it was not representative of society at large.

The use of the UKZN online notice system to invite employees to participate in the survey was not an ideal platform for conducting the research survey. The notice was lost amongst a host of other notices and may have not been visible to the employees, which is one of the possible reasons why the response rate was low. The identities of staff could also be traced via their IP addresses, which deterred respondents from participating.

A pilot study was not conducted due to time constraints. A pilot study would have enabled alterations to be made to the questions in the questionnaire in order for the questions to be better aimed at determining the objectives of the research topic.

1.13 Ethical Clearance

Ethical approval (APPENDIX 1) was obtained from the university to carry out this research prior to distribution of the questionnaires. The survey instrument consisted of a cover letter with the questionnaire (APPENDIX 2). The cover letter explained the purpose and objectives of the study, and included confirmation that permission had been granted to conduct the research study at UKZN. The cover letter also assured the participants of confidentiality and the anonymity.

A gatekeeper's letter was obtained from the Registrar (APPENDIX 3), and thereafter the survey was published on the UKZN on-line notice system for staff to access via a link. All full-time staff members were given the opportunity to participate as all employees have access to the internet.

1.14 Chapter Outline

Chapter One : Introduction

This chapter will give an overview of the research problem and its background, and the context in which the research was conducted. The objective and the purpose of the study and the research methodology will be explained.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter will present the current and past literature on gender, leadership, gender discrimination and gender stereotyping. The strengths and limitations of past research will be highlighted. In addition, the review will explain why the current research study is necessary. The theoretical framework in which the study is situated will be discussed, and how the proposed theory is applicable to the problem statement of this research study.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter describes in detail the research methodology employed. It details the study design, study population, sampling method, variables studied, data collection techniques and instruments. The type of statistical analysis employed is indicated, with the reasons why these tests were appropriate. In addition, this chapter discusses the methodological limitations of this research study.

Chapter Four: Presentation of Results

This chapter presents the research results. The objective is to determine how gendered stereotyping affects leadership. The analysis is presented as graphs and cross–tabulations.

Chapter Five: Interpretation of Results

This chapter provides a coherent synthesis of the result and indicates possible directions for future research. Gaps in the study are identified and presented in this chapter.

Chapter Six: Recommendations and Conclusions

The final chapter summarises the research in terms of objectives, expected results of the study, and the conclusions. Final recommendations for future research on the topic are made.

1.15 Summary

This chapter focused on the motivation of the study, emphasised the objectives of the study and the crucial questions guiding this study. Researchers such as A.H Eagly have done numerous studies on gendered leadership and the influence that gender has on leadership and its practices. The current literature on gendered leadership attempts to understand how gender affects leadership and the perceptions and discrimination of women in leadership roles. The current literature on gendered leadership is not free from ambiguities, due to the inconsistent perceptions of preferred leadership styles and female discrimination. The following chapter will provide a literature review on gender and how it affects leadership styles.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the differences in leadership styles between men and women are investigated. In organisations today, many individuals are of the opinion that primarily the success of any organisation depends solely on excellent financial management, information technology and intellectual capital; but having hard working, competent leaders, regardless of gender, is one of the most important assets an organisation could acquire. The literature focuses on the differences in leadership styles between men and women, women in leadership roles, and the barriers women encounter in attaining leadership positions. In addition, gender discrimination and gender role stereotyping of leaders are explored. The link between male leadership styles and organisational culture are highlighted to explain the barriers that women have to overcome to attain high-level leadership roles in the corporate world. This chapter will provide and an overview of the current literature on gender and leadership styles.

2.2 Leadership

There have been conflicting views on gender and its impact on leadership in the literature. According to Hassan and Silong (2008:363), gender does not determine leadership; however, this view is not shared by researchers in the literature on leadership and gender. According to Puliaeva (2007), even though there are some studies that prove that men and women are more alike than they are different, society continues to create significant perceptions of gender differences, making it a bigger problem than it really is.

Hoy and Miskel (1996), points out that leadership is frequently viewed as the most significant influence in the success or failure of an organisation. Hoy and Miskel's summary of leadership proposes that there are four essential groups of leadership behaviour, encouraging and motivating, relationship building, communicating and decision-making. According to Daniel et al (1993), as cited by Naidoo (2005:3) a leader is someone in an organisational setting whose objective is to direct and lead all work activities. According to Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973), leadership occurs with the end result being to influence the situation through communication channels having a certain objective in mind. According to Gardner (1990), as cited by Beinecke (2009:9), leaders persuade their followers with the aim of reaching an objective.

2.2.1 Different leadership styles

Leadership has always been described as being either democratic or autocratic; however, leadership styles often vary from situation to situation.

The Competing Value Framework (CVF) assists with analyzing leadership styles. Figure 2.1 is an illustration of organizational cultures and leadership roles; they are grouped together to portray leadership skills in relation to organizational cultures.

Flexibility

Collaborative	Creative
Empathizer Facilitator Mentor	Innovator Visionary Motivator
Control	Competing
Monitor Coordinator Regulator	Producer Competitor Driver

Internal
External

External
Focus

Control
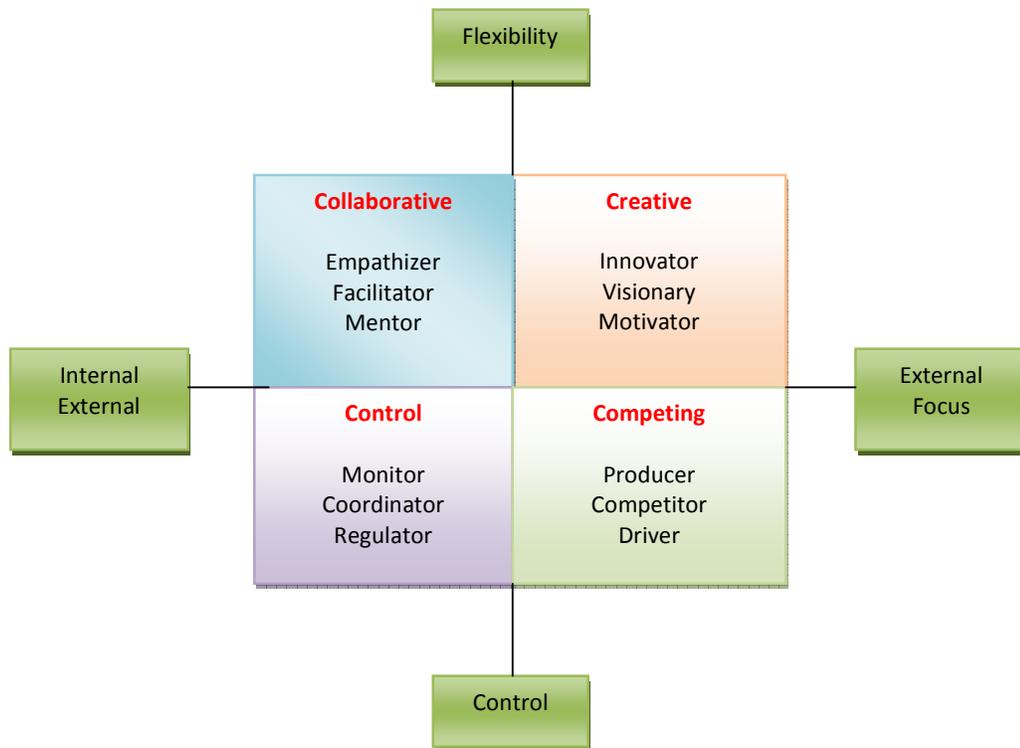
Figure 2.1: THE COMPETING VALUE FRAMEWORK

Adapted from: Andres, B.A**. Competing Values Framework: Creating values in organisations.** Capella University March 2008, Pg 95

According to Cameron, Quinn, DeGraff, & Thakor, (2006), as cited by Andres (2008:95) there are four distinct leadership styles, which are (a) collaborative leadership, (b) creative leadership, (c) control leadership, and (d) competitive leadership. Cameron et al (2006) further state that for an organisation to excel, leaders must use various combinations of leadership styles, depending on the situation. Cameron et al (2006), further lists twelve leadership skills, namely (a) mentor, (b) empathizer (c) facilitator, (d) innovator, (e) visionary, (f) motivator, (g) coordinator, (h) monitor, (i) regulator, (j) competitor, (k) driver, and (l) producer (Andres 2008).

The CVF model helps to understand leadership styles by categorising them in a framework of performance in the organisation. Within the CVF model there is no preference, you do not choose one quadrant over another, it does, however, indicate which leadership skills contribute to making a good leader, whilst also bearing in mind that all leadership skills are equally imperative to the success of any organisation (Andres 2008:95).

2.2.2 Evolution of leadership theory

According to Yukl (2006) as cited by Miles (2007:2), in the last century leadership theories have evolved and have become important in understanding the objectives that leaders have. From the early theories to the most recent theories on transformational leadership, the theories both past and present try to outline characteristics that make a perfect and successful leader. One theory is the "Path Goal Theory" which remodeled to depict the way that leaders support their followers in realising their aspirations by making the direction they take obvious and uncomplicated. The Leader-Member Exchange Theory portrays how leaders in clusters uphold their status during a series of unstated arrangements made with their members. The Full-Range Leadership Theory portrays the leader as competent enough to lift their followers from their irrelevant concerns and draw them together around a general idea with the aim of accomplishing goals they never thought could be achievable. The most relevant theory to this study is the Transactional-Transformational Theory, Yukl (2006) as cited by Miles (2007:2).

2.2.3 Transactional and transformational leadership

According to Burns (1978), transactional and transformational leadership is by far the most effective and important leadership style in this present day. According to Burke and Collins (2001), transformational leaders place a lot of emphasis on developing good working relationships with their followers to ensure that these positive relationships contribute to the success of the subordinates and the organisations performance. Transformational leaders ensure that their followers have a "big picture" mentality of the interests of the organisation as a whole and not just focus on their personal interests. This

is done by fostering a high level of commitment from the follower, which indirectly increases the bottom line of the organisation, (Burke and Collins, 2001).

According to Rosener (1990) as cited by Kawana (2004:14), transformational leaders and the emerging information on female leaders suggests that the characteristics of female leadership mirror those of transformational leaders. Rosener (1990) as cited by Kawana (2004:14), further described the transformational leadership style as being associated with the female gender, with the view that transformational leadership has feminine characteristics such as respecting individuals, mutual trust and respect between the leader and follower and most importantly creating a platform so that the follower can grow and showcase their diverse talents. The traditional transactional style is associated with men and encompasses all the male characteristics, such as authority, status and designation.

According to Pounder and Colemen (2002) as cited by Kawana, (2004:16), the feminine attributes that women leaders possess is recognised as significant to leadership, as these qualities help leaders to empower people through transformational leadership. Whilst transformational leadership is viewed as an accepted way of leading and the essence of the leadership style are in line with the majority of qualities innate in female leadership, women are still not successful in acquiring executive – level leadership roles, (Pounder and Coleman 2002 as cited by Kawana, 2004:16).

2.2.4 Male leadership as opposed to female leadership

Rosener (1990) and Shakeshaft (1998) as cited by Kawana, (2004:15), suggested that during the past few years, feminist researchers began to explore the differences in leadership styles amongst men and women, particularly the characteristics that contribute to the advancement of women in leadership. Eagly and Karau (2002) cited by Lewis (2004:9) argued that males and females act in accordance with the gendered role they are expected to play, which explains the different approaches to leadership styles. Pounder and Coleman (2002) as cited by Thawley (2006:20) suggested that the polarization of 'male' and 'female' has legitimised the question of whether men and women lead differently. After several investigations conducted by Pounder and Coleman (2002) as cited by

Thawley (2006:20), on women in leadership roles, they concluded that there are debatable opinions that are positive and negative towards the different leadership styles of both men and women. According to Pounder and Coleman (2002) as cited by Thawley (2006:20), "the real value of gender and leadership is its ability to reveal factors that reinforce gender stereotypes".

According to Lieberman (2010), women perform tasks of relationship building and men focus on the task. Women make decisions by weighing up all the options before making an informed decision, whilst men tend to internalise the different options until they find a solution. Female leaders are different to their male counterparts in that women are more concerned about building relationships with people and men are only interested in status and how high they fair in the organisational structure. Women associate with people of all levels whilst men only associate with people who have the same level as themselves, (Lieberman, 2006).

Eagly, Makhijani and Klonsky (1992) characterised men as being task-oriented, autocratic, controlling, punishment-oriented, aloof, analytical, systematic, robust and operating very close to the policies and procedures within the organisation. The authors, Eagly et al (1992) characterized women as being team oriented and people-oriented.

According to Powell and Butterfield (1989), when employees make mistakes, female leaders are more accustomed to weighing up whether it was the inability of training used or whether it was lack of effort on their part to account for the mistakes made. Male leaders on the other hand generally take a more coherent approach, using punishment or training in all cases (Powell and Butterfield, 1989). Tannen (1990), described women as using communication to establish a connection with staff, whilst men use communication to transmit information and at the same time show their experience. Female leaders focus on the understanding and the development of staff, whilst trying to inspire confidence through the accomplishment of their work and effort (Tannen, 1990). Ely (1994) believed that the role of the leader should be to listen, mentor, direct and support staff.

2.2.5 Women in leadership

According to Deaux et al (1985), there are two important reasons why women matter in business. Firstly, gender diversity can meet certain business goals. Secondly, with many countries facing a skills shortage at all levels, especially in male dominated domains such as Engineering and Information Technology, women who have the relevant qualifications, but are inactive because of stereotyping in the workplace, can fill the skills gap.

According to Stanford, Oates, And Flores (1995), as cited by Shunmugam, Amartunga & Haigh, (2006:8), during the 1980's women mimicked masculine characteristics in leadership roles, women have since evolved and have their own way of leading. According to both the authors Helgesen (1995) and Stanford et al (1995), the integration of women into leadership roles should not rely on them fitting into traditional male roles, but rather on practicing their own style of female leadership. Leadership styles of women are no better or worse than traditional male-dominated styles; they are just different. According to Shakeshaft (1993), by paying particular attention to one leadership style as opposed to another does not in any way suggest that there is an ideal approach to leadership, but rather sets out to impress upon us that men and women have different views and thoughts and unless we understand and respect these differences, they will not work well together.

Eagly and Carli (2003) as cited by Jogulu and Wood (2006:246), stated that women leaders in the past often adapted their leadership style to their male counterparts, but is of the opinion that female leaders of today have evolved into their own leadership style. The authors are also of the view that women are more flexible, have better communication skills, are better listeners and are better than men in negotiation. The authors also believe that women leaders are now beginning to impact organizations by trusting their own leadership styles. Unlike the first generation of women leaders, women of today are making their mark in the corporate world. Women continue to fight for continuous improvement in the ethics of their work and try to raise the bar to keep their subordinates encouraged at all times, whilst always encouraging participation (Jogulu and Wood 2006:246).

According to Shavlik and Touchton (1988), despite the great efforts to address the balance in organizations, there is still a perception that women should not be in leadership and this tips the balance when stereotypes have a powerful influence in the decision to employ woman leaders over their male counterparts. If a woman is successful in obtaining a leadership role, she is then pressured to behave like her male counterparts, instead of embracing her new leadership role with her own distinct leadership style (Eagly and Carli 2007). Therefore, according to Shavlik and Touchton (1988), organisations tend to place great emphasis on gender roles and less emphasis on organisational leadership roles.

2.2.5.1 The Glass Ceiling

Although women today are more educated and even represent more individuals that are employed globally, they still experience a distinct division in an organisational setting and find it difficult to break the barrier that divides them from attaining high level professional positions in leadership, (ILO proposal 2000:6). The same proposal revealed that women represented 20% of individuals placed in leadership positions. In renowned organisations globally, there is a huge difference in terms of how many men are in leadership positions as opposed to women, the ILO proposal (2000:17).

According to Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) and Eagly & Carli (1986) as cited by Van Euphen (2003:4), the terminology "the glass ceiling" was first heard of when it was published in the Wall Street Journal in 1986, the article spoke of women and the barriers they face when trying to climb the corporate ladder. Morrison and Glinow (1990) as cited by Kaifi & Mujtaba (2009:5) defined the "glass ceiling", as an obstruction that is so small, that it is sometimes hard to see it, yet it is powerful enough to deter women from moving up the corporate ladder. The barriers experienced by women in leadership roles have more of an impact on high-level leadership positions.

"The Glass Ceiling" the invisible barrier between women and high-level leadership roles:

Figure 2.2: THE GLASS CEILING ILLUSTRATION

Adapted from: Wirth, L. 2001, **The Glass Ceiling Illustration: International Labour Organisation. Economical Active Population**.1950 – 2010, Pg 26

Figure 2.2, the circles represent women and the rectangles represent men. The triangle represents the organization whilst the square represents the corporate ladder to high-level leadership roles. The roof of the square is referred to as "The Glass Ceiling" According to Castro and Furchtgott-Roth (1997) the term has been used to describe the obstruction or barrier that women face that cannot be penetrated when trying to climb the corporate ladder, women then have to accept low level leadership positions as opposed to their male counterparts who advance more rapidly beyond them.

2.2.5.2 Preventing pitfalls of women in leadership roles

Eagly (2005), as cited in Mathipa and Tsoka, (2001:327) indicated that training in leadership could help women leaders break through all barriers to attain high-level leadership positions. Female leaders should be trained with specific attention given to the problems they encounter in their leadership positions. The training may help women leaders to understand and resolve why their subordinates are resistant to their leadership. The training should include how leaders exercise their authority more effectively and help women cement the relationships that they have with their subordinates based on transparency and honesty, as cited in Matipha and Tsoka, (2001:327) in a study by Eagly 2005. Women should be empowered to take up leadership roles believing in themselves and not let their gender be a stumbling block or an excuse to pursue their aspirations as a leader.

2.3 Gender

According to Basow (1992), gender referred to the biological distinction between males and females. According to Giddens (2004) as cited by Geddes LR (2009:7), gender helps distinguish the roles men and women have to play, it also helps in defining their role in society.

2.3.1 Gender differences in organisational behaviour

According to Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001:794), leadership styles of men and women yield a pattern in shaping the organisation, mostly reflecting the influence of gender stereotypes. Furthermore, in organisations the manner in which women lead is more democratic than men, this could very well be because women are afraid to deviate from the traditional ways of leading, (Eagly and Johannesen- Smith, 2001:794).

According to Morrison, Greene and Tischler (1985) as cited by Cook, DeCaro and DeCaro (2010:53) research had shown that organisations have a very negative perception of women in leadership roles, which could be as a result of the negative views of society, which has been derived from role incongruence. Reed (1983) argued (as cited by Cook, DeCaro and DeCaro 2010:53) that when women begin to behave like their male

counterparts then the issue of role incongruence occurs. According to Atwater, Carey & Waldman, (2001), gender-stereotyping theories portray women as being more incompetent than male leaders (Cook, DeCaro and DeCaro 2010:53). According to Dawley, Hoffman & Smith, (2004) (cited by Cook, DeCaro and DeCaro 2010:53), women are confused as to how they are expected to behave in leadership positions because there are various conflicting perceptions about the way they should lead and more often they fail to meet all that is expected of them.

2.3.2 Gender not the determinant of leadership style

According to Myers-Briggs (1980) as cited in Kelley (1997:1) in general people prefer different things and that's what makes them individuals, which can then be seen when they choose who they allow in their circle of friends, what sport they like, what type of jobs they prefer and even what type of leadership style best suits them. People are different and diverse and in order for organisations to grow, they have to embrace having a diversified workforce. The studies by the various authors have revealed there is therefore no consensus as to which is the best leadership style; however, the findings suggest that leadership styles in general have similar characteristics. Powell, Butterfield and Parent (2002) as cited by Booysen and Nkomo (2006: 5), studied the findings of research done on male and female leaders and found that men and women are very similar with regards to the way they lead and behave. If men and women are then equally competent and are, similar in so many ways this should result in more leadership opportunities being available to women.

According to Vinnicombe and Singh (2002), studies have shown that men and women who are in high-level leadership roles were perceived as being educated and masculine and

lower level leadership roles were perceived as being more feminine suggesting that high-level leadership characteristics are associated with masculinity. Women are then expected to mould themselves according to male role models. The increase in the number of women in senior leadership positions will result in women having more female role models as opposed to male role models, (Vinnicombe and Singh 2002).

According to Kanter (2000), there are many views and perceptions about what differentiates male and female leadership styles. For example, women in organisations may be perceived as being employed as token thereby allowing women to feel inadequate and left on their own whilst facing enormous amounts of pressure when it comes to their performance levels (Kanter 2000). According to Epstein (1991), society should not differentiate between men and women but they should fall under one title, which is "people". Smith (1987) is concerned that society should not idealise men as being the perfect gender for leadership roles because this in turn makes women feel that if they do not conform to male leadership styles they are then considered abnormal and hence inadequate.

According to Kanter (1977), leaders in a hierarchy, occupy roles defined by their specific positions and have to work within boundaries of their respective gender roles. Leadership roles are covered by appropriate behavior and set rules for appropriate leadership, regardless of the sex of the leader. Eagly, Wood and Diekman (2000), as cited by Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001:7) are of the view that leadership and gender should be synonymous and that the objectives of the organisation should be of more importance than gendered leadership. Eagly et al. (2000) as cited by Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001:7) suggested that organizations should focus on organisational leadership roles and attempt to regulate as many of the tasks as possible that could be performed by both men and women. The MLQ Center for Leadership Studies (2000) as cited by Palmer et al (2001:8) measured the leadership styles of men and women, and found very little difference; women did, however, outperform men on three levels of transformation: the characteristics that inspire motivate and influence an individual's consideration. These findings from the leadership study suggested that women leaders expressed enthusiasm for the future, and focused on motivating staff, staff development, mentoring, coaching and

attending to the individual needs of staff. Lowe, Kroeck and Sivasubramaniam (1996) found that women on many levels of style and effectiveness did better than their male counterparts. Women also excelled in the soft skills department, and were noted to be warmer, kinder, more emotional and helpful as opposed to their male counterparts (Eagly, 1997).

2.4 Stereotyping

According to McGarty et al (2002), stereotypes are shared beliefs about a particular social group; these beliefs are often based on real life perceptions. According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2008:191), "a stereotype is an individual's set of beliefs about the characteristics or attributes of a group". According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2008:191), stereotyping begins by categorising people into various criteria such as gender, age, race and occupation.

2.4.1 Gender stereotyping

"A sex role stereotype is the belief that differing traits and abilities make men and women particularly well suited to different roles" (Kreitner and Kinicki 2008:193). According to Chetwynd and Hartnett (1978), Three important factors can be identified for gender stereotyping:

- The male stereotype is one of dominance, aggressiveness, independence, and problem solving; whilst the female stereotype is one of dependence, subjectivity, passivity and subordination.

- Division of labour into men's work and women's work is conducted on the basis of gender.

- Investing in males because the characteristics of men have more importance and value compared to those associated with women. This assists males in moving into higher status positions.

According to Alvesson and Billing (1992) as cited by Van Euphen (2003:10), the difficulties in gender stereotyping is that there is a rigid view in that you have to be either masculine or feminine without any other deviations and hence men cannot be a seen as feminine males and women cannot be seen as masculine females. Alimo-Metcalfe (1995) as cited by Kawana (2004:19), suggested that one of the reasons why gender stereotypes is extensively researched is to understand why there are so few women in leadership and the perceptions that exists in society about how differently men and women lead. Vinnicombe and Singh (2002), as cited by Kawana (2004:19) referred to "gender "and 'sex' as being used to substitute one for the other. However 'sex' is a term used when you want to describe the physical and biological aspects of people placing them into different groups of men and women and 'gender' is used when you are describing the social and psychological development of men and women based on their sex (Kawana 2004:19).

2.4.2 Gender stereotypes and leadership

According to Burgess and Borgida (1999) and Eagly (1987) as cited by Bowles and Mcginn (2008:8), gender stereotyping of women leaders are based on societies perceptions of women. The authors Burgess and Borgida (1999) and Eagly (1987) as cited by Bowles and Mcginn (2008:8) outline the views and societal perceptions of women in leadership roles and what women should aspire to be. The gender typing of occupations are mainly classified into either male and female, with the majority of leadership roles being associated with characteristics that are more male than female (Miller & Budd, 1999). According to Krefting (2002), Neubert and Taggar (2004), and Ridgeway (2001) as cited by Cook, DeCaro & DeCaro (2010:54) , several studies have indicated a stereotype of the "typical man" and "typical woman" across the different age groups, genders, education levels, and marital status. These studies also found that the traditional male characteristics are seen as more valuable than traditional female characteristics.

According to Eagly et al (2003), the female leadership style is perceived as having stereotypical features such as warmth, kindness and the cultivating of high quality relationships. Women in leadership roles are seen as being easily persuaded and not

aggressive or independent. Women in leadership are perceived as being more talkative and are viewed as being extremely submissive to authority. However, according to Vecchio (2002), women do not possess characteristics that are needed to be successful in leadership based on traditional gender stereotypes. Traditional gender stereotypes depict the male leadership style as being very task-oriented and high on traits reflecting competence and strength. Male leaders are perceived as being successful, active, effective, emotionally stable, very independent, rational, aggressive, very objective, not easily influenced, very dominant, distant, very forceful, very hard and unaware of the feelings of others (Becker, Ayman and Korabik (2002) and Heilman, Block and Martell (1983) as cited by Dawley et al (2004:2)

According to Heilman (1997) as cited by Sikdar and Mitra (2009:3), men and women have characteristics that define which career is suited for them. For example, men are stereotyped as being good at fixing cars and driving trucks and women are stereotyped as being good at administrative work, teaching and nursing. Many high profile leadership positions demand 12-hour work days, work on weekends, social events, extended travel, and business meetings, and women more than often do not qualify because of family obligations. Heilman (1997) as cited by Sikdar and Mitra (2009:3), argued that the genre of writing job profiles in terms of male and female reduced the likelihood that people will pursue careers that did not meet the stereotyped criteria that is associated with that particular job and that men and women will look for jobs that suit their lifestyle, characteristics and gender.

2.4.3 Effects of stereotyping on female leaders

According to Aronson, Quinn, and Spencer (1998) and Steele and Aronson, 1995 as cited by Hoyt (2005:3) gender stereotyping has many negative effects, and women themselves start to believe that they are inferior to their male counterparts, society also has a very negative perception of women and their capabilities as leaders.

According to the Catalyst Census (2005:3), organisations overlook women for leadership roles because of gender stereotyping. The 2005 Catalyst Census findings revealed that

even though women occupy more than 50% of leadership roles globally, only 2% of women make it to Fortune 500 organisations. Organisations should therefore confront the issues of women being discriminated against because of their gender and should take advantage of the talented women they have in their organisations.

Gender stereotypes also permeates the relations of men and women in the workplace, which then affects the way each sex is expected to behave and how they interpret their behaviour (Williams & Best, 1982). Women who are brave enough to assume leadership roles often imitate their male counterparts, and if they adhere to their traditional "feminine" characteristics, they are then often seen as incompetent and considered too nice. If they take on more "masculine" characteristics they are then considered as being too harsh. Gender stereotyping influences the way we think about others, as well as the way we interpret the differences in behavior (Valian 1999) as cited in Lewis (2004:19)

2.5 Summary

This chapter provided the theoretical framework of how gender is conceptualised and the effect that gender has on leadership. The literature review indicated that gender is independent of leadership, and discussed the stereotyping of women, female leadership styles and the perceptions and barriers that women face when aspiring to leadership roles. The foundation of this study revolved around the ability to understand perceptions of gender leadership and how perceptions influence behavior. The purpose of this research was to address some of the issues pertaining to leadership and gender discrimination. The result of this study may provide the foundation to help assess the validity of perceptions of gender and leadership effectiveness. In the following chapter, the methodology employed in the current research study will be discussed.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents detailed information on methodology for collecting the data. The research methodology includes the research scope, research method and design, data collection methods and the variables of the study. The description of the population and sampling plan as well as the data collection instrument used and the analytical tools and limitations of the methodology will be discussed.

3.2 Research Study

This research study made use of the quantitative data analysis technique as opposed to the qualitative data analysis technique. According to the Webster dictionary (1999), quantitative research uses wide-ranging research methods through surveys, questionnaires and structured interviews. The contact with people is much faster than qualitative research. Qualitative research explores the behavioural experiences of participants in the form of interviews. The main aim is to get a deep understanding of the participant's opinion and it is because of this technique that fewer people participate.

3.3 Research Study

Hypothesis and non-hypothesis is also an important concept to understand in research methodology. Hypothesis is an assumption or concession made for the sake of an argument. The assumption is made in order to draw out and test its logical consequences. According to the Webster dictionary (1999), non hypothesis is a statistical hypothesis used to test and accept or reject in favor of an substitute alternative, the hypothesis observed

between the means of two samples is due to probability alone and not due to a systematic cause. This study examines women in organisations and how the challenges which have impacted on their employability, their promotability and the level of respect their command of respect from their peers both male and females.

3.4 Sampling

A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole, (Webster, 1985). With regards to people, it can be classified as a group of participants or respondents (people) chosen from a larger population for the purpose of a survey as cited in Fridah, (Webster, 1985). According to Mertens 1998:253, sampling "refers to the method used to select a given number of people or things from a population". One key area of concern with regards to sampling is the validity and interpretations of the findings and the generalisation of the findings on people in society (Shavelson, 1988). The sample size of this study was 4361 as there were 4361 permanent employees currently employed at UKZN at the time the study was undertaken. Of the 4361 employees at UKZN, 2202 were females and 1860 were males (UKZN HR Equity Report, 2010). The sample size included the full population for broader participation. It allowed for greater generalizability and the reliability and validity to be much higher. All sampling is either probability or non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, each person of the population has a known probability of being chosen, K.N. Ross (2005). Random sampling is a familiar form of probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is not random instead a person is chosen based on some trait like being in the right place at the right time it is called a convenience sample, (CDC PPS Module, 2006). The actual response consisted of 64 respondents (n = 64) valid responses, The response rate was poor due to the nature of the study, which required a focus on the participants perceptions of their managers which was of a sensitive nature.

3.3 The Measurement Instrument

Employees were invited to participate in the survey via the on-line notice system at UKZN. The responses obtained was 64. According to Weiers (1998), the specific advantages of using questionnaires for research purposes is that analysing information from structured questionnaires is relatively uncomplicated with questionnaires generally carry a low cost and are easy to disseminate. More specifically, self-completion questionnaires allow participants sufficient time to formulate accurate responses. The research was conducted over a period of two months. Data was then exported from Question Pro and analysed.

The decision to use electronic questionnaires was for the following reasons:

- It allowed easy access to all employees at UKZN

- Completed data could be retrieved immediately

- Data could be analysed immediately

- Answers are kept confidential and the researcher's opinion could not influence the respondent

- Respondents could complete the form at a time that was convenient for them

- The questionnaire did not ask the respondents their level within the organization as it was assumed that all employees reported to a leader be it male/female

3.4 Reliability and Validity of the questionnaire

Reliability generally refers to consistency or stability taking into account that measurements can be repeated and confirmed by further competent measures according to Rosnow & Rosenthal, (1996) as cited by Coopmans (2007:33). According to Joppe (2000)

as cited by Golafshani (2003:598), validity is the extent to which a test is measured and interpreted as being accurate.

Measures taken to ensure reliability and validity:

- the language of the questions were simple, language that is incomprehensible to the participants could have distorted the findings

- there were no leading questions , which could bias the answers of the participants

- the questions were specific to the study and did not confuse the participants

3.5 Data Analysis

This research study made use of the quantitative data analysis techniques. Quantitative research entails the development of a research hypotheses and then validating the hypotheses using specific data. (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992).

The strengths of the quantitative method include:
- Specifying the research study based on specific set terms (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992).

- Independ and dependent variables are specified under investigation

- Research goals are followed for a more objective conclusion

- Research subjects are measured based on longitudinal measures

  The weaknesses of the quantitative method include:

- It fails to convey to the researcher information of the situation and where the phenomenon occurred.

- It does not allow any control over the environment were participants answer the questionnaires

In addition Patton (2002), stated that data interpretation and analysis explains the findings by outlying the importance of the data. QuestionPro was used to analyse the data after the questionnaire was exported. Data stored on QuestionPro has a built in facility to analyse the data can, which can then be exported as graphs or tabulations.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, the research methodology was described, as well as the analysis technique, the motivation for the compilation of the questionnaire, and the advantages of using electronic questionnaires. The following chapter will present the analysis of the results. Graphs and cross tabulations are used to present the effectiveness of gender leadership and comparisons are made regarding employee leadership style preference and perceptions of whether men lead better than women do.

Chapter Four

Presentation of Results

4.1 Introduction

The influence of gender on leadership practices is not a trivial matter and manifest in a complex and diverse manner in organisations. It is important to estimate impact that gender has on leadership so as to identify ways to reduce and overcome gender discrimination against women. Chapter four presents and justifies the methodology used to assess whether there are differences in leadership styles amongst men and women. The following will be discussed, the type of research, sampling procedure, data collection methods, data analysis technique, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

4.2 Reliability

Cronbach's alpha was calculated at .955. This indicates that the questionnaire is very reliable. The closer the alpha value is to 1, the greater the level of reliability (Gliem and Gliem, 2003).

4.3 Data Collection

The online "Gender Differences in Leaderships Styles" questionnaire was placed on the UKZN notification system. 164 employees viewed the questionnaire; of these, 87 started the survey, but only 64 completed it, despite several reminders to staff. The desired sample size (n=350) of completed questionnaires was not achieved. Although the sample size was relatively small, the result were still statistically effective, Askew (2005). "Within a quantitative survey design, one of the real reward of quantitative methods is their

capability to use smaller groups of people to make conclusions about larger groups that would be rather expensive to study" (Holton & Burnett, 1997, p. 71).

4.4 Age distribution of respondents

To analyse the demographic factor of age, participants were requested to state to which age group category they belonged. Questionnaires were available to all age groups. The number of participants in each age group category is depicted on the graph below: 39.6% were between 35 – 44 years of age, 30.2 % were between 45 - 54 years of age, 24.5 % were between 25 – 34 years of age, and 5.7% were above 55 years of age (Figure 4.1).
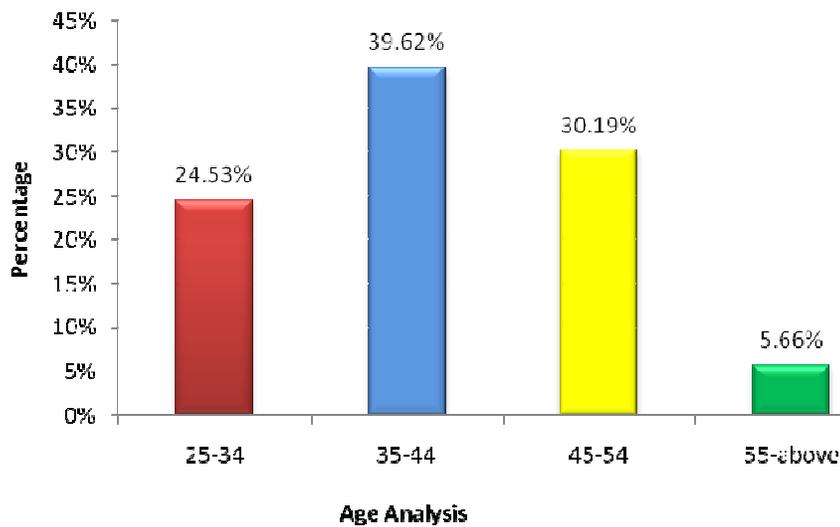
Figure 4.1: Age categories of respondents

4.5 Race distribution of respondents

Given South Africa's social divisions based on the different population groups, it was essential to investigate whether or not population group is a differentiating factor for how gendered leadership is viewed. Accordingly, the participants were requested to specify whether they were African Black, Coloured, Indian, or White. Indians represented 47.3% of the sample, followed by Whites 29.1%, African Blacks 16.4%, Coloureds 3.6% and other 3.6%. There was a lower percentage of African Blacks than Whites, but it was predominantly Indians who participated in the survey (Figure 4.2).
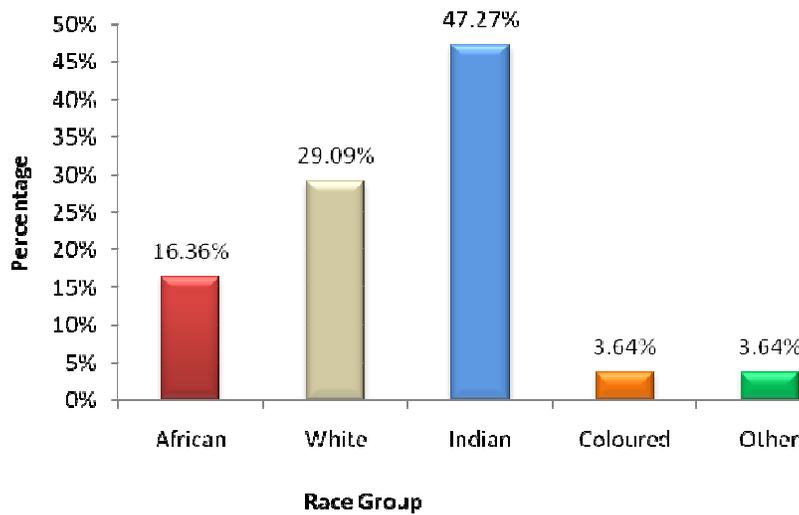
Figure 4.2: Race distribution of respondents

4.6 Gender of participants

The number of female compared to male respondents who participated is 63.6% and 36.4% respectively. This ratio reflects that females were more interested in the research topic than males (Figure. 4.3).
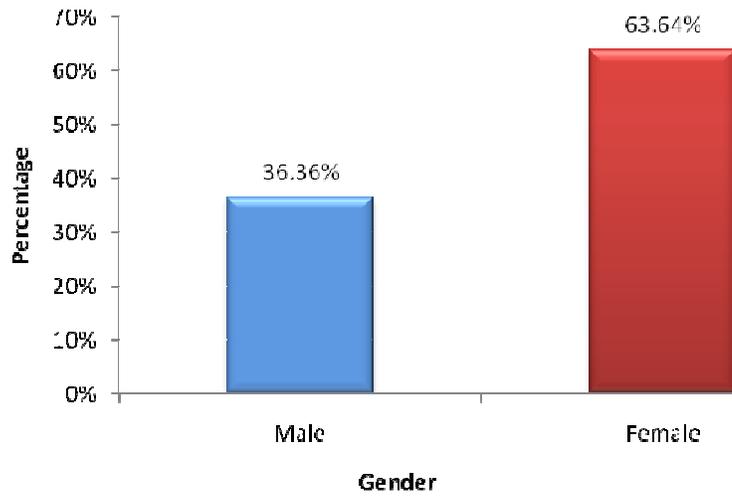
Figure 4.3: Gender of respondents

4.7 Female leaders' response to male subordinates

This question aimed to establish whether participants feel that female leaders respond differently to male subordinates, as opposed to female subordinates. 44.2% of the participants agreed that female leaders responded more favorably toward male subordinates as opposed to female subordinates, 11.5% strongly agreed, 38.5% disagreed and 5.8% strongly disagreed. There was no significant difference between those that agreed and disagreed that female leaders respond more favorably towards male subordinates (Figure 4.4).
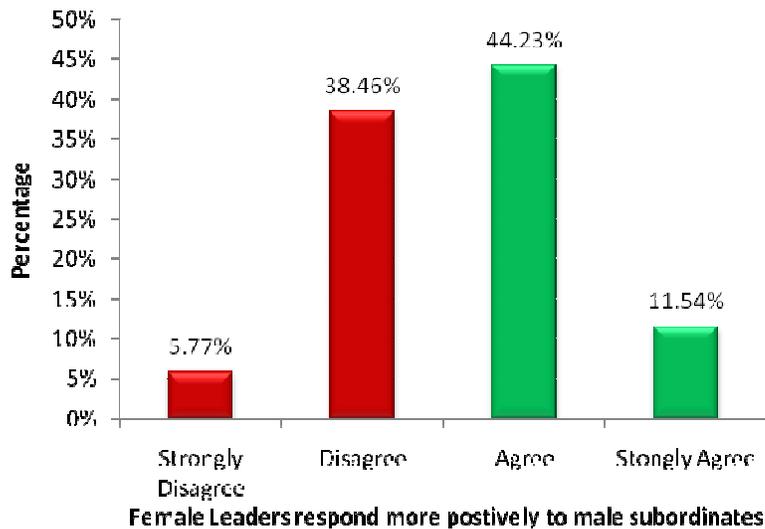
Figure 4.4: Female leaders respond more positively to male subordinates

4.8 Male leader's response to female subordinates

This question aimed to establish whether participants feel that male leaders respond differently to female subordinates as compared to male subordinates. 32.7% of the participants agreed that male leaders responded more favorably toward female subordinates as opposed to male subordinates, 15.4% strongly agreed, 48.1% disagreed and 3.8% strongly disagreed. There was no significant difference between the number of participants that agreed and disagreed that male leaders respond more favorably towards female subordinates (Figure 4.5)
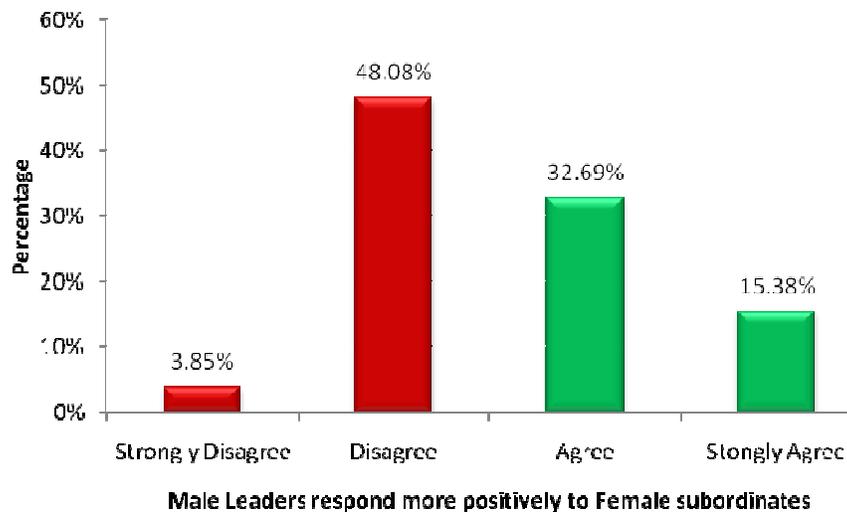
Figure 4.5: Male leaders respond more positively to female subordinates

4.9 Leadership preference

Critical to this study is the participants' preference for a male or female leader. The majority of the participants, 64.4%, preferred to be led by a male leader, and a significantly lower percentage of participants, 35.6%, preferred to be led by a woman. It is evident that a high proportion of employees prefer to be led by a male, which is very much in keeping with the discriminatory perceptions that organisations and society have on female leadership (Figure 4.6)
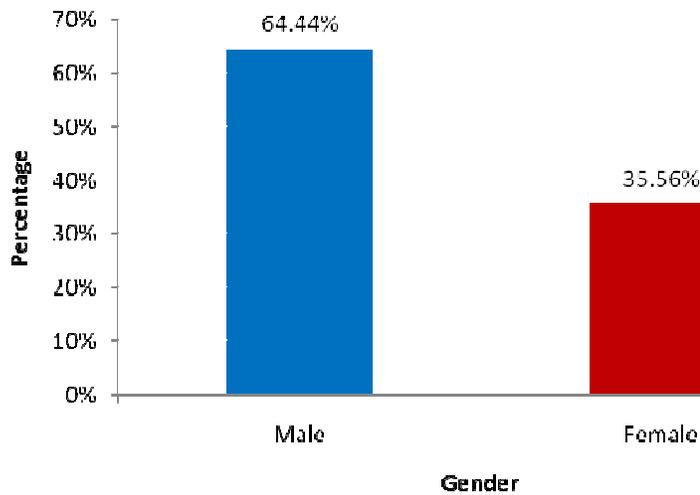
Figure 4.6: Leadership gender preference

4.10 Gendered leadership impacts work performance

This question assessed whether participants believe that the gender of their leaders affects their work performance. The majority of participants did not feel that the gender of their leader affected their work performance: 20.8% strongly disagreed, 60.4% disagreed, 13.2% agreed, and 5.7% strongly agreed. (Figure 4.7).
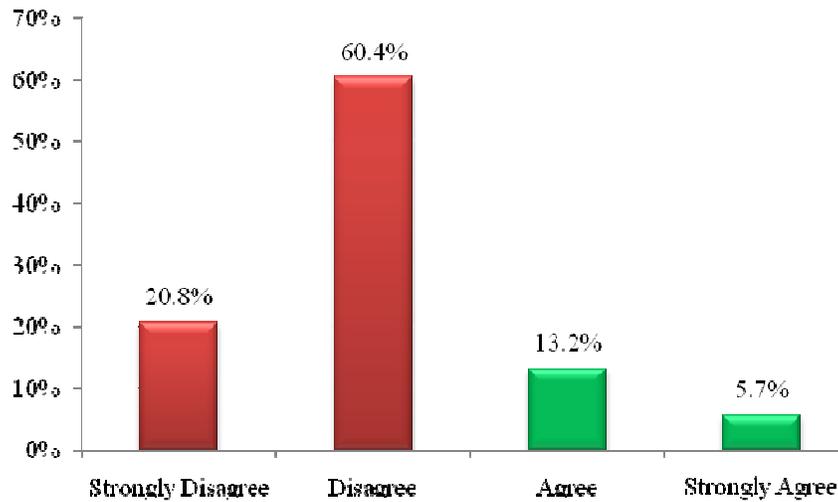
Figure 4.7: Gendered leadership impacts work performance

4.11 The effect of male leaders

Participants were asked whether male leaders are more effective than female leaders: 23.1% agreed, 3.8% strongly agreed and 59.6% disagreed, 13.5% strongly disagreed. The proportion of positive and negative responses differed significantly. Almost more than double the proportion disagreed that male's leaders were more effective than female leaders. (Figure 4.8).
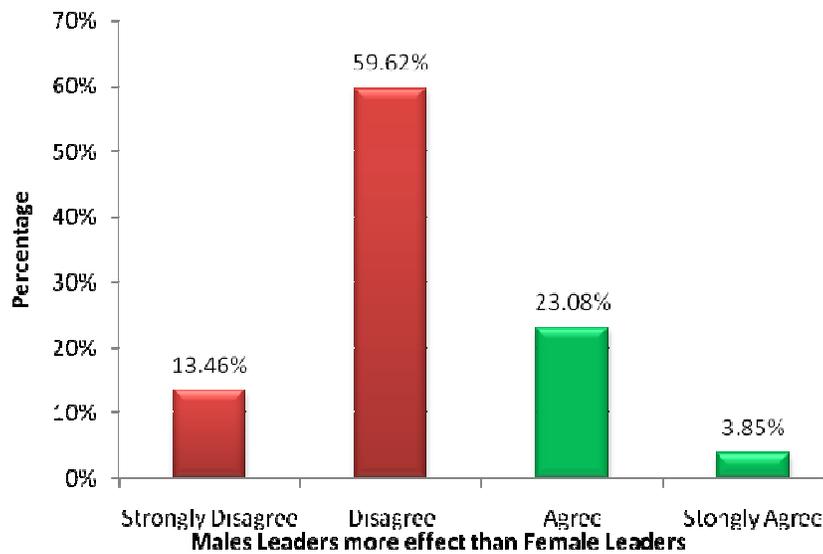
Figure 4.8: Male leaders more effective than female leaders

4.12 I respond better to a male leader

The following graph indicates that the majority of participants 67% did not agree that they respond better to male leaders than to female leaders, 17% strongly disagreed, 10% agreed and 6% strongly agreed. (Figure 4.9)
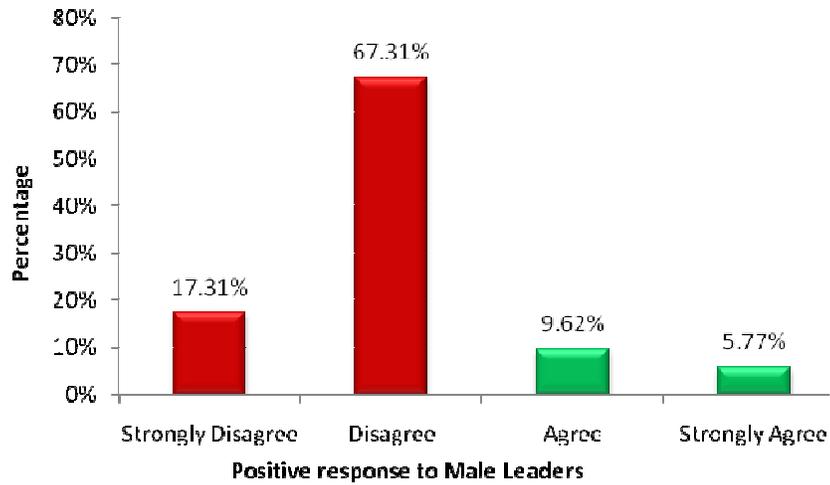
Figure 4.9: Respond more positively to male leader

4.13 Preference for leadership styles

Question eleven aimed to understand the participants' preference for leadership style. Respondents were asked to indicate their preference from nine of the most common leadership styles. The majority of the participants preferred the director leadership style.

Twenty three percent (23%) preferred a director; a 'director' has holistic view of the organisation and what the organisations objectives are and how can it be attained (Quinn et al, 2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57).

Nineteen percent (19%) preferred a delegator; a leader in the 'delegator' role delegates and assigns a set of desired results to a team member (the delegate) and leaves it to him to determine how to achieve those results (Quinn et al, 2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57).

Twelve percent (12 %) preferred a leader; a leader is someone that is a team player, extremely high on ethics and has good working relationships with subordinates based on mutual trust. A leader also produces superior work for long periods of time (Quinn et al, 2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57).

Ten percent (10%) preferred a coordinator; a leader in the 'coordinator' role, according to Quinn et al (2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57) is a project manager who ensures there is a work process plan in place, he not only manages the design work but also manages the flow of work across all the functions.

Eight percent (8 %) preferred a mentor; a leader in the 'mentor' role according to Quinn et al (2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57) guides and develops subordinates to reach their full potential, this is done by communicating areas of development and giving them the tools to build up their skills.

Six percent (6%) preferred facilitator; a 'facilitator' boosts morale and cohesiveness, whilst managing relationships and balancing the needs of subordinates (Quinn et al, 2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57).

Four percent (4%) preferred an innovator: a leader in the 'innovator' role, according to Quinn et al (2006, as cited in Andres 2008:57) is creative, manages organisational changes and facilitates change, identifies trends and envisions innovations

Four percent (4%) preferred an educator; a leader in the 'educator' role focuses on personal development; learns what the strengths are in his workforce and links peoples strengths to their career objectives and goals (Quinn et al, 2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57).

Four percent (4%) preferred a communicator; a 'communicator' communicates in different ways to get a message across to subordinates, this can be done by being animated, authorative, dramatic, friendly and honest (Quinn et al, 2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57).

Two percent (2%) preferred a participator; a leader in the 'participator' role takes democratic decisions, seeks to involve other people in the process, possibly including subordinates, peers, superiors and other stakeholders (Quinn et al, 2006 as cited in Andres 2008:57).
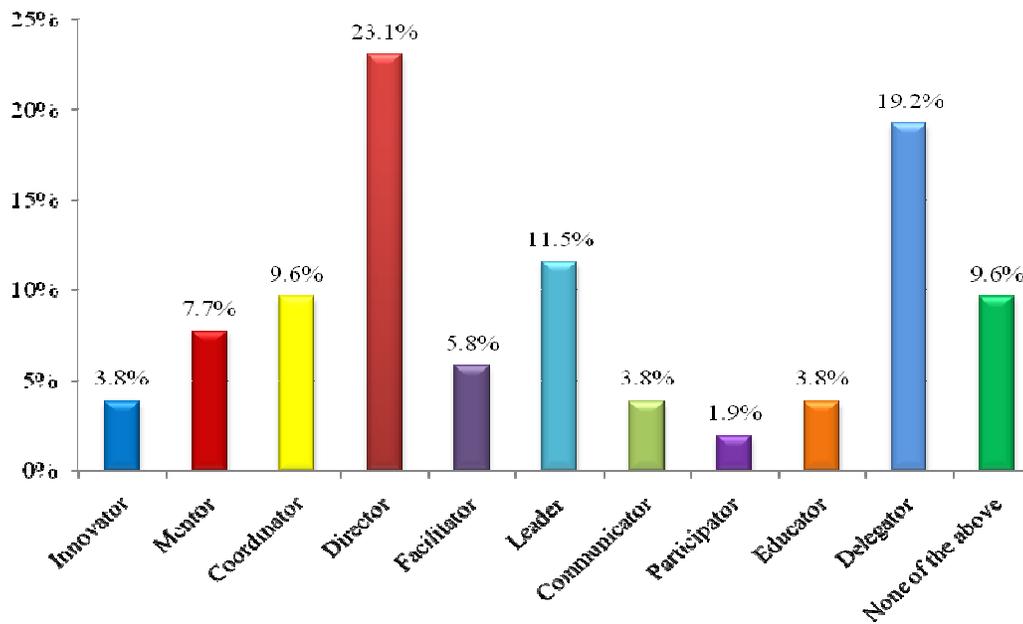
Figure 4.10: Preference for leadership styles

4.14 Cross Tabulations

Table 4.1: Gender cross-tabulated against "I prefer to be led by a male or female leader"

Consistent with the premise of this research study, and much of the research cited therein, female leaders were rated more negatively and male leaders were rated more positively. 72% of male participants preferred to be led by a male leader, and only 28% of male participants preferred to be led by female leaders. 59% of female participants preferred to be led by male leaders, whilst 40 % of female participants preferred to be led by female leaders. There was no significant difference between male and female participants (p=333) with regard to leader gender preference.

	I prefer to be led by a:	
	Male Leader	Female Leader
Male	72.2%	27.8%
Female	59.3%	40.7%

χ^2= 0.792

P = 0.373

Table 4.2: Gender cross-tabulated against "male leaders respond more positively to female subordinates"

There was no significant difference in the responses from male and female participants as to whether male leaders respond more positively to female subordinates. 55% of male respondents disagreed, whilst 27% of male respondents agreed and 16% strongly agreed. With regard to female respondents, 44% disagreed, 5% strongly disagreed, 35% agreed and 14% strongly agreed (Table 4.2).

Gender	Male leaders respond more positively to female subordinates			
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Male	0%	55%	27%	16%
Female	5%	44%	35%	14%

$\chi^2 = 1.61$

P = 0.657

Table 3: Gender cross-tabulated against "female leaders respond more positively to male subordinates"

There was no significant difference in the responses from male and female participants on whether female leaders respond more positively to male subordinates. 44%, of males participants disagreed, 5% strongly disagreed whilst, 44% agreed and 5% strongly agreed. With regard to female participant, 35% disagreed, 5% strongly disagreed, 38% agreed and 11% strongly agreed (Table 4.3).

Gender	Female leaders respond more positively to male subordinates			
	Strongly Disagreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Strongly Agreed
Male	5%	44%	44%	5%
Female	14%	35%	44%	5%

$\chi^2 = 1.113$

$P = 0.774$

Table 4.4: Race group cross-tabulated against "Prefer to be led by a male/female leader"

The data revealed that 85 % of the African Black participants preferred a male leader, whilst 14% preferred a female leader (this could very well be because of the patriarchal nature of African culture). 58% of Whites preferred a male leader and 26% preferred a female leader. With regard to Indians, 60% preferred a male leader and 39% preferred a female leader. 50% of Coloured respondents preferred a male leader and 50% preferred a female. 100% of the "other" category preferred a male leader. There was no significant difference amongst the different race groups with regard to their preference for a male or female leader. (Table 4.4)

Race Group	I prefer to be led by a:	
	Male Leader	Female Leader
African	85%	14%
White	58%	26%
Indian	60%	39%
Coloured	50%	50%
Other	100%	0%

χ^2= 2.44

P = 0.655

4.15 Summary

This chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of data generated from the study, and the findings were presented in the form of graphs and cross - tabulations. The research questions were analyzed and the findings revealed that although participants did not agree that male leaders were more effective, participants still preferred to be led by a male leader. The evidence from the research suggested that the "glass ceiling "has been broken but employees are still being influenced by society's perceptions. In the following chapter, a summary and discussion the findings will take place. The discussion of findings will provide the basis for the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

Chapter Five

Discussion of Results

5.1 Introduction

The research study was conducted in order to understand perceptions of gender differences in leadership and the barriers that women encounter in leadership roles. The chapter discussed the implications of the findings reported in the previous chapter.

Popenoe (1997) as cited by Tsoka (2010:3) stated that, as a result of prejudice, society's perceptions can easily lead to women being discriminated against stereotyping. The need to examine the perceived differences in leadership by gender is critical in order to understand the reasons why employees prefer to be led by a male leader. The current study suggested that even females within organisations prefer to be led by a male leader as opposed to a female leader (Table 4.1). The data revealed that 59% of female participants preferred to be led by a male leader and 40% of female participants preferred to be led by a female leader. The social perception and myths about women in leadership roles may have persuaded even female employees in to believing that male leadership is more effective than female leadership. Therefore, the social assumptions of women continue to create barriers for women in securing leadership roles or gaining the confidence that is required to occupy leadership positions.

5.2 Leadership

According to Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan (1994 as cited in Yarrish et al 2010:247), the concept of leadership involves persuading other people to pursue a common goal that is imperative for the organisation's welfare. The authors Hogan et al (1994) cited in Yarrish et al (2010:247) identified fourteen different categories of leadership behaviour: planning and organizing, problem solving, clarifying, informing, monitoring, motivating,

consulting, recognizing, supporting, managing conflict and teambuilding, networking, delegating, developing and mentoring, and rewarding. In the definition of leadership by Hogan et al (1994 cited in Yarrish et al 2010:247) gender or whether gender determined the outputs of a good leader was not mentioned as a key criteria for excellent leadership qualities.

Organisations require effective leadership, as being of paramount importance as a means to achieve an organisations outcomes and objectives (Antonakis, Cianciolo & Sternberg, 2004). The importance of a good leader cannot be under estimated and therefore it is imperative that organisations choose the best person for the job based on the leader's capabilities and competencies irrespective of their gender. Although the research finding suggested that men and women can be equally effective leaders, there exists resistance from employees when being led by a female. Employees and organisations must realise that leadership is separate from gender and that gender and leadership are not mutually exclusive. Men and women are more alike than most people perceive, and many studies have been undertaken and the findings revealed the there is minimal differences in leadership styles of either gender (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Female leaders have a more efficient way of leading than their male counterparts in that they make additional use of collaboration, consultation, encouragement, and mentorship as a leadership technique. Employees and organisations therefore need to understand that leadership roles can be performed just as effectively and efficiently by either males or females. The ultimate aim of organisations is to appoint leaders that perform effectively and are capable of ensuring the sustainability of the organisation.

There is a common view that women often have to work twice as hard in a leadership role, and have to constantly prove their worth to the organisation. Women have to struggle to find a balance between what is seen as acceptable in terms of their leadership style so as to not appear as being too masculine or too feminine to employees in the organisation. Therefore women in leadership are required to shift their current negative perceptions on gender and leadership stereotypes.

5.3 Stereotyping women in leadership

According to Krietner and Kinicki, (2008:193) "sex-role stereotype is the belief that differing traits and abilities make men and women particularly well suited to different roles". Heilman et al (1983) argues that when subordinates feel that they do not fit into stereotyped roles, they loose confidence in their abilities to do the job. Leadership has always been associated with masculine traits; hence, employees feel that women do not fit the masculine role.

When a negative perception exists, the phenomenon is called a "stereotype threat" (Steele, 1997). These results in people internalizing the idea that women are less capable in leadership roles than men. The findings revealed (Table 2.1) that both male and female respondents preferred to be led by male leaders. Even though women are more than able to perform in leadership roles they are still not given equal opportunities in leadership due to gendered stereotyping. Organisations and society play a big role in the perceptions of women in leadership roles as organisations and society continue to define leadership as being transactional, aggressive and competent which defines a male leader. Women will have to fight against the stereotypical mould that has been created by organisations and society, in an effort to prevent traditional gender roles.

5.4 Gender Differences in Leadership

The findings revealed (Figure 4.3) that majority of the respondents preferred to be led by a male leader. There are several possible explanations for respondent's preference for male leadership, including gender stereotypic expectations that employees have, which has been influenced by society. The current study did, however, show some positive shifts; The findings revealed that employees are beginning to see women as equally effective to their male counterparts. That by itself represents a positive breakthrough for women.

Based on the findings, employees still have a perception that men are better leaders than women in the workforce. According to Powell (1999), nothing could be further from the truth. From a review of the past few decades of academic research, Powell concluded that gender differences were absent in task-oriented behavior, people-oriented behavior, effectiveness ratings of actual leaders, and subordinates' responses to leaders. Powell (1999) pointed out that research suggested differences in the range of influence styles, and a slight difference in treatment by managers of poor performers, the differences were often more a function of a leader's self-confidence than of gender. According to Mansbridge (1991 as cited in Parker 2006), even if one concedes that there are differences in leadership styles between men and women, the differences are so small that they are statistically insignificant. Mansbridge (1991 as cited in Parker 2006), states that the distinctions between male and female styles of leadership are, at best, deceptive, and, at their worst, simplifications and perceptions of reality.

Echoing the sentiments of Mansbridge (1991) as (cited in Parker 2006), the findings revealed that participants agreed that the gender of their leader did not impact on their work, or the way that leaders respond to their male or female sub-ordinates. The positive responses revealed that employees are starting to view women in leadership as being equally effective to their male counterparts. Whilst this is a positive step toward breaking the barriers that women face in leadership, there is still the conflicting findings that UKZN employees prefer to be led by a male leader. It is evident that society's perceptions and stereotyping of women leaders still exist. More research is warranted to further explore these perceptions of female leadership.

5.5 Summary

Based on an analysis and interpretation of the responses, it was found that employees at UKZN, whilst they are beginning to see the worth of women in leadership roles, still prefer to be led by a male leader. Gender differences in leadership style remain an area that is still not fully understood. Although there have been many studies on this topic there are still many questions that have not been answered. For example, in this study, the participants

overall perception was that male and female leaders were equally effective. Why then do the majority of the participants still want to be led by a male leader as opposed to a female leader? Employees need to give female leaders the benefit of the doubt, instead of conforming to societies stereotyping and perceptions. According to Burns (1978), researchers still find a lot of interest in gender and leadership styles. They will perhaps in the future find some conclusive evidence that there are very slight or no differences in the way men and women lead.

Chapter Six

Recommendations and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

Gender and leadership is an important issue for organisations and society at large. For women to excel in leadership roles they need the platform and the support to do so. The study on gender and leadership was prompted due to the notable gap between the number of men in high-level leadership roles as opposed to females.

The study on gender leadership was undertaken to explore the perceptions that employees have on gender leadership, and whether there are any perceived differences or similarities between the male and female leaders. The study also attempted to identify factors indicative of stereotyping and prejudices that employees may have towards female leaders. The central finding that emanated from the study was that the majority of employees prefer to be led by a male leader. These findings are illustrative of the social perceptions on gendered leadership and gender stereotypes on society. It is no wonder that there are so few women in high-level leadership roles.

The current study on gender leadership illustrated that while employees do not feel that male leaders are more effective than female leaders, they still prefer to be led by a male leader. The findings revealed that, although women have broken through the glass ceiling, there are still barriers faced by women in the workforce. It is imperative that the critical issues that continue to deny women opportunities for advancement into leadership roles be further unpacked, and that relevant and effective mechanisms be put into place to harness the potential of women in leadership roles.

6.2 Summary of the findings

Objective 1: To determine the gender preference of leadership

The first objective of the study on gender leadership determined the gender preferences of leadership that employees may have. Therefore, the question that was posed to the participants was simply phrased so that the factors that influence their preferred gender were clearly identifiable. The finding revealed that majority of the participants preferred to be led by a male leader. The resistance may be based on societies stereotyping and the symbolic representation of gender, which suggests that male characteristics are associated with leadership roles. According to leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly & Carli, 2007), they refer to this phenomenon as the "double bind" when women are torn between being a women and trying to fit into a male stereotyped leadership role.

Objective 2: To establish if employees responded more positively to male leaders

The second objective of the study established if employees responded more positively to male leaders. The second objective was achieved. The findings of this study confirmed that the majority of the participants disagreed that they respond more positively to male leaders. The findings revealed that the barriers that women face in the work force are breaking. However, women are still notably underrepresented in high-level leadership positions.

Objective 3: To determine if gender of the leader impacts on the employee's work performance

The third objective determined if the gender of the leader impacted on the employee's work performance. The third objective was achieved. The findings of this study revealed that the majority of the participants felt that the gender of their manager did not impact on their work performance. It is possible that the gender gap is eroding and that employees are beginning to embrace female leadership.

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6.3 Implications of this Research

The results of the study on gender leadership and the discussion led to the following conclusions:

It is interesting to note that the results of this research study were rather consistent with the findings of earlier studies on gender and leadership. Females and males were rated equally as being effective leaders. The current study found that participants did not believe that male leaders responded more positively to female subordinates, and that female leaders responded more positively to male subordinates. The gender of the manager was not reported to impact on work performance. Subordinates had a positive response to female leaders however in spite of that, respondents preferred to be led by a male leader than by a female leader.

The findings of this study indicate that, although women are breaking barriers in the workforce, they still face numerous negative perceptions and problems at different levels. There still appears to be considerable gender discrimination against women, which requires attention. Will female employees in a male dominated society have the potential to grow as efficient and effective leaders? The question can only be answered with time.

6.4 Recommendations to solve the research problem

The University of Kwa – Zulu Natal should:

- Create situations that intensify women's awareness of their potential in leadership roles and build their level of self confidence in their own abilities
- Create an environment that educates all employees to respect women in leadership roles
- Focus their efforts on improving opportunities for women to be promoted into senior management leadership roles
- To educates staff that women are just as effective as their male counterpart
- Focus on gender equity and the career development of women

- Encourage training sessions that educate the subordinates of female leaders that societies gender perceptions are incorrect and discriminatory
- Provide a platform for women within the University
- Create avenues for women to serve on committees where they can make a meaningful contribution

6.5 Recommendations for future studies

Given the above findings, the following recommendations are made to address the problems experienced by women in leadership, as well as women entering leadership roles, and the perception that organisations and society at large have that male leaders are better than female leaders:

- Gender /diversity/sensitivity awareness training needs to be implemented amongst all employees and should be included as part of the organisations employee value proposition.

- Any organisational policies which discriminate against female employees with regard to areas such as job appraisal, job design, travel, leave, benefits, and transfer must be analysed and redefined to support gender equality and equal opportunities.

- Organisations must be willing to become change agents and embrace diversity, value women and redress the gender imbalances.

- Organisations should avoid token appointments of female leaders, and should change their perceptions of women and their capabilities. Women should be respected as being equal to men, and organisations should draw on the strengths of women to increase profits. Women leaders should be trained and developed to increase capacity in their leadership roles.

- Team building, sensitivity training and techniques of organisation development must be used to create supportive, reinforcing platforms for women in leadership.

6.6 Recommendations to overcome the limitations of the study

- The first limitation involves the issue trust. According to the Webster Dictionary (1999), trust is defined as having the ability to have confidence on someone else's strength and abilities. The low sample rate may be related to the issue of trust, as the topic of the study was very sensitive. Even though confidentiality was maintained at all times, employees were still skeptical about their answers being kept confidential from their managers. Therefore, staff may have been reluctant to divulge information that could compromise their work situation.

The following are suggested for overcoming the limitations to this study:
- To build up a clearer picture of the objective of the study to the participants so that they understand the purpose of the research study

- The second limitation was the small sample size: only 64 employees of a total of 4321 completed the survey. The findings also only represent UKZN participants, which is not representative of society at large, and, therefore, not truly representative of the population.

The following are suggested for overcoming the limitations to this study:

- Send out reminder emails to staff

- Face to face interviews would up the response rate

- The third limitation involves using the UKZN online notice system to invite employees to take part in the survey. The notice system at UKZN is not an ideal platform for conducting research surveys. The notice was lost amongst a host of other notices and employees may have not seen it, which is one of the possible reasons why the response rate was so low. Therefore, a limited number of employees did in fact complete the survey.

The following are suggested for overcoming the limitations to this study:

- With permission to send out invitations to participants individually instead of collectively

- The fourth limitation was not doing a pilot study. Doing a pilot study would have helped me make needed alterations in the data collecting method and to change some of the questions in the questionnaire that may have made the answers more targeted to the research question.

The following are suggested for overcoming the limitations to this study:

- A pilot study should be done; it permits a thorough check the usefulness of data and allows for needed alterations in the data collecting methods

6.7 Summary

The research objectives outlined at the beginning of the study have been achieved. The study on gender leadership illustrated that the issues pertaining to women attaining leadership roles and the respect of subordinates can no longer be ignored. Overall, the participants did not view male leaders to be better than female leaders, but they did prefer to be led by a male leader. Participants are more than likely influenced by society's

perceptions, prejudices and stereotyped beliefs of female leaders. Both the primary and secondary data analysed in this and previous chapters raised concerns about the persistence of gender stereotypes, and the challenges faced by women in leadership roles. It seems likely that as more women assume leadership roles and as gender role stereotypes fade away, the very notion of gender differences in leadership style will also disappear.

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APPENDIX 1: Ethical Approval

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

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29 March 2010

Mrs J B Naidoo
Graduate School of Business
Management Studies
Westville Campus
DURBAN

Dear Mrs Naidoo

PROTOCOL: "Gender differences in Leadership Style"
ETHICAL APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0144/2010 M: Faculty of Management Studies

In response to your application dated 18 March 2010, Student Number: **205524371** the Humanities & Social Sciences Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been given **FULL APPROVAL.**

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully
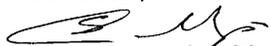
Professor Steve Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES ETHICS COMMITTEE

SC/sn

cc: Prof. A Singh (Supervisor)
cc: Mrs C Haddon

Founding Campuses: ▬ Edgewood ▬ Howard College ▬ Medical School ▬ Pietermaritzburg ▬ Westville

APPENDIX 2: Informed Consent Letter

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
SCHOOL

Dear Respondent,

MBA Research Project

Researcher: Mrs JB Naidoo   031 26073796

Supervisor: Prof A M Singh   031 260 7564

The I, **Jolene B Naidoo**, an MBA student, at the Graduate School of Business, University of Kwazulu-Natal, hereby invite you to participate in a research project entitled: **Gender Differences in Leadership Style: A case study.**

The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding if there is gender differences in leadership behaviour and if so what are the differences and similarities in the stereotypes about male and female leaders. To determine if employees relate differently to male or female leaders. Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this survey group. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the Graduate School of Business, UKZN.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this survey group. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the Graduate School of Business, UKZN.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participating in this study, you may contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above. The survey should take you about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Please note that due to the very strict deadlines of this MBA course we would greatly appreciate your response within 10 days of receipt of this questionnaire

Thank you for time and participation.

Yours Sincerely

_____   _____

JB Naidoo   **Date**

APPENDIX 3: Questionnaire

1. **Gender**

Male	
Female	

2. **Race**

White	
Black	
Indian	
Coloured	
Other	

3. **Age**

25-34	
35-44	
45-54	
55 and older	

4. **I believe that female leaders respond differently to their male and female**

   Subordinates

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	
Agree	

5. **I believe that male leaders respond differently to their male and female subordinates**

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	
Agree	

6. **The most senior person that I report to is male or female**

Male	
Female	

7. **There is a balance between male and female leaders**

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	
Agree	

8. **I prefer to be led by a**

Male Leader	
Female Leader	

9. **Gender makes a difference when it comes to being effective**

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	

Agree	

11. **Which of the following best describes your manager?**

Innovator	
Mentor	
Coordinator	
Director	
Facilitator	
Leader	
Communicator	
Participator	
Educator	
Delegator	

12. **The gender of my manager has an impact on my work**

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	
Agree	

13. **I respond more positively to male leaders**

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	
Agree	

14.   I respond more positively to female leaders

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	
Agree	

5.   Does gender make a difference in the way my manager leads with regards to the ffg:

Strongly disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly Agree	
Agree	

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX 4: Gatekeepers Letter

1 March 2010

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Ms J B Naidoo
Graduate School of Business
UKZN

Dear Ms Naidoo

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Your requests dated 1 March 2010 refer.

Gatekeepers permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal towards your MBA qualification in the following research areas:

1) Gender differences in Leadership Style
2) The impact of organizational politics at a South African University

I trust the data collected will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely,
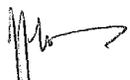
Prof J Meyerowitz
REGISTRAR

Certificate of

English Editing

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled Gender Differences in Leadership Styles by Jolene Beryl Naidoo (Student Number: 2055 243 71) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal has been edited for language by Dr Catherine Blanchard

Dr Catherine Blanchard, BA (Honours) English, *blanchard@ukzn.ac.za*

Turnitin Originality Report

gender1 by Jolene Beryl Naidoo

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