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Gender-roles and leadership styles:

An empirical evaluation of senior executive teams of public universities in Gauteng Province, South Africa

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in fulfilment of the requirements for award of the degree of Master of Commerce (Human Resource Management) in the School of Economic and Business Sciences.

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May 2018

Declaration

I, **Kamal Omar Alahdal** hereby declare that the entire dissertation was completed by me. I declare that this work has not been submitted before to any institution for the purposes of obtaining any other academic qualification.

I further declare that:

- ❑ I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone else's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong.
- ❑ I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.
- ❑ I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief or proof that this thesis is not my own unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

_____

Kamal Omar Alahdal

25/05/2018

Abstract

The objective of this dissertation was to investigate the influence of gender roles on leadership styles, with regards to senior management staff at universities in Gauteng province. Women represent 51.1% of the South African population (Statistics South Africa, 2015), but their position in the workplace is still marginalised. Representation of women in senior management positions in South African universities are relatively low. Women are still marginalised in terms of progression to senior management positions, due to a number of factors including glass ceiling, and the leadership style adopted (Kayi, 2013). The Council of Higher Education (2013) reports that a total of 2664 senior management staff were employed across 23 public universities in South Africa, of which 1510 (56%) were men and 1154 (44%) were women. The study investigated the barriers that inhibit the progression of women to senior management positions and how leadership styles contribute to the gender gap within senior management. Theories such as the role congruity, think manager – think male paradigm and the social role theory provide theoretical grounding for the study. With regards to the research methodology, qualitative research techniques was utilised. Fourteen participants were chosen to participate in the study. The snowball sampling technique was utilised for this study. Data was analysed using thematic analysis, which includes familiarization, developing a thematic framework, indexing and mapping and interpretation. This study is limited to senior management staff, at universities within the Gauteng province; therefore, the findings of the study may not be generalizable to other universities in South Africa. The findings demonstrate that while all the respondents identify as being transformational leaders, it is necessary to develop and understand when to enforce transformational and transactional behaviours. Therefore, the environment in which one operates in and the circumstances encountered by leader's influences leadership behaviours. The findings illustrate that woman in senior management positions are perceived to be underrepresented but only in certain roles and positions. There is a good representation of female leaders but it is the top management positions where males still dominate. Although the female leaders have experienced some barriers in their career progression, there is a general belief that gender stereotyping is becoming less of an issue. The respondents mentioned training, coaching and mentorship, workshops for men as well as monitoring legislations/equality targets as recommendations to addressing the gender imbalance within senior management teams.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT, OBJECTIVES AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Leadership as a male prerogative has dominated the corporate, political, educational and other sectors of society. While extensive literature on leadership styles in relation to gender is widely available, leadership within the higher education system is an emerging area of study for both academics, educational institutions and particularly government agencies responsible for higher education. Various authors have suggested that there are major differences in leadership practices among male and female leaders. For example, Chisholm (2010) has suggested that male leaders are more directive and bureaucratic, whereas female leaders are perceived to be more relational and collaborative. Understanding the differences in leadership behaviour between men and women is essential, in that a leader's own behaviour determines how effective they are as well as their chances for advancement in the future (Collard, 2001).

Prior to 1994, South African women were not fully empowered to work in a corporate environment due to political restrictions and traditional norms (Littrell and Nkomo, 2005). The start of the new democracy brought about change in laws aimed at empowering previously disadvantaged individuals and groups including women (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2010). Such legislative intervention include the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, which was enacted to address the past disequilibrium in proportional demographic representation of employees in South African organisations (Kayi, 2013). Women continue to challenge the notion of glass ceiling as a barrier of biasness and discrimination that excludes them from advancing to higher leadership positions despite legislation that promotes gender equality. Although the number of women occupying leadership positions has increased over the last few decades, women remain vastly underrepresented in top and executive leadership positions (Haber, 2010). In addition to the gender disparity in top leadership positions, there are a number of challenges that women face when they occupy these positions. Research demonstrates that women in top leadership positions face challenges in balancing their preferred leadership styles with follower's expectations while in leadership roles (Eagly and Carli, 2007). The underrepresentation of female leaders point to the effectiveness of their leadership style, thus theoretical perspectives such as the lack of fit theory, role congruity theory and the think manager-think male paradigm suggest that the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions is mainly due to their attributes and the form of leadership style they adopt.

Cultural traditions have contributed to glass ceiling and the lack of women in top management positions, in that domestic issues such as raising children may hinder their opportunity to obtain a promotion or participate in crucial decisions while they are on maternity leave (Kelly, Wale, Soudien and Steyn, 2007). Women also have to overcome discrimination or prejudice that may arise when an individual perceives the characteristics of individuals in relation to the requirements of the social roles that they occupy or desire to occupy. Eagly and Karau (2002:573) state that:

> A potential for prejudice exists when social perceivers hold a stereotype about a social group that is incongruent with the attributes that are thought to be required for success in certain classes of social roles, prejudice toward female leaders follows from the incongruity that many people perceive between the characteristics of women and the requirements of leader roles.

1.1 Problem statement

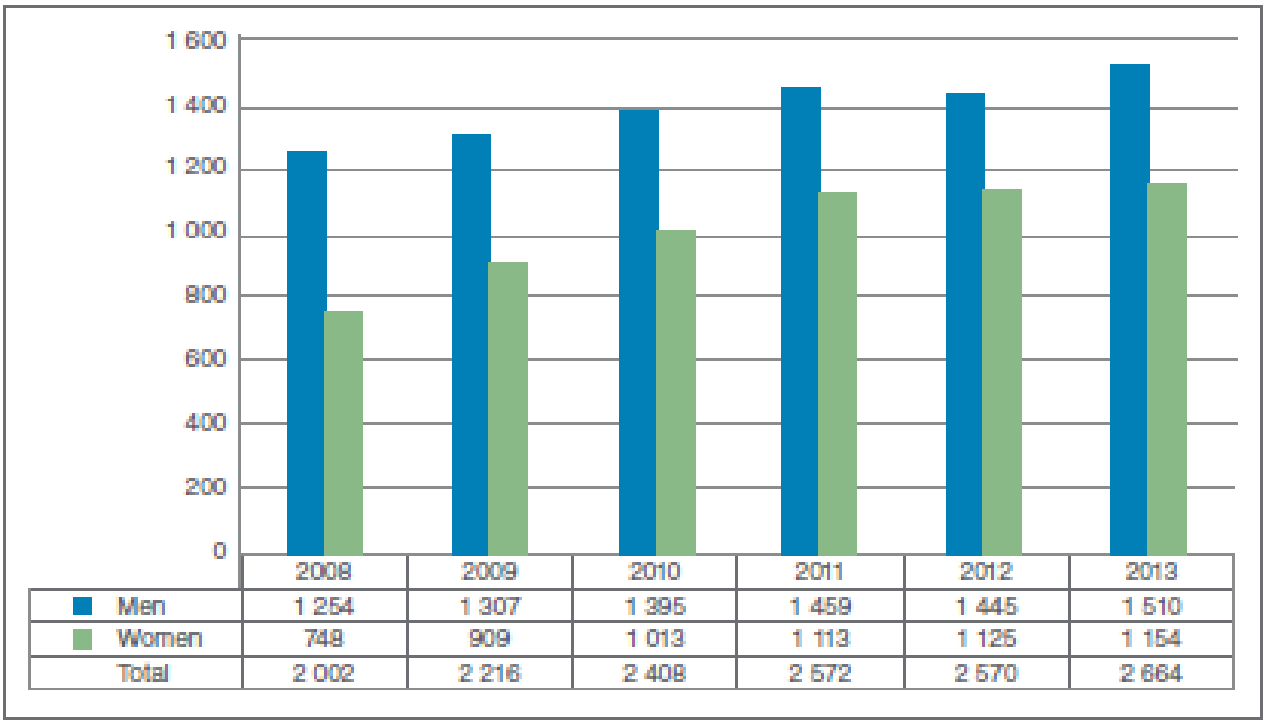
The dawn of a new South African democracy in 1994 led to the introduction of new pieces of legislation and policies aimed at redressing the injustices of the apartheid regime and accelerating the social and economic status of previously disadvantaged groups (i.e. Africans, Indians, Coloureds, women and people with disabilities). Although institutions have adopted employment equity plans aimed at ensuring equal representation, there are gender barriers, stereotypes and obstacles that women encounter in the workplace, particularly the underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions (Govender, 2005). Eagly and Karau (2002) suggest that one of the main difficulties female leader's encounter is the difference between the stereotypes of their leader role and their gender role, as members of society expect an individual to exhibit characteristics and behaviours consistent with a specific gender role. Furthermore, female leaders face discrimination when they work in an industry such as mining and construction that are considered incongruent with their gender role (Garcia-Retamero and Lopez-Zafra, 2006). Eagly and Carli, (2007) suggest that the characteristics associated with leadership roles have been associated more to men than to women; therefore, it is assumed that leadership behaviours are more parallel to the masculine gender role than to the feminine gender role.

According to the latest Grant Thornton International Business Report (2017), women represent approximately 52% of the country's population, yet approximately 28% hold executive positions. Furthermore, the study found that South Africa ranked 12th in a research consisting of 36 countries

regarding the representation of women at senior management positions in the private sector. Similarly, Ernst and Young's G20 report (2012) ranked South Africa 4th in terms of female leaders in the public Sector with 34% of women in the public sector as leaders. Representation of women in senior management positions in South African universities is relatively low and women are still marginalised in terms of progressing to senior management, due to a number of factors including glass ceiling and the leadership style adopted by female leaders (Kayi, 2013).

Although women constitute approximately 53% of the overall workforce in higher education, they are still under-represented in senior management positions (Council of Higher Education, 2013). A statistical report by the Higher Education South Africa (2017) revealed that only 3 (13%) out of the 23 Vice-Chancellors in public universities were women while 5 (21%) registrars were women, which indicates a gender gap within senior management. Figure 1.1 illustrates that women occupy fewer senior management positions (Heads of Department, Deans, Registrars, Executive Directors and Vice-Chancellors) compared to their male counterparts. The Council of Higher Education (2013) reports that a total of 2664 senior management staff were employed across 23 public universities in South Africa, of which 1510 (56%) were men and 1154 (44%) were women. Although the number of women occupying senior management positions have increased between 2008 and 2013, so has the number of men occupying these positions. For example, the University of the Witwatersrand's executive management team comprises of 4 males and 3 females, while 4 of the 5 executive faculty deans are males. Furthermore, the University of Johannesburg's (2016) executive leadership group comprises of the management leadership committee (5 males and 2 females), executive deans (6 males and 3 females), executive directors (2 males and 7 females), and senior directors (1 male and 4 females). The Council of Higher Education (2013) found that women occupy 61% of administrative positions, thus contributing towards underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions. Eagly and Carli (2007) suggest that resistance to women's leadership and issues relating to their leadership style are some of the factors that contribute to women's challenge in attaining senior management positions. While equity legislation promotes gender equality in the workplace, implementing gender equality targets can be challenging. The implementation of gender equality objectives, requires men to be tolerant and supportive towards their female counterparts (Govender, 2005).

Figure 1.1: Headcount of senior management staff members by gender from 2008 to 2013



	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Men	1 254	1 307	1 395	1 459	1 445	1 510
Women	748	909	1 013	1 113	1 125	1 154
Total	2 002	2 216	2 408	2 572	2 570	2 664

Source: Council of Higher Education (2013)

1.2 Research questions

- What are the barriers inhibiting the progression of women to senior management positions in public universities within the Gauteng province?
- What are the strategies being implemented to address the gender gap within the senior management team in public universities within the Gauteng province?
- What are the key differences in leadership styles between male and female members of the senior management teams in public universities within the Gauteng province?
- How has leadership styles contributed to the gender gap within the senior management teams in public universities within the Gauteng province?

1.3 Research objectives

The objectives of the study include:

1. Investigate the different leadership styles utilised by senior management at public universities within the Gauteng province.
2. Investigate the underrepresentation of females in senior management positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.
3. Identify the barriers women encounter in progressing to senior leadership positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.
4. Determine how leadership styles contribute towards the gender gap within senior leadership positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.

1.4 Research significance

Leadership within tertiary institutions is a noteworthy subject worth investigating. The findings from various studies provide diverse perspectives, due to the environmental nature and the researched industry. It should be noted that most studies available online are from a western context, as such there is a lack of African studies on the topic of leadership and gender within higher education. Furthermore, most of the studies on leadership and gender are conducted in the corporate environment, thus the findings may reveal different perspectives. Given that there is limited literature on leadership in relation to the gender gap within senior management at South African universities, it is anticipated that this study will provide a valuable addition to existing knowledge on the topic of leadership and gender. Furthermore, the findings of the study would provide insights on factors contributing to the gender gap within senior management in South African universities and would provide recommendations on effective policy interventions.

1.4.1 Justification of research setting

Public universities within the Gauteng region were chosen for the following reasons:

- Public universities follow the same mandate, compared to private institutions with different missions/objectives.

- The leadership structure within public universities are similar, which allows the researcher to focus on certain senior positions such as DVCs, Deans and Executive Directors. Private institutions have different organisational structures, which may not include standardised roles/positions common to public universities.
- Other public universities outside the Gauteng region were considered, however due to financial and time constraints, it was decided that the study will focus on leaders at public universities in Gauteng province.

1.5 Delineation of the study

This study is limited to senior management staff, which include Faculty Deans, University Registrars, Executive Directors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors; therefore, the findings of the study may not be applicable or generalizable to other universities in South Africa. The findings represent the experiences and perceptions of some tertiary institution leaders, thus the experiences and perceptions of leaders working in different sectors are not included. As such the findings may differ in different industries.

1.6 Research structure

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction on the influence of gender roles on leadership styles. The research problem, research questions, significance of the study and the objectives of the study are outlined.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter explores previous studies and a variety of theories that are relevant to the study of leadership styles and gender roles. These theories/frameworks include the role congruity theory, think manager – think male phenomenon and the social role theory. The purpose of exploring these theories/frameworks is to establish a theoretical grounding for the study.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

The chapter explores the research paradigm, research design and data analysis techniques that will be utilised in the study. Data collection methods, research instrument and sample and population size is outlined, in addition to the ethical considerations pertinent to this research.

Chapter 4: Research findings and discussion

This chapter provides data analysis and findings of the study. This will include the transcribed interviews, development of themes and interpretation of analysed data using thematic analysis.

Chapter 5: Summary, recommendations and conclusion

This chapter will conclude the research process, by providing a summary of the research findings and provide insight on the implications of the study. The chapter will also provide recommendations to senior managers and recommendations on further research.

1.7 Chapter summary

This chapter highlighted the topic under investigation and a brief overview of the research. The chapter briefly highlighted issues including gender imbalances within senior management, the impact of stereotypes and leadership perceptions. The research questions, objectives, significance and the research structure were outlined.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Research on leadership styles and gender roles within various industries have been examined extensively in the last few decades. The scientific research of gender role differences began in the 1970's and remains a significant area of study across the globe. The studies have focused on gender differences in leadership, stereotypes/prejudices and perceptions on leadership styles. This chapter provides a detailed literature review on the influence of gender roles on leadership styles, within senior management at public universities in Gauteng province. This will include a discussion on the notion of leadership styles and theories relevant to the study, such as the role congruity theory, the social role theory and the think manager – think male paradigm which provides a theoretical grounding for the study.

2.2 Review of related literature

A growing number of researchers have examined the notion of leadership in relation to gender roles. Hoyt, Simon, and Reid (2009) suggest that the majority of these studies focus on the prejudice against female leaders that results from the difference between gender and leadership stereotypes. A growing number of authors such as Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2009) have examined the difference in which men and women lead; however, the findings illustrate diverse conclusions. For example, quantitative studies conducted by Eagly and Johnson (1990); Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2007); Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) and Helgesen (1990) declare that there are no significant differences between leadership styles and gender as the leadership position influences the behaviour of the individual in that position. In other words, men and women in similar positions would exhibit similar behaviours. On the other hand, authors such as Eagly and Carli (2007) and Powell (1990) argue for the presence of gender differences in leadership styles.

Research conducted in the 1980's and 1990's emphasized that an effective leader does not only motivate followers but also cultivates their capability to contribute to the organisation (Haber, 2010). Transformational leadership emerged as an approach that emphasizes attaining the trust and assurance of followers, thus leaders embracing this approach do not necessarily adhere to the status quo, but rather use innovation as a tool to achieve goals (Bass, 1998). Mentorship and empowerment are used as strategies to encourage subordinates to develop their potential, which in turn benefits the organisation. Bass (1998) and Burns (1978) mention that transformational

leadership appeals to subordinates' self-interests by creating and maintain relationships, whereas transactional leadership advocates the idea of managing people conventionally, by explicitly defining responsibilities, rewarding individual who achieve their objectives and providing guidance and support when difficulties are encountered. In addition to these leadership approaches, the laissez-faire approach exhibits absence and lack of involvement during critical stages. Modern assertions that women are effective leaders is supported by studies that found women to be more transformational compared to their male counterparts. Aldoory and Toth (2004) suggest that there are two theoretical perspectives commonly used to describe diverse findings in gender and leadership research: socialisation and structuralism. On one hand, gender differences in leadership are due to gender socialisation in which individual's exhibit gendered traits and behaviours that cannot be changed easily (Cooper, 1997). Portello and Long (1994:685) state that "attributes considered instrumental and ascribed to men include being independent, goal oriented, objective, assertive, competitive and logical, whereas stereotypically expressive characteristics attributed to women include emotionality, nurturance, and sensitivity to others". On the other hand, Aldoory and Toth (2004) suggest that the lack of gender differences in leadership stems from structuralism, in that gender differences that exist are annulled by structural and employment variables such as the description, hierarchy and status of a position.

To determine whether men and women differed in terms of leadership approaches (transformation, transactional and servant leadership) Eagly and Johnson (1990) conducted a meta-analysis, consisting of 162 studies that compared men and women's approach to leadership. The findings indicated that leadership approaches adopted, were to a certain extent gender stereotypic in laboratory experiments that made use of students and employees that did not occupy a leadership role. The experiments and assessment studies revealed that women inclined to be fairly interpersonally oriented and favoured a democratic approach to leadership, compared to male participants who favoured task-oriented and an autocratic approach to leadership (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen, 2003). Furthermore the studies revealed that participants reacted negatively to women who embraced an autocratic leadership approach, thus when compared to their male counterparts, women were less likely to embrace an approach that would result in an unfavourable judgement of their actions. Despite these findings, it is worth mentioning that the findings are not inclusive, in that the effectiveness of an approach depends on various factors such as organisational environment and dynamics of the group being led, therefore the

influence of gender on effective leadership approaches requires further exploration (Foels, Driskell, Mullen and Salas, 2000).

Samuel and Mokoaleli (2017) evaluated the association between managerial and functional competency perceptions and the stereotype of male and female managers. The study which comprised of 383 lower and middle level managers in a South Africa organisation, found that employees' perceived that male managers are more competent than female managers at the organisation. Furthermore, the organisation that was surveyed has engineering, rail freight, logistics and port operations, which has been traditionally associated with men. Therefore as suggested by Eagly and Wood (2012) the division of labour which has traditionally linked men as the breadwinners and women as the homemakers, influences people's perceptions on the industries suitable for men and women, which in turn affects the progression of female leaders in certain environments/industries. However, it was found that the participants agreed that both male and female managers demonstrated the same level of core competencies that were essential in accomplishing organisational goals (Samuel and Mokoaleli, 2017). This is supported by studies conducted by Donnell and Hall (1980), Powell (1990) and Arditi, Gluch and Holmdahl (2013), who all found no differences in managerial competencies between men and women, but instead found differences in the way men and women are perceived and stereotyped. Based on Schein's (1975) depiction of female leaders accepting the association between male characteristics and attributes of a successful leader, Samuel and Mokoaleli (2017:62) state that "this characterization by female managers thus imply their acceptance of the traditional male-dominance culture and could influence their selection, promotion and placement decisions in favour of men". As such, women have to work harder than their male counterparts, to prove that they are capable to lead others (Duehr & Bono, 2006).

Moreover, Sharpe's (2000) study revealed that a factor contributing to women's effectiveness as leaders is as a result of women's inclination to engage in rewarding behaviour and avoid engaging in behaviours associated with passive management and non-interventionist approach to leadership. Previous studies illustrate that female leaders possess the capability to lead democratically (Facca and Allen, 2010; Eagly and Carli, 2004; Haber and Komives, 2009), whereas male leaders possess greater confidence and self-efficacy in their ability to lead (Dugan and Komives, 2007). Further

studies also illustrate that leadership styles that combine feminine and masculine attributes are becoming more valued in today's modern society (Eagly and Carli, 2004).

Reid, Palomares, Anderson and Bondad-Brown (2009) argue that when gender is relevant, assertive women lack influence, predominantly with men, as they are perceived to lack an accepted level of communality. In a non-gender context such as educational attainment, role congruity theory suggests that assertive women are likely to be influential with men than women, thus it is driven by the greater perceived agency of the assertive woman. Reid, Palomares, Anderson and Bondad-Brown (2009:469) further state that "when educational attainment is salient, men will not be particularly influenced by tentative women who will be perceived as lacking agency and when gender is salient and women are tentative, again judgments of agency will be relatively low, but because tentative behaviour is consistent with the communal role, these women will be perceived as relatively influential". Based on this perspective, the role congruity theory prophesies that men will be more influenced by tentative women when gender is relevant, rather than when educational attainment is relevant.

A meta-analysis by Eagly (1995) found that male hypothetical leaders and colleagues were evaluated more favourably compared to their female counterparts. By contrast, another meta-analysis conducted by Eagly and Karau (2002) found no gender differences with regards to employees evaluating leader effectiveness in terms of satisfaction, persuasiveness and support offered by their leaders. However a study conducted by Taylor and Hood (2010) found that female leaders had a higher rating in terms of emotional and social proficiency compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, according to Schein (2001) the attitudes of management students and corporate managers were very similar, in that female students' disassociated gender and managerial position, whereas male students viewed management positions in terms of masculine attributes, thus males have continued to perceive to possess attributes essential for managerial success. Robinson and Stubberud (2011) suggest that differences in confidence, social risk and emotional recognition contributes towards the differences in leadership styles between men and women. Bengtsson, Persson, and Willenhag (2005) suggest that men can be personified as more confident compared to their women counterparts. Whereas women are stereotyped as apologetic compared to men. Schuman's (2011) study revealed that women tend to apologise more as they judge themselves more harshly and not because they are willing to apologise. Guidice, Alder and

Phelan (2009:14) state that “men exhibit a greater willingness to bluff, which ties into the fact that greater confidence undoubtedly causes more optimistic projections and judgments”. Women are perceived as greater social risk takers due to social sensitivity, their ability to tackle social uncertainty and the ability to react to circumstances with greater strength, thus based on impulsive base-reaction, men tend to react through action, whereas women tend to react through emotion (Hoffman, Kessler, Eppel, Rukavina, and Traue, 2010). Therefore, men are perceived to be more overconfident and optimistic, whereas women possess a higher social sensitivity.

2.3 Stereotype-driven discrimination and its impact

Prejudice towards female leaders stems from society’s perceptions on the attributes of women and the requirements of a certain leadership role (Haber and Komives, 2009). It is therefore necessary to understand how gender roles signify consensual views about men and women, as well as the degree of congruity between gender and leadership roles. Stereotypic views on gender and leadership have been studied extensively in the last few decades. Schneider (2004) defines stereotypes as perceptions that are typically generalised and with negative connotations about the attributes, that differentiates groups of people, thus stereotypes can apply to any group regardless of gender, race or religious affiliation in society. Individuals use stereotypes to conveniently anticipate the abilities and behaviours of others, rather than having to ‘‘figure out’’ each individual. Jonsen, Maznevski and Schneider (2010:551) state that “stereotypes are further reinforced by various social mechanisms, such as the ‘spill over effect’ which suggests societal gender roles may contaminate organisational roles and result in different expectations for female and male managers”. Gender is regarded as an important organizing standard in our perception of the world, thus women have been traditionally stereotyped as housewives or as nurses, which are inconsistent with what has been traditionally defined as a great leader; however this perception has changed to some extent.

Women have acknowledged stereotypes as a major barrier in attaining top management positions and this is consistent with the perception that leadership is influenced by gender. Jonsen, Maznevski and Schneider (2010) suggest that when a group of people experience a negative or positive stereotype, members of the group exhibit behaviours that confirms this stereotype. Jonsen, Maznevski and Schneider (2010:552) further state that “for women in management, this may result in the internalization of the idea that women are less competent in leadership roles and as such,

they do not identify themselves with potential leadership positions, considered male territory, thus undermining their motivation and potentially leading to lower performance". Furthermore, women who attain leadership positions are often perceived negatively from both men and women, in the sense that if they adhere to traditional female communal attributes, they are regarded as being too friendly and not assertive, whereas if they adopt agentic attributes, which are often attributed to male leaders, then women are regarded as being too strict. Therefore, female leaders often have to work harder than their male counterparts to prove that they are just as capable (Jonsen, Maznevski and Schneider, 2010). Ely and Rhode (2010:74) state that "the concern regarding the evaluation of their performance rather than focusing on opportunities for learning can result in, for example, not taking on challenging assignments which are necessary for career progression".

Heilman and Welle (2005) suggest that women, who experienced some form of workplace discrimination or have witnessed fellow colleagues being discriminated against, show less engagement in their occupation. A study conducted by Ensher, Grant-Vallone and Donaldson (2001) found that minority and female employees differentiated between three sources of discrimination: supervisors, colleagues and organisations. Participants who strongly believed that their supervisors discriminated against them were less satisfied in their position, not actively committed to the organisation they worked for and more inclined to leave the organisation. Ensher, Grant-Vallone and Donaldson (2001:30) state that "women were less likely to engage in organisational citizenship behaviours when they reported experiencing co-worker discrimination". Stereotype-driven discrimination consists of formal and informal discrimination, which will be discussed below.

2.3.1 Formal Discrimination

Descriptive stereotyping influences the perceptions and expectations people construct about men and women, which leads to formal discrimination. For example, male human resource recruiters that adopt a stereotypical view of women applicants are influenced to conclude that women are less likely to possess the essential skills required to succeed at male gender-typed jobs (Heilman and Welle, 2005). Heilman, Martel and Simon (1998:28) state that "research has demonstrated that even when the actual qualifications of men and women are equivalent, men are viewed as having higher performance ability, are expected to form better and are therefore favoured over women in the selection process for male gender-typed jobs". Davison and Burke (2000) suggest that men and

women are evaluated differently with regards to their performance, thus women are systematically rated lower in their performance compared to their male counterparts, especially in industries that are dominated by males (e.g. mining and engineering). Therefore, given the association between performance evaluations and remuneration, women receive lower income compared to equally performing men (Roth, 2003). This is further supported by a study conducted by Ostroff and Atwater (2003), which included 4000 mangers representing various companies in multiple industries.

Women that do not conform to stereotypes by being effective in a male gender-perceived position can be subject to discrimination. Heilman and Welle (2005) provide an example based on this type of discrimination. Ann B. Hopkins, an employee of the Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), was by all objective measures exceptionally effective in her position. However, Ms Hopkins was denied promotion to partner despite her previous achievements and success, due to her interpersonal management approach. Ms Hopkins did not conform to women's historical prescribed principles as her approach was described as aggressive and assertive. Although these attributes may have contributed to her achievements, they were used as justifications to deny her promotion to partner at the firm (Fiske, Bersoff, Borgida, Deaux and Heilman, 1991). This led to a lawsuit against Price Waterhouse Coopers, which Ms Hopkins ultimately won.

2.3.2 Informal Discrimination

Heilman and Welle (2005) propose that formal discrimination contributes to the limitations encountered by women concerning access to career advancement opportunities, better remuneration and positive performance evaluations. Although women have historically encountered challenges in attaining leadership positions, due to prescribed norms and cultural influences, there has been an increase in the number of women occupying elite leadership positions and women continue to defy the obstacles they encounter in attaining leadership positions. Informal discrimination occurs once women occupy leadership positions and is described by Heilman and Welle (2005:29) as "the negative expectations of women's abilities and skills that may lead members of the organisation to socially ostracize them, thereby keeping women from becoming central players within their organisations". Therefore, a female leader's perspectives or inputs may be considered less valuable and omitted from key deliberations or important decisions, as well as overlooked at informal networking platforms that provide the setting for critical

information sharing. Welle (2004) suggests that women who perceive to be informally excluded from an organisation's culture, such as exclusions from networking platforms and exerting a behavioural style that is different from the organisation's norm, often stay in their occupation for a shorter period, compared to women who perceived a greater level of inclusion and hospitable working environment. Based on this notion, Heilman and Chen (2003:349) state that "the prevalence of discriminatory work environments motivates women to start their own businesses, which helps to explain why the number of women entrepreneurs is growing rapidly".

2.4 Theoretical framework

This study is theoretically informed by bodies of research on leadership styles and gender roles, thus theories such as the role congruity, think manager – think male paradigm and the social role theory will provide theoretical grounding for the study.

2.4.1 The role congruity theory

The role congruity theory is grounded in the social role theory's position on gender roles and the importance in supporting gender differences in behaviour. Eagly and Karau (2002:574) state that "the role congruity theory further considers the congruity between gender roles and other roles, especially leadership roles, as well as specify key factors and processes that influence congruity perceptions and their consequences for prejudice and prejudicial behaviours". Eagly and Karau (2002) suggest that prejudice against women can be explained through understanding the discrepancy between traditional female roles and the leadership role. The division of labour has traditionally linked men with breadwinner positions and women with homemaker positions (Eagly and Wood, 2012). Due to society's stereotypical view on roles traditionally occupied by women including communal roles and men's roles as more agentic, individuals who occupy roles that are incongruity with their gender role are evaluated negatively within society. Therefore, preconception views creates an obstacle for female leaders, in the sense that attributes possessed by effective leader are more often associated with male leaders (Schein, 1975). However, Eagly and Karau (2002) suggest that perceptions of incongruity can vary depending on the leadership context and the characteristics of individuals assessing a leader's ability to lead. Therefore, Paustian-Underdahl, Walker and Woehr (2014) suggest that leadership roles that require collective participation and collaborative behaviours were considered feminine, while a role requiring the ability to command-and-control and the assertion of power were rated as masculine in nature. Hitt,

Keats, and DeMarie, 1998 suggest that the role congruity theory can be applied to men when they occupy leadership positions that are incongruent with the agentic characteristics associated with the male gender role. Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, and Ristikari (2011:634) conducted a meta-analysis to determine the extent to which stereotypes of leadership are culturally masculine and found that "leadership now, more than in the past appears to incorporate more feminine relational qualities, such as sensitivity, warmth, and understanding". Based on this notion, Paustian-Underdahl, Walker and Woehr (2014) propose that key aspects of the leadership context will affect the extent to which leadership roles are viewed as congruent or incongruent with both male and female gender roles. This gives us an idea on whether males or females are perceived as more effective leaders in different situations.

Powell, Butterfield, and Parent (2002) suggested that stereotypes may change over time, thus as more women attain leadership positions, it is likely that individual's stereotypes associating leadership with masculinity will dissolve over time. In other words, the increase in the number of female leaders may be associated with a decline in perceived incongruity between women and leadership. McCauley (2004) suggested that characterisations of effective managerial behaviours have changed in response to features of modern organisational environments, such as the promotion of team-centred practices. He further suggested that different hierarchical levels require different types of behaviours. For example, lower level managers are tasked with supervising employee performance, monitoring potential issues and managing conflict, which are considered masculine in nature. However, recent studies have shown that the attributes associated with lower level leadership positions may be considered gender neutral in nature. In contrast, middle level leadership positions require attributes such as promoting collaboration, inspiring and developing employees, thus transformational leadership behaviours are desired. Therefore, women are considered to exhibit these behaviours compared to their male counterparts and may be viewed as more effective in middle management (Eagly and Karau, 2002). Paustian-Underdahl, Walker and Woehr (2014:1132) state that "perceptions of leadership are likely to be the most masculine for higher status, senior leadership positions, thereby increasing role incongruity for women in these positions". The role congruity theory further proposes that leadership evaluators rely on stereotypes in making judgments on a leader's performance (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

The role congruity theory indicates that female leaders encounter two types of prejudice (descriptive and prescriptive) (Johnson, 2008). Descriptive prejudice ensues when female leaders are stereotyped as possessing fewer attributes that are desired for a leadership role, whereas prescriptive prejudice ensues when female leaders are judged in an unfavourable manner, because male leaders are more preferred than female leaders (Elsesser and Lever, 2011). Women encounter biasness in the sense that if they conform to their traditional gender role, they are viewed as individuals who lack qualities associated with an effective leader and if they embrace agentic qualities, which are mainly associated with male leaders, then they are judged for behaving in an unfeminine manner. Eagly and Karau (2002) suggest that the two forms of prejudice yields less opportunities for women to attain leadership positions and have to overcome obstacles in their leadership position. However, women would not always be targets of prejudice in relation to leadership roles, due to several factors that would moderate these prejudices. For example, Eagly and Karau (2002:576) state that "the more agentically a leader role is defined or the more completely women fulfil its agentic requirements, the more likely such women are to elicit unfavourable evaluation because their behaviour deviates from the injunctive norms of the female gender role".

2.4.2 Think Manager - Think Male Paradigm

The think manager, think male paradigm is a well-researched phenomenon; however, studies replicating the paradigm in an African context are scarce. Schein's (1970) empirical study on stereotyping managerial gender roles found that "think manager–think male" was a strongly held belief among middle managers in the United States. The findings illustrate that both male and female managers perceived that male managers possessed attributes associated with managerial success, compared to their female counterpart. Schein (2001) mentions that this belief is unconfirmed due to structural limitations and creates a psychological barrier for women in management to advance to elite positions and promotes biasness against women in managerial selection and promotion. This led to the replication of the study in the United Kingdom, Germany, China and Japan, with the aim of attaining a global outlook on this phenomenon. This belief among women has since changed 20 years after the initial study and female managers no longer associate a managerial position with gender, thus women view men and women as equal individuals capable to manage and succeed (Schein, 2001). The study however revealed that male

managers hold the same view that men have attributes that are associated with successful managers, compared to their female counterparts, despite societal and laws advocating for equality in the various sectors of society, particularity industries dominated by men.

South Africa's distinctive political history provides a different perspective on managerial stereotypes in terms of race and gender. The apartheid system discriminated against certain groups politically and socially due to their race, thus while white women attained economic and social privileges, they occupied positions that were stereotypically linked to women such as being a nurse or secretary, whereas African women were largely restricted to domestic labour (Booysen, 2007). White men primarily occupied management positions, whereas African men were predominantly engaged in unskilled occupations (Booysen, 2007). Therefore, South Africa's political dispensation moulded policies advocating for gender equality and affirmative action aimed at addressing past injustices; however women are still underrepresented in managerial positions (Boshoff, 2005).

2.4.3 Social role theory

Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen (2003:583) state that "in emphasizing gender roles as well as leader roles, social role theorists argue that leaders occupy roles defined by their specific position in a hierarchy and simultaneously function under the constraints of their gender roles". Society has different views on what roles are suitable for men and women, thus gender roles are shared expectations or views that relates to an individual's attributes in relation to the position they occupy in society (Biddle, 1979). This indicates that society's expectations define certain behaviours that are desired for men and women. Social roles can be defined as socially shared norms that apply to individuals who occupy a social position in society, whereas gender roles are shared dogmas regarding the characteristics of men and women (Biddle, 1979). Gutek and Morasch (1982) suggest that gender roles influence the way in which male and female leaders engage and the approach they adapt to lead others. The authors further argue that gender roles spill over to organisations and that gender provides an implicit contextual distinctiveness in a working environment. Therefore, the social role theory in contrast to the traditional perceptive proposes that men and women who occupy the same role, will exhibit contrasting behaviours (Kanter, 1997). The social role theory notes that roles comprise of two forms of expectations or norms. This includes descriptive expectations, which relates to what a group of individuals actually do, and

injunctive norms, which relates to what individuals ought to do or preferably would do (Cialdini and Trost, 1998). The social role theory suggests that there is a relationship between the actions undertaken by individuals and their inner persona, thus gender stereotypes arises from individual observations with regards to gender social roles. For example the traditional role of men being the breadwinner and women's role as a housewife. Eagly (1987:56) states that "a key proposition of social role theory is that the majority of these beliefs about the sexes pertain to communal and agentic attributes".

Communal attributes have been mainly attained by women and focusses on the wellbeing of others. These attributes include being affectionate, accommodative, companionate, understanding and cooperative. In contrast, men, who are more assertive, controlling and self-confident, mainly attain agentic attributes. Although there are other attributes that can be ascribed to both men and women, it is the above-mentioned attributes that highlight the issues of prejudice (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen, 2003). The perceived lack of individual–position fit has been used to describe the occurrence of gender biasness against women. The lack-of-fit theory asserts that stereotypically based characteristics attributed to women (I.e. affectionate, accommodative, cooperative and relationship oriented) and the characteristics attributed to men (i.e. assertiveness, self-confidence, decisive and achievement-oriented) play a key role in performance evaluations because there is a tendency to perpetuate and confirm them (Heilman, 2001). Based on this notion, Heilman and Lyness (2006:777) state that "these expectations become the lens through which information is filtered, including what behaviour is attended to, how that behaviour is interpreted, and whether it is remembered when critical decisions are made". Therefore, the negative anticipations resulting from perceptions of lack of fit influences how women are viewed and how their work is evaluated when they occupy traditionally male occupations. Bielby and Baron (1986) suggest that occupations are to some extent gender-typed and men/women have high or low representation in many organisational roles and occupational groups. They further suggest that men or women are more highly represented than their counterpart in many occupations and roles. For example, there are more women who occupy nursing occupations and more men who dominate the engineering, mining and transportation industry (Lips, 2003).

2.4.4 Effects of leader and gender roles

Although gender influences leadership behaviour, the importance of leadership roles should be emphasized in the sense that roles provides legitimate authority that are regulated by explicit rules about desired behaviour that needs to be adhered too (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen, 2003). Social role theory advocates for the idea that leadership roles regulate activates, for example a leader is obliged to ensure that objectives assigned to subordinates are achieved (Peterson, 2014). This can be achieved through monitoring and evaluating individual performance over a period of time; however leaders have sovereignty to differ in the manner in which they convey their required activities as well as go beyond the boundaries of their roles. Therefore, leaders may exhibit an approachable attitude or be more secluded, consult a few or include many associate in decision-making, provide extensive or partial mentoring of subordinates, and so forth (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paineand Bachrach, 2000). These unrestricted and voluntary aspects of leadership may vary between men and women as they are not regulated by norms associated with leader roles and consequently are liable to influence gender-specific norms (Gabriel and Gardner, 1999). Moskowitz, Suh, and Desaulniers (1994) conducted a study utilising an experience-sampling technique to observe participants interpersonal behaviour in the workplace. The purpose of the study was to identify how employees engaged with both their colleagues and leaders. The findings revealed agentic behaviour (assertiveness, self-confidence, decisive) was related to the status of the interacting associates, thus participants conducted themselves agentically towards subordinates, however communal behaviour (affectionate, accommodative, companionate and cooperative) was influenced by the participants' gender, regardless of their status and women behaved more communally especially in their interactions with other women associates.

Eagly et al. (2000) suggest that the impact of gender roles on organisational behaviour transpires as individuals react to leaders in terms of gendered expectations and to a certain extent have internalized their gender role. Due to differing social identities, women and men incline to vary in their expectations for their own behaviour in organisational backgrounds (Ely, 1995). Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen (2003:572) state that "self-definitions of leaders may thus reflect an integration of their managerial role and gender role, and through self-regulatory processes, these composite self-definitions influence behaviours, thereby shading the discretionary aspects of managerial behaviours in gender-stereotypic directions".

2.5 The notion of leadership

Kearns (2005) defines leadership as a purposeful relationship, which occurs episodically among participants, who use their skills in influence to advocate transforming change. Appelbaum, Audet and Miller (2003:44) define leadership as "the process of influencing human behaviour so as to accomplish the goals prescribed by the organisationally appointed leader". The Higher Education Research Institute (2003) emphasises that leadership is characterised by a collaborative relationship between the leader and the individuals he or she is leading. Prior to 1990, research on leadership focused on two styles to leadership: task-oriented approach, which supports the idea of completing tasks by organizing relevant activities and the interpersonally oriented approach, which advocates for developing and maintaining continuous relationships through the morale and welfare of others (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). Some studies further distinguish leadership approaches by grouping leaders into two groups; those who engage in a democratic manner and support the idea of allowing followers to participate in decision-making and leaders who engage autocratically and disregard the perspectives of others in decision making (Haber, 2010).

2.6 Leadership approaches

2.6.1 Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership has emerged as one of the most widely researched leadership styles in organisational psychology. James MacGregor Burns (1978) initially introduced the notion of transformational leadership through his seminal work on political leadership and has since been used in social and organisational psychology as well. According to Burns (1978:20), transformational leadership is a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" in addition to specific behaviours portrayed by leaders. Transformational leadership emphasizes the need to motivate, enhance morale and encourage followers to improve their performance through a selection of mechanisms (Aldoory and Toth, 2004). In doing so, leaders seek to introduce values and ideals that are appealing as well as utilise charismatic techniques to interest individuals to adopt these values. Burns (1978) mentions that Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs played an influential role in that individuals have a range of needs and individual effectiveness is dependent on the extent to which these needs are fulfilled, thus transformational leadership requires a high level of self-esteem and self-actualization. Belasen and Frank (2012) define transformational leadership in terms of how leaders affect followers, who

are envisioned to trust, admire and respect the transformational leader. In other words, a transformational leader is expected to emphasize the importance and value of tasks, encourage followers to achieve organisational objectives rather than their own goals and lastly stimulate their higher-order requirements (Belasen and Frank, 2012).

2.6.1.1 Components of transformational leadership

Bass (1985) identified four components of transformational leadership. The first component, **Charisma or idealised influence** refers to the degree to which the leader behaves in admirable behaviours that allows followers to identify with the leader. Charismatic leaders exhibit principles, allow followers to provide their viewpoints and appeal on an emotional level, thus a charismatic leader does not only provide a clear set of values, but adheres to them in every action and in turn is perceived to be a role model (Burns, 1978). Trust between leaders and their followers is an essential component that ensures that a long-term relationship built on moral and ethical foundation is preserved. **Inspirational motivation** as the second component refers to the degree in which the leader expresses a vision that is attractive and inspiring to others. Inspirational motivation is aimed at challenging individuals with high standards, being optimistic about future objectives and providing a sense of importance for the task at hand (Bass, 1985). A strong sense of purpose by individuals provides motivation to behave and achieve objectives as desired by superiors, thus the significance of communication is essential, in that it provides a clear vision that is compelling and persuasive towards others.

Thirdly, **Intellectual stimulation** refers to the leader's ability to challenge norms, undertake risks and explore ideas provided by others, thus creativity is encouraged to ensure that objectives are achieved (Bass, 1985). A leader's vision provides a framework; however, given the opportunity to articulate diverse perspectives, followers are able to use creativity as a tool to overcome obstacles. The last component, **Individualized consideration or individualized attention** refers to the degree to which a leader addresses each follower's needs, provides mentorship and the platform for others to voice out their concerns. Transformational leadership emphasizes the need to respect and appreciate individual contributions as diverse perspectives provides a range of solutions to difficulties and prepares future leaders to takeover. Most importantly, leaders promote the need for self-actualisation, self-fulfilment, and self-worth through appreciation and motivation (Aldoory and Toth, 2004).

2.6.2 Transactional leadership

Aldoory and Toth (2004) define transactional leadership (also known as authoritative leadership) as a leadership style that focuses on the exchanges that occur between a leader and his/her followers. For example, the use of rewards/benefits provided to followers by a leader, because of satisfactory performance leader signifies the transactional nature of this leadership approach. It is characterized by confidence, clear direction, personal supervision, perceptions of impartial treatment and minimum support for intentional change. Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2006:186) describe transactional leadership as an approach in which:

> The leader sees to it that procedures by which people enter into agreements are clear and above board, and takes into account the rights and needs of others. It is the leadership of the administrator who sees to the day-to-day management of the system, listening to the complaints and concerns of various participants, arbitrating disputes fairly, holding people accountable to their job targets, and providing necessary resources for the achievement of subunit goals.

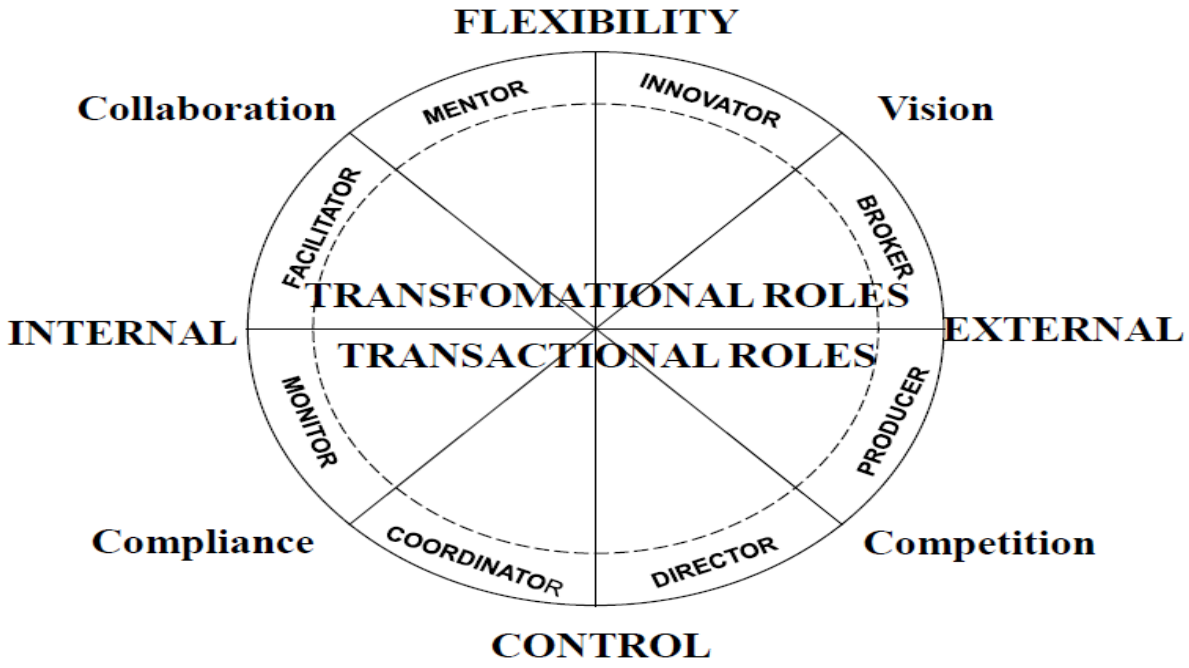
Belasen and Frank (2012) suggest that transactional leadership focuses on monitoring and controlling subordinates through rational or economic means. Therefore transactional leaders use rewards, support and resources to followers in exchange for the desired performance output. Transactional leaders may revise/update standards and monitor deviations that arise from unanticipated incidents. Hine (2011) describes three forms of transactional leadership: management-by-exception-passive, management-by-exception-active and constructive transactional. Management-by-exception-passive entails a platform created for individuals to set principles, however these individuals wait for major obstacles to occur before exerting leadership behaviour. Individuals who adhere to this form of transactional leadership emphasize the need to maintain the status quo within the organisation (Hine, 2011). Belasen and Frank (2012:194) state that "In the passive version of management by exception, leaders take an inactive approach, intervening only when problems become serious". Leaders, who exhibit behaviours consistent with management-by-exception-active focus on problems that arise, establish principles, observe behaviour of subordinates and believe in not taking risks and initiatives. Therefore active management by exception symbolizes the use of monitoring activities by transactional managers who instigate remedial actions and evaluate deliverables/constrains that occur in achieving desired

performance levels (Hine, 2011). A constructive transactional leadership leader establishes objectives, clearly communicates desired outcomes, utilises rewards/recognition for achieving objectives and provides a platform for consultation and feedback (Marzano, Waters and McNulty, 2006). Adherents of constructive transactional leadership are inclined to this form of transactional leadership due to the focus on established objectives and involvement platform provided to followers.

2.6.3 Competing Values Framework

Given the differences in leadership styles between women and men, it becomes increasingly important to identify whether male and female leaders share similar behavioural attributes when enacting the Competing Values Framework (CVF). The CVF was introduced by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) and Quinn (1988) as a framework that focuses on the conflicting nature that exists in organisational environments and the difficulty of choices encountered by managers when tackling opposing conflicts. Therefore, a variety of transactional and transformational positions differentiated by situational contingencies. The CVF in figure 2.1 illustrates a range of leadership roles and aligns these roles with specific organisational environments. The diagram illustrates that the *innovator* and *broker* roles rely on a clear vision that is created through creativity and communication skills to bring about change in a work environment. The *monitor* and *coordinator* roles requires employees to comply with the rules and regulations stipulated by leaders, thus it requires supervision and controlling skills. The *director* and *producer* roles are aimed at setting and achieving goals, while the *facilitator* and *mentor* roles are geared towards motivating subordinates driven by participation and allegiance (Belasen and Frank, 2012).

Figure 2.1: The competing value framework



Source: Belasen and Frank (2012)

The CVF comprises of two parts; the upper part of the framework contains transformational roles while the lower part includes transactional roles. Belasen and Frank (2012:198) suggest that when leaders employ the characteristics of one role extensively without considering other roles, the organisation may become dysfunctional. Whereas "high-performing managers display behavioural complexity that allows them to master contradictory behaviours while also maintaining some measure of behavioural integrity and credibility" (Belasen and Frank, 2012:198). However, prioritizing factors such as compliance and competition based on an organisation's environment and culture might inhibit the achievement of objectives in other fields such as collaboration. Table 2.1 on the other hand illustrates various activities that women or men apply in their leadership approach.

Table 2.1: key leadership differences

People development: teaching, mentoring, listening to needs and concerns.	Women apply more
Expectations and rewards: clear expectations and responsibilities and rewards for achievements.	Women apply more
Role model: relationships based on respect and regard for the ethical side of decisions.	Women apply more
Inspiration: vision for the future and inspiring optimism.	Women apply more
Participative decision making: creating an atmosphere where everyone joins in the decision-making.	Women apply more
Intellectual stimulation: challenging assumptions, risk taking, creativity.	Equal
Efficient communication: convincing and with charisma	Equal
Individualistic decision making: making decisions alone, involving others with executions	Men apply more
Control and corrective action: taking corrective actions when performance lacks.	Men apply more

Source: McKinsey and Company (2009)

2.6.4 Servant leadership

Research on servant leadership is still in its infancy and has focused mainly on comparing its attributes to other leadership approaches (Russell, 2000). Robert K. Greenleaf (1977) is credited with the introduction of servant leadership aimed at addressing the needs of others by providing a vision that is widely shared, gaining integrity and trust from those they serve. Spears (1996) defined servant leadership as a leadership model, which places serving others as a priority and emphasizes the need to provide services to others; adapting holistic approach; promoting a sense of community and advocating for collective decision-making. The focus of servant leadership is not on self-interest, but rather helping others succeed in achieving their goals. Russell and Stone (2002) identified functional and accompanying attributes associated with servant leadership as illustrated in table 2.2. Servant leadership emphasizes a leader's fundamental personal attributes that enables him/her to serve the interests of those they lead, thus a leader's personal values are considered an important source of influence for bringing about change (Russell, 2001). Despite

the positive influence of servant leadership, various authors have criticized the model as lacking empirical support as the model is still in its infancy. Eicher-Catt (2005:17) suggests that the values attributed to servant-leadership are gender biased, and the model propagates "a theology of leadership that upholds androcentric patriarchal norms and insidiously perpetuates a long-standing masculine-feminine, master-slave political economy". On the practical front, Lloyd (2003) questions whether this collective approach to leadership is compatible with today's corporate environment, where emphasis is made on individual performance, thus it fails to consider differing levels of competence among individuals, but rather advocates for a collective approach. While this perspective supports certain industries (particularity the service and hospitality industry) and occupations that require individual performance, it fails to recognize a changing working environment, where team performance, knowledge sharing and support structures are appreciated (Lee and Zemke, 1993).

Table 2.2: Functional and accompanying attributes of servant leadership

Functional attributes	Accompanying attributes
Vision	Communication
Honesty, Integrity	Credibility
Trust	Competence
Service	Stewardship
Modelling	Visibility
Pioneering	Influence, Persuasion
Appreciation of others	Listening, Encouragement
Empowerment	Teaching, Delegation

Source: Russell and Stone (2002)

2.6.4.1 Central tenants of servant leadership

Greenleaf (1977) identified four tenants that are central to servant leadership, in addition to inner values that shape attributes of a leader. The first tenant, **Service to others** refers to the idea that leaders should have the desire to help others first rather than exerting power or engaging in self-centred actions. A servant-leader's primary inspiration and purpose is to encourage others to succeed, while institutional success is the indirect, resulting outcome of servant-leadership. The second tenant, **Holistic Approach to Work** challenges organisations to rethink the relationships that exist among leaders and subordinates and society as a whole, thus an integrated valuation of

individuals, eventually benefits both the organisation and its stakeholders. The third tenant, **promoting a Sense of community** advocates for the need to cooperate with various stakeholders, thus by establishing a sense of community among various parties' objectives can be easily achieved. This also allows for the creation of solutions that would be embraced by all stakeholders. The last tenant relates to **Sharing of Power in Decision-Making**. Russell (2001:80) states that "by nurturing participatory, empowering environments, and encouraging the talents of followers, the servant-leader creates a more effective, motivated workforce and ultimately a more successful organisation"; therefore, servant leadership promotes flexibility and delegated organisational structures, which are essential in a post-industrial environment (Biberman and Whitty, 1997).

2.6.5 Leadership styles and implications on gender role

Women and men's preferred leadership style may differ, due to the dynamics of role incongruity, notions of specific gender norms or the culture prevalent in organisations. Women may therefore favour a transformational approach in that it offers means of overcoming the issue of role congruity. Yoder (2001) argues that transformational leadership permits women to evade excessive masculine impression they can yield by hierarchical control and engaging in less agentic leadership behaviour. Organisational context may also influence the approach that is adopted, in the sense that an organisation that does not emphasize the need for hierarchy and the traditional command and control approach (e.g. the university system), may utilise a combination of transformational and transactional approaches that are consistent with women's communal attributes. It should be noted that some aspects of transformational leadership are not aligned with a specific gender role for example representing characteristics that encourage respect and self-importance by association with a leader. Carli (2001) argues that transformational approach may be hospitable to women, not only because some of its features are somewhat communal, but also because specific communal behaviours may assist female leaders to resolve difficulties of authority and legitimacy they encounter. Research conducted by Eagly and Karau (2002) demonstrate that female leaders can be disliked and considered untrustworthy, when they exert authority over male subordinates and utilise dominant approach to communication.

Negative perceptions by male subordinates towards female leaders has thus contributed towards the adoption of certain behaviours such as expressing agreement or showing interest in helping

individuals, which appeals to all subordinates (Carli, 2001). From this perspective, features of transformational leadership such as mentoring followers and emphasizing the need to achieve the goals of the organisation as a collective, rather than focusing on one's own goal may be critical to effective leadership, thus aspects of transformational leadership may provide a hospitable context for women's performance in leadership positions (Collard, 2001). Chemers (1997) suggests that although transformational leadership is effective in men as well, it may be more essential for women to exhibit their capability in a favourable manner that is sympathetic towards subordinates. Biernat and Kobrynowics (1997:573) state that "even though certain leader behaviours may ease the incongruity between the female gender role and leadership roles, women may still have to meet a higher standard than men to attain these roles at all". Therefore, research studies such as Eagly and Karau's (2002) study illustrate that women are evaluated differently and the use of double standards are present concerning performance evaluations and higher standards are imposed on women to attain and retain leadership positions. Foschi (2000) further suggests that female leaders who demonstrate ineffective leadership styles and perform incompetently may lose their position quickly compared to their male counterparts. While, the findings of various studies may differ due to the type of environment and the industry examined, it should be noted that factors such as organisational environment and dynamics of the group being led, influence the approach and behaviours a leader exhibits (Foels, Driskell, Mullen and Salas, 2000).

2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter provided a comprehensive literature review on the influence of gender roles on leadership styles. Empirical studies conducted by Eagly and Karau (2002), Hoyt, Simon, and Reid (2009) as well as Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2009) were examined, to gain a greater understanding on the historical perceptions regarding gender roles, the leadership styles exhibited by men and women as well as the challenges encountered by women in attaining top management positions. Furthermore, the chapter provides an overview of stereotype-driven discrimination (formal and informal) and its impact on the attainment of top management positions by women. Theories such as the role congruity theory, social role theory, and the think manager, think male perspective were reviewed. The notion of leadership styles and the relevant components were also examined. Lastly, the chapter provides an overview on leadership styles and its impact on gender roles.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter explored relevant literature relating to the influence of gender roles on leadership styles. This chapter provides information on the techniques used in performing the research activities including the techniques used to collect, analyse and interpret collected data. Bell and Bryman (2011) define research methodology as the technique used to systematically solve a research problem, whereas the research design provides a blueprint of how the research will be carried out. The research methodology includes the steps undertaken in investigating the research problem and applying research techniques relevant to the study undertaken. The research methods include the techniques used to collect, analyse and interpret collected data (Bell and Bryman, 2011).

3.2 Research paradigm

Turner (2010) defines research paradigm as a set of assumptions, values and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality. Therefore, a research paradigm influences what should be studied, how a topic should be researched and how results should be interpreted (Bell and Bryman, 2011). In other words, a research paradigm moulds the purpose of research that can be represented as either objectivist or subjectivist (positivistic or phenomenological paradigm) (Garner, Kawulich and Wagner, 2012). Tables 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate the differences and the comparisons of the two research paradigms. Bell and Bryman (2011) define objectivism as an external viewpoint that is independent of social actors, whereas subjectivism aims to understand social phenomena through the viewpoints of individuals involved in an activity that is researched.

For the purpose of this study, subjectivism is followed in order to understand the respondent's viewpoints on gender and leadership. The notion of ontology questions the nature of social entities and whether social entities can be regarded as objective entities that have an independent reality (Bell and Bryman, 2013). Garner, Kawulich and Wagner (2012) define constructionism as an ontological orientation that asserts that social occurrences and their significances are continually being achieved by social actors, thus constructionism is chosen as the ontological orientation. This implies that social phenomena is created through social interactions and are constantly being revised. Furthermore, constructivism is associated with qualitative methodology which relates to conducting interviews with research subjects to ascertain information (Garner, Kawulich and

Wagner, 2012). Bell and Bryman (2011) suggest that constructionism includes the researcher's own experiences, which in turn presents a specific version of social reality, rather than a social reality that can be considered as conclusive.

Table 3.1: Differences in research paradigm

Positivistic paradigm	**Phenomenological paradigm**
Quantitative	Qualitative
Objectivist	Subjectivist
Scientific	Humanistic
Experimentalist	Interpretative
Traditionalist	

Source: Collis and Hussey (2003:47)

Table 3.2: Comparison of research approaches

	Quantitative	Qualitative
General framework	Seek to confirm hypotheses about phenomena	Seek to explore phenomena
	Instruments use more rigid style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions	Instruments use more flexible, iterative style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions
	Use highly structured methods such as questionnaires, surveys, and structured observation	Use semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation
Analytical objectives	To quantify variation	To describe variation
	To predict causal relationships	To describe and explain relationships
	To describe characteristics of a population	To describe individual experiences
		To describe group norms
Question format	Closed-ended	Open-ended
Data format	Numerical (obtained by assigning numerical values to responses)	Textual (obtained from audiotapes, videotapes, and field notes)
Flexibility in study design	Study design is stable from beginning to end	Some aspects of the study are flexible (for example, the addition, exclusion, or wording of particular interview questions)
	Participant responses do not influence or determine how and which questions researchers ask next	Participant responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next
	Study design is subject to statistical assumptions and conditions	Study design is iterative, that is, data collection and research questions are adjusted according to what is learned

Source: Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide (2005)

3.2.1 Phenomenological (subjectivist) paradigm

The research paradigm chosen, influences critical aspects of the research methodology. For the purpose of this study, phenomenological paradigm is utilised. A phenomenon is a fact or an experience of which the cause is questioned. Collis and Hussey (2003) suggest that from a theoretical point of view, researchers perceive behaviour in terms of the phenomena of experience, rather than a described external and objective reality. Therefore, based on this perspective, a phenomenological paradigm focuses on understanding human behaviour from the participant's own experiences and perceptions on the subject that is investigated. In addition, this paradigm, emphasizes the subjective viewpoints of human activity and converging on the meaning, rather than quantifying social phenomena (Collis and Hussey, 2003). It should be noted that the researched topic may be influenced by the process of the research and the research is an intrinsic part of the research subject. Furthermore, each social phenomena is unique, due to diverse settings and experiences of the participants, thus it becomes essential to look beyond the aspects of one situation, to understand the principles working behind them (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

3.3 Research design

Bell and Bryman (2011) define a research design as a blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. For the purpose of this study, an interpretive study design is utilised for the study. Bhattacherjee (2012:97) define interpretive case study design as an "inductive technique where evidence collected from one or more case sites is systematically analysed and synthesized to allow concepts and patterns to emerge for the purpose of building new theories or expanding existing ones". The case under study in this research includes senior management staff from six public universities in Gauteng province. The experiences and perspectives of senior management stuff at these institutions may vary, thus an interpretive case study design is appropriate for this study. Bell and Bryman (2011) suggest that an interpretive study design allows the researcher to compare and contrast the findings obtained from the different cases, thus common themes and unique perspectives can be identified. It also provides a platform for the researcher to understand multifaceted issues and to strengthen findings of previous studies (Baxter and Jack, 2008).

3.4 Research strategy

Qualitative research techniques is utilised for this study, which allows the researcher to understand the subject matter through the perspectives of the individuals who are being studied and provides in-depth evidence of one's experiences on the subject matter (Kothari, 2009). Garner, Kawulich and Wagner (2012:39) define qualitative research as a "naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context-specific settings, such as a real world setting, where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest". Unlike quantitative research that seeks to identify association between variables and generalization of findings, qualitative research seeks to generate theory and provide an extensive description of individuals and their interactions in natural settings (Bell and Bryman, 2011). This research approach provides the researcher with the opportunity to understand the experiences of senior managers at Gauteng universities, with regards to leadership and gender roles. Qualitative research emphasizes an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research. In other words, the purpose of qualitative research is to generate theory or add to existing literature (Bell and Bryman, 2011).

3.5 Research population

The research population refers to the total populace that the researcher intends to include in the research (Bell and Bryman, 2011). Therefore, the research population will comprise of all senior management staff in public universities in Gauteng province of South Africa. The universities include the University of the Witwatersrand, University of Johannesburg, University of Pretoria, Vaal University of Technology, Tshwane University of Technology and University of South Africa. The participants include Faculty Deans, University Registrars, Executive Directors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors. The Council of Higher Education (2013) revealed approximately 183 senior management staff occupied positions in 6 public universities in Gauteng province. The respondents will comprise of both males and females, in order to obtain diverse perspectives, diminish biasness and to gather an in-depth understanding of their experiences.

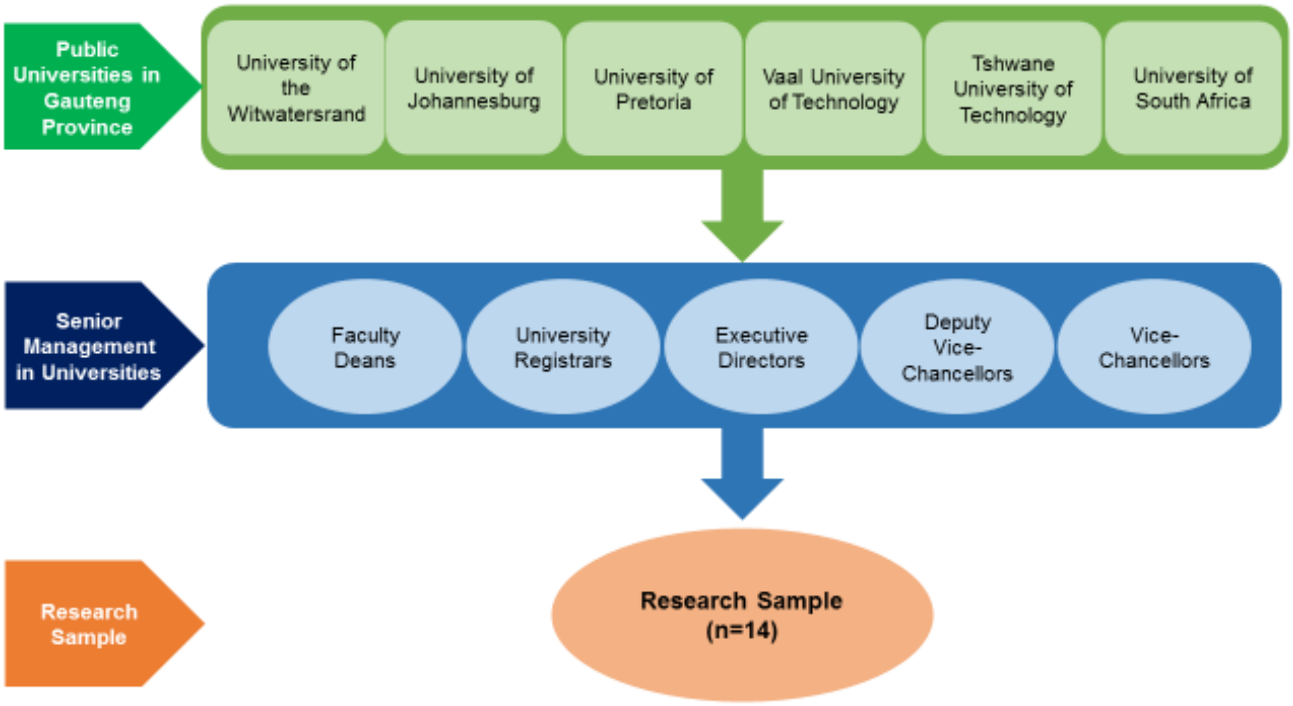
3.6 Sample size

The sample size refers to the proportion of the research population that is selected for the study (Bell and Bryman, 2011). Research participations were selected through purposeful sampling, with key individuals identified based on their leadership positions. In addition, gender was also considered in choosing the sample to ensure equal representation. Glense (2006) describes purposeful sampling as a method that groups respondents according to a pre-selected criterion relevant to a particular research question. Purposeful sample sizes are determined on the basis of theoretical saturation (the point in data collection, when new data no longer provides valuable insights to the research question) (Glense, 2006). The point of saturation for qualitative studies is subjective in nature; as such, 14 respondents were selected to participate in the study (this is the point at which saturation was reached). The research sample include participants from all public universities in Gauteng province in order to make participation representative of the population. Table 3.3 and figure 3.1 provides a demographic overview of the participants in this study.

Table 3.3: Research participants

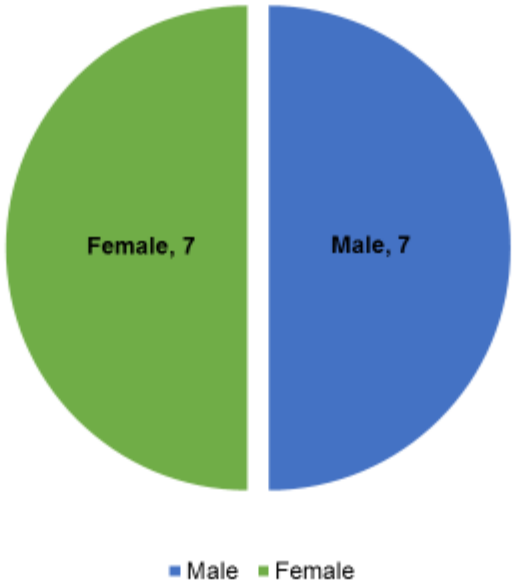
Participant	Position	Gender	Institution
Professor Adam Habib	Vice Chancellor and Principal	M	University of the Witwatersrand
Dr. Marcia Socikwa	Deputy Vice-Principal: Operations and Facilities	F	University of South Africa
Professor Angina Parekh	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academics	F	University of Johannesburg
Professor Stanley Mukhola	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching, Learning and Technology	M	Tshwane University of technology
Dr. Dhaya Naidoo	Chief Information Officer and Executive Director: quality, planning and risk management	M	Tshwane University of technology
Professor Debra Meyer	Executive Dean: Faculty of Science	F	University of Johannesburg
Professor Chika Sehoole	Executive Dean: Faculty of Education	M	University of Pretoria
Professor Prince Ngobeni	Executive Dean: Faculty of Science	M	Tshwane University of technology
Professor Elmarie Sadler	Executive Dean: College of Accounting Sciences	F	University of South Africa
Ms Carol Crosley	University Registrar	F	University of the Witwatersrand
Four participants chose to remain anonymous			

Figure 3.1: Sampling of participants



An equal number of male and female leaders participated in the research as illustrated in figure 3.2

Figure 3.2: Gender representation



3.7 Sampling procedure

A non-probability sampling technique is utilised for this study. Bell and Bryman (2011) describe a non-probability sampling as a technique that selects relevant informants to participate in the study, rather than random selection of participants. The main issue with the non-probability sampling techniques is the possibility that personal judgement may influence the selection of the sample and the sampling error cannot be estimated (Kothari, 2004). Snowball sampling (a subset of purposeful sampling) is utilised for this study by identifying an initial group to conduct interviews with, and using the group to establish contacts with other relevant individuals.

3.8 Research instrument

Merriam (2008) suggests that interviews are mostly utilised in qualitative research and can be in the form of structured or semi-structured format. For the purpose of this study, semi-structured interviews were utilised. This allows the researcher to prepare questions before the interview and provides a platform for respondents to express their perspectives in their own terms. A set of questions were used as an aid in exploring the participant's own perception and experiences about the topic. Turner (2010) suggests that unstructured interviews are beneficial, in the sense that a lack of structure provides flexibility. However Creswell (2007) states that unstructured interviews are unstable or unreliable because of the inconsistency in the interview questions, thus making it difficult to code data. The semi-structured interview guide was developed based on extensive review of the literature and using the guidelines provided by Bryman and Bell (2011). The interviews were aimed at understanding the differences in leadership styles, barriers women encounter in attaining senior management positions, the presence of glass ceiling, stereotypes and gender role perceptions as well as whether leadership styles contribute to the gender gap in senior management, within universities in Gauteng.

3.9 Data collection process

One on one interviews were utilised as a means of data collection for the study. A formal email detailing the purpose of the research was sent to participants, requesting them to voluntarily partake in the study. Once participants accepted to participate in the study, a suitable date and time was agreed upon to conduct the interviews. These interviews lasted for a duration of 30-45 minutes. Prior to the interview, participants were asked to sign a consent form. A voice recorder

was used to record the interview. Furthermore, secondary data was examined to gain a deeper understanding on the research subject.

3.10 Data analysis

There are various techniques that can be used to analyse qualitative data; these include thematic, content and descriptive analyses. For the purpose of this study, thematic analysis was utilised. Patton (2002) describes thematic analysis as a technique that examines all collected data, to identify the common issues that recur and identify the main themes that summarise all the views that have been collected. Ritchie and Spencer's (1994) guideline for the analysis of qualitative data was applied in this study. This guideline comprised of familiarisation, developing a thematic framework, indexing and mapping and interpretation. Familiarisation focuses on the review of collected data from research participants in order to identify recurring themes or perspectives and assist in understanding differences or similarities with regards to perspectives shared by the senior management at public universities in Gauteng province. This allows the researcher to compare data and identify any themes that require further investigation. Developing a thematic framework is aimed at grouping perspectives in order to derive associations between theories and individual perspective (Green and Thorogood, 2004). Indexing refers to analysing responses in terms of patterns, themes and assumptions, which allows the researcher to retrieve information relating to a certain theme or theory (Patton, 2002). Lastly, mapping and interpretation involves the consideration of an all-inclusive perspective of the data collected, thus an inclusive perspective is derived from a systematic procedure of formulating concepts, classifying information, identifying associations, validating these associations and providing recommendations based on the findings (Bell and Bryman, 2011). The interview tape recordings were transcribed and data was analysed through the identification of fundamental patterns and themes.

3.11 Reliability and Validity

Quantitative researchers (positivists) often question the trustworthiness of qualitative research as the notion of validity and reliability cannot be addressed in the same way due to its naturalistic setting (Shenton, 2004). While the concept of reliability and validity are fundamental standards for quality in quantitative studies, the notion of credibility, conformability, dependability and transferability are vital standards for quality in qualitative studies. Bryman and Bell (2011) suggest

that the trustworthiness of a qualitative study can be improved through the consideration and application of four cardinal terms: Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Figure 3.1 illustrates different strategies that can be used, when addressing the four cardinal terms.

3.11.1 Reliability

Although the concept of reliability is often used in evaluating quantitative research, Patton (2001) suggests that reliability and validity should be emphasized by the researcher, when designing, analysing and decoding the quality of the study. Joppe (2000:11) defines reliability as "the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable". The notion of conformability and dependability should be considered, with regards to reliability of qualitative studies. Conformability relates to whether the researcher allowed his or her values to intrude the findings of the study (Shenton, 2004). Strategies to tackle issue of conformability, include the use of triangulation to reduce the effect of researcher biasness, acknowledging the limitations of the study's techniques and their potential impact and providing an in-depth methodological description to examine the integrity of the findings (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Conformability was ensured through triangulation, thus the views shared by the participants was verified with other sources of data to support the findings and interpretations of the study. In addition, the data collected was reviewed by a peer and the limitations of the study were highlighted. Dependability parallels with reliability and refers to whether the findings are likely to apply at other times, thus dependability was ensured through the accumulation of documented research procedures, analytical processes and findings and apparent themes of the study as proposed by Bryman and Bell (2011).

3.11.2 Validity

Golafshani (2003) asserts that validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are, thus the research should provide appropriate, meaningful and useful results. The notion of transferability and credibility are used to address the issue of validity in qualitative studies. Transferability (parallels with external validity) refers to whether the findings apply to other research contexts, thus researchers can attain background data to generate research context and detail the description of events, which allows

for comparisons to be made (Shenton, 2004). Credibility refers to how reliable the findings of the study are or how congruent the findings are with reality. Therefore, credibility can be achieved through member checks in which participants are asked to read dialogue transcripts to ensure their response matches what they intended to say and through triangulation, which makes use of diverse methods and participants (Kothari, 2004). Transferability was ensured by evaluating existing literature on the topic of gender roles and leadership. Existing theories and paradigms such as the role congruity theory, social role theory and the think-manager think-male paradigm were scrutinized and linked back to the findings of the study, thus similarities and differences were identified. Credibility was ensured by asking participants to confirm their views on the questions that were asked. This allowed the participants to confirm or add any additional information that they intended to share. Therefore, it is essential to consider these four factors throughout the research process.

Figure 3.3: Strategies used to address trustworthiness of qualitative studies

Provisions that may be Made by a Qualitative Researcher Wishing to Address Guba's Four Criteria for Trustworthiness

Quality criterion	*Possible provision made by researcher*
Credibility	Adoption of appropriate, well recognised research methods
	Development of early familiarity with culture of participating organisations
	Random sampling of individuals serving as informants
	Triangulation via use of different methods, different types of informants and different sites
	Tactics to help ensure honesty in informants
	Iterative questioning in data collection dialogues
	Negative case analysis
	Debriefing sessions between researcher and superiors
	Peer scrutiny of project
	Use of "reflective commentary"
	Description of background, qualifications and experience of the researcher
	Member checks of data collected and interpretations/theories formed
	Thick description of phenomenon under scrutiny
	Examination of previous research to frame findings
Transferability	Provision of background data to establish context of study and detailed description of phenomenon in question to allow comparisons to be made
Dependability	Employment of "overlapping methods"
	In-depth methodological description to allow study to be repeated
Confirmability	Triangulation to reduce effect of investigator bias
	Admission of researcher's beliefs and assumptions
	Recognition of shortcomings in study's methods and their potential effects
	In-depth methodological description to allow integrity of research results to be scrutinised
	Use of diagrams to demonstrate "audit trail"

Source: Shenton (2004)

3.13 Ethical considerations

Bell and Bryman (2011) propose four ethical principles to consider during the research process. These principles include, obtaining informed consent from participants, without being coerced or unfairly pressurised, protecting participants from any harm, and ensuring confidentiality of their identity and the information provided. It is essential to consider ethical issues throughout the research process, to ensure that the findings are reliable and most importantly, the research participants are protected from any harm. Therefore, permission to conduct the proposed study was requested from the university's central ethics committee. Furthermore, permission to conduct the interviews was requested from the selected participants. Participants were asked to sign a consent form and were well informed about what participation entails and were given the option to accept (voluntarily) or decline to participate at any point in the study. In addition, data collected was treated with utmost anonymity and confidentiality, thus participants had the option to decline to reveal their identity. The information collected will be used for academic and research purposes only without infringing the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. In addition, some participants agreed to participate only on the basis of anonymity.

3.14 Chapter summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research methodology and design utilised for this study. The research paradigm, population, sample size, instrument and the sampling procedure used for the study were discussed. For the purpose of this study, a phenomenological paradigm and a multiple case study design were utilised. Due to the nature of the study, interviews are used to gather primary data. Qualitative data analysis techniques are also examined. Lastly the notion of validity and reliability are discussed. Chapter 4 will provide the research findings and interpretations of the data collected from the interviews.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the analysis of the data collected in the form of interviews and to discuss these findings in relation to existing literature. The general themes that often arise from the available academic research propose the need for effective leadership in all organisations, regardless of their size, tenure and status (Mehmood and Ari, 2011) and that transformational leadership can have a significantly greater impact compared to transactional leadership in relation to the perceptions and evaluation of leaders (Khan, Ramzan, Ahmed and Nawaz, 2011). Research on leadership and gender has provided diverse conclusions and this can be attributed to the research environment and the dynamics of the respondents. Therefore, this chapter will outline the information gathered from the respondents and identify similarities and differences in relation to existing literature. Themes and similarities are discussed through a cross-case analysis. Furthermore, this chapter provides the research findings in relation to the research objectives and questions stated in chapter one. The objectives of the study as stated in chapter 1 include:

- Investigate the different leadership styles utilised by senior management at public universities within the Gauteng province.
- Investigate the underrepresentation of females in senior management positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.
- Identify the barriers women encounter in progressing to senior leadership positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.
- Determine how leadership styles contribute towards the gender gap within senior leadership positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.

The following questions were developed for the research study:

1. What are the barriers influencing progression of women to senior management positions in public universities within the Gauteng province?
2. What are the strategies being implemented to address the gender gap within the senior management team in public universities within the Gauteng province?
3. What are the key differences in leadership styles between male and female members of the senior management teams in public universities within the Gauteng province?

4. How has leadership styles contributed to the gender gap within the senior management teams in public universities within the Gauteng province?

Subsequent to the analysis of the data gathered, the following themes were identified. The themes were derived from the literature review in chapter two and through the data collected in the form of interviews.

Theme 1: Leadership styles and socio-cultural factors

Leadership styles and the influence of socio-cultural factors on leadership styles.

Theme 2: Gender and leadership style differences

Gender attributes/differences and its influence on leadership styles

Theme 3: Career advancement and glass ceiling

Factors contributing to the gender gap and the barriers/challenges encountered by women seeking to advance their leadership career.

Theme 4: Policy intervention and strategy

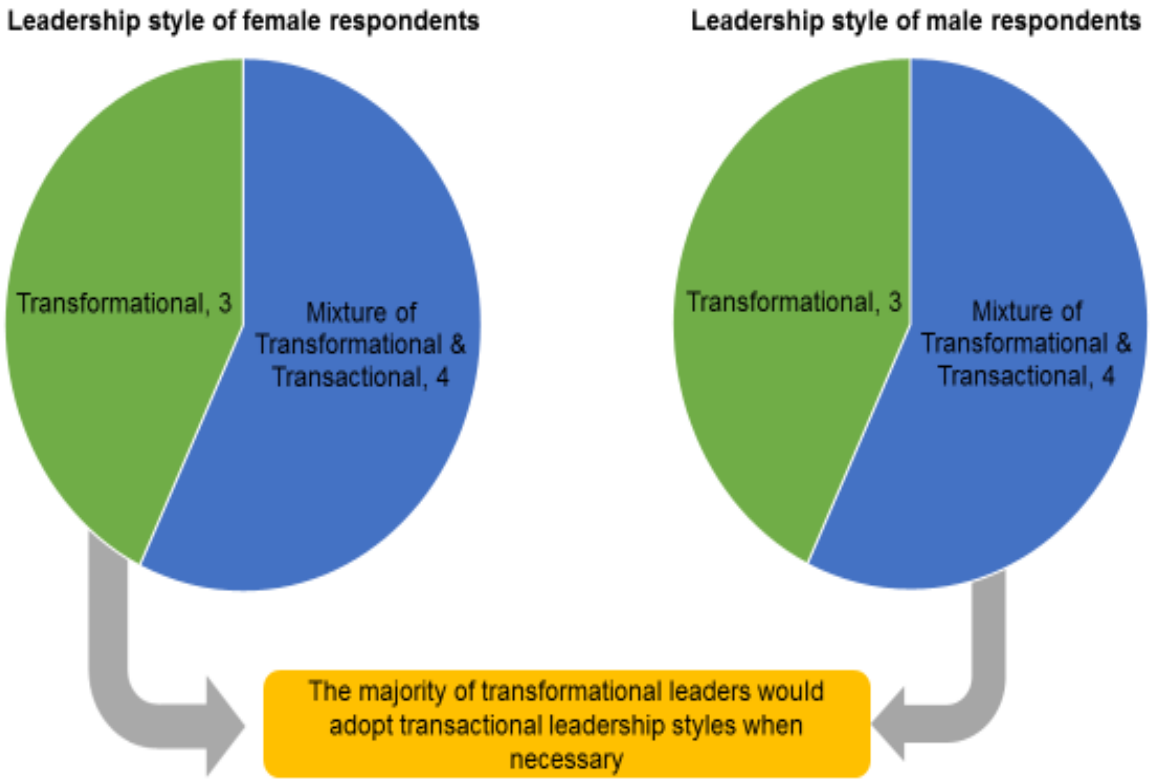
Policies and strategies utilised to address the gender gap within leadership positions

4.2 Theme 1: Leadership styles and socio-cultural factors

The first objective of the study was to investigate the different leadership styles utilised by senior management at public universities in Gauteng provinces. Literature proposes that women and men's preferred leadership style may differ, due to the dynamics of role incongruity, notions of specific gender norms or the culture prevalent in organisations (Eagly and Karau, 2002). Organisational context may also influence the approach that is adopted, in the sense that an organisation that does not emphasize the need for hierarchy and the traditional command and control approach (e.g. the university system) may utilise a combination of transformational and transactional approaches. While certain leadership styles are dominant in certain industries or work

profession, it was established that all the respondents (both men and women) within the academic space adopt transformational leadership practices. However, some respondents emphasize the need to exhibit transactional behaviours, depending on the situation. Both male and female respondents had similar responses with none of the respondents indicating that they adopt transactional leadership style as illustrated in figure 4.1. Slightly more than half of the respondents indicated that they use a combination of both transformational and transactional leadership styles, and the others all indicated that they are transformational leaders. The first question is fragmented into two sections, which includes the use of both transformational and transactional leadership styles and leaders that are striving to always be transformational.

Figure 4.1: Leadership styles used by the respondents



The following responses were obtained from respondents who perceive their leadership style as being both transformational and transactional.

> Probably, my sense is that it's a bit of both. Obviously, ideally you want to be transformational because I understand that you get more out of people, you get more out of staff when it is transformational whereas transactional, while that's less appealing, it sometimes gets the job done, so you kind of have to balance the two – Carol

This is consistent with the findings of Fernandes and Awamleh (2003) and Bass and Avolio (1990). The researchers found that leaders that exhibit charisma, inspiration and motivation towards employees elicit positive reactions. However, reliance on one leadership style may negatively impact performance and therefore the use of transactional leadership components such rewards and punishments are essential when the delivery of results is required. In contrast to the perception that transactional leadership is less appealing, Boseman (2008) found that transactional leaders have substantial influence on the followers.

Another respondent argued in favour of a combination of leadership styles in order to achieve both operational effectiveness and efficiency. Adam highlights that motivation has to be coupled with penalties and rewards.

> I would think, I am a combination of both. I came in on an agenda that would enhance change and implement that change. You could argue that the change has been very effective….there is a fundamental shift in behaviour. Now, it may not be what some people want, but the definition of transformational is to motivate people to achieve a goal and there is a fundamental systemic change. I say transaction component because, we actually have a scorecard, we have penalties and I do not think we cannot do it without penalties, we can motivate, but motivation can only go so far. Motivation has to be coupled with penalties and rewards... so it is a combination of transformational and transactional – Adam

In similar responses, three other respondents subscribed to the use of both transactional and transformational leadership styles, which is supported by empirical studies by Burns (1978), Bass (1985) and Avolio, Waldman and Einstein (1988), who insist that effective leaders demonstrate attributes of both transactional and transformational leadership. Angina highlights that a tertiary institution is also results driven, thus transactional components are sometimes utilised. Balogun

and Hailey (2008) suggest that coercive power is necessary in times of crisis or when results are required in a short period of time.

> It is a combination of both transformational and transactional. I think that certainly in the current context, it is important that one focusses on the transformational imperatives and priorities, but I think that you're also an organisation that does require results and sometimes one does need to look at a kind of strategic style of engagement that does allow for focus on results and results-oriented. So I think that my own approach to leadership is that it's a combination of leadership styles and part of a leader is knowing when a particular style of leadership is required – Angina

> I have found in my experience that one needs to have a combination of transactional and transformational attributes. The context of the situation and the maturity of the organisation will determine what will be the balance between transformational and transactional. Merely being transformational presumes that nearly everybody in the organisation is aligned to that way of thinking, but in my experience I have found that you need a combination of transactional and transformational leadership – Dhaya

> I believe that you actually need at least a bit of both, but if I were to select just one, I would say I am more transformational but in some cases, you need an element of transactional leadership – Elmarie

While some respondents place emphasises on the need to enforce elements of both transformational and transactional leadership styles, others strongly perceive themselves as being transformational leaders by highlighting the use of motivation, care and participation as elements to uplift individuals. The respondents who perceive themselves as being transformational leaders state that:

> I recently asked the people under my leadership to tell me what type of leader they think I am. They were asked to do this anonymously. I gave them a choice of four leadership styles and I was pleasantly surprised when everyone agreed that my leadership style is exactly

> what I perceived it to be. I see myself as a participative and transformational leader and that is what everyone selected as well – Debra

In a similar response, anonymous respondent three highlights the participative nature of transformational leadership. As stated by Belasen and Frank (2012), a transformational leader is expected to emphasize the importance and value of tasks, encourage followers to achieve organisational objectives rather than their own goals and stimulate their higher-order requirements. Furthermore, transformational leaders emphasizes the need to respect and appreciate individual contributions as diverse perspectives provide a range of solutions to difficulties.

> I am more transformational, because I am more participative with my team. You will want to hear everyone's side and you do not want to override. You may think you're guided by your goals, with achieving your goals, but you must have your followers so…I prefer to participate with my team on a transformational level to say how do we best achieve our goals... – Anonymous respondent three

The collaborative behaviour which is linked to transformational leadership has been acknowledged as a valued characteristic of a leader (Gill, 2006) and emphasis is made on establishing and growing interpersonal relationships in order to achieve common goals (Bass, 1998).

> If you focus on transactional leadership you are…focusing on transactions and you don't consider the human being in the transaction. For example, if you look at the aspect of compliance, in order to get a person to be compliant to a process, it is better to focus on the human nature than to force them to do so. So if you tell me, "It is better for you to be honest" you won't believe me, but if you see me acting honestly, if you see I have integrity when I do things, then through that leadership you get transformed yourself. So rather than saying, make it a compulsory type of action, that person actually becomes a better person through example, through discussions, through human interactions rather than specifying the rule and saying, "this is the way that you will do it" – Anonymous respondent two

Similarly, the views shared by anonymous respondent two are consist with the leadership paradigm introduced by Burns (1978). Transactional leaders motivate followers through exchanges that appeal to the individuals' self-interest, while transformational leaders motivate followers through charisma and inspiration to better themselves to achieve both personal and organisational goals (Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Another respondent expresses that he looks for opportunities to uplift everyone in his team.

> I think I am more transformational. In the faculty I am supervising, half of the HODs are women and I have two assistants that are women. I look for opportunities that can uplift not only those that are disadvantaged but everyone in my team – Prince

Chika highlights the components of transformational leadership including the inspirational motivation and Intellectual stimulation. Bass (1985) proposes that a leader's vision provides a framework; however, given the opportunity to articulate diverse perspectives, followers are able to use creativity as a tool to overcome obstacles. By instilling a strong sense of purpose, employees are motivation to achieve organisational objectives. Furthermore, Chika's proposition on taking care of the team's wellbeing addresses the individualized consideration or individualized attention component of transformational leadership. Aldoory and Toth (2004) emphasizes the need to address follower's needs, providing mentorship and the platform for others to voice out their concerns.

> I think I am a transformational leader and the way that I apply it is, that I work for an institution that has got a particular vision and institutional goals, which we are working towards and my role is working with the staff to achieve those particular goals. However, in so doing I acknowledge the element of urgency whereby people have their own strengths and weaknesses but also ways in which they can differentially contribute in the ascertainment of those goals. Most importantly, I do not see people as workers in a working context but you need to take note of their wellbeing and find out how they are doing. Like paying courtesy calls to them, moving around campus and meeting people who report to you, not just to check if they are doing their work but to affirm them and making them aware of how important they are to the overall functioning of the institution. That is how I view my leadership style – Chika

Based on the information above, the respondents were questioned if there are times when they would enforce a certain leadership style based on the situation or environment. None of the leaders identified with being autocratic or exhibiting transactional leadership behaviours at all times, however, when probed further some leaders emphasized the need to sometimes enforce transactional leadership behaviours in order to achieve certain objectives. Some respondents emphasized the need to exhibit transactional behaviours, depending on the situation or context. Although transactional leadership was perceived to be results orientated, it was said that it is less appealing and destroy relationships or hamper the development of an organisation. While transformational leadership was perceived as a leadership style aimed at appreciating and motivating individuals to be compliant and perform at their best. Furthermore, the respondents emphasized the need to have a balance and being mindful of when to enforce a certain leadership style.

Carol proposes that enforcing a leadership style is dependent on a situation, and while it is important for leaders to lead by example, it is also important to ensure that the end goal is achieved. Grint (2011:118) states that "effective leadership requires a rational understanding of the situation and an appropriate response, rather than a charismatic leader with a large group of dedicated followers".

> I'd like to think, that it's not so much the leadership style, but it's the situation that presents itself because perhaps in some situations one has to be transformational and one wants to be transformational and in other situations one has to be more transactional. It is important for me to provide that strategic leadership and that example setting but I also have to make sure that the job gets done. I can give the leadership, I can set the example, I can have the ideals to say, "Come on, let's work on this together..." but at the same time I have to be able to say, "Jeez, come you know, we have deadlines". We have 450 exams that are being written from this period to this period. Who is managing the venue allocation? Who's making sure that the exam scripts are there? So, to answer your question, probably a mixture of both, depending on the scenario and the situation – Carol

Another respondent emphasizes the need to have a balance and proposes that it is essential to know when to enforce a certain leadership style. This is supported by Bass (2008) who emphasized the need to evaluate the situation and apply a suitable approach, while considering the level of maturity or readiness of the followers as a contingency or situation that leaders need to account for in order to establish the appropriate fit between the leader and followers.

> I think any style of leadership has to be, to a large extent guided by the circumstances and the context. I think it would be wrong to be fixated on one style of leadership, which may or may not necessarily be the kind that is required for a specific moment in time or to drive a specific agenda. So I think that my own approach to leadership is that it's a combination of leadership styles and part of a leader is knowing when a particular style of leadership is required – Angina

These sentiments are also shared by three other respondents who propose that leaders cannot rely on one leadership style and that different situations require different leadership styles.

> Yes, in an environment that is as diverse as ours and as large as UNISA, you deal with different scenarios and your own managers have different styles. So sometimes, you treat people differently and apply different leadership styles… – Elmaria

This is consistent with the findings presented by Yoder (2001). The organisational context or environment may influence the approach that is adopted, in the sense that an organisation that does not stress the need for hierarchy and the traditional command and control approach (e.g. the university system), may utilise a combination of transformational and transactional leadership attributes (Yoder, 2001). Similarly, two other respondents share the same sentiments.

> I think different situations/problems require different approaches, so I wouldn't say I have one particular way that I would ascribe to or a way of dispensing instructions or engagement – Marcia

> Yes, you have to. Transformational and transactional are not two opposites they work together – Anonymous respondent one

Based on the competing values framework (CVF), Belasen and Frank (2012) suggest that when leaders extensively employ the characteristics of one leadership style without considering attributes from other roles/leadership styles, the organisation may become dysfunctional. Whereas "high-performing managers display behavioural complexity that allows them to master contradictory behaviours while also maintaining some measure of behavioural integrity and credibility" (Belasen and Frank, 2012:198). However, prioritizing factors such as compliance and competition based on an organisation's environment and culture might inhibit the achievement of objectives in other fields such as collaboration. Consistent with the findings of Belasen and Frank (2012), three other respondents suggest that while staff in higher education strive to be transformational leaders, they acknowledge the negative implications and the need to enforce components of transactional leadership when necessary.

> Look, I think one is always striving to be transformational in one's leadership style. You are looking at bringing out the best in people. You are looking at leading in innovation; you are looking at convincing people why they should do what they need to do. Looking at a wide range of motivated factors as to why people should do what they need to do. Therefore, that is your default position or orientation, but there comes a time where you have to find a way of getting people to do things, when their goals are not consistent with the goals of an organisation. That is where you need to place your formal authority, not to demand but to get people to complete objectives. We make the assumption that personal goals are aligned with organisational goals and that is not always the case – Dhaya

The idea of adopting different leadership styles is further supported by Vinnicombe and Singh (2002) who identified the need for leaders to move towards androgynous styles that combine the strengths of transactional and transformational attributes to add value and achieve organisational goals.

> It is more situational leadership…transformational leadership helps you understand the situation that you are under and then there are times, let's be honest when there are deadlines and you must be authoritative and instruct people to comply and deliver – Anonymous respondent three

An autocratic approach can impact interpersonal relationships and the development of an organisation as suggested by another respondent.

> I am not in favour of an autocratic management style, because I have seen how it can destroy relationships and it can also hamper the development of an organisation, but in some instances there might be a point where you have to use aspects of transactional leadership – Anonymous respondent two

Despite the fact that existing research has demonstrated that transformational leadership (relation-oriented) is preferred over transactional leadership (task-oriented leadership), Arvidsson, Johansson, Ek, and Akselsson (2007) argue that transactional leadership is appropriate in certain situations, thus allocating tasks, stipulating procedures and clarifying follower expectations gives rise to increased productivity and job satisfaction.

> Yes, depending on the situation…That is why leadership is not static, it is dynamic. It changes with time and it changes with the followers that you are leading, so that is why I am saying no one can stick to one trade. There are many trades that somebody can go for and at the same time, people can say 'wow that guy is dynamic, look at his team'. That can be because he is not using one style – Anonymous respondent four

The idea that leadership changes with time and followers is further supported by Arvidsson, Johansson, Ek, and Akselsson (2007) by proposing that leaders need to regularly change their approach to suit their followers to be effective, thus leadership styles change based on the knowledge and skills of followers in a given task. Leaders need to have the ability to know when to apply a certain approach, while keeping in mind that the effectiveness of the approach utilised

is essentially dependent on the followers' readiness to accept an approach (Johansson, Ek, and Akselsson, 2007).

As indicated in the literature review, gender roles impose societal expectations on the way an individual should behave based gender. Various researchers assert that one significant reason for the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles is due to the socialization of women into specific gender roles (Diekman and Schneider, 2010). Historical perceptions include the view that men exhibit stronger attributes for leadership roles compared to women (Diekman and Schneider, 2010), thus this notion drives many institutions to stereotype the qualities required for leadership positions. The leadership styles adopted by most of the research respondents are perceived positively and this is attributed to seeking feedback from followers, providing growth and learning opportunities, motivating followers and establishing a fair and transparent relationship with followers. Those respondents who led with both a transformational and transactional leadership styles, also believed that their staff were generally happy with their leadership, although a few indicated that it depends on the individual. It was also indicated by one female respondent that other females are more positive towards her leadership style than men who tend to initially resent it. Interestingly, the male leaders who utilise both leadership styles only discussed the perceptions of their subordinates as being dependent on the individual, whereas some female respondents went on further to indicate that they believe their subordinates perceive them as utilizing a more transactional leadership style, when they are more assertive and push their staff for achievement. The responses below are in relation to the question of how followers perceive the respondent's leadership approach as either positive or negative.

> Well, I have been in this position for 6 months now but previously I was head of department for 5 years. It worked well in the departmental context as head of department and people experienced it quite well, especially in the context of a historically white institution like this one, where black people were never in positions of authority. So when I took over there were some expectations… actually there were mixed reaction from the staff. Some white people thought the department was going to fall. Some black people were excited at the fact that a black person was taking over and they were all out to support me. So through

> my leadership I tried to provide opportunities to all of them and I got a positive response from them – Chika

One respondent proposes that while it is difficult to speak on behalf of others and find out how her leadership style is perceived, the fact that her own staff nominated her for a leadership award, indicates that her leadership style is perceived positively.

> …from what I gather, people do experience it positively. Most of the staff members have an open rapport with me and in 2013/4…I received the Women's Leadership Award for transformative and servant leadership. Judging by the fact that it was actually my own staff members that nominated me… it must be having a positive impact – Anonymous respondent two

Another respondent articulates the positive relationship shared with followers and emphasized the need to be approachable and create a pleasant environment where followers and leaders engage.

> For them it's positive, I have been in higher education for 15 years at senior level, so it's been very positive. What is nice is when you have openness, people do not mind coming to you and asking for direction. That is the attitude you want to have, you do not want people being afraid to come to you, so it helped me get to where I am, because people are open and you even start understanding the personalities of various people within the environment – Anonymous respondent three

Three respondents do not mention whether their leadership style is perceived positively or negatively. However, it is mentioned that they are perceived to exhibit transactional leadership behaviours.

> Recently we had to undergo a programme called Lead and through this programme; I had to get feedback on how other people perceive my leadership style….So as a result, they perceive it as a more composed, assertive, attentive and analytical style – Prince

Two female respondents who embrace both transformational and transactional leadership approaches believe their leadership style is perceived as transactional. Furthermore, research conducted by Eagly (2007), Catalyst (2005) and Eagly and Johannesen- Schmidt (2001), suggest that female leaders are perceived as being more transformational than transactional, thus contrasting with the views shared by the two female respondents.

> It's perceived as transactional because I am very compliance oriented – Elmarie

> I think that people perceive my style of leadership as kind of very direct, a no-nonsense approach. Somebody who is capable but also leads by example. So I think there's an element of that. I think that they perceive my leadership style to be somewhat fair and transparent – Angina

Leaders such as Carol and Dhaya argue that follower perceptions are based on individual behaviours and that perceptions may change based on leadership behaviours exhibited in certain situations, which is consistent with the findings of Arvidsson, Johansson, Ek, and Akselsson's (2007) study, which found that changes in leadership behaviours elicits different perceptions.

> I'd like to think that it is perceived to be positive. I do know that I've set high standards and I know that I can be difficult because I expect a lot. I am quite intolerant of laziness, if I'm being frank with you. So, it depends on who you speak to. If you speak to someone who just wants to come to work and just do their job and be casual, they probably don't like my style, but the person who is there to do their job and who achieves and who works hard, they'd probably see it in a more positive light – Carol

> So, in my experience I felt that people are not the same. You have to understand the people who you are working with, you have to understand the context in which you are working and you have to adapt your leadership style according to that without compromising your values and your principles of course. Some people find it transformational and that is largely based on the relationship I have with those people. There are others where we have a conversation about how we are going to approach things and I say to them, tell me what you think, and tell me why you should walk this particular road or convince me to adapt your way of thinking. So where there is openness and a willingness to align oneself with a

> transformational way of thinking, then we have a transformational relationship. Others find it very transactional when there are demands that are placed, where there are deadlines placed, where there is a follow up to say you didn't do X-Y-Z, why didn't you do it? – Dhaya

However, Marcia proposes that perceptions depend on the gender of the individuals assessing a leadership approach.

> Women mostly appreciate it. I think men initially resent it but with time attitudes change but mostly women appreciate it – Marcia

Furthermore, some research studies found that female leaders who adopt autocratic leadership behaviours are perceived negatively and as a result, women were less likely to embrace an approach that would result in an unfavourable judgement of their actions. The respondents were asked if women are perceived negatively if they exhibit features of transactional leadership. Some female respondents suggest that women who exhibit autocratic/transactional behaviours would be perceived negatively and that some men find it hard to relate to a strong women. This could be attributed to historical stereotypical pre-conceptions of the nature of women as the nurturer and caregiver, therefore a contradiction if different behaviours are exhibited. Furthermore, some respondents suggest that regardless of gender, both men and women would be perceived negatively if autocratic behaviours were exhibited.

> I don't see it as much in the university environment because it's a different environment to the corporate one. Whilst there are similarities, there are huge differences as well. Wits as an environment is a gentler one in that our main remit at the university is that we are here for the public good so we want to pursue knowledge and research. We are not here to make money, whereas in the corporate environment, their goal…they exist to generate more money. We exist to generate more knowledge. Because there's a difference in that basis, I don't see that hard-core kind of, aggressive, autocratic behaviour…I don't see it evident in the university. There are one or two individuals but I think that's their personas, whether they are male or female they would be like that. So, I do think the corporate environment is a little bit more aggressive and autocratic than what the university environment is – Carol

Carol indicates that the nature of tertiary institutions is a gentler environment and with a different objective compared to the corporate environment. As such, aggressive or autocratic behaviours are not exhibited and if they are, it is mainly attributed to the individual's personas. However, she highlights women's perceived attributes and suggests that when women exhibit attributes that were traditionally associated with men, some men may perceive them as being aggressive.

> I think it goes back to how women are perceived. I think women are better listeners, where they're perceived to be the nurturers, making sure children are brought up and being kind and caring. There is a fine line, between being perceived to be aggressive and assertive. I do find that when a woman is assertive sometimes men resort to making a joke about it saying 'you're getting aggressive', whereas they never ever think of saying that to a fellow male colleague. Depending on the scenario, the situation and on the person themselves, I do think that your older, more mature women perhaps know how to deal with that better than someone who's new to management – Carol

In a similar response, two other respondents concur with the view that women who exhibit autocratic behaviours are perceived as bullies.

> I think it's true… that female leaders who seem to be autocratic and we have had a few experiences of that, of female leaders who were actually very autocratic. They were labelled as being bullies. So I think that employees would be much more hesitant to label an autocratic male leader as a bully. It's just a perception that a woman is seen to be, generally, the nurturer and therefore a contradiction if she behaves differently. From a woman it's sort of unexpected so they are quick to label them (women) as being a bully or intimidating – Anonymous respondent two

> Strong women are likened to men or called the B-word if they are tough and decisive. This happens in any industry including academia. If women are openly ambitious it's treated as an anomaly, somehow not lady like – Debra

The views shared by the two respondents are consistent with aspects of the role congruity theory. It is suggested that society's stereotypical view on roles traditionally occupied by women including communal roles and men's roles as more agentic, individuals who occupy roles that are incongruity with their gender role are evaluated negatively within society (Eagly and Wood, 2012).

Furthermore, systematic investigations revealed that women who exhibited stereotypically masculine attributes were perceived and evaluated negatively and are less likely to be considered for promotions, even if they are as competent and effective as their male counterpart (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs and Tamkin, 2004).

> Yes, I would say so looking at the university's top level, there is a very strong female leader with a transactional attitude and it's easily perceived as bullying whereas if it was a man with the same behaviour it wouldn't be perceived as bullying but perceived as assertiveness so that conception is definitely still there – Elmarie

In addition, the views shared by some of the female respondents is supported by a study conducted by the centre for creative leadership (2015), where it was found that women were twice as likely to be perceived as bullies when they exhibit autocratic/transactional leadership attributes, compared to their male counterparts. The study found that assertive female leaders are rated as less popular than their male counterparts. Furthermore, the findings presented by Opportunity Now (2000) revealed that women in leadership felt that when women exerted autocratic behaviours traditionally associated with men, they are negatively evaluated whereas when men exert the same behaviours it is considered to be assertive.

> Yes, again, it's based on who the core world is, if it's skewed towards the old generation then of course you are going to experience that. If the core world is skewed towards the younger generation and it's far more exposed to women in leadership positions, then it would be a different attitude absolutely – Marcia

Bass (2008) proposes that historical stereotypes expected women to be submissive, with some men finding it difficult to take orders from women, however these stereotypes and negative perceptions are slowly fading away. Another female respondent argues that women have to work harder to prove that they are capable of leading.

> I think that there is a kind of sense that men find it difficult necessarily to relate to woman that are strong (I wouldn't say autocratic). I think that women have to go the extra mile to prove, not only that they're strong but they're capable, whereas men can shout and scream and not be capable and nobody will criticize them. Women will be criticized – Angina

Even when female leaders don't exert autocratic/transactional behaviours, they are evaluated negatively as one respondent explains;

> Yes, even in the absence of an autocratic leadership style. When women use different leadership styles and are successful at their jobs, just their success alone makes some people negative towards them. It's a sign of weakness and fear, they feel/believe that the only way they can succeed is by becoming someone else – Debra

However, some respondents argue that regardless of gender, leaders that exhibit autocratic behaviours will be perceived negatively. In contrast, Wolfram, Mohr and Schyns (2007) suggest that female leaders that adopt autocratic leadership behaviour are more likely to be perceived negatively and receive less respect from subordinates, compared to male leaders that adopt autocratic leadership behaviours.

> My previous line manager was a woman and we did not have a wonderful relationship and I don't think our relationship was influenced by the fact that she was a woman. I guess if you act in an autocratic way, you will be evaluated negatively whether you are male or female – Chika

> Any person of any gender with autocratic qualities is viewed negatively in a university context. Autocracy is not tolerated in a university because it gears against the principle that a university is a democratic institution where you win through your arguments and your persuasion. You don't win by imposing things autocratically – Anonymous respondent one

> Nurture where necessary, reprimand when you have to, but you need to have that balance. I think autocratic behaviours are perceived negatively, regardless of gender – Anonymous respondent three

Cultural practices, religious beliefs, gender norms and expectations have previously influenced society's view of suitable behaviours desired for men and women, thus gender roles influence the way in which leaders engage and the leadership approach they choose to exhibit. Haber and Komives (2009) suggest that prejudice toward female leaders stems from society's perceptions on the attributes of women and the requirements of a certain leadership role. Jonsen, Maznevski and Schneider (2010:551) state, "Stereotypes are further reinforced by various social mechanisms, such as the 'spill over effect' which suggests societal gender roles may contaminate organisational

roles and result in different expectations for female and male managers". The respondents were asked whether gender norms or expectations, cultural norms, beliefs and attitudes play a role in the leadership style male and female leaders adopt and how their leadership style is perceived. There was a very strong agreement from all the respondents that gender norms or expectations, cultural/religious norms and attitudes play a role in the leadership style adopted by men and women. The degree of influence these have on an individual differs according to their cultural/religious background and their work/life exposure. A number of ways in which gender stereotypes influence a woman as a leader were mentioned. It was stated that gender stereotypical socialisation disadvantages women significantly and has a traumatising effect on a women's success. Women with natural tendencies to lead therefore tend to avoid leadership positions. Gender stereotypes were also reported to influence people's perceptions, resulting in women believing that they can only aspire to certain positions. In addition, women have to work much harder to gain respect and cooperation from a diverse workforce. African women were said to find it difficult to transition into leadership where they need to lead their elders. Despite the fact that women are still disadvantaged by stereotypical views, the respondents were of the opinion that this phenomenon is changing with the younger generation. Two respondents agree that gender/cultural/religious norms influence people's perception of the positions suitable for men and women, however one respondent suggests that this belief is changing.

> I think cultural norms and all of that have a traumatizing impact on performance, on woman's success. I think the fact that women are socialised into doing some things than others, disadvantages them in certain professions, in quite significant ways; but I also think that is changing – Adam

> I think there are gender stereotypes that influence people's perceptions of who is more likely to be a good leader than not. I do not think they necessarily think that people are incapable, but I think that it does influence perceptions – Angina

These sentiments are supported by various studies conducted by Cubillo & Brown (2003), Curry, (2000) and Shah (2009), who believe that socialization and gender stereotyping disadvantages women and is a result of the lack of female leaders in senior management. Carol suggests that society is governed by religious and cultural expectations or norms, which influences people's perceptions, however, she explains that gender roles are changing.

> Yes, we live in a very patriarchal society and I think it also depends on your upbringing, culturally. So, stereotypically I grew up in a conservative Afrikaans home so it's a traditional, conservative environment. The male is still the dominant person there and I think in certain religions, it is also quite prominent. So, I do think that our society is still governed largely by norms, by stereotypical views, but at the same time, I think it's changing a lot. I am seeing, just amongst my younger colleagues, where some of the women are breadwinners and it's become that the father is the house dad. If you go to primary schools, you will see a lot more men are picking up children from school, participating in the kinds of things that were traditionally done by women. I think some families are making a conscious decision there and I think our economy is also dictating that more, whereas in the past, it was really just taken for granted that it was the man who got the income and the woman who stayed at home to look after the children. I have one or two colleagues who cannot find work even though they are well qualified men, but their wives can find the jobs so, it's said, "Okay, well, you know, I will stay at home and look after the children and you will earn…you will be the breadwinner" – Carol

Our society in the 21st century is very different in that historical stereotypes/perceptions and gender roles are changing. The emergence of stay-at-home fathers and changes in other roles previously dominated by a particular gender has been widely documented (Hofmeyr and Mzobe, 2012). The homemaker role was traditionally held by women, however, due to today's changing economic landscape, the primary breadwinner might be a woman, and thus many men have taken the responsibility to take care of the house and children.

Three other respondents agree that cultural/religious norms influence how others perceive men and women and the leadership style they adopt, however one of the respondents suggest that the experiences shared will differ from person to person. Similarly, Shah (2009) acknowledges culture as a compelling factor that influences how one leads, thus characteristics of effective leadership may vary in different cultures. For example, some cultures may require leaders to be strongly decisive, whereas other cultures may require leaders to be collaborative and lead democratically.

> They are surely influential. They are amongst some of the variables that would shape a person's leadership style – Anonymous respondent one

> To some extent yes. I do think in today's society… there's still a lot of 'labelling', to say that if you come from this culture, this is the way that you will behave because you are so and so and gender plays a strong role. I do believe that culture, background, and you know things like race, and numbers of years' experience and what type of experience you were exposed to play a role. I mean a woman, who is a captain in the police force, who has dealt with trauma cases, will have a completely different management style compared to a woman who is in our environment (education). So yes, I do think it has an impact – Anonymous respondent two

> We are a product of society and communities that we come from. Our societies have their own stereotypes in terms of how they perceive and how they look at people and that influences how they experience it. So I do believe that in reality that such norms do influence the way in which we perceive people – Chika

Another respondent proposes that women have to work harder and that women in leadership would get less cooperation from men. Coleman (2002) confirms the idea that women in leadership positions have to prove their worth as a leader by working harder in order to break away from the traditional stereotypes associated with them in leadership positions. However, Bassett (2009) suggests that female leaders are sometimes not supported by their own female colleagues, as they prefer a male in authority, thus indicating that women also maintain negative stereotypes about women in leadership.

> Absolutely, we make it a fallacy to think of organisational cultures as being unitary. It is not true. You have in a diverse team a range of cultural values, morals and beliefs that intrude into behavioural patterns at work and I have seen this. I have seen this where at senior and executive level, a woman has to work that much harder to get the respect that she needs and the kind of cooperation that a woman will get wouldn't be as forthcoming as it would be towards a man. Now that I have said that, I have seen men who do not respect other men either. So you know, it's all context based – Dhaya

Furthermore, Dana (2009:69) contends that "culture itself raises barriers for women's aspirations simply because of the attitudes, learned behaviours and routine practices that are practiced and reinforced". The influence of religious and cultural indoctrinations are described by one another respondents.

> Absolutely, I was listening to a group of women who obviously were coming from church and you could see that their priest had thoroughly inducted in them that only men must lead and women must follow. That is why some women will never take any opportunity because of this indoctrination and it spreads quite extensive throughout society both religiously and culturally. So I would say actually a large segment of our society is exposed to that kind of thinking. It is a tragedy because it means those with natural inclinations to lead will always avoid it. You lead in different ways as well and that is not understood. So this is a very rigid view of what leadership entails within these doctrines of religion and culture and that is a tragedy in itself – Marcia

Similarly, another female respondent states that a number of women still believe that they should aspire to occupy certain positions, due to cultural and religious indoctrinations. However, the respondent acknowledges that there has been a change and women are taking proud of the accomplishments of other women.

> Yes, definitely. This needs to be changed at a very young age. A number of women still believe they should only aspire to certain roles. On a positive note, I am increasingly seeing women taking pride in the achievements of other women, and that gives us hope. I gave a talk to a group of Women in IT last year at one of the major banks and what I liked from listening to people's commentary is that seeing other women succeed makes women believe their daughters can aspire higher than they did – Debra

In addition, another respondent shares the sentiments that culture influences society's perceptions on the role of women. Similarly, Sperandio (2009:53) states that some men portray successful African woman as "one who got married, raised a family and submitted to her husband". Therefore, a male-dominated culture which underpins the socialization of women as subordinates, makes it difficult for some men to accept the idea of being led by women (Coleman, 2002; Shah, 2009)

> Yes, in an African culture, a woman is always subservient. When I joined the university, I think the culture was already mature, but it was a bit difficult because men were the dominant ones. You come to the office, now you've got these elder men and you must lead… that was the difficult transition, but for me I think once you lay the platform to say these are the objectives and we are all here to achieve the university's goals, then they start following – Anonymous respondent three

As a follow up question, the respondents were asked whether perceptions of stereotypes were still present within the university. The responses indicate that gender stereotypes are still present because institutions extracts its members from the rest of society and that perceptions are based on the level of exposure one has in their life. One respondent suggests that gender stereotypes are intertwined with race, thus creating a form of double discrimination against women of colour, which makes it difficult for some women to progress to senior management, especially in the private sector (Research Focus, 2009).

> Of course it is and I think…they are also intertwined with race. Looking at, I think the V.C… our V.C is a woman and I think she is the first female vice councillor of this university and people had some misgivings in the beginning which were informed by their culture and for the VC to be able to win over staff and be in control of this situation. It was a process, which was informed by the fact that she was female and black, but she had to come with certain leadership qualities that would enable her to assert her authority. With time she managed to put her hands on the levers of control of this institution – Chika

However, another respondent argues that while stereotypes are still present at the institution, the university environment is one that challenges stereotypes and aims to change historical perceptions with regards to gender roles.

> It will still be present because this institution draws its members from the rest of society but it can be different because institutions are created partly to challenge and also to question things. So what you find in this institution is not exactly what you find in society because it's exactly an institution that seeks to critique or to change society or to improve society but then the institution also does not exist in a vacuum, it exists in society" – Anonymous respondent one

Another respondent indicates that stereotypes are influenced by an individual's level of exposure as described below.

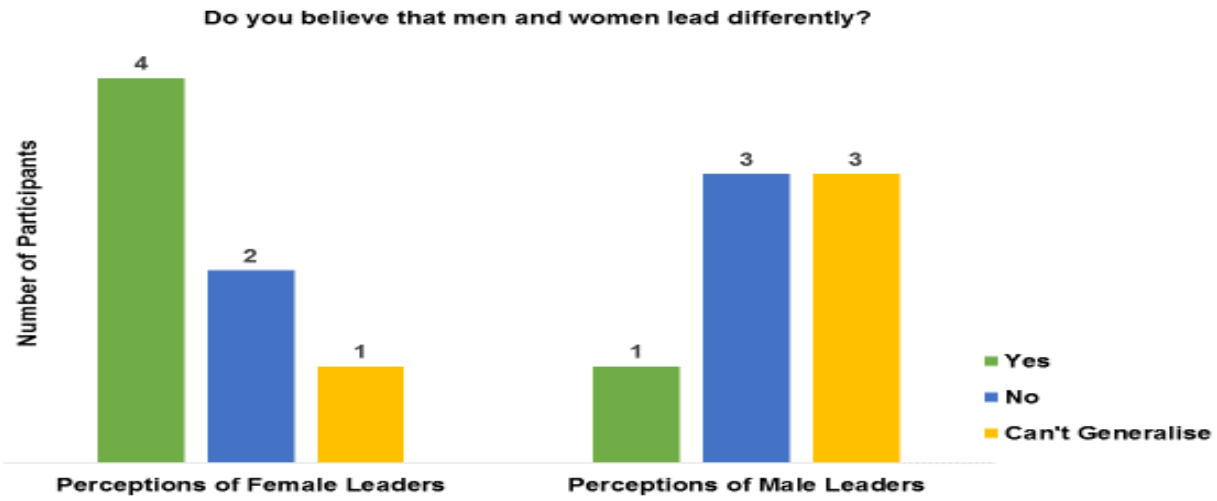
> Absolutely. I think the least exposed you are to a variety of leadership styles and leadership persons, the more you see that sort of behaviour. This weekend for example I had a debate around a women president and it is amazing that people have a rigid way of how they view the world. So yes, I really just think, for me it is the level of exposure that we have had in

> life. It has nothing to do with the level of education or which position you occupy in society. That provides for an open minded or close minded approach towards women in leadership – Marcia

4.3 Theme 2: Gender and leadership style differences

As described in chapter two, various researchers have investigated whether there are differences in the way men and women lead, thus the findings of the studies have often varied. This may be due to the institutional environment and relationship dynamics between the leader and the team. The information gathered from the interviews provide diverse responses, with some respondents suggesting that there are no differences in the way men and women lead, but rather depends on individual/gender dynamics and societal ideologies. In other words, gender differences in leadership are due to gender socialization in which individual's exhibit gendered traits and behaviours that cannot be changed easily. A number of factors, including the individual's background, experiences and their exposure, may influence the approach taken by an individual. Only three respondents (two males and one female) discussed the fact that there are some industries where a female is not perceived to be strong enough to work in, either emotionally or physically. In terms of leading, it was found that men do not generally believe that women lead differently to them, with only one respondent stating that women do lead differently. On the other hand, four of the seven female leaders did believe that females lead differently to males as illustrated in figure 4.2. It was also mentioned by some respondents that one could not generalise, as there are many other factors that contribute to the way in which one leads. These factors include the individual's socialization, skill sets, experience, personalities and ideologies.

Figure 4.2: Perceptions of men and women leading differently



One respondent perceives that there are no gender differences, however holds the view that men and women are socialised differently and into different responsibilities or roles in society. Various researchers such as Eagly and Karau (2002) found no gender differences with regards to employees evaluating leader effectiveness in terms of satisfaction, persuasiveness and support offered by their leaders. However, Bass (2008) agrees that women have been socialized in ways that disadvantages them to compete with men.

> No I don't believe that, I think we socialize differently and that might impact on how we respond in some cases but not in all. I think that we socialized into different responsibilities and sometimes those responsibilities may link itself into different impacts, but that is not leadership. The fact that women use social grants differently from men, I think that's a reflection of differential socialization between men and women, but I do not buy onto the easy generalization that happen with gender stereotypes There are women who lead in a very hard way and some women lead in a soft effective way. It has very little to do with their gender, it has something to do with their socialization, their skill sets, their experience, their personalities, all of which is different – Adam

In a similar response, another respondent agrees to the idea that there are no differences in the way men and women lead. The respondent further describes that he has observed men and women who exhibit behaviours that were traditionally ascribed to a specific gender. For example, women who adopt an autocratic/authoritative leadership style or men who exhibit communal attributes, which

has been linked to women. The respondent adds that some men struggle to take instructions from a woman. Bass (2008) indicates that historical stereotypes expected women to be submissive and exhibit communal attributes, thus some men finding it difficult to take orders from women, due to the stereotypical views/beliefs of the role of women.

> I don't think there is a distinct way that is different between how men and women approach a situation. I have seen women who are authoritative and rule by dictation and at the same time, I have seen men who are accommodating and willing to accept other positions, so in my experience I have not seen a gender based way of approaching a leadership style. Again, this is a culturally specific type of question. One has a traditional notion of a male being authoritarian and rule based. In my experience, I find rather than gender orientation it depends on the individual adopting a particular approach, so I find women to have been just as authoritarian as the male colleagues I have worked with. There was no sense of gender bias in one way or the other, but what I have noticed is that men find it difficult to take instructions from a woman – Dhaya

Similarly, three other respondents propose that there are gender dynamics and individual differences, however gender does not determine how one leads, thus suggesting that an individual's ideologies, beliefs, experiences/exposure and knowledge acquired over a period of time influences the way one chooses to lead.

> No, I think especially if it's put as men and women counter posing it's too general. It depends on what type of men. Let me give you an example, a man who considers himself a feminist will lead in a particular way that has nothing to do with being a man, but also something to do with their ideology and the way they think about society. The same can be applied to a woman. A woman who believes that she is conservative might lead in ways that people associate with men, but actually what they are talking about is not being a woman, it is her ideology about society. Gender does not necessarily determine the difference in how they lead. I have met men who lead in a particular way and some who lead in the same way, which women lead, so that dichotomy again is not what I have experienced. Are there gender dynamics? Yes, there are many individual differences and can be applied to different kinds of context – Anonymous respondent one

> I would never package it as a gender issue. I think it is your life knowledge that is acquired over time and exposure you have. It is really about what tools have been acquired over time to enable them to lead. I would hate to say it is based on gender. I know there is a strong view that women are pathetic in a boardroom but I have also seen women who are not and men who are, men who express more empathy than women. I think boxing people and categorising is an outdated way of understanding human beings. Human beings are ever evolving. Others are happy to assume a particular role based on expectations around them and others defy them. It all depends on the tools that you have to be one or the other – Marcia

> This depends on what types of individuals they are, what their values are and how strongly the live according to their convictions – Debra

As stated in chapter two, various quantitative studies conducted by Eagly and Johnson (1990), Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2007), Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen (2003) and Helgesen (1990) state that there are no significant differences between leadership styles and gender, however certain leadership positions may require individuals to exhibit certain behaviours. Another respondent agrees to the idea that there might be differences in leadership styles, but does not ascribe these differences to gender.

> Well look. I have never thought about leadership in terms of males and females. I believe in that whoever gets appointed in a position of leadership, the organisation must have found that person capable in leading even though there might be differences in their leadership styles or behaviours, I don't necessarily think that it might be because of the gender of the leader – Chika

The social role theory proposes that there is a relationship between the actions undertaken by individuals and their inner persona, thus gender stereotypes arises from individual observations concerning gender social roles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen, 2003). While some respondents suggest that there are no difference in the way men and women lead, others suggest that socialization and stereotypes have influenced the way men and women lead. Some respondents suggest that women are more participative and more empathetic, whereas men are viewed as being stricter, autocratic and having the ability to act swiftly. Furthermore, Robinson and Stubberud (2011) suggest that differences in confidence, social risk and emotional recognition

contributes towards the differences in leadership styles between men and women. One respondent proposes that women are empathetic and more understanding especially in situations where they have experienced the same issue. Similarly, Vinnicombe and Singh (2002) found that women perceived themselves as more understanding to others, aware of the emotional state of others, participative and supportive/helpful toward other.

> Yes, I do think there is a difference. I think it is not only personality-based. I do think that that gender plays a role and I have to be careful that I don't get into saying any stereotypes, such as "Well you know, females are typically like this and males are typically like that". I think and I am relying probably on stereotypes - that women, because of the role that they have played in the family and because they are traditionally, stereotypically seen as the nurturing kind, where they have to bring up children…I do think that plays a role. It has an influence and it comes back to the empathy. When you've been in a situation before you can empathise, so you can understand it better. It doesn't mean to say that men are probably less tolerant of it; it's just when you've been in a situation yourself you know what it feels like. For example, I have a member of staff who's a single parent - because I'm a single parent - who's stuck with her child, who's sick at school and the school phones and says listen you need to come and fetch your child. I cannot just say, "No" you know, because I've been there. I know what it's like when you perhaps don't have a network, you don't have an infrastructure of family to support you. So, if that member of staff comes along and says to me, "Listen, I've got a problem", I will say, "Yes, please go and sort that out". But in the same vein, if that member of staff comes to me once every two weeks with that same problem then I kind of…then I think, "Hang on now," and that's when my nurturing role doesn't play a role – Carol

Oshagbemi and Gill (2003) found that female leaders delegated less, while male leaders were more likely to utilise inspirational motivation. However, they found no significant gendered differences in relation to the participative, consultative and directive approach adopted by men and women. Similar to the views shared by one respondent, Taylor and Hood (2010) found that female leaders had a higher rating in terms of emotional and social proficiency compared to their male counterparts.

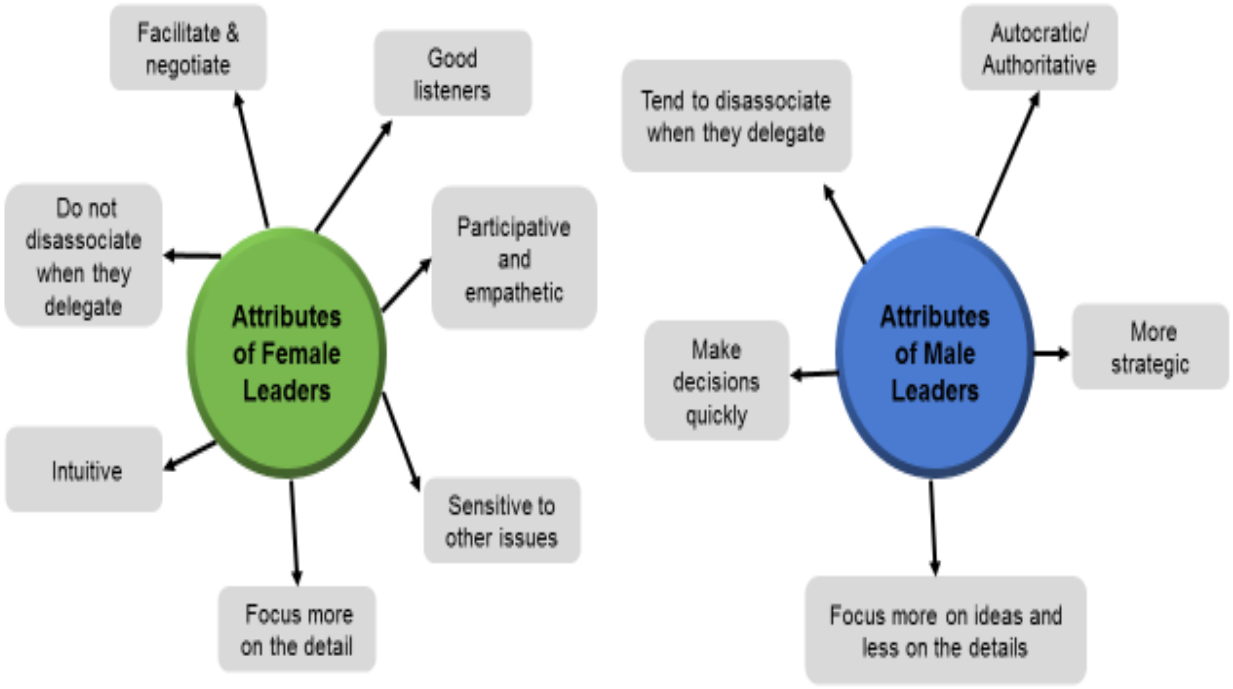
> Yes, I think that there is a difference. I think that men tend to be a lot more autocratic… I think men and women are similar in certain ways but the way in which men express themselves is in a more autocratic, dictatorial style; a kind of almost an aggression that comes through. Women tend to be a lot more… more empathic, listen more than men do – Angina

Similarly, Catalyst (2005) indicates that male leaders are perceived to 'take charge' of situation, while women are perceived to be 'care takers'. Furthermore, Adams and Funk (2009) found that male managers emphasized the need for power and achievement, while female managers placed less emphasis on the need for compassion and empathy. In contrast, Wood (2003) found that female leaders placed more emphasis on strategic vision and the ability to plan ahead compared to their male counterparts.

> Yes, I think it's a very generic type of statement to make because, it goes back to the person's background, experiences and what they were exposed to before. But generally yes, maybe women and men would lead differently. Men tend to be hard and perceived to be stricter, whereas women are considered to take the softer approach – Anonymous respondent two

As discussed in chapter two, the social role theory proposes that men and women who occupy the same role, will exhibit contrasting behaviours. Furthermore, the social role theory proposes that there is a correlation between the actions undertaken by individuals and their inner persona, thus gender stereotypes arises from individual observations with regards to gender social roles (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen, 2003). As a result, communal attributes were mainly associated with women. These attributes include being affectionate, accommodative, companionate, understanding and cooperative. In contrast, agentic attributes were associated with men, who are more assertive, controlling and self-confident. The respondents were asked whether they would ascribe any leadership attributes to men and women. The male respondents continued to discuss the fact that the attributes of leaders are dependent on the individual and not on the gender of the individual. The female respondents, on the other hand, provided a list of differences between the leadership attributes of men and women, which highlighted stereotypical beliefs.

Figure 4.3: Attributes of female and male leaders as perceived by female leaders



One respondent indicates that based on generalisations, women will want to facilitate, negotiate and listen more, whereas men are decisive and focus on ideas, however the respondent acknowledges that these are generalisations linked to communal and agentic attributes associated with men and women, thus actual differences may be attributed to the personality of an individual.

> Okay, so if we were to generalise, I do think that from my own observations, my sense is that women are better listeners than men. I could be slaughtered for saying that and I say that upfront, that I am generalising because I know many women who are not good listeners, so that then comes to the specifics of the personality. But I think that once again it goes back to the role as the nurturer, where you've brought up children, you've had to learn to listen to them. I do think that generally women…women's skills of listening are perhaps more fine-tuned than men's skills of listening. I think that you generally find that a woman will want to facilitate, negotiate, listen and let people on board together, whereas some of the men that I work with are quite…more decisive, quicker, than what a woman would be. I think that men, generally, are seen to be making decisions quicker than some

> women but then somebody could argue with me and say, 'Well, that's because woman want to be more inclusive and to listen to other points of view before making a decision'. Whereas some men kind of think, 'Well, it's either my way or no way' you know, so that also points to the leadership style of individuals – Carol

Shefer (2001) argues that differences in leadership styles may be insignificant but gender differences do indeed exist and makes reference to the agentic and communal attributes traditionally associated with men and women. Carless (1998) found that female leaders perceived themselves to be more transformational exhibited more interpersonal behaviours compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, another female respondent shares the view that women listen more and are empathic towards others.

> Yes, I think that there are different kinds of attributes ascribed to men and women. I think that women tend to be more empathic and listen more. They are probably more… they are more focused on detail and getting the job done. I think men tend to focus on the ideas and less on the detail – Angina

Similarly, Opportunity Now (2000) found that female executives believed in leadership differences between men and women. The female executives perceived female leaders to be more sensitive and intuitive. In contrast to the views shared by the previous respondents in relation to the idea that men are decisive, anonymous respondent two suggest that men may also take time to make decision.

> I think women tend to be more sensitive to other issues. In my experience, women would assess the different scenarios that could potentially play out, but do it intuitively. They look at what the implications are; for example, if management makes this decision, what implication will it have on the students. Women seem to be more individualistic. They will actually speak up for what they believe in and say that this is not the way to do it. Whereas my experience, or what I've observed, is that men tend to focus on, "What is the decision now?" not considering what will happen in the future or what will happen in 15 months' time. What I can say is, when male leaders chair meetings, they sometimes, especially in our environment, tend not to make a decision unless the majority makes a decision – Anonymous respondent two

Although some respondents suggest that there are different attributes ascribed to men and women, three respondents suggest that it is difficult to generalise and it is dependent on the individual and the different leadership styles they choose to exhibit.

> It is difficult to generalise. Maybe if I look at myself, I have been in a relationship for a long time and I care about people. I am very passionate about people and about how people feel and people sometimes may or may not feel the same. So women tend to be more of a people's person but then I am looking at my own framework. You do get females that are not people oriented so it's very difficult to generalise styles to say females are like this and males are like that. I think it's more to do with individuals – Elmarie

> …particularly if one looks at the type of leaders that we have had, different presidencies, different cooperate leaders. I wouldn't attribute it to gender. In fact, I refuse to because at least I have looked at a whole lot of leaders in my studies. Look at Margaret Thatcher and compare her to Barack Obama for example. If you were the traditional type-old school you would say Barack Obama is perhaps too feminine or Margaret Thatcher is too masculine but if you forget about gender stereotypes, they are just leaders with different styles – Marcia

> It has nothing to do with that [gender]. It also has to do with how an individual is. Listening is not a female attribute, it's a human attribute and it depends on what choices that person has taken. It will help them to lead. So to ascribe it to gender in that black and white way is just inaccurate and wrong. Society also helps men and women to behave and become very fluid because of a number of things. For example, what the women rights movements have done and what some ideologists that are not ascribed to men and women who insist on gender equality. It means that attribute is distributed differently – Anonymous respondent one

Furthermore, the anonymous respondent one proposes that leaders within educational institutions should have the ability to distil facts and present them, as well as have the capability to debate facts and to listen to many different sides regardless of gender.

> First you need the intellectual capability because it is an intellectual institute so you have to show that, you have to demonstrate intellectual ideas of your own. In a university, an

> institute were making arguments for your position is very important. You must have the capability to debate facts and to listen to many different sides and not just your sides. Many different sides and to distil things and therefore present something that people can come into an agreement. So it's a very deliberative and rational disputation kind of situation. You have to demonstrate that you are an intellectual and an academic; if you don't do that then you are not going to be able to lead because it's not a place by nature where it's imposed from top to bottom. Things are debated and agreed on and then they are implemented. People want a leader who is able to listen to many different arguments, be able to articulate the different arguments and try identifying where there is a meeting point so people can have a consensus in doing certain things – Anonymous respondent one

As a follow up question, respondents were asked whether they believed men or women are effective in a certain industry or occupation. Historically, the division of labour has stereotyped women as housewives or as nurses/teachers and men as the breadwinners and engineers or doctors. One respondent disagrees with the idea that men and women are effective in certain industries or occupation, however proposes that external factors such as family responsibilities may influence the choice of industry or occupation an individual pursues.

> As a general rule I would say no, but I think their responsibilities lend them to certain industries. So the fact that women would want to have children at a particular age category, would lend to certain industries. I do not think it has to do with effectiveness, but more about the responsibilities they carry, their life cycles and socialization. There are certain things to take into account in terms of the gender background of individuals. If you in the building industry and you have to have, an enormous amount of carrying heavy equipment, then it may well be you employ more men, partly because of their physique, structure is more predisposed to strength, but I wouldn't push that with white collar disciplines – Adam

Similarly, another respondent argues that gender does not determine a particular career path and that society has categorised men and women based on the roles they have traditionally occupied.

> I probably used to think that…I would be uncomfortable with it being as clear cut or as easily defined to say, Yes….so we assume and stereotypically we say, 'Well, women make good administrators and men make good accountants' and I'm a little uncomfortable with that kind of stereotyping. I think it's a lot more complex than just men being good in a

particular job and women not being good in a particular job. So, for me then I feel that, that's a limitation. I also think society judges and tends to put people into categories so traditionally the teacher role has always been a female one, so yes there are some males, but not enough. It's unfortunate because the role models then for young people is that they always see women as teachers and I suppose the men as doctors. We have this kind of stereotypical view that there's mostly men that are doctors or mining engineers. We assume that it's only men that are mining engineers, so yes I would be uncomfortable in assuming that gender determines a particular career path – Carol

Consistent with the views shared by another respondent, Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) suggest that although there are disparities, studies have shown that there are changes in roles previously dominated by a particular gender, for example there are more male nurses and teachers as well as more female engineers and doctors compared to the past.

I think in today's world the boundaries have changed so in the past you would have traditionally found women to be the head of a nursing team but these days you find that women are actually very good neurologists or doctors. The same counts for men. Men, traditionally, were not nurses but now you would find male nurses. So I believe internal and external factors have an impact on whether they are effective in their leadership. What I do think is a strong component of how you lead is your integrity. Integrity will determine whether you are a good leader or not – Angina

Two other respondents suggest that men and women are equally capable of delivering, if they are provided with equal opportunities and training as well as the commitment and will of the individual.

If people get training and are provided with equal opportunities and support, all of them whether male or female are capable of delivering. So there might be differences but they all can't always be attributed to gender – Chika

I believe we have the capability as individuals to perform to the best of our abilities. It depends on the person that is acquiring the position. It's the commitment and the will of the individual because any one of us can do it – Stanley

Although some respondents are of the opinion that both men and women can be equally effective in any industry, other respondents agree with the notion that men or women may be effective in a certain industry or occupation.

> I think it will depend on the industry, because there are certain environments where you need that authoritative and very instructive kind of leadership but it will depend per sector. Higher education is becoming transformational so you need that balance. If you look back, it used to be a male dominated environment focusing on academia. The plateau has changed now, it's more about 'we are now partners with the students', you see that's where it changes everything – Anonymous respondent three

> I think you are putting it correctly when you say certain industries. As you can be wrongfully placed. You may find that an industry is not conducive for a woman yet. Maybe it needs some time to prepare itself – Anonymous respondent four

Based on their previous experiences, the respondents were asked if employees or subordinates are inclined to male or female leaders or whether it is just a norm. The research found mixed reactions to the assumption that leadership preference is based on the leaders' gender. Some respondents suggest that it is largely dependent on the individual, their upbringing, beliefs and ideologies as well as the way an individual leads. While some suggest that employees are more inclined towards male leaders. However, both the male and female respondents agreed that employees would respect a good leader, regardless of gender and suggest that it is more about the competence of the leader and the perceptions of whether that leader was appointed into the position without cultural or political interference. It should be noted that society is evolving with a bit of disruption, to be more accepting of women and that organisations are consciously trying to appoint more female leaders.

Three respondents indicate that gender preferences are based on an individual background, ideologies, beliefs, experiences, culture and preferences. The respondents also state that they have witnessed men and women who exhibit behaviours that were traditionally not associated with their gender.

> I think it depends on the person. I really do. I think it depends on how they've been brought up. It depends on their views. It depends on their construct. Whether they are more

> comfortable or uncomfortable taking instructions from a female. I have certainly had employees who have been distinctly uncomfortable with taking instruction from me and it shows, very easily, very quickly and that's sometimes…I think it goes back to the way they were brought up. It goes back to a particular culture – Carol
>
> I think it depends on the person's experience and where they come from, their background, their history. I've seen very sensitive male leaders, but I've also seen very hard female leaders. Maybe in the past, there were rigid views on leadership but its fading away. Some females tend to lean towards having a female leader but many also, like myself, prefer a male leader – Anonymous respondent two
>
> It's very difficult to generalise. I know females who are transactional and males who are transformational or the other way around. Even in my own department, I have eight line managers that are reporting directly to me. They are all different and a mixture of males and females, so it comes down to individual preferences, background and ideologies – Elmarie

However, four other respondents indicate that employees do not have preferences and are adaptive to the leadership style they exposed to. However, they add that the context or situation may determine the inclination towards a certain gender. The respondents also acknowledge that the bigger issue is the way one leads and their competence to lead, rather than attributing it to gender.

> I think employees adjust themselves to whatever leadership they have….I think people adjust and it really depends on context. I think many would say that it is more conducive to be with male leaders because they are assertive or men who prefer a woman leader because they find them more responsible. Ultimately, I think the big issue is how you lead that counts – Adam
>
> I've led mixed teams since 1996 and all of them (team members) were adaptive. I think maybe it's because you learn along the way to form friendships and build those relationships, but it's all about how you approach other people. You look down on them; they will be negative towards you… It is important to understand the team around you because you will be able to know each one's shortcomings and then work on those shortcomings – Anonymous respondent three

> I think with the situation they are inclined to either male or female leaders. I think it's also part of their socialization to say some women prefer to have male friends than female friends, some prefer to have male leaders than female leaders because of the gender politics associated with that. I think I command respect in a faculty that is female dominated. I think part of it might have to do with me being male. The other thing is that it's not a gender issue, it's about competence, and it's got to do with the ability to lead. It's not about being male or female but has to do with capacity to be able to lead – Chika

> I don't think they have a preference, eventually every one follows the leader be it male or female. People accept whom ever has the highest title as the one to follow, the problem is in getting the title without cultural or political interference, but simply based on merit – Debra

In a similar response, another respondent indicates that employees will respect a good leader, regardless of gender.

> I think there's common sense of gravitating towards male leadership, but I think that employees will respect a good leader, regardless of whether they're male or female – Angina

Leadership has historically been associated with men and the possession of agentic attributes, thus Jones and Schneider (2010) propose that prejudice against women is due to the stereotypical views that they possess communal attributes and therefore perceived as being incompetent as leaders. Pande and Ford (2011) state that individuals may possess negative perceptions against female leaders based on personal preference or preference for male leaders, as a result of stereotypes. Similarly, two respondents acknowledge that cultural/religious norms and stereotypes may influence employee's inclination towards a specific gender. However, one respondent suggests that the younger generation is open minded and receptive/embracive towards change.

> Yes, especially in South Africa. People will lean on cultural and religious definitions of the role of women and they clearly lean on it throughout the work experience. So you see it and it's a challenge when, particularly with the older generation who have had a longer period of indoctrination of that and I think with the younger generation it's a whole lot

easier. They are a little more open to change and they are far more open and receptive to change. The younger generation are not just accepting but also more embracive – Marcia

There is that stereotype mentality and it is unfortunate. You can see it across universities, you can see it across the schooling sector and I think we really have to join hands and end that mentality because it's not taking us anywhere. There are females who can actually make a huge change. If we feel that a women can't tell us anything, then I feel that we are losing out – Stanley

4.4 Theme 3: Career advancement and glass ceiling

The next theme focuses on the barriers encountered by women in attaining leadership positions and the challenges they encounter once they occupy leadership positions. Haber and Komives (2009) suggest that prejudice towards female leaders stems from society's perceptions on the attributes of women and the requirements of a certain leadership role. In a study conducted by Davison and Burke (2000), the findings suggest that men and women are evaluated differently with regards to their performance, thus women are systematically rated lower in their performance compared to their male counterparts, especially in industries that are dominated by males (e.g. mining and engineering). The respondents were asked if they ever felt discriminated based on their gender. All the female respondents reported to have experienced some form of gender discrimination at some point in their career. In contrast, most of male respondents indicated that they had not experienced any discrimination. The female respondents indicated that they have experienced various forms of gender discrimination from subtle forms to clear pay discrepancies and sexism. The female leaders also shared the implications of gender discrimination, including the view that women have to work harder than men and constantly have to prove that they are capable. The responses are analysed in detail below.

One respondent conveys her story on personal experiences of prejudice. The respondent indicates that her male colleagues were rated better and remunerated more, even though they are in the same level. Various researchers such as Grün (2003) and Casale and Posel (2011) have reported on the remuneration gap between men and women who occupy similar roles. Furthermore, women still occupy low paid positions compared to their male counterparts (Casale and Posel, 2011).

> Yes, definitely. What happens in our environment and specifically in my case, I have to work much more than any other male counterpart at my level to be even closely recognised in the way that they are. I can give you an example. In my previous portfolio, I was the only female leader and then there were two male leaders and they never attended any meetings and if they did attend meetings they'd either recuse themselves of the five minutes or ten minutes and they ended up getting higher ratings than I did. It is known that they do private business during official hours. It was also known that they were not always at work so they were not attending work, they were absent and yet they got higher ratings than I did. I attended every single executive meeting that was ever there. My plans and my work was always up to date and way above the deadlines. They never met the deadline and if they did meet the deadline it was usually through an extension or they completely forgot. Our leader at the time would protect them to such an extent that there were excuses sought for them and like I said, it is common cause because our remuneration is disclosed in our annual reports. You will find that men often get more at the same level for doing less, in our levels. So yes I have been a personal participant in such discrimination – Anonymous respondent two

In a similar response, another respondent shares the view that women have to work harder and prove that they are worthy of the position they occupy. Similarly, Duehr & Bono (2006) found that women have to work harder than their male counterparts, to prove that they are capable to lead others.

> Yes, absolutely. In fact, I think as a woman you constantly have to prove yourself and that is the interesting part but I understand more specifically the South African situation. There is this almost relentless pressure to prove yourself worthy of the post whereas I don't think males get the same kind of pressure. There are these present stereotypes that live through religious and cultural dominations – Marcia

Another respondent proposes that there is a subtle biasness against women and highlights that gender disparity with regards to the vice-chancellor position at South African universities.

> I've never been overtly discriminated but I think that there is a kind of subtle biasness and prejudice that does play itself out. I don't think that people necessarily admit to it, the men won't necessarily admit. I mean if you look at universities, most of the women will be in

> the academic and not in the research space. The woman will be a deputy, not a vice-chancellor, other than say one or two of the institutes. But if you look at the 25-26 universities, predominantly I think there's only, at the moment, one or two female vice-chancellors, which is shocking – Angina

Four other respondents indicate that they were discriminated against in the past and some attribute the discrimination to apartheid legislations.

> Who has not felt discriminated at some point or another in their life? Sometimes validly and invalidly. As someone who grew up in apartheid South Africa, it is hard not to be discriminated against on racial and gender tips. I have lost jobs because someone else got it. More specifically, it was whites and more convenient in that era, I have lost jobs to women because there were probably of equal quality or better. I cannot say precisely because I was on a receiving end of it. I can say that is the nature of life just like the rich people get more advantages than poor people – Adam

> I would say 20 years ago, but not any longer. In the present environment you get to look at the number of females in higher level positions in the country or the JSE listed companies and in the professions in which I operate in and in many cases there are women there – Elmarie

> Yes, more so when I was younger and still trying to assert myself, not so much currently. But sexism is not dead, you simply have to listen to the overwhelming negative comments from both men and women on the topic of South Africa's first female president or whether Hillary Clinton would make a better president than Donal Trump - a self-proclaimed sexist – Debra

> I think very early, that was around 1996, at the time the country was changing so there were lot of factors, but we've passed that. I would say that these days it is no longer a problem to see a woman in leadership, in more senior leadership positions. I have never been discriminated against in higher education – Anonymous respondent three

Although policies such as the employment equity act aim to uplift previously disadvantaged groups, including women, statistics show that women are still underrepresented in senior management positions. As stated in the Grant Thornton International Business Report (2017), women represent 52% of the country's population, yet approximately 28% hold executive positions. The respondents were asked if they believed whether there is a gender disparity within senior management at their institution. Only one respondent felt that there was complete equality. The other respondents indicated that although the institutions are trying to address the disparity, there is still a shortage of women in some positions. The managerial levels of leadership were perceived to be more evenly distributed but the more senior levels are still dominated by men. The main reasons provided for the continued disparity were that there is a continued discrimination against women from past legacy, that the structure of the organisation makes it easier for men to advance and that certain positions are deemed better to be occupied by men and others by women. In addition, women were perceived to have child caring responsibilities and maternity issues, which can delay their career development or discourage them from pursuing growth to managerial levels.

Two respondents from the same institution (University of the Witwatersrand) acknowledge the fact that there is a shortage of female professors and leaders at the institution, however they mention that the university continuous to address the gender gap and there has been progress in addressing the gender disparity.

> Okay, so we don't have enough female professors, we know that. I think that in the university sector, as I say, there has been great strides made to try to address this, but at the same time, like everybody else you have to earn your place there. You know, you can't just put a woman in a position because you have to fill the post. So, Wits has, in terms of one of its targets for next year…on its institutional score card, it's set as one of the parameters to increase the number of female professors. So, it does take time – Carol

> Yes, I think there are few female leaders that we are trying to address it because there is a shortage. The more senior levels of the university hierarchy, the predominance of women gets lesser and lesser and I think that has to do with a number of things – Adam

Similarly, another respondent highlights the disparity between men and women at Tshwane University of Technology. The respondent also add that the institution has taken steps to address the gender disparity at the institution.

> There is one female executive out of eight in total. At the next tier at the dean level there is only one [female] out of seven. Knowing this the institution took a deliberate step to appoint all associate dean's as women because then with those positions you are providing a career path, opportunities for growth and development and you are not setting up people for failure. We can very well take a person who has no experience in leading a department or faculty and has no understanding of the complexities that come with a senior management position, we would be doing that person a disservice – Dhaya

Disparities vary depending on the level of management, as described by two other respondents.

> There are [disparities] but depending on the levels. There are more men on certain levels than women. At the moment there are more men than women at senior management, but at the middle level there can be a more even gender spread – Anonymous respondent one

> No, they are equally represented. There is no disparity. Women have been advanced greatly at TUT [Tshwane University of Technology]….As I said, in my faculty; almost 60% of HODs [head of department] are women. The only place where we trying very hard to improve is in senior management – Prince

However, three respondents believe that there are no disparities between the number of women and men occupying leadership positions.

> No, I think there is a good balance, there's no disparity. There are programmes that help us in balancing gender and race from the executive level going down to senior directors" – Anonymous respondent three

> No, currently because of the legacy and post practices, there are more male professors at the university but that profile is changing as roles are changing, but at management level there is no disparity – Elmarie

> I would just say as a general observation, I think that men are more accepting immediately of their competency to do their jobs, particularly the older men. It's less of a function with

> the younger men. So I think with that some take more advantage than others of that particular differential so they are just far more accepting of each other generally. In our top management we are even (4 men and 4 women) – Marcia

Literature has suggested that factors such as maternity leave and our historical background has disadvantaged women in the attainment of senior management positions. The respondents were asked to share their views on the reasons for the gender disparity within senior management. Some respondents share the sentiments that historical stereotypical perceptions in addition to family responsibilities may influence the progression of women in attaining leadership roles.

> I think it has to do with history – that we come from a patriarchal society that had a blatant discrimination against women. Our conditions, the way our work is structured, advantages men rather than women. The mere fact that women would go for maternity leave, have child-care duties – all of that would deflect them from being able to finish and perform as adequately as men can. So I do think that all of that has led to an outcome, where the more senior you become, the more disparity between men and women representation is evident. I think that that has to be addressed and it's actually something we are committed to address – Adam

Similarly, Headlam-Wells, Craig and Gosland, (2006) found that women perceived that career breaks due to maternity and family responsibilities as barriers when they return to work, in the sense that their male counterparts are available for new opportunities or provided with learning and training. In addition, when women return to their position, the lack of organisational support may be limited in some organisations. Furthermore, two other respondents also highlight the impact of raising a family, while pursuing leadership positions. One respondent adds that men favour other men when positions of power are available.

> There are many reasons; politics, cultural practices and society favours men. When women give birth, society dictates their responsibilities, so even if in a position of leadership, societal pressure may cause them to resign to raise the child instead, and this would not be expected of the father. They may want to raise the child themselves irrespective of societal pressures but something as simple as nurseries at work places are not in place yet. If there's

> a position of power available and the choice is between a man and a woman, men will choose other men and thereby retain their numbers – Debra

> I think in higher education for some reason or the other women have to balance a traditional stereotype of being a caregiver which interrupts their academic career path and I also think with women there are barriers in which areas for growth are limited. There are barriers were certain positions or certain categories are limited so we very much find ourselves being victims of our past and that is why I think many organisations are moving towards addressing this – Dhaya

To understand whether the institutions had barriers, respondents were asked whether any barriers exist at the institution that prevents women from attaining leadership positions. The general consensus among the respondents was that there are no institutional barriers for women aspiring to attain leadership roles in the institutions, with the suggestion that there are no barriers around qualifications, experience and policies. However, there are barriers for women, which are often subtle or secretly applied. Both men and women discussed the underlying discrimination that occurs such as the consideration of a woman's duties outside the workplace, the patriarchal society, traditional and cultural norms and beliefs.

Carol indicates that there are policies aimed at transformation, however she highlights the underlying discrimination encountered by women as described below.

> So the barriers are not as far as qualifications are concerned. The barriers are not as far as experience is concerned…there has just been huge changes now as well, not just to address gender but also to address race so, I certainly think that our policies are probably one of the most transformative around. It is more the…the kind of underlying discrimination, kind of subversive perceptions around it. For example, it is perhaps in a selection committee dealing committee members perceptions and their stereotypical views where they don't believe that a woman, would be able to do the job as well as a man does. Perhaps where she says that she has three children that she looks after and the selection panel members might think, "Oh you know, that means she's going to have to leave at 17:00. She might not be able to work after hours". So, I think that's where the discrimination comes in – Carol

Similarly, another respondent also acknowledges that there are policies aimed at addressing the gender disparity, however indicates that there is a glass ceiling at the institution.

> I think that at the end of the day, you know, in terms of policies and processes, it's all equal. I don't think it's explicit….but I think in behaviour it says...there are differences. Opportunities are created more at this university for women but I think there is a glass ceiling. I don't think that the institution is necessarily ready for a female vice-chancellor. I think you can get to a glass ceiling - to a deputy - but I don't think you can get to being a vice-chancellor. There's still a very patriarchal sense that prevails – Angina

Likewise, another respondent argues that while women have been excluded from attaining senior management positions in the past, there has been changes in addressing the gender disproportion and all the individuals in leadership positions have earned their place. Similarly, Derks, Ellemers, van Laar and de Groot (2011) suggest that whilst it's imperative to implement policies/strategies aimed at addressing gender equality, individuals should not be placed in leadership positions for the sake of ensuring gender equality, in the sense that it may result in the hiring of inexperienced/less qualified individuals.

> I think women for too long have been excluded from senior positions purely because they are women. We have moved on from a time when a woman was afraid to fall pregnant because she would lose her job and we are beginning to see some degree of gender parity. I won't say there are barriers at this institution. We have a commitment towards gender parity and to respect a person as a professional. We have taken conscious steps towards moving women especially and advancing their careers where in the past it would have been their limits. For example, all of our deans are women with an idea of growing the next cartilage of leadership, but it would be of disservice to all those women to say they have been placed there because they are women. Every person who is in a position is there because they deserve that position, there is no hand out – Dhaya

Marcia highlights family support as a contributing factor for leadership growth. Hojgaard (2002) found that male leaders performed minimal or no housework, thus men get more time to focus on their positions. Therefore, some women may be hesitant to pursue leadership positions due to the pressure of balancing family and work obligations (Hojgaard, 2002).

> These barriers are more tangible and intangible. There are others that are purely psychological and others that are purely cultural and religious and others institutional. Then of course, there other are responsibilities that are imposed on men and women depending again on where they find themselves. Opportunities and responsibilities - there are women in partnerships that allow for growth and others are not (in partnerships). That is what I call structural family relationships. Is your family predisposed to, inclined to you assuming those positions? So that plays a huge role – Marcia

The respondents were asked if they believed whether issues such as maternity and family responsibilities impacts the progression of women. Maternity leave is not necessarily seen as a barrier for female leaders, however it does cause a delay in their progression when they leave the work environment and it can be difficult when they are expected to always be available as a senior leader, but there are policies in place that allow women to take time off for maternity leave. The greater barrier is when women do not have support from their families to share in the child rearing responsibilities. One respondent acknowledges maternity as a barrier, however argues that men's attitude and behaviour towards women as a greater barrier as described below.

> Yes, going out of the system and coming in doesn't make it necessarily easy for women and so there's always a catch up that women have to do. but at the end of the day, I think that for me the bigger issue is men's attitude and behaviour which is a barrier to women's progress, not about whether women give birth or not because there are women who've not had children, who face the same constrains as women who've had children – Angina

Another respondent argues that other factors such as lack of family support may be a challenge for women. Similarly, Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) found that lack of support, especially in the workplace presents a challenge for women as it may result in them experiencing an unpleasant working environment.

> It's wrong to just say maternity, it depends. They might have to do with specific individuals and their position in society. If somebody comes from a family where they are expected to carry on most of the domestic work, then they will not have time to focus on their career in such ways that they compete for certain jobs, but the women next door might not come from a family like that. She might not even have a husband or children. She would have all

> the time…I will give you an example of two women. One is married and has children and takes all of the domestic care duties and the husband does not play a role. While the other women's husband plays his role, so her maternity would be less of a factor compared to the first woman. What are social organisations and how are families organized? So, I think if the support is there then it's probably a big and compelling factor and if it's absent then it's a huge obstacle. So it's multi-faceted – Anonymous respondent one

Furthermore, another respondent indicates that institutions permits few women to rise to senior positions, in order to disprove gender disparities.

> I think with the exception of a few. We live in a patriarchal society but in order to disapprove the patriarchy we allow one or two women to ascend to senior positions. It's the same with race and it's the same with gender and class as well. They exist through a variety of demographic tides that bring these groups together – Dhaya

In contrast, to the views shared by two respondents who suggest that maternity could potentially be a barrier for women, Mathur-Helm (2006) found family obligations as a prominent barrier for women and in turn results in them compromising their progression. In addition, Mathur-Helm's (2006) found that women would much rather remain in senior management rather than pursue an executive position as they fear the extra burdens that come with raising a family and leading an organisation (Mathur-Helm, 2006). However, the two respondents suggest that there are policies in place to accommodate women who would like to raise families and that some leaders are accommodative/supportive towards women raising a family, while pursuing a career.

> Maternity leave, well yes, I must be cautious about what I am saying because perhaps there could potentially be a barrier in the sense that we are expected as executive management to always be available, even on leave days. So I have been on maternity in the time when I was an executive. I didn't experience it then because my supervisor/line manager at that stage, was very accommodative, but I do think under a different leader I would have experienced some discrimination based on my recent experiences – Anonymous respondent two

> It may be a barrier, but there are policies that allows you the time out. As a mother I've been given leniency to attend to family matters as long as my goals are being achieved – Anonymous respondent three

Welle (2004) proposes that women who perceive to be informally excluded from an organisation's culture, such as exclusions from networking platforms and exerting a behavioural style that is different from the organisation's norm, often stay in their occupation for a shorter period, compared to women who perceived a greater level of inclusion and hospitable working environment. Various researchers have reported on the exclusion of women from informal network sessions and women turning against other women as a result of professional jealousy. The exclusion of women from informal networking platforms is perceived by most female leaders, to still be occurring and agree that it could be a barrier for women seeking to attain leadership positions. However, the women believe that the existence of the "boys club" should not disadvantage them as women. In addition, there are many clubs, which the women can form themselves. On the issue of women being excluded from informal networking sessions, one respondent states the following:

> I think there certainly is those stereotypical "boys club syndrome" and going to a pub or playing golf, so that kind of informal networking. I agree, women are excluded from it, but at the same time, there's nothing stopping women from forming their own informal networks and doing the same as what men have traditionally done. So, I will certainly never play victim mode and say, "Oh, you know, I wasn't invited". That's my problem, that's not their problem, you know – Carol

Carol acknowledges that women may be excluded from informal networking sessions, however she argues that there is nothing stopping women from forming their own networking platforms. Similarly, Oakley (2000) argues that stereotypes against women and the 'old boy's network' are factors that continue to act as barriers for women and while there has been changes in the demographics of informal networking sessions, there are still women who feel they are excluded. These sentiments are acknowledged by another female respondent.

> Initially, going to a bar on Fridays was an exclusionary practice but increasingly women are getting accepted in bars and then the other one was golf and then women got accepted

> in sports. It has now moved to cycling. There are cycling groups on Saturdays at a particular time where you have to be doing groceries. So there are all these exclusionary, what I call self-reservations and hobbies that people assume in a workplace. From sector to sector it changes…. Some of them are very complex and highly structured; I can think of quite a few that we have in South Africa whereas others are more accepting. It helps if the men in those platforms are open-minded – Marcia

Similarly, another respondent indicates that golf sessions and informal meetings such as going to the bar with other leaders are perceived as an opportunity to network, review strategies and yield important decisions, thus women were previously excluded such opportunities. Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) found that respondents perceived the 'old-boys club' as a barrier for the advancement of women. However, they suggest that women can form networks to share knowledge and experiences as a solution to understand and tackling barriers. This is consist with the views shared by the next respondent, who indicates that both men and women get invited to the same functions, therefore they have equal opportunities to network with others.

> I don't think that's deliberate. It would depend on the person's ability to network because the opportunities are there. So you cannot say, "No, I've never had an opportunity because I was a woman". We all get invited to the same functions, we all get invited to all the different events, so I don't think that would be an excuse – Anonymous respondent two

On the issue of women turning against other women. One respondent implies that this is not exclusive to women only, but men as well who feel threatened and feel that they need to protect their own environment. In contrast, Pandor (2006) indicated women in senior leadership positions are not always accommodating towards other women and are inclined to support the status quo.

> I don't think that's a uniquely or specifically woman issue. It could be perceived as that because women have had to sometimes fight so hard to get to that position that they do feel threatened by other women. So there will be this case of "I won't share information with you" – that kind of professional jealousy, but having said that I don't see it specific just to women. Maybe it's more obvious because women in senior executive positions have had to fight for that place and there are fewer of them, so maybe it's more noticeable there. But I think professional jealousy, happens across the gender board – Carol

Another respondent shares her experiences on female leaders who turn against other women. In support of this, Starr (2001:9) states that "Competition between women may go deeper than professional rivalry, to include sub-conscious jealousy and competition based on age or appearance (attractiveness, weight, dress sense)". Starr (2001) adds that this type of hostility is often portrayed in a passive manner.

> Well, from personal experience, I've gone through that various times where I thought I had built up a good relationship with this [female] leader and in fact, I thought it was based on trust, only to find that this person was actually talking about me differently to other people, including male leaders. So yes, they do attack each other and sometimes publicly, sometimes not so publicly. Sometimes it is very, sort of, under the radar. It's not exclusive to women. It goes for men as well. So, I've also seen cases where men actually put each other in a bad light for the sake of either protecting their own environment, their own leadership, their own space of control or for potential future promotional purposes or in order to protect themselves from experiencing backlash because they've made a wrong decision or deflect the blame to someone else. I think female leaders who get into power tend to become power-drunk. They get so self-absorbed with the power that they sometimes tend to forget who around them got them there in the first place, who supported and encouraged them. They also then become very protective of their territory so they would be fighting off all potential threats from other female leaders in order to not allow that person to get into their space. Whereas men seem to be more competitive, it is a fair competition, you know, it's straightforward, we all go for the same goal post – Anonymous respondent two

The experiences shared by anonymous respondent two can be linked to the queen bee phenomenon. Queen bees have been described as women who have reached senior management by distancing themselves from other women and in the process prevent junior women from progressing into senior leadership positions (Derks, Ellemers, van Laar & de Groot, 2011; Johnson & Mathur-Helm, 2011). Furthermore, these women are perceived as being more hostile and less supportive towards other women, as well as having the preference to work with men (Cherne,

2003). However, Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) found that almost half of their respondents perceived male leaders as unsupportive towards women. Another respondent argues that

Theories such as the lack of fit theory has attributed qualities such as assertiveness to men thus suggesting that, the lack of female leaders in top management positions could be attributed to their lack of assertiveness. Furthermore, based on the role congruity theory, assertiveness has been viewed as a male agentic attribute, thus suggesting that the lack of female leaders in management positions could be attributed to their lack of assertiveness. This was frowned upon by the respondents who indicated that women can be assertive and this is not a reason for the lack of women in leadership positions. The respondents believe that a lack of assertiveness in women is more to do with the individual and how they have been socialised or exposed to various things.

> I do come across a lot of women who are assertive. I think it's true that women are socialized not to be assertive. Most cases it works and in many cases it does not and I think as much as that has an impact so does the issue of life chances and responsibilities. If you look at the accounting faculty, there is a large number of women who decide to do accounting/to teach accounting at a university. We struggle to keep accountants, because many accountants are paid much more in the accounting firms, so why are we able to attract women accountants more than men? It probably has to do with the fact that women at a certain age are considering the possibility of having children and spending time with their children. The University environment lends itself more than the accounting firms does. That's a logical answer I suspect. Responsibilities, life opportunities and the way the day is structured all of that has an impact on this, as much as the socialization of assertiveness does – Adam

In contrast, Litzky and Greenhaus, (2007) found that men had greater aspirations, with regards to the attainment of leadership positions, compared to their female counterparts and this has been attributed to women's lack of assertiveness and low ambition/motivation to seek senior leadership positions. Rhode and Kellerman (2007) suggest that women are often reluctant to take risks and be assertive in attaining leadership positions. However, in contrast to these findings, two respondents suggest that there are men who lack assertiveness and that society has perceived women as unassertive.

> I don't agree with that. I think that it's got nothing to do with a woman's ability to be decisive or not and these are stereotypes because I've seen men rise to the top who are really indecisive and cannot take decisions… – Angina

> I can't say that women lack assertiveness. There are men who are not assertive, however members of our society share this perception that women are not assertive and if they are assertive, they perceived negatively – Stanley

In a similar response, another respondent makes reference to South African politics and proposes that there are men who occupy senior positions but are not assertive. However studies conducted by Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) and Opportunity Now (2000) found that women perceived other women as lacking self-confidence compared to men, thus suggesting that women are reluctant to pursue senior positions compared to their male counterparts.

> I think those are conditioned by exposure. Human beings can hide their emotions. One has to look at the South African politics, we have had leaders that are quiet and reserved and in respect, not assertive assume very senior positions…it's largely man. I think it's more a function of the stereotyping…Some people grow confidence in their jobs. I suppose if one really reflects on it, it's almost as saying if women are not confident then they should not be given top management positions. I don't think it's a matter of confidence. I think there are other factors (level of maturity, institutional and structural factors) that come into play. Maybe on the surface they look confident but I think its other issues – Marcia

Two other respondents similarly suggest that there are women who are assertive and take risks. This is consist with the findings of Caliper (2005) who found that female leaders are assertive, influential and more inclined to take risks than their male counterparts. One respondent explains that there are other dynamics at play as described below.

> I don't think that is the case anymore. There are a lot of women who are actually very assertive and who are very confident but no matter how much confidence they have or how assertive they are, they can never get into executive positions because of other dynamics that are at play. Dynamics like the male representation on the executive management team, or the race that is required or you know, what is the ratio of male versus female on the team? Whether the persons are being headhunted? - Your assertiveness is not necessarily

> going to ensure you a position in an executive management team – Anonymous respondent two

In addition, another respondent explains that there is a difference between being decisive and autocratic, thus when women are decisive they may be perceived as being autocratic.

> None of the woman that I have worked with displayed any of that. The women that I have worked with have been assertive, they have been risk takers and have been pretty much sure of the course of action that they want to take. Sometimes I guess it works against them because you can be a consensus builder, up to a certain extent and limit but there are times when you have to make a decision and when you make a decision, you are not going to please everybody. We have not reached that level of maturity where we can say 'yes I accept your decision' based on a marital decision or I don't accept your decision based on that too, not because of gender. So the women that I have worked with have been pretty strong, they have been pretty authoritative, they were confident and sometimes men feel threatened by that. I don't think it's so much of adopting an autocratic style. There is a difference between autocratic and dictate saying 'you shall do this' or a person that says I have listened to what you have said and have considered all the factors and I think that this is what we must do - that is being decisive. Often being decisive is confused with being autocratic and men and women are often victims of this but when a woman is decisive she may be criticized for being autocratic – Dhaya

The female respondents were asked how they would deal with the obstacles they face. The respondents suggest that one needs to have a family/work life balance, ensure psychological readiness and establishing a strong network among colleagues and members of society as part of a support structure. One respondent explains that she confronts her challenges head on.

> That depends on the individual. I am not easily intimidated and I accept upfront that people, especially men in higher or lower positions than me will be intimidated by me and therefore unreasonable in their judgements/behaviour, but I meet these challenges head on. I accept that I may not make friends at my job but since that's not why I took for in a job in the first place I'm ok with that and I keep my personal and work lives completely separate – Debra

Another respondent proposes that balancing work and family responsibilities is essential in overcoming barriers. Cheung and Halpern (2010) share these sentiments and add that social and organisational support is essential for women to be successful in their leadership positions. However, Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) propose that some female leaders may find it difficult a career and family life, as some female leaders may spend less time fulfilling family obligations, due to the pursuit of higher positions/roles and greater opportunities. Furthermore, Braun and Clarke (2009) argues that appears women may settle for low-middle ranking positions in order balance family responsibility and employment obligations.

> You need to balance your family/work life, you need to establish a network of people who will be your pillars and if you've got a strong network of support like we do have here, where among ourselves outside the formal meeting we do share information and it helps you also to overcome some issues – Anonymous respondent three

Analysing a situation and understanding the reasons behind the barriers is a strategy used by another respondent.

> Well, the best way for me to deal with it is to just be analytical about it. To say, "If this barrier is placed in front of me, what is the reason for the barrier? Is it because there's professional jealousy? Is it because the person really has a legitimate claim? What is the reason? What is causing this barrier? Did I put the barrier there myself?" Once I have analysed the problem…the cause of the barrier, I'm able to address it and then I usually – through the process of self-introspection, am able to understand what to do next – Anonymous respondent two

Acquiring extensive knowledge/skills, developing networks, ensuring psychological readiness and engagement with other leaders are also proposed as possible strategies to combat gender barriers.

> Okay, so firstly it's acquiring the right set of necessary skills or proving that you have acquired them. The other is through engagement with as many people and keeping your network to gain some kind of access to multiple people who make decisions in other places. So, its set of skills, networks and psychological readiness to take on whatever role it is regardless of the challenges one may confront. I also think exposure…extensive exposure to diverse people with diverse profiles, engagement with other women leaders, engagement

> with other male leaders on whatever role it is that you want to assume and of course, extensive knowledge gathering and constantly developing yourself and the people around you so that you are accepted. So you have to basically develop a bit of a legacy for yourself so that you are not rejected, almost like a body of evidence and of course, supporters - people that you work with, people who are your supporters – Marcia

From the information above, the respondents provided information on how they would encounter discrimination and the barriers they face in attaining senior leadership positions. The next section explores the challenges encountered by women once they occupy leadership positions. Mathur-Helm (2005) states that although the number of women being appointed into leadership positions has increased over the last few years, women still confront difficulties once they occupy top management positions. Research conducted by Coleman (2009), Shah (2009) and Sperandio (2009) found that women encounter multiple barriers as they progress to more senior leadership positions and while they occupy leadership positions they may experience unequal opportunities and patriarchal attitudes from some of their male colleagues. The perception that women have to work harder and prove themselves as being effective in leadership positions is shared by four female respondents.

> You learn very quickly how open-minded a person is based on the interactions you have on a daily basis. You can see very quickly whether they judge you on the basis of your skills and your ability rather than have the stereotypical view of she's a woman, she's not going to be able to cope and she's not going to be able to manage. Those are the kinds of challenges you face and it's long, old held views and once again it's perceptions…there's no rationale to it but to change that mind-set, it takes a long time and you have to build the relationship with that person. I do think women have to prove themselves a lot more than some of their male counterparts…they have to do so much more to be able to prove it – Carol

Johkheid and Mango (2008) found that South African women believed that stereotyping still clouded their roles in the workplace and perceived that women are less acknowledged and often have to work harder than men to prove themselves and gain equal acknowledgement and recognition for their performance and work output. Three other respondents also share this view.

> Let's just say that with most positions one acquires, there is some level of constantly proving that you are capable. I wouldn't say it's difficult, you just have to be better than the next man to get the post. Maybe one would say that you should be the best candidate for the post not better than the next man. It's the engagement with the older generation, engagement with those married to their doctrines, be it cultural, religious doctrines etc. – Marcia

Balancing work and family obligations are also highlighted as challenges for women. However, one respondent indicates that occupational support programmes are provided.

> The fact that I have to constantly prove myself as a female leader more than any other male leader. So yes, there are challenges. There are barriers. I think balancing… your work-life balance is a problem, especially if you're a mother and you have to also look after the needs of your family and pursuing your career at the same time and also if you're studying then it causes a lot of pressure on your family and yourself – Anonymous respondent two

> There's high expectations on us to show we are capable because remember there's still this perception that women do not belong in the office but should be subservient. There is a high expectation on deliverance and balancing the family/work life, which is critical. Fortunately, they do provide occupational support programmes, but the main thing is, you don't want to be so work orientated that your family life suffers, so that's the challenge as a mother – Anonymous respondent three

4.5 Theme 4: Policy intervention and strategy

The last theme explores the policies that are currently in place to ensure gender equality and recommendations on how to address the gender gap, within senior management. Most respondents have mentioned the employment equity act, No 55 of 1998 as the policy utilised to address gender inequality in the workplace, thus legislation is viewed as one of the strategies aimed at addressing gender inequality. Some respondents were very positive about the effectiveness of the policies, stating that there has been an increase in the number of women occupying leadership positions. However other respondents, although positive about the policies, indicated that it is the implementation of the policies and their practicalities that will result in their effectiveness or not and this will only be apparent after some time. However, there was also a sentiment shared that

the transformation of leadership in higher education has not been addressed adequately by the government for gender equality.

> We have an EE policy at the university. Each section at the university or a department has an EE profile. I can even say there are examples of were white males were appointed because of the EE profile in their departments. So yes, just recently we had interviews in my department, where preference was given to a male as a manager instead of a female candidate, because there were more females in that environment. So it's very fair, no preference is given to a certain gender. There's only the transformation charter and therein there are aspects of equality mentioned there – Elmarie

> Well, we have got the employment equity policy which is a government policy to be implemented at an institution level. The implication of it is that if you advertise a position and you have an EE candidate whether male or female they will get preference over a non-EE candidate. So that's the policy that we use to address gender inequality in the workplace – Chika

However, Booysen (2007) argues that organisations that emphasize the need to fill quotas do not comprehend the true value of workplace diversity, thus it is argued that leaders and legislation should emphasize the importance of training and development, which will assist men and women in attaining the necessary skills required of an effective leader.

> As any institution in this society, we are subject to the employment equity act. We also have our own employment policies. For example, when we are recruiting people, our preference among those candidates who qualify is going to be women for certain positions in order to address that (gender imbalance) so we have an employment equity policy which has an affirmative action element. Yes, it is effective, for example, ten years ago when I was a head of school, you could count on one hand how many female head of schools we had. Now there are ten or more and it's partly because we have driven those policies and it's also partly because some women have said that they want to be head of schools. I have done a lot in my career, especially interviews and I have done a lot of interviews and I ask why they want this job and women would say 'finally my children are grown up I am at a stage in my career where I need a management challenge so I will take this job'. We need more women in senior management – Anonymous respondent two

Anonymous respondent two maintains that the employment equity act has been effective, in that the number of female head of schools has increased compared to the past. However, Noble and Moore (2006) are in agree that despite the laws such as the employment equity and affirmative action as well as organisational support structures that promote gender equity, women still encounter barriers and glass ceiling.

Another respondent contends that having open-minded leaders regardless of gender assists in advancing gender equality. In contrast, Booysen (2007) suggests that leaders in senior management are not fully committed to accelerating gender equality policies and that some organisational cultures aren't supportive enough towards transformation, thus contributing towards the limited achievements of legislations that promote equality.

> Okay, firstly we have got a legislation (EE) which is a key factor and then we have a vision and a strategy for the university. The focus is not more on gender but the goal of service to humanity - I really support that. I don't think you have to be of particular gender to advance that vision. We all work and are committed to what we are doing. I think it also helps if your CEO/ top leadership is also liberated and open-minded – Marcia

Three other respondents indicate that there are talent acquisition policies aimed at retaining internal staff.

> "Firstly, we have a talent acquisition policy, so we ensure that it's a formal policy of the university. There will be forms of positive discrimination where we will attempt to find candidates, especially women to fill some positions. So it's very clear and upfront, there is no personal hidden agenda. Secondly, to grow these woman who are on a leadership track as opposed to academic track, opportunities are presented so that these women can move into those positions. Then we have a retention policy, because the sector is so small, institutions poach from one another so what we try to do is that we create a system whereby if someone tries to offer a senior woman an executive position at another university, we can have a counter offer or an incentive for the person to stay. We retained a number of our senior female professors over the past couple of years – Dhaya

> There is a policy on transformation and a talent acquisition policy that addresses talent retention at the institution. If there is a position available then we recruit internally or we try to head hunt using the employment equity act as a guide – Prince

> Our HR policies have, very recently been amended to ensure, from a transformational perspective, we are addressing that. Interestingly enough, a lot of our administrative staff complained, particularly amongst the admin staff where they say there's no career goal for them. There is no career projectory for them and it's difficult for them to be promoted so the university is conscious of that and we do have a policy in place that says, 'If there's an internal and external candidate, the internal candidate must be appointed first before the external one is'. So I think our policies are addressing that…how we implement it of course is the defining factor because some people may just ignore the policies sometimes or work their way around it and that's problematic and that's going to take time to change – Carol

It is argued by another respondent, that government has not been assertive enough in the implementation of the employment equity act and the way policies around transformation are addressed. The respondent further proposes the need for a fundamental strategy to address the gender gap. Similarly, Rhode and Kellerman (2007) suggest that the implementation of the legislation has been weak and there are inefficiencies in social policies, which is attributed to the slow gender equality transformation.

> Yes, we've got the policies - we've done everything possible to make sure women progress. I think that policies and talking about the issues is absolutely important. It remains a priority that we have policies that address gender discrimination in the workplace, but I think that there is a fundamental issue that has not been addressed and remains silent and that is the fundamental transformation of the leadership of higher education institutions. That's where I think government has not been assertive enough, in the way in which policies around race and transformation in terms of leadership at universities are addressed… we've seen very good changes there, we've just not seen changes at the level of gender and I don't think it should be left to the individual woman. I think that there has to be a fundamental strategy. There needs to be a more deliberate and aggressive strategy to change things. It can't be business as usual, tinkering at the edges. I think that if there is a fundamental decision about

> women in top leadership, there has to be a fundamental policy around it and a will on the part of council to make that an absolute priority – Angina

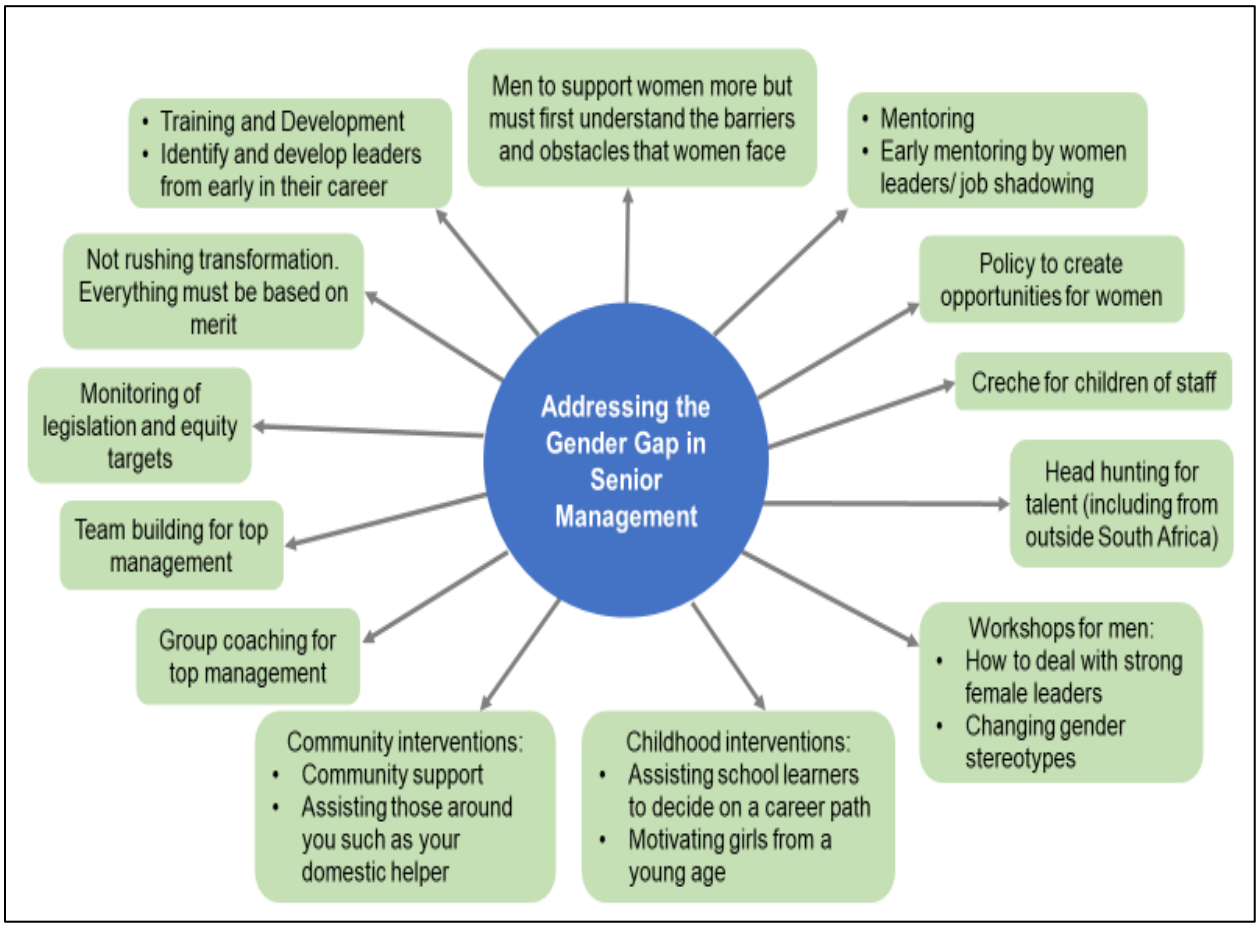
In addition, two other respondents argue that the implementation of the relevant policies have been slow. Similarly Selby and Sutherland (2006) and Mathur-Helm (2006) suggest that the implantation of the employment equity act has been decelerate, especially in the private sector and that the corporate environment is inundated with principles traditionally associated with men and leadership. Furthermore, Samuel (2001) argues that the employment equity is widely documented, however in practice it is not evident.

> All the necessary policies are there, the matter is in the implementation and sometimes practicalities can allow you to delay implementation – Debra

> "We follow everything that the government dictates, even the labour law. Every year we are reminded to look at the EE profile and see where we are lacking. The reason why you cannot transform so quickly is because everything is intact, until somebody resigns or you create a new position or somebody retires then you can start to address any imbalances" – Anonymous respondent four

The respondents provided a number of recommendations for addressing the gender gap in senior management as illustrated in figure 4.4. These were focused around the early development of women as leaders, coupled with training and mentoring for women during their career progression. It was also recommended that men should be provided with training to help support women and in order to for this to be effective, they would need to learn more about the kinds of barriers that women experience. Other recommendations include the education and support of communities, so that girls can be encouraged early on to pursue leadership roles and communities can change their stereotypical norms and perceptions. Institutions must ensure that they have policies in place to create opportunities for women; however, women must not be advanced purely for political reasons, but rather based on merit. Ultimately, transformation should not be rushed.

Figure 4.4: Recommendations for addressing gender gap in senior management



Consist with the strategies proposed by three respondents, Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) found that some organisations do not have support structures that can uplift women, thus mentorship/coaching programmes and training are proposed as possible solutions to address the gender disparities and can assist women in dealing with the barriers they encounter.

> I do think that we need to have programmes that identify women at a younger stage or at the start of their careers where they can develop their management skills and to mentor them. I think women can assist younger women starting up in their careers with sharing practices, knowledge and information. So, that kind of programme, informal as it may be could work well and I certainly would want to support something like that – Carol
>
> Maybe personal coaching - If you find a woman that is not assertive then you can appoint a personal coach to guide her especially for the first 6 months of their new realm to become

> more assertive and to mentor her throughout that new realm. Maybe top management level group coaching, and that has been very effective in our university where the university will take the top management for 2 or 3 days on coaching programme and have crucial conversations as a group and that has been very effective – Elmarie

> Mentorship programs, where potential female leaders are selected and given the necessary training before they are placed in the actual roles. Then unique, out of the box ideas like a crèche at university for staff. Also perhaps training for male leaders on how to deal with their feelings of inadequacy when experiencing strong women – Debra

In a similar response, another respondent mentions mentorship and training as possible solutions to address gender disparities. The respondent acknowledges the importance of legislation and proposes that it should be monitored. Similarly, Hofmeyr and Mzobe (2012) propose that monitoring legislature is essential, however it is also imperative that organisations realize the need for transformation and that change has to be initiated by top management. In addition, they recommend that equality legislations/quotas should be more evident and transparent, thus organisations that fail to meet equity targets should be penalized.

> I think legislation is a very useful tool and should be monitored. Secondly, by creating opportunities for women to assume various posts as a matter of policy. Inviting women to, exposing women to training and development, mentoring both within and outside the institution. For example, delegating critical developmental work to women or asking women to represent you in a public place where they have to speak, it builds them up. As well as ensuring men in the workplace get exposure, particularly the older groups to workshops that break barriers amongst the gender – Marcia

The support and commitment from top management is also mentioned as essential in combating gender disparities by another respondent. Ernst and Young (2016) propose that changes in the perceptions held by leaders, mentorship and flexible working can contribute towards gender equality.

> It has to start at the top. It has to start at the level of vice-chancellors and unless this country begins to address the gender disparity at the level of vice-chancellors, we can talk as much

as we want about promoting women leadership, we're not going to get there because women will see that it's all tokenism - that you promoted up to a point – Angina

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has examined and presented the findings of the study in relation to the existing literature outlined in chapter two. Four themes were identified and these were derived from the literature review in chapter two. The themes discussed include leadership styles and influential factors, the difference in leadership styles between men and women, the barriers and challenges encountered by women in leadership and equality policies aimed at addressing the gender imbalance. In addition, the chapter explored recommendations provided by the respondents. In the concluding chapter that follows, the findings are summarised and the implications of the study are assessed.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Primary research was undertaken to explore the underrepresentation of women in senior management positions at South African Universities, particular public universities based in Gauteng province. The research was conducted with the main objective of exploring the leadership techniques adopted by leaders in the higher education sector, understanding the factors that contribute to the gender gap within senior management at these universities and to explore the influence of cultural/religious norm/perceptions on leadership. This chapter concludes the research process and provides a summary of the findings that constitutes an independent analysis of data collected through 14 semi-structured, in-depth interviews with senior management staff at public universities in Gauteng province.

5.2 Research objectives

The stated objectives of the research were to:

- Investigate the different leadership styles utilised by senior management at public universities within the Gauteng province.
- Investigate the underrepresentation of females in senior management positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.
- Identify the barriers women encounter in progressing to senior leadership positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.
- Determine how leadership styles and socio-cultural factors contribute towards the gender gap within senior leadership positions in public universities within the Gauteng province.

5.3 Research questions

In order to answer the research objectives, interviews were conducted to explore the different leadership styles utilised by leaders at tertiary institutions and to understand whether leadership styles are in any way influenced by historical perceptions/norms. In addition, it was pivotal to explore the presence of glass ceiling or the barriers women encounter in attaining senior management positions and how stereotypical views influence people's perceptions on leadership behaviours. The research questions developed within the framework of the research objectives were:

- What are the barriers influencing progression of women to senior management positions in public universities within the Gauteng province?
- What are the strategies being implemented to address the gender gap within the senior management team in public universities within the Gauteng province?
- What are the key differences in leadership styles between male and female members of the senior management teams in public universities within the Gauteng province?
- How has leadership styles contributed to the gender gap within the senior management teams in public universities within the Gauteng province?

5.4 Achievement of research objectives

The research objectives were achieved through the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. The first objective was achieved by understanding the different leadership styles utilised by senior management at public universities in Gauteng province. The respondents were asked to describe their leadership style and whether they would enforce a certain leadership style based on the situation or environment. The responses provided insights on leadership styles and behaviours exhibited at the institutions. In order to establish whether men or women exhibit a certain leadership style, the respondents were asked if they believed men and women led differently. The second objective was achieved by understanding whether women were underrepresented at the tertiary institutions. The respondents provided insights on gender disparities and the reasons for those disparities. The third objective was aimed at identifying the barriers women encounter in progressing to senior leadership positions. The findings present insights on the barriers encountered by female leaders, personal experiences of discrimination and the challenges women encounter once they occupy senior management positions. The fourth objective determined how leadership styles and socio-cultural factors contribute towards gender disparities. The insights provided by the respondents indicate how cultural/religious norms, beliefs and perceptions influence the leadership style and behaviours exhibited by leaders and additional factors such as prejudices/stereotypes that contribute to gender inequality. A summary of the research findings are highlighted in the next section.

5.5 Summary of research findings

5.5.1 Theme 1: Leadership styles and socio-cultural factors

The first theme explored the leadership styles adopted by senior management at public tertiary institutions in Gauteng province. The theme also explored the influence of socio-cultural factors on leadership styles. The respondents were asked to describe their own leadership style as either transformational, transactional or both. Interestingly, both male and female respondents had similar responses with none of the respondents indicating that they adopt transactional leadership style. Slightly more than half of the respondents indicated that they use a combination of both transformational and transactional leadership styles and the others all indicated that they are transformational leaders. The transformational leaders all believe that their leadership style is perceived positively. The respondents who adopted both transformational and transactional leadership styles, also believed that their followers were generally happy with their leadership, although a few indicated that it depends on the individual. The respondents indicated that the nature of tertiary institutions is a gentler environment and with a different objective compared to the corporate environment. As such, aggressive or autocratic behaviours are not exhibited and if they are, it is mainly attributed to the individual's personas. Some respondents indicated that regardless of gender, both men and women would be perceived negatively if autocratic behaviours were exhibited. Some female respondents suggest that women who exhibit autocratic/transactional behaviours would be perceived more negatively. There was a very strong agreement from all the respondents that gender norms or expectations, cultural/religious norms and attitudes play a role in the leadership style a male or female leader adopts. The degree of influence these have on an individual differs according to their cultural/religious background and their work/life exposure. In addition, it was found that women have to work much harder to prove themselves. Despite the fact that women are still disadvantaged by stereotypical views, the respondents were of the opinion that this phenomenon is changing.

5.5.2 Theme 2: Gender and leadership style differences

The second theme explored the differences or similarities in gender attributes and its influence on leadership styles. The majority of the respondents did not subscribe to a belief that women are more effective in certain industries or occupations and men in other industries or occupation, but rather dependent on the individual adopting a particular approach. In terms of leading, it was found

that men do not generally believe that women lead differently to them, with only one participant stating that women do lead differently. On the other hand, four of the seven female leaders did believe that women lead differently to men. The research found mixed reactions to the assumption that leadership preference is based on the leaders' gender. Some respondents suggest that it is largely dependent on the individual, their upbringing, beliefs and ideologies as well as the way an individual leads. However, some respondents agree that employees would respect a good leader, regardless of gender.

5.5.3 Theme 3: Career advancement and glass ceiling

The third theme identified the notion of glass ceiling, gender disparities and career advancement challenges. Respondents were asked if they believed whether there is a gender disparity within senior management at their institution. The respondents indicated that there are disparities and the institutions are trying to address the gender disparities. All the female respondents reported to have experienced some form of gender discrimination at some point in their career. Most of male respondents indicated that they had not experienced any discrimination. The general consensus among the respondents was that there are not institutional barriers but there are barriers which are often subtle or secretly applied. The exclusion of women from informal networking platforms was perceived by most female leaders, to still be occurring. Maternity leave is not necessarily perceived as a barrier for female leaders, however, it does cause a delay in their progression. The female respondents also indicated that there are policies in place that allow women to take time off for maternity leave. The respondents indicated that the greater barrier is when women do not have support from their families to share in the child rearing responsibilities. The respondents did not agree with the notion that women lack assertiveness as a contributing factor for the lack of women in senior management. The respondents indicated that lack of assertiveness in women is more to do with the individual and how they have been socialised or exposed to various things. High expectations, dealing with stereotypes, managing multiple roles and achieving a work-life balance were highlighted as some of obstacles women encounter once they occupy leadership positions. The respondents also highlighted work-family balance, establishing a support system and acquiring the necessary knowledge/skills as coping mechanisms for women in leadership.

5.5.4 Theme 4: Policy intervention and strategy

The last theme explored current policies, strategies and recommendations aimed at addressing gender inequalities. It was found that the tertiary institutions do have policies and strategies in place to promote gender equality in senior management. The policies and strategies mentioned included:

- Transformation policies, directives and charters
- Employment equity policies, including legislated policies and internal policies.
- Talent acquisition policies, which include talent retention elements.

Some respondents were very positive about the effectiveness of the policies, stating that there has been an increase in the number of women occupying leadership positions. However other respondents indicated that it is the implementation of the policies and their practicalities that will result in their effectiveness or not, and this will only be apparent after some time. The respondents provided a number of recommendations for addressing the gender gap in senior management. These were focused around the early development of women as leaders, coupled with training and mentoring for women during their career progression. It was also recommended that men are provided with training to help support women and in order for this to be effective, they would need to learn more about the kinds of barriers that women experience. Other recommendations included the education and support of communities, so that girls can be encouraged early on to pursue leadership roles and communities can change their stereotypical norms and perceptions. Institutions must ensure that they have policies in place to create opportunities for women; however, women must not be advanced purely for political reasons, but rather based on merit. Ultimately, transformation should not be rushed.

5.6 Contributions of the study

As mentioned in chapter 1, there is limited literature on leadership in relation to the gender gap within senior management at South African universities. Most of the studies available online are from a western context, as such there is a lack of African studies on the topic of leadership and gender. Researchers have mainly focused on the corporate environment, therefore this study provides valuable perspectives and information on the topic of leadership styles and gender roles.

The findings of the study provide insights on the experiences and perceptions of leaders in tertiary institutions in Gauteng province. Furthermore, the findings of the study may be used by leaders across tertiary institutions in South Africa to acquire knowledge and to create awareness on the leadership challenges encountered by tertiary institution leaders, the factors contributing to the gender gap within senior management in South African universities and to formulate ideas on effective policy interventions. Leaders at tertiary institutions as well as governmental institutions can use the recommendations provided by the respondents to establish practices and policies aimed at addressing gender inequalities.

5.7 Limitations and recommendations for future research

The study was limited to senior management staff comprising of Faculty Deans, University Registrars, Executive Directors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of Universities located in Gauteng province. Therefore, the findings of the study may not be applicable or generalizable to other universities in South Africa. The findings represent the experiences and perceptions of some tertiary institution leaders, thus the experiences and perceptions of leaders working in different sectors are not included. As such the findings may differ in different industries and therefore, the study can be replicated with different settings and with leaders in different hierarchical levels. The findings of the study represent the experiences and perceptions of a very few individuals occupying leadership positions in public universities in Gauteng province, thus future researchers could consider a large sample consisting of various leaders in different universities across South Africa in order to enhance generalizability, validity and reliability. The study focused on senior management teams, thus future research could explore the experiences and perceptions of middle/lower level management teams. Furthermore, agentic and communal behaviours required at different hierarchical levels can be explored, in order to identify if there are gender differences and leadership styles at different levels of management. Future researchers could also utilise a mixed method approach in order to leverage the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research styles, in order to acquire a comprehensive understanding of gender roles and leadership styles.

5.8 Conclusion

Extensive studies on leadership and influential factors such as gender have been examined by numerous researchers. While focus has been on the corporate environment, leadership within tertiary institutions has become a noteworthy subject worth investigating. Although the findings of the studies have often varied, it is believed that the findings presented in chapter four will provide valuable information to the existing knowledge on leadership and gender. The research found that while all the participants identify as being transformational leaders, it is necessary to develop and understand when to enforce transformational and transactional behaviours. Therefore, the environment in which one operates in and the circumstances encountered by leader's influences leadership behaviours. Women in academia were found to have a similar style of leadership to that of their male counterparts, where they display a mix of transformational and transactional leadership styles. Transformational leadership was believed to be the better leadership style to encourage engagements from subordinates, but transactional leadership was used to ensure productivity and the achievement of goals. It was not generally believed that there is a preferential gender for leaders but rather that leaders are respected and followed based on their abilities, knowledge and skills. It was concluded that women in senior management positions are perceived to be underrepresented but only in certain roles and positions. There is a good representation of female leaders but it is the top management positions where males still dominate.

The institutions were perceived to be doing fairly well with addressing gender inequality and have policies in place to correct the gender disparity in leadership. However, the success of these policies and strategies will take time to be realized in full. Although the female leaders have experienced some barriers in their career progression, there is a general belief that gender stereotyping is becoming less of an issue. However, once women reach top leadership positions, they place a lot of pressure on themselves to prove their abilities and they perceive that they have to work harder than men in order to be recognised. In addition, there is a perception that gender discrimination still occurs but in a far subtle form than in the past, despite the policies that are in place in the institutions. The respondents mentioned training and mentoring, coaching and mentorship, workshops for men as well as monitoring legislation/equality targets as recommendations to addressing the gender imbalance within senior management teams.

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Appendix 1 – Interview guideline

Name of respondent (optional): _____

Job title: _____

1. How would you describe your leadership style?
    - Is this approach perceived (positively/negatively) by your colleagues/subordinates?
    - What are your perceptions on the way men/women lead?
    - Do you believe men/women are more effective in certain industries or occupations?
2. Do you believe gender norms or expectations play a role in the leadership style a male or female leader adopts? Please explain why or why not.
3. Have you ever felt discriminated/ stereotyped because of your gender?
4. Are there barriers at this institution that prevents women from attaining top management positions?
    - What obstacles do female leaders face once they occupy leadership positions?
    - How are these challenges dealt with?
5. Based on the leadership style that is adopted by top management at the university, do you think male and female leaders lead differently?
    - Are employees more inclined to male/female leaders?
6. Does a disparity between female and male leaders within senior management still exist?
    - If so, what are the reasons?
    - What policies or strategies are in place to ensure gender equality within senior management team?
7. Do you believe cultural norms, beliefs and attitudes contribute towards people's perception on specific gender roles? (Most women at tertiary institutions occupy administrative positions)
8. Previous research reveals that women who adopt autocratic leadership approach are perceived and evaluated negatively, is this the case at this institution.
    - What are your perceptions on women who adopt autocratic leadership approach, which is associated with male leaders?
9. What recommendations would you suggest in addressing the gender-gap within senior managements at your university?

Appendix 2 – Participation letter and Interview consent

26th October 2016

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Request for an interview

My name is Kamal Alahdal and I am a Masters student in the School of Economic and Business Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. I am conducting research on gender-roles and leadership styles. The purpose of this study is to determine how leadership styles contribute towards the gender gap within senior management at public universities in Gauteng province. It is anticipated that this study will provide a valuable addition to existing knowledge on the topic of leadership and gender. I am therefore requesting you to voluntarily participate in an interview as part of my Masters studies. Should you accept to participate in the study; a suitable date and time will be discussed to conduct the interview. The interview is estimated to last for one hour.

The research is purely for academic purposes in fulfilment of my Master's degree in Business Sciences. Your perspectives are important and there are no right or wrong answers. The interview is both confidential and anonymous. Personal information will not be collected and used in this study and confidentiality and anonymity of the participants will be ensured. Participants can choose not to answer certain questions or withdraw from the study with no consequences. Your participation is voluntary and involves no risk, penalty, or loss of benefits whether or not you participate. You may withdraw from the process at any stage.

Thank you in advance, your participation is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, or should you wish to obtain a copy of the results of the study, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

Researcher: Kamal Alahdal - 589kamal@gmail.com – Cell number: 081 360 7155

Research supervisor: Professor Olorunjuwon Samuel – Olorunjuwon.Samuel@wits.ac.za

INTERVIEW CONSENT

I_____ hereby agree to voluntarily participate in this Interview as part of the research study titled "**Gender-roles and leadership styles: An empirical evaluation of senior executive team of public universities in Gauteng province, South Africa**". I understand that I am participating voluntarily and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can withdraw from participating at any point and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively. I understand that my participation will remain confidential and my personal information will not be collected nor used in this study. I also understand that my participation will not pose any risk, penalty or loss of benefits to me.

_____

Signature of participant **Date**: _____

CONSENT FOR DIGITAL RECORDING

I hereby agree to the digital recording of my participation in the study. I understand that the information that I provide will be stored electronically and will be used for research purposes only.

_____

Signature of participant **Date**: _____

_____

Signature of Researcher **Date: _____**

Ethics clearance certificate

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Alahdal

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H16/11/03**
PROJECT TITLE	Gender-role and leadership styles: Am empirical evaluation of senior executive teams of public universities in Gauteng province
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Mr K Alahdal
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Economics and Business Science/
DATE CONSIDERED	18 November 2016
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved
EXPIRY DATE	27 November 2019

DATE 28 November 2016 **CHAIRPERSON** J. Knight
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor M Samuel

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

_____ _____/_____/_____
Signature Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

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Reference: Ms Noncedo Rwanqa
E-mail: Noncedo.Rwanqa@wits.ac.za

05 January 2018
Person No: 589578
PAG

Mr KO Alahdal
26 St Lawrence Avenue, Crosby
2092
South Africa

Dear Mr Alahdal

Master of Commerce: Approval of Title

We have pleasure in advising that your proposal entitled *Gender role and leadership styles: an empirical evaluation of senior executive teams of public universities in Gauteng province, South Africa* has been approved. Please note that any amendments to this title have to be endorsed by the Faculty's higher degrees committee and formally approved.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Marike Bosman
Faculty Registrar
Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management