



Transformational and Transactional Leadership: From the Gender Lens

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Abstract

This paper aims to review the literature on gender differences in leadership styles, focusing on transformational and transactional leadership. The theoretical backgrounds of transformational and transactional leadership and gender differences in leadership style are reviewed. Previous studies have found mixed results regarding the differences and similarities between men's and women's leadership styles. Four factors have been found to lead to these results: (1) the context of the study, (2) the evaluator's identity, (3) team composition, and (4) culture. The paper hopes to shift researchers' focus from documenting the differences and similarities to exploring and digging deeper into the causes of these differences and similarities. Based on this, the paper suggests exciting directions for future research.

Keywords: gender, transformational leadership, transactional leadership

1. Introduction

Researchers and practitioners alike have been interested in learning whether men and women lead differently. Finding the answer to this question may be necessary; the lag in women's advancement in leadership positions frequently indicates women's alleged lack of suitable leadership behavior. More recent insights claim that women are superior to men in leadership roles in modern organizations because of their unique leadership styles (Van Engen & Willemsen, 2004). Today, statistics show significant improvement in women's presence in the workplace. For example, women's participation in leadership positions has increased from 33.3% in 2016 to 36.9% in 2022 globally (World Economic Forum, 2022). However, there is still a gap. McKinsey & Company (2021) noted that women still face the "broken rung"; 86 women are promoted to management positions for every 100 men. The broken rung indicates that women in entry-level jobs are statistically less likely to be promoted than men.

Further, women get leadership positions in industries where they are already highly represented (World Economic Forum, 2022). Women also face difficulties in getting leadership positions because of the traits that people stereotypically attribute to men, women,

and leaders. Cultural stereotypes may give the impression that women lack essential qualifications for leadership positions (Koenig et al., 2011).

The obstacles that women face in the workplace and the fact that they are still left behind in reaching leadership positions notwithstanding, many studies provided evidence that women's leadership positively impacts organizational performance (Hoobler et al., 2016). For example, McKinsey & Company (2021) indicated in their report that women leaders spend more time than men leaders in helping their team members; women provide emotional support, ensure work-life balance, and achieve better overall well-being.

Usually, scholars cite leadership theories as either sex or gender-neutral (Fletcher, 2004), but lately, gender, sex, and personality have been observed as a bunch of variables that could influence a leader's behaviors, as well as evaluations given by the subordinates (Brandt & Laiho, 2013). A new leadership paradigm started to draw people's attention in the middle of the 1970s. In his book *Leadership*, James MacGregor Burns (1978), often regarded as the father of contemporary leadership theory, introduced the idea that leadership might be either transactional or transformational (Horn-Turpin, 2009). Bennis (2009) states, "Quality of life depends on the quality of our leaders." To develop better and higher quality leaders, we must expand and enhance our knowledge about leadership styles and study them from different perspectives.

Accordingly, this paper combines three elements—transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and gender—to contribute to our understanding of leadership styles through a gender lens. The next section outlines the background of leadership styles and gender, focusing on transformational and transactional leadership. The section after that will present the results found in leadership and gender literature, highlighting the factors that lead to mixed results. The paper concludes with a discussion and identifies a few interesting directions for future research.

2. Background

2.1 Gender Theories

The relationship between gender and leadership styles was widely studied, and many varying results were found. Historically, the ideal manager was thought to possess stereotypically "masculine" characteristics such as self-assurance, independence, aggressiveness, dominance, and rationality (Schein, 1973). Schein's findings supported the idea that successful managers are thought to have traits, attitudes, and temperaments that are more frequently associated with men than with women.

Social role theory argues that gender role beliefs, which in turn reflect people's perceptions of men's and women's social roles in the society they live, are reflected in sex disparities and similarities in behavior. For instance, in postindustrial countries, males are more likely than women to hold jobs, especially those with authority, and women are more likely than men to take on caregiving responsibilities at home and work (Eagly & Wood, 2012). The sex role theory holds that being a man or a woman entails playing a particular role because of one's sex. Moreover, this theory also employs the terms "masculine" and "feminine," and it claims that indoctrination into the female role specifically produces the feminine character. According to this theory, women learn a lot about sexual roles early on in life, and this might result in a mentality that causes problems later on when they are working. It is an example of a "cultural trap" (Appelbaum et al., 2003).

The consistency of gender roles with other responsibilities, particularly those involving leadership, was explained by Role Congruity Theory; the female gender role carries the risk of bias against female leaders due to how different it is from the expectations that people usually have of leaders. Because of the disparity between the mostly communal attributes perceivers connect with women and the primarily agentic qualities they think are necessary to thrive as a leader, prejudice might develop when perceivers appraise women as existing or potential holders of leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Templeton & Marrow (1972) stated that "the dilemma for a woman having managerial aspirations is often to deny her femininity or her managerial authority" (p. 32).

Rudman (1998) explained that the women's dilemma is that they may be compelled to choose between femininity and maintaining a professional image—their gender identity vs. their career. Also, she mentioned that women suffer from the "backlash effect," which is the criticism of agentic women for defying expectations of feminine propriety. In line with this perspective, a study analyzed the penalties women face when they succeed in traditional men's dominant roles. The study found that women encounter penalties because they do not follow the expected gender stereotypes. It is worth mentioning that the study also found that these negative perceptions about women had been mitigated when they portrayed communal attributes (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007).

In her previous study (Rudman, 1998), the agentic women were considered less likable and hireable than their male peers. Rudman & Glick (2001) remarked that agentic women face discrimination due to presenting some agentic characteristics such as competitiveness and aggressiveness (related to social dominance) because of that conflict with the feminine socially accepted traits. A meta-analysis study by Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky (1992) shed light on the bias against women leaders. The study ascertained that women leaders are devaluated when they follow what is considered stereotypically masculine leadership styles. Furthermore, when women leaders held positions in male-dominant roles, their devaluation was worse. Galanaki, Papalexandris, and Halikias (2009) found that perceptions of women managers' capacity for leadership and their "feminine" characteristics can impede their pursuit of senior positions. The lack of Fit model suggests that when there is a perceived "lack of fit" between a woman's characteristics and the characteristics thought necessary to succeed in traditionally male occupations and organizational positions, descriptive stereotypes cause issues for women (Heilman, 2012).

This section has presented how gender stereotyping is a fundamental obstacle women face in their leadership journey. Today, people still perceive differences between men and women on stereotype components as in the past (Haines et al., 2016). The think manager-think male by Schein (1973) emphasized that historically, leadership positions are seen as masculine. The women's dilemma is argued by the Social Role Theory, where women are compelled to choose between their gender identity and career image as leaders. The dilemma led to the lack of the Fit model, where women were disqualified as leaders. The following section presents a background of transformational and transactional leadership.

3. Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles

Leadership styles have significantly changed during the past twenty years. The quick change in technologies has significantly impacted organizational development and leadership styles. Further, what was once a male-dominated society in business has been challenged by the involvement of women in terms of organizational cultures, gender, and leadership styles (Begum et al., 2018).

By providing long-term prospects and visions, transformational leadership seeks to develop (or "transform") the workforce toward higher-level values. Transformational leaders encourage and appreciate their team members to inspire them to succeed. The characteristics of the transformational style are idealized influence (behavior and attributed), charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Along with being transformational leaders, they must also be visionary leaders. In other words, they must create a vision for the group and secure the members' commitment to realizing it (Hitt et al., 1998). Transformational leaders are those who have positive visions of the future of their organizations, focus on boosting employees' self-confidence by assisting them in realizing their potential, share with staff an achievable mission and vision, and work with staff to identify needs and find cooperative solutions to meet those needs (Peterson et al., 2008).

Transformational leadership gains its strength by valuing the needs of the employees, not the leaders. Additionally, the leaders are expected to encourage the employees to think for themselves and think in the group as well, "work collaboratively" by establishing high moral standards. Theoretically, followers of this creative and cooperative process grow in self-efficacy, enjoy more job satisfaction, and have higher levels of organizational commitment (Horn-Turpin, 2009). Transformational leaders aim to "transform" the employees' values toward achieving the organization's goals and visions by creating a trust-based atmosphere (Gregory et al., 2004). Gregory Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) stated: "The extent to which the leader can shift the primary focus of leadership from the organization to the follower is the distinguishing factor in classifying leaders as either transformational or servant leaders."

According to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, there are four components of transformational leadership. The first is idealized influence, which refers to leaders receiving their employees' respect, trust, and admiration. Leaders are willing to put their followers' needs ahead of their own, which makes employees desire to imitate their leaders. Moreover, a leader acts in a way that inspires others to copy him/her. Second, inspirational motivation: This component refers to the leader's ability to create a powerful vision and communicate it clearly to inspire employees and demonstrate commitment to the tasks they handle. Leaders exhibit behaviors that inspire followers by giving them purpose and challenging tasks. Third, intellectual stimulation: This component means that the leaders empower the subordinates by engaging with them in decision-making and allowing them to share their ideas and discover new ways of doing things; this leads to an increase in the followers' independence and creates an innovative and creative environment. This component also means that nobody will be publicly criticized for his or her mistakes. Fourth, Individual consideration is where the leaders act as personal mentors or coaches by paying close attention to each employee's needs for accomplishments and growth. Also, the leaders create new learning possibilities and a growth-friendly environment (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Avolio et al., 1999; Bass et al., 2003)

Transactional leadership is a model that was created by Burns in 1978. Transactional leadership occurs when a person interacts with others to exchange highly valued items (Burns, 1978). Burns points out that although two parties may have mutual goals, their relations are limited to exchanging highly valued advantages. Burns' model was expanded by Bass (1985), who created the "transactional leadership theory." According to Bass, the characteristic of transactional leadership is the exchange or transaction that occurs between leaders and employees. The managers and employees will agree on the requirements to meet to receive the rewards or to avoid the punishments in case of the unfulfillment of these requirements (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass et al., 2003). Bass (1990) notes that the transactional leadership foundation is the transaction of the exchange between the managers and the staff. Transactional leaders accomplish their goals by promising rewards, pay raises,

and promotions for the staff who perform well. On the other hand, the staff who do not accomplish their jobs or produce shoddy work could be punished. Thus, leaders who follow the transactional leadership style clarify tasks and rewards to their staff in exchange for their achievements (Bass, 1990).

Transactional leadership has three elements: (a) Contingent reward leadership, which is a motivation-based system where the leaders tell the followers clearly what their tasks are to be accomplished to receive rewards (for example, constructive transactions), so the employees are rewarded based on the achievements of their designated tasks. In other words, it is the extent to which leaders reinforce proper employee behaviors. (b) Management-by-exception (active) is where the leader will monitor, observe, and control the work implementation and take corrective action immediately when there are deviations in the work implementation (for example, active corrective transactions). Lastly, (c) management-by-exception (passive) is where the leader will not interfere in the work unless something wrong happens. In other words, employees will only hear from the leader if a problem or failure happens (e.g., passive corrective transactions) (Antonakis et al., 2003; Bycio et al., 1995). Jensen et al. (2016) stated that transactional leadership is "the use of contingent rewards and sanctions. Through appropriate incentives, the self-interest of individual employees may align with the interest of the organization" (p.10). Jensen et al. (2016) observe that transactional leadership behavior is about meeting employees' self-interests to achieve goals. In contrast, transformational leadership encourages the staff to transcend their self-interests. The researchers also find that transactional contingent reward is essential to effective leadership behaviors (Bass et al., 2003).

The differences between transformational and transactional leadership do not mean they can only be used separately. Both types of leadership could be used simultaneously. As specified in the Full-Range leadership model (Bass et al., 2003; Burns, 1978), the benefit of optimizing organizational effectiveness is that leaders can merge and mix in a desired frequency between transformational and transactional leadership to maximize both advantages and benefits. Transformational leadership was predicted to be more efficient than transactional leadership. However, empirical results indicate that outstanding leaders will maximize the benefits of transactional leadership by combining it with transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In conclusion to this section, different types of leadership have different characteristics. For example, transformational leadership appears as a people-oriented, trust-based relationship with people, which tends to be associated with women, so it is connected to "feminine characteristics," whereas transactional leadership tends to be a task and outcome-oriented, appeal self-interest and the leader promotes compliance through rewards and punishment these all aspects are more fitting to "masculine characteristics" (Appelbaum et al., 2003). Transformational leadership has often been perceived as a feminine leadership style (DUEHR & BONO, 2006), and women tend to view female managers as being more successful transformational leaders. Transformational leadership aims to inspire and motivate employees and transform their values to achieve the organization's goals, and transformational leaders are described as change agents. This management style creates creative spaces and encourages employees to find new solutions to old problems.

On the other hand, transactional leaders rely on the exchange of interests. Transactional leaders clearly frame required tasks to receive rewards or avoid punishment. This type of leadership requires direct supervision and monitoring, and mistakes are investigated. This review focused on these two styles because they are widely studied. A simple search on Google Scholar retrieves 705,000 studies on transformational leadership and 129,000 studies

on transactional leadership. Regarding gender and leadership, research findings on the gender differences in leadership styles have yielded mixed results. The following section is dedicated to reviewing the literature on gender differences in leadership and highlighting some of the mixed results.

4. Methodology

This research explores the differences in transformational and transactional leadership styles through a gender lens, focusing on how men and women may exhibit these styles differently. Given the study's theoretical nature, the research methodology primarily involves a comprehensive review and synthesis of existing literature on gender differences in leadership styles, particularly transformational and transactional leadership.

4.1 Research Design

The study employs a qualitative research design, focusing on secondary data analysis. It is a theoretical review synthesizing various scholarly articles, books, and research reports to understand the relationship between gender and leadership styles. The study follows a descriptive and analytical approach, aiming to describe the existing knowledge in the field and analyze the findings to uncover patterns, gaps, and directions for future research.

4.2 Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from various sources, including peer-reviewed journals, books, conference papers, and reports. The literature was gathered from databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, Scopus, and Web of Science. The keywords used for the search included "gender differences in leadership," "transformational leadership," "transactional leadership," and "gender and leadership styles."

4.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance and quality of the sources, the following inclusion criteria were applied:

1. **Time Frame:** The literature published between 2000 and 2023 was included to ensure the data is current and relevant.
2. **Language:** Only English-language publications were considered.
3. **Type of Studies:** Both qualitative and quantitative studies, meta-analyses, and theoretical papers were included.
4. **Focus:** Studies that explicitly examined gender differences in transformational and transactional leadership styles were selected.

Exclusion criteria included non-peer-reviewed sources, opinion pieces, and studies unrelated to the research topic.

4.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The literature was categorized based on key themes such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, gender differences, cultural context, and evaluation biases. The findings were compared and contrasted to identify consistent patterns and conflicting study results. Special attention was given to the factors leading to mixed results, such as study context, evaluator identity, team composition, and culture.

4.4.1 Methods

The methods section outlines the specific techniques and processes used to gather, analyze, and interpret the data in this study.

4.4.1.1 Literature Review

The primary method used in this study is a systematic literature review. This involves identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing existing research on gender differences in transformational and transactional leadership. The literature review process was conducted in the following steps:

1. **Literature Search:** Using the identified keywords, a systematic database search was conducted. Relevant studies were identified and shortlisted based on the inclusion criteria.
2. **Literature Screening:** Abstracts of the selected studies were screened to ensure they met the inclusion criteria. Full-text articles were retrieved for further analysis.
3. **Data Extraction:** Key information from the selected studies, including the research objectives, methodologies, findings, and conclusions, was extracted. This data was organized into categories based on the themes identified in the literature.
4. **Thematic Analysis:** The extracted data were analyzed to identify recurring themes and patterns. The analysis focused on understanding how gender influences transformational and transactional leadership styles and what factors contribute to the differences observed in the literature.
5. **Synthesis and Interpretation:** The findings from the thematic analysis were synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The results were interpreted in the context of existing theories and frameworks, such as social role theory and role congruity theory.

5. Analyzing Transformational and Transactional Leadership from Gender Perspective

People continue to study leadership in all its manifestations, including organizational, political, military, and even sporting. A recent Web of Science search for "leadership" retrieved more than 228,000 publications, demonstrating how successful leadership research has become in academia. Moreover, women in leadership have an essential area of research; more than 15,000 publications on the Web of Science address both leadership and women (Data accessed on 28 September 2022).

Identifying differences in leadership styles can significantly impact whether or not women hold leadership roles and move up the organizational hierarchy, as the existence and nature of these differences or lack thereof directly influence people's opinions (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). Many researchers asked the question, does gender have a role when it comes to leadership styles? What are the similarities and differences between men and women when they lead? Researchers have written numerous publications in response to these questions, and the answers vary from researcher to researcher. There is a group of researchers (Miranda, 2019; Dappa et al., 2019; Martinez-Leon et al., 2020; Komives, 1991) that argue there are no differences between men's and women's leadership styles, whereas other researchers (Reza Zeinabadi, 2013; Lee & Park, 2020; Rosener, 1990; Brandt & Edinger, 2015) argue the opposite. Rosener (1990) remarks that transformational leadership is the preferred style by women in several leadership positions, including women executives in the corporate world. Men tend to describe their style as transactional leadership. A study on 400 teachers and 77 principals in public primary schools in Iran demonstrated that women principals, as compared

to male principals, exhibited a higher level in all transformational leadership dimensions (Reza Zeinabadi, 2013). A more recent study aimed to examine the role of gender in the perception of leadership styles in the context of public sector organizations showed that women have more favorable perceptions of transformational leadership than their male peers. In contrast, there was no discernible gender difference in transactional leadership perceptions (Lee & Park, 2020). A study by Levandowski (2020) cited that women in academic fieldwork coordinator roles in the USA demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors.

Among other supporting studies that yielded similar results is a study that collected data from 104 team leaders and 672 team members from a Finnish university. The study found that women are more transformational team leaders than men (Brandt & Laiho, 2013). Such findings also hold in almost the same context. Begum, Begum, Rustam, and Rustam (2018) collected data from 400 male and female leaders in Pakistan and Turkey's education and health departments. The study revealed differences in women's and men's leadership styles; Women are more transformational leaders than their male peers. Funk (2015) found that men's leadership style is characterized more hierarchically and authoritatively. These differences varied in communication styles, problem-solving, and interaction with coworkers and supervisors. Past studies have also examined gender differences in leadership styles, such as those by Bass, Avolio, and Atwater (1996). The researchers collected data from three different samples and discovered that women leaders were more transformational than male leaders. Carless (1998) tested gender differences in transformational leadership from multiple perspectives. Women evaluated themselves as more transformational leaders than their male peers.

Moreover, their managers considered them in the same way. Aligned with these results, Van Engen and Willemsen (2004) reviewed the published studies between 1987 and 2000 on sex differences in leadership styles. The results indicated that women were more likely to follow the democratic and transformational leadership styles than men.

In a different vein, some other studies state no differences between men's and women's leadership styles. Recent research papers by Miranda (2019) and Dappa, Bhatti, & Aljarah (2019) concluded the absence of differences in the leadership styles of men and women managers. The results of Sims, Carter, & Moore De Peralta (2020) confirmed the same results obtained by Galanaki, Papalexandris, & Halikias (2009), Manning (2002), and Mandell & Pherwani (2003), which did not identify any gender differences in leadership styles. In line with the previous results, a study demonstrates similarly high transactional and transformational leadership levels among cooperative managers and does not find any appreciable gender differences in their application in the cooperatives under the study (Martinez-Leon et al., 2020). Komives (1991), in a study carried out on 74 hall directors (men and women across seven campuses), indicated that men and women directors generally similarly evaluated their leadership styles. However, there were significant differences in how they perceived transformational leadership. Men said that their direct power styles (control and direction) led to their transformational leadership, whereas women believed that styles focused on relationship accomplishment played a role. Therefore, the sort of leadership that is formed is impacted by gender stereotypes.

Delving into women's leadership styles, an earlier meta-analysis study reported that women follow the transformational leadership style more than men (except for the "idealized influence" dimension). Also, the study has reported that women leaders, compared to their male counterparts, use contingent rewards, regarded as one of the most compelling aspects of transactional leadership. Men leaders demonstrate other transactional leadership dimensions as active and passive management by exception (Eagly et al., 2003). This result is supported

by Begum, Begum, Rustam, & Rustam (2018); women leaders scored slightly higher in using contingent rewards than male leaders. Vinkenburg, van Engen, Eagly, & Johannesen-Schmidt's (2011) research, which included two studies about descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes in leadership styles, found close results. The first study was on descriptive gender stereotypes and leadership styles. It concluded that women exhibit more excellent management-by-exception and contingent reward behaviors than their men's peers. The second study tested the significant role of prescriptive stereotypes in promotions for women and men. The study revealed that "inspirational motivation" is considered more important for men than women, while "individualized consideration" is considered more important for women than men. A study by Stempel, Rigotti, and Mohr (2015) confirmed some results and contradicted others:

1. The study revealed that transformational leadership attitudes are perceived as more typical of women leaders.
2. Inspirational motivation and idealized influence are perceived as gender-neutral.
3. For transactional leadership, contingent reward was considered more typical of women leaders, while management by expectation is perceived as gender neutral.

Ayman, Korabik, and Morris (2009) indicated that women leaders follow transformational leadership more than male leaders. Moreover, their male subordinates evaluated them more highly on the transformational leadership subscales of individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation.

The debate about women's and leadership styles started long ago. One of the earliest studies was conducted in the eighties (Apfelbaum & Hadley, 1986). From the previous results, we conclude that the investigation of how women and men lead still needs to be answered. Many researchers argued that women are more likely to follow transformational leadership than men, while others argued the opposite. Another perspective adds that women present different transformational and transactional leadership aspects at different levels. The following section will mention some key factors to be considered in assessing women's and men's leadership styles.

6. Delving into the Results

From the previous review, it is clear the results about gender and leadership are mixed. The variation in the results can be attributed to several factors. This section will attempt to highlight key aspects behind these mixed results.

6.1 Context

The first factor that can affect the result is the context in which women work. In their study, Martinez-Leon, Olmedo-Cifuentes, Martínez-Victoria, and Arcas-Lario (2020) mentioned that in value-based organizations, leaders' behaviors are particularly influenced by the context. They attributed the women's advancement in leadership positions to the context where values such as democratic and participative are adopted. In her article, Rosener (1990) stated that "women are making their way into top management, not by adopting the style and habits that have proved successful for men but by drawing on the skills and attitudes they developed from their shared experience as women." She confirmed that most women adopt transformational leadership in organizations where the women shape the culture by themselves. Druskat (1994) stressed the prominent role that the context plays in adapting the leadership style, noting that gender differences are concealed in traditional organizations that

are bureaucratic, rigid, and distinctly masculine because women adjust to the masculine norms and expectations there.

In contrast, women can display their leadership style in non-traditional companies. Van Engen & Willemsen (2004) and Paustian-Underdahl, Lisa Slattery Walker, and Woehr (2014) confirmed the importance of the context and the type of organization. The review presented the importance of the organizations' context and values. This paper recommends that future studies emphasize the role of different contexts, such as female-oriented or male-oriented organizations. Another context is if the organization is stable or in crisis. Future studies can be comparative research between private and public organizations as well.

6.2 Evaluator Identity

The evaluator's identity is another factor that can explain the differences in results. Reviewing the previous research showed that studies used different types of evaluators:

1. Self-rating, where the leaders evaluated their leadership styles
2. Subordinates, where the leaders were evaluated by their team members
3. Superiors, where the leaders were evaluated by their managers

The discrepancy in results may be based on the identity of the evaluator. Some studies depend on one evaluator to collect the data (Reza Zeinabadi, 2013; Lee & Park, 2020), while others depend on more than one evaluator (Saint-Michel, 2018; Ayman et al., 2009). The meta-analysis study by Eagly & Johnson (1990) found a discrepancy between results from self-report studies and studies using subordinates as raters. Jordan and Troth (2019) explained that common method bias (CMB) is often linked with self-report questionnaires. One way, among others, to control the CMB is to bring measures from diverse sources. A fundamental way to achieve this is by obtaining the predictor measure(s) from one person and the criterion measure(s) from another (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Carless (1998) followed a comprehensive approach by collecting the data from three types of evaluators: self-rating, subordinates, and superiors. In future studies, this paper recommends following Carless's (1998) approach and conducting more studies using the same method of collecting data. This approach has the advantage of generating multiple and comprehensive perspectives.

6.3 The Team Composition

Another factor that appeared to be an essential dimension that caused mixed results was the gender composition of the management teams. An early study indicated that the most significant differences between women and men were based on the gender composition of the workgroup (Brass, 1985). Webster, Grusky, Podus, and Young (1999) also found that the gender composition of teams influences leadership differences. For example, when Ayman, Korabik, and Morris's (2009) study considered the leader-subordinate dyad, differences in leadership styles appeared. Martinez-Leon, Olmedo-Cifuentes, Martínez-Victoria, & Arcas-Lario (2020) found that women and women leaders widely use transformational and transactional leadership. However, when they considered the team management gender composition, differences in leadership appeared.

A recommendation for future study is to consider team gender compositions as an essential factor. Martinez-Leon, Olmedo-Cifuentes, Martínez-Victoria, and Arcas-Lario (2020) followed a comprehensive approach, suggesting seven-team compositions. Future studies could benefit from this approach to provide inclusive perspectives in different contexts. This factor is crucial to both organizations and academia. Organizations can maximize team

efficiency and strengthen their strategies by considering teams' gender compositions and the leader-subordinate dyad.

6.4 Culture

Cross-cultural studies emphasize the importance of the individuals' cultural backgrounds in perceiving leadership (Sczesny et al., 2004). The cultural aspect has generated mixed results in leadership styles. Reza Zeinabadi's (2013) study in Iran and Begum, Begum, Rustam, and Rustam's (2018) study in Turkey and Pakistan showed differences in leadership styles between men and women. Research in France has presented the differences in leadership between men and women (Saint-Michel, 2018). At the same time, another European study indicated no differences (Wille et al., 2018). Believes and perceived thoughts about men and women vary from one culture to another. This paper recommends conducting more cross-cultural studies and comparing the results from one culture to another. Also, it is interesting to study the impact of conservative values and culture on women's and men's leadership styles. For example, Arabic-speaking countries have a conservative culture and traditional values that impose more restrictions on women (Yaseen, 2010). According to the global gender index (2022), the Middle East and North Africa are the regions with one of the widest gender gaps. These cross-cultural studies can be a window for learning lessons and imitating successful models from one culture to another.

The relationship between gender and leadership is a complex one, influenced by a multitude of factors. This section significantly contributes to our understanding of the factors that shape the differences and similarities in women's and men's leadership styles. While the paper summarizes four main factors, i.e. (1) context, (2) evaluator identity, (3) management team composition, and (4) culture, it also emphasizes the need for future studies to delve deeper into these factors. This call for further research invites the audience to engage and contribute to the ongoing discourse on gender and leadership.

7. Conclusions

This paper aims to review the literature on gender differences in leadership styles, focusing on transformational and transactional leadership. The review revealed that the results are mixed. There is a group of researchers (Miranda, 2019; Dappa et al., 2019; Martinez-Leon et al., 2020; Komives, 1991) that find there are no differences between men's and women's leadership styles. Other researchers (Reza Zeinabadi, 2013; Lee & Park, 2020; Rosener, 1990; Brandt & Edinger, 2015) argued the opposite. These mixed results are attributed to several factors influencing the relationship between gender and leadership styles. First, many studies (Martinez-Leon et al., 2020; Rosener, 1990; Druskat, 1994; Van Engen & Willemsen, 2004) stressed the fundamental role of context in formulating women's and men's leadership styles. Second, the evaluators' identity appeared in several studies as an essential factor (Carless, 1998; Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Third, some results changed when the researchers considered team management gender compositions (Martinez-Leon et al., 2020; Ayman et al., 2009). Finally, the culture has been seen as an essential influencer (Sczesny et al., 2004). The paper also concluded that there is a need to conduct more studies that consider the previous dimensions that influence the study of gender and leadership.

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