Country Conditions that Affect Women's Development as Business Leaders
Comparing the Framework of Brazil versus Nicaragua

Master Thesis

Submitted in Fulfillment of the Degree
International Management and Leadership

University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg
International Management and Leadership

Submitted to
Prof. (FH) Stefanie Chen, MBA MA BA

Handed in by
Amanda Lotzer

Dornbirn, 07.01.2022

Abstract

Country Conditions that Affect Women's Development as Business Leaders – Comparing the Framework of Brazil versus Nicaragua

This paper sought to identify and analyze what are the barriers towards women career's development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua when it comes to the country societal variables. In order to comprehend these barriers through women's perception, qualitative data was chosen for this investigation, which was gathered through one-to-one interviews within businesswomen from Brazil and Nicaragua that have experience in leadership positions. The results of this research confirm that societal, economic, and political factors have great influence at gender equality and in how it affects women's progress as business leaders. Thus, it can vary considerably between countries, even when they have similar culture backgrounds. Furthermore, it is imperative to comprehend these differences in order to close any gender gap in the field.

Acknowledgement

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor MBA MA BA Prof. Stefanie Chen of the University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg. Prof. Chen was always available whenever I ran into a trouble spot or had a question about my research or writing. She consistently allowed this paper to be my own work but pointed me in the right direction whenever she thought I needed it. I would also like to thank her for being especially supportive and kind in a time when the COVID-19 pandemic got the best of us all.

Secondly, even though this research was developed based on an anonymity agreement, I would still like to thank all the women who offered their time and joined this project as respondents of my one-to-one interviews. Without their passionate participation and input, this paper would not have happened.

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my parents and to my husband for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing my thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you.

Author,

Amanda Lotzer

Table of Contents

List of Tables

1. Introduction

Political, economic, and social variables are very difficult and time consuming to alter, as they have an effect on various other dimensions of life and cannot easy be controlled. However, the last few decades have been marked by significant social changes with increasing insertion of women in the workforce. [1] The participation of women in paid work provided for many of them, self-independency and therefore it altered the gender relations in many fronts. Women today occupy positions never before considered, whether as state leaders, as entrepreneurs or as top executive leaders. A trend that indicates in practice that women are also capable of leadership. However, there is still a long way to go. While the new generation might take for granted the fact that women are now allowed in the workforce, the truth is that it was not that long ago when women had to fight for their basic rights, including to be able of earning a living.[2]

Currently, even though women tend to enter the workplace at similar levels to men, both in position and career expectations, their career paths quickly diverge. Women on average earn less income than men, have fewer chances of a career promotion, are responsible for the biggest share of housework and care given, and often suffer from gender bias and harassment.[3] They are still minority in first- or second-tier positions in the organizational hierarchy, need to prove their competence and ability far more often and intensely than men, and have their mistakes judged easier than their male co-workers.[4]

As any other phenomena, Leadership has been extensively observed over time, which resulted in an enormous body of research and literature towards the topic. However, it was not that long ago that scholars started to connect it with others very important variables, for example, gender, culture, and ethicality. The previously studies have been mostly focused on the general ideal of leadership and its meanings, perceptions, and behaviours. And although the female leadership body research has increased considerable in the recent past, they are generally limited to an organizational or individual scope, not taking into account the macro environmental factor.[5]

Therefore, despite the progress of globalization and how it challenges the idea of leadership, the increased participation of women in the workforce and the fact that leadership and organizations are rooted in a national context, there is little effort towards the topic. Remaining a lack of understanding as to how women have achieved little progress in reaching top management and leadership positions after so many efforts towards women's development. Gender scholars have also emphasized that there is a need for investigations that have a "less West-centric view", and that are focused on

---

[1] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.13 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

[2] Feminism and Women's Rights Movements. (n.d.). [Conseil of Europe]. Gender Matters. Retrieved June 24, 2021, from https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/feminism-and-women-s-rights-movements

[3] Ponthieux, S., & Meurs, D. (2015). Gender Inequality. In Handbook of Income Distribution (Vol. 2, pp. 981–1146). Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-444-59428-0.00013-8

[4] Sandberg, S. (2013). Lean in: Women, work, and the will to lead (First edition.). Alfred A. Knopf

[5] Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, 2(4), 306–326. p.308 https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

underrepresented regions, for example, Latin America.[6] Thus, this investigation aims to collaborate within female leadership by 1) Offering an overview of how macro-environmental levels can affect and create barriers towards female leadership; and 2) Offering an analysis of the topic upon an underrepresented region on the field.

1.1   Thesis objectives and research question

The objective of this research is to identify what are the barriers towards businesswomen career's development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua when it comes to the country societal variables. Thus, the following study was designed to:

1) approach potential barriers towards female leadership from an economic, social, and environmental perspective.

 2) approach these barriers from a perspective of women who are part of the Brazil and Nicaragua workforce.

To reach these objectives, the following research questions were identified:

1) What are the barriers towards women's career development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua from a political, economic, and social perspective?

2) What are the main similarities and differences between the barriers found in both countries?

Therefore, the primary aim of the research is to understand in more detail what are the complexities behind women's career development that prevents them to become executive leaders in those places and to identify what are the differences and similarities between them.

On the important matter of the subject, this research seeks to contribute to academic studies concerning women in Leadership and Management by analyzing the factors contributing to the disparity between the numbers of men versus women in executive positions and the glass ceiling effect. With that clarified, it is necessary to emphasize again that this is a very extensive theme and with different variables that must be considered before getting to a conclusion on the topic. Because of that, this thesis will NOT address the following issues: Transgender, homosexuality, and related topics. Thus, although this thesis will include information about white women and women of color, the difference between their results and challenges will not be the primary focus. Hence, this study will focus only on businesswomen excluding women in political positions and non-governmental organizations – meaning only women in business positions. Besides that, it is imperative to mention that this research does not take into account the changes and problems that appeared because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

---

[6] Snaebjornsson, I. M., Edvardsson, I. R., Zydziunaite, V., & Vaiman, V. (2015). Cross-Cultural Leadership: Expectations on Gendered Leaders' Behavior. *SAGE Open*, *5*(2), 1–8. p.2 https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015579727

In conclusion, the specific objectives, and areas of research for this investigation are:

• analysis of the Academic Literature to access important already existent leadership and their approach towards gender, and societal variables

• gathering of secondary data to access the real state of Businesswomen in Brazil and Nicaragua

• to interview female leaders under the contexts of Brazil and Nicaragua to comprehend what are the barriers perceive from them towards women's career development as business leaders in these places from a political, economic, and social perspective?

• to analyse what are the main similarities and differences between the barriers found in both countries.

2. Leadership

Leadership is a universal phenomenon that has been extensively discussed over the centuries. Ideas and principles of leadership can be traced back nearly as the emergence of civilization and it can be found under the study of history, philosophy and all the developing sciences.[7] Philosophers such as Aristotle[8], Plato[9], Sun Tzu[10], Niccolo Machiavelli[11], and many others are known for their contribution to the development of the theoretical base of leadership.[12] Such an ancient discussion have naturally generated countless definitions and methodologies on the field. According to Fiedler (1971) "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are leadership theories – and there are almost as many theories of leadership as there are psychologists working on the field."[13] As an example of what he meant by this, there is Bennis and Townsend estimation, which suggested that in 1995 there were at least 650 different definitions of leadership available in academic literature.[14] Most recent, there is also Kellerman estimation that highlighted in 2012 the increase of this number to approximately 1,400.[15] Currently, new investigations on the field are still appearing dramatically, year after year, proofing that the subject has not fallen into disuse.[16]

However, while there is an abundance of writing on the topic, there are those like Burns (1978) who believe that leadership is "one of the most observed and least understood

---

[7] Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2008). The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications (Fourth Edition). Free Press. p.4

[8] For more information read Aristotle & Aristotle. (2006). *Aristotle's Ethics and politics*. El Paso Norte Press.

[9] For more information read Kirsch, A. (2016). *The Republic of Plato* (A. Bloom, Trans.; 3rd edition). Basic Books.

[10] For more information read Tzu, S. (2018). *The Art of War*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

[11] For more information read Machiavelli, N., & Grafton, A. (2003). *The Prince: Niccolo Machiavelli* (G. Bull, Trans.; Reissue edition). Penguin Classics.

[12] Cited in Toor, S.-R., & Ofori, G. (2008). Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different, and Why. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, *8*(2), 61–71. p.61 https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:2(61)

[13] Cited in Day, D. V., & Antonakis, J. (Eds.). (2012). *The Nature of Leadership* (2nd ed). SAGE. p.5

[14] Cited in Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5. p.1

[15] Cited in Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5. p.1

[16] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.32

phenomena on earth".[17] From Yukl (2013) perspective the reason for this is the fact that like all constructs in social science, the idea of leadership is arbitrary and subjective. Therefore, the word can hold different meanings for different people.[18] As a result, there is no universal way to explain the concept, as well as there is no consistent methodology that covers all aspect of the phenomenon.[19] Instead one can only present how the perception of leadership has been adapted according to how the needs of society have evolved.

The reason for that can be explained by the fact that organizations are bounded to replicate the gender structures established by society. And people, no matter how much they try to avoid falling for it, often find themselves acting according to their role on some level. Hence, men are greeted with advantages and women with barriers to professional success. Therefore, the factors that shape and influence women's careers are not confined to the organizational or individual context alone. It is also affected by the macro-national-level that rises so many issues in the economic, social-cultural and legal scope. For example, it was only after the industrial revolution and the context generated by the world wars that the traditional role of women in modern society began to change. With women no longer being seen only as caregivers and subordinates but as an active part of society.[20]

2.1   Defining Leadership and Management

Many scholars have pointed out that since the beginning, the study of humankind history has been focused on its leaders, mainly on what they did and why they did it.[21] In which every society has created stories about myths and legends in order to offer an acceptable explanation for the dominance of a few over the submission of many.[22] According to Bass (2008), the greater the socioeconomic injustice in society, the more distorted the realities of leadership – its powers, morality, and effectiveness – in the mythology.[23] An example of this can be seen when comparing the ancient perception of leadership between the Greek and Medieval era. Both periods have approached leadership as a set of personal attributes gifted by God - to only and rare men. However, on whom these characteristics could be encountered, how it was described, and how it should be used, varied according to the needs of society at the time.[24]

---

[17] Burns, J. M. (2012). *Leadership*. Open Road Media. p.2

[18] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.24

[19] Hunt, T., & Fedynich, L. C. (2018). Leadership: Past, Present, and Future: An Evolution of an Idea. *Journal of Arts and Humanities, 8*(2), 20–26. p.21 https://doi.org/10.18533/journal.v8i2.1582

[20] Carol Hymowitz & Timothy D. Schellhardt. (1986, March 24). The Corporate Woman (A Special Report): Cover—The Glass Ceiling: Why Women Can't Seem to Break The Invisible Barrier That Blocks Them From the Top Jobs. Wall Street Journal, Eastern Edition; New York, N.Y., 1.

[21] Crevani, L., Lindgren, M., & Packendorff, J. (2010). Leadership, not leaders: On the study of leadership as practices and interactions. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *26*(1), 77–86. p.78 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2009.12.003

[22] Paige (1977) cited in Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2008). *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications* (Fourth Edition). Free Press. p.2

[23] Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2008). The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications (Fourth Edition). Free Press. p.2

[24] Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5. p.2

For Plato, leadership was based upon wisdom and knowledge. The leader was the one who was the best of society in his field. His primary purpose was to closely serve the people and support the community development. For this, he was expected to give up any personal wishes and matters. [25] In the Medieval period though, the perception of whom could be a leader became even more selective. In which only kings and princes were known for bearing such gift. Besides this, differently from before, at this time, leaders were expected to be kept away from the society in order to remain 'pure'. Therefore, if previously the leader was seen as the servant of the people, at that moment, the roles were altered with the people becoming the servants of the leader. [26]

A different reality of leadership can also be observed from the industrialization period onwards.[27] At the beginning of the 20th century, the need for guidance towards the new employee-employer relation duo to the huge demand of work, the new technologies, and globalization, was great enough to reshape the existing discussions about leadership into an academic scientific field.[28] An important mark on leadership history because it instigated scientists to go beyond the set of personal attributes (gifted by God) that have been discussed for so long before, to also investigate topics such as leader's behaviours and sources of power, as well as aspects of the situation, interaction patterns, relationship role's, and furthermore even occupations of administration positions.[29] To illustrate how these new studies have changed the perception of leadership over time, the following table offers a short sum of how the term has been described by important scholars in the field since then.

Year	Scholar	Definition of leadership
1927	Moore	"the ability to impress the will of the leader on those led and induce obedience, respect, loyalty, and cooperation."[30]
1942	Copeland	"the art of influencing people by persuasion or example to follow a line of action. It must never be confused with driver ship… which is the art of compelling people by intimidation or force to follow a line of action."
1950	Stogdill	"the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting ang goal achievement."[31]
1960	Seeman	"acts by persons which influence other persons in shared direction."[32]
1978	Burns	"the reciprocal process of mobilizing by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers."[33]

---

[25] Wilson, S., Cummings, S., Jackson, B., & Proctor-Thomson, S. (2017). *Revitalising Leadership: Putting Theory and Practice into Context*. Routledge. p.7

[26] Wilson, S., Cummings, S., Jackson, B., & Proctor-Thomson, S. (2017). *Revitalising Leadership: Putting Theory and Practice into Context*. Routledge. p.8

[27] Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43. p.35

[28] Clawson (2003) cited in Asrar-ul-Haq, M., & Anwar, S. (2018). The many faces of leadership: Proposing research agenda through a review of literature. *Future Business Journal*, *4*(2), 179–188. p.179 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fbj.2018.06.002

[29] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.2

[30] Cited in Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.34

[31] Cited in Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5. p.2

[32] Cited in Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.38

[33] Cited in Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.39

1984	Rauch & Behling	"the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement."[34]
1990	Bass	"an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of members."[35]
1990	Jacobs & Jaques	"the process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose."[36]
1993	Rost	"an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intended real changes that reflect their mutual purposes."[37]
2004	Antonakis, et al.	"the nature of the influencing process – and its resultant outcomes – that occurs between a leader and follower and how this influencing process is explained by the leader's dispositional characteristics, and behaviours, follower perceptions and attributions of the leader, and the context in which the influencing process occurs."[38]
2013	Yammarino	"a multi-level (person, dyad, group, collective) leader-follower interaction process that occurs in a particular situation (context) where a leader (e.g., superior, supervisor) and followers (e.g., subordinates, direct reports) share a purpose (vision, mission) and jointly accomplish things (e.g., goals, objectives, tasks) willingly (e.g., without coercion)."[39]
2018	Northouse	"a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."[40]

Table 1: Leadership definitions according to scholars

Source: Self-created

As one can see, until the 1930s leadership was still defined as an "ability", an idea that was replicated since the Greek era. Besides this, it was also still described as a powerful act that should be obeyed. A reflection of the power relations of the time, which were marked for long periods of authoritarian governments worldwide.[41] It was not until the 1940s, that this idea began slowly to change. Between the major changes of this time there are three appealing elements that must be considered:

a) How the grounds of leadership evolved from being described as a set of personal attributes or abilities, to being described as a process, to further become a reciprocal exchange between the leader and those led, to finally be described as we know it today, the relationship among leaders and followers.[42]

b) How the way of exercising leadership evolved from being fully connected to power and dominance - using the words "impress" and "obedience" to define the concept,

---

[34] Cited in Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.3

[35] Cited in Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5. p.2

[36] Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43. p.36

[37] Cited in Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5. p.2

[38] Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43. p.36

[39] Yammarino, F. (2013). Leadership: Past, Present, and Future. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *20*(2), 149–155. p.150 https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051812471559

[40] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.43

[41] Hunt, T., & Fedynich, L. C. (2018). Leadership: Past, Present, and Future: An Evolution of an Idea. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, *8*(2), 20–26. p.23 https://doi.org/10.18533/journal.v8i2.1582

[42] Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2009). The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications. Simon and Schuster. p.26

to the art of persuasion of followers that should not use of intimidation or force anymore, to finally be described as we know it today, the exercise of influence.[43]

c) How the reach of leadership studies evolved beyond the leader's act, to include the role of followers during this process, to further include the need of the organization (described most of the time as "common goals"), to finally consider the role of the context in which leadership occurs.[44]

In other words, within the evolution of the industrial age, there was a need to recognize the importance of human capital. To see employees not only as resource whose primary function is to provide goods and services, but rather as a critical player to the success of any organization.[45] According to Ciulla (2004), by shifting the idea of leadership from "induce" to "influence", scholars implied that leaders recognize the autonomy of their followers. Hence, there is voluntary compliance on the part of the followers, in some degree. Beyond this, by describing it as a relationship among leader and followers, one also implies recognition of the beliefs, values, and needs of both ends.[46] Kellerman (2012) went beyond by writing that there are three dimensions to be considered when studying leadership: the leader, the followers, and the situational variables.[47] According to her perception these three components make an equilateral triangle, where the followers and the context are equally important as the leader in the leadership process.

For Northouse (2018), despite the many ways in which leadership have been defined over the centuries, currently, the four cores of the concept are:[48]

a) Leadership is a process
b) It involves influence
c) It happens in groups
d) It involves shared objectives.

According to him, because it is a process and not a personal trait, leadership is something that now is seen as available to everyone. Depending solo on the influence that one (leader) is able of communicating to others (followers), where the lack of influence means the lack of leadership. In addition to this, from his point of view, because the groups are the context in which leadership takes place, their needs and expectations need to be taken into consideration in order to build a common a purpose. In sum, leadership is a complex phenomenon that connects with many others important organisational, social, and personal processes. It is also a constantly changing one, that it is expected to evolve according to society's changes and available knowledge.[49]

Management, on the other hand, has a very much straightforward description of the concept according to scholars.[50] One of the most known was developed by Fayol still in 1916, for which he wrote "To manage is to forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to

[43] Day, D. V., & Antonakis, J. (Eds.). (2012). *The nature of leadership* (2nd ed). SAGE. p.513

[44] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.13

[45] Farzad (2006) cited in Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43 p.35

[46] Day, D. V., & Antonakis, J. (Eds.). (2004). *The Nature of Leadership* (1st ed). SAGE. p.307

[47] Cited in Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5. p.1

[48] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.43

[49] Day, D. V., & Antonakis, J. (Eds.). (2012). *The Nature of Leadership* (2nd ed). SAGE. p.6

[50] Toor, S.-R., & Ofori, G. (2008). Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different, and Why. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, *8*(2), 61–71. p.64 https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:2(61)

co-ordinate and to control. To foresee and provide means examining the future and drawing up the plan of action. To organize means building up the dual structure, material, and human, of the undertaking. To command means maintaining activity among the personnel. To coordinate means binding together, unifying, and harmonizing all activity and effort. To control means seeing that everything occurs in conformity with established rule and expressed command.''[51] Almost one hundred years later, this idea has not changed much; in 2005 Schermerhorn described the concept as "the process of planning, organizing, leading, ad controlling the use of resources to accomplish performance goals".[52] As one can see, although considerable shorter than Fayol's definition, the essence of the idea continues the same – focused on practical tasks. Most recent, there is also Kinicki & Williams (2018) definition, which describes management as "(1) the pursuit of organizational goals efficiently and effectively by (2) integrating the work of people through (3) planning, organizing, leading, and controlling the organization's resources".[53]

Therefore, while leadership is currently known as an influential process that aims to inspire followers to achieve common goals; management is seen as a practical process focused on the reduction of chaos in organization. It aims to provide order and consistency to ensure results.[54] However, according to Northouse (2018), one should not dismiss the fact that there are similarities between leadership and management; they both involve a certain way of influence, entail working with other people, and are concerned with achieving goals.[55] Yet, differently of leadership, which discussions on the topic can be traced back for centuries in literature, the debate towards management appears to be blurrier.

First, there are different perceptions by the scholars of how the concept was developed; one group describes it as ancient as leadership by arguing that leadership and management was discussed by philosophers interconnected to leadership[56], while another one approaches it as a concept developed in the beginning of the 20th century, specifically to supply the need for appropriate means of organizing, planning, and scheduling of available resources in large and complex organizations.[57]

Second, there is also an ongoing debate of whether leadership and management are two opposing styles of employee supervision, and therefore cannot be performed by the same

---

[51] Cited in Kaehler, B., & Grundei, J. (2019). *HR Governance: A Theoretical Introduction*. Springer. p.9

[52] Cited in Kaehler, B., & Grundei, J. (2019). *HR Governance: A Theoretical Introduction*. Springer. p.9

[53] Cited in Kaehler, B., & Grundei, J. (2019). *HR Governance: A Theoretical Introduction*. Springer. p.10

[54] Toor, S.-R., & Ofori, G. (2008). Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different, and Why. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, *8*(2), 61–71. p.65 https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:2(61)

[55] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.53

[56] Heames, J. T., & Harvey, M. (2006). The Evolution of the Concept of the "Executive" from the 20th Century Manager to the 21st Century Global Leader. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *13*(2), 29–41. p.29 https://doi.org/10.1177/10717919070130020301

[57] Daft 2003 cited in Toor, S.-R., & Ofori, G. (2008). Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different, and Why. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, *8*(2), 61–71. p.64 https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:2(61)

person[58]; or if they are both sides of the same coin, hence, complementary to each other but each with its own functions and characteristics.[59]

To the first, is not up to this research to unveil the mystery. To the second, for the purposes of this research the author bases this research upon the idea that although leadership and management might differ in functions and characteristics, they are an extension of each other. The reason for this is the fact that the general reality of nowadays organizations is that the role leader and manager is too entangled to be treated differently. Therefore, in order to deliver good service, it is in the best interest of organizations to ensure that managers become good leaders and that leaders develop good management skills.[60]

2.2   Major Leadership Theories

As mentioned previously, discussions about leadership have been going on for centuries. There are literatures on the field from philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato, Confucius, Sun Tzu, Niccolo Machiavelli to Pareto. [61] In addition, when it comes to approach the subject as a scientific field, there is already over a century of studies and theories that can be analysed. However, when paying attention to variables such as gender and furthermore societal variables (such as culture, nationality, environment, and others), discussions appear to not have begun until the 1970s.[62]

To the lack of gender approach, Jogulu & Wood (2006), argue that it can be explained duo to the lack of women in the workforce in the 1900s. For them, because women represented very small number in the organization back then and because those who were part of it, were filling "helping roles" such as secretaries or assistants, they were not considered as potential leaders.[63] Northouse (2018), confirms this lack of attention to gender and also to societal variables, when he states in his discussions that many of the studies on leadership field were conducted only with white-American-men.[64]

Yet, although these variables were not taken into account during the development of the theories, over time there were many scholars who revisited them in order to analyse potential differences. The following table offers an overview of the major approaches on the field of leadership since the beginning of the 1900s. The reason for this period is because it was at this time that scientific leadership theories begun to be developed. In

---

[58] Ricketss 2009 cited in Algahtani, A. (2014). Are Leadership and Management Different? A Review. *Journal of Management Policies and Practices*, *2*(3), 71–82. p.71 https://doi.org/10.15640/jmpp.v2n3a4

[59] Toor, S.-R., & Ofori, G. (2008). Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different, and Why. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, *8*(2), 61–71. p.62 https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:2(61)

[60] Wajdi, B. N. (2017). The Differences Between Management and Leadership. *Sinergi*, *7*(1). p.75 https://doi.org/10.25139/sng.v7i1.31

[61] Cited in Toor, S.-R., & Ofori, G. (2008). Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different, and Why. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, *8*(2), 61–71. p.61 https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:2(61)

[62] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.575

[63] Jogulu, U. D., & Wood, G. J. (2006). The role of leadership theory in raising the profile of women in management. *Equal Opportunities International*, *25*(4), 236–250. p.237 https://doi.org/10.1108/02610150610706230

[64] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.66, 178, 210, 225, 242

addition, the reason for focusing only on the major ones is because the body knowledge of leadership is too extensive, so there are many of it that are not interconnected to the topic of this paper.

Major Leadership Theories
Traits Theory
Behavioural Theory
Situational/Contigency Theory
Transactional & TransformationalTheory

Table 2: List of Major Leadership Theories

Source: Self-created

This summary is imperative so that one can comprehend how the scholars have moved forward on the subject according to the needs of the constantly updating business world, and to offer a clarification of how they arrived at issues such as the one discussed on this research – gender and societal variables.

It was already mentioned that for a very long time, leadership was understood as a set of personal attributes that were gifted by God to only and rare men. In which the main difference between one era to another, was on whom these characteristics could be encountered, how it was described, and how it should be used.[65] An idea that persisted until the beginning of the 20th century when the first leadership theory was developed.

In 1840, Carlyle explored further this topic by analysing the great heroes of history. In his book *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History*[66], he concluded that there were only a few men – great men – in any society and time, with the unique characteristics necessary to conduct the history of mankind, especially in times of crisis. From his point of view, an effective leader would be a man that would present personal charisma, intelligence, wisdom, and political abilities.[67] Furthermore, he extended the group of potential leader's beyond the monarchy to include also prophets, poets, priests, and men of letters.[68] The assumptions of his approach, besides the continuous idea that leaders were already born with leadership traits, was that these leaders would only rise if the need for them was great enough. So, they were directly connected to major history events. He called it the "Great Man Theory".[69]

One of the most forceful critics of Carlyle's was Spencer (1873), who believed that to attribute historical events solo to the decisions of specific individuals was an unscientific position. For him, these so called "great men", were only the result of their social

---

[65] Crevani, L., Lindgren, M., & Packendorff, J. (2010). Leadership, not leaders: On the study of leadership as practices and interactions. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *26*(1), 77–86. p.78 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2009.12.003

[66] Carlyle T. *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*. Fredrick A. Stokes & Brother, 1988.

[67] Dugan, J. P. (2017). *Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives*. John Wiley & Sons. p.86

[68] Halaychik, C. (2016). Lessons in Library Leadership: A Primer for Library Managers and Unit Leaders. Chandos Publishing. p.5

[69] Dugan, J. P. (2017). Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives. John Wiley & Sons. p.86

environment, and not the other way around.[70] Yet, although not a scientific theory, scholars suggests that the discussion towards the subject were great enough to influence the discussion that happened even after the theory was criticised.[71] One example, is the Traits theory that not only also approached the idea of leadership as a set of attributes but is also known as one of the most antique and investigated theories on the field so far.[72]

2.2.1 Traits Theory

The Traits theory was the first study developed in the scientific leadership field sought to comprehend the nature of leadership. According to the literature, although there was never a real end to the discussions towards this theory, its most significant period happened on the 1930s and 1940s.[73] It was named this way because just as the "Great Man Theory" it was focused on identifying a set of innate qualities and characteristics that could differentiate leaders from non-leaders.[74] However, differently on the previous one it evolved according to the settings of the new business world generated by the industrialization.[75] See table 3.

Great Man Theory	Traits Theory
Believed leadership was a gift to a small group of personalities, such as: prophets, poets, priests, men of letters, and kings	Focused on regular men
Still believed that leadership traits were gifted by Gods	Approached the leadership traits as inherited but not divine
Reduced leaders and leadership to happen only duo to major history events	Researched leadership on the business world

Table 3: Major differences between the Great Man Theory and Traits Theory

Source: Self-created

As one can see, just like the previous great thinkers of leadership, Carlyle also comprehended the concept as set of attributes gifted by God to rare and only men.[76] Although he expanded the group of who could become leaders, if compared to the philosophers before him[77] leadership was still a trait that could not be found in regular people. The Traits theory though, approached the subject differently, since was developed under the need of large and complex organizations.

---

[70] Cited in Spector, B. A. (2016). Carlyle, Freud, and the Great Man Theory more fully considered. *Leadership*, *12*(2), 250–260. p.254 https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015571392

[71] Dugan, J. P. (2017). Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives. John Wiley & Sons. p.86

[72] Zaccaro (2014) cited in Dugan, J. P. (2017). Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives. John Wiley & Sons. p.85

[73] Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning. p.16 & 32

[74] Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning. p.16

[75] Farzad (2006) cited in Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43 p.35

[76] Dugan, J. P. (2017). Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives. John Wiley & Sons. p.86

[77] Explained on 'Defining Leadership and Management' in this chapter

Furthermore, it also innovated the field by systematically investigating the topic using the following approaches: 1) The comparison of leaders with non-leaders in order to identify a specific set of attributes that could differentiate them; 2) The comparison of effective leaders to non-effective leaders in order to narrow down these set of attributes.[78] It focused on personally, motives, values and skills by investigating physical factors such as age, height and weight; ability factors such as fluency of speech and tone of voice; and personality features such as integrity and emotional control.[79]

Although very much discussed and investigated, the main criticism of this theory ended up being because of the lack of unanimity on the final result. There were too many studies with too many different lists of leadership traits, all very difficult to generalize. Therefore, a universality of theory became impossible.[80] In response to this, there were many scholars who attempted to develop major reviews of the trait's studies, in order to come up with a shorter list. Table 4 offers an overview of them.

Scholar	Year	List of traits	Key aspects
Stogdill	1948	Intelligence, Alertness, Insight, Responsibility, Initiative, Persistence, Self-confidence, Sociability	The leader's traits alone are not enough to ensure leadership, they must also be relevant to the context the leader is inserted.[81]
Mann	1959	Intelligence, Masculinity, Adjustment, Dominance, Extraversion, Conservatism	The leadership traits list might help to distinguish leaders from non-leaders.[82]
Stogdill	1974	Achievement, Persistence, Insight, Initiative, Self-confidence, Responsibility, Cooperativeness, Tolerance, Influence, Sociability	Both traits and situational factors are determinants for leadership.[83]
Lord, Evader & Alliger	1986	Intelligence, Masculinity, Dominance	Traits could be used to make discriminations across situations between leaders and non-leaders.[84]
Kirkpatrick & Locke	1991	Drive, Motivation, Integrity Cognitive ability, Task knowledge	Leadership traits could be inherited or learned.[85]
Zaccaro, Kemp & Bader	2017	Cognitive ability, Extraversion, Conscientious, Emotional Stability, Openness, Agreeableness, Motivation, Social Intelligence, Self-	Extended the list by recognizing the importance of social abilities.[86]

[78] Explained on the section Defining Leadership
[79] Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43. p.37&38 https://doi.org/10.9790/487X-1911033543
[80] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.80
[81] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.65
[82] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.66
[83] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.65
[84] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.66
[85] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.66
[86] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.67

monitor, Emotional

Intelligence, Problem Solving

Table 4: The six major reviews of Leadership Traits studies

Source: Adapted from *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition) by Northouse, P. G. (2018). Sage Publishing p.66-67

However, it again culminated on each scholar developing their own list of leadership traits. In which, despite some similarities, it still did not offer a universal answer on what was the set of characteristics that determinate leadership. In addition to this issue, another important consideration about this theory was written by Stogdill (1948, 1974) who concluded that although leadership traits were essential, they were not enough to ensure leadership in every situation. For him, the leader's traits must also be relevant to the context in which the leader was inserted, or it would not have the result expected.[87] Therefore, the theory had also failed in predicting leadership efficiency. An argument that instigated researchers to also investigate other variables beyond the leader, such as context.

As mentioned previously, most of these studies were developed in white-American-men and therefore did not take into account other variables such as gender. [88] However, overtime when women became a significant part of the workforce and questions towards the lack of women in management begun to be asked, many scholars shifted their attention to identify how the gender traits stereotype played a role on women's career advancement.[89] Schein (1973, 1975) was one of the firsts to investigate the social image of successful middle managers in US and find that the traits designated to successful managers were highly connected to the description of typical man.[90] In these descriptions, leaders were expected to be aggressive, competitive, independent, and self-reliant traits that are usually ascribed to men.[91] A phenomenon she called of 'think-manager-think-male'.[92] In addition to this, at a second moment, she was also one of the firsts to attest that these gender stereotypes on the perception of leadership were also encountered cross-culturally.[93]

More recent is Eagly and Karau (2002) 'Role Congruity Theory' which proposes that the prejudice against female leadership is duo to the inconsistencies between the characteristics associated with the female gender stereotype and those associated with

[87] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.131

[88] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.66, 178, 210, 225, 242

[89] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.371

[90] Snaebjornsson, I. M., & Edvardsson, I. (2013). Gender, Nationality and Leadership Style: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *8*(1), 89–103. p.89 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v8n1p89

[91] Bozkurt, V., Tartanoglu, S., & Dawes, G. (2015). Masculinity and Violence: Sex Roles and Violence Endorsement among University Students. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *205*, 254–260. p.255 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.09.072

[92] Cited in Sczesny, S., Bosak, J., Neff, D., & Schyns, B. (2004). Gender Stereotypes and the Attribution of Leadership Traits: A Cross-Cultural Comparison. *Sex Roles*, *51*(11–12), 631–645. p.632 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-004-0715-0

[93] Cited in Sczesny, S., Bosak, J., Neff, D., & Schyns, B. (2004). Gender Stereotypes and the Attribution of Leadership Traits: A Cross-Cultural Comparison. *Sex Roles*, *51*(11–12), 631–645. p.632 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-004-0715-0

leadership. For them, people are better evaluated when their characteristics are seen as the same ascribed to their gender.[94] Discussions towards gender traits stereotypes are still on going and have shown that these perceived differences have decreased over time.[95] However, it still exists and can be hold accounted for women being less favourably than men as potential leaders and as a barrier to women success in leadership roles.[96]

2.2.2 Behavioural Theory

Just as shown on the previously section, the leadership Traits theory sought to identify a set of innate personality characteristics that could differentiate a leader from a non-leader.[97] However, because the theory failed in predict leadership efficiency by not accounting for the context the leader was inserted[98], on the behavioural period (1930s-1960s) scholars shift their attention from the leader's characteristics to the leader's behaviour in various contexts. It means that they expanded the field to also investigate the leader's actions towards followers.[99] Under this theory there were at least four major studies, which although were all developed under different approaches and time, all concluded that there were two main behaviour/style of leadership found – people-centred and task-centred. See table 5.

Study	Scholars	Year	Behavioural leadership style
Iowa State University studies[100]	Lewin & White	1930s	Autocratic: centralize authority and use of rewards and coercions to influence followers Democratic: delegate authority to others and encourages participation of followers Laissez-faire: absence of leadership
Ohio State University [101]	Hemphill & Coons, Halpin & Winer, and Shartle	1940s	Initiating Structure: Focused on formalizing objectives and group activities to achieve organizational goals Consideration: Focused on stablishing mutual respect, trust, and rapport with followers through two-way communication and a participative environment

---

[94] Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, *109*(3), 573–598. p.573 https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573

[95] Sczesny, S., Bosak, J., Neff, D., & Schyns, B. (2004). Gender Stereotypes and the Attribution of Leadership Traits: A Cross-Cultural Comparison. *Sex Roles*, *51*(11–12), 631–645. p.632 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-004-0715-0

[96] Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, *109*(3), 573–598. p.574 https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573

[97] Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning. p.16

[98] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.131

[99] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.133

[100] Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning. p.70

[101] Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning. p.73-74

University of Michigan [102]	Likert	1950s	Job-oriented: stress the technical and production aspects of the job
			Employee-orientated: approach followers with a strong human relation emphasis.
Managerial Grid[103]	Blake, McCanse & Mouton	1960s	Concern for production: focused on achieving organizational tasks
			Concern for people: focused on the followers needs

Table 5: Major behavioural studies

Source: Self-created

According to Northouse (2018), these findings were crucial because it illustrated that: 1) Whenever leadership occurs, the leader is acting out both task and relationship behaviours; 2) The leaders effectiveness depends on how they balance both behaviours.[104] However, although impressive and advanced for the leadership field, according to Bratton (2020), the theory also failed on explaining how this balance must occur. How one can know which style is better and when. It did not offer any connection between these behaviours and outcomes such as morale, job satisfaction, and productivity.[105] It is from this non-answered question that scholars sought to investigate beyond how leaders behaved in different contexts to also research which style of leadership was more appropriated to each situation.

Once again, there is no mention of gender or cross-culture issues under this theory when it was developed.[106] However, when gender begun to relate to leadership, one of the questions asked was if there were differences between women and men leadership styles/behaviours. Thus, the scholars focused in explore to which extent women's and men's behaviour diverged because of their sex or gender.[107]

Studies developed from a sex difference perspective were inconclusive duo the fact that the differences found were too small to be taken into consideration.[108] Studies developed from a gender perspective, though, suggested that women leaders appeared to apply democratic and participative leadership styles more often than men. While men leaders appeared to behave more often on a directive and autocratic style[109] – more information on these styles can be found under Situational/Contingency theory section. However, opposite of what was expected duo to gender traits stereotypes, women were not found to lead in a more people-oriented way and less task-oriented than men.[110] Besides this,

---

[102] Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning. p.72-73

[103] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.136

[104] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.146

[105] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.137

[106] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.66, 178, 210, 225, 242

[107] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.390

[108] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.390

[109] Snaebjornsson, I. M., & Edvardsson, I. (2013). Gender, Nationality and Leadership Style: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *8*(1), 89–103. p.90 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v8n1p89

[110] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.580

there was also an indication that female leaders would usually demonstrate similar behaviour to male leaders when working in an industry that was dominated by them. Hence, a small proportion of women would adapt their behaviour in order to succeed in a male-dominant environment.[111]

In sum, there were only small differences found between women and men leadership styles, which did not support the gender stereotypes expectations. Thus, can not be used to explain the lack of women in management and leadership positions.

2.2.3 Situational/Contigency Theory

Based on the perception that predicting leadership success was more complex that isolating the leader's traits and identifying their behaviours, scholars became to investigate how the situations in which leaders were inserted influenced their results.[112] For this, researchers isolated situational variables such as the degree of structure in the task being performed, the quality of leader-member relations, the leader's position power, subordinates' role clarity, group norms, information availability, subordinate acceptance of leaders' decisions, and subordinate maturity.[113]

There were many studies during this period (1960s-1970s) that according to Yukl (2013) can be divided between two major subcategories: 1) The comparative of two or more situations to discover the extent which leadership processes are the same and unique across different types of organizations, level of management, and cultures – which are known as situational theory; 2) The attempt to identify aspects of the situation that moderate the relationship of leader attributes (traits, skills, and behaviours) to leadership effectiveness. Based on the assumption that different attributes will be effective in different situations, and that they can not be optimal in all contexts – which are known as Contingency theory.[114] Table 6 offers an overview of the major ones and its key aspects.

Study/ Scholar/ Year	Key aspects	Situational variables analysed	Leadership style offered
Contingency Model (Fielder, 1960s)[115]	Argued that one's leadership characteristics is not subject to change or adaptation. A leader must be placed	Leader-member relations: the degree of confidence, trust, and respect subordinates have in their leaders Task structure: the	Task-oriented leaders: more effective in high-control and low-control situations Relationship-oriented leaders: more effective in

[111] Snaebjornsson, I. M., & Edvardsson, I. (2013). Gender, Nationality and Leadership Style: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *8*(1), 89–103. p.90 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v8n1p89

[112] Chandan, J. S., & Mandal, S. (2019). *Principle & Practice of Management*. Vikas Publishing House. p.231

[113] Howell et al., (1986) cited in Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43. p.39 https://doi.org/10.9790/487X-1911033543

[114] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.13

[115] Chandan, J. S., & Mandal, S. (2019). *Principle & Practice of Management*. Vikas Publishing House. p.232-233

	in a situation that is favourable to his/her style.	degree which the job assignments are structure or unstructured <u>Position power:</u> degree of influence the leader has over rewards and punishment variables	moderate-control situations
Path Goal Theory (House & Mitchel, 1970s)[116]	Extend the Contingency theory buy implying that leaders must engage in different types of leadership behaviour depending on the nature and demands of the situation.	<u>Followers' characteristics:</u> need for affiliation, preferences for structure, desire for control, and self-perceived level of task ability <u>Task characteristics:</u> design of the task, formal authority system of the organization, primary work group of followers	<u>Directive leadership (Task-oriented):</u> effective when tasks are ambiguous <u>Supportive leadership (Relationship-oriented):</u> effective when the environment is stressful <u>Participative leadership:</u> effective with followers that see themselves as good in controlling their focus <u>Achievement-oriented leadership:</u> effective in situations in which tasks or relationships are psychologically or physically distressing.
Situational Model or the Life-Cycle Theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1970s)[117]	Also argue that a leader must adapt the leadership style according to the situation encountered.	<u>Leadership style & Maturity level of followers</u>	<u>Telling style (Task-oriented & Authoritative):</u> effective with followers with low competence and low commitment <u>Selling style (Persuade followers rather than direct them):</u> effective with followers with low competence but high commitment <u>Participating style (Relationship-oriented & more Democratic):</u> effective with followers with high competence but

---

[116] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.140
[117] Chandan, J. S., & Mandal, S. (2019). *Principle & Practice of Management*. Vikas Publishing House. p.235-236

	low commitment Delegating style (Relationship-oriented & fully Democratic): effective with followers with high competence and high commitment

Table 6: Main Situational/Contingency studies

Source: Self-created

As one can see the focus of Situational/Contingency theory is the relationship between the leader's style/behavior and the context in which he/she is inserted. It aimed to identify which style/behavior is the best according to different situational variables. In general, it approached the leader's attributes, the followers' characteristics, and the organizational environment. Besides this, this theory was also crucial in adding a new leadership behavior/style that was focused on the middle ground between people and task oriented. Currently, Situational/Contingency models are still used for training leaders in organizations because different of the other theories that were descriptive in nature, this one is prescriptive– tell people exactly what to do and what not to. However, there also important considerations towards the validation of this theory, according to Bratton (2020) the situational/contingency approach is very valuable because it facilitated leaders to become more context sensitive, flexible, and responsive to different events. However, for him the main critique upon this theory relies on the fact that it lacks a central hypothesis and therefore, it cannot be reliable tested.[118] In addition, there is also not attention paid to how variables such as gender can alter the results.[119]

2.2.4 Transactional and Transformational Leadership

Although Situational/Contingency theory sought to comprehend in more details how the leadership behaviour and the situational variables were interconnected; it was also responsible for approaching leadership – for the first time - beyond the leaders' characteristics to also analyse the follower's profile.[120] Yet, it was not the last one, a new type of study focused on the relationship between leader and followers was developed by Burns from the end of 1970s and was labelled as Transactional and Transformational leadership.[121]

For him, Transactional leadership described the process of leadership as a social exchange. It described a leadership process that was focused on achieving organizational objectives more efficiently by linking job performance to punishment or rewards.[122] On the other hand, Transformational leadership is an idealized leadership. It's a process focused

---

[118] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.143

[120] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.264
[121] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.321
[122] Chandan, J. S., & Mandal, S. (2019). *Principle & Practice of Management*. Vikas Publishing House. p.241

on inspiring people by providing vision and high ideal for moral and ethical conduct. The leaders see themselves are change agents, courageous and visionaries.[123]

The theory was expanded again in 1985 by Bass when he argued that Transformational leadership motivated followers to do more than expected by 1) raising followers' level of consciousness about the importance and value of specified and idealized goals; 2) getting followers to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the team or organization; and 3) moving followers to address higher-level needs.[124]

According to Yukl (2013) the transactional and transformational leadership theory is valuable because it raises the idea that emotional processes are as important as rational processes, and symbolic actions are as important as instrumental behaviour. Thus, provides a new perspective on why leaders might be effective or not.[125] Yet, it is imperative to underline that although transactional and leadership theory have been widely studied since then, it is still lack in conceptual clarity and in methodology that allow its measurement.[126]

When it comes to gender, there were many studies developed in order to identify which are approach is more often used by women and men. In which scholars suggested that women, more than men, tend to adopt a transformational approach; mainly when it comes to support the development of followers, attend to their individual need, and offer them mentorship.[127]

2.2.5 Summary

In this chapter, the topic of leadership was addressed from different points such as conceptualization, development of theory and relation to gender variables. It attempted to explain how even though leadership has been topic of discussions and investigations for centuries, there is still no unanimity under many aspects, such as the definition of leadership or a universal theory capable to approach every aspect of this phenomenon. Because it is such an extensive subject with countless studies in academic literature, the author focusses on an overview of the major leadership approaches developed so far and how they are connected to the variables that are interest of this study. However, there are many other aspects of leadership and gender that are not related to the theories mentioned above and therefore are only explained on the next chapter.

3. Gender

As noticed on the previously section, there were many leadership theories developed over time, however, most of them did not take into consideration variables such gender, culture, or race. It was not until the 1970s, when the number of women in the workforce

---

[123] Chandan, J. S., & Mandal, S. (2019). *Principle & Practice of Management*. Vikas Publishing House. p.242
[124] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.269
[125] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.336
[126] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.284
[127] Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, *109*(3), 573–598. p.590 https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573

was higher than ever before, and the number of women in academia increased that investigations towards the challenges women faced as professionals became focus of attention.[128] The approaches under the gender-based traits stereotypes and under the dogma of whether women lead different than men were already reviewed above, however, this is not all. There is a third main approach that takes over most studies under the branch of female leadership – whether there are barriers that prevent women to become leaders and what are those barriers. [129]

However, before analysing the knowledge developed so far on the subject, first, it is imperative to mention that there is significant confusion in the academic literature regarding the terms used to address the differences between women and men in leadership. Thus, for the sake of this research, the definition of gender used to base this paper will be first explained and only then female leadership will be discussed.

3.1   Sex versus Gender

There is a long history of interest in sex-based investigations and there are two terms that are commonly used throughout those studies: sex and gender. For a long time, these terms have been used as synonymous on most of them to describe biological variation traditionally assigned to sex.[130] However, there is an important distinction between them that needs to be clarified in order to assess correctly the issues that surrounds each topic. Yet, before doing so, it is imperative to add that although there are new discussions coming up every day about gender classifications, currently, most of societies and cultures are still officially based on a gender binary perception of opposite forms: masculine and feminine/ men or women.[131] Hence, while the author recognizes this as an important issue to be discussed, because of the timeframe and in order to not diverge from the focus of this research, this topic will not be covered.

Nevertheless, sex is the correct term to describe the biological differences between humans and animals which are universal and determined by birth.[132] While, on the other hand, gender is a social construct, and therefore should be used to describe an internal sense of self – whether an individual sees themselves as a man or a woman, or another gender identity – and the expectations society has towards it.[133]

When it comes to how one identifies themselves there is a social construction of gender that plays a key role in this process. According to Lorber (1994), from the moment that a baby is born a gender construction begins based on the sex category assigned to her or

[128] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.575

[129] Snaebjornsson, I. M., & Edvardsson, I. (2013). Gender, Nationality and Leadership Style: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *8*(1), 89–103. p.90 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v8n1p89

[130] Torgrmson, B. N., & Christopher, T. M. (2005). Sex and gender: What is the difference? *Journal of Applied Physiology*, *99*(3), 785–787. p.785 https://doi.org/10.1152/japplphysiol.00376.2005

[131] Maddux, J. E., & Winstead, B. A. (2019). *Psychopathology: Foundations for a Contemporary Understanding*. Routledge. p.385

[132] *UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework (GMIF) for 2002-2007*. (2003). UNESCO. p.1 https://bit.ly/2Rqb6Tn

[133] Maddux, J. E., & Winstead, B. A. (2019). *Psychopathology: Foundations for a Contemporary Understanding*. Routledge. p.385

him. Then, it continuous through how she or he will be named, dressed, educated, and treated during childhood according to what is expected from their gender category.[134] Hence, gender is the base to determine how people are placed in society, how they are expected to behave, what are their responsibilities, and which roles they are entitled to.[135] Also when there are individuals that do not conform to these cultural roles, often they face a unique set of challenges including discrimination, physical violence, and/or social rejection.[136] Therefore, differently of sex, gender is learned, and it is maintained/recreated daily in our lives from our interpersonal interactions, our cultural construction and the rules imposed by society, whether they are reproduced consciously or unconsciously.

According to Ridgeway (2011), the reason gender is so persistent in our lives is because it is used as a basis for inequality between people; it represents an ordinal hierarchy created between men and women towards resources, power, and status – just like religious or race. [137] For Lorber (1994), society depends on "a predictable division of labour, a designated allocation of scarce goods, assigned responsibility for children and others who cannot care for themselves, common values and their systematic transmission to new members, legitimate leadership, music, art, stories, games, and other symbolic productions".[138] Thus, as soon as one comprehends that gender is a social construction, then it only makes sense to conclude that it can also change over time, and it can vary within and between cultures.[139]

Proof of that would be the fact that not that long ago, men would be the sole representative and financially provider of the family, while women would be uniquely responsible for the housework and the caregiver; something that cannot be hold true anymore. According to the Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR) of 2021 developed by the World Economic Forum, at least 65 countries have already achieved 99.5% of gender parity under education, and another 121 countries have already closed at least 95% of their educational gender gap. According to them, in 2018, 90.4% of young women (15-24y) and 92.8% of young men (15-24y) were seen as literate. In addition to this, more women than men were found to be enrolled in higher level of education, in which 40.6% of women were enrolled in tertiary education (academic or technical level) against 35.6% of men.[140] When it comes to paid labour, although there is still a considerable gap between the number of women and men in the workforce - 80% of all men in working age (15-64y) against 52.6% of all in working age (15-64y) – women have shown their best numbers yet.[141] Thus, although stereotypes towards gender might persist (as approached in leadership theories), the gender role have been proved to change over time.

---

[134] Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of Gender*. Yale University Press. p.25

[135] Torgrmson, B. N., & Christopher, T. M. (2005). Sex and gender: What is the difference? *Journal of Applied Physiology*, *99*(3), 785–787. p.785 https://doi.org/10.1152/japplphysiol.00376.2005

[136] Maddux, J. E., & Winstead, B. A. (2019). *Psychopathology: Foundations for a Contemporary Understanding*. Routledge. p.385

[137] Ridgeway, C. L. (2011). *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World* (1st edition). Oxford University Press. p.3

[138] Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of Gender*. Yale University Press. p.15

[139] *UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework (GMIF) for 2002-2007*. (2003). UNESCO. p.1 https://bit.ly/2Rqb6Tn

[140] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.12 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

[141] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.13 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

3.2   Female Leadership Barriers

The third and last major group of studies under gender studies sought to investigate whether there were barriers preventing women to become leaders, and if proven true, what were those barriers and how they were originated. From this range of research many challenges towards women's career development were encountered, and many metaphors and theories were created to address them. The most well recognized and investigated between them is known as the "Glass Ceiling" effect phenomena.[142]

The "Glass Ceiling" expression became popular in 1980s when the Wall Street Journal published a report and interviews outlining that despite women having entered the US labour market voluntarily and in large numbers for more than a decade – back then – few had developed their careers at the same pace as their male colleagues with most of them still holding a position of low authority and low payment.[143] The article also suggested that the rare ones that had managed to climb the hierarchy ladder of the company, ended up hitting an invisible barrier that did not allow them to go further to top management positions.[144]

Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) authors of the article, pointed out that the barriers for women's career development are far more in number and difficulty than they are for men. It assumes that those women have the motivation, ambition, and capacity for positions of power and prestige, but for some reason they are kept from reaching the top. It is described as a glass because it is invisible, so therefore women can see their goal through it, and as a ceiling because when trying to achieve it, these women will be stopped of moving forward.[145] It is considered artificial because is based on an attitudinal or organizational bias that prevents women from advancing upwards in the organizations into management-level positions.[146]

Since the creation of the "Glass Ceiling" metaphor countless studies were developed allowing the catch term to become an academic concept. First, a generation of scholars sought to investigate why women were such a small part of management. Second, after the number of women in those positions increased over time, researchers drawn a new question, why women were such a small part when it came to top management.[147] According to Jackson & O'Callaghan (2009), in order to answer those questions, studies were developed in different fields such as science, law, social work, manufacturing,

---

[142] Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *2*(4), 306–326. p.306 https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

[143] Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *2*(4), 306–326. p.306 https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

[144] Snaebjornsson, I. M., & Edvardsson, I. (2013). Gender, Nationality and Leadership Style: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Business and Management*, *8*(1), 89–103. p.89 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v8n1p89

[145] Lorber, J. (1995). *Paradoxes of Gender*. Yale University Press. p.227

[146] Labor, U. S. D. of. (1991). *A Report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative*. U.S. Department of Labor. p.6

[147] Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *2*(4), 306–326. p.308 https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

clerical, and service,[148] and based upon different variables, such as, salary and wage differentials[149], and promotion and mobility. Within the results suggesting that those barriers appeared because of gender-based stereotypes, gender socialization process, gender organizational structures and processes, homosocial reproduction, labour market rationales and racism.[150]

For Northouse (2018) one of the explanations for the Glass Ceiling is also the fact that there are still some Human Capital differences between women and men in the workforce. According to him, Human Capital differences explanations approach the idea that women have less investment in education, training, and work experience than men.[151] Thus, women are less qualified than men. Although when it comes to education, as mentioned on the previously section, women are – globally – more enrolled in the educational system than men.[152] When it comes to work experience and employment continuity, they currently still score less than men duo to the disproportionate responsibility women assume for child raising and domestic duties. [153] In addition, when it comes to training, according to a study developed by Bell and Nkomo (2001) prejudice plays a key role and women are less likely to receive mentoring or be included in key networks.[154] For Babcock and Laschever (2003) barriers that explain the Glass Ceiling can be also found in an individual level. According to their study, women are less likely than men to ask for promotion and initiate negotiations.[155]

Hence, there are numbers of explanations for the leadership gender gap. In which the discussions on the field have allowed organizations to focus on changing and reducing discriminatory practices. However, according to Eagly & Carli (2007), the solution that are being invested are not making enough difference. According to them, duo to changes on workforce and organizations, a metaphor that describes an absolute barrier at a specific point of the organization hierarchy does not fully fit to the situation anymore. The new perception of the problem is that the Glass Ceiling metaphor implies that women and men have equal access to all the other levels of the organization, however, this is not true. Because of this, the scholars suggests that now what women face is a labyrinth – a complex journey in which wall are all around.[156]

The Labyrinth proposed by Eagly & Carly (2007) is not the only variation found from the Glass Ceiling metaphor. For example, the "Glass Cliff" phenomenon suggests a counterpoint to the idea of "think manager - think male" by suggesting that women are

[148] Jackson, J. F. L., & O'Callaghan, E. M. (2009). What Do We Know About Glass Ceiling Effects? A Taxonomy and Critical Review to Inform Higher Education Research. *Research in Higher Education*, *50*(5), 460–482. p.469 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-009-9128-9

[149] Jackson, J. F. L., & O'Callaghan, E. M. (2009). What Do We Know About Glass Ceiling Effects? A Taxonomy and Critical Review to Inform Higher Education Research. *Research in Higher Education*, *50*(5), 460–482. p.470 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-009-9128-9

[150] Jackson, J. F. L., & O'Callaghan, E. M. (2009). What Do We Know About Glass Ceiling Effects? A Taxonomy and Critical Review to Inform Higher Education Research. *Research in Higher Education*, *50*(5), 460–482. p.469 https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-009-9128-9

[151] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.577

[152] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.12 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

[153] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.577

[154] Cited in Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.372

[155] Cited in Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.372

[156] Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2007). Women and the labyrinth of leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, *85*(9), 62–71, 146. p.62

more likely to attain top management positions in poorly performing organizations. It argues that most of the time women only achieve C-level positions when organizations are placed in a context of crisis, therefore the metaphor "Think Crisis-Think female".[157] For last, there is also appeal to what is called the "Glass Wall" metaphor, which suggests that there is also horizontal segregation within managerial ranks. In which female managers tend to be concentrated in more female stereotyped positions, while male managers occupy the other functions.[158]

In sum, there has been a lot of effort in academic literature towards understanding whether there are barriers preventing women to become leaders, what were those barriers and how they were originated.[159] Countless studies have proved that yes, there are many barriers towards women career advancement. It has also suggested that differently of what the Glass Ceiling suggests, these barriers are not only encountered on the top-level of organizations, but rather in every level. Different approaches have also found different types of barriers that go from lack of Human capital to prejudice based on gender stereotypes.[160] Consequently, the attention to the subject raised changes on organizational culture towards women's career development, on social structures towards a more fairy division of the household, and on women individually by raising self-awareness.[161] However, when it comes to account for other diversity variables also related to leadership and gender- both together, such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and others, there is still a lack of investigation of the field. According to Northouse (2018), researchers should put a greater emphasis on understand the role of these variables in leadership as an integrative process.[162] There are also suggestions that because most of the research focused on gender was developed under a Western context, the results cannot be generalized to every culture and society.[163] It is based on this gap on the field that the author of this master thesis justifies the need for research on gender and leadership under the Latin context.

4. National Context

As mentioned previously, there are many scholars such as Northouse (2018)[164], Yukl (2013)[165], who argues that because most of leadership research were developed in United States, Canada, and Western Europe, the results found might not generally apply to every

---

[157] Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *2*(4), 306–326. p.315 https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

[158] Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *2*(4), 306–326. p.315 https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

[159] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.372

[160] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.577

[161] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.588

[162] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.589

[163] Snaebjornsson, I. M., Edvardsson, I. R., Zydziunaite, V., & Vaiman, V. (2015). Cross-Cultural Leadership: Expectations on Gendered Leaders' Behavior. *SAGE Open*, *5*(2), 1–8. p.2 https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015579727

[164] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.589

[165] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.360

culture and society. However, because of globalization and changing demographic patterns, the need for knowledge towards how to influence and manage people with different values, beliefs, and expectations have increased considerably on the last few decades.[166] Thus, the number of studies accounting for different societies and cultures is increasing.

On the first few chapters, the author of this master thesis referred to the topics that are under investigation in this research as leadership, gender, and societal variables. The societal variables term was chosen in order to explain widely that there are many variables that can have root in society itself. As an example, there are culture, nationality and environment issues that can be approached from a society perspective. In academic literature, though, the studies sought to identify the differences of each country regarding to leadership are called Cross-cultural research.

They range from analysis of whether a type of behavior is used more in one culture or country than another; whether there are differences in the relationship of leadership behavior to followers' satisfaction and performance; to finally attempt in developing an empirically based theory that describes the relationship between national culture, organizational processes, and leadership through dimensions of culture[167]. From all the academic literature that account for leadership in Cross-cultural contexts, there are two which stand out for the purposes of this master thesis – Hofstede's culture dimensions theory and the GLOBE model.

The Hofstede's culture dimensions theory was developed by Hofstede between 1967 and 1973, to explore the differences in thinking and social action that existed on the company he worked, which included members of more than 50 nations.[168] It was based on a survey with different questions about the perception of values and gathered more than 116.000 answers. Since then, new editions of his work based on replication and extensions of his previous one on different international populations allowed the list of scores to increase to at least 76 countries and regions.[169] Based on the analyses of the answers gathered, Hofstede was able to develop a model that identifies six primary Dimensions that can assist people when attempting to differentiate cultures. According to his model a country can score from 0-100 in each dimension and the general analysis of the results offers an overview of in which culture values the country and its people are based.[170] The following table offers an overview of these Dimensions and what they mean.

Culture Dimension	Key aspects
Power Distance	Investigates to which extent the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (e.g., family), accept, and expect that

---

[166] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.360

[167] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.363

[168] National Culture. (n.d.). *Hofstede Insights*. Retrieved July 28, 2021, from https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/

[169] Shi, X., & Wang, J. (2011). Interpreting Hofstede Model and GLOBE Model: Which Way to Go for Cross-Cultural Research? *International Journal of Business and Management*, *6*(5), 93–99. p.94 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v6n5p93

[170] National Culture. (n.d.). *Hofstede Insights*. Retrieved July 28, 2021, from https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/

	power is distributed unequally. Therefore, it draws a picture of how those groups of people usually handle inequalities in their lives. A nation that seeks to decrease inequality it's the ones that score very low in this index.
Individualism versus Collectivism	Investigates if the country analyzed has a culture which is group-oriented or individual-oriented. A country that scores high in Individualism expects that its individuals take care only of themselves and immediate families. While a country that scores low is defined as a Collectivism culture, in which individuals are expected to look after their relatives or members of a particular group in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.
Masculinity versus Femininity	Investigates if a nation presents a more soft or tender behaviour. In masculine cultures, more assertive behaviour is usually expected, with people focusing on material achievements and wealth building. While in feminine cultures, there is a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and for quality of life.
Uncertainty Avoidance Index	Investigates how uncertainty and ambiguity are handled in a culture. While a high score in this index would mean that the country analyzed has a low tolerance for risk-taking and therefore offer more strict rules and regulations. A country that scores low in this dimension are known for being more comfortable within the unknown and because of that, usually also have a less complex and detailed framework.
Long-Term Orientation versus Short-Term Normative Orientation	Investigates to which extent the culture values tradition and how it deals with changes. Societies which score low on this dimension, are known for prefer to maintain time-honored traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion. The cultures which score high, on the other hand, are known for being more pragmatic and therefore for encouraging thrift and efforts in modern education to prepare for the future.
Indulgence versus Restraint	Investigates to which extent that group of people are able to control their impulses and desires based on the way they were raised. It considers that the ability to control those desires comes from which extent those cultures value socialization. A country that scores high in this dimension is called Indulgent and the ones that score low are labelled as restraint group.

Table 7: Hofstede's Culture Dimensions

Source: Self-created with definitions derived from National Culture. (n.d.). *Hofstede Insights.* Retrieved July 28, 2021, from https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/

The GLOBE model is based on a long-term programmatic research effort developed in the mid of the 1990s, that according to House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004) was designed to identify the effects of culture on leadership, organizational effectiveness, economic competitiveness of societies, and the human condition of members of the

societies studied.[171] It aimed to measure culture at different levels from a practices and values perceptive under the levels of industry, organization, and society. Differently of the Hofstede's model that was applied upon only one industry (Information Technology), only one organization (IBM), and was developed primary by only one researcher; the GLOBE model focused on different industries (Food processing, Finance, and Telecommunication Services), investigated 951 different organizations, and counted with 170 different primary researchers, in which 17,000 answers were gathered.[172]

The GLOBE model was developed to replicate and expand the Hofstede's work and to test various hypotheses that have been developed on leadership topics since then, such as how leadership and cultural values are affected by other situational variables, including, type of industry, economic development, type of government, dominant religious, and type of climate conditions for a country.[173] Just as the Hofstede's Culture Dimensions theory, the GLOBE model also developed a set of culture dimensions to represent its findings.[174] The following table offers an overview of these Dimensions and what they mean.

Culture Dimensions	Key aspects
Power Distance	Just as the Hofstede culture dimension, investigates how comfortable people are within power been distributed unequally.
Uncertainty Avoidance	Just as the Hofstede culture dimension - it refers to how strong people try to avoid the unknown.
Institutional Collectivism	It focuses on how much individuals are incentivized to cooperate and work as a team instead of individually.
In-Group Collectivism	It investigates to which extent people value being part of a group or a family, and how they handle pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in the organizations.
Humane Orientation	It also investigates rewards but focus on a different front, on how much people are encouraged to be altruistic, friendly, and caring for others. Therefore, cultures that score low on this category are usually known for being more independent and private within their problems.
Performance Orientation	It refers to how strong is the culture of rewarding people for good behaviour and performance. Societies that score high in this dimension tend to invest in the training and development of their people. Differently, the ones that score low, where the relations are usually based upon the family network.
Assertiveness	It describes how assertive, confrontational, and aggressive people from those groups tend to be in their relationships. Within the society's that score high on it formed by people that are more competitive, differently of the

[171] Cited in Shi, X., & Wang, J. (2011). Interpreting Hofstede Model and GLOBE Model: Which Way to Go for Cross-Cultural Research? *International Journal of Business and Management*, *6*(5), 93–99. p.94 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v6n5p93

[172] Interpreting Hofstede Model and GLOBE Model: Which Way to Go for Cross-Cultural Research? *International Journal of Business and Management*, *6*(5), 93–99. p.96 https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v6n5p93

[173] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.364

[174] Javidan, M., & Dastmalchian, A. (2009). Managerial implications of the GLOBE project: A study of 62 societies. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, *47*(1), 41–58. p.44 https://doi.org/10.1177/1038411108099289

	society's that score low on it and present a behaviour more towards harmony and loyalty.
Gender Egalitarianism	It refers to how organizations and society handle traditional gender roles. If it is minimized or explored.
Future Orientation	It investigates how much planning and investment in the future is made by the individuals of a certain culture. Within countries that score high on this category have been described as future-oriented cultures and the ones that score low are described as with more opportunistic behaviours.

Table 8: GLOBE Model Culture Dimensions

As illustrated above, Hofstede's Culture Dimension theory and the GLOBE Model were both innovating studies under the culture branch of the leadership field. For the first time, scholars attempted to identify and categorize dimensions that could represent and profile every society in order to support the new challenges faced by organizations duo to the globalization. For Northouse (2018) it was crucial because it highlighted the need for people to expand their ethnocentric tendencies to view leadership from a particular perception to a more diverse one.[175] However, according to Yukl (2013), there is important to notice that there is some lack of clarity - on both models - when it comes to taxonomies and interpretation of the results. In addition, he argues that the assumptions that cultural values identified for a society applies to all types of organizations in that nation overlooks the importance of organizational culture, regional differences, and individual differences.[176]

When it comes to this master thesis, there is a major issue that must be underlined, although both studies have included Brazil under their investigations, the same did not happen about Nicaragua. There is no official analysis of culture dimensions in Nicaragua in neither of them. One could assume that because Nicaragua is considered part of the Latin America[177], the general result found about the region could also be used to analyse the country. However, just as mentioned by Snaebjornsson et al., (2015) because there are indications that to generalize the GLOBE model results could be misleading, duo to the fact that the results showed that similar cultures could hold strong differences in their dimensions; there is no ground in academic literature to allow this.[178] Therefore, the author of this master thesis chose to not account for them in the development of this research.

In addition to this, when it comes to investigate leadership, gender, and cross-culture variables all together, both theories do not offer much ground either. Although Hofstede's

---

[175] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.646

[176] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.369-370

[177] Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. (2017). "List of countries in Latin America". *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved on 28.11.2021 https://www.britannica.com/topic/list-of-countries-in-Latin-America-2061416

[178] Snaebjornsson, I. M., Edvardsson, I. R., Zydziunaite, V., & Vaiman, V. (2015). Cross-Cultural Leadership: Expectations on Gendered Leaders' Behavior. *SAGE Open*, *5*(2), 1–8. p.3 https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015579727

model has at least one variable that could be related to gender – the Masculinity versus Femininity dimension – according to Hofstede (1998), it analysis the subject under a country level perspective rather than an individual one.[179] Thus, it cannot represent the differences in preferences between men and women in a particular culture. Considering that this master thesis aims to comprehend the macro-environmental barriers towards women's career advancement from their own perspective, to use this dimension would only potentially set stereotypes that could disturb the investigation.

Furthermore, the same can be said about the Gender Egalitarianism dimension developed by the GLOBE model, which is also meant to compare societies and not individuals. The only other potential consideration for this model, though, would be the fact that it does offer data towards how women and men rated almost half of its dimensions differently.[180] However, in this case, we circled back to the issue that the results cannot be generalized and that there are no data available about Nicaragua. Therefore, this aspect can also not be taken into account to this master thesis.

In sum, based on the literature reviewed under this topic, the author concludes that there is a lack of investigations aimed to investigate leadership, gender, and cross-culture variables all together. Mainly, the author focuses on the lack of information towards many countries, such as Nicaragua, as well as the lack of attention in the field to other societies beyond the United States, Canada, and Western Europe.[181]

5. Justification

As the literature review presents, at the beginning of leadership research, scholars sought to identify what were the traits and attributes of a leader. This study was labelled the leadership Traits theory and aimed specifically on identifying a set of characteristics that could differentiate leaders from non-leaders.[182] Because it was the first theory developed after the "Great Man Theory" it assumed that leaders were born and not made. Thus, leadership was inherited and could not me developed/learned. Duo to the lack of consistence towards a universal set of traits that could describe every leader, and duo to conclusion that the traits only were not enough to ensure leadership in every circumstance, researchers comprehended that others variable should also be considered when studying the field. [183]

From this moment, there were investigations focused on whether there could be found any universality towards the leader's behaviour or leadership style; if there was a

---

[179] Cited in Snaebjornsson, I. M., Edvardsson, I. R., Zydziunaite, V., & Vaiman, V. (2015). Cross-Cultural Leadership: Expectations on Gendered Leaders' Behavior. *SAGE Open*, *5*(2), 1–8. p.2 https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015579727

[180] Snaebjornsson, I. M., Edvardsson, I. R., Zydziunaite, V., & Vaiman, V. (2015). Cross-Cultural Leadership: Expectations on Gendered Leaders' Behavior. *SAGE Open*, *5*(2), 1–8. p.3 https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015579727

[181] Snaebjornsson, I. M., Edvardsson, I. R., Zydziunaite, V., & Vaiman, V. (2015). Cross-Cultural Leadership: Expectations on Gendered Leaders' Behavior. *SAGE Open*, *5*(2), 1–8. p.2 https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015579727

[182] Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning. p.16

[183] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.65

connection between the leader's behaviour/style and the context in which he/she was inserted[184]; If leadership could be learned/developed; and finally, what was the variables and importance of the relationship between leaders and followers.[185]

It is also concluded from the review that because leadership is a phenomenon proven to represent the social rules and context of the time it is analysed[186], variables important to this master thesis, such as gender and culture context, had only a later development.[187] For gender the focus can be categorized under three main approaches: 1) Investigations towards sex and gender differences in leadership capability and style;[188] 2) Prejudice duo to gender stereotypes;[189] and 3) Identification of the reasons towards the lack of women in management and leadership positions – also known as the Glass Ceiling branch.[190] For culture context, studies can also be categorized under three main approaches: 1) Whether a type of behavior is used more in one culture or country than another; 2) Whether there are differences in the relationship of leadership behavior to followers' satisfaction and performance; and 3) The attempt to develop an empirically based theory that describes the relationship between national culture, organizational processes, and leadership through dimensions of culture[191]. However, it is noticeable that the majority of scholars and studies are under the culture dimension approach.

Duo to the strengths and criticism found towards each of these studies, this author concluded that there is little attention paid towards connection leadership, gender, and culture context all together. There is little information on what is the role of the country's conditions framework towards women's career development as business leaders. Especially, when it comes to investigate culture contexts from a macro-environmental perspective, accounting for variables such as political, economic, social, technological, and environmental. In addition, literature review has shown that the majority of investigation in the field in general is usually focused on United States, Canada, and Western Europe.[192] A fact that is known as an obstacle to the development of a universal theory on the field.

Thus, this investigation aims to collaborate within female leadership by 1) Offering an overview of how macro-environmental levels can affect and create barriers towards female leadership; and 2) Offering an analysis of the topic upon an underrepresented region on the field.

[184] Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE. p.133

[185] Howell et al., (1986) cited in Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management*, *19*(11), 35–43. p.39 https://doi.org/10.9790/487X-1911033543

[186] Day, D. V., & Antonakis, J. (Eds.). (2012). *The Nature of Leadership* (2nd ed). SAGE. p.6

[187] Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing. p.575

[188] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.371

[189] Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, *109*(3), 573–598. p.574 https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573

[190] Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance*, *2*(4), 306–326. p.306 https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

[191] Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson. p.363

[192] Snaebjornsson, I. M., Edvardsson, I. R., Zydziunaite, V., & Vaiman, V. (2015). Cross-Cultural Leadership: Expectations on Gendered Leaders' Behavior. *SAGE Open*, *5*(2), 1–8. p.2 https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015579727

5.1   Why Brazil and Nicaragua?

The first determination of this master thesis subject was to focus on what are the barriers that businesswomen may encounter to develop their careers as Business leaders. The reason for this is duo to the fact that although there is a strong academic literature focus on the topic under the branch of glass ceiling and its variants – in which, as noticed earlier is responsible for approach barriers towards female leadership - according to data women are still the minority when it comes to leadership roles. According to the Global Gender GAP Report (GGGR)[193], developed by the World Economic Forum since 2006[194], in 2021 women occupied only an average of 41% in senior positions based on their sample of 156 countries.[195]

However, because literature review suggests that there is a lack of knowledge that investigate these barriers and even leadership, gender, and societal variables all together, in other countries and cultures beyond the United States, Canada, and Western Europe paradigm, this study was narrowed down to focus on the Latin America context. The choice of approaching the Latin American scenario specifically is justified by this author's Brazilian nationality. Yet, because the timeframe and resources available for this investigation are not able to cover an analysis towards all the countries in the Latin America, the study was once more narrowed down to focus on Brazil and Nicaragua.

Although the choice of Brazil can once more be explained by the personal interest of this author towards its own culture and society, the reason for choosing to compare Brazil specifically with Nicaragua it is justified by the surprising numbers found towards gender gap in both countries over the last few years.

When searching for female leadership landscape trustful data, the author encountered with the Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR) – previously mentioned. The GGGR is an annually report developed by the World Economic Forum, which draws findings, interpretations, and conclusions towards gender inequality issues. It benchmarks the evolution of gender-based gaps among four key dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.[196] This analyse is made by giving a score for each country, by dimension, from 0 to 100 where 100 would mean that no gender inequality was found.[197] It is known for offering significant insights into women's progress worldwide since 2006 duo to its steady methodology and to the fact that investigates 156 different countries. Differently of the issues found under the Hofstede's culture dimension culture and the GLOBE model, the

---

[193] Explanation in more detail on next paragraphs
[194] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.9
   http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf
[195] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.14
   http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

[196] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.9
   http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf
[197] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021*. (n.d.). World Economic Forum. Retrieved December 7, 2021, from
   https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021/in-full/gggr2-appendix-b-the-global-gender-gap-index-methodology-and-technical-notes/

GGGR does account for Brazil[198] and Nicaragua[199] in its investigation. Most important both countries have been introduced to the report, for the first time, at the same year (2006)[200] and therefore offer us a stable comparison between both countries' development.

But what is so interesting about the GGGR? Scholars suggest that gender inequalities are likely to decline with industrialization or economic growth because they consider that differences between men and women in employment, wages, or poverty are due to human capital differences.[201] Therefore, it would be expected that because Brazil as a richer country and better developed than Nicaragua, would present better results towards gender equality when compared to the last. However, this is not what data suggests, in 2021 Brazil appeared in the 93th place on the ranking of the GGGR - that accounted for 156 different countries - as one of the most gender inequalities. While Nicaragua was listed as 62nd.[202] In addition, when both are compared under the Latin America regional perspective, while Brazil is ranked as 24th in the list with only 25 countries, Nicaragua takes over the first place as the country with less gender inequality of the list.[203] This discrepancy between both countries is also not something new, it happened since 2012 when both countries entered the study. The following table offers an overview of their development since then.
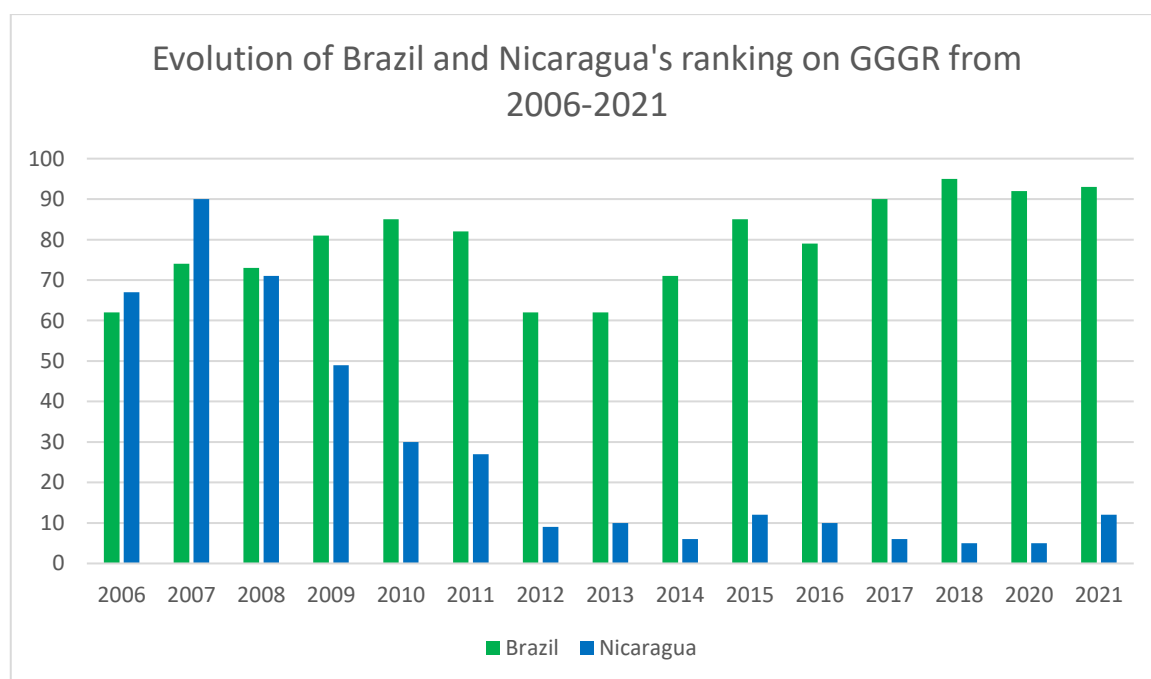

Figure 1: Comparison of Brazil and Nicaragua's performance at the Global Gender Gap Report from 2006-2021

[198] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.133-134
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf
[199] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.299-300
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf
[200] See Figure 1
[201] Cuberes, D., & Teignier, M. (2011). *Gender Inequality and Economic Growth*. p.2
[202] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.10
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf
[203] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.31
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

As one can see, except for 2007 when Nicaragua was listed in 90th place and Brazil ranked in 74th, Nicaragua has always performed better than Brazil since the analysis started.

While the interesting data of the GGGR was the reason for the author of this master thesis become interested in developing a comparison between both countries under the subject of macro societal barriers, the same also realized soon enough that duo to underline issues towards the GGGR, this research could not be used for more than data offering.

First, because the GGGR does not take into consideration the country scenario in each category, but rather only if there are differences between women and men. And second, because of the GGGR double standard when calculating the data. An example of this can be seen under the comparison of Brazil and Nicaragua towards educational attainment, in which Brazil was ranked 37th and Nicaragua was listed as 1st place under the category.[205] Educational Attainment in the GGGR explores four main variables: literacy rate and enrolment in primary, secondary, and tertiary education. The following table illustrates how both countries scored under each variable in 2021.

2021	Brazil[206]	Nicaragua[207]
Literacy rate %	Women: 93.4% Men: 93.0%	Women: 82.8% Men: 82.4%
Enrolment in primary education %	Women: 94.7% Men: 94.8%	Women: 96% Men:93.9%
Enrolment in secondary education %	Women: 83.2% Men: 80.3%	Women: 52.4% Men: 44.6%
Enrolment in tertiary education %	Women: 59.5% Men: 43.5%	Women: 18.4% Men: 16.5%

Table 9: Comparison between Brazil and Nicaragua under the Educational Attainment category of the GGGR of 2021

Source: Self-created

As one can see, in Brazil a major part of the population is suggested as part of the educational System. In the other hand, in Nicaragua, this number decreases considerable when it comes about tertiary education. However, Nicaragua still scores higher than Brazil under the category. In addition to this, when it comes to primary education, in Brazil women and men data allow us to draw conclusions that if compared to Nicaragua, the first has less gender gap than the second. However, in the report, because they are focus only on the issues towards women, it is seen as a positive sign. Thus, Nicaragua scores higher than Brazil under the category and the variable.

---

[204] Every report can be found under Reports. (n.d.). World Economic Forum. Retrieved July 29, 2021, from https://www.weforum.org/reports/
[205] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.18 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf
[206] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.133-134 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf
[207] *Global Gender Gap Report 2021* (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.299-300 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

Yet, although the report cannot be used to base this research as a confirmation of greater gender inequality in Brazil if compared to Nicaragua; it is valuable enough to offer data towards the % of women who are part of the workforce in each country, the % of women who occupy legislators, senior officials, and managers positions, the % of women's educational attainment, and other considerations that are imperative to be analysed to build the research methodology.

5.1.1   Brazil and Nicaragua Profile

As mentioned previously, this master thesis aims to comprehend what are the macro-environmental barriers towards women's development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua. To do so, a natural first step is to investigate how does the landscape of female leadership looks like in these countries and what are the potential underline issues that can be approached during the investigation. Since the barriers towards women generally found on studies on the field – as explained in the literature review – seem to be connected to Human Capital differences, before designing the methodology of this investigation, information's that are part of these differences were gathered.

According to the GGGR of 2021, in Brazil 61.9% of all women in working age (15-64y) was part of the workforce last year, compared to 80.2% of all men in the same group. In Nicaragua, though, this number is considerably smaller, in which only 52.9% of all women in working age were part of the workforce against 86.9% of all men. In both countries, women are the majority in part-time jobs, however, the number is higher in Nicaragua. In Brazil 35.34% of all women part of the workforce are under part-time employment against 20.89% of all employed men. In Nicaragua this number increases to 51.38% of all women employed, against 26.57% of all employed men. When it comes to leadership and management positions, Brazil's results suggest that in 2021, women occupied 39.4% of all legislators, senior officials, and managers roles. The number is similar but low in Nicaragua, which suggests that 35.2% of these positions were occupied by women. However, the opposite is noticed when focusing on firms located in these countries that account for female top managers. In which Brazil results suggest that women occupy 19.40% of all positions, while in Nicaragua they are 27%.

Under the educational category, women's enrolment presents to be higher in both countries under every educational level when compared to men; suggesting that women are more educated than men is these places. However, an important consideration is that while Brazil presents 94.7% of girls in primary education, 83.2% in secondary education, and 59.5% in tertiary (professional) education; in Nicaragua these numbers are noticeable smaller, in which girls are 96% enrolled in primary education, 52.4% in secondary education, and only 18.4% in tertiary education. Thus, when investigation the topic one must consider the gap of opportunities between both countries.

6. Methodology

The previous chapters have already addressed the issues towards the leadership, gender, and cultural context knowledge; it has also described how and why this subject and places were chosen; and finally, it has also offered an overview of the female landscape towards access to education and participation on workforce in both places. However, it is still lacking an explanation towards how this master thesis research will approach the subject.

The objective of this research is to identify what are the barriers towards businesswomen career's development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua when it comes to the country societal variables. In Business Strategy, when one must investigate the macro-environmental variables that play a role towards organization success, a PEST analysis is developed.[208] A PEST analysis is a strategic framework that account for political, economic, social, and technological. It was not developed to analyse how a countries framework plays a role in female leadership; however, it is used here to explain from which perspective the societal variables are approached. Because this study is focus solo on the business world, for this study the variables approached are only political, economic, and social.

Consequently, the following study was designed to: 1) approach potential barriers towards female leadership from an economic, social, and environmental perspective; and 2) approach these barriers from a perspective of women who are part of the Brazil and Nicaragua workforce. By doing so, the objective of this study is to: 1) Identify what are the macro-environmental barriers found in each country; and 2) Compare if there are any similarities or differences between both countries.

Because the study aims to comprehend the barriers through women's perception, qualitative data was chosen for this investigation that will be gathered through one-to-one interviews within businesswomen from Brazil and Nicaragua that have experience in leadership positions. In order to gather better insights and avoid any influence from the authors side, these interviews will follow a semi-structure system, based in open-ended questions. Therefore, the questions might not always follow the same order giving so enough room to the researcher explore what the respondent think that it is important about the topic.[209]

6.1 Questionnaire

As mentioned previously the objective of this research was to analyse how the countries frameworks affects the development of women as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua and compare them. Because a qualitative perspective of that was not possible through statistics, the best approach was to investigate how professional women perceive those potential barriers. And to analyse how was their experience in the workforce while

---

[208] *What is PESTLE Analysis? An Important Business Analysis Tool.* (n.d.). Retrieved January 2, 2022, from https://pestleanalysis.com/what-is-pestle-analysis/

[209] Anderson C. (2010). Presenting and evaluating qualitative research. American journal of pharmaceutical education, 74(8), 1-7. p.2 -4 https://doi.org/10.5688/aj7408141

looking for patterns and similarities. Therefore, the interview questionnaire was design in three parts:

1. Questions that sought to offer a profile of the subjects and their background experiences.

 2. Questions that sought to comprehend how their experiences as female leaders has been.

3. Questions that sought to comprehend their perception of how the macro context of Brazil and Nicaragua have affect them and other women.

Based on that, at the first block of interview, questions towards age, marital status, children, economic class, family background, educational history and professional experiences were asked. Next, to comprehend what and how were their experiences as female leaders, they were asked about promoting barriers, leadership skills development, career choices and support. Finally, at the final block, they were offered examples of the statistics found under the Global Gender Gap Report and asked about how they perceived the result of the index, the lack of women in the workforce, their numbers towards education, about their lack of representation in leadership positions and about policies and regulations on programs that are available, or they believe that should be available towards helping women's professional development.

In conclusion, the questionnaire sought to connect and discuss during those 90 minutes about gender issues, leadership perceptions and experiences and countries issues. The full questionnaire can be seen at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

6.2   Data Analysis Procedure

The qualitative data acquired was investigated through a content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is one of numerous research methods used to analyse text data.[210] This type of research focuses on the content and its contextual meaning. It is appropriate when there might be lack of literature on the topic. Therefore, instead of using preconceived categories to draw conclusions, the researcher defines them from insights provided by the data.

Based on that a six-step procedure was performed following the recommendations of the method. [211]They are:

1. **Organizing:** The researcher transcribed the data from an audio file to a text file. To the interviews in Portuguese, a translation of the transcriptions was also made. The recordings, transcripts and translations were organized in different files where

---

[210] White, M. D., & Marsh, E. E. (2006). Content Analysis: A Flexible Methodology. *Library Trends*, *55*(1), 22–45. p.27 https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2006.0053

[211] Skjott Linneberg, M., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: A synthesis guiding the novice. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *19*(3), 1–29. p.17-18 https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012

each participant was labelled with a number under the category of Brazil and Nicaragua. Finally, the researcher listened to all the recordings while following the transcriptions to ensure that the results were accurate.

2. **Exploring:** At the second phase, the researcher read all the transcriptions again but now looking for patterns and recurring themes that might be capable of answering the research question of the study. Within the significant sentences being highlighted in case that it could be used as quotes at the final discussion.

3. **Classifying:** Those highlighted words or sentences were used to draw initial ideas of how the main barriers might be encountered at the respondents' lives. Next similar ideas were grouped together, creating different categories, and offering an idea of how the results should be displayed.

4. **Codifying:** The stage four of the data analysis procedure was to review the data classified before and tagging that with codes that best represented what the interviewee shared during the interview process. 5. Categorizing: Based on the codes established a figure was designed to better demonstrated how they were connected. Allowing the researcher to display the results at the discussion chapter and draw conclusions of how the results would answer the research question. Overall, content analysis is a suitable method when one seeks to offer a picture of the dilemma context.

7. Analysis

The qualitative data analysis of this study aims to answer two main questions: 1) What are the barriers towards women's career development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua from a political, economic, and social perspective; and 2) What are the main similarities and differences between the barriers found in both countries? Therefore, to answer the first research question the results will be displayed next divided by country. To answer the second research question, a comparison between both results will be offered outlining the main differences and similarities between them. However, before that, the interviewee will be presented next by numbers within a short description of their background information. So that it can establish credibility to their stories by offering a better comprehension of in what their perspective are based. The participants from Brazil will be categorized from 1 to 3 and the participants from Nicaragua will me described from 4 to 6.

Participant number 1 lives in São Paulo, is 44 years old, married, has two children and is currently part of the upper social class. She graduated in Science Communication and have an MBA degree in marketing. Her first job was at 15 years old, and she achieved her first leadership position at 22 years old. Currently works at a multi-national company as Global media director. She started at the company three years ago as Head of marketing and was promoted one year ago. Usually, her team is formed by 10 people, where only two of them are women besides her.

Participant number 2 lives in Rio de Janeiro, is 52 years old, married, has one child and is part of the Upper middle social class. She is graduated is Math and is postgraduate in Computer Science. Her first job was at 18 years old and at 26 she achieved her first

leadership positions. She currently works at one of the biggest companies in Brazil at the energy industry as Digital Transformational Manager. She currently manages 17 people, which 2 are women.

Participant number 3 lives in Minas Gerais, is 29 years old, singles, has no children and is part of the working class. She graduated in Publicity and Marketing and has no specializations. Her first job was at 16 years old, and she achieved a leadership position at 25 years old. She currently works for a small to medium size technology company as Head of Marketing.

Participant number 4 lives in Managua, is 46 years old, single, has no children and is part of the middle social class. She is graduated in business administration, postgraduate in - 40 - strategic administration in non-profit organizations and certificated as professional trainer. She currently works at her own company and fulfil a director position. Her currently team counts with 6 people where all are women.

Participant number 5 recently moved to Guatemala due to job opportunities but speaks from her experience at the last 10 years of working in Managua. She is 33 years old, single, has no children and is part of the upper middle class. She is graduated in Marketing with an MBA in finances. Her first job was at 18 years old and her first leadership position at 25 years old. She worked as Vice Operating Officer for new Businesses in the automotive industry.

Participant number 6 lives in Managua, is 25 years old, single, has no children, and is part of the middle class. She is graduated in Business administration, is certified in Management and Leadership, and has a master's degree in Global Affairs. Her first job was at 18 years old, and her first leadership position was at 24 years old. She works for a global youth-led development organization as a Development Manager.

7.1   Findings in Brazil

Four main themes emerged from an analysis of the qualitative data performed with women from Brazil. These themes were: a) Machismo; b) Motherhood perceptions; c) Education, and d) Prejudice. Under each of these themes different sub-themes were identified as also important to answer the research question number one. A display of these themes and sub-themes are illustrated in Figure 2.
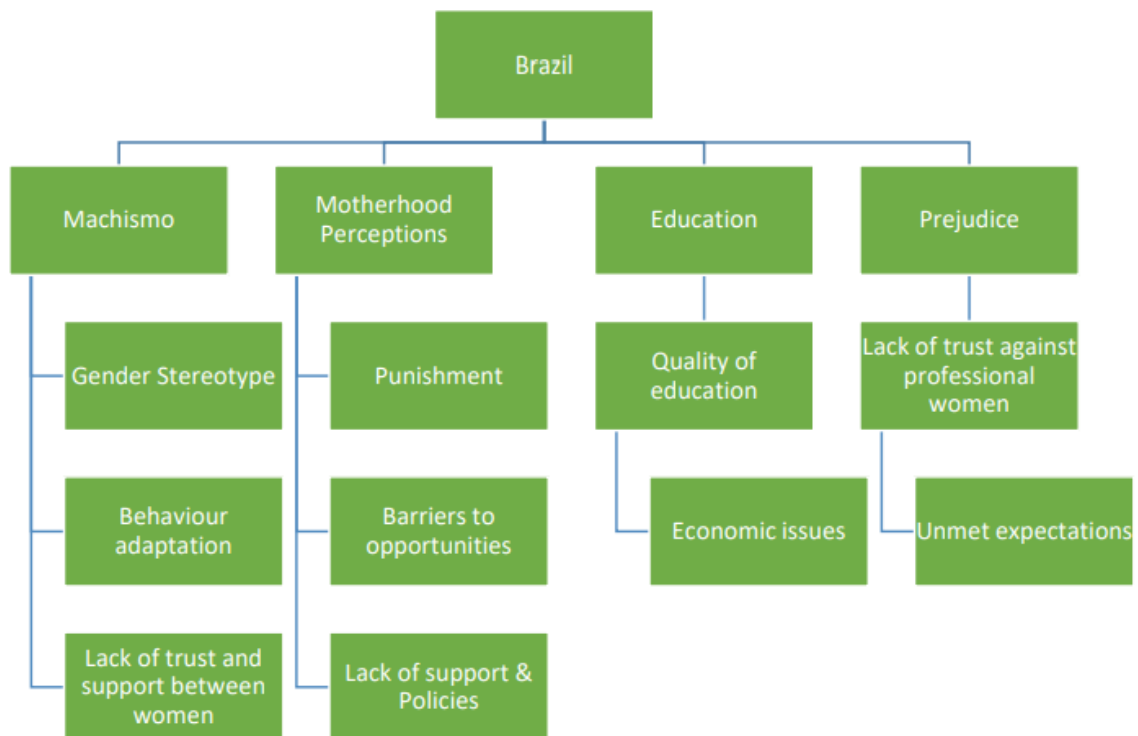
Figure 2 Themes and sub-themes outlined as barriers to women's career development as managers in Brazil

Source: Developed by the researcher based on the qualitative data findings

The first theme that was identified from the interview was Machismo. Machismo in Latin culture's is a concept that refers to the male superiority and dominance over women. It is usually known for reinforce the traditional gender roles and in its worst form, promotes domestic violence. The machismo as well as most of the behaviours we learn at life, usually is already constructed at childhood when it is practiced by the parents. They can be replicated in different forms and have various consequences just as the findings of Brazil suggested.[212]

Based on how the topic was approached there was established three main sub-themes, within the first one being the gender stereotypes. The first mention that women in Brazil still suffer from the traditional role expectations that are rooted on machismo, was when they were asked if there were any differences between treatment and opportunities while growing up because of gender, when compared to male siblings. The interviewee number 1 answer to that by saying: *"It is a curious thing; I have a twin brother besides the oldest one. And there were many things that my brother could do growing up that I was not allowed to. But it was such a natural behaviour that I even did not consider that it was weird."*[213]

Although the second interviewee answered it as not true in her case, she was able to remember though another occasion that she suffered from such discrimination. She said:

---

[212] Ceballos, M. (n.d.). Machismo: a culturally constructed concept. 91. P.1
[213] Interview recording number 1, time stamp 00:06:05

"Between me and my brother no. But at work I felt discriminated once, that really impacted me. I was partner at a software consult business, and we were doing a project to this new client, but my male partner had made the deal. When it started because I was the specialist, I went to the first meeting. The first question made was: But is he not coming? (Referring to the male partner). After I explained who I was he said OK and left the room. He soon called my partner and said 'Did you need to send a girl? And a black one?'."[214]

The topic was mentioned again by the interviewee number 1 when describing her past experiences as an explanation of why she started to work so early. She mentioned *"I started to work when I was 15 years old. I did not need to, but I was seeking emancipation and my own money. Because I understood that the way to freedom was to be independent."*[215]

At last, the issue appeared once again, when also interviewee number 1 offered her perspective of what were the most significant barriers that she encountered during her professional career as a female leader, and she mentioned: *"It is common for men to feel superior at the work environment."*[216]

The second sub-theme generated from machismo - that was recurring used to explain how it has affected their lives – was behaviours adaptations. It was labelled like this because there were different citations of how those women, without noticing, have changed their behaviours to a more masculine point of view, as a strategy to feel welcome at the business environment.

Interviewee 2, when asked if she ever needed to adapt her behaviour in any way to be successful as a female leader, mentioned: *"At my previous job I was the only one woman. It was not common to dress casually. We would all dress formal, the men would wear suits and the women would also follow the same protocol. I never liked wearing skirts, so I had a lot of female suits with long trousers. When I moved to my currently job, I kept going to work dressing at the same way. But the people there would go very casual. One day someone said, 'you are always very elegant but also you always look like a man.' It was the first time that I realized that I used to dress like that because I was coping the male style to feel equal."*[217]

Interviewee 1, even before being asked about that, while still describing her past work experiences had already mentioned: *"I thought I needed to be tough for being women and young."* Complementing further by saying *"I would go to work wearing blazers, my hair was very short, I would wear little accessories, it was very masculine. I would even join the sexist jokes sometimes. All done unconsciously."* *"I was young, women and working in male-dominated industry. I ended up becoming too harsh. People that worked with me back then and again 10 years later, have told me that."*[218] And when asked what were the primordial factors that influenced her to follow a leadership career, she explained that was probably because unconsciously she had already realized the machismo and therefore, she decided that she *"did not want to be in the position where I could not do the things."*

---

[214] Interview recording number 2, time stamp 00:06:24
[215] Interview recording number 1, time stamp 00:14:42
[216] Interview recording number 1, time stamp 00:47:04
[217] Interview recording number 2, time stamp 00:36:14
[218] Interview recording number 1, time stamp 00:29:11

She *"wanted to be at the other position"* where she could. So, she affirmed*: "I decided to behave like a boy. I became a boy."*[219]

The last sub-theme defined under the machismo category was the lack of trust and support found between women in Brazil. There were references from how they seem to see each other as competition at the work environment, to references of how the women themselves seem to reinforce the gender stereotypes by pressuring other women. Still while describing her past professional experiences, interviewee 1 mentioned: *"I had few female leaders above me."* And further, she complemented "*I always felt more comfortable in having male bosses. It was difficult when was the other way around. I think that there is a non-spoken issue. I think that the judgement and the pressure between women is very strong and negative. For me, somehow it felt like a competition. I did not feel that I could trust them."*[220]

When the interview moved up to the women's barriers in achieving top executive positions she also said: *"So, I think that there is a lack of trust between women. For example, you see men that are focused on networking. But while it is common to see men going out every Wednesday to play football with their colleagues, there is not common to see women going out every Wednesday to have dinner with her friends."*[221]

Interview number 3 approach the issue when asked if she believed that she had suffer from any resistance towards her leadership. She explained that yes by telling the follow story "I moved to my currently job because of a college referral. Back then he was the responsible for the whole team. When we structure the marketing department, it was handed over to me. But there had this one girl, that she would just not listen to me. She would not accept me, you, see? She would always have a reference by other colleague and because he was still at the company but only in different position and because that was not a big formality when I was promoted, she just kept behaving like he was her leader and just ignore me. It was very challenging."[222]

All references suggests that women seem to feel threatened by other women and that this might harm their development. Because while men are working together to move forwards, women are acting individually. The lack of support between each other, was also mentioned. First by the Interviewee 1 when giving her perspective about the lack of women at the workforce. While explaining that she believes that this issue is directly connected to motherhood and the culture that imposes women as main responsible for the children, she shared: "*My husband is an entrepreneur, so he has better flexibility over his schedules. And it is impressive the things we see. Sometimes he takes the kids to places and there are just women around. The judgment is noticeable, it is like they are asking themselves: what are these guys doing here at our place*?"[223]

Next, when asked about how it is possible that women occupy almost 60% of the professional and technical jobs but only 39% of the managerial positions, she shared the following story. *"At the other day I was talking to my sister-in-law and my niece, her*

---

[219] Interview recording number 1, time stamp 01:08:41
[220] Interview recording number 1, time stamp 00:36:01
[221] Interview recording number 1, time stamp 01:00:42
[222] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:26:58
[223] Interview number 1, time stamp 00:57:04

daughter. She wants to be a doctor, but her mom was trying to convince her to be a dermatologist instead of a surgeon. When I asked why, she said it was because surgeons need to be all the type at the hospital, and she needed to have time for her future family. Have better schedules. She was already teaching her daughter to hold back to raise kids."[224]

Therefore, overall, there are many indications that the machismo is still very strong at the Brazilian culture, as well as that it might be one of the main reasons why gender stereotypes seem to be constantly reinforced. Phenomena that do not happen only because of men's behaviours but also because of women. Forcing women often to adapt their behaviours trying to blend within the male colleagues by looking less feminine to succeed in the business word. But in general, harming women's progress.

The second main topic that was very recurring through different question of the interview was motherhood. It presented statements from how women are usually punished at the organization when deciding to have children, to how women - even without kids – face barriers to get opportunities or to be promoted because they are at the "labour age". Besides that, the lack of policies towards childcare support, was also very much mentioned.

When Interviewee number 1 was asked if she felt that the maternity leave time or the process of becoming a mom had affected her career, she said*: "At my second maternity leave, when I got back to my job, I was fired just a few months later, even though I was at a leadership position and have been working there for years. I had taken 7 months off because the company allowed us to connect holidays and maternity leave. But I still do not know in which extend the fact that I used the benefit harmed me."*[225]

Interviewee number 2, while answering what was her perspective of the lack of women at the workforce, she also mentioned motherhood. To illustrate it, she shared her personal experience of how she needed to choose between career or children until she felt safe enough financially. She said: *"I chose to only get pregnant when I was already 40 years old." "I came from a very poor family, I wanted to get a better life. To move up at the social economic status. I grew up at the favelas, now I live in one of the best condos of my region. My house has 7 bedroom and 4 suits. I have a pool. From where I was born, to where I am now, you see? But it was all because of my sacrifice."*[226]

She also shared the following statement: *"At my former company, ok this was 15 years ago, but if a women would get pregnant, she would be fired as soon as she was back from the license. If you think about, this is not that long ago."*[227]

At this question, interviewee number 1 also said: *"We do not have this social division towards work in Brazil. For example, if a woman earns 10 million reais per month and the husband earns 10 thousand. It is not that obvious that the man is going to be the one to stop to work and take care of the kids. It is not a clear or obvious decision at all."*[228]

---

[224] Interview number 1, time stamp 01:06:52
[225] Interview number 1, time stamp 01:04:07
[226] Interview number 2, time stamp 00:48:08
[227] Interview number 2, time stamp 00:43:36
[228] Interview number 1, time stamp 00:56:37

Therefore, it seems that in Brazil, motherhood can often act as a punishment to women when considering their professional lives. As well as that, even when they might decide not have children, they might still be vulnerable to that because they are women.

Yet at the question of why women seem to not be joining the workforce as they could, interviewee 1, while explaining how motherhood affect women and is a cultural issue in Brazil, shared: *"I particularly used to judge women that did not work. Nowadays I have a different perspective. But I confess that I already thought when at hiring process things like 'Oh my god, am I really hire a woman? She is at labour age, recently married, she will get pregnant and take a maternity leave.' To hire a woman between 20 and 30 years old is trick because you can expect that she will take at least two maternity leaves."*[229] Towards promotion issues, interviewee number two said: *"There are still many companies that do not promote women because they trust that will lack of that resource for at least some time (referring to maternity leave)."*[230]

Interviewee number three also gave her perspective on the issue: *"The organization still see women as an expense. If a woman gets pregnant, the leader sees her as an expense. Because it's expected that when they have children, every time that there the kid is sick, for example, she will be the one leaving to take care of he or she in most of the times.*[231]

The reason for why motherhood become such a vulnerable question in Brazil, the lack of support and policies from the state was blamed. Interviewee number 1 said: "*There is no childcare system offered from the public institutions." "There should have full time schools and a childcare system of quality. It is fundamental to close this gap." (Referring to the gap at workforce and leadership positions) "The world needs to be populated and we all depend on women to do that. Those women that often are the solo responsible for providing for their children." "There should be a paternity leave at the same parameters of the maternity leave one." "I think that paternity leave is fundamental to change the situation. Not only because men will learn from early stages how to care for their children. But also, because many parents that do not even recognize their children, would for sure do it, if that meant to get a paid license."*[232]

Interviewee number three also seem to agree, she said: *"It is a result of the patriarchy (referring to the lack of women at workforce), where taking care of the house and family ends up as fully responsibility for women. So, if a woman gets married and has a child there is a huge pressure for staying at home." "There should be at least a childcare support, a benefit."*[233]

The third category address the issues presented during the interview towards education. There were statements that suggest that the educational system is not equal for everyone. Therefore, women that had more privileged educational opportunities might also have better professional development in the future.

Interviewee number 1 was the first to approach the topic when talking about her past professional experiences and what contribute with her success. She said: "*When I started*

---

[229] Interview number 1, time stamp 01:02:48
[230] Interview number 2, time stamp 00:43:36
[231] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:34:39
[232] Interview number 1, time stamp 01:17:27
[233] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:41:09

university, I got an internship in my field. I speak English, and French as well, it was a differential. Because most people that worked with me there did not speak English. So, I started to act as a consultant at the company, because there was a need for the language, which was a huge difference between by low job position. The company did not even tell the people that I was an internship. Because of that I was eventually hired and stayed at the company for four years."[234]

In contrast, when describing her educational background, the interviewee number three said: *"The city I am from, did not have other option beside the public school. It is a very small city. It did not even have university."*[235]

Economic issues were then mentioned as the main reason to explain how those differences affect them. While interviewee number 1 said: "*I speak from a place of total privilege. Upper class, private schools, white, CIS, hetero. My privileges are so many that I could spend 30 minutes talking about them.*"[236] The interviewee number two shared how she did not manage to follow her dream career because of economic issues and lack of access to public universities. She mentioned: "*My dream was to go to med school. But I did not get accepted at the public university. So, to get a degree and not be delayed because I needed to work and make money, I chose the only private school that I could afford. So, I ended up studying Math instead of medicine.*"[237]

Interviewee number three also suffered from a similar problem, she shared: "*Before I was 18 years old, when I finished school, I got a few scholarships at the private university by the PROUNI (scholarship programs at private school based on grades) in the city a live today. I was leaving with my aunt, but we did not have internet, so I did not hear about the sponsorship before it was too late. Since I did not have how to pay for it, I went back to by home city. I stayed there for more two years, before organize everything to try to move again.*"[238] After that the only solution found was: "*To afford to live in alone in another city and to study I needed to take part on a college finance at the bank. So, in this case, after two years of graduated, I would need to start paying for it. I financed it for 30 years within monthly payments.*"[239] Therefore, besides the social factors established before, there seems to also exist economic factors that can harm women's development and prevent them from even getting education.

The last group of barriers encountered in Brazil it is categorized as Prejudice. The reason for this is that there were recuring statements towards the lack of trust against businesswomen, about the unmet expectations towards leadership style and about how men feel more comfortable with other men because of the stereotype's ideas. Allowing the "boys clubs" practices to continue and exclude women from moving upward in their careers.

As lack of trust against professional women the researcher means lack of trust towards women's professional skills. For example, when describing her professional development, interviewee number 1 mentioned that because she was women and young there were

---

[234] Interview number 1, time stamp 00:09:01
[235] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:07:53
[236] Interview number 1, time stamp 00:44:01
[237] Interview number 2, time stamp 00:18:48
[238] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:10:10
[239] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:10:10

always side comments questioning "*who she is sleeping with*?"[240]. In an attempt of explain her professional success. Interviewee number 2 shared similar experience. She said*: "I entered the company in 2005, in 2009 I was invited to be the assistant of the superintendent. So, I was new at the company because there were people working for 25 years already. People used to retire within 40 years working at the company. Two of the people that work with me are 65 and 69 years old. So, people were shocked. They would wonderer how did I got the job. There were many sides comment like 'she is his mistresses, that's why she got the job.'."[241]

Besides the need to justify women's success, there was also mentioned more conflictual situations such as the one mentioned by interviewee number 3 next: "*At one of the company's I worked for, I was already there for a while, I knew all the processes but one of the partners did not trust me. He did not trust me because I did not tell him all the time what I was doing. It was so serious that when a chance for promotion came, he brought a completely new person to the company to fulfil the leadership position that I was fully capable to perform.*"[242]

Within the lack of trust towards women's abilities, there was also issues towards what was expected from them as leaders. Interviewee number one mentioned: "*I think that as a female leader the expectations towards you are huge. It is expected from the women to be more emphatic, to be team-oriented, to worry about the organizational culture. But at the same time, people almost cheer for these women to fail. There is a doubt if she will be able to be assertive enough. And this is such a trick characteristic for women. Because although they expect it from her, when she acts on it, she is usually interpretated as hysteric or rude. And she cannot even reply to it, she is not supposed to.*"[243] Interviewee number 2 went beyond and said: "As a female leader you need to always prove that you are better than the rest of the people." [244]

Interviewee number 3 offers a similar idea when discussing the lack of women in top management. She said: "*I think that a female leader needs to make a lot more of effort than the men to achieve certain upper positions. She needs to prove herself two, three times more. She needs to show that she is independent at every time, it does not matter the context. She needs to be always dedicating herself, but the man does not.*" For her, the main barriers are to be heard and respected. She mentioned: "*As a female leader is very difficult to be respected. I have already been in a situation that I asked by director for a meeting together with another colleague. We were all at the same level there, but I felt that he was always paying more attention and valuing better my colleague insights. It is something you realize at the small details.*"[245]

---

[240] Interview number 1, time stamp 00:28:10
[241] Interview number 2, time stamp 00:16:10
[242] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:19:48
[243] Interview number 1, time stamp 00:45:38
[244] Interview number 2, time stamp 00:33:44
[245] Interview number 3, time stamp 00:25:20

7.2   Findings in Nicaragua

Four main themes emerged from an analysis of the qualitative data performed with women from Nicaragua. These themes were: a) Machismo; b) Poverty; c) Business Structures, and d) Extra Mile run. Under those categories, different sub-themes were created according to how they connected with each other during the interview process. A display of these themes and sub-themes are illustrated in Figure 3.
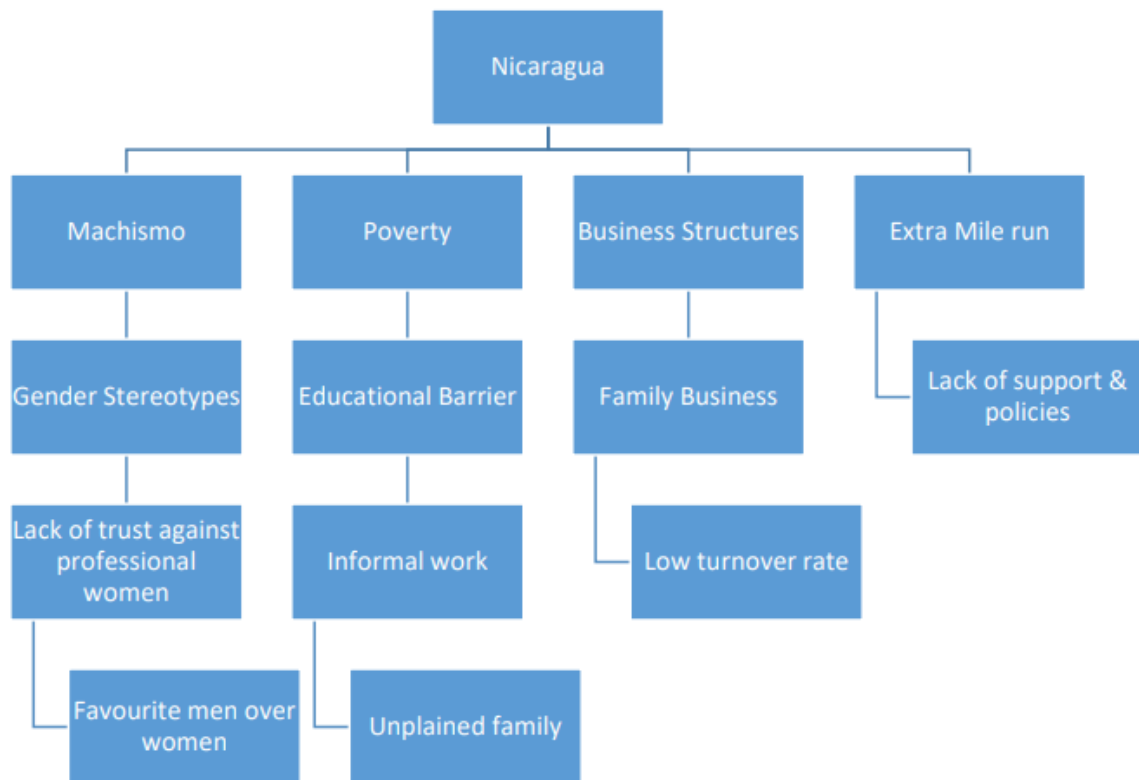

Figure 3 Themes and sub-themes outlined as barriers to women's career development as managers in Nicaragua

Source: Developed by the researcher based on the qualitative data findings

The first category of the Nicaragua's findings is also labelled as machismo. The first subtheme is also categorized as Gender Stereotypes. Similarities and differences between both countries will be analysed on the next section. Before, it is imperative to draw a clear picture of the barriers identified by this study in Nicaragua. One of the first affirmations of the interview number 4 was "*We have machismo. Do you know what is machismo, right? But the worst machismo that we have is the one coming from women.*" "*If you want to do something by yourself, they are going to judge you in a very bad way.*"[246] Suggesting that women are also part of reinforcing the gender stereotypes in this country. Including by choosing not to be exposed in powerful and contradictory positions, as she argues next: "*Machismo culture. That's a cultural problem that we have in Latin America.*"[247] "*You find powerful women, but they don't want to be in the front role. They*

---

[246] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:30:17
[247] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:51:09

want to be in the backstage of the organization."[248] The interviewee number 6 also offers a perspective on that "*There is a tendency of women prioritizing family and home responsibilities. While men take the work.*"[249]

According to interviewee 5: "*From the people (woman) that I went to high school with. I don't think any of them work at the workforce. Yeah, the girls they either work at their houses as a mom, which Is a very important job, or they work on the side having their own little companies or baking.*"[250] A cause-and-effect phenomena is also suggested by the interviewee number 4 "*Women tend to go more in that when they need to. You know something that is very weird. Some of them is related with this: divorced women and within kids usually get those positions.*"[251]

However, the gender stereotypes are not only reinforced by women in Nicaragua. The machismo can present itself very strongly in relationships. Interviewee 4 offered an example when discussing the lack of women in top management. She said: "*Let's just talk about salary. Do you think that a man would like to go out with me If I had better salary than him? I remember one boyfriend saying goodbye to me because of that.*" "*So, I will say that is something related with the old culture that we have to change. Because they prepare and teach you that you are not allowed to be there. It is an education problem. Not only from school but from the homes as well, from our families.*"[252]

No one seems to be left out of it, when sharing her school experience interviewee number 5 said (about the other kids) "*I remember the two words that they still use for me. One is bossy, and then intense. So, I thought that I was intense, I thought that. And I did not want to be. I did not want to seem intense.*"[253] At work she also offers an example of how the gender expectation might have affect her: "*My mentor loved working with women. But I realized that the gentleman, the new guy, even though he was very young, for him it was very hard to work with women. Culturally it was very hard. His sister didn't work at the company, his wife didn't work.*"[254]

Those gender stereotypes can also cause lack of trust against professional women. Lack of respect is one example, when questioned about what she considered that were the most significant barriers encountered as female leader, interviewee number 4 answered: "*People, if they saw that you are a little pretty or take care of yourself, they will think that you are stupid.*" "*They do not see your brain. They do not see your capacity, they only see your body, your face. But we are not flower centres.*"[255]

When asked if there was any type of resistance towards her leadership, she shared a recently experience at one of the companies she was consulting to "*I remember one comment of one of the managers. He said, 'you are here because you are friends with the*

---

[248] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:54:36
[249] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:40:52
[250] Interviewee 5, time stamp 01:56:36
[251] Interviewee 4, time stamp: 01:02:12
[252] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:59:20
[253] Interviewee 5, time stamp 01:16:50
[254] Interviewee 5, time stamp 01:09:48
[255] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:34:17

owner'. Or something like that." In negative and as way to explain why that comment was so off, she shared "*But they had lower level of education than mine.*"[256]

Interviewee number 6 have had a similar experience, she explained: "*80% of the managers are men. So, being in that environment was to face doubts like – are you doing a good financial analysis? – or – do you know how does this company work?*"[257]

Interviewee number five also mentioned "*It is time for men to understand that women can add a lot of value to their companies more than they think, especially in leadership roles. We are not only the people that answers the phone or the people that are in human resources.*" "*We are not going to freak out, you know. Yes, we do have hormones and stuff like that, and you know that happens and some days we are up and some days we are down. But we all have crappy days, and we all have good days. And that should not matter.*"[258]

When the results of Nicaragua at the Global Gender Report were firstly approached, her first reaction was to ask: "*Do you believe in those numbers?*"[259] "*The vice president is the wife of the president. Yes, she is a woman but that does not mean that those women make decisions.*"[260]

Besides that, at least two of the three interviewees suggested that in additional to the issues outlined by the lack of trust towards women, there is also a clear male favouritism that prevent women to move upward in their careers. The interviewee number 6 mentioned: "*There are many (barriers to female leadership). For example, the priority in a management position will be to choose a man over a woman. Not just because of their abilities but because sometimes it is the cultural expectation.*"[261]

Interviewee number 4, when answering if she felt that there was any difference at treatment and opportunities for being a woman if compared to her brother, even though she said now, she was able to offer an another recurrent situation that she feels and felt discriminated: "*If I go to a company to apply for a business service, like training, If some coach that is a man comes and makes the same application, guess who is going to get the job?*" (Referring to the man)[262]

The second theme outlined by the studied was Poverty. Within Nicaragua being one of the poorest countries of Latin America and suffering from economy instability since 2018, the barriers rooted by poverty seems to be the ones that most affect women's progress nowadays. Under this theme barriers to education access, informal work, and early pregnancies will be discussed.

Approaching education, interviewee number 5 outlines economic inequality issues: "Like the vast majority of Central America, people here don't have those opportunities, the vast majority of people do not study. They don't get to study."[263]

---

[256] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:35:59
[257] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:41:51
[258] Interviewee 5, time stamp 01:42:34
[259] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:43:15
[260] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:43:24
[261] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:49:24
[262] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:09:09
[263] Interviewee 5, time stamp 00:21:45

A metaphor offered by interviewee number 4 complements the discussion "*If you have 10 students that go to the first year of school. The fathers will have a lot of effort to be able to give them food, por example, to go to school. To give them materials. So, when they growth up and get older, they are going to start working. So, they will have their first job at 9 or 12 years old. So, when you consider university, they are not allowed to be there because they need to work for food. They do not have money. If you go to outside of Managua, it gets worst. The little girls are supposed to be the maids of the houses. That's the reality, so they don't have the same opportunities.*"[264]

Interviewee number 6 also offers her perspective at the topic by saying: "*People might decide to just go into work directly. There are many people who struggle here. Besides that, there is a percentage that comes from rural areas. Because if you think of rural areas you have to add up to that cost. Transportation moving to the capital city and most of the public universities are there because the ones that are on different cities.*" "*With the economic situation of the country, people will definitely prioritize working.*"[265]

Overall, the economy crisis of the country seems to be affecting its whole population but because women are usually placed to take care of home and the family, this problem might affect them even harder. "*But that is how it rolls. You know, 1% goes to those places, and then the other percentage, well, they don't.*"[266]

When approaching the Global Gender Gap in order to gather their perspective of the statistic found towards women's participation at the workforce, Interviewee four reinforced: "*One thing that we have to be clear and realistic is that since 2018 the number of people performing informal jobs increased and the numbers of formal job went down.*"[267] "*Remember, we lost so many formal jobs. I think that it was almost 40% since 2018. That's the step number one (for women becoming small business owners), reason two is that some of those women need to maintain their kids. So, they are going to do whatever they need to be able to do that. They don't waste their time.*"[268] Interviewee number 6 confirms: "*Since 2018 there is a huge unemployment rate and there were many women affected.*"[269]

Another field very much approached during the interviews was early pregnancy and unplanned families. They all seem to recognize that within so many teenagers getting pregnant, child marriage is a real issue that affects all of them. Interviewee number 6 confirms "*The rates of women that get pregnant at a early age, there are many. There is a lot of teen pregnancies in Nicaragua.*"[270]

Interviewee number 5 affirmed: "*Sexual education is a big thing that we should do.*" "*It is a very important thing that we should do because kids shouldn't be having kids, that's the reality. There is also a lot of issues, also with violence.*"[271] Otherwise as consequences "*They don't have the same opportunities. Most of them get pregnant very young. (lower*

---

[264] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:48:39
[265] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:19:59
[266] Interviewee 5, time stamp 00:36:31
[267] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:44:43
[268] Interviewee 4, time stamp 01:05:27
[269] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:03:04
[270] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:03:48
[271] Interviewee 5, time stamp 02:08:26

social class) They get pregnant and then what they do is to work at their houses or informally."[272] According to Interviewee number 6 opinions it all starts in education. She said: "*I think that culture changes as people get more educated. At least those perspectives might change.*" "*You can see that talking to people from different levels. Just talking to them you can tell the difference of how they perceive family, marriage, work.*" "*I would start by educating people and empowering women. Not just when they are about to graduate university and going to the workforce. Girls should be given the space to learn a little bit more about careers options, to getting to know themselves better, to understand what they would like to do with their future. I think that something that should be incorporated in school curriculums. For example, adding Leadership skills building.*"[273]

The next category analysed as the business structures. It was referred to many times during the conversations within the respondents highlighting that most of the large companies in Nicaragua were traditional family organizations. And that because of this, opportunities and promotions were limited to network and economy reach. Besides that, the long-term relationship of the employees at the business were also mentioned as justification for the lack of women at top management positions. Interviewee number 4 offered the following example: "*For instance, the unfair treatments in the companies. I remember once, when I was selected to be a Latin America trainer for this financial company. And the niece of the CEO had a problem with me. She came to me and said, 'Or you stay, or I stay, so you are going away.' 10 days after that I had lost my job.*"[274]

She also highlighted that besides the unfair treatment and the complication towards family business, she has also perceived a weird situation. She mentioned: "*Most of the big companies are coming from family companies.*" "*The board of directors belongs to men.*" "*The middle companies and the small companies most of them belongs to women. But I don't know why the legal documentation is under their husbands' names*."[275] Interviewee number 6 also confirmed: "*To get those position was either because of your social status or economic status, whether you come from a well-known family or not.*"[276]

"*There is this tendency, or I noticed the tendency of people staying on the same positions for years. So, when you think of transitioning someone else and other talents, it might take a huge time. They rely on people based on either trust or seniority. So, when you have people who have been in that position for many years, they just decide to be there forever, until they retire.*" "*Besides that, I noticed that it is based on who you know, who you are connected with, networks circles and family backgrounds.*" "*There is an old fashion way of managing things in these companies because of the type of people that are managing, so the young people are discouraged. We do not see our ideas been taken into consideration.*" "*I have a colleague that when I joined my first company, I joined earning exactly the amount of money she had started to earn only after being 15 years on the job.*"[277] Therefore, it is also possible that the low rate of turnover is also contributing to lower incomes to employees.

---

[272] Interviewee 5, time stamp 01:58:13
[273] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:41:30
[274] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:25:02
[275] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:57:24
[276] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:41:22
[277] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:29:59

The last category draw to represent the Nicaragua's findings as the Extra Mile run. It describes how the lack of support and policies from the estate in additional to all the other issues mentioned, create an environment that in order to "win" women need to always do something more. An example of this, is that all three interviewees needed to count at some point within sponsorships to get access to better education. But to do that, they needed to present a greater performance then everyone else. The next quotes describe how they approached to subject.

Interviewee number 4: "*When I was with the scholarship, I went to university for only a year and then I took all my classes by special tests. It was supper difficult. I had to study by myself.*" "*But I balanced to work full time, like 9 or 10 hours per day, plus study.*" "*I remember one time that I was crying because I thought that I was never going to get my degree.*"[278]

Interviewee number 5: "*You know what, you have to keep pushing and every time I got to my limit at pushing some door, then I opened a window. Just open anything. So even when I was tired, I just kept going.*"[279]

Interviewee number 6: "*I would say that in order to get to where I am today, it has definitely been because I have prepared myself. I had to, you know, give the extra mile. I have been curious enough to pursue opportunities. Which is different from the Nicaraguan people. They do not know about opportunities. So, I was probably the only one applying and probably why I was chosen.*"[280]

7.3 Discussion

The first question draw under this study was 'What are the barriers towards women's career development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua from a political, economic, and social perspective?' The following table illustrates the major barriers found under each country context.

Brazil	Nicaragua
Machismo	Machismo
Motherhood Perception	Poverty
Education	Business Structures
Prejudice	Extra Mile Run

Table 10: Major barriers towards female business leadership found under Brazil and Nicaragua context

Source: Self-created

During interviews with Brazilian female business leaders, the Machismo was one of the most discussed topics. There were stories about how the treatment and opportunities offered to women through life were smaller or at least different than from men. There were discussions towards the gender role expectations, on how men believe they are superior

---

[278] Interviewee 4, time stamp 00:17:54
[279] Interviewee 5, time stamp 02:14:32
[280] Interviewee 6, time stamp 00:44:20

to women, and how women are expected to be nicer, kinder, and more caring. There were also mention of how these women adapted to a more masculine behaviour in order to feel safe and be respected. Least but not last, about how all these situations made women so insecure that now exists a lack of trust and support even between them.

The second most discussed topic was the Motherhood perceptions. When discussing about opportunities of advancement and development in their career, there were constantly mentioning of how motherhood is used to punish women in the Brazilian workforce. There are considerations about women who lost their jobs because of maternities leaves and at the same pace about women who post-pone the plan for a family for being afraid of losing their careers. There was also mentioning about under the cultural aspects' women are still the only one expected to give up everything in order to raise a family, even in the contexts where they have superior careers and payment than their partners. There was also attention to the lack of support and policies towards these issues, meaning lack of childcare systems by the government and the lack of paternity leave. Finally, there were great considerations about how women are denied opportunities when they are a) in the age of having children; or b) already have children.

The last two categories from Brazil perspective were Education and Prejudice. Although less discussed were also responsible for bringing interesting insights. The Education category approached how the educational system in Brazil is known for being better in private schools. As a result, people who have better economic parameters are also the ones who have better job opportunities. The Prejudice barrier, tough, described a second type of lack of trust, this time against women from men. Under this category, issues towards how successful women are usually dismissed and described as someone's protegee were discussed. At the same pace that the need for women to proof and justify themselves all they time to male bosses or colleagues were mentioned.

In sum, under the context of Brazil, the major issues encountered where connected to social issues. In which women feel that the society still behaves against them in many ways.

When it comes to the Nicaraguan context, during interviews with Nicaraguan female business leaders the Machismo was also one of the main barriers encountered. However, differently from Brazil in which the men were hold the major responsible for this issue, in Nicaragua were much mentioning about how for them this machismo is coming from other women. According to the analysis the reason for this is duo to the fact that women still see family caring and working as in an exclusion relationship. In which they can only choose one, and therefore, it must be family responsibilities. Beyond this, under this category were also discussed the fact that women are still not seen as professional capable. Thus, successful women – just as in Brazil – are usually dismissed and described as someone's protegee.

The second major category under Nicaragua's context was Poverty. The economic crisis that the country is suffering during the last decade was repeatedly mentioned. Mainly, it was ascribed as the reason for why the majority of the population does not enrol in tertiary education. It is said that duo the lack of resources, people are becoming more engage to informal types of work, especially women. While poverty was determined as the major barriers against women's development as business leader's duo to lack of education and

opportunities in formal workforce; unplanned family was described as the consequence of this lack of education. There were constantly mentioning about early pregnancy as also a barrier to women's professional development.

The last two categories under the context of Nicaragua were Business Structures and Extra Mile run. Which although were less discussed it also brought light for some important aspects of the organizational culture and the lack of support and polices towards women's development. The first, highlighted the idea that businesses in Nicaragua tend to have a lower turnover rate because people are still conditioned to stay in the same company throughout all their professional careers. Thus, there are less opportunities for everyone in management and leadership positions. The second, focused again on the lack of support and policies towards education enrolment and retainment.

In sum, under the context of Nicaragua, the major issues encountered are connected to social and economic aspects. In which women are choosing to be out of the workforce because of machismo, or are forced out of the workforce (formally speaking) because of poverty.

The second question draw under this study was 'What are the main similarities and differences between the barriers found in both countries?'

According to analysis, the major differences between both countries underline on the fact that the main barriers found in Brazil were Machismo and Motherhood, and both were connected to societal aspects. While in Nicaragua, Poverty that lies under the economic aspect was concluded to be the main problem towards female leadership in the country duo to the unstable economy of the country. This category was found to be responsible for preventing women to acquire qualified education and sometimes just education at all. Another consequence of this issue was that duo to the lack of education and awareness, the country also presented problems towards early pregnancy and unplanned families.

When it comes to the similarities found between both nations, there was one major founding – see table 11.

Categories	Brazil	Nicaragua
Machismo	X	X
Motherhood Perceptions	X	
Education	X	
Prejudice	X	
Poverty		X
Business structure		X
Extra Mile Run		X

Table 11: Comparison of similarities and differences between Brazil and Nicaragua's categories results
Source: Self-created

As once can see, from the main categories codified between both countries, only one was found in both, the machismo. In both scenarios, gender stereotype was used to describe

how women are being forced out of the workforce because of the traditional expectation that they need to be fully responsible for the family responsibilities and childcare. However, the main difference at both performances might be how this effect is perceived by the interviewees and presented during the interview. While in Brazil, one could interpret that women are unhappy because of the situation and see it as a challenge. In Nicaragua, one might interpret that this movement is happening in accordance with the women. Where they seem to preferer to focus on the motherhood instead of the professional career.

Besides the gender stereotype, there are also another two sub-categories that even though were divided in different group, were similar enough to be described with the same code. They are the Lack of trust against professional women and the Lack of support and policies. The first, address how women might not always be respected at the work environment by the colleagues. This lack of trust can come in different forms, for example, women's achievements being undermined or dismissed by the colleagues, for considering that she did not deserve it. Because this was the main way that this topic was described in Brazil, it was categorized under the theme Prejudice. However, in the Nicaragua context it appeared as a discomfort that men might feel when working with the opposite gender. Thus, it was underlined as Machismo. The second sought to described what women felt that was missing and should be done by the government to help them to close the gender gap. In Brazil the need for policies towards childcare system and better paternity leave were describe as potential solution to the lack of women in the job market and leadership positions. In Nicaragua, the candidates outlined the need for policies that created a fairer educational system. So those better opportunities would also be offered to the largest part of the population and not only to the upper class one.

When taking into consideration the other barriers investigated, the main difference found between them happens at the issue that offers ground to all the other complains. In Brazil case, the main trouble seems to be how the society deals with motherhood. While in Nicaragua, the main issue is the economic context of the country. Therefore, in overall, while Brazil and Nicaragua suffer from the same culture influence, they appear to illustrate very different barriers when it comes to political, economic, and social variables. Which allow them to present different perception towards similar social issues.

8. Overview

8.1   Summary

This study sought to investigate how macro dynamics affect the development of women as business leaders at the Latin America region, in specifically in Brazil and Nicaragua. The choice of the research field was based on Literature Review that presented a lack of attention towards connecting the topic Gender, Leadership and societal variables all together as a tool to analyse women's progress in leadership in different countries. The methodology was based in qualitative research methodology that allowed the researcher to access personal stories and perceptions of women that have or had experiences in those environments. The data was explored by a five steps content analysis that allowed

the creation of different categories and dimensions to represent the barriers encountered based on the similarities and patterns found at the one-on-one interviews.

Taking it all in consideration there are two main research questions to be answered next:

1) What are the barriers towards women's career development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua from a political, economic, and social perspective?

2) What are the main similarities and differences between the barriers found in both countries?

8.2   Conclusion

The first question draw under this study was 'What are the barriers towards women's career development as business leaders in Brazil and Nicaragua from a political, economic, and social perspective?'

First, when it comes to the results found in Brazil, the barriers identified were codified as 1. Machismo; 2. Motherhood perception; 3. Education, and 4. Prejudice. Second, when it comes to the results found in Nicaragua, the barriers identified were codified as 1. Machismo; 2. Poverty; 3. Business Structures; and Extra Mile Run.

The second question draw under this study was 'What are the main similarities and differences between the barriers found in both countries?'

According to analysis the major differences between both countries underline on the fact that the main barriers found in Brazil are under social aspects and the main barriers found in Nicaragua are under economic aspects.

Overall, the research was able to identify that there are significant differences between the results of both countries. Proving that there is ground for further research, that could lead to raising knowledge to different barriers that prevent women's progress in professional career. And potential solutions of how one can improve the gender gap in better parameters. Yet, as any other study, its limitations should be informed in order to enlighten next researchers that might approach the topic. Because both Brazil and Nicaragua are countries that counts with extensive countryside influence, the result found under this investigation might not be found true in every region of the countries, especially at the less centred positioned ones. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore how the macro conditions that affect women's development as business leaders, also change within the different cities and micro cultures at these countries.

8.3   Outlook

The results of this research confirm that societal, economic, and political factors have great influence at gender equality and in how it affects women's progress as business leaders. It also suggests that the type of barriers that are encountered in each country and are based and developed from changes according to the framework of the countries. Even

when they have similar backgrounds and are influenced by the same hereditary culture; for which Brazil and Nicaragua being a great example to outline those differences.

References

Aalateeg, S. (2017). Literature Review on Leadership Theories. *Journal of Business and Management, 19(*11), 35–43.

Algahtani, A. (2014). Are Leadership and Management Different? A Review. *Journal of Management Policies and Practices, 2(*3), 71–82. https://doi.org/10.15640/jmpp.v2n3a4

Anderson C. (2010). Presenting and evaluating qualitative research. American journal of pharmaceutical education, 74(8), 1-7. https://doi.org/10.5688/aj7408141

Asrar-ul-Haq, M., & Anwar, S. (2018). The many faces of leadership: Proposing research agenda through a review of literature. *Future Business Journal, 4*(2), 179–188. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fbj.2018.06.002

Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2008). T*he Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications* (Fourth Edition). Free Press.

Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2009). *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications.* Simon and Schuster.

Bozkurt, V., Tartanoglu, S., & Dawes, G. (2015). Masculinity and Violence: Sex Roles and Violence Endorsement among University Students. Procedia - *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 205,* 254–260. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.09.072

Bratton, J. (2020). *Organizational Leadership*. SAGE.

Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. (2017). "List of countries in Latin America". *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved on 28.11.2021 https://www.britannica.com/topic/list-of-countries-in-Latin-America-2061416

Burns, J. M. (2012). *Leadership*. Open Road Media.

Carlyle T. *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*. Fredrick A. Stokes & Brother, 1988.

Carol Hymowitz & Timothy D. Schellhardt. (1986, March 24). The Corporate Woman (A Special Report): Cover—The Glass Ceiling: Why Women Can't Seem to Break The Invisible Barrier That Blocks Them From the Top Jobs. Wall Street Journal, Eastern Edition; New York, N.Y., 1.

Chandan, J. S., & Mandal, S. (2019). *Principle & Practice of Management*. Vikas Publishing House.

Crevani, L., Lindgren, M., & Packendorff, J. (2010). Leadership, not leaders: On the study of leadership as practices and interactions. *Scandinavian Journal of Management, 26*(1), 77–86. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2009.12.003

Cuberes, D., & Teignier, M. (2011). *Gender Inequality and Economic Growth*.

Day, D. V., & Antonakis, J. (Eds.). (2012). *The Nature of Leadership* (2nd ed). SAGE.

Dugan, J. P. (2017). *Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives*. John Wiley & Sons.

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review, 109*(3), 573–598. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573

Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2007). Women and the labyrinth of leadership. *Harvard Business Review, 85*(9), 62–71, 146.

Feminism and Women's Rights Movements. (n.d.). [Conseil of Europe]. Gender Matters. Retrieved June 24, 2021, from https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/feminism-and-women-s-rights-movements

Global Gender Gap Report 2021 (No. 16; p. 405). (2021). World Economic Forum. p.12 http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

Halaychik, C. (2016). *Lessons in Library Leadership: A Primer for Library Managers and Unit Leaders*. Chandos Publishing.

Heames, J. T., & Harvey, M. (2006). The Evolution of the Concept of the "Executive" from the 20th Century Manager to the 21st Century Global Leader. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 13*(2), 29–41. https://doi.org/10.1177/10717919070130020301

Hunt, T., & Fedynich, L. C. (2018). Leadership: Past, Present, and Future: An Evolution of an Idea. *Journal of Arts and Humanities, 8*(2), 20–26. https://doi.org/10.18533/journal.v8i2.1582

Interpreting Hofstede Model and GLOBE Model: Which Way to Go for Cross-Cultural Research? *International Journal of Business and Management, 6*(5), 93–99. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v6n5p93

Jackson, J. F. L., & O'Callaghan, E. M. (2009). What Do We Know About Glass Ceiling Effects? A Taxonomy and Critical Review to Inform Higher Education Research. *Research in Higher Education, 50*(5), 460–482. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-009-9128-9

Javidan, M., & Dastmalchian, A. (2009). Managerial implications of the GLOBE project: A study of 62 societies. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources, 47*(1), 41–58. https://doi.org/10.1177/1038411108099289

Jogulu, U. D., & Wood, G. J. (2006). The role of leadership theory in raising the profile of women in management. *Equal Opportunities International, 25*(4), 236–250. https://doi.org/10.1108/02610150610706230

Kaehler, B., & Grundei, J. (2019). *HR Governance: A Theoretical Introduction*. Springer.

Labor, U. S. D. of. (1991). *A Report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative*. U.S. Department of Labor.

Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of Gender*. Yale University Press.

Lorber, J. (1995). *Paradoxes of Gender*. Yale University Press.

Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2010). *Leadership: Theory, Application, & Skill Development* (4th ed). South-Western Cengage Learning.

Maddux, J. E., & Winstead, B. A. (2019). *Psychopathology: Foundations for a Contemporary Understanding*. Routledge.

National Culture. (n.d.). *Hofstede Insights*. Retrieved July 28, 2021, from https://www.hofstede-insights.com/models/national-culture/

Northouse, P. G. (2018). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th Edition). Sage Publishing.

Ponthieux, S., & Meurs, D. (2015). Gender Inequality. In Handbook of Income Distribution (Vol. 2, pp. 981– 1146). Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-444-59428-0.00013-8

Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The glass ceiling: What have we learned 20 years on? *Journal of Organizational Effectiveness: People and Performance, 2*(4), 306–326. https://doi.org/10.1108/JOEPP-09-2015-0032

Reports. (n.d.). World Economic Forum. Retrieved July 29, 2021, from https://www.weforum.org/reports/

Ridgeway, C. L. (2011). *Framed by Gender: How Gender Inequality Persists in the Modern World* (1st edition). Oxford University Press.

Sandberg, S. (2013). Lean in: Women, work, and the will to lead (First edition.). Alfred A. Knopf

Silva, A. (2016). What is Leadership? *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, *8*(1), 1–5.

Sczesny, S., Bosak, J., Neff, D., & Schyns, B. (2004). Gender Stereotypes and the Attribution of Leadership Traits: A Cross-Cultural Comparison. *Sex Roles, 51*(11–12), 631–645. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-004-0715-0

Shi, X., & Wang, J. (2011). Interpreting Hofstede Model and GLOBE Model: Which Way to Go for Cross-Cultural Research? *International Journal of Business and Management*, *6*(5), 93–99. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v6n5p93

Skjott Linneberg, M., & Korsgaard, S. (2019). Coding qualitative data: A synthesis guiding the novice. Qualitative Research Journal, 19(3), 1–29. https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-12-2018-0012

Snaebjornsson, I. M., & Edvardsson, I. (2013). Gender, Nationality and Leadership Style: A Literature Review. *International Journal of Business and Management, 8*(1), 89–103. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v8n1p89

Spector, B. A. (2016). Carlyle, Freud, and the Great Man Theory more fully considered. *Leadership*, *12*(2), 250–260. https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015571392

Torgrmson, B. N., & Christopher, T. M. (2005). Sex and gender: What is the difference? *Journal of Applied Physiology, 99*(3), 785–787. https://doi.org/10.1152/japplphysiol.00376.2005

Toor, S.-R., & Ofori, G. (2008). Leadership versus Management: How They Are Different, and Why. *Leadership and Management in Engineering, 8*(2), 61–71. https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)1532-6748(2008)8:2(61)

UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework (GMIF) for 2002-2007. (2003). UNESCO. https://bit.ly/2Rqb6Tn

Wajdi, B. N. (2017). The Differences Between Management and Leadership. *Sinergi, 7*(1). https://doi.org/10.25139/sng.v7i1.31

What is PESTLE Analysis? An Important Business Analysis Tool. (n.d.). Retrieved January 2, 2022, from https://pestleanalysis.com/what-is-pestle-analysis/

White, M. D., & Marsh, E. E. (2006). Content Analysis: A Flexible Methodology. Library Trends, 55(1), 22–45. https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.2006.0053

Wilson, S., Cummings, S., Jackson, B., & Proctor-Thomson, S. (2017). *Revitalising Leadership: Putting Theory and Practice into Context.* Routledge.

Yammarino, F. (2013). Leadership: Past, Present, and Future. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies, 20*(2), 149–155. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051812471559

Yukl, G. A. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed). Pearson.

Zaccaro (2014) cited in Dugan, J. P. (2017). *Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives.* John Wiley & Sons.

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Brazilian's participants

I.   Background information:

A. Personal Profile
1. Name
2. Age
3. Marital status
4. Number of kids
5. Currently social economic class

B. Family background
6. How many people lived in your house while growing up?
7. If you have siblings, what is their gender?
8. What is your close family educational background?
9. What was your social economic class back then?
10. If you have brothers, do you believe that there were any differences in the treatment you received from your parents or the opportunities you had, when compared to your brothers, because of your gender?

C. Academic history
11. Did you frequent a private or public school? If you studied at a public school, was it intentional or was it based on financial need?
12. At each age did you begin university and which course did you apply for?
13. Was it a public or private university? If it was a public university, was it intentional or based on financial needs?
14. Did you work while studying? If yes, was the decision made based upon professional goals or financial needs?
15. What are the extracurricular courses you participated that you consider as most important to your career so far?
16. What are the main factors that have influenced your choice of career? D. Professional experiences
17. Tell me about your currently job (name, type, and size of the company; starter and currently position, main tasks, size of your team, proportion of the team by gender, for how long have you been working there).
18. Tell me about your others professional experiences that you believe were significant to your professional development so far.

II.   Leadership experiences and perceptions
19. Do you believe that women in your field face barriers to be promoted?
20. Do you consider that you prepared yourself intentionally to achieve a leadership position? If yes, how?

21. Do you consider that was easy for you to get financial and moral support to develop your career and become a female leader?
22. As a female leader, what are the most significant barriers that you have encountered in your professional career so far?
23. Do you believe that you suffer or suffered from any kind of resistance from your team or colleagues for being a female leader?
24. Do you believe that you needed to adapt your behaviour, in any way, to succeed in your career in general and specially as a female leader?

III. National Context – Brazil

25. In Brazil, only 60% of all women in working age are part of the workforce against 80% of all men in working age. What is your perception of this number? Tell me why you believe that this gender gap exists and in what is based on.
26. In Brazil, almost 60% of all women are part of the tertiary education. They also occupy almost 60% of all professional and technical jobs. However, when it comes to becoming legislators, senior officials, and managers, they are only 39%. Please tell me why even tough women have more education, and occupy most of the professional and technical positions, they are still minority on authority positions? Also, tell me what was primordial in your career or life that allowed you to be part of those 39%.
27. When approaching top management positions, in Brazil, women does not fulfil even 20% of all vacancies. In your opinion what happens between middle management and top management that the rate of women's participation decreases even more?
28. In your opinion, what is the role of Brazilian's culture in the barriers faced or opportunities presented to women during the development of their professional career? 29. What is your opinion on how Brazilian women can overcome these barriers?
29. With a policy perspective in mind, what do you believe that should be done by the government or companies, to help women overcome these obstacles. Example, to attract more women to the workforce and/or to help them to develop their career and occupy leadership positions?
30. Are you aware of any strategy or benefit that already exists and is offered by the government or companies that seek to overcome this lack of women in the labour market and in leadership positions? If so, how effective do you think these strategies are? What could be done to improve them?
31. Keeping in mind that we are seeking to understand the factors that affect women's career development as leaders in Brazil. Also, that we are focusing on gender issues and national context. Do you have any other information or experiences that we did not cover during this conversation that you believe is relevant to this research and would like to share?

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for Nicaraguan's participants

I.   Background information:

A. Personal Profile
1. Name
2. Age
3. Marital status
4. Number of kids
5. Currently social economic class

B. Family background
6. How many people lived in your house while growing up?
7. If you have siblings, what is their gender?
8. What is your close family educational background?
9. What was your social economic class back then?
10. If you have brothers, do you believe that there were any differences in the treatment you received from your parents or the opportunities you had, when compared to your brothers, because of your gender?

C. Academic history
11. Did you frequent a private or public school? If you studied at a public school, was it intentional or was it based on financial need?
12. At each age did you begin university and which course did you apply for?
13. Was it a public or private university? If it was a public university, was it intentional or based on financial needs?
14. Did you work while studying? If yes, was the decision made based upon professional goals or financial needs?
15. What are the extracurricular courses you participated that you consider as most important to your career so far?
16. What are the main factors that have influenced your choice of career? D. Professional experiences
17. Tell me about your currently job (name, type, and size of the company; starter and currently position, main tasks, size of your team, proportion of the team by gender, for how long have you been working there).
18. Tell me about your others professional experiences that you believe were significant to your professional development so far.

II.   Leadership experiences and perceptions
19. Do you believe that women in your field face barriers to be promoted?
20. Do you consider that you prepared yourself intentionally to achieve a leadership position? If yes, how?

21. Do you consider that was easy for you to get financial and moral support to develop your career and become a female leader?
22. As a female leader, what are the most significant barriers that you have encountered in your professional career so far?
23. Do you believe that you suffer or suffered from any kind of resistance from your team or colleagues for being a female leader?
24. Do you believe that you needed to adapt your behaviour, in any way, to succeed in your career in general and specially as a female leader?

III.   National Context – Nicaragua

25. In Nicaragua, only a bit over 50% of all women in working age are part of the workforce, against 85% of all men in working age. What is your perception of this number? Tell me why you believe that this gender gap exists and in what is based on. 58. In Nicaragua, over 95% of all girls enter the primary school. However, only a bit over 50% of frequented secondary school and finally, only 18% are part of the tertiary studies. Tell me what your perception on those numbers is. Why the number decrease so much throughout the years?
26. Event tough only 18% of women are part of the tertiary studies in Nicaragua, they still have a higher rate of participation than men. And when it comes to occupying professional and technical positions in the workforce, women fulfil 55% of all the vacancies. However, when it comes to becoming legislators, senior officials, and managers, they are only 35.2%. Please, tell me why even tough women have more education, and occupy most of the professional and technical positions, they are still minority on authority positions? Also, tell me what was primordial in your career or life that allowed you to be part of those 35%.
27. When approaching top management positions, in Nicaragua, women fulfil only 27 of all vacancies. In your opinion what happens between middle management and top management that the rate of women's participation decreases even more?
28. In your opinion, what is the role of Nicaraguan's culture in the barriers faced or opportunities presented to women during the development of their professional career?
29. What is your opinion on how Nicaraguan women can overcome these barriers? 63. With a policy perspective in mind, what do you believe that should be done by the government or companies, to help women overcome these obstacles. Example, to attract more women to the workforce and/or to help them to develop their career and occupy leadership positions?
30. Are you aware of any strategy or benefit that already exists and is offered by the government or companies that seek to overcome this lack of women in the labour market and in leadership positions? If so, how effective do you think these strategies are? What could be done to improve them?
31. Keeping in mind that we are seeking to understand the factors that affect women's career development as leaders in Nicaragua. Also, that we are focusing on gender issues and national context. Do you have any other information or experiences that we did not cover during this conversation that you believe is relevant to this research and would like to share?

Statement of Affirmation

I hereby declare that all parts of this thesis were exclusively prepared by me, without using resources other than those stated above. The thoughts taken directly or indirectly from external sources are appropriately annotated. This thesis or parts of it were not previously submitted to any other academic institution and have not yet been published.

Dornbirn, 07.01.2022

Amanda Lotzer