
Renaissance of Saudi Women Leaders' Achievement

A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Lama Gazzaz

Brunel Business School

Brunel University

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Dedication

I dedicate my thesis to my mother Aysha and my father Tallal who both nurtured my interest in knowledge by sending me to summer school in Switzerland at the age of fourteen. I owe my education and personal development in part to both Mecca, the cultural hub of Saudi Arabia, and my mother's town Abha, which strongly holds its traditions. However, my family were liberal and open-minded, which enabled me to benefit from the rich cultural fusion that arose from being raised in Mecca. The other robust and solid part of my education and personal development is because of my dear husband Nihad, who from my earliest education completely and unreservedly supported me. I came to England to support my eldest daughter who has always been a first class student, but the quest for knowledge in me, which was severely upset in Saudi because of lack of spaces for MSc study, was sparked too, and I registered for the PhD programme at Brunel University. My other daughter and sons were pivotal in keeping me focused on my studies. Yousef was especially kind and supportive in many aspects of my research. Though my son-in-law, he is like my son. I hardly need to mention my loving and deeply understanding sisters, who are no different from me, and brothers continuously encouraged me and comforted me throughout my research studies. I thank my family friend, a wise man, who made England seem like my home in Saudi, by supporting me and my family and helping me settle down to do my studies. As my research reveals, a woman's journey to leadership is influenced by both family relationship and culture, similar my own completion of my PhD research is no different; it reinforces the fact that to be a leader requires relationships that nurture achievement and help to overcome often severe obstacles. Finally, I especially want to thank my real friend for being the pillar who was able to prevent things from falling apart, and particularly myself.

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Declaration

I declare that this Thesis is my original work. This includes the idea for the research topic, intellectual thinking and empirical research design, as well as the collection and analysis of data. I have adhered to proper academic conduct and ethical guidelines for undertaking research. This Thesis has not been previously submitted a research degree at this or other university.

Abstract

This research investigated cultural and social factors that influenced or allowed Saudi women to become leaders. It also examined those values that are synchronous with cultural and social factors that improved their access to leadership opportunities. An understanding of the factors and values that enabled these Saudi women to succeed leads to better knowledge of formation of leadership character. The context in which these Saudi women achieved their successful goal of becoming leaders, provides insight into their development as leaders and contribute to leadership studies in a traditional and religious context.

The empirical data, gathered through in-depth structured interviews using multiple rounds of interviews, was interpreted to produce a framework focused on the achievement of leadership and the cultural and social factors that enable or inhibit women leadership. The research revealed culturally based constructs related to gender. Whilst men are given responsibility and favoured for responsible positions, women are not inferior to men. Significantly, the women regarded themselves as no different from men in terms of bearing responsibility, being independent and achieving success. It confirmed the expectation depicted in the conceptual framework that women's attributes or values are critical and significant in their successful journey to leadership. Sixteen such values and attributes emerged from the data. Significant among them were empathy with employees, ability to adapt, strength of character, expert knowledge and solidarity among women.

By understanding the values that help women to achieve, sustain and evolve their leadership skills, which social and cultural dynamics enable or inhibit them in becoming leaders, and which organisational factors are critical for their success, this research has contributed better knowledge of Saudi women leadership achievement. Knowledge about women leadership in the Saudi context is thus advanced. This reveals that there is a role of the family and especially the father's role, individual's aspirations and action, the personal and professional struggle that Saudi women leaders experience, and the interpersonal relationships that they establish with their male counterparts to succeed. The research contributed understanding and knowledge of those values held by successful women leaders that are both unique and shared with successful leaders around the world. It revealed the social and cultural factors and dynamics, in the opinion of the participants that inhibit or enhance their ability to gain leadership roles and to work as effective leaders. The research revealed the organisational factors or dynamics affect women leaders.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

It surprises many people that there are women in Saudi Arabia who are in leading positions of influence and power in organisations in Saudi Arabia. Saudi women aspire to be successful in their careers and become entrepreneurs (Al-Ahmadi, 2005; Ahmad, 2011; Abdalla, 2015). They seek leadership positions in companies, healthcare organisations and government. This phenomenon of leadership is the subject of the present research investigation. Miner (2005) argues that leadership needs to be studied in the context of the actual challenges encountered by aspiring leaders. Consequently, the research focused on the culture and society of Saudi Arabia in which Saudi women aspire to become successful leaders and aimed to investigate the cultural and social factors of Saudi society that promote or hinder Saudi women leadership. Empirical knowledge of the cultural and social factors that affect women's aspirations to become leaders can contribute to better theoretical understanding of Saudi woman leaders' experience.

The subjects for this study were successful Saudi women leaders of companies, government departments, universities and women entrepreneurs. They had begun their individual journeys to successful leadership positions both before government reforms to liberalise women's rights and since then. However, what is unique about their achievements is that they achieved successful leadership in a very difficult and problematical context. This context is the traditional and religious society of Saudi Arabia, in which women do not have the same rights as men and in which they have to struggle to be heard and recognised for their abilities, knowledge, skills and competencies.

Theoretical explanations of successful leaders focus on 'Great Man', personal traits, behavioural theories, personal participation and involvement, contingency models, integrative leadership and situational theory. It is argued in this thesis that the situational theory better explains the experiences of successful Saudi women leaders. It is particular aspects of the situation that determine the achievement of prominent leadership positions. These aspects

include cultural, social, and personal characteristics, which are assumed to be greatly influenced by the women leaders' parental family and married family.

An understanding of the social, cultural and personal characteristic factors that enabled these Saudi women to succeed and why they succeeded leads to better knowledge of women leadership successes in Saudi Arabia. These factors are presumed in this research to be primarily the social, cultural and societal factors that the women would have experienced in their journey to leadership. By understanding the role of their family in their upbringing and particularly significant individuals such as the father, better knowledge of the critical stages of development of leadership ambition and potential can be determined. By considering the culture in which the women leaders had to achieve their goal, better knowledge of the formation of leadership character can be established. So, the context in which these Saudi women achieved their successful goal of becoming leaders can provide much insight into their development as leaders and contribute to leadership studies in different contexts.

1.2 Leadership

The phenomenon of leadership is important to understand in itself, but also because leaders create value. Understanding leadership can benefit both the leaders and those seeking to develop leaders, such as business companies, business schools, governments and the military. Since studies of leadership began the theoretical knowledge has advanced and become more comprehensive, encompassing individual leaders' traits, situation and context (Burke and Cooper, 2004; Northouse, 2015). The studies have led to classifications of types of leaders (Kuppusamy et al, 2010). When broadened to women leaders, such studies have included factors like family, culture and society (Abdullah 2008; Stead and Elliot, 2009).

Also, the phenomenon of leadership is important because leaders provide either a product or service of value to people. This is especially true for business leaders (Northouse, 2015). They provide social or political vision and direction that leads people to a better future (Frohlich and Oppenheimer, 2015). However, a study of the literature reveals no consensus on leadership formation or performance. Definitions of leadership focus on personal traits, behaviours and process, as discussed in Sections 2.2 and 2.3.

Leadership research has traditionally focused on the traits of male leaders (Burke and Cooper, 2004), but shifted to situational factors and context, behavioural approaches and contingency modes (Miner, 2005). The behavioural theories focus on the observation that learned

behaviours result in successful and effective leadership (Howell and Costley, 2006). These studies have mainly been done about leaders in North America, Europe and the UK.

However, more recent definitions of leadership suggests that it is a process that uses social influence and guidance to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of others in the achievement of a set target or goal (Burke and Collins, 2001). It is this process, as related to women and their family, culture and society in which women become leaders that is of interest in this research.

Explanations of leadership focus on the person and personal traits (Carneiro, 1981; Straker, 2015). Though such explanations have been supplemented with others that examine the context and situation, the personal trait theories are dominant. Explanations that focus on the context and situation of leadership provide understanding of the factors in the situation that inspire an individual to become a leader. The behavioural explanations are significant too (Miner, 2005; Howell and Costley, 2006). There is other research that focuses on the social, cultural and familial aspects of leadership, which determine the achievement of leadership positions (Burke and Collins, 2001). This research seeks to understand these aspects as a whole, rather than individual elements, as they affect Saudi women leaders' achievement of leadership positions.

1.3 Women Leadership

Companies have begun to appreciate the benefits of gender parity. There is the argument that gender diversity leads to better productivity and organisational performance (Steven et al., 2003). They have invested in training and development programs for women to take leading roles.

The available studies of women leadership provide better understanding of constructs, theories and factors. Recent focus on women leaders has drawn on situational theories. For example, Bass and Riggio (2006) and McCleskey (2014) contend that where relationships are critical, women can naturally emerge as leaders. This suggests that the context in which leaders emerge is significant and discourse theory or social constructivism has been applied to understand women leaders arising in context (Miner, 2005; Baxter; 2009).

These situational explanations seek to explain the successful rise of women as leaders in organisations. The situational theories consider interaction in the situation and the ability to adapt. Women's unique interaction style suggested to researchers that the situation could be

significant in explaining how they become leaders. It is argued that a good leader would be able to adapt to the situation. It is to this situational perspective that is adopted by this research.

1.4 The Suadi Context

There is some general research on women leadership in the context of Saudi Arabia (Al-Ahmadi 2005; 2011; Alajmi, 2001; Ahmad, 2011; Alexander, 2013) and on Arab women (Al-Halawani, 2002; Al-Lamki, 2007; Abdalla, 2015). This research draws upon theories such as situation leadership or trait theory. Studies of Saudi women leaders based on such theories constructed with data from North America, Europe and the UK provide some insights, but they do not focus on the unique Saudi context.

The composition of Saudi society is worth noting in terms of gender, religious convictions, political rights, and demography. This effects the economic activity of the country, especially by women and therefore their potential and ability to become leaders. Saudi Arabia is an Islamic country governed by *Shariah* law, with over 98% of the native being Muslim. Tucker (2015) argues that the Saudi government has promoted equality by including women in municipal elections, but refrained from the promised wider and comprehensive widening of women's rights.

However, there is evidence that Saudi society has become fairer and open to women. King Abdullah decreed equal access to education for women and since 2011, the change in Saudi society has been accelerated. Mittelstaedt and Salter (1997) note that more women are now working in companies, healthcare and government organisations, and others have set up their own companies. They have become financially stronger and travelling abroad for their education. Consequently, the perception of women by men and of women by themselves has changed.

1.4.1 King Abdullah's Decree

A new era of education in general and higher education has started in Saudi Arabia. This was initiated by the Saudi government and supported with financial support to study abroad. The government has decided that education is a critical and significant means for all Saudis to develop personally and develop professional careers. Women were given special attention in this reform of education in the Kingdom. The aim was to reform and restructure Saudi society through especially empowering women.

In January 2011, King Abdullah decreed in the Majlis al-Shura (Consultative Council) that Saudi women can hold leading and higher local and national government positions. This signalled the King's intention that women should be more engaged in national and regional decision-making process. The Council of Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue now enable women to make official deliberations. However, as Thompson (2015) notes the decree posed challenges to women which they needed to overcome in order to seize the new opportunities, and become the 'trailblazers' for Saudi national development.

This decree has been highly significant for Saudi women aspiring to leading positions in government. Until then, women tended to reach the 'glass ceiling' positions and serve out their professional careers. The decree meant that women now could aim and achieve significant government positions. As Welsh et al., (2014) research reveals, the public sector is the largest employer of Saudi women, with 30% of government employees being female. This can be compared with only 5% in the private sector. The decree meant that women could now aspire to and hold positions ranging from the top ministerial post to membership of international bodies as representatives of the KSA.

The decree had further impact on the aspirations of Saudi women. Saudi's are loyal to the King and the decree inspired women, as their King had acknowledged their ambitions and aspirations to hold high public office. The decree legitimised women's ambition and inspired them to aspire to higher public office. Women's motivation was not only legitimised by the King, which is equal to society's recognition of their ambition and potential, but it was ignited to set and achieve more challenging roles. The goal horizon of women changed fundamentally and even revitalised their ambition for private enterprise.

In general, the Saudi government decided to support women's education through the new scholarship programme. The government set the goal of promoting education for women and enabling them to advance in their careers through higher education achievement. Ahmed (2015) reports that 199, 285 Saudi students were studying abroad during 2012-13. The government started the scholarship programme and 165,908 were drawing from this scholarship programme. Nearly a third of the total students studying abroad are women.

Saudi women have risen to the challenge and set aspirational goals. Having taken advantage of this programme, many Saudi women feel empowered. This empowerment is a positive

force in Saudi society and it has an impact on Saudi women's leadership ambition. They are able to travel abroad with their families to study and achieve educational qualifications that justify their leadership potential.

1.4.2 Religion

Islam is the religion of Saudi Arabia. Islam has an effect on gender related issues such as education, professions and careers, and influences social and cultural values, as well as the norms of Saudi society (van Geel, 2016). As noted above, Saudi women seeking education and personal careers in business and government are in a better position since King Abdullah's decree.

"It's the culture, not the religion," is a popular Saudi saying (Agarwal, et al., 2012). Arabian Peninsula customs influence women's place in Saudi society. It's many patriarchal and nomadic practices mix with Islam to define women's role in Saudi society. Islam and cultural traditions of Saudi Arabia are distinct and related. Taking advantage of King Abdullah's decree, Saudi women have benefitted from a foreign education and returned to their towns and communities and workplaces, bringing with them adapted cultural values (Taylor and Albasri, 2014).

Combined with the new government policy for better higher education for women and fairer career opportunities, as well as confidence of Saudi women returning from their overseas education, the adapting culture of Saudi Arabia is influencing the religiously derived practices. Now, Saudi women feel different. Szilagyi (2015) study reveals that even Saudi women who have had online education feel more accepted with their education and knowledge.

So, an important distinction needs to be made between the impact of religion on educational policy and outcomes in Saudi Arabian education and the effect and acceptance of foreign higher education of Saudi women by companies, government and local communities. These organisations and communities accept educated women with their higher levels of professional knowledge and skills. It is this distinction that this research seeks to investigate and its impact on Saudi women leaders.

Welsh et al., (2014) recent study reveals interesting facts about Saudi women entrepreneurs and leaders. They aimed to document the sources of knowledge and support for Saudi women entrepreneurs as they begin a new venture. They identified factors that influence knowledge

base, family support, and support from outside sources as women seek to create their own ventures. Their research reveals that 55% of the women are the principal in women-owned businesses. 70% of the women are the majority stakeholders, owning more than 51% of the business. And 42% of the women started the business by themselves. Welsh et al. state that Saudi businesswomen possess higher education, benefit from strong support from family and friends, and regard themselves as expert in people skills and innovation.

While religion is important in Saudi Arabia, studies such as Welsh et al.'s and others reveal that women themselves, their tenacity, determination to succeed, higher education, and family provide some of the key reasons for their success. It is such factors and others that this research seeks to investigate as contributing to Saudi women leaders' success.

1.5 Saudi Women Leaders

According to the World Bank the ratio of females to males in work in KSA has remained constant around 20% since 2000 (World Bank, 2016). Women lag behind men in low, middle and high income bands. There are more waged and salaried women (98.8%) and only 1.1% of women are self-employed, and the unemployment rate among women is 20%, compared to 3% for men.

In this context, it surprises many people that there are women in Saudi Arabia who are in leading positions of influence and power in organisations in Saudi Arabia. They hold senior management positions in companies and occupy principle administrative roles in government departments and public organisations. However, the 1992 Basic Law of Saudi Arabia is not gender equal. It promotes equality in line with Sharia law, in which women are legal minors, controlled by their mahram. This law was ratified in 2000 to prevent discrimination against women, but as long as it does not contradict Sharia law.

Women in Saudi Arabia have struggled in this unfavourable context to become leaders of companies, government departments, educational institutions, and entrepreneurs. The purpose of this study is to understand how they have achieved their leading positions and develop constructs that can be used to explain their achievements theoretically.

1.6 Research Aim and Objectives

This research aims to investigate cultural and social factors that influence or allow Saudi women to become leaders. In addition, it is expected to discern those values that are

synchronous with cultural and social factors that may improve access to leadership opportunities for women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

By understanding the values that help women to achieve, sustain and evolve their leadership skills, which social and cultural dynamics enable or inhibit them in becoming leaders, and which organisational factors are critical for their success, better knowledge of Saudi women leadership can be obtained. Knowledge about leadership in the Saudi context needs to be advanced and, especially, knowledge about women leaders. There is a need to understand the role of the family and especially the father's role, individual's aspirations and action, the personal and professional struggle women experience and interpersonal relationships that women need to establish with the males. Such understand will need to developing knowledge of women's leadership achievement in Saudi Arabia.

To achieve the research aim, the following are the objectives of the research:

- To discover those values held by successful women leaders in the KSA that are both unique (if any) and shared with successful leaders around the world.
- To learn which social and cultural factors and dynamics, in the opinion of the participants, inhibit or enhance their ability to gain leadership roles within the KSA and to work as effective leaders.
- To determine if there are organisational factors outside of the social and cultural factors that might inhibit or advance the ability of women to assume roles of leadership responsibility.

The first objectives is about the values, principles and standards that Saudi women hold. The research supposes that these values are significant in the Saudi women's achievement of leadership success. For example, do successful Saudi women leaders exhibit strength in their character or are they able to adapt to the particular context in which they need to succeed? By identifying and enumerating such values a profile of Saudi women leader can be determined.

The second objective covers the role of the family and society and how these determine Saudi women's values, ethics and personal goals. Support from the family or a significant individual in the family may have bearing on the level of goals or leadership ambition that the individual woman leader sets herself. Those women leaders with families of their own would need to consider the support they receive from their husbands and balance professional

ambition and family commitment. For example, does family commitment delay Saudi women into leadership roles?

The third objective concerns the interplay between society and organisation. There is no clear boundary between the two. By understanding society and culture, as perceived by Saudi women, their roles in organisations can be better understood. For example, are the cultural and religious boundaries between women and men in society reflected in organisations?

1.7 Dissertation Outline

Chapter 1 set out the research problem by discussing the need to understand the renaissance of Saudi women leaders, as explained by social, cultural and personal characteristics. It described the crucial cultural and political context in which contemporary Saudi women have achieved prominent positions of leadership. This primarily was set in motion by King Abdullah's decree in the Majlis al Sura which permitted Saudi women to accede to higher regional and central government positions. The next chapter covers the existing literature on leadership. It begins the discussion with theories of leadership beginning with the seminal 'great man' theories and then focuses on women leaders, considering the forms and types of leaders. It then examines the specific factors stated in the literature that affect women leadership. It then considers the remedial strategies to increase women leadership roles, and concludes with the findings from this critical review which suggests the need to further investigate specifically Saudi women leadership as explained by cultural and cultural factors and personal characteristics. Chapter 3 defines the conceptual framework arising from the critical review of the existing literature. The conceptual framework is formulated to achieve the research aim and objectives. It does so by deriving observable constructs from the available literature and further defines particular contextual constructs relevant to the experience of Saudi women. This is then further refined by defining situational constructs relevant to their experience of achieving leadership positions in Saudi Arabia and their familial, social and cultural contexts. Chapter 4 sets out the research methodology designed to investigate the research aim, objectives and the conceptual framework. It begins by considering the research philosophy adopted which identifies the particular epistemology used and the particular research method needed to collect relevant data. The interpretivist epistemology is suited to explain human experiences because people attach meaning to their actions. Equally, the researcher applies her understanding to the problem to explain the rise of Saudi women to prominent positions of leadership. This is then detailed in terms of the

design and execution of the fieldwork needed to collect the data. This consists of data collection methods suited to collected qualitative data, which in this case is the in-depth structured interview method. The in-depth interview method enables the interpretive epistemology to be applied to the research topic. The chapter also details the data analysis methods and techniques used, which required interpretive methods that focused on thematic analysis. Chapter 5 presents the data analysis, which is organised in terms of the three rounds of interviews used and the particular analysis techniques used. The emergence of the themes from the data require focusing by systematic theme identification and consolidation. Chapter 6 then discusses the results and relates them to the existing literature to highlight the new findings arising from the research. Finally, Chapter 7 ends the dissertation by drawing relevant conclusions of the research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The modern era is considerably altered compared to the past few decades. According to Anderson (2009), we live in times of turbulent change where modern ideologies of social life are rapidly evolving. Our past was dominated by male breadwinner families with women only expected to bear children and take care of them. For decades, a household was defined as having two major components: (1) a male breadwinner and (2) a housewife. This was the traditional way of structuring a family that could be explained well using Becker's work (1991). Specifically, Becker (1991) suggested that efficiency will only be achieved through appropriate time allocation, which demanded specialization of work.

The inclination towards a traditional family structure still exists in many parts of the world. However, there is a silent revolution taking place with regards to the role of women. Traditionally, the domestic division of labour has had a significant impact on women pursuing careers. Regardless of regional variations, women are considered as having sole responsibility for domestic work and childcare (Women and Leadership, 1996). In industrialized countries the picture of a traditional family system has metamorphasized and is now better represented as a household with dual earners and a shared approach towards domestic work (Mattis, 2002).

Research work by Fernando (2011) studied women from around the world, examining their contributions relevant to a cultural context. The focus was to understand their role in the development of a globalized world. Fernando's research established that women across the world face varying degrees of discrimination whether in the form of violence or discriminatory working conditions, as well as sexual exploitation and exclusion from the political process (e.g. no right to vote or no right to run for office). Historical patterns of men doing well in the workplace and women only performing domestic roles are difficult legacies to modify, especially as the women who did work in the past were given roles of lower status. Following this historical pattern, women of the modern era face major issues where certain professions are still closed (e.g. clergy) or conditions prohibit women from exceeding

towards roles with a higher status and greater responsibility due to limited access to education or more subtle forms of discrimination (Burke and Cooper, 2004).

Globally, the debates on the role of women and gender equality (especially with regards to basic rights and employment opportunities) are on-going, yet despite several encouraging research outcomes and the progress made, there are regions where women are still not allowed to participate in professional life alongside men (Anderson, 2009). According to long standing lines of research, members in the society who are in a minority or are in socially disadvantaged positions will find it challenging to rise to leading posts. With regard to women, in most countries and most industries the 'glass ceiling' is still in place making it difficult for women to achieve higher roles (Barreto et al., 2009). Notably, this is also true in regions where women are independent to make decisions on their own.

In other parts of the world, the scenario is even more challenging, based on certain social norms and religious values (Acker, 2006). For instance, only one out of five men in the Saudi Arabian society believes that the women should also work professionally whereas the rest, prefer women to stay at home and take care of their families (Al-Lamki, 2007). Professional life becomes difficult for women in such regions where most women are not allowed to pursue careers and the few women who do typically work in an environment of general hostility from the society at large (Rudman and Kilianski, 2000).

Despite strong evidence which suggests that women working alongside men improves the economic status of the family and adds to the overall economy of any nation, there is still considerable amount of confusion, as to whether women and especially mothers should spend time outside their homes (Ernst & Young, 2011). In the developed world there has been an increase in the percentage of households with dual earners rising from 31 to 70 per cent in less than two generations (Ely et al, 2011). However, there is also an increased concern about how to effectively raise children. This seemingly inherent conflict can be referred to as cognitive dissidence, where the roles are not clear and although the men want women to be part of the work environment, they also want the mothers to spend time significant amounts of their time with their children and/or taking care of household matters. This adds to more conflict that women face in terms of their role and often leads to staying home and raising their children, despite other real aspirations. Additionally, such advances should not be confused with parity. For example, the extensive study by Kværner et al. (1999) of nearly

14,000 non-retired Norwegian physicians showed male achievement at levels nearly three-fold of comparable females (14.6% versus 5.1%). Only within a hospital setting did female physicians have a higher positive relation between their specialty and the probability of leadership opportunities (versus 0.57 for men over 54 years compared to 0.39 for women of that age). They concluded that in general women do not reach senior positions as easily as men, but in medical specialties with high proportions of women in the work force did have more female leaders.

In many cultures the universal access to primary education has been a critical step towards the overall progression of women in society and a counter balance for many of the traditional entrapments of women in lives of poverty as an outgrowth of practices related to dowry, child marriages, and maternal health issues. Ultimately, however, equal status for women does not finally come until it is permissible in the minds of men (Lopez, 2010).

O'Connor (2010) argues that success in the current economy and globalisation is not owned by an individual based on their power, social orientation, and gender. Instead, it is owned by a person who is capable and can manage it efficiently, irrespective of their social status and gender. With this shift in power delegation and leadership, the rise of a woman's role is clearly emerging (O'Connor, 2010). According to Eagly (2004) women in industrialized countries demand the same opportunities and roles as men. Women want to be in leadership roles so that they too can support a family and improve their social status. In research by Eagly and Karau (2002), it was suggested that men were able to achieve positions of a higher level because they had the opportunity to get good education and experience. The women were restricted from these thereby creating fewer opportunities for women to advance their social standards and achieve leadership roles (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

More recent research by Garcia-Retamero and López-Zafra (2006) suggests that it is quite common to associate the characteristics of effective leadership to men rather than women. Men are generally assigned competitive roles with more power and responsibility, while women are considered as unsuitable for handling such positions. Traditionally it has been considered that women are far better in handling jobs that involve providing care and support and involve a deeper level of human interaction. Based on these assumptions the concept of leadership is more consistent with masculine roles Garcia-Retamero and López-Zafra (2006).

Alongside this is a growing concern that gives rise to another emerging concept of female empowerment.

Female empowerment and gender equality are often discussed side by side. However, empowering women is beyond the gender discussion and focuses on improving women's status regarding the power to make choices and decisions without any influence of a man (Rowley and Hossain, 2010). Women must be empowered to utilize the opportunities and resources they have to achieve more in life than to only focus on raising a family (Fehr-Duda et al, 2006). The concept encompasses women having opportunities to participate fully in the economic, social and political life across all sectors. Today organizations such as the United Nations (UN) along with private sector partners are working towards gender equality and female empowerment (UNESCO, 2012). Their initiatives focus on improving not only the quality of life for women but also to help them become part of the economic fabric of the country and lead in their own areas of specialization. Current research has established that diversity in terms of gender in the workplace has many positive outcomes and, therefore, the inclusion of women in the workplace at all levels requires policy work and actions focused to encourage women (Burke and Collins, 2001).

Female empowerment as a topic is often side-lined and misunderstood, especially by men. Empowering women is not about increasing the number of women in politics and other sectors. If more women are allowed to work and participate this does not mean that the women are empowered. The effectiveness and impact of this participation is important. This can only be evident once the women are in positions where they can influence and bring changes to the existing norms and practices and exercise control over resources (Women Empowerment, 2012). Modern women realize their true power and potential and pursue self-actualization. This enables them to aim at achieving leadership positions in business and elsewhere. This is what has in fact resulted in the numerous changes in the social settings and businesses over the past 20-40 years in much of the northern hemisphere.

In this age of globalization and rapid exchange of information, women in one part of the world can more easily (and regularly) see how women in more developed parts of the world are taking up roles beyond those that have traditionally been ascribed to them (Gallant and Pounder, 2008). These success stories have played a major role in motivating other women to break from tradition and achieve success in their own personal and professional

lives. Increasingly, women are coming to understand that in order to achieve more, they must take part in educational and training activities similar to men (Cooke, 2007). For example, enrolling in formal education can help them gain perspective and take up roles that require leadership and decision-making. Yet cultural, social and religious values in places like Saudi Arabia pose limitations on women becoming effective leaders (Women and Leadership, 1996).

Notably, recent research about Saudi Arabia indicates a drastic shift in female leadership. Increased contributions by women in the business sector and beyond has assisted in making women stronger and in enabling them to gain better positions within the private, as well as public, sectors. The renaissance of female leadership in a society where women used to face intense competition and hostility from their male counterparts has gained immense attention in the media and amongst researchers (Niederle and Versterlund, 2007). Research into this topic has emphasized that the personal qualities that Saudi women possess and other social factors have acted as the main motivational tools (Abele, 2003).

Despite new efforts and opportunities, global statistics indicate that there are factors that inhibit women, especially in the context of leading large organizations. Only 40 per cent of total positions in the United States are occupied by women and this number drops to only 6 per cent in the group of highly paid executives such as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), Chief Operating Officers, and Chairman of the Board. Furthermore, across all industrialized countries, only 11 per cent of the top executives are women with a further reduction to 4 per cent as CEOs. Notably, in Fortune magazine's Global 500 companies, only 7 companies have a female CEO. This is despite clear research (e.g. Catalyst, 2003) showing the positive impact the women have on overall corporate performance. The research indicates that when women were part of the managing board; companies did well and had disproportionately significant increases in the return in equity, invested capital and profit margins (Lyness and Heilman, 2006). This research was a further confirmation of the early work by Franke (1997) that showed that companies with at least one woman on the board of directors perform ethically and observed better corporate governance.

A recent study targeted the question of women in the gulf region have the chance of becoming senior executives. The study included women from the KSA. The findings indicated that although the conditions are improving, significant efforts and initiatives will

still be required at various levels for women to stand any real chance of such positions. It further suggested that although women have been able to achieve leadership roles in governing bodies and leading companies, social attitudes remain largely unchanged. Interestingly, this generation of Saudi women have started demonstrated their abilities and serve as role models for the next generation of young women. Furthermore, the report indicates that women are an under tapped resource, but that the women who are pioneers must be responsible to convince their respective organizations about their capabilities as leaders for hiring women in leadership positions to become a standard practice (Fernandez, 2008).

In a report by the UNDP, it is suggested that for the entire gulf region, full empowerment of women is critical for development and the region's participation in the global economy. The increasing popularity of female leadership and empowerment is challenged by an utter absence to remove the harmful socio-cultural barriers (Davidson and Burke, 2004). Complete integration of women in development activities and utilization of their potential will require research that extends beyond mere description and analyses all aspects and factors, so that policy makers can make informed decisions (Yukl, 2002).

2.2 Theories of leadership

From the very beginning, theorists have used various approaches to define the term leadership and describe the traits of an effective leader. Within this body of research, however, there has been little attention paid to gender and in particular relating to women in leadership roles. Arguably female leadership was not a major research topic, because of the traditional roles of women that women have played have not been seen or characterized as ones of leadership, as it has been historically defined (Acker, 2006). In Baxter's (2009) seminal book there is an investigation of the use of language and lingual choices in corporate environments and how this becomes a problematic construct for the further advancement of women to leadership positions in a corporate context.

Before proceeding to the different theories of leadership, we shall first consider the various commonly used definitions of leadership and analyse how gender and in particular women are related to them. Definitions of leadership are vary and involve different aspects. For some leadership is simply where one person can guide and direct a group of followers to accomplish a set of activities. For others leadership is more about motivating and

encouraging people to do more and achieve the set goals. The earliest definitions focused on traits, behaviours, and contextual factors. However, more recent definitions of leadership suggests that it is a process that uses social influence and guidance to improves the efficiency and effectiveness of others in the achievement of a set target or goal (Burke and Collins, 2001). Many authors and scholars have presented their ideas on leadership and how leaders engage their followers, however, it is difficult identify a universal definition. However, modern era consensus has been emerging that being a leader has nothing to do with attaining a certain position or financial status. Although most leaders are in senior roles with a certain pay grade, this is not a condition. Arguably, the same occurs with externally assigned titles. For instance, just because a job title is that of ‘Team Leader’, the person occupying that role is not necessarily leading (Burke and Cooper, 2004).

The first theories on leadership had little focus on gender roles and described the concept using examples of great men. Specifically, Thomas Carlyle in the 1840s popularized the 19th century concept of the Great Man theory, which postulated that history was created (and therefore explainable) by “great men” or heroes (Straker, 2015). The concept proposed that individuals in and of themselves created or shaped events by their personal characteristics and it was a highly influential theory. Leadership as an ideal was more closely related to military leadership than any other form. This theory gained significance particularly in the 19th century based on historical leaders such as Alexander the Great, Phillip of Macedon, and Charlamagne. Later individuals such as Abraham Lincoln and Mahatama Gandhi were similarly characterized. The theory was well aligned with the concept of monarchy and divine birth. Because of these factors few individuals (to say nothing of women) even had opportunities to exhibit “leadership” as it was then defined. For instance in the case of the aristocratic rulers, the wife’s responsibility was to bear a successor for the future. She had no role otherwise and was not allowed to weigh in regarding matters of governance (Anderson, 2009). Subsequently, Herbert Spencer in 1860 proposed the counter argument that these Great Men are products of their time and societies, and that their ability to act is reliant upon the preceding social conditions (Carneiro, 1981). While notably different from Carlyle’s concept, the idea still focuses on the innate abilities of an individual with little consideration given to the issues of training, education, and opportunity, to say nothing of their converse in terms of limitations (e.g. gender).

As an outgrowth of the Great Man theory, the Trait Theory was developed in which leadership is defined in terms of identifiable traits and skills that leaders possess. This Trait Theory of Leadership emphasizes those traits that make up a leader are also inherent. Good leaders are born with certain traits that enable them to lead well. In this theory, a man's role was suggested for leadership while a woman's role was more of that of a helper. The theory focuses on analysing the different personality qualities that make an individual a successful leader. Researchers working on this theory often focus on developing a list of characteristics that are attributable to successful leadership. Lists most commonly include aspects such as confidence, intelligence, emotional stability, and assertiveness. Though the theory is old, even modern authors and scholars on leadership often provide lists of traits that are thought to be fundamental to effective leadership (Burke and Cooper, 2004).

The theory notably defined traits with a historically masculine association. During the early twentieth century a small number of women started entering the work arena in primarily helping roles such as office secretaries and assistants, with an even small proportion of women in managerial positions. This created a perception that in the work force women are better at roles that involve in caring, assisting, teaching and nursing and not as a leader or in a position of great responsibility and decision making. The trait theory did little when it came to defining women in leadership, as most trait theorists focused on those associated with male leaders and their respective traits. Describing leadership based on traits began to lose popularity as other research focused on situational factors, behavioural approaches, and contingency models began to emerge in the middle of the twentieth century (Miner, 2005).

Specifically, in the 1940s, researchers proposed that personality traits are not sufficient in explaining the concept of leadership, and many other factors play a critical part in making a leader different from the follower. This was the time when it was proposed that leaders are made not born and that situational factors, as well as group interaction are significant contributors to effective leadership. These notions led to the foundation of the behavioural theories of leadership, which emphasized that learned behaviours result in effective leadership (Howell and Costley, 2006). Various studies over time have focused on understanding behaviours by analysing different dimensions or styles such as autocracy, democracy, employee orientation, and production orientation.

The behavioural theories on leadership therefore emphasized that leadership is not inherent and can be taught. The theory is based on the idea that leadership is a learned set of behaviours. With the rise of such arguments gender roles became more significant. Specifically, the concept of a man being great or born with the right traits that uniquely suited him to a life of leadership was fundamentally questioned and in part replaced with the idea that an individual, regardless of gender, can learn certain behaviours and develop a potential for leadership. Additionally, that women too could understand and learn such behaviours (Spillane et al, 2004).

Another mid-century category of leadership theory focused on participation and involvement of all the stakeholders in the decision-making process. In this model, each member's knowledge and experience benefits all other group members, thus adding to the ownership of the decision itself. The model proposed by Lewin and Lippit (1938) describes three such styles of leadership namely (1) autocratic, (2) democratic, and (3) laissez-faire. Such evolution of leadership theories continued to contain strong prejudices against women. For example, behavioural theories such as the managerial grid (Blake & Mouton, 1968) and role theory (Eagly, et al., 2000) suggest an influential role of male members as leaders, because they have strong control abilities and the right attitude to manage people (Belasen, 2012).

In more recent decades, expanded concepts of leadership have developed. For example that of leaders emerging based on situational factors with little or no regard to gender. Namely, that in the right situation, women can rise and take up leadership roles in any business. According to recent research, effective leadership is defined as occurring when the leader's style matches the development level of the follower. Some have argued that styles that have a high relationship focus such as selling/coaching and participating/supporting are more suited to women and women have the tendency to develop such styles easily (Bass and Riggo, 2006).

Contingency models also give little regard to gender and focus more on both the cognitive resources of an individual and the situational factors. Contemporary research has focused more on describing leadership without ascribing it to a certain gender. This suggests that women also possess qualities such as collaboration and problem solving that can make them effective leaders and decision-makers. Transformational leadership is a more contemporary concept that assumes that people will follow a person that inspires them. A transformational

leader is one with a vision that is effectively sold to the followers who will believe in the vision and work towards achieving it (Bass and Riggo, 2006). Visionary and charismatic women have been able to inspire others and have lead in businesses effectively. Theoretically, it can be suggested that early research had an inclination towards men being successful in leadership roles and women in supportive roles however modern research has focused more on the concept of leadership and understanding the factors that make an effective leader regardless of gender. Effective leadership is mandatory for the success of any type of organization. Leadership must be studied in relation to the wider society within which they must work. Thus, leadership should be analysed in the context of all real challenges that a society or organization must face (Miner, 2005).

As an alternative, Lipman-Blumen (1992) describes an integrative leadership model entitled “connective leadership,” which combines the traditional masculine American ego-ideal with additional female role behaviors that have been characterized as being more appropriate for an interdependent world. Connective leadership emphasizes connecting individuals to their own, as well as others’, tasks and ego drives achieved through three types of behavioural characteristics: (1) direct, (2) instrumental, and (3) relational). Gender differences in achieving styles are reported and related to the connective leadership paradigm. Conversely, Baxter (2009) proposed alternative approaches to promote a more pro-active context for advancing women in corporate leadership roles. Prominent amongst these is Discourse Theory (often referred to as the “Social Constructionist” approach).

Finally, Cooper (1997) conducted focus groups of traditional and non-traditional women in an attempt to verify whether a queen bee type of theory was applicable but was unable to establish a definitive conclusion for this when considering women in both traditional and non-traditional leadership roles. This supports early work by Chapman and Luthans (1975) who provided a review on the contemporaneous research and made the rather unorthodox conclusion at the time that there was probably no significant difference between male and female leadership styles but instead a difference in leadership behaviours. Those conclusions were further confirmed by the early work by Yerby (1975) using small focus groups that showed that responses were more strongly influenced by group composition than the specific nature of the tasks. This reinforces the concepts that the barriers to female leadership success are much more cultural than structural in nature.

2.3 Definitional Landscape of Women's Leadership

Historically, leadership has focused on great men with power and authority and has had a more political perspective than otherwise. Although there have been great women leaders in history, their greatness and ability were always defined as per the standards of men. Only after the 1980's have women leaders begun to be assessed on their own terms as individuals capable of leading (Ledet and Henley, 2000). Women have been leading in informal roles for decades however only recently women leadership is formally recognized by the public (Women and Leadership, 1996).

Arguably, effective leadership is mandatory for the success of any type of organization and this effectiveness has no relation with gender (Burke and Collins, 2001). Research has focused on the concept of leadership and men researchers have often focused on analysing leadership abilities of men leaders. This however does not state that women are ineffective leaders (Howell and Costley, 2006). The relationship between gender and leadership has been discussed by various authors and researchers.

For example, Davis argues that it is not the leadership within the organizations that is gendered but that managerial positions within the organizations consist of more men. As another example, the majority or all of the leadership posts within the organizations especially in Saudi Arabia are stereotypically masculine in nature. This remains regardless of the skills and the professional traits that women possess or that the position requires. Leadership has always been considered to be a role associated with a male figure and having masculine features including power, cohesiveness, assertiveness and dominance. This masculine nature of the definition of leadership roles in Saudi Arabian organizations seems like a socially constructed stereotype that has skewed the true nature and notion of leadership and is stymie how women participate in professional life and focus on developing themselves (Heilman and Stamm, 2007). Such perceptions not only strengthen unfair employment practices but also engender a sense of inferiority amongst the women with regards to their abilities and potential.

Many women would think twice about what the family members and society will say, if they decide to work and take time away from more traditional roles (Harris et al., 2006). A common thought process amongst the people in countries like India, Pakistan and in the Gulf

Region suggests that women who work will fail at the traditional roles and will not be effective wives and mothers. Thompson (2002) considered the role of women in emerging Asian democracies from a historical perspective. Richter (1990) looked at some of these same concepts in the context of Asia's numerous female leaders in the 1960s, '70s and '80s. Based on their historical context and their limited on the rights and conditions of women in this region predicted poor prospects for future female achievement in formal leadership roles in such countries despite previous successes.

To date, there has been little focus, however, in public discussions about how systems have failed women to move to positions of a higher scale. The current system supports a masculine approach that limits women's access to leadership roles. This lack of debate on the matter and other related issues of who decides the rules and defines the limitations and the qualifications all add up to a general absence of senior women leaders and managers. Individual women leaders are then often blamed to be incapable and, therefore, opportunities are further closed for other women (Acker, 2006). This has been built into the social and organizational system, and many women despite of having the ability will blame themselves for not being able to secure positions that require leadership and will continue to work under male leaders (Anderson, 2009).

Through silent efforts and small achievements women in the last three decades, women have been able to make their mark in political and business arenas. In countries like England, Israel, India, and Pakistan, women have served well as Prime Ministers. In addition to some of these famous women in politics, women also took leading roles in fields of healthcare and education. Over the years, many parts of the world have seen a significant increase in number of female employees, doctors, and university professors, as well as female entrepreneurs thereby directly adding to a nation's economy (Alvarez and Miles, 2006).

Women's leadership as a topic for empirical research only began to become popular after the 1980's. Most research prior to this time primarily involved men and focused on men as leaders. To date, all major theories presented on leadership have been formulated and established by men, as well. Because of this absence of women in research on leadership, our knowledge on women's leadership is limited and deduced from researches done by men on men and for men. Traditionally, the term leadership was synonymous with masculinity since the women in leadership roles were rare and typically insignificant (Walby, 2005). Women

leaders have over the recent decades demonstrated the confidence and ability to lead, yet still certain vulnerability is prevalent. Therefore, despite women being referred to as leaders, they still are at a disadvantage when placed in a leading role (Rudman and Kilianski, 2000).

Today, women challenge the myth that they are unfit for leadership. The roles they have taken as Prime Ministers of entire nations to running their own businesses or working with organizations in the fields of medicine, education and technology all support the notion that women are no less capable than men at being effective leaders. However, the all-important concept of the 'glass-ceiling' is evident in all organizations across the globe. The term glass-ceiling is defined as a barrier that is not explicit yet it is present within an organization and limits women across the world to reach top positions within an organization (Wirth, 2001). It is an invisible mechanism of discrimination against women that prevents them from reaching leadership roles and has been ascribed as being one of the major reasons why there are fewer women in the top management of various companies in comparison to their male counterparts (Barreto et al, 2009). The term 'glass ceiling' is used because these barriers and limitations are not clear, as in the case of a glass which blocks women from excelling to higher level (Harrison et al, 2015). In organizations that claim that there is no glass ceiling, it is important that women are seen in leading roles and in positions which are generally held by the male counterparts. There has been considerable debate on breaking the glass ceiling in all parts of the world. The issue however is not only to break the ceiling but also to change how women are viewed in the workplaces (Bass and Avolio, 1994). In a culture that is male dominant changes have to be brought in the practices and culture.

The glass ceiling is more evident in regions like Saudi Arab as the cultural norms and traditions are supportive of this phenomenon. The problem lies in the thought process and perceptions of a male dominated society. Often, based on past employment practices, women are excluded from certain domains as the thought (for both men and women) of women working in certain roles is not conceivable. The glass ceiling is a challenge for only a small number of women in Saudi Arabia, because so few women have broken the cultural norms to opt for working. For these women, becoming leaders involves breaking many invisible barriers starting with breaking with tradition in seeking opportunities to work at all.

Gulf countries will need to hire more women if they are to meet their localisation targets, Booz & Company said in a recent report. Its research shows a wide range in the density of

female employment in the region, from about 17 per cent in Saudi Arabia to about 35 per cent in Qatar.

Efforts to improve competitiveness in Gulf countries amid a worsening global economy is driving the employment of women up the policy agenda.

Three important arguments by Sinclair (1998) are critical to this topic regarding attempts at describing why there is a lack of focus on women leadership over the past decades. The first argument suggests that since women have been absent or invisible from leadership positions, all theory and practice has focused on men as leaders. The second argument states that women will always be considered different, and women in the past have not been able to use this difference to their advantage (Pawlowski et al, 2008). The difference in male dominated societies and business is always seen as a problem (Anderson, 2009). Regardless of an equal effort and outcome, the contributions made by women are treated and rewarded differently as compared to men. Women, therefore, may not be rewarded in a senior position despite their contributions (Lighthall et al., 2012). The third argument focuses on a participative approach and suggests that leadership is a product of one person leading, while others support that one individual. Throughout ages leadership has a more masculine meaning for people, so the idea of a woman leading men can arguably be difficult for followers. Based on these three arguments, women will always be judged differently in the effectiveness of their leadership. Consequently, there is an acute need to develop a newer understanding of the concept of leadership with special emphasis on women (Leonard, 2001).

In the gulf region, the proportion of women entering the workforce is still very low. Although there is a long list of Arab women leaders, but the numbers are insignificant compared to the equivalent number of men. Female employment in the region has increased since the year 2000 however when compared to the international standards, but remains quite low (Davidson & Burke, 2004). For example women only comprise 13% of the KSA's workforce but 51% of its most recent graduates (Al Arabia, 2016). As such, public and private organizations are realizing that Saudi women represent a very talented untapped pool of human resources. The Centre for Work-Life Policy conducted a study in which they concluded that 92 per cent of Arab women aim at securing a top-level position in an organization. The study also reported that Arab women are more motivated than American women and are at par with Arab men. These women also have strong family backgrounds,

theoretically enabling them to engage in start-up ventures or entering a business of their own (ARABHDR, 2005).

In the last decade, the gulf region witnessed a growth in the participation of women across different sectors. This was due to the increase in women enrolment in education and employment. Women have made it to positions within the senior management and have the ability to control resources and make decisions that matter (Ibarra et al., 2010). The governments in this region has also focused more on developing plans and policies that encourage women participation in more responsible and strategic roles. Despite all these factors, women continue to face problems that are different from those then their male counterparts. The reality differs for both genders and culture and society poses challenges to women only and this impacts their ability to effectively lead (Jogulu, 2010).

The situation in Saudi Arabia changed for women after King Abdullah took charge in 2005 and promoted freedom for women in the workplace. His efforts to improve the economy and increase educational and job opportunities for women have led to an increase in female participation in the region, and as a result many women leaders have emerged in different domains. The King ensured that women in the Kingdom have a right to vote and even stand in the municipal elections. It is only during his reign that the women have been appointed as members of the Shoura Council. Official data suggests that since 2011, a total of 123,093 jobs have been created specifically for women. These efforts are all meant to develop women to reach higher-ranking positions over time and contribute to the overall economy.

Effective leadership is critical in defining organizational success and to achieve this effectiveness. Thus it is important that the leader has credibility, the power to decide, and the ability to utilize resources. There have been numerous other requisites for effective leadership defined in research. However, there is no indication of gender as a requisite for effective leadership (Howell and Costley, 2006). There has been considerable research on how leadership is viewed as a stereotypically masculine position that makes it more challenging for women to embark leadership roles. For the Kingdom, such perceptions have always been a hindering factor, and often women are considered to be less effective in leadership than men in leadership roles.

2.4 History of Women Leaders in Organizations

Over the years, various forums and platforms have highlighted the current scenario of women leadership and the future course of action to improve the situation. The aim behind such work was to encourage governments and policy makers to design policies that promote gender equality and inclusion in leadership positions in all domains of public and private sectors (Burke and Collins, 2001). However, the situation for women with regards to leadership opportunities still requires considerable improvements, in both developed and developing countries. While developed countries have done far better, there are still barriers related to perceptions of men and the society at large. Women continue to have little representation in leadership in many domains. One important factor is that the women themselves have not made significant efforts to break barriers and perceptions and move to positions with influence and decision making abilities. Secondly, countries have also failed to utilize a talented pool of candidates.

In an online discussion on women in leadership roles, sponsored by the United Nation's High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR,) participants suggested that from all parts of the world, women leaders have emerged and proved that they can lead as well as men. Yet in countries like Saudi Arab, Pakistan, India and Zimbabwe, the remaining social and economic barriers are significant (Women Watch, 2014). In countries where there is political instability and an ineffective economy, women face more challenges in occupying leadership positions, and the governments find it difficult to ensure that the women get opportunities to participate in the public and private sector (Elmuti and Davis, 2009). Women have to deal with gender biases and other forms of inequalities, that men, as leaders, do not typically encounter (Davidson & Burke, 2004). Therefore, the effort that a woman has to invest to become a leader is far greater than that for a man. This scenario needs to be changed before leadership and gender can be related and compared. The conditions and factors in which a leader emerges must be the same for both men and women and then only the effectiveness can be compared (Martino et al., 2006). The problem with the existing research and literature presented on female leadership is that is always analysed in comparison to male leadership. Men in leadership roles are generally considered to be more assertive and capable to handle the tasks well, whereas women are considered to be weak and expected to fall under pressure situations (Dodd, 2012).

Identifying and learning about women leaders working or leading organizations is important, as the presence of women in workplaces has had a positive impact on how people view women leaders (Davidson and Burke, 2004). In the same online discussion as indicated earlier, it was established based on certain cases in Zimbabwe that when women are a part of an organization in decision making roles, the gender responsiveness of policies and programs is improved (Women Watch, 2014). For instance, if the head of human resources of an organization is a woman, the probability that the employment practices will support and promote women is higher. It is also important to keep track of these improvements in terms of policy making and gender sensitization (Burke and Collins, 2001). The issue here is to have sustainability in terms of these actions. Only having a few women leaders emerge is not in and of itself sufficient or sustainable, as there is a deep rooted culture in most parts of the world which inhibits women to prosper.

In many countries despite the global attention on women empowerment and initiative by UN and other international organizations, women remain under-represented and have no access to attain positions that have influence and decision making ability (Women Watch, 2014). Women leadership can only flourish when women are made part of every process. It is important that women be part of policy making and judiciary so that the struggle towards equality becomes effective (Dodd, 2012). A group exclusively of men should not be in decisive roles about deciding issues pertaining to women. Furthermore, the private sector has realized that in order to gain a strategic advantage and to stay competitive in the market, it is important that the workforce be diverse including senior level management positions being open to women who have the potential (Omar and Davidson, 2001). Yet many issues still remain about enabling women to become part of the board of directors or achieve executive positions (Nielsen and Huse, 2010).

In organizations across the globe, women are now taking roles with more responsibility and leading employees in an effective manner towards goal attainment (Roziyah and Maimunah, 2007). Women today are holding positions of the CEO in companies. For example Mary Barra is the CEO of General Motors, Meg Whitman is the CEO of Hewlett-Packard, and Indra Nooy is part of the top management at PepsiCo. Our focus however is women in leadership roles within Saudi Arabia. The issue of gender and women leadership has drawn more international attention than other issues in the Kingdom. Although statistics reveal data that supports an improved Arab society with more Arab women taking up leadership roles,

yet it still is difficult to reconcile this data with the experience of individual Arab women who faces many disadvantages from the society from a simple driving ban to an increased dependence on male relatives.

Despite countless cultural and social barriers for Saudi Arab women, some have succeeded in occupying leadership roles within large organizations of the Kingdom. One of the leading women is Lubna Olayan, the CEO of Olayan Financing Company. She is ranked as the 2nd highest Arabs business women as published by CEO Middle East (Arab women, 2014). As one of the leading Arab women, Lubna Olayan takes part in many initiatives and debates that help promote women empowerment in the Kingdom and also to ease the pathway for younger women to access better employment opportunities and effective careers. Lubna Olayan is known to always stress on that fact that Arab women who are leading like her should hire more women to promote this culture and break the barriers and help the economy prosper (Arab Women, 2014).

Another leading lady in the Kingdom is Princess Ameerah, who is the vice-chairperson and secretary general of the Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation. In the world of philanthropy, Princess Ameerah is known for her work in Saudi Arabia and other parts of the world. She also works on improving the image of Saudi Women in an effort to improve their social standing and help them achieve their true potential. Her achievements include the opening of Centre for Islamic Studies at Cambridge University in the UK in 2011. She also is part of the Doha-based Silatech Organization as a member of the board of trustees (Arab women, 2014).

Women across the world are also known for taking part in human rights organizations with particular focus on the rights of women. In Saudi Arabia, Al-Munajjed is a women's rights activist working with many local NGO's as well as the UN. She was one of the senior advisors at Booz and Co where her reports provided detailed accounts of social issues, especially those encountered by Arab women. Al-Munajjed was awarded the UN-21 Award in 2005 for excellence in her efforts in coordination and productivity (Arab women, 2014).

Another prominent leader in the Kingdom is Nahed Tahir, who is the only woman heading a bank in the Gulf sector. She is also the co-founder of the Gulf One Investment Bank, alongside Dr. Samia Al-Amoudi who leads in the field of obstetrician and gynecology in the Kingdom.

The Saudi government over the years has realized the contributions made by women and their tremendous potential to provide more in the future years. Recently, women were given positions as members of the Shoura Council of whom Thoraya Ahmad Obaid is a prominent leader and a Council member. In 2000, she was the first Saudi woman to head a UN agency. Saudi women are also making a valuable contribution in the media industry. Some prominent figures are the journalist Badriya Al-Bishr and, filmmaker Haifa Al-Mansour.

From all the examples of leading Arab women, it can be established that there is a reformation of Saudi culture, and Saudi men are opening to women in organizations in an unprecedented manner. Success stories of women like those stated above and also in other fields have created new options for other women to explore (Arab Women, 2014).

2.5 Leadership Forms, Types and Categories

Leadership is a complex concept that encapsulates various internal and external factors. It is very difficult to come up with a single definition that covers all aspects of leadership. Additionally, if one was to define the leadership type and style of actual leading men and women, each definition would be unique to the individual. Leadership can be divided into many types and categories. Through extensive study and research various forms have been derived to match the leadership examples in the history. It is easier to understand and define leadership when one has a leader in mind. However, the method and manner by which we define one leader may not fit another based on individual differences and other contextual factors (Transformations of Leadership, 2005).

Arguably, the type and form of leadership is well described by the individual style of the leader. Some broad forms of leadership include:

2.5.1 Autocratic

This form of leadership focuses more on the leader where the individual leading will direct all actions and processes with little input from other people or followers. Such leaders will have complete authority, and there is little employee involvement in most matters of business. Decision making authority and ability lies solely with the leader, and there is no one to challenge the decisions. Such leaders will not delegate any form of decision-making responsibility on the subordinates and will simply rely on imposing decisions and will expect that the decision is accepted by all. The autocratic form of leadership is evident in people who

have the desire of being in control of most situations. Thus, this approach is generally not considered effective in most literature but is well- to situations where there is a pressure of time and decision-making has to be quick (Kuppusamy et al, 2010). Such a form of leadership works best with employees requiring close supervision. However, it hinders creativity and innovation (Miner, 2005). Additionally, the autocratic leader will however never motivate and develop the followers.

2.5.2 Democratic

Also referred as participative style of leadership, this approach focuses on the followers or team members input, yet gives power to the leader to make a final decision. Most leaders today attempt to adopt this style because it helps improve employee satisfaction, morale, and engagement, thereby impacting the overall performance of an organization and the individuals leading it (Tittmore, 2003). Since the followers are involved, the decisions made are owned by the entire team.

Consultation is an important part of this form of leadership. Such leaders will always create an environment that has open, continuous, and constructive feedback from all associated members and based on that the leader will make a decision. Such a form of leadership is usually preferred in an organization as it promotes a culture of respect and consideration. Through such an approach, a leader keeps the followers engaged and motivated towards the goals. Once the leader has made a decision, delegation and facilitation by the leader helps the team of followers to accomplish the set tasks.

2.5.3 Laissez - Faire

This approach suits best for individuals who have to lead followers that are well equipped and trained to perform a desired activity and need little direction and supervision. The leader, therefore, will not directly supervise employees and will primarily ensure that each member is working in the right direction towards goal attainment. This style is difficult to adopt and often results in a lack of control and increasing costs (Miner, 2005).

Such leaders promote the freedom of choice for the followers and allow them to operate in the manner they desire. When leaders have to lead a team who is fully equipped to handle a job, and each member has the specific expert power for the task, then such leaders will leave the task to the individual without sharing or guiding and with a trust that the person will

complete the job effectively. The only information sharing is regarding the overall vision of what needs to be achieved. Participation, communication and engagement are rarely considered in such an approach. This can therefore lead to a fire fighting situation at the end (Eagly et al, 2003).

2.5.4 Transactional

The approach is derived from the concept of a transaction. Transactional leaders manage employees by rewards and punishments that are aligned with performance and outcomes. In this type, the leader will be explicit with regards to expectations and goals and will monitor the progress towards the set of goals. Based on performance, the subordinates will be rewarded (Tittmore, 2003). This style is more commonly adopted in combination with some other form of organizational leadership.

This approach is most suitable for leading low-skilled jobs where the job duties and responsibilities are clear and the probability of any change is low. The follower within the limits is only required to perform the task and be rewarded. If the performance is acceptable and the objectives are achieved, the transaction as expected by both sides will be completed, and the leader will reward the employee. Although some form of transaction is evident at every level in an organization and in jobs that are more skillful, this approach as defined in literature is apt generally for low-skilled positions (Bass, 1997).

2.5.5 Transformational

A transformational leader focuses on effective communication and mentoring. Such leaders will focus on motivating employees to work with improved efficiency and will give a certain degree of authority and responsibility to the employees. Transformational leaders focus on delegation of tasks so that the leader can concentrate on the bigger vision, while the subordinates achieve the smaller tasks leading up to the entire vision (Mandell and Pherwani, 2003).

The focus of transformational leadership is to bring about changes to improve productivity, profitability, and other organizational goals (e. g. corporate image, employee satisfaction and retention). Such leaders will always encourage employees to be more creative and devise innovative and effective solutions (Judge and Piccolo, 2004). In such a scenario, the followers feel that their work is valued, and the leader only guides towards the long-term

strategic vision. Such leaders perform best in situations that demand continuous change management and the uncertainty of events is high (Bass, 1997). They have the ability to cope with such challenges, while inspiring the team to stay focused towards the overall goal.

In addition to these basic types there are other ways in which leadership is categorised based upon the type of actions a leader performs while working. Depending on various contingency factors, a leader will respond through certain actions. These actions will define the leadership itself. The broad categories are as follows (Transformations of Leadership, 2005):

2.5.6 Opportunist

These leaders focus more on personal wins and exploit every opportunity they find for their own betterment. Such leaders usually want more control and power and are often autocratic in nature. They attempt to control all processes and direct all outcomes. Most leaders that follow this approach will not seek or accept any form of feedback and will often involve themselves in blame games (Tittmore, 2003).

2.5.7 Diplomat

A diplomat leader (as the title suggests) will try to please everyone, especially senior colleagues. Such leaders will always choose ways that minimize conflict and keeps everyone happy. Diplomat leaders can only lead in levels of middle management as the top leadership requires a leader to face and handle conflict and face criticism and make at least a few people displeased. By nature, a diplomat will not be able to handle such situations effectively. By nature a diplomat is polite and will never seek to initiate change. This approach, therefore, will not lead individuals to very senior positions (Miner, 2005).

2.5.8 Expert

Leadership of this category is observed widely. Unlike the diplomats and opportunists, a leader is an expert on a matter who will use knowledge as power and as a source to inspire and direct others. Marketing experts and investment analysts often use their expert opinions and knowledge to convince others to follow their lead. These leaders only rely on the knowledge and data that they have, and through logical reasoning they will seek consensus. These leaders however fail in situations that require collaboration and feedback, as they feel they know more about the subject than the other people.

2.5.9 Strategist

A strategist is different from Expert leadership in a way that experts focus more on their expertise, whereas a strategist leader focuses on external factors, perceptions and constraints, as well. Strategists will strive for both individual and organizational transformation and will encourage the process of change. Such leaders think beyond personal gains and work towards successfully and ethically handling business.

Several other research studies have defined leadership in many ways. There are numerous approaches styles and categories in which leaders of the world will fall. Several external factors play an important part in making leaders. It is difficult to suggest that a single leader who has been effective in one organization in a particular part of the world will also be effective in some other organization at a different geographic locale (Eagly and Schmidt, 2001). The style of leadership in North Korea and Japan will be different from the style adopted by leaders in the UK. That does not suggest that one form is superior to the other forms but it shows how leadership is a diverse concept.

Leaders in the modern era normally go by the pattern where they delegate and guide, whereby the subordinates' commitment is assumed. When the goals and objectives are clear, the leader relies on the team's ability to accomplish the task. In research by Hersey et al. (2000), leaders were shown to use various styles depending on the circumstances and expected outcomes. In situations where the followers lack decision making power and confidence, one person must take the charge and order others to perform. In such cases, the autocratic form of leadership will work best, since all the decisions will be made by the leader and the followers simply work according to the instructions given. As time progresses, the employees will become trained and based on past experiences. They will also be able to decide on certain matters and raise a considered opinion. This is the time when the leader realizes that the followers can assume more responsibility and be held accountable for making certain decisions. So for the same group of employees, the leader will have to resort to a more democratic style since the autocratic style may lead to conflict and disengaged employees. Democracy will also help the leader gain support with regards to decisions made regarding a project or task. Once each member learns to specialize in an area of work and becomes sufficiently proficient to handle the task effectively without any guidance or supervision, the Laissez – faire approach can be adopted. Here the leader understands that

each person is competent and responsible for specific tasks and there is no need for interfering in the processes (Eagly et al, 2003). The leader only keeps track of progress and ensures that all the followers are working as per the defined limits. There are individuals who may find it difficult to change styles, as their personality traits supports one form. The autocratic leader may find it hard to adopt the democratic approach and similarly a democratic leader will find it difficult to let go of most decision-making and leave it to each member to decide on their specific tasks (Engen, 2003). A good leader will, however, adopt all the styles where needed based on the situational factors.

In 1990, research revealed that women are more democratic in their approach and less autocratic as compared to the men. In research by Bass (1997), it was established that women are more transformational leaders and focus on rewarding performance. Men on the other hand focus more on punishing and adopt a transactional approach. Cooperation and collaboration is more evident in women leadership then otherwise. McKinsey and Company (2007) established that to meet challenges of the global economy the leadership approaches and styles that are favourable are demonstrated and applied more by the women than the men.

2.6 Women's Leadership

In most parts of the world, top management in their effort towards gender parity and diversity have set goals that ensure that women get a certain proportion of the top management positions (Steven et al., 2003). They have heavily invested in programs that target training and development of women so that they can effectively handle leadership positions. But often, top management is disappointed, as the results are not satisfactory despite their investment (Omar and Davidson, 2001).

The renaissance of women's leadership in a society where women previously faced intense competition and hostility from their male counterparts has gained immense attention in the media and researchers. Research work clearly emphasizes that the personal qualities that Saudi women possess and other social factors have acted as the main motivational tools for women in Saudi Arabia.

The developments in the strategic organization of Saudi Arabia have created great work opportunities for women at large. This has caused the Saudi women to take up leadership roles in the public arena. The Saudi Arabian government has made some serious planning

efforts for the empowerment of women. According to Metcalfe and Rees (2010), the activation of all social and economic elements was imperative for the development of women's roles in Saudi Arabian society (Metcalfe and Rees, 2010). The strong shift in the Saudi society has seen women qualifying for leadership positions in top private and public organizations and institutes at unprecedented rates such as presidents of universities, Shura council advisers, deputy ministers, head of various departments and other senior management roles (Arab women, 2014).

Research has put a great focus on leadership roles increasingly being adopted by women in Saudi Arabia, and the skills that the Saudi women possess (Omair 2008; Stead and Elliot 2009). The growth in the interest of practitioners and researchers has evolved from the increasing attention gained by the concept of leadership in the organizations. According to Stead and Elliot (2009), the strengthening of women's roles has opened up a new chapter of progress of women's leadership in Saudi Arabia. Researchers further argue that for a social change to be brought about in Saudi Arabia, it is vital that the society at large be committed to the development of women's leadership.

According to Alchoui (2009), the globalization forces have brought in the drift in Saudi Arabia's approach towards women in leadership roles in the public and private sectors (Alchoui, 2009). The challenges that women in Saudi Arabia face have also been receiving immense attention during the last few decades. The Eighth Development Plan of Saudi Arabia also mentions it in its second strategic pillar that it is one of the foremost aims of Saudi Arabia to provide 'increased attention to women's affairs and development capabilities, and removal of barriers to participation in the development activities. Hence, it is evident that the development plan emphasizes on the empowerment of women's leadership and encourages their participation in not just their family lives but also the workplace.

Another development plan in this context relates to the recommendation provided in the Third National Dialogue (2003), where the need for serious efforts for reforms in female empowerment was strongly focused. The main aim of the recommendation was to highlight the legal system relating to women's rights and identify its influence on the empowerment of women. Also, it aimed to introduce new educational and public endeavours to ensure that traditional beliefs and customs do not hinder creation of vocational, organizational and academic opportunities for women in Saudi Arabia.

Despite the expansion and the empowerment of women in Saudi Arabia in past few decades, the challenges that the women working at senior management positions continue to face from their male counterparts are immense (Almankash et al., 2007). These challenges affect the ability of the Saudi women to become effective managers and leaders. The challenges faced by women in Saudi Arabia and those by women in other gulf countries are somewhat similar. The main obstacles, as outlined by Al-Lamki (2007), are as follows: (1) limited opportunities available for women, (2) gender discrimination at the time of promotions, (3) strong hostility from male counterparts, (4) male dominated cultures at workplace, (5) a lack of policies for securing the women's rights at leadership roles, (6) an absence of professional networking, (7) a lack of formal policies and procedures for development of women empowerment, and (8) other cultural and economic issues (Al-Lamki, 2007). However, the work environment in Saudi Arabia has shown great improvement over the last few years and is evidently different from that in other gulf states. This has happened mainly due to the entry of large numbers of women in labour market of Saudi Arabia and segregation on the basis of gender at workplace.

Unfortunately, discrimination based on gender is built into the governing and social framework of Saudi Arabia. Based on this women find it hard to access employment opportunities and even if they start working, they will not be offered full benefits of working (Women and Leadership, 1996). This has become a limitation that the Saudi's are realizing and are attempting to reform.

2.7 Factors Affecting Women's Leadership

Research indicates that women in many western countries also face various challenges when they work in managerial capacities and several factors impact their progress. The challenges that they face and those faced by women leaders in Saudi Arabia however, differ in many ways. According to Stead and Elliot (2009), the western women tend to face problems such as stereotyping, absence of sufficient training and development programs and lack of effective female role models. On the other hand, women leaders in Saudi Arabia face cultural taboos, negative attitudes at workplace, severe lack of confidence, encouragement and recognition of work and intense discrimination from male counterparts (Wilkinson, 1996). The women leaders in Saudi Arabia face numerous challenges, which relegate them to lower management positions in the organizations. Women in Saudi Arabia are mostly working

under men who engage in constant intervention, and generally, the women lack of freedom in the decision making process. Also, it implies that no decision can be made without the approval of the senior male management and hence, this leads to having impact on the performance of women (Al-Halawani 2002; Almenkash et al. 2007; Abdullah 2008).

2.7.1 Culture

One of the major factors that effects women leadership is Saudi Arabia is the Saudi culture itself. The Saudi community though modern in most its approaches still looks at leadership from an ancient perspective, where only men had leadership capacities, and by nature women did not possess any characteristics or traits that could make them effective leaders (Anderson, 2009). This attitude dates prior to Islam and, therefore, is deep rooted in the Arab culture. Arguably, such prejudicial attitudes are endemic elsewhere. For instance, Eagly (2007) authored a review paper that compared that apparent contradiction in both the Western press and many previous Western studies based on peoples' perceptions and preferences regarding the attributes typically associated with women and in specific those characteristics in the context of providing organizational leadership. Eagly concluded that there was a high level of discrepancy between acknowledged capabilities and willingness or contentment of being subjected to female leadership in a formal organizational context (e.g. government, corporation).

2.7.2 Hostility for Women

The tradition and culture especially amongst the tribal communities in Saudi Arabia promote hostility towards women, and men prefer dominance over women and to have women remain their traditional roles. Acceptance amongst the Saudi male community for women managers and leaders is very low. Even amongst those who accept female leadership, they are not entirely satisfied with allowing such freedom to the women at the workplace. Hostility or resentment towards women who strive to become leaders at the workplace is deep rooted in the education and family systems (Mills, 2002). This is the reason why Arab women leaders find it harder than women in other parts of the world to achieve more and demonstrate effective leadership (Abele, 2003).

2.7.3 A History of Male Dominance

Another factor that impacts women leadership not only in Saudi Arabia but all across the world is the historical male dominance in leadership roles. From the very early research, it is evident that male dominance is prevalent all over and stands as a barrier to the progress of

women. A society where male leadership is preferred will inhibit women from entering into competition (Schien, 2001). In KSA the situation is acute. For example, in Saudi society, men will refuse to follow a female leader regardless of her expertise and ability. The historical facts add more meaning to the existing cultural and societal norms, thereby, making it more difficult to break the norms (Cubillo and Brown, 2003).

2.7.4 Corruption

Additionally, women in all parts of the world including Saudi Arabia fail to attain leadership positions because of corrupt practices of organizations in both the public and private sectors. Corruption is one of the major problems primarily in the public sector and individuals through lobbying or based on personal relations occupy leadership roles. Bribery is also common, and with such practices whether explicit or otherwise, the possibility of a women to make it on a leading position based on merit is highly unlikely. A culture of male dominance and corruption makes it very difficult for women to emerge as leaders especially in regions like Saudi Arabia where the culture supports such dominance.

2.7.5 Lack of Self Confidence

One factor that lies within women is the confidence and belief that they can lead and lead effectively. An internal oppression exists, and this limits women to take up roles with leadership responsibilities. This oppression again is the fault of the larger society, who has created this environment and has built a system that trains women to take the traditional practices and roles as the ultimate goal. The women are, therefore, limited by their own lack of confidence, and often they fail not strive for change.

2.7.6 The Glass Ceiling

The definition of barriers as described by the researchers and authors is that they refer to the events, which prevent individuals from progressing towards their aims and goals. The glass ceiling phenomenon and the prejudice that women have to face from within their organizations remain the most common issues facing them. Eagly and Carli (2003) in a large-scale assessment of women's progress in leadership skills asserts that many of the impediments to further advancement relate to prejudice and what is constitutes "leadership" within an organization, specifically what leadership is supposed to look like. Based on diaries, recordings, and analyses by participants and nonparticipant observers Bormann et al. (1978) devised an extensive case study of a developing organization and concluded that male response to female dominance was a critical component. Powell and Graves (2003) also

identified that the glass ceiling phenomenon can affect the entire job roles of women and create numerous hurdles which then prevent women from reaching the leadership roles in organizations (Powell and Graves, 2003).

2.7.7 The Sticky Floor Syndrome

A common barrier found primarily in the education sector in Saudi Arabia and other parts of the world is sometimes referred as the sticky floor syndrome, where a group of people are intentionally kept down. Women in the Saudi Arab have started focusing on education within the Kingdom and have also sought opportunities outside (Pounder and Coleman, 2002). Yet despite having good academics and qualifications, men are selected in higher positions and there are very few women who become the dean for a faculty (Bassaw, 2010). This is not just in academia but is also evident in other sectors just like the presence of a glass ceiling (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

2.7.8 Challenging Career Paths

Another barrier is the career path for a particular job role. Organizations have jobs designed to achieve certain targets, and the process disregards gender issues (Correll, 2001). It is easier for men to travel and take up work in a different area or an expatriate assignment. Women find this difficult since they have to look after their families as well or may not be permitted to travel. The additional responsibilities and travelling is generally avoided, especially by working mothers. This results in less exposure and knowledge about the organizations operations. With higher-ranking positions, the job demands increase and cannot be avoided. It can be suggested that senior management roles disregard the needs of women and so women may avoid such positions and remain content with lower ranking jobs (Omar and Davidson, 2001).

2.7.9 Increased Scrutiny

The lack of women leaders makes it more difficult for the women who have made it to the top levels. The scarcity leads to an increase in scrutiny of female leaders that leads to risk aversion (Charness and Gneezy, 2012).

2.7.10 Limited access to Resources

Leadership requires certain resources to be effective. Without these resources or access to avail the resources, leadership will fail. In order to limit a person from achieving any target, a useful strategy is to cut down or limit the resources required (Walby, 2005). Women in the

Saudi region face structural challenges of getting complete access to resources (Sidani, 2005). For instance, financial resources and the banking sector do not fully support women, thereby making it difficult for women to achieve more. Since the culture supports male dominance the idea that women may need services from a bank, or the very basic need of commuting to work is considered insignificant. With limited access to important and basic needs and resources, women leadership suffers (Leonard, 2001). If women seek to become entrepreneurs in the Kingdom, it is difficult as access credit. Furthermore, lack of confidence and biases against women leads to biased credit policies and so with limited resources, women choose not to start up their own work.

2.7.11 Lack of Women Empowerment

Metcalf (2008) states that lack of empowerment of women in Saudi Arabia has affected women's decision-making abilities. Lack of access to knowledge, lack of participation in setting up organizational goals, and an absence of sufficient power has led to lack of women empowerment (Metcalf, 2008). Moreover, according to Effendi (2003), women in Saudi Arabia are reported to have said that lack of empowerment leaves a negative impact on their psyche and gives them no feeling of recognition by or affiliation with their organizations (Effendi, 2003).

For women it is important that the public sector gives opportunity to women since the sector has to employ a greater number of resources, and their actions have a greater impact on the society and employment practices in general. If women are empowered by giving them opportunities to lead in the public domains, the sector itself will become a role model and open new doors for women in other domains as well.

2.7.12 Family related barriers

Research indicates the women have always been treated as the suppressed gender, and the general perception is that women have responsibilities strictly within the four walls of their homes. The performance of domestic duties is considered to be their primary role. Hence, this division of roles between the men and women of Saudi Arabia implies that men focus on their professional lives, while women cater to obligations in their homes (Mostafa, 2005). Moreover, Saudi women often withdraw from working in the low paying job roles that lack fringe benefits that they are offered. Another pressure that they have to face constantly is striking a balance between their professional and domestic lives.

2.7.13 Legal Factors

According to Mostafa (2005), the legal rules and policies applicable within Saudi Arabia are highly discriminatory against women. They discourage women to work professionally and pursue their careers. There are no policies in Saudi Arabia that protect the rights of women and allow them to work professionally (Mostafa, 2005). Policies that do cater to such issues never go beyond documents into an implementation phase. Noraini (2002) feels that a major factor that hinders the growth of women in Saudi Arabia is the law that inhibits women from driving a vehicle, which means that the working women will be dependent on the male members of the society to work outside their homes (Noraini, 2002).

2.7.14 Educational Constraints

It is a sad state of affairs that the majority of the world's illiterate population are women. In developing nations particularly women are left behind in the education sector and the gender gaps persist (Burke and Collins, 2001). Since access to education itself is a difficulty, women are unable to develop themselves as professionals ready to take up leadership roles. This situation leads to marginalization of girls and women from leadership positions. In rural areas, girls are not allowed to get education and even if they are, the quality of education is a concern as well.

For an entry-level leadership role in the public and private sector, a basic level of education is required. A key constraint faced by many aspiring women in Saudi Arab and around the world is that the woman are not sufficiently educated to be considered for such roles (ILM, 2011). Even where women have been able to attain such roles, it has been observed that they have required more support and training in order to handle the job role effectively, because of insufficient early phase educational opportunities. Omair (2008) suggests that women are only required to attain basic education from the public sector, which is not up to the required standards (Omair, 2008). This means that women from the very beginning are not trained and educated to be qualified for a senior level job.

2.7.15 Occupational Factors

The occupational division within Saudi Arabia is seen as most discriminatory worldwide. This is because men continue to enjoy better career growth and brighter work opportunities. According to Rhode and Kellerman (2007), only the Saudi men have the decision making power in the banking sector, while women remain at the lowest posts of the organizations. In

addition to this, women are not even allowed to form unions or raise voices against discriminating practices within organizations (Rhode and Kellerman, 2007).

One occupational factor is the dual role that women have to perform in terms of work and family. Since women are not given leadership roles and positions of decision making power and influence, the systems and supporting structures for women are never established (Howard and Willins (2015). For instance the option of having day care facilities is a major concern for working mothers. Based on such factors women will choose work with low responsibility so that they can earn for their family and also take time for their children. If organizations are supportive and understand the dual roles that women play, more women will opt to work and strive for leadership positions.

Significant researcher indicates in their case studies that the general trend in Saudi Arabia is that the men decide, control, organize and plan, while women do only repetitive jobs (Carli and Eagly, 2001). The confidence of women regarding their abilities to achieve their goals and get rewarded also influences their working capabilities and skills. The gender identity threats and the lack of recognition for the goals they achieve cause women to face a lack of motivation, and they have to either quit working or cope with low paying positions unchallenging positions.

2.7.16 Tokenism

A very critical aspect as part of the discussion of constraints is tokenism. Media, various organizations and leading women today talk about women's empowerment, gender parity and bringing women in leadership roles so that their contribution to the economy and society matters (Women Empowerment, 2012). Because of this awareness, many organizations will appoint women in leadership roles just to conform and fulfil the affirmative action requirements. The management board does not have sincere belief and trust in women, yet for compliance they will appoint a woman. Such appointments in Saudi Arabia have known to take place however since the appointments are not purely based on merit, therefore the chances that those women leaders fail is high. The token act of having a woman in a leading role in the company must end. Women in Saudi Arabia can lead as effectively as their male counter parts and so they too can compete for leadership roles just like men do. To empower or to give an opportunity does not mean that women are made part of a company just so that the management can claim about equal opportunity (Omar and Davidson, 2001). Even in governance, it is seen that to meet international requirements, women are given leading roles

however the selection is not based on merit. In developing countries it is often seen that companies in order to meet requirements of certain standards and certifications will create positions and hire women so that they can claim that the women are an equal part. Such corrupt practices also constrain women who have the ability to achieve more. A related problem is marginalisation as was documented in a series of oral histories of 21 female administrators in public schools in Nova Scotia, Sherman (2000). To date no equivalent studies have been undertaken in the Gulf countries.

The basic issue is the resistance from the men and their perception regarding women as emotional beings unable to handle situations with pressure (Eckel and Grossman, 2008). The reality of the situation is that effective decision-making is a skill that can be taught, learned, and developed with time and with no regard to gender (Burke and Collins, 2001). Once learned both men and women, individuals can be in decisive roles and perform their jobs effectively. Many organizations across the globe understand that a workforce that is diverse based on gender is more productive and generally sends a good message about the company's employment practices, but to date little effort has been put into place to improve the work practices and limiting the factors that inhibit women from leading (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

2.8 Remedial Strategies to increase Women's Leadership

Women's leadership is the most important factor to keep an organizational balance between men and women. Moreover, in the diverse working background female leadership styles are more effective than male ones because women can more effectively treat people and interact with them using their emotional understanding and soft skills. The general behavior of women is considered as more polite than that of their male counterparts, and they are good at consoling the workforce. In an early study Chapman (1975) confirmed that "women tend to adopt more accommodative strategies than their male counterparts when influencing group performance and goal attainment of employees. Women tend to form coalitions in an accommodative manner when engaged in competitive activities, while men are more exploitive, using coalitions to gain individual advantages." (Chapman, 1975 p. 1)

Women across the world have played a strong role in contributing to the economic progression and Saudi government realizes this. Therefore, the government is now focusing on strategies that will empower women and break the cultural and societal barriers (Oakley, 2000). Saudi society must accept expanded women's leadership roles and through

empowering initiatives must allow them to take part in the decision making process to provide the women leaders with sufficient autonomy and flexibility. A key component to this is changing hearts and mind. Thus a program by the government of India is worth mentioning. This was used as the basis of a study by Beaman et al. (2012), considered the impact female leadership opportunities on the educational achievement of school-aged girls (aged 11-15) in 495 rural villages in India. Specifically, the study investigated the impact of a 1993 law that reserved leadership positions for women in randomly selected village councils. Based on 8453 surveys of girls and their parents' gender gap in aspirations closed by 20% in parents and 32% in adolescents in villages assigned a female leader for two election cycles. The gender gap in adolescent educational attainment was erased, and girls spent less time on household chores. We found no evidence of changes in young women's labor market opportunities, which suggests that the impact of women leaders primarily reflects a role model effect.

According to Stead and Elliot (2009), female empowerment development plans in Saudi Arabia have mainly aimed at increasing the level of knowledge and expertise possessed by the Saudi women. Also, the plan emphasizes the need to reduce stereotyping and negative biases, which hinder women from advancing in their leadership roles. The development plans have aimed to provide women leaders with a sense of belonging by recognizing their performance and by making the training of women part of the overall organizational strategic plan. Organizations and the governing bodies also realize that through various workshops and conferences, the women will have a platform to find solutions and discuss the challenges that they face in their work lives.

The key to achieve business goals and aspirations in Saudi Arabia is to maximize the human resource potential by allowing women to take part in the labor force. To utilize the potential of women in Saudi organizations, it is imperative that certain strategies as mentioned below be followed to block the limiting factors that were discussed in the previous section:

2.8.1 Breaking the Glass Ceiling

The invisible barriers that prevent women to excel to higher positions within organizations must be eliminated. Such barriers can take many forms, and may be a policy or a person that defines the limitations. For this, organizations must understand and analyse their policies from the perspective of women critically analysing associated factors. Statistical data can provide useful details as to how many women actually reach the top management and what

might be the factors that are inhibiting women to be in leadership roles (Barreto et al., 2009). Only through a proper understanding of the entire context, can an organization rectify and break glass ceilings. When women are seen as top managers, it will be evident that the glass ceiling no longer exists.

2.8.2 Favourable regulatory environment

A favourable regulatory environment is essential to address the concerns of women leaders and women who are trying to attain senior management roles (Davidson & Burke, 2004). When laws are not sensitive to gender, the primary victims are women. Commitment to improving the situation for women's leadership by governing bodies and those in power is essential to changing the status quo (Dodd, 2012).

Laws in the Kingdom prohibit women from driving. This is a major concern for women especially and such laws need to be scrutinized whether they are really needed and whether the religion is suggesting such a practice.

2.8.3 Improved role of Saudi Media

In this age of technology and information, media plays a vital role in shaping the minds of masses. It is, therefore, essential that the media plays an effective role and supports women in their struggle for equality and to gain positions in leading capacities. If the media highlights accomplishments by the women and their contributions to the Saudi society, this will create a positive image in the minds of the Saudi society, and the next generation will be more open to allowing women to pursue careers and take up leadership roles. Media must also provide a platform for the Saudi women leaders to act as role models for the younger women.

2.8.4 Improved Education and Training Programs

One of the major reasons identified for having fewer women in leadership roles in the Saudi region other than the cultural limitations is that of education and training. Another issue highlighted by Almenkash et al (2007) is that women in Saudi Arabia are now given the leadership roles too soon without sufficient experience and preparation for the required performance of the job. Lack of women role models is another problem that the women in Saudi Arabia face (Omair, 2008). In Dreher's 2003 study of lower-level managerial positions held by women in the 1980s and 1990s, attainment was positively associated with the number of work-life human resource practices provided in 1994 and with the percentage of senior management positions held by women in 1999 (Dreher, 2003).

Since the beginning, little focus is given on the education of girls. Young women are not expected to work in organizations rather they are expected to marry and raise a family. With such expectations the focus on education and training of girls becomes insignificant and men feel that there is not much need to do so. This needs to change drastically and women must be allowed to seek quality education and training (Ridgeway, 2001). The cultural limitations have to be broken allowing girls to study and prepare for leadership roles. Saudi government needs to further improve on programs and initiatives that target education of women.

When women are qualified for positions, they will be able to use logical reasoning and convince others and eventually lead them (Al-Ahmadi, 2005). In this context, training programs are important. Women are mostly given roles that are supportive and therefore organizations feel that there is no need to invest in training women (Leonard, 2001). This culture also needs to change and through enrolling women in training programs and helping them develop leadership potential. Training programs that target leadership building are vital. These programs must target both men and women and educate them on how to overcome biases as various forms of individual and organizational wide biases limit women from excelling (Alexander, 2012). One bias that is evident in the Kingdom is that in many large organizations, the number of women in top management is limited. This suggests that the organization only aims at giving a certain number of women the opportunity to lead, which might indicate that organization only seeks affirmative action. Through trainings on different levels, the mind-sets need to be changed. Women can be in the top management regardless of the total count of women already in leadership roles within the same organization. The criteria needs to be on merit and regardless of gender, leadership roles should be assigned (Omar and Davidson, 2001).

2.8.5 Increase in the number of positions for women

Organizations must also encourage and equal employment opportunity practice and a practice that encourages females to apply. In a conservative culture, organizations do not seek women employee. Therefore the opportunity for a Saudi woman to be a part of an organization and build a career is very sparse (Burke and Nelson, 2002). Organizations today have realized that Saudi women have the potential to work effectively and lead efficiently. This suggests that positions must be open for women to apply and corresponding employment opportunities. When organizations will ensure diversity in terms of gender, the chances of women rising in situations and leading will be higher (Alajmi, 2001). One does not just enter in an organization and starts leading. Instead, there is a long and tough journey to top

management positions. With the glass ceiling removed and more women working, women leadership in Saudi organizations will be evident.

It is also essential that those sitting in leadership roles in the public sector understand the importance and advantages of gender parity. When women are promoted to leadership roles with more power and authority, the outcomes will serve as a model for the private sector. The positive outcomes will encourage the private sector to preserve competitiveness and hire more women employees (Gneezy and List, 2009). With more women employees in the workplace, the likelihood of women emerging as leaders in different domains and roles will be higher.

2.8.6 Flexible working options/ timings

Smaller roles with fewer responsibilities are generally easier for women with children to handle. These women working either in the Gulf region or any part of the world will not seek for roles that require extensive over time and high pressures. If however the women are allowed options to work from home, then this might improve the number of Saudi women opting for leadership roles as well. For an organization, this might be difficult to implement but it is a useful option to utilize a woman who is capable enough to handle a leadership role. Organizations today offer women flexible timing and work from home options through the use of internet and other modern technologies (Burke and Cooper, 2004). Technology has made our lives easier and with the increased demands of the job, these can be employed to support women.

2.8.7 Improving Communication and Networking

Effective leadership requires open and effective communication and improved channels of networking. Without the information exchange it becomes difficult for anyone regardless of gender to lead. The conservative culture of Saudi Arabia makes it difficult for Saudi women to communicate with their male counter parts and to be part of networking forums. This results in poor performance and a general lack of understanding (Stead and Elliot, 2009).

Al- Hawani (2002) states that the empowerment of women in Saudi Arabia is quite recent, and the concerns relating to the challenges are still emerging, which continue to have an impact on women's capabilities to manage and lead effectively. Studies have confirmed that women who were given appropriate employment and leadership development opportunities proved to be effective leaders (Leonard, 2001).

Similar to practices in the European Union, the Saudi government must also maintain a database of the leading women in the Kingdom. This information must be up to date and easy to access so that the government can keep track of the progress women have made, the contributions they have made to the economy and also analyze the effectiveness of plans that target women empowerment. This can also be used as a convenient mechanism to identify women with potential for roles with even greater responsibility and influence (Forret and Dougherty, 2004).

Traditionally, cultural issues were considered as too influential for the success of women leaders in Saudi Arabia. However, with the change in the policies, the role of women in Saudi Arabian society has changed. This has happened also because of the policy of ‘integration of women in decision making positions’ by King Abdullah.

2.8.8 Improving effectiveness of Human Resource Departments

There is a general consensus that Human resource departments in organizations are not effective in terms of promoting gender equality and ensuring that women in addition to the men get equal opportunities to excel and attain a leadership position. The effectiveness of this department in large organizations needs to be improved so that the employment, compensation and career management practices are supportive for women in Saudi Arab.

In addition to these remedial strategies there are two actions that can help improve the current scenario. The first is to educate the women about second generation gender bias and the glass ceiling effect. This is important, as the women need to understand what implicit factors will impact their performance (Harrison et al., 2015). The next step is to ensure that the women understand the true definition of leadership and that it has nothing to do with gender. This is important, so that the women go beyond their traditional roles and understand that they are fully capable to achieve more. With these steps within an organization, the women will understand both themselves and their surroundings and will effectively be able to proceed to roles with greater responsibility and decision-making power (Tibus, 2010).

2.9 Findings from Literature

The literature review on renaissance of women’s leadership in Saudi Arabia identifies how leadership is viewed throughout history with special focus on women leadership in the Kingdom.

The gaps in the literature can be categorised into three areas for further study. One, the place of values in women's ambition to become leaders and achievement of leadership position is implicit in the existing research. Existing models and theories of leadership make no explicit reference to the sources of values and the process for nurturing values conducive to women's leadership ambition and its achievement. The present research investigates such sources and process of value formation conducive for Saudi women leaders. Two, while some research references social issues impacting on women leadership, there is a need to further understand the actual social dynamics. And in the case of Saudi women leaders, the cultural dynamics which made the achievement of leadership possible for them needs to be explained and understood in the Saudi context. Three, focusing on the Saudi context, women's work, contribution and recognition in organisations needs to be explained and understood too. As the organisational characteristics of Saudi companies and government departments is unique, it needs to be explained in terms of Saudi women's achievement of leadership positions.

Therefore, these three key findings from the literature are formulated as the three critical research questions to be undertaken herein. First, what is the role of values in sustaining and evolution of leadership skills? Second, what is the role of social and cultural dynamics in supporting and framing women's ambition to become leaders? Three, what is the impact of organisational dynamics between men and women on women's achievement of significant leadership positions? These questions are further elaborated in the following three sub-sections.

2.9.1 Demonstrated values that help women sustain or evolve leadership skills

- History has focused more on men leaders than women as leaders and all researchers and theorists have focused on men in leadership roles.
- This has led to an absence of understanding about female leadership models and potential, although it is now recognized that leadership encompasses various styles and approaches and each leader can be defined differently.
- Furthermore, leadership that is effective in one place with a group of people may be ineffective in another place at a different time.
- Female leadership relies more on consensus and cooperation from all stakeholders and this can be a useful tool for organizations in the modern era.
- Women in leadership roles need to be more assertive to be viewed as credible decision makers.

2.9.2 Social and cultural dynamics that foster or inhibit women's leadership chances

- Saudi cultural and societal norms remain one of the prominent barriers to women in their efforts to reach leadership positions.
- The glass ceiling is globally evident and is highly present in most Saudi organizations.
- There is a general lack of focus on the education and training of Saudi women.
- Expectations from women and perceptions regarding the ability of Saudi women are flawed.
- Young Saudi women need to develop the confidence and assertiveness required for leadership positions.
- Male dominance and the general hostility of men towards working women is an important limiting factor that needs to be eliminated for women to reach higher level positions.
- Tokenism is evident all across and women are made part of organizations in top roles so that the companies can claim about their fair practices. Women need to be selected on merit and not just to conform to a standard working practice.
- Saudi officials and governing bodies have started to realize the importance of women's role in the economy.
- Saudi women are no less than other women from around the world who have taken up leading positions in organizations and governments.

2.9.3 Critical organizational characteristics for supporting women in leadership roles

- When women are provided with flexible working options so that they can maintain a health work life balance, the number of women emerging as leaders rise.
- Human resource departments in large organizations in various sectors need to adopt practices that improve chances of women to attain leadership positions. The supportive structures and procedures that will encourage women to take up leadership roles must also be present.

2.10 Conclusion

History is marked with women in leadership roles and women are considered to be effective leaders based on their ability to handle situations in an effective, polite and ethical manner. Women also have the tendency to adapt to changes in the organizational environment since they are more flexible and empathetic. To improve women leadership in regions where

women have limited freedom is challenging on a multiple levels. From the deep roots to a larger picture, the reforms need to be brought that support women in leading roles.

Media and education in the Kingdom must play a vital part in bringing these reforms. Not only do the systems and practices need to encourage women to come forward and strive towards leadership roles but the education and media has to work in order to alter norms relating to women leaders. Gender equality is an issue rights and so it must be given significant attention and effort. The curriculum in schools needs to be supportive of this so that the boys from an early age understand that gender should not be used to discriminate when working in professional life. The girls must also be educated on this matter so they develop the confidence to seek leadership opportunities in professional life.

Significant importance is given to the traditional role of women in the Kingdom. This however does not mean that women have to adopt the traditional care taking role only. If the women are provided with flexible options of work, and supportive organizational designs, then women will show deeper interest in pursuing careers and excelling in them. Another critical factor is that to achieve gender parity it is important that the men play an important role and support women leadership. In a male dominant society, a few leading women will not be able to change norms and develop the culture into something more favorable for career oriented women. Understanding and high levels of commitment from the male counterpart is also an essential component for change.

In both the developed and developing part of the world, no country has achieved true gender parity in terms of access to leadership positions, quality healthcare and education and roles in governance. Even in societies where male dominance is much less significant, gender disparity persists. It is important that data collection regarding the women, their enrollment in education and then towards careers needs to be monitored and worked upon before coming to informed conclusions about what policy level changes have to be brought. Tracking the performance of women leaders and progress in terms of initiatives that support women leadership is critical to improving the current situation.

Saudi government needs to continue its efforts in empowering women from the grass root level. It needs to invest in initiatives that ensure quality education of girls and must also ensure that organizations provide women an equal opportunity to work and an equal right to be rewarded appropriately. Saudi women have the confidence to take up leadership roles but culture and society has limited them to traditional roles and so they are unfamiliar to these

roles and their requirement. Saudi women, although increasingly working outside of the home are mostly sidelined in their career opportunities, and male dominance continues. For younger Saudi women there are very few role models who can act as mentors. With more women joining the workforce a reform in the culture and society can be brought eventually promoting women leadership in the Kingdom.

Chapter 3 Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

A conceptual framework enables the framing of the expected observations around constructs and their relationships to provide an explanation for the phenomenon of interest, and centrally enables the data to be collected to evidence these constructs and relationships. It contains the sources of the constructs, concepts, themes and interrelations between them that explain the object of interest or phenomenon (Northouse, 2015). Recently, Saudi women leaders have become effective and influential leaders in government and private organisations. Their strengths and success needs to be explained. What is a plausible explanation of the renaissance of women leaders in Saudi Arabia? For example, female university graduates account for 55 percent of Saudi Arabian university graduates, Saudi women studying abroad account for 80,000 and Saudi Arabia has 27 of Forbes' 200 most influential Arab women in 2014 (Roundtable, 2015). This appears to be contrary to popular perceptions of Saudi women in their everyday life. The normal view is that Saudi women are not allowed to drive, need male's permission to travel abroad, depend on male relatives, and have to comply with cultural gender segregation. What can account for the renaissance of women leaders in Saudi Arabia, as many women are now in leading positions in companies, organisations and government? Resume!

Explanation is the core of a conceptual framework as it details the constructs and their relations that are then explored empirically. A conceptual framework is a set of constructs, concepts or themes and their interrelations which explain the object of interest (Rocco and Plakhotnik, 2009). In particular, a conceptual scheme or framework explores the factors and their relationships (Aldaweesh, et al., 2012). In this research, a conceptual framework is used to identify the constructs, themes, and factors that explain the renaissance of women leaders in Saudi Arabia.

The conceptual framework also indicates the potential contribution of the research. Since this research seeks to provide an account of how women leaders themselves explain their success

as leaders, this conceptual framework details the constructs underpinning women leaders' perception of factors contributing to their success.

The conceptual framework seeks to explore the expected observations that can be judged to be an account of these factors. It incorporates women leaders' perception of the challenge of gaining and keeping leadership positions. In particular, it incorporates their knowledge of leading, organisational culture that affects their gaining and keeping their positions, and the social and societal factors that promoted their aspirations and securing of leadership positions. It includes informal aspects such as an explanation of how women leaders acquire peer-supported leadership with no formal designation.

First, the function of conceptual frameworks in research is explained in Section 2. How the conceptual framework for this research was developed is explained in Section 3. Qualitative research centrally accounts for the *context* of the research, in which the observed subject, Saudi women leaders, and their intricate relationships with other contextual factors exists. In Section 4, how contextual constructs through a logical analysis of the literature were identified is explained. Though the subject and their complex relations with others happens in particular contexts, the subject themselves are located in unique *situation*. An analysis of the unique situations of Saudi women leaders is discussed in Section 5 to identify relevant constructs. The relationship between the context and the situation is explained. In Section 6, an account is provided of how the conceptual framework was validated. Section 7 ends the Chapter with a conclusion.

3.2 Conceptual Frameworks

A conceptual framework is needed to identify the set of constructs and their interrelationships that can be empirically observed (Northouse, 2015). It reflects the researcher's own thinking about the research problem. Significantly, it directs the research study. Miles and Huberman (1994: 18) state that a conceptual framework: 'explains either graphically, or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – key factors, concepts or variable and the presumed relationship among them.' As noted in the literature review, the becoming of women leaders is different compared to men leaders, and that there are fewer women leaders than men in all types of organisations. Any explanation of how Saudi women aspire to and achieve leadership positions in public and private organisations needs to identify from the highest level core constructs to tangible factors that result in women becoming leaders (Alexander,

2013; Alexander et. al., 2014). This is done by carefully constructing a conceptual framework.

A range of conceptual frameworks are possible. Those that describe leadership themes; for example Northouse (2015). Frameworks that identify leadership principles; for example, Thomas (2005) identifies five principles of effective leaders, these are: principles, passions, people, performance and perseverance. And those that develop core explanatory constructs (Northouse, 2015). The conceptual framework proposed in this Chapter focuses and enables the research around core causal factors that explain and enable prediction of women leaders. Thus, the explanation contains the reasons why or the explanatory causes of the renaissance of women leadership in Saudi Arabia.

In particular, the conceptual framework defines the constructs and concepts used in this research. Clear and unambiguous definitions of constructs and their interrelations will help to understand cause and effect relations more precisely. This has been achieved by using previous studies' findings and applying modifications to suite the particular research aims and objectives of this study.

3.3 Meeting the research aim and objectives

The development of the conceptual framework detailed in Section 3.3, was based on careful consideration of the research aim and objectives as detailed in Section 1.6. The aim of the research is to investigate personal and social factors that influence Saudi women to become influential leaders. However, as seen in the following Sections such factors need to be based on observable and theoretically sound constructs. Such constructs need to be capable of reflecting not only factors but also explain the personal and social situations and contexts from which women leaders emerge. As Greene, et al., (1989) suggest, the purpose of conceptual framework is to determine the causal relations between the variables under study. Additionally, since the research is of Saudi women leaders the cultural variation of the situations and contexts needs to be reflected in these constructs.

In particular, the conceptual framework needs to be capable of reflecting the research objectives set out in Section 1.6. These objectives cover successful Saudi women leaders' values, identify social and cultural factors that inhibit or enhance Saudi women leaders' ability to gain leadership positions, and thirdly organisational if organisational factors inhibit or advance women leadership. These objectives aim to identify cultural and social factors that

influence or allow Saudi women to become leaders. In addition, it is expected to discern those values that reflect cultural and social factors that may improve access to leadership opportunities for Saudi women.

Finally, the conceptual framework and the resulting data and the data interpretation needs to be able to enable the drawing of recommendations to enhance and sustain women leaders in Saudi organisations. From the empirical data it should be possible to draw sound conclusions. This would only be possible if the conceptual framework reflected actuality in the first place.

A conceptual framework is flexible It can be modified during the research process. In inductive, qualitative research this is an obvious advantage. This is particularly the case because conceptual frameworks emphasize understanding, as opposed to prediction (Jabareen, 2009).

3.4 Developing the conceptual framework

The development of conceptual framework has various sources personal experience, supervisors' experience, literature review and rounds of empirical data (Smyth, 2004). Process frameworks and content frameworks are possible. A process framework sets out the phases or steps through which something happens and answers the 'how' research question. A content framework sets out the variables and their relationships, often with relative strength, and answers the 'why' research question (Page and Wong 2000; Rocco and Plakhotnik, 2009).

Normally, a conceptual framework in quantitative research is created to investigate a research problem. In qualitative research, such as this study, a conceptual framework emerges through successive iterations of data collection and analysis Ravitch & Riggan (2011). Depending on the nature of the research problem, a conceptual framework is created by (a) conducting a comprehensive literature review (Hart, 1998) or (b) an empirical problem requiring a framework of investigation (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Each of these sources of a conceptual framework can be supplemented with the researcher's own ideas about the research problem, particularly, what data is needed to understand and explain the research problem (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

A conceptual framework for this research was created. It involved conducting an initial literature review of influential leadership theories that resulted in identifying key critical constructs capable of explaining women leadership. This formed the initial conceptual

framework. This initial conceptual framework was used to formulate interview questions for the first round interview questions (Section 4.3). The data analysis from this first round interviews and a further comprehensive literature review resulted in a more logically coherent map of themes on women leadership. These themes emerged from the data analysis consistent with the ideas of emerging conceptual framework in qualitative research (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This more developed conceptual framework was used to formulate interview questions for the second round of interview questions (Section 4.4). Finally, the data analysis from this second round interview and a further directed literature review resulted in the final conceptual framework.

3.4.1 Deriving Constructs from Available Theory

A tentative conceptual framework for this research was derived by conducting an initial critical literature review of relevant theories of leadership. This consisted of related theories – such as theories of women leaders, related research – such as research on Arabian women leaders and in particular Saudi women leaders, and other theory and research - such as general theories of leadership (Hart, 1998). To begin to explain and understand women's personal journey to becoming leaders it is necessary to account for their experiences. Following Kleihauer et al., (2012), the initial conceptual framework was focused on the central question: 'Describe your personal journey to becoming a leader in your organisation.' This basic question seeks to understand the life experiences faced by women in becoming leaders in organisations. Life experiences means that the woman is seen both over time and in the context of her society.

Table 2.1 shows the relevant theory, framework or model reviewed and the resulting construct for the initial phase of the investigation. Theory, models and frameworks of leadership obtained from influential literature were used to identify 19 constructs that describe women leadership in the wider literature on leadership. For instance from the leadership framework developed by Egidio Boatwright (2003), the constructs of connectedness, gender role, self-esteem and fear of negative evaluation were identified. Connectedness determines the type of influential network that a leader develops and the value of the network to becoming a leader. In terms of gender, women have specific qualities that give them an advantage to become leaders and constraints that pose a barrier to become leaders. Low self-esteem can prevent women seeking leadership roles and high self-esteem can be a positive influence. These constructs serve to account for women leaders life experiences and lead to developing an explanation of how women leaders become leaders.

The value of such constructs is in the direction they provide for empirical data collection. Therefore, the Table 1 also details the expected types of data to be collected. These constructs can then form the basis for formulating the interview questions for the first round interviews (See Section 4.3).

Table 1: Constructs in the Literature

Source	Theory	Constructs	Learning, Understanding and Knowledge Outcome
Egidio, R. K., & Boatwright, K. J. (2003)	Framework	Connectedness	This question will collect data on women's connectedness. The data will help in understanding whether connectedness is significant. Connectedness determines the type of influential network that a leader develops and the value of the network to becoming a leader. Leaders have the attribute of being connected and an ability to become connected for gainful purpose.
		Gender role	This question will collect data on the difference gender makes to becoming a leader. The data will show whether gender was used by women leaders. Women have specific qualities that give them an advantage to become leaders and constraints that pose a barrier to become leaders.
		Self-esteem	This question will collect data on women's self-esteem. The data will help to understand how women's self-esteem affected their climb to leadership roles. Low self-esteem can prevent women seeking leadership roles and high self-esteem can be a positive influence.
		Fear of negative evaluation	This question will collect data on the effect that negative evaluation of them has on their pursuit of leadership roles. This data will help to understand how women manage hurdles on the way to leadership roles.
Dugan, J. P. (2006)	Social Change Model. 'Feminine skills' and behaviours consistent with female gender roles.	Relationship-building	This question will collect data on how women leaders build relations to become leaders. This question is related to the question on gender role. The data will improve understand of how women use relationships to become leaders. Relationships are important means to get influence and power.
		Process-orientation	This question will collect data on how women leaders engage with the process of leadership. The data will illustrate women leaders engaging in the processes of becoming leaders.
		Connectedness	This question collects different data from Q1. This question will collect data on women's <i>use</i> of their connections. It complements Q6 to show the process of becoming a leader and being a leader. The data will help to understand how connections are used by women leaders, and so is related to Q2 on Gender.
		Ethics of care and concern	This question will collect data on women leaders' ethics. The data will illustrate the role of care in women leaders.

Egidio, R. K., & Boatwright, K. J. (2003).	Environmental factors; causal factors	Women's attitude	This question will collect data on women's attitude. The data will lead to understanding the attitude women have to seeking leadership and leadership.
		Women's self-confidence	This question will collect data on women leaders' confidence in seeking leadership roles. The data will provide details of the confidence of women during their climb to leadership. It may reveal varying levels of confidence during the climb.
		Women's prior work experience	This question will collect data on prior work experience. The data will show the relevance of prior work experience for women becoming leaders. Prior experience outside work will also be explored by asking follow on questions.
		The corporate environment	This question will collect data on the effect of the corporate environment on women becoming leaders. The data will provide data on the corporate environment and lead to understanding how women deal with the corporate environment.
		Old boys' network This concept will be substituted for the dominant power of men in Saudi culture, society and companies.	This question will collect data on how women deal with the influence and power of men in becoming leaders. The data will lead to understanding the strategies women use to overcome resistance.
Ballaro, J. M., & O'Neil, M. A. (2013).	Transactional and Transformational Theories of Leadership: Themes as factors	Passion	This question will collect data on the drive and passion of the interviewee. The data will illustrate the significance of passion in women leaders.
		Achievement	This question will collect data the role of targets in the process of becoming a leader. The data will explain how women leaders use achievement in assessing their progress.
		Credibility	This question will collect data on women leader's self-perception of credibility. The data will add to understanding women's drive to become leaders.
		Family Values	This question will collect data on family values in the process of women becoming leaders. The data will determine whether women leadership results from family values.
		Morality	This question will collect data on the role of morality in women becoming leaders. The data will determine how women use morals in seeking leadership.
		Ethics	This question will collect data on ethics used in becoming a leader. Similar to question Q18, it will determine how women use ethics in seeking leadership.
		Community	This question will collect data on the influence of community on women leadership. The data will show whether community is a factor in women becoming leaders, and how women use it.

		Uncompromised Values	This question will collect data on compromising values in pursuit of leadership.
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Further, reading of the literature identified nineteen themes and values, as shown in Table 2, which had specific relevance to the research objectives. Many of these are refinements of the themes identified in Table 1 above.

Table 2: Nineteen Themes and Values

1	Ability	8	Enthusiasm	15	Persistence
2	Achieving	9	Excelling	16	Relationships
3	Being First	10	Family	17	Self-confidence
4	Charisma	11	Friendships	18	Stability
5	Community	12	Integrity	19	Vision
6	Concern for Others	13	Leadership		
7	Education	14	Perseverance		

3.5 Contextual constructs for investigation

An informed investigation of the renaissance of Saudi women leaders needs to factor in the changing context in Saudi Arabia. Recent Saudi experience is radically different from previous generations' more traditional and clergy-centric life of Saudi women. The newer context of women's life in Saudi Arabia has changed dramatically. There have been recent reforms resulting in females participating in many walks of social, political and business life. Roundtable (2015) compare these recent radical changes in Saudi society with how German women gained and secured their rights in the late 1970s.

Recent Royal decrees are the significant source for the changing context of Saudi women leaders. (Alhoussein, 2014). These decrees are changing and challenging the established views of the powerful clergy and the conservative norms and customs of cultural society. As noted earlier, women have more access and job opportunities in private and public office, as well as becoming entrepreneurs. Critically, they have higher visibility in public life. Some of these contextual changes enabling women leaders can be attributed to the economic pressures that the Saudi economy faces, as well as political pressures for women liberalisation from powerful friends and trading partners of the Saudi Kingdom.

The review of the literature in light of these recent experiences of the Saudi society and specifically Saudi women leaders resulted in further constructs worthy of empirical observations. This contextually-based review of the literature aimed to generate logical argumentation for the thesis and develop contextual constructs for the conceptual framework.

The argumentation was developed by reading the relevant literature, gathering empirical findings, making inferences from them and generating conjectures, all relevant to understanding how Saudi women become leaders in public and private organisations. The bottom layers labelled 'L.1' etc. refer to the literature and items labelled 'F.1A' etc. detail the empirical findings in the literature that relate to contextual constructs. Reading of the literature that related to contextual constructs that have not been investigated in the literature are labelled 'C.1' etc. The rationale for identifying and selecting both these types of constructs for this research investigation is labelled 'R.1' etc. and consequent research gap is labelled 'G.1' etc. The rationale and research gap combined lead to the research questions labelled 'R.Q.1' etc. which in turn lead to the research objectives labelled 'OBJ.1' etc. The research aim stems from these research objectives and the research problem is then fully derived through hypotheses and deduction.

The research problem concerns the identification of personal, professional and social factors affecting Saudi women leaders' aspirations. In order to contribute to understanding of how Saudi women become leaders, the research aim is to investigate the personal, professional and social factors that influence women to become leaders. The reference to professional is in the context of the organisations in which Saudi women work.

Reading of the literature generated four contextual conjectures. One, businesses need to devise the mechanisms and policies to encourage women and remove barriers or reduce negative impacts to enable more women to be represented as leaders. Two, social factors could be divided based on their positive and negative impacts and internal or external source, as they can stem from within family and outer social circle of Saudi women. Three, leadership style and can influence success in becoming and being leader. Specific personality traits can help Saudi women succeed as leaders, for example self-esteem and confidence. Finally, context of the leadership can influence success in being leader.

Reflecting on these contextual conjectures resulted in identifying four areas for further research – research gap. One, though organisational impacts are known in the literature, the glass ceiling's effects on personal leadership journey and style of Saudi women leaders are not known which this study would address. The rationale being that professional factors in the context of the specific Saudi organisations need to be better understood to explain women leadership. Two, to what extent personal and social factors, such as personality traits or upbringing account for Saudi women leaders' achievement is not clearly identified in the

literature. This study would concentrate on this aspect. The rationale for this is that the influence of personality, family and societal factors are intertwined together in creating opportunity for women to become leaders. Third, the direction and strength of relationship between various personality traits and leadership achievement is not understood for Saudi women leaders. The assessment of personality traits would enable women to improve their leadership skills and personal growth. Finally, male peer-recognition of Saudi women's capability for leadership is not explained by the literature. This is the construct 'being a leader or leading without authority or designation' and receives male peer-recognition in the workplace. This study seeks to explain this phenomenon. The concept of 'being a leader without designation' is critical in terms of the status Saudi women achieve informally and the formal recognition of organisational leadership.

3.6 Situational constructs for investigation emerging from interview rounds

The particular and specific situation of Saudi women leaders is unique compared to women leaders in other countries and cultures. Though women researchers make comparison to other countries, for example Germany (Roundtable, 2015), the specific mix of fervent religious and very traditional cultural norms and values, distinguish the achievements of Saudi women leaders. To derive relevant constructs to capture this highly specific situational environment, three rounds of interviews were conducted.

Each round revealed situationally-specific personal, family and social factors, as well as organisational factors. This situational analysis, though similar to situational leadership theory (Blanchard and Hersey, 1997), is not the same in content because of (a) the unique traits of Saudi women leaders and (b) the specific Saudi context described earlier. The situational investigation consisted of three rounds of interview data collection. Each round of data analysis aimed to identify the particular situation of Saudi women, and specifically to determine themes for further investigation.

3.6.1 First Round Interviews

From the first round of interview data, six constructs were derived: personal qualities of women leader; their relationships with others, including men; the values and ethics with which they conduct themselves on their journey to leadership; personal ambition or goals and their relations with the women's characteristics; the families from which they come and the unique role of the family and, in particular, the father, in giving them freedom and confidence

to become leaders; and finally the new openness of Saudi society and emerging equal treatment of women.

Women leaders have personal qualities that drive them to become a leader. This dominant theme included the strong subthemes of self-confidence and independence. Internal qualities such as the ability to complete a task, critical and innovative thinking, and problem solving skills. Their independence and the ability to work without fear emerged as interesting themes to explore further.

Women leaders' relationships with others appeared as another significant theme. This was the second most prominent theme to appear and included multiple subthemes that encompassed relationships with students, men, and women in varying roles, leaders, managers, and subordinates. There was a dichotomy between the relationships between the two genders. Networking was an important subtheme and had a gender component.

Women leaders voiced their values and ethics as important towards their leadership journey. A dominant theme that includes the subtheme of role models including respect for role models and the respect from role models. The concepts of setting an example, commitment to a principle or idea, integrity, and helping others were components. As important within this theme was the idea of achievement would favours from others, the ability to compete and lead based on individual merit.

Personal satisfaction and personal gain composed the theme of personal goals and personal characteristics. This theme also includes women perceptions of their own ability, competency and problem solving skills. Of all the characteristics, self-confidence and independence were prominent in terms of personal satisfaction.

Family emerged as crucial and each woman leader's situation was unique in this respect. The theme of the family focused on the critical and significant encouragement from parents. Strong components also related to male figures, such as the father and husband who encouraged and supported the women leaders. At the same time, matrilineal support was also an important concept.

The theme of society and equality revolved around societal barriers concerning female gender, including aspects considered repressive and progressive. These issues varied along both cultural and gender lines. The issue of barriers was noted, especially in the work place.

These constructs emerging from the first round of interviews can be grouped in terms of contextual and situational constructs earlier. Contextual constructs are the liberalisation of Saudi society in favour of women, the new openness of Saudi society and emerging equal treatment of women, and women leaders' relationships with others, including men. Situational constructs would be: personal qualities of women leader; the values and ethics with which they conduct themselves on their journey to leadership; personal ambition or goals and their relations with the women's characteristics; the families from which they come and the unique role of the family and, in particular, the father, in giving them freedom and confidence to become leaders.

3.6.2 Second Round Interviews

The second round of interviews revealed two new constructs and the same constructs identified in round one appeared again. The first new construct was the experience women leaders had through their journey to becoming leaders. In particular, they felt they had the right experience to be in their leadership position. This in turn gave the self-confidence and belief to make decisions without fear. The second new construct concerned intra-organisational relationships with managers, networking, and overcoming male biases.

3.6.3 Third Round Interviews

The third round of interviews revealed one new construct and the same constructs identified in rounds one and two appeared again. The new construct was equality. Women leaders strongly expressed their desire to be treated equally. The new openness of Saudi society seems to have emboldened women leaders and they believed they deserved to be treated equally. Relationships with various people, self-confidence, values and ethics (accountability, trust, commitment, rights and responsibilities), personal ambition (goals, plans, and overcoming personal issues) personal characteristics, all appeared again but through different experiences and different contexts.

3.6.4 Relating Context, Situation and Subject

Qualitative research focuses on the subject in context to provide a rich explanation of both the subject and context, and how the two are intertwined (Silverman, 2013; Miller and Dingwall, 1997). The subject is located in a particular and unique context and within the context the subject is located within intricate unique situation of social relations. Above, in Sections 4 and 3.5, this relationship between the subject, context and situation was invoked to derive relevant constructs for the conceptual framework of this research. It accounts for Saudi

women leaders in the context of Saudi society and their particular and unique situations composed of complex social relationships, values, norms and expectations.

This research in particular needs to be sensitive to the context of the subject. The 'text' extracted from the particular 'context', needs to be located in the unique 'situation' or setting of the subject (Silverman, 2013). To explain the renaissance of Saudi women leaders, relevant constructs need to be identified in their unique situation from which they emerged as leaders, and placed in the wider context, which itself would have construct that relate to the unique situation and the subject. So, this construction of the conceptual framework locates the subject, Saudi women leaders, in their individual self, the subject, the situation and the context in which they emerge as leaders.

3.6.5 Validating Strategies for the Conceptual Framework

One significant strategy for validating any aspect of the research process, including the conceptual framework, is self-disclosure or reflexivity (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). The researcher's attitude to systematically examine the context in which knowledge is being created forms the core of the reflexive process. This includes personal beliefs, biases and feelings. As a woman, and a Saudi woman, the researcher seeks to improve Saudi's women's situation in society, which is part of the motivation of the research. The impact of this on the research and choice of successful women leaders studied is obvious. The researcher has a deep interest in women's leadership arising from interest in developing her own knowledge about women's leadership. As there is a renaissance in women's leadership in Saudi Arabia, the researcher wants to contribute to women's development by doing research, and communicate it to others. As a female the researcher will allow empathy with the research subjects. Researcher herself has been a leader in a private business and seeks to become a better leader. Given these biases, it would be another research project to investigate Saudi women who sought to become leaders but did not achieve their ambition.

Another validating strategy is to compare the developed conceptual framework with others. This was done in the context of the literature review and in the discussion chapter of this thesis. In summary, this comparison reveals that the conceptual framework developed here is not only valid but that it provides contextual and situational factors that other frameworks do not.

The actual construction of the conceptual framework can be validated by disclosing the researcher's skills. The researcher has attended research seminars to train in doing qualitative research, including two qualitative research methods on interviewing and data analysis.

3.7 Conclusions

The conceptual framework, developed through iterations and inductively, includes the necessary constructs to investigate Saudi women leaders' success strategies, the particular context and the unique situations of individual leaders. It was constructed through critical evaluation of the existing research and successive rounds of exploratory interviews. It has the constructs and relationships sufficient for the investigation. This conceptual framework is expected to deliver the expected empirical contribution.

How the conceptual framework will be operationalised is detailed in the research methodology chapter (Chapter 4). This involves designing the empirical investigation to collect data that can validate the conceptual framework, which requires converting or operationalising the constructs and their relationships into collectable data.

Chapter 4 Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The qualitative research methodology explained in this Chapter is linked to the research aim, objectives and conceptual framework. Qualitative research is concerned with identifying *processes* inherent in phenomena (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994) and how such processes produce the phenomenon. Where the researcher is interested in gaining insight, discovering new factors or patterns or producing new interpretation from a different perspective, then qualitative research is useful. In this research, the interest is on the new phenomenon of Saudi women leaders from the perspective of the women leaders themselves taking part in this research.

This Chapter details the qualitative research methodology used in this research. It explains how the research aim and objectives are met through this methodology, which is explained in terms of the philosophical stance, the inductive method of reasoning and the actual interview research method used to collect data. The Chapter then explains the use of the three rounds of interviews used to inductively derive and develop the conceptual framework. It details the data analysis method used which involved coding and deriving themes that evidence the conceptual framework, and resulted in the identification of the personal, social and societal factors that influence the success of Saudi women leaders.

4.1.1 Research Aim and Objectives

Since this research aims to investigate personal and social factors as interpreted by Saudi women leaders that influence them to become leaders, the appropriate research approach is qualitative. Qualitative research is used to understand meaning and interpretation, context and situation, processes and subjects (Creswell, 2013). The qualitative approach used in this research sought to understand what influences Saudi women to become leaders.

The qualitative approach is suitable for the objectives of this research. The research objectives detailed in Section 1.6 involve understanding the following: These objectives

cover successful Saudi women leaders' values, identify social and cultural factors that inhibit or enhance Saudi women leaders' ability to gain leadership positions, and third if there are organisational factors that inhibit or advance women leadership. These are *qualities* of women leaders and compose the *context* and specific *situations* of women leaders. The qualitative approach is suitable for the investigation of such qualities, context and situation.

4.1.2 Conceptual Framework Iterations

Qualitative research is normally associated with induction (Holyoak and Morrison, 2005). Induction is the way reasons for something are first made and then the evidence is used to verify those reasons.

A conceptual framework can be developed deductively by studying the relevant literature (Hart, 1998). This involves finding relevant explanations that explain the phenomenon of interest and critically analysing them to evaluate the adequacy of the explanation offered, and hypothesing the missing constructs and their relationships.

The conceptual framework of this research was developed inductively. The initial reasons and constructs to explain the way women leaders become leaders were derived by critically analysing the literature. These reasons were then formulated into a pilot study using interview method. The analysis of the interview instrument developed and the pilot data analysis were used to develop the first round interview. The subsequent three rounds of interviews detailed in Sections 3, 4 and 5 below.

4.2 Methodology

Methodology helps the researcher to understand which method is suitable for them in order to carry out the research. It gives direction to the researcher to explore ways through which a researcher can collect relevant data to analyse the content (Merriam, 2009). In this research, qualitative method will be used. This method helps in explaining those variables that are based on quality of attribute and nature, and the meaning people attach to their actions and situations. It does not involve mathematical and statistical involvement (Merriam, 2009).

The research process is both a deductive and inductive (mixed) process. The first approach is to use inductive reasoning to make broad generalizations from the literature in search of general themes related to women in leadership roles. The deductive part of the study focuses

on taking those generalizations and seek specific theories or hypotheses from which predictions can be made.

4.2.1 Research Philosophy

The way research is done is studied by philosophers of science and social scientists and normally referred to as research philosophy. The topics covered in research philosophy include epistemology, ontology and axiology (Hughes and Sharrock, 1980). Epistemology is about how knowledge is made or the approaches and methods used to make knowledge. It is concerned with the reliability of the methods used. Ontology is about the nature of the object studied and axiology is about the values of the research project.

There are five main philosophical approaches or paradigms (Guba and Lincoln, 2005): positivism, postpositivism, critical theories, constructivism and participatory. A particular ontology suggests a particular epistemology. Researchers who accept that reality exists independently of the observer tend to be positivist. Positivism emphasises the experience of the researcher and use of reasoning and logic. It emphasises the use of verified data or positive facts as empirical evidence. Positivism treats both physical reality and social reality equally. So, positivists studies of society seek to find general laws (ref).

In contrast antipositivism or interpretivism, is the belief that social studies, such as leadership study of this research, cannot be adequately performed using methods of the natural sciences. (Scott, 2007). The social realm needs different epistemology and research methods. The emphasis is on the ideas, concepts and language of the researcher and how it shapes thinking about the social world. So, interpretivists focus on trying to understand the interpretive method used by researchers (Miles and Huberman, 1984).

Since there are different epistemologies, it is argued that the researcher needs to select the one most appropriate to her standpoint and justify its use (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). This needs to be done in relation to the type of data collected. The data for this research is from individual Saudi women leaders who have attained substantial and significant positions of leadership in commercial and public organisations. Their achievement is based in the social context in which their leadership ambitions, knowledge and skills were acquired to achieve their goal. It is their experience of this social context and their individual experiences that gives rise to the kind of data needed to understand Saudi women leaders rise to leadership positions.

Consequently, this research is based on the interpretive epistemology which is part of the constructive paradigm. Qualitative research, discussed in the next Sub-section, is itself characteristic of interpretive approach (Denzin and Lincoln 1995). The interpretive epistemology is about the researcher's and the subjects' subjective meanings attached to social action, and design of research methods to understand this socially constructed reality. It recognises that the researcher attaches meaning to the action of research because s/he is human. Similarly, subjects attach meaning to their actions. Both these aspects of the interpretive epistemology of this research were discussed in the conceptual framework Chapter of this thesis.

4.2.2 Qualitative Method

In qualitative research the researcher seeks to develop understanding by investigating the context and particular situation. The aim is to understand the meaning of social action by studying it in its social context (Maxwell, 2012; Glass and Cook, 2016). Qualitative research begins by making propositions and moves in logical and scientific steps based on empirical data. Often, the data collected is large and needs to be sorted and coded (See Section 5).

The interview data for this research consisted of transcripts of structured in-depth interview with eleven (11) Saudi women leaders. These women are currently leaders in top executive positions, very senior government officials and parliamentarians in their professions in private and public companies and organisations. The reason for selecting structured interviews is explained in this Chapter.

The eleven interviewees were done with high-achieving women leaders from three private firms and two public organisations in Saudi Arabia. The industries represented by interview respondents included banking, higher education, government departments and Parliament. The National Commercial Bank (Al-Ahli Bank) has assets of \$115 billion and is the second largest in Arabia. It has 342 branches and 4 million clients. The Saudi Council of Ministers is the Saudi legislature, and one respondent is a member. The Ministry of Education is responsible for all education and one respondent was the second significant official in it. The women's ages ranged between 50-60 years, with the bank respondent in her late 30s. Their educational achievements included three respondents with bachelor degrees, two with masters and one with PhD.

'Theory based' data sampling strategy was used Miles and Huberman (1994). The conceptual framework with its constructs and relationships between the constructs was the basis for the empirical observations, or interview questions. The collected data was analysed using thematic coding and interpretation.

4.2.3 Inductive Method

The steps used to reason the way this research was done or its interpretive epistemology involved inductive reasoning. Induction is about seeing or observing first and then making conclusions or generalisations from these observations (Creswell, 2013).

The rounds of data collection and analysis explained below enabled the inductive reasoning underpinning this research. Initial set of constructs were derived from the literature to investigate women leaders' success. Through each round of data collection and analysis further constructs were determined and incorporated into the conceptual framework. In this way, the conceptual framework was developed.

4.2.4 Sample and Interview Method

Eleven women leaders were interviewed. The women were accomplished in their fields and leaders with significant experience. They held CEO, directorial, ministerial and executive positions indicating their leading positions within their organisations. They worked in banks, private colleges, government and private companies. Their age ranged from 38 to 65 years of age and their combined years of experience totalled 574 years.

The sample of women leaders were determined iteratively corresponding to the three rounds of interviews. For the first round the women leaders were determined as a convenience sample drawing on the researchers own network of highly achieving people. At the end of each of the first two rounds of interviews, the researchers probed the respondents for their contacts who would be willing to participate in the research. The convenience sampling process resulted in the eleven women interviewed for this research.

The selection of the women needed to meet certain criteria. One, the women had to be Saudi nationals living and working in the Kingdom either during their ascendancy to leading positions or currently. Two, the women needed to be in significant positions in their own companies, government or other kinds of organisations, such as international, chambers of commerce or education. Three, the women needed to have experienced the journey to leadership involving values, social and cultural and organisational aspects that determined

their achievement of leading positions and success. Four, the context in which these women achieved their leadership positions needed to reflect a typical lower-middle class family, in which the women sought to improve themselves through the available opportunities. It is in this context that the women needed to have formed their values, been impacted by the social and cultural norms of their particular society and overcome organisational resistance to their capabilities to become leaders.

The interview method is widely used in qualitative research because it enables the analysis of meaning that subjects attach to their actions (Creswell, 2013) and it is used in women leadership research, for example (Glass and Cook, 2016), and in investigations concerning gender (Hopf, 2004; Moore, 2012; Weaver-Hightower, et al., 2013).

Qualitative research is often used by even quantitative researchers to identify key constructs that are then measured using quantitative research (Denzin et al., 2005). It offers determination of why and how subjects behaviour and an understanding of in-depth meaning of human behaviour.

Hopf (2004) notes that the interview method is used to impart expert knowledge, record and analyse informants' subjective perspective and collect biographical data. Interviews enable in-depth understanding of human behaviour (Creswell, 2006) and provide large datasets that enable understanding why a particular behaviour happened, how and in what particular context.

Structured Interviews

The chosen instrument of data collection for this research is structured interview. The interview data is expected to result in collecting in-depth views, meaning and interpretation of Women respondents who are leader in Saudi organisations and society. The data will enable understanding of the rising trend of Saudi women leadership, and social and personal factors that influence leadership.

The structured interview is used to focus on a topic of conversation that is determined in advance, such as Saudi women's success in becoming leaders in public and private companies and organisations. Their success occurred in a particular context and situations unique to each of them, such context- and situation-specific investigates can be explored using structured, in-depth interviews (Hopf, 2004), within the interpretive approach to provide an explanation 'according to their own subjective frame of reference.' (Williams, 2000: 210).

The structured interview offered a greater level of openness. While the broad questions concerning the achievement of leaders were predetermined, the interviewer and respondent were able to be open. In the format of the structured questions, the researcher was able to follow multiple directions of questioning, depending on the interviewee's responses. The resulting data is concrete because it is context- and situation-specific and highly related to the respondent's experiences. For such reasons, Irvine, et al., (2013) consider the structured, in-depth interview superior to other interview variants.

Therefore, the structured interviews were guided by carefully pre-formulated questions, enabling the researcher sufficient flexibility to move around and explore interesting themes. This format also enabled freedom in follow-up questions and sequencing of the questions to derive the required data. The resultant data, as Adler and Adler (1987) state is contextually rich and richly contextual rendering context and meaning in social inquiry. Similar Taleb (2010), it was possible to be flexible with the respondents using the structured interview format. To ensure that the interview questions were independent of bias influences, the researcher wrote and rewrote all the questions to ensure construct validity. This is also misleading the respondents in their answers. (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010).

The interview questions were formulated to seek positive influences on the successful Saudi women leaders. For example, interviewees were asked if they found inspiration to become leaders from family members such as the father or other leaders they admired, or if the social network they used had an influence on their achievement of leadership positions. They were asked if they faced organisational challenges, particularly from Saudi men, and how they overcome such challenges (Gibbert and Ruigrok, 2010). Each interview started with assuring the respondents of confidentiality and an opportunity for them to ask any questions before the interview started, and the Interview Consent Form was then completed. This introductory time though brief enabled setting a comfortable environment, trust and openness between the researcher and the respondents, similar to the approach used by Glass and Cook (2016). As Gibbert and Ruigrok (2010) state, this kind of trust-building results in obtaining authentic data and true picture of the Saudi women's leadership achievements.

Interviews were conducted and transcribed by the researcher and verified by a professional translator (See Sub-section 4.2.5 below). The transcription of the audio recording was done immediately after the interviews to ensure the capture of the rich experience of the researcher. All the interviews were conducted in person at times convenient to the busy Saudi

women leaders, who also had family commitments. The interview questions focused on Saudi women's leadership ambition, their family, education, and strategies for seeking employment that would enable them to develop careers towards leadership, as well as key organisational factors, and in particular their experiences with male Saudi colleagues. Questions on the government policy and social networks were posed.

As suggested by Porath et al., (2012), construct validity was strengthened by referencing the empirical research and closely examining the actual context and situation that composed the experiences of the Saudi women leaders. The three round of interviews were written and re-written by analysing the data and reviewing the relevant literature. The questions were formulated to capture rich and in-depth meaning from interviewees, and this made it possible for the interviewees to drive the research rather than the researchers. Critical in this whole process was trust and rapport with the women interviews. Also, aspects of the culturally-specific interaction required was achieved using this approach. As the research is herself a Saudi women, also successful woman leader, she was aware of the cultural nuances required to interact effectively with the Saudi women leaders. As Biemann and Voelpel (2012) state this process results in credibility and confirmability of the findings by carefully consider how data is aggregated.

It is necessary to create a climate of trust to obtain the true experiences of the women respondents. There were no culturally sensitive questions, questions that the researcher as a Saudi woman herself would only know. For example, there were no questions about what religious precepts they had to overcome or about their dress.

By obtaining interview data about life experiences and career progression data it is possible to establish logical relationships and check the internal validity (Cresswell, 2013). Question on both these paths could be then coded to cross-reference and check validity. Reliability of the data was ensured by checking the positions of the women and, similar to validity checks, by cross checking the codes emerging from the successive rounds of interviews (Yin, 2013).

As the women leaders kindly agreed, the interviews were conducted in the offices of the women leaders. This was a deliberate choice to ensure the professional context of the research. In most cases the interviews were done at the desk, with a couple over a coffee table. In all the cases, an environment of professionalism was maintained.

Biographical Interviews

Structured interviews can vary and biographical interviews is one variant (Hopf, 2004), and researchers recommend that these two types be combined where necessary (Creswell, 2013). The structured interview method used in this research included questions on biographical aspects of the Saudi women leaders.

By obtain data on the women's life histories the researcher was able to acquire access to their particular situations. This enabled getting data about women leaders' life histories, with the particular and unique events or contexts that shaped the women's achievement of leadership recognition or positions.

Validation of Interview Questions

The interview questions were validated through two means. First, initial interview questions were formulated based on the critical reading of the literature. This is grounding the questions in the literature (See Sub-section 5.2 & 5.3). The purpose of this was to drawn on the existing research findings to understand current knowledge in the field. This critical reading providing insights which were then used to questions assumptions and the available facts. This lead to formulating questions. The other approach was to use the findings from each round of the interviews to probe deeper into the issues that were revealed by the data.

Conducting structured Interviews

The actual conducting of the qualitative interviews was carefully planned. The researcher attended two interview method seminars and read widely about how to prepare for and conduct the interviews. The researcher's ability to conduct the interviews was not unproblematic. She learnt much from the pilot interviews. For example, the new situation that she and her respondents as Saudi women experienced in the formal interview situation. At first this was unfamiliar and uncertain. The practice gained from the pilot study helped to improve the performance in the first round interviews, and the same happened in the second and third round interviews. As Hopf (2004) states, the interviewer needs to be capable of assessing when to follow up the pre-determined interviews with additional probing questions. Equally important, the interviewer must know when and how to give respondents broad scope of responses. These skills were acquired through the successive rounds of interviews. These kind of 'performance errors' are inevitable, but they should not impede the collection of data relevant to the investigation.

To prevent critical performance errors, the researcher thoroughly planned the interviews. She identified the information sources and the available time to ensure the capture of relevant data from Saudi women leaders with significant leadership experience and interesting journeys to positions of leadership. She avoided setting extensive guidelines, or 'interview guide bureaucracy' (Hopf, 2004) to ensure flexibility in the field, and by attending interview training she was able to minimise performance errors.

For example, the interview situation was itself novel to the researcher, as it exposed her to a new situation involving intensive communication with unknown Saudi women, who had achieved significant leadership positions. She ensured that she did not domineer or make suggestions and unacceptable interpretations. She was conscious that she needed to be patient and listen that she needed to sense any stimuli to ask supplementary questions. She was aware that the questions in the structured interview themselves should not close off other avenues, and where the situation presented itself she was willing to go beyond the interview guide. These additional conversations with the respondents were carefully analysed.

Validation and Authentication of Translation

The interviews were conducted in Arabic and translated into English. The verification and authentication of the translation was ensured by using a certified professional translator to validate the transcriptions and translations. The researcher first transcribed the interviews. This was done for each interview by playing the audio recording of the interview and translating into English on a Word document. Each translation was checked by playing the audio again to verify it. The translated interviews were then passed onto the professional linguist to validate. Where the professional translator identified issues with the translation these were corrected to her satisfaction.

4.2.5 Recruitment and Selection of Participants

The respondents were recruited from the researcher's professional network and snow-ball sampling (Saunders, 2011). The researcher contacted significant individuals in her network, women who had achieved high leading positions and told them about her research. These women then provided leads for other high-achieving women. Six women were identified through the researcher's professional network and five were referrals. This resulted in recruiting eleven women in positions of substantial leadership.

4.2.6 Insider Status

The researcher's position as a successful woman also aspiring to be a leader did not compromise the research. Wilkinson and Kitzinger (2013) discuss insider research as potentially contaminating the results and preventing the production of knowledge. True 'insider status' research is where the researcher studies herself (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013). Dwyer and Buckle (2009) discuss the methodological usefulness of the insider or outsider role. They argue that rather than consider it as an either or issue, it needs to be valued methodologically as insider *and* outsider. Rather than making a dichotomy, they propose that in qualitative research the insider can be an integral aspect of the methodology. This understanding can account for both the indwelling or closeness and the separateness or independence required of the qualitative researcher.

Roberts' (2014) research resulted in identifying certain issues of insider status. He discusses certain dilemmas of insider status when doing research on gay men. He points out that the researcher needs to be aware of the ethical issues of being close to the subject and being involved. The researcher needs mechanisms for dealing with their own personal frustrations. Also, the researcher needs to consider the power imbalance between the interviewer and the respondent. Finally, the researcher's personal position when collecting data needs to be made explicit.

It may be assumed that the researcher adopted the insider status uncritically. However, the study was not a study of the researcher herself as an insider as defined by (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013). She dealt with the issues that Roberts (2014) above raises. The researcher dealt with such issues by being aware the independent nature of the research. She followed the ethical guidelines stipulated for the research and maintained independent distance between herself and the respondents. She explained to the participants as detailed in the participant information sheet, that the research was for a PhD and that she needed to maintain independence. Both she and the respondents respected this position. Dealing with personal frustrations was more subjective. The researcher wanted to ensure that the data she collected reflected the actual subject in the context accurately; but she was aware that sometimes this may not be possible because of respondents own constraints.

Greene, (2014) acknowledges that a researcher's position influence the narratives that a qualitative researcher shares. She defines insider research as concerned with studying one's own social group or society. Though there are challenges of doing insider research, Greene

discusses several techniques and tools that enhance methodological approaches involving insider research. Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are primary considerations. These issues can be overcome by ensuring safeguards, for example, independent data, on-site data collection and reflexivity. The researcher ensured this by following a rigorous methodology.

4.2.7 Ethical Approval

The researcher obtained ethical approval for the research through the University's formal process for ethical approval (See Appendix 1). As there were no damaging issues in the ethics of the research, the approval for the research encountered no obstacles.

Though the subject-matter, women in public life in Saudi, is sensitive it is not controversial. Similarly, the participants were not vulnerable, and there were no risks or hazards for them. The researcher had no conflict of interest.

4.3 First Round Interview Questions

As noted earlier, the literature review resulted in themes emerging that were formulated into an initial set of interview questions. These interview questions were used to pilot the study. The pilot study was done with three women leaders, one from the bank and two from the education sector, and lasted one hour each. Respondents' ease of understanding the questions, time taken to ask the questions, and respondents' time to answer them were noted. Notes were made about the supplementary and follow on questions asked. These notes were then used to revise the interview questions for the first round interviews and allow time for follow on questions.

The first study was done with three respondents, one woman leader who started her own bank and two women leaders in education. Each interview lasted one hour. The audio recordings were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

The interview data set produced three key findings about Saudi women: their personality, family support and society and environment as key contributors to the women's journey to successful leadership positions. Personality of a woman leader is important for success in leadership. An important feature of personality is self-confidence; for example, the confidence to interact with men without hesitation. The respondents had interpersonal communication skills and used them to achieve leadership recognition among men that they encountered in their leadership journey. Another theme that emerged is family support.

Parental support at a young age was given a reason for the Saudi women's confidence to strive for leadership. For example, encouragement to obtain higher educational qualifications, even if that means going abroad to study. In the conservative context of Saudi society, women, especially young women travelling abroad is considered undesirable. Though, parental support is not a necessary factor for Saudi women to become leaders, as some other respondents did not mention it but were nevertheless in leadership positions.

A significant factor in the renaissance of Saudi women leaders is society and environment or the context. The Government decided to fund women's education, which enabled many ambitious women to seek qualifications in the US and UK, and develop careers in business and government. This is the Government's policy of equal opportunity for women.

This resulting analysis issues and findings, which were then related to the literature. The purpose was analyse the findings in relation to the literature to identify further themes that needed investigation or existing themes that needed deeper study, which resulted in the first round of interviews.

The thematic analysis with emerging personal and social issues, themes and factors needing further investigation and unexplored factors, and other factors from related literature review, are summarised in Table 3. It reveals twenty-one themes and the interview questions formed to investigate them in the first round of interviews. Possible supplementary questions were prepared. However, as discussed earlier in Sub-section 4.2.4 the researcher was aware not to restrict the structured interviews by adhering to the interview guide if respondents revealed something more interesting. The expected learning, understanding and knowledge outcome are given in the final column of Table 3.

Table 3: First Round Interview Questions

Themes	Question	Learning, Understanding and Knowledge Outcome
Egidio, R. K., & Boatwright, K. J. (2003) Framework		
Connectedness	Q1. How did you develop your network of important connections to become a leader?	This question will collect data on women's connectedness. The data will help in understanding whether connectedness is significant. Connectedness determines the type of influential network that a leader develops and the value of the network to becoming a leader. Leaders have the attribute of being connected and an ability to become connected for gainful

		purpose.
Gender role	Q2. What difference did you being a women make to you becoming a leader?	This question will collect data on the difference gender makes to becoming a leader. The data will show whether gender was used by women leaders. Women have specific qualities that give them an advantage to become leaders and constraints that pose a barrier to become leaders.
Self-esteem	Q3. How did your self-esteem affect you in becoming a leader?	This question will collect data on women's self-esteem. The data will help to understand how women's self-esteem affected their climb to leadership roles. Low self-esteem can prevent women seeking leadership roles and high self-esteem can be a positive influence.
Fear of negative evaluation	Q4. What role did other peoples' negative views of your ability play in you becoming a leader?	This question will collect data on the effect that negative evaluation of them has on their pursuit of leadership roles. This data will help to understand how women manage hurdles on the way to leadership roles.
Dugan, J. P. (2006) Social Change Model. 'Feminine skills' and behaviours consistent with female gender roles.		
Relationship-building	Q5. How do you build relationships with influential people in the organisation? Sub-question: how did you build your relationships in society?	This question will collect data on how women leaders build relations to become leaders. This question is related to the question on gender role. The data will improve understand of how women use relationships to become leaders. Relationships are important means to get influence and power.
Process-orientation	Q6. How did you engage with people while seeking a leadership role in our organisation?	This question will collect data on how women leaders engage with the process of leadership. The data will illustrate women leaders engaging in the processes of becoming leaders.
Connectedness	Q7. What role did your connections play in you becoming a leader?	This question collects different data from Q1. This question will collect data on women's <i>use</i> of their connections. It complements Q6 to show the process of becoming a leader and being a leader. The data will help to understand how connections are used by women leaders, and so is related to Q2 on Gender.
Ethics of care and concern	Q8. What emphasis do you put on caring for your employees?	This question will collect data on women leaders' ethics. The data will illustrate the role of care in women leaders.
Egidio, R. K., & Boatwright, K. J. (2003). Environmental factors; causal factors		
Women's attitude	Q9. What is your attitude to becoming a leader?	This question will collect data on women's attitude. The data will lead to understanding the attitude women have to seeking leadership and leadership.
Women's self-confidence	Q10. How confident were you in your pursuit of leadership?	This question will collect data on women leaders' confidence in seeking leadership roles. The data will provide details of the confidence of women during their climb to leadership. It may reveal varying levels of confidence during the climb.
Women's prior work experience	Q11. What prior experience did you have that helped you	This question will collect data on prior work experience. The data will show the relevance of

	to achieve your leadership role?	prior work experience for women becoming leaders. Prior experience outside work will also be explored by asking follow on questions.
The corporate environment	Q12. What affect did the environment and culture of the company have on you becoming a leader?	This question will collect data on the effect of the corporate environment on women becoming leaders. The data will provide data on the corporate environment and lead to understanding how women deal with the corporate environment.
Old boys' network This concept will be substituted for the dominant power of men in Saudi culture, society and companies.	Q13. How did you manage the resistance of men to you becoming a leader?	This question will collect data on how women deal with the influence and power of men in becoming leaders. The data will lead to understanding the strategies women use to overcome resistance.
Ballaro, J. M., & O'Neil, M. A. (2013). Transactional and Transformational Theories of Leadership: Themes as factors		
Passion	Q14. How passionate were you to become a leader? Please give examples of situations.	This question will collect data on the drive and passion of the interviewee. The data will illustrate the significance of passion in women leaders.
Achievement	Q15. What targets did you set yourself to achieve to become a leader?	This question will collect data the role of targets in the process of becoming a leader. The data will explain how women leaders use achievement in assessing their progress.
Credibility	Q16. How did you assess your credibility in seeking leadership?	This question will collect data on women leader's self-perception of credibility. The data will add to understanding women's drive to become leaders.
Family Values	Q17. What role did family values have in your becoming a leader? Supplementary Q: What support did they give you?	This question will collect data on family values in the process of women becoming leaders. The data will determine whether women leadership results from family values.
Morality	Q18. What was the role of morality in you becoming a leader?	This question will collect data on the role of morality in women becoming leaders. The data will determine how women use morals in seeking leadership.
Ethics	Q19. What kind of ethics did you adopt to become a leader?	This question will collect data on ethics used in becoming a leader. Similar to question Q18, it will determine how women use ethics in seeking leadership.
Community	Q20. What influence did your community have on you to become a leader? Supplementary Q: What support did they give you?	This question will collect data on the influence of community on women leadership. The data will show whether community is a factor in women becoming leaders, and how women use it.
Uncompromised Values	Q21. Did you have to compromise your values to become a leader?	This question will collect data on compromising values in pursuit of leadership.

As well as the specific interview question listed in Table 3, the researcher formulated general probing questions that could be pursued during the interview. Could leadership be

encouraged indirectly without given authority or designation to utilize capabilities rather than status? What personality traits help women to grow or sustain their leadership? What personal and social factors enable women to become leaders? Do these factors create more opportunities or barriers for women? How do businesses remove professional barriers so as to allow women leadership growth? What organizational factors are critical to the success of women leadership? These questions were kept as notes and used during the interview when the respondent mentioned a related issue or fact.

So, the interview questions were structured. The main questions were followed with subsequent questions where appropriate to probe further. This enabled exploration of relevant issues and themes as they arose during the process of the interview. Creswell (2006) suggests constructing questions that keep interviewees focused, because interviewees tend to provide delayed answers to questions. The sequence of the questions too was logically organised and grouped to enhance the focus. The probing questions were based on White (2014), who suggests nine different types of questions that can be used in research interviews, of which follow-up, probing, specifying, direct, indirect, structuring, silence and interpreting questions types were used. Introduction questions cannot be used for probing.

The investigation of these twenty-one theme resulted in obtaining data on Saudi women's life experiences that enabled them to become leaders in organisations. As noted by Tuval-Mashiach (2014), interviews can be used to obtain interviewees' life stories. The questions were open-ended questions because the aim of the research is to develop knowledge of the life experiences of women leaders that resulted in them becoming leaders. The questions are framed using 'Why', 'How' and 'What'. For example, 'What do you think was the influence of your family on you becoming a leader?' Other questions sought women leaders own explanations, for example 'Can you explain how you become a leader?' 'Where' and 'Which' type of questions too are important in understanding how women become leaders, for example, 'In which situation did you first encounter the struggle to become a leader?' 'What did you do in that situation to show your leadership ability?

4.4 Second Round Interview Questions

The second round study was done with five women leaders, one from the Ministry of Education, two from banking, and two from the Parliament. The interviews lasted for one and a half hours and some for two hours. The actual time was determined by the follow-up questions of the structured aspect of the interview. Notes were made about the supplementary and follow on questions asked. These notes were then used to revise the interview questions for the third round interviews and allow time for follow on questions. The audio recordings were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

Fifteen questions with sub-questions arose from the analysis of the first round interview data and further related literature review. These are detailed in Table 4. The questions covered family, leading, self-esteem and attitude, society and expertise. Both the first round interviews and the additional associated literature reviewed indicated further themes to investigate. These were concerned with leading and the context of leading, namely the organisation.

Table 4: Second Round Interview Questions

Theme	Question	Learning, Understanding and Knowledge Outcome
Family	Q1: What role have the familial values played that helped you become a leader? What kind of support have you received?	The expected learning included understanding the influence of the family of the women; particularly the influence of their father, because the father is the dominant figure of the family
Leading	Q2: Was that because you were enthusiastic? Talk about the practical aspect. Before getting this position, you were gradually promoted in other positions. To what extent were you enthusiastic about becoming a leader? Q3: Certainly, you had goals that you wanted to achieve. What were the goals that you set for yourself to become a leader? Q4: What difference you have found, being a woman who became a leader? (at work)	The expected learning included uncovering knowledge about the women's eagerness, their goals and experience of leading.
Self-esteem and attitude	5. To which extent has your self-esteem helped you become a leader? How much	The expected learning included establishing the confidence women had to be leaders; the effect of their

	<p>confident you were about achieving a leadership position?</p> <p>6. What was the attitude or the orientation that you adopted towards attaining a leadership position? Surely, you had attitudes in any leadership position and I do not mean goals. Let's concentrate on your last position.</p>	<p>self-esteem on achieving leadership, and how they adapted themselves the leadership positions.</p>
Society	<p>Q7: The next question is related to your words. To which extent your advance towards leadership has been affected by the others' negative views and opinions? For example, some of them may have some negative views that you won't succeed! Have you got the idea of my question?</p>	<p>The expected learning included understanding the role that society has on women's ambition to be leaders and how women negotiated the varying societal expectations.</p>
Expertise	<p>Q8: In the beginning, you told me about your previous experience that helped you to achieve every leadership position. What was the (previous) expertise that you had and helped you become a leader?</p>	<p>The expected learning included how women deployed their expertise to become leaders.</p>
Network and interpersonal skills	<p>Q9: The next question: In which ways have the society helped you become a leader?</p> <p>9.1 Q: Everyone is surrounded by a network of connections that has helped him/her to reach his/her goal. How have you managed to build your network of important ties (figures, persons) that helped you become a leader?</p> <p>9.2 Q: How could you develop this social network to reach this position?</p>	<p>The expected learning included determining whether women used personal networks to climb the leadership ladder; to understand whether there was gender effect concerning values and morals.</p>
Personal & Leadership Values	<p>Q10: I want to ask you about the role of your family ties or relationships that helped you become a leader? In the beginning, I asked you about how you developed your relationships and you answered.</p> <p>Q11: The next question is related to the previous one. What was the role of the</p>	<p>The expected learning included determining the specific ways in which women become leaders in relation to their value systems.</p>

	moral aspects (the values) that helped you become a leader? What kinds of morals you adopted that helped you become a leader?	
Organisation	<p>Q12: These values are wonderful. You were very brief in your answer and it was very indicative. How do you evaluate your credibility (honesty, Integrity) in searching for leadership?</p> <p>Q:12.1 How was your relationship with the people during your quest for a leadership role in the organization? I do not talk about the organization, but I mean the society. Did you avoid attending the social events?</p> <p>Q: 12.2 How have you managed to build ties with influential figures in the organization?</p> <p>Q13: I may ask you to kindly talk a little bit about yourself as a leader in this organization? Would you talk about the difficulties, the obstacles, the expertise, the roles and the requirements?</p> <p>Q14: Let's talk about the important point that we have just talked about! How could you build relationships with the influential people at the ministry such as Prince Faisal?</p> <p>Q15: What are the principles that you want to be embraced by your staff? Things that they must put into consideration. There could be more than one principle, but what is that principle that must be embraced?</p>	The expected learning included understanding how women negotiated the men in organisations; to determine women's perceptions; and develop knowledge of how they related with others in organisations.

Similar to round one interview questions, the questions for the second round were open-ended questions, as the aim of the research is to develop knowledge of the life experiences of women leaders that resulted in them becoming leaders. The questions were framed using 'Why', 'How' and 'What'. For example, 'What do you think was the influence of your family

on you becoming a leader?’ The follow up questions in the second round interviews probed deeper into the women’s experience towards becoming leaders and the experience while being leaders.

4.5 Third Round Interview Questions

The third round of the study primarily sought to examine women’s leadership achievements within the changing context of Saudi Arabia and women’s work and life. The study was done with three women leaders, an executive in a bank, a chancellor of a university and one minister. The interviews lasted for one and a half hours. As with the previous rounds, the actual time was determined by the follow-up questions of the structured aspect of the interview. Notes were made about the supplementary and follow on questions asked for later data analysis and interpretation. The audio recordings were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

Nine questions arose from the analysis of the second round interview data and further related literature review. These are detailed in Table 4.3. The questions covered leaders, government policy, personality traits, social networks, interpersonal leadership skills and organisation. These questions sought to understand deeply leading and the context of leading, namely the social network, government and organisation.

Table 4.3: Third Round Interview Questions

Theme	Question	Expected Learning, Understanding and Knowledge Outcomes
Leaders	<p>1. Which leaders from your past (including your parental leader) were influential in encouraging you be a leader?</p> <p>2. Can you think of anyone who indirectly encouraged you through word or action to focus on leadership as a career path?</p> <p>2.1. How did they encourage you indirectly, and were you aware of their encouragement at the time?</p>	The expected learning included understanding the early influences on women and the role models they used to become leaders. It also sought to understand the specific ways in which they used other leaders as examples towards their leadership achievement.
Government Policy	2.1 Do you think that you or the Saudi women in general receive enough support from the government in terms of empowerment?	The expected learning included understanding the important and critical effect of government’s new policies towards women, and how women took advantage of it

		towards their leadership journey.
Personality traits	<p>3. What are the personal traits that helped you become a successful leader?</p> <p>3.1 Are they the same traits that sustain you as an effective female leader or have they changed as you matured into your leadership role?</p> <p>4. Of the traits discussed in the previous question, are there any that more important to you?</p>	The expected learning included understanding what the successful women leaders regarded as their critical personality traits that enabled them to become successful leaders.
Social network	<p>5. How familiar are you with networks, social and personal?</p> <p>6. What is your experience with social networks and do they add value?</p> <p>6.1 Do any of these types of networking situations (voice-to-voice, social media, face-to-face) create barriers for leaders, or do they facilitate the exchange of useful information.</p>	The expected learning included understanding whether women were familiar with social networks, how they used them, and whether they were significant in their achievement of leadership positions.
Interpersonal leadership skills	<p>7. How do you communicate with your superiors, your peers or those who report to you?</p> <p>8. What is the most effective way of exchanging information between you and the others?</p>	The expected learning included understanding distinguishing features of interpersonal communication that resulted in leadership skills, and methods women used to interrelate with others towards their leadership journey.
Organisation	<p>9. Within the organization in which you currently work or one in which you recently worked, can you describe specific processes or factors that impede your ability to be a successful leader?</p> <p>Are there specific processes or factors that enhance your ability to be a successful leader?</p>	The expected learning included understanding organisational enablers and barriers towards women's leadership, and how women overcome these towards their leadership journey.

Similar to the other round of interview questions, the questions for the third round were open-ended questions. Again the questions were framed using 'Why', 'How' and 'What'. The interview questions sought to understand issues, themes and factors more deeply. The follow up questions in the third round interviews probed further into the women's experience towards the leadership journey.

5. Data Analysis Method

Data analysis focused on thematic analysis to find emerging issues, unexplored factors and other factors. The specific data analysis technique used followed the core methods detailed by Miles and Huberman (1994). They state that qualitative data provides ‘some lawful and reasonably stable relationships’:

‘Human relationships and societies have peculiarities that make a realist approach to understanding them more complex – but not impossible. Unlike researchers in physics, we must contend with institutions, structures, practices, and conventions that people reproduce and transform. Human meanings and intentions are worked out within the framework of these structures – structures that are invisible but nonetheless real.’ (p.4)

The qualitative data analysis focused on accounting for the context of how Saudi women leaders acted. Data analysis process included the following steps: acquainting with the data, initial open coding, sorting and connecting themes, developing thematic analysis for each round and synthesising and reporting lessons learnt.

5.1 Acquainting with the Data

The first step was the preliminary acquaintance with data through exploring the verbatim. The interviews had been transcribed to enable verbatim exploration of the data. The field notes were used along with the transcripts. Each interview transcript and associated field notes were read to identify key phrases and words within them. These were listed and notes made for each one. These were then compared across each interview to discover common and recurring phrases and words.

This initial acquainting with the data is important because as Saladana (2012) states it aligns the conceptual understanding underpinning the research with the empirical data. The initial open coding following this acquainting is then better focused on discovering the core themes and relationships with the data.

5.2 Initial Open Coding

The first step towards uncovering themes is open coding. This is the initial open coding of the data. It is done by breaking the data down into meaningful, recurring units and making connections across similar codes to develop themes. Since data collection and analysis are

interconnected in qualitative data analysis, and therefore occur inductively. The transcribed interview data was analysed by using thematic analysis method and a “funnel structure”.

The funnel structure model suggests development of more nuanced and focused analysis through gradual fine-tuning of broad observations in a recursive fashion. Thematic analysis is defined by Lapadat (2010) as an approach that encompasses “identifying themes or patterns of cultural meaning; coding and classifying data, usually textual, according to themes; and interpreting the resulting thematic structures by seeking commonalities, relationships, overarching patterns, theoretical constructs, or explanatory principles” (p. 925-926). One crucial difference that distinguishes thematic analysis from grounded theory is that the former seeks to provide an exploratory angle to the data without necessarily aiming to develop a structure.

5.3 Sorting and Connecting Themes

The next step in the qualitative data analysis is sorting and connecting the interconnected themes. To identify key leadership themes from the transcripts, the review of the transcripts was followed by exploring the possible themes, specifically related to leadership ambition and leadership journey Glass and Cook (2016).

Sorting and connecting themes is similar to data reduction. This involved identifying relevant coding categories to group codes and connect them. This was done by applying the conceptual framework developed for this research (see Chapter 3). This conceptual framework enabled structural coding to do done.

‘Structural coding applies a content based or conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data that relates to a specific research question used to frame the interview’ (Saldana, 2013: 84). The result of structural coding is the identification of broad categories of the transcript text, which then enable in-depth analysis of the data within and across topics. (MacQueen et. al., 2008: 125).

5.4 Developing Thematic Analysis for Each Round

The acquainting with the data, initial open coding and sorting and connecting theme was done for each round of the interviews. Each round of interview data analysis involved:

- Developing the thematic analysis for each interview round.
- Identifying themes or patterns of meaning.
- Coding and classifying data according to themes.
- Interpreting the resulting thematic structures by seeking.
- Commonalties, relationships, overarching patterns, theoretical.
- Constructs, or explanatory principles.

5.5 Synthesizing and reporting lessons learned

The final stage of the data analysis was synthesizing and reporting lessons learned. This is covered in Chapter 6 which is a discussion the findings. The reporting of the lessons involved relating the findings of the research to the existing research. This is critical because it begins to identify the key contribution of the research by establishing similar, different and entirely new findings of the present research project to the existing research or body of knowledge.

6. Limitations

A limitation of the interview method is unavailability of verifying self-reported data –the interviews. However, as noted earlier the validity of the data was checked by obtaining the ‘life histories’ of the respondents which helped to reduce any limitation. It would be ethically wrong to ask respondents questions that invaded their privacy or questioned their integrity. The emerging themes suggest that the leadership journey of Saudi women is similar and this reporting by many women of their experience cannot be denied.

There is also the possibility that respondents exaggerated their experience in the presence of the interview. This may be because they want others to think that their achievement is somehow special. The three rounds of interviews enabled cross checking to uncover inconsistencies in the reported data.

Griffiee (2005) considers other limitations of the interview method. The Saudi women leaders may not have said what they think. This is because of their sensitivity to public opinion or in consideration of their family; they may not want to discuss what they know with a stranger. They may not have an opinion or may not be able to articulate it properly. These issues were unlikely to occur since the women leaders interviewed regularly spoke in public to other women and international audiences.

It is also possible that the women leaders interviewed may not be representative of women who struggled to achieve leadership positions – they may have secured their leadership through favour. Such issues were addressed in the selection and recruitment of interview participants.

An important limitation is the interviewer's skills at interviewing. A new interviewer may not be able to obtain the required data. The researcher had attended seminars on the interview method and conducted pilot study to practice. Additionally, through each successive round of the three rounds of interview, she gained more skill and confidence.

7. Conclusion

This chapter set out the research methodology of this research project. It related the research aim and objectives to the proposed interview research methods and identified the data needed to support the proposed conceptual framework. The research methodology itself is underpinned the interpretive research philosophy and associated qualitative approach, which involves inductive data analysis. The three rounds of interview data collection were detailed. Finally, the data analysis strategy was explained.

The research methodology is the basis for the empirical investigation of this research. It is central to obtaining empirical data to support the proposed conceptual framework that explains how Saudi women leaders achieve successful leadership positions. The research methodology detailed in this Chapter is appropriate for collecting and analysis data to fulfil the research objectives.

Chapter 5 Analysis of Interviews Results

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to investigate and gain a better understanding of the cultural and social factors that might enhance the ability of a woman in Saudi Arabia to become an effective leader. At the same time, the research seeks to discover those cultural or social factors that could inhibit a woman in Saudi Arabia from advancing into an effective leadership role. Additionally, what are the values of women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) who have been successful at achieving leadership roles and how do those values mesh interrelate to the cultural and social factors

The research process is both a deductive and inductive (mixed) process. The first approach is to use inductive reasoning to make broad generalizations from the literature in search of general themes related to women in leadership roles. The deductive part of the study focuses on taking those generalizations and seek specific theories or hypotheses from which predictions can be made. While not necessarily focusing on theory development, the purpose of this exploratory study is to learn, through a series of interviews, the dominant themes of a group of women leaders in KSA.

5.2 Grounding in the Literature

In order to get a better understanding of the values that allow women leaders to be successful, a review of the literature related to women in leadership roles, especially within KSA was conducted. While the literature in leadership roles is extensive and is covered in created detail in the literature review chapter, it is useful to look more specifically at literature that specifies the types of values found in successful female leaders. Within this section, the focus is primarily on current studies, studies within the last five years, of Saudi women leaders, a smaller subset of the overall leadership domain. There is also a goal of discovering research on women leaders within Saudi cultures who specifically lead within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

Alexander (2013) provided insight into the view of female students taking leadership classes at Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University. Students completed a survey as well as writing an essay on the topic. The four main themes evolving out of Alexander's research were Perseverance (in the face of obstacles), Being first (in one's field), Excelling in a male dominated work, and achieving a dream or a goal. The suggested implications are that these themes frame how women, working in a male-dominated society, might be able to achieve leadership roles by paradigmatically changing their world view in terms of themselves, their work, and in their relationship to men, especially male leaders.

Al-Ahmadi (2011) discussed a number of problems that demonstrate the cultural issues that inhibit women from becoming leaders. The author mentioned a lack of empowerment primarily because of Muslim customs and culture. Women tend to be under the "umbrella" of male leaders, which limits potential women leaders in many ways, including independent decision making and possibly access to information. At the same time, Al-Ahmadi's research noted values or qualities of successful women leaders in Saudi Arabia. One significant quality that stands out is Education. Ahmad (2011) in a study of women entrepreneurs in KSA noted the importance of education as did Al-Ahmadi (2011). Other values noted in women leaders were family, community, and friendships. Invariably, successful women leaders and entrepreneurs also needed to have successful relationships with men. These relationships involved the fathers, family, friends, and managers over them in their work. One research study by Tsegay (2013) studied 45 women at length and developed a list of ten success factors. In order of importance to this group, there was integrity, concern for others, self-confidence, enthusiasm, vision, ability, vitality, persistence, charisma, and stability.

Anwar and Abdullah (2013) stated the case that women leaders place a higher value on relationships than male leaders, and their success largely depended on the quality of those relationships within their organisations. According to Anwar and Abdullah, women also prefer direct communication over men. Women are also more comfortable with diversity, and yet have a more difficult time separating their personal lives from their work. Women, according to Anwar and Abdullah, are more skeptical of hierarchical organizations and less interested on the privileges that separate hierarchical leaders. Women also prefer "leading from the center rather than the top . . . [and] ask big picture questions about the work they do and its value" (p. 76). This goes back to the reference about women's preference for relationships as a form of leading.

Abdalla (2015), conducted a survey of Arab women leaders in Kuwait, the UAE, and Qatar. In that survey, the majority of respondents (69%) felt that women value personal relationships more than they do power. Kemp and Madsen (2014), research women leadership in Oman, noted that men value authority more than men while women were less accepting of authority. Abdalla also noted that women, especially those working in international leadership positions, tended to focus more on relational skills.

In one last study, Yaseen (2010), using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), found that “Women in the Arab world exceeded men on four transformational scales: the attributes version of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration” (p. 67). According to Yaseen, Arab women leaders seek differing perspectives more often and spend more time helping team members, focusing more on relationships than their male counterparts.

Reflecting on this literature review of women in leadership roles, there are some common themes that repeatedly appear. Leadership is the overarching theme, which is logical as that was the primary search term. Relationships were a dominant theme, followed by less often mentioned themes of self-confidence, perseverance, authority, and acceptance of diversity. Family and cultural values were also consistent themes as was integrity and ability to meet one’s goals. In total, 19 themes emerged from a review of the research literature related specifically to women in leadership roles, primarily with Muslim cultures. These themes are shown in alphabetical order in Table 5 and form the basis from which the first round of questions evolved. At the same time, it was important to leave open the possibility of other themes emerging that were more relevant to the population under study.

Table 5: Values and themes from the literature related to successful women leaders.

1 Ability	8 Enthusiasm	15 Persistence
2 Achieving	9 Excelling	16 Relationships
3 Being First	10 Family	17 Self-confidence
4 Charisma	11 Friendships	18 Stability
5 Community	12 Integrity	19 Vision
6 Concern for Others	13 Leadership	
7 Education	14 Perseverance	

5.3 Round One: Research Questions

Research Questions

1. Which values can help women sustain or evolve their leadership skills?
2. Which social and cultural dynamics could enable or inhibit women in become leaders?
3. Which organisational factors are critical to the success of women seeking leadership roles in the KSA?

Rationale

These questions are important for a number of reasons. First, this study is specifically focused on women leaders in Saudi Arabia, an area where research is less frequent. Second, understanding the values, social and culture dynamics, and organisational factors of successful women leaders in general can be helpful in comparing women leaders in the KSA. Third, the process of comparison of women in established leadership positions within the KSA to those factors already mentioned could help highlight important areas of important differences and emphasis

Question 1 is more personal to the individual, whereas questions 2 and 3 examine the question of leadership from cultural and organisational levels. Discovering factors indicative of successful Saudi female leaders and comparing those to previous published research, could add value in understanding how the factors of personality and relationships play a role in the success of female leaders, especially in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The first question is the biggest challenge. Most research focuses on direct leadership, where the leader is in the presence of those that he or she might lead. In terms of direct leadership, research has primarily focused on dominant leadership styles, such as transactional, transformational, and passive (Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy, 2014), but little research has focused specifically on the values that engender specific leadership styles. Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy described an effective leader as someone who “influences followers in a desired manner to achieve desired goals” (p. 57). Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2014) continued by noting that direct leaders, effective leaders, attempt to influence [emphasis added] others to achieve the goals desired by the leader. The previous statements refer to direct leadership but the issue of using values such as a focus on relationships to achieve a specific outcome is important to the first research question.

Research Aim

This research aimed to investigate cultural and social factors that influence or allow Saudi women to become leaders. In addition, it is expected to discern those values that are synchronous with cultural and social factors that may improve access to leadership opportunities for women, especially with the KSA.

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the research:

- To discover those values held by successful women leaders in the KSA that are both unique (if any) and shared with successful leaders around the world.
- To learn which social and cultural factors and dynamics, in the opinion of the participants, inhibit or enhance their ability to gain leadership roles within the KSA and to work as effective leaders.
- To determine if there are organisational factors outside of the social and cultural factors that might inhibit or advance the ability of women to assume roles of leadership responsibility.

Analysis

The analysis process will ultimately involve three rounds of interviews. The first round was an exploratory study limited to three female Saudi Arabian leaders. There were each asked the same 20 questions, which were open ended. The evolution of the 20 questions comes from the values and themes noted in the first stage of research and an inductive approach to developing questions that might examine potential themes further. The purpose was to use a broad spectrum of questions to try to discover those themes that closely related to the research questions, but which also resonate with the participants. From the first round, the themes discovered would form the basis of the second set of interview questions, which would the themes and their importance to the participants in detail. In the second round, the more dominant themes were kept as the primary focus which would allow that focus to be even more refined in the third and final round.

5.3.1 Round One: Exploratory Analysis

A questionnaire of 20 open-ended questions was created. These were questions discovered in the literature review or evolving from similar questions found in the literature. As the long-term research goal was to move through three rounds of questions, each built upon the other, the validity of these first set of 20 questions would be established in this first round. If the responses did not align with the questions, then the question would be dropped or rephrased.

The first round included three interviews, each containing the participant responses to 20 open-ended questions, and each totally about 1,000 words. The interviews were transcribed to paper and then subjected to content analysis. The guidelines for coding as suggested by Saldaña (2009) were used. QDA Miner qualitative data analysis software was used to establish codes, frequency of codes, categories and subcategories of these codes.

Questions used in the First Round

- Q1. How did you develop your network of important connections to become a leader?
- Q2. What difference does being a woman make to you becoming a leader?
- Q3. How did your self-esteem affect you in becoming a leader?
- Q4. What role did other peoples' negative views of your ability play in you becoming a leader?
- Q5. How do you build relationships with influential people in the organisation?
- Q6. How did you engage with people while seeking a leadership role in our organisation?
- Q7. What role did your connections play in you becoming a leader?
- Q8. What emphasis do you put on caring for your employees?
- Q9. What is your attitude to becoming a leader?
- Q10. How confident were you in your pursuit of leadership?
- Q11. What prior experience did you have that helped you to achieve your leadership role?
- Q12. What affect did the environment and culture of the company have on you becoming a leader?
- Q13. How did you manage the resistance of men to you becoming a leader?
- Q14. How passionate were you to become a leader? Please give examples of situations.

Q15. What targets did you set yourself to achieve to become a leader?

Q16. How did you assess your credibility in seeking leadership?

Q17. What role did family values have in your becoming a leader?

Q18. What was the role of morality in you becoming a leader?

Q19. What kind of ethics did you adopt to become a leader?

Q20. What was the influence of society on your becoming a leader?

Texts from each question from the three participants were combined into a single document for each question, so that there were 20 documents. Each question was then analysed using a phrase frequency counter called WriteWords (WriteWords, 2016). WriteWords allows for the quick analysis of textual phrases, and the researcher can quickly change the length of the phrases sought. For example, if a question indicated no common phrases that included five words, then the software would quickly allow a switch to four word and three word phrases respectively. These phrases, based on frequency of appearance in the interviews, then may become the initial “codes” that would be used in the textual analysis. Examples of codes are found in Table 6. The fact that some phrases are repeated is not sufficient. The phrases also need to have some meaning within the context of the interview. That is an evaluation made by the researcher.

Table 6: Codes extract through content analysis of round one

PARTICIPANT #	1	2	3	PARTICIPANT #	1	2	3
Ability	2	4	5	Leadership	8	1	6
Achieve	4		7	Manager (relationship with)	4	9	10
Accountability	2	2	1	Men (relationship with)	13	11	6
Affect change	2	1	8	Networking	6	2	7
Confidence	6	5	6	Opportunity	9	7	5
Connections	3	3	6	People (connections)	8	11	15
Develop (opportunity to)	11		2	Personality	4	1	10
Difference (make a)	4	2	4	Position	12	13	7
Education	1	1	8	Praise (appreciation)	6	6	7
Equality	8	7	7	Problem solving	2	2	4
Experience	12	1	6	Relationships	10	1	3
Family	2	2	6	Respect	11	9	9
Father	9	1	10	Responsibility	7	6	10
Helped (me)	9	3	3	Self esteem	3	3	8
Importance (work & family)	7	8	5	Society	2	6	5
Independence	7	3	16	Teaching		7	5
Influence	4	1	8	Trust	6	4	4
Integrity	4	2	8	Women	13	14	6
Leader	15	8	20	Work	25	13	17

The context of the codes was important in arranging them into categories, the second step of the content analysis. Categories included subcategories and the combined categories and subcategories suggested themes for the first round of interviews, as shown in Table 5.

Table 7: Evolving thematic analysis based on codes in Table 5

Categories	Subcategories	Themes
Leadership	Independence, trust, praise and advice from other leaders, respect of subordinates	Independence
Confidence, Self-esteem	Develop opportunities, open doors, self-esteem, trust, caring for others	Self-Confidence
Multitasking, intuitive	Ability, problem-solving, responsible	
Interpersonal relationships	Networking	Relationships
	Personal connections	
Relationships with men	Men - equality	
Relationships with men	Men – negative; surprised that men don't want you progress above their position	
Female connections	Women's rights, difficult to deal with women	

Relationships with Leaders	Leaders: praise, advice	
Female connections	Managers, opinions valued	
Relationships with Leaders	Subordinates: caring about them	
Role Model		
Honesty	Respect, setting an example, commitment, integrity, thoughtfulness, helping others, no favours	
Trust	Accountability, trust, commitment, rights and responsibilities	Values and ethics
Honesty	Integrity, honesty, trustworthiness	
Benefit others	Self-directed towards benefit of the work.	Ability to meet one's goal
Commitment	Work effectively with others	
Success	Achieve the desired position.	
Relationship to father	Father, influence, Father's influence, foundations, grandfather	Family
Parental encouragement	Encouragement of Family	
Parental guidance	Other people, all people are the same. Father believed there was no difference between men and women	
Societal barriers and traditional culture	Society does not support but accepts, creates barriers	Society and Culture
Tension based on gender	No difference between men and women at work, treat other workers equally	

5.3.2 Development of the themes

As noted by Saldaña (2009), "Coding is only the initial step toward an even more rigorous and evocative analysis and interpretation" (p. 8). Coding is an iterative process of linking data with salient features of that data. The codes are then arranged into categories, as in Table 7. Categories are concepts drawn from the codes, and then subcategories amplify and give deeper understanding of the categories as a whole. "A theme is an *outcome* of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself, coded" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 13). The seven themes in Table 8 are a result of that analytical reflection.

Discussion of the Thematic Structure from Round One

The First Round served the purpose of refining the thematic structure for the second round of interviews. Seven dominant themes discovered in round one showed direct relationships to

the research questions. The theme of **Independence** associates well with research question #1 as does the theme of **Self-Confidence**. The theme **Relationships** directly relates to research questions #1 and #3 and the theme of **Values and ethics** directly relates to both questions #2 and #3. The **Ability to Meet One's Goal** directly relates to research question #1. **Family** as a theme, connects with #1 and #2, while the theme of **Society and Culture** directly connects with research questions #2. A representation of the hierarchy of these seven themes and their subthemes is found in Table 8.

The selection and “naming” of the themes is a subjective process, based on the categories and subcategories taken from the content analysis. This process is an evolutionary and exploratory process and will change, be modified, and become more specific as the different rounds progress. The themes evolve downwards in figure #1, and the following discussion treats each of the seven themes in greater detail.

Table 8: Seven main themes the primary subthemes.

1. Independence	2. Self-Confidence	3. Relationships	4. Values and Ethics	5. Ability to Meet One's Goals	6. Family	7. Society and Culture
1.1 Respect	2.1 Self-Esteem	3.1. Interpersonal	4.1. Trust	5.1. Self-directed	6.1. Father	7.1. Barriers
1.2 Support from others	2.2 Develop opportunities	3.2. Networking	4.2. Accountability	5.2. Work effectively with others	6.2. Family encouragement	7.2. Equality
		3.3. With Women	4.3. Responsibility			
		3.4 With Role Models				

It is important to understand what qualities the participants believe to be important in their becoming successful leaders. Avolio (2005) suggested that, when defining a leader, it is important to identify the traits that are demonstrated, but also to understand the situation in which they are demonstrated. Avolio argued that, while leaders may carry certain traits, those traits are not, by themselves, definitive of leaders. Certain qualities or aspects of

leadership such as independence and self-confidence are established in leaders in the process of interacting with others.

5.3.3 Theme #1: Independence

The theme of independence included a sense of self-respect and the respect of others as well as the support of others.

This dominant theme included the strong subthemes of self-confidence and independence. Internal qualities of ability to complete a task, thinking ability, and problem solving are also contained within this theme. The idea of independence and the ability to work without fear are interesting and the challenge is to learn why there is a lack of fear. Following are comments from participants in round one.

Self-confidence and Independence were not the only personal qualities discussed by the participants in the first round, but these were the most frequently mentioned. It will be important to understand these qualities and the context in future rounds of this research. The reason that, as noted by Ibarra et al. (2013), the qualities of self-confidence and independence are considered ideals for a leader, but those qualities are usually only associated with men. Self-confidence, for example, in women may be viewed as being arrogant or uncompromising. Being independent may be perceived, in a male-centric world, to be inappropriate for females and this will be examined more closely in the subsequent interviews and discussions.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1.1. Respect | I tried to be a good example. I had a lot of respect for the people around me. This helped me to get to my position. (Participant #1). |
| 1.2. Support of Others | Now Saudi Arabia is improving and proving that there are opportunities for women. It was the action of government to support women at the time which provided benefits and opened opportunities. |

5.3.4 Theme #2: Self-Confidence

Self-confidence consists of multiple subthemes, primarily based on self-esteem as well as the ability to develop opportunities to lead, which enhances self-confidence

- 2.1. Self-esteem I was the kind of person who knew their worth; that I had qualities that were different to others and this gave me self-confidence (Participant #3).
- 2.2. Develop Opportunities I did not find any difference and had a lot of self-confidence. So I saw that an individual is the one who develops chances and opens opportunities. My self-confidence came from my experience in my field in addition to my high degree of education. (Participant #1)

5.3.5 Theme #3: Relationships

This was the second most prominent theme to appear and included multiple subthemes that encompassed relationships with students, men and women in varying roles, leaders, managers, and subordinates. There was a dichotomy between the relationships between the two genders. Networking was an important subtheme and had a gender component.

A dominant and complex theme throughout the First Round interviews were relationships. This over-arching theme includes relationships with men and women and in differing roles from father and husband, to mother or grandmother, and to role models of both genders. The relationships exist at different levels, including the interpersonal. Relationships appear to play an important part in the ability to network with others, and important aspect of being an effective leader, according to those interviewed.

- 3.1. Interpersonal I did not build relationships based on personal affairs (#1).
I didn't try to make personal relationships in the workplace (#2).
My beginnings were based on personal connections (#3).
- 3.2. Networking My character is different to women. I am close to the character of men and from that I built my networks (#2)
My relationships are special because connecting with people is very important for success. I

believed that networking with people will take you to leadership, in addition to getting advice when needed (#3).

Networking with people really helped me reach my position. My beginnings were based on personal connections (#3).

3.3. Relationships with Women

My subordinates were women and the difference was that my character is similar to a man (#2).

I was not able to deal with women and found it hard to deal with my own gender (#2)

3.4. Relationships with Role Models

The leaders all of them gave me praise and advice which helped me reach my position (#1).

My father was the main figure that drove me to become a leader (#2)

As can be seen from the initial results of the First Round, the relationships are not all positive or negative. The relationships can potentially be adversarial, but they can also be positive, or at least neutral. It may be an important aspect of women leaders to be able to sidestep issues of gender. There is research going back decades that talk about issues such as the “glass ceiling,” effect, the idea that women are kept below certain levels (especially) leadership because of their gender. Hamdan (2005) discussed the issue of gender roles and the glass ceiling effect as it relates to women in Saudi Arabia. Hamdan’s focus was in the field of education. Some of the research participants in this study are also in education, so it will be interesting to focus on this issue.

Rudman (2010) when discussing the relationships between men and women and perceptions of gender roles discussed the concept of “priming.” The concept is that women (and men) are primed as to their gender roles, and this priming includes implicit gender stereotypes. Rudman suggested that this priming might mediate against women being interested in roles typically associated with leadership if they have been primed to consider all leaders as men.

5.3.6 Theme #4: Values and Ethics

A dominant theme that includes the subtheme of role models including respect for role models and the respect from role models. The concepts of setting an example, commitment to a principle or idea, integrity, and helping others were components. As important within this theme was the idea of achievement would favours from others, the ability to compete and lead based on individual merit.

Values and ethics are qualities often discussed in the literature related to leadership (Freeman & Auster, 2011; Todnem et al., 2012). The concepts of trust in leadership, as well as honesty are also frequent topics (Yukl, Mahsud, Hassan, & Prussia, 2011). Both trust and honesty qualities that are double-edged. The question the participants expressed, at least indirectly, was the extent and degree to which a person can be honest in the work place and how much trust can be placed on people and situations. These suggest vulnerability on the part of the leaders and future questionnaires will focus deeper on these issues.

Trust, accountability, and responsibility are values we have known since the times of Gordon Allport. Allport noted that values are numerous, multifaceted, and very hard to define (Allport, 1931). More recently, Zaccaro (2007) diagrammatically illustrated the motives and values of leaders in terms of other needed leadership attributes, which the author described as distal and proximal attributes. According to Zaccaro, distal attributes are those personal characteristics (such as motives and values) that precede proximal attributes, which include aspects such as social appraisal skills and problem solving skills. To understand the dynamic and progression of these attributes better, it will be important to understand the precursor values involved, so a more in-depth query is needed.

4.1. Trust

I felt that I could take a decision and be held responsible for it. I had the core value that when someone takes a decision that they should be held accountable to it. And this was my beginning in gaining the trust of the managers. In the end I was able to build a strong relationship with them and this is how I reached my position (#3)

4.2. Accountability

I have a personality that likes to accept challenges so in certain times when I had to meet the manager, the men

would give the responsibility to me. This is because I liked to discuss issues and I was accountable for my own actions (Participant #3)

4.3. Responsibility

There are principles present in the government, and I was able to reach positions that were intended for men even though I was women. I had a feeling of accountability in my work. (Participant #2)

5.3.7 Theme #5: Ability to Meet One's Goals

Each of the themes has some overlap and the ability to meet one's goals probably interrelates to all the other themes. This ability is reflected in the ability to direct one's self and work effectively with others.

One purpose of this research is to seek those goals that stand out as common to women who become successful leaders. It should be noted that there were no questions in the First Round that specifically asked the participants as to their goals, yet goals were mentioned 17 times. This suggests that this is an important area of consideration for the participants. Future rounds within this research will need to drill down deeper and more specifically as to which goals are key to success for women in leadership. The goals of women leaders, especially in Saudi Arabia, is one that has been addressed previously (Al-Ahmadi, 2011), but it is hoped deeper questions may expand on the specific goals most closely related to success as a female leader.

5.1. Self-directed

I concentrated on my work and my job and on those around me. I felt comfortable with men and women and my ability to direct my own activities (Participant #2)

5.2. Work effectively with others

So [my family] played a big role in building my personality. And when I escalated in my work I had the confidence that I would go higher. I am confident in myself and others were confident in my ability. (Participant #1) is good or bad it goes

back to their past experience.

It seems clear that goals are varied and complex within these three participants. Goal complexity as it relates to leadership, has been an area of moderate research over the last decade, as the world appears to be becoming more and more complex (Lord et al., 2011). As Lord et al. indicated, individual perception, conscious awareness, and self-regulatory behaviour are essential in this complex world, and awareness of goals from this study could enhance those areas for future leaders.

5.3.8 Theme #6: Family

Saudi Arabia is considered a very patriarchal country (Elamin & Omair, 2010). There are significant efforts by the Saudi Government to shift away from that patriarchal approach, but the culture has a long tradition. The study by Elamin and Omair (2010) was interesting in that there does seem to be a shift away from the culture of strict patrimony. In their research, younger and educated Saudi males held less traditional values, whereas the strongest adherents to the traditional culture of male leadership and patriarchy were older, married, and less educated. In the First Round, the goal was to examine the roles, at least tentatively, that the family, especially the parents, might have played in the success of women leaders.

6.1. Father

I was highly influenced by my father, and he had a lot of influence. I found he had the most influence on my character. My father's love for education impacted us. He taught us to travel, live, and work with success as a primary Focus. Connection with others was important and the role of the family was important. My family played an important role; they supported me and made a lot of things easy for me in society (#2).

I felt responsibility from a young age. In addition to what I gained from the experience of my father as he had a leaderships role. My father was the main figure that drove me to become a leader (#3).

6.2. Family Encouragement

My family were the main influence. I did a lot of my learning in my country. But because of the passion I had for research, my parents gave me the confidence to travel to develop myself and gain what was not available in Saudi Arabia. Their encouragement was important during my time at the university (#1)

The role of the family and specific family members is an area of continuing debate among academics. Ibarra et al., (2013) discussed the dichotomy with which women must deal. Traditional culture requires that women accommodate the needs of the family, whether they are leaders or not. Families can encourage and provide guidance, but young women are conflicted because, while they are receiving encouragement to be individuals, there is often still the expectation of adherence to traditional female roles within the family. The father may be a key figure in this issue, based on the results from the First Round, and this is an area that could be considered in future rounds.

The theme of the family focused on encouragement from the parents. Strong components also related to male figures, such as the father and husband. At the same time, matrilineal support was also an important concept.

5.3.9 Theme #7: Society and Culture

The theme of society and equality revolved around societal barriers around gender, including aspects considered repressive and progressive. These issues varied along both cultural and gender lines. The issue of barriers was noted, especially in the work place.

This last theme presented in the First Round focuses on societal and cultural concerns and how those traditions affect women in leadership roles. Al-Ahmadi (2011) acknowledged the increasing role of women in leadership roles in many areas of Saudi Arabia, largely due to increasing educational levels of women, who are being actively encouraged to attend universities and expand their skills. Elamin and Omair (2010) also acknowledged that while traditional culture is still alive and well, it is fading within the younger people and those who have higher levels of education.

7.1. Societal barriers

The government encourages women to get to

leadership positions. [However], there are restricting views of women in some parts of society (#1).

With their help [family] I found barriers and difficulties easier. They didn't stop me from travelling and did not put barriers in my way (#2)

7.2. Equality

My knowledge and experience in the place I worked helped me develop my relationships. I would treat my workers equally. That is what helped me develop relationships (#1).

I had the principle that a person cannot be a leader unless they put themselves in the position of other people so that they can lead them. I would put myself in other people's position and this would mean they are all equal (#2).

The issues related to societal barriers, traditional culture, and equality involve the values and beliefs that have existed for centuries. Many times, these are steeped within the religion of a country. One participant in the First Round made the point that there is a division between men and women in religion in Saudi Arabia. The lines between religion and the secular world may not be as separate in some countries, especially within the Islamic world. Voas and Fleischmann (2012) noted that the conflict between the secular world and religion, and the deep reaction of current generations is both complex and difficult. Muslims who move to the west, according to the authors, must struggle with the concept of bringing a traditional culture with them to an essentially alien environment or change. Women who are successful leaders may be doing the opposite. That is, they are taking what might be considered “Western” ideas and bringing them into Saudi Arabia, and there is some resistance. How female leaders recognize and deal with traditions will be an important topic for upcoming rounds of this research.

5.4 Discussion of Round One

The First Round involved only three participants. Each was asked 20 questions and their comments were recorded and then textually analysed, seeking themes by first using a process of coding, category creation, and subcategory creation. Through the process of inductive reasoning, the researcher reversed the process and combined subcategories and categories into themes. Those themes most relevant to the study of women as leaders in Saudi Arabia include relationships, which is not only a theme, but also the overarching meta-theme for this research.

Values and ethics, personal goals and characteristics, family, and society and equality were also clear themes. Personal qualities inherent to becoming a leader was the sixth theme. In this text, they were presented in order of greatest frequency noted in the interviews. After a short explanation of the meanings of each theme as taken from the “voices” of the participants, there was a brief discussion of the questions that the First Round generated for the next round research. The idea is to continue to go deeper and refine the questions to better determine the most important aspects related to becoming a successful female leader in Saudi Arabia.

Questions that presented themselves during the First Round include consideration of the positive and negative aspects of self-confidence and independence in female leaders needs to be better understood. Additionally, a better and deeper understanding of relationships between successful women leaders and all others would seem to be important. Relationships may be the most important consideration as it is an overarching theme for all seven themes. Issues of goals, family, equality, networking, and others aspects all eventually play some part in the relationships of female leaders.

The theme of personal goals also needs to be understood at a deeper level. More clarity as to specific goals, their value to women leaders, and the role those goals play in relationships could be important. In alignment with this, the values inculcated in the personality of successful women leaders need to be better defined and understood.

While it is understood that the focus of this study is on successful women leaders in Saudi Arabia, and that the Saudi culture has a long tradition of patriarchy, it will be helpful to understand more clearly how participants in this study deal with that culture. Even if the culture is changing, this type of change is very slow and will be an issue for many years to come. In respect with how women leaders deal with the culture, it will also be very helpful to

get deeper insights into the role of the family, especially the mother and father. In the study, the father was most often mentioned, although the research questions were not slanted in that direction. A better understand of the father role and male mentors and role models might prove beneficial. At the same time, a deeper long into the almost silent matriarchal role could be of value.

The last area of consideration, which is closely related to the other themes, is the issue of culture and society in Saudi Arabia. How do successful women leaders include the positive elements of both culture and society while coping with other elements that might be considered discouraging?

5.5 Round Two Interviews

The second round of interviews evolved a set of 15 questions and sub-questions that were based on the themes of the first round. Five, well established successful women leaders in Saudi Arabia volunteered to be interviewed. The protocols of ethics and informed consent were followed. The names of the individuals were known only to the researcher and are referred to by a number (1-5) coded to the individual's personal information. Only the researcher knows to whom the codes refer.

The list of questions was addressed to each individual and the interviews were recorded and later transcribed. The interviews were long and provided a significant amount of detail. The researcher would sometimes move in a direction to follow-up on a specific question. The interviews averaged about 10,000 words, although one was five times that long. The participants were open and free with their discussion and did not seem to be constrained.

The questions that follow were derived from the thematic analysis of round one. Parts of each question relate to one or more of the themes notes in Table 9. Table 9 provides a list of which questions address which themes.

Table 9: Themes represented within the second round questions

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Related Questions</i>
Independence	6, 8, 13
Self-Confidence	2, 5,
Relationships	4. 9.1, 9.2, 10, 12, 14
Values and Ethics	1, 10, 11, 12, 15
Ability to Meet One's Goal	3,

Family	1, 10
Society and Culture	4, 7, 9, 15

Q1: What role have the familial values played that helped you become a leader? What kind of support have you received?

Q2: Was that because you were enthusiastic? Talk about the practical aspect. Before getting this position, you were gradually promoted in other positions. To what extent were you enthusiastic about becoming a leader?

Q3: Certainly, you had goals that you wanted to achieve. What were the goals that you set for yourself to become a leader?

Q4: What difference you have found, being a woman who became a leader at work?

Q5: To which extent has your self-esteem helped you become a leader? How much confident you were about achieving a leadership position?

Q6: What was the attitude or the orientation that you adopted towards attaining a leadership position? Surely, you had attitudes in any leadership position and I do not mean goals. Let's concentrate on your last position.

Q7: The next question is related to your words. To which extent your advance towards leadership has been affected by the others' negative views and opinions? For example, some of them may have some negative views that you won't succeed! Have you got the idea of my question?

Q8: In the beginning, you told me about your previous experience that helped you to achieve every leadership position. What was the (previous) expertise that you had and helped you become a leader?

Q9: The next question: In which ways have the society helped you become a leader?

9.1 Q: Everyone is surrounded by a network of connections that has helped him/her to reach his/her goal. How have you managed to build your network of important ties (figures, persons) that helped you become a leader?

9.2 Q: How could you develop this social network to reach this position?

Q10: I want to ask you about the role of your family ties or relationships that helped you become a leader? In the beginning, I asked you about how you developed your relationships and you answered.

Q11: The next question is related to the previous one. What was the role of the moral aspects (the values) that helped you become a leader? What kinds of morals you adopted that helped you become a leader?

Q12: These values are wonderful. You were very brief in your answer and it was very indicative. How do you evaluate your credibility (honesty, Integrity) in searching for leadership?

Q: 12.1 How was your relationship with the people during your quest for a leadership role in the organization? I do not talk about the organization, but I mean the society. Did you avoid attending the social events?

Q: 12.2 How have you managed to build ties with influential figures in the organization?

Q13: I may ask you to kindly talk a little bit about yourself as a leader in this organization? Would you talk about the difficulties, the obstacles, the expertise, the roles and the requirements?

Q14: Let's talk about the important point that we have just talked about! How could you build relationships with the influential people at the ministry such as Prince Faisal?

Q15: What are the principles that you want to be embraced by your staff? Things that they must put into consideration. There could be more than one principle, but what is that principle that must be embraced?

5.5.1 Importance of the Questions

Q1: This question directly addresses the issue of familial values and how those shaped the participant in becoming a leader. This was one of the major themes discovered in the pilot study. The goal is to dig deeper and better understand not only support, but also the types of values or encouragements that were helpful to the participant either as a future leader or as a leader in the present. As noted by Cheung and Halpern (2010), the existing models of leadership, which tend to be male oriented, are insufficient. The authors explore an alternative model that focused on relationships (another key theme), and the importance of

consensus building and working as a team. Effective work-family aspects are also considered in their model. Al-Ahmadi (2011) also inquires as to the family role in providing access to information, encouragement and rewards.

Q2: Enthusiasm is a specific personal value as it relates to the energy necessary to keep a leader seeking success when there appear to be many roadblocks in the way. The question was prompted by a statement by #2 in the initial round who stated, “I have a lot of enthusiasm but I didn’t have high hopes. My morale was low but I would go back to enthusiasm.” The level of constant enthusiasm necessary for continued success is a point worth consideration. The question was also stimulated by the research of Ahmad (2011), who studied the characteristics of women entrepreneurs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Q3: Directly addresses one of the major themes from the pilot study. The topic of goals is one widely discussed, and a portion of that was seen in the pilot study, but the brevity of those interviews did not provide the depth that is needed for a more extensive understanding of the underpinnings of the personalities of successful women leaders. Rokeach (1973) provided germinal studies on human values where he described goal values and support values. Goal values are those values that drive an individual to accomplish their respective objectives. Support values are those values that support the goal values and assist in the accomplishment of those goals. While this is not a values study, a deeper understanding of the dominant goals could have value to future women leaders and leadership theory development.

Q4: The question about “difference” is important, although not directly related to a specific theme. The intent is to try to understand better how the successful women leader in Saudi Arabia perceives that she makes a difference. The question should cross-relate to other thematic questions as well.

Q5: Self-esteem was mentioned in relation to the theme of personal qualities in the pilot study. It is one of those issues where the lack of information is bothersome. Pierce and Gardner (2004) noted that a leader’s self-esteem acts as a significant agent in establishing motivation, behaviours, and attitudes related to work and success. The hope was to drill down more deeply and try to discover if, at least for these leaders, the proposition of Pierce and Gardner hold true and self-esteem is more relevant than demonstrated in the pilot study.

Q6: The intent of this question is to try to differentiate the participants' perceptions as to their attitudes toward leadership, separate from goals. The question also focuses on the last position held by the participant to narrow the alternatives. Nieva (2015) studied women entrepreneurs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The author draws a clear line of distinction between attitudes and goals. Nieva stated: "Societal attitudes and norms inhibit some women for even considering starting a business" (p. 4). While Nieva's study focuses on entrepreneurs, there is an interesting connection between successful women leaders and female entrepreneurs. In a study by Bogren et al., (2013), the link between successful women leaders and successful women entrepreneurs is their social networking. The authors stated that, "Women's networks are more homogeneous than men's, and women also have more family and friends in their networks" (p. 61). It could be of value to discern if attitudes, especially attitudes towards networking, present themselves in the interviews.

Q7: This question addresses the main theme of society and equality, a dominant issue in the literature related to women leaders (Al-Ahmadi, 2011; Ibarra et al., 2013; 2011). While this theme is widely covered in the research literature, it may be of value in determining the individual perspectives of the participants in this study.

Q8: The intent of this question is to go back and gain additional information about the foundations of the successful women leaders. Foundations are very important in understand the etiology of leadership. This question relates to questions aspects of the first six questions, but formats the question in a different way, which might help even greater insights.

Q9: Networking and relationships are key tools, based on the pilot study, of the successful leader's toolkit. This is a point discussed with Q6 as well and by Bogren et al., (2013). The question is not whether or not networking is important, but to try and discover through exploratory analysis just how important the issue really is.

Q10: This question is an immediate follow-up to Q9, and looks more deeply into relationships, both a dominant theme and the over-arching theme of this research. The question seeks to understand how successful women leaders build their networks.

Q11: A question about morals was included as religion is a central theme in Saudi Arabia. While religion and morality are not exactly the same thing, there is a general belief that morality stems from religious beliefs. In a 2015 leadership development study in Saudi

Arabia (Varshney, 2015), participants were assessed on a variety of attributes that necessary for successful leadership in KSA. One area of assessment included the dimension of character and integrity, and the evaluation was to see if participants demonstrate “high ethical standards and integrity and has the moral courage to stand for what is right” (p. 254). Considering the society and culture, this seemed to be an important question to investigate.

Q12: Values, as discussed previously, are potentially critical to the success of women in leadership roles, and a number of questions are designed to delve more deeply into understanding the operative values of the participants. While each question in this round provides the opportunity for the research to add probing questions, Q12 has specific probing questions built into the formatted questions. The intent is to try to establish whether there are relationships between values (honesty and integrity are specifically listed as they appeared in the pilot study), and relationships, are primary theme. The question goes further to seek an understanding of not only relationships, but also relationships with individuals of influence. This is a most important question because it ties elements back to our research question #1, which seems to be the most difficult to study.

Q13: This question revisits the concepts of obstacles and barriers successful leaders might experience in KSA. The focus, however, is on the current organization, so is more specific. The specificity might be helpful in understanding the larger context as a specific experience might be easier to explain than the concept of obstacles and barriers in general.

Q14: This question is very specific and of strong interest to the researcher who is applying the concepts of successful women leaders within the context of people of influence at the Ministry of Higher Education.

Q15: The last question seeks to understand how successful women leaders put forward their principles and beliefs in the workplace. The intent is to understand better both what the participant believes is important, and what the successful leader believes is important enough to suggest staff should also embrace these principles. While a seemingly innocuous question, the goal is to try and examine any potential areas that might be in conflict with what was stated earlier.

5.5.2 Confirming Themes

The responses of the women leaders was consistent in the second round. The themes identified in round one were explored deeper in the second round interviews with five key respondents. The themes concerning goals was prominent in the responses of the interviewees. The women leaders considered setting their goal as critical to their success. Participant #3 below discussed how she aimed to fill the gap of women leaders in her organisation and across Saudi Arabia in the same organisation. Similarly, Participant #5 aimed to make her institutions successful. All five women leaders reported such determined goals and discussed how they achieved them by developing successful relationships with important men in their organisations.

Themes	
Ability to meet one's goal	<p>These goals were very important to me and I always worked for achieving them. When I came to the ministry, there was no woman who was on the fifteenth grade. Now, there are two women. There was no female deputy minister. There is one now. There were no women on the fourteenth grade and now there are many not only in Riyadh but also in Jeddah and the Eastern Region. Participant #3</p> <p>My very positive goal was the College of Languages and Translation which is considered one of the best colleges at King Saud University. With my colleagues, I wanted to make this place succeed. I did not want to achieve a personal success. My goal was to achieve success for the organization and students. Participant #5</p>

The themes independence and self-confidence were related, as discussed by participants. So, they are presented together in the table below. As Participant #1 noted being independent was critical for her self-confidence and eventual success as a woman leader. She was chosen for the important role and she felt that she deserved their trust because of her ability to achieve the goal of her responsible position. Participant #3 had a stronger sense of independence 'I must be myself'. She was emphatic about having her own ideas and not slavishly following others. The related concept of self-confidence featured strongly in all the women leader's responses. This was linked to being positive. Participant #1 recalled being positive from an early age and later she developed more self-confidence while working with 'educated people'.

Themes	
Independence	This gives me the power, self-confidence and challenge. They chose me and I had to prove that I deserve their trust. I must work hard, be sincere in my work, be honest with God and my homeland, and try to hold the stick from the middle. I have to be

	<p>independent and fair and not to challenge anyone. I was the first woman to hold this position, and if I dealt with the matter stubbornly, this would have a bad impact on the women who would hold such a position after me. Participant #1</p> <p>They always emphasized on the idea that I must be myself. This means that I must have my own idea and not to follow anybody else. I have to have my own independence for making decision. I must be also convinced of that decision, but at the same time I do not rebel against the society. Participant #3</p>
Self-Confidence	<p>The second thing is that I always like being positive in life. When I feel that there are people who create a passive energy, I stay away from them. These things have created my self-confidence since my childhood because I used to work with the people around me and lead them. What increased my self-confidence was that I worked with the educated people and I was superior to them. When I worked in committees, I was distinguished. When I worked with experts who got master and doctorate's degrees on a particular project, I find that I lead the project. All of this increases my self-confidence. Participant #1</p> <p>I had self-confidence because I can learn things and communicate with others quickly. I can also lead a large team and get used to different cultures, nationalities and thoughts. I am also flexible. In addition, luck played an important role. In my first year at the bank, I did not want to continue, but there was one of the financial managers who did not make me leave work. Since then, I have believed in myself so that I can do my best. Participant #2</p>

All the participants recognised the critical importance of keeping positive and friendly relationships with others. They related that achieving their goals was dependent on developing and keeping good relationship with people they partnering, influencing or working with as colleagues. Participant #4 stated that 'my leadership skills are natural and internal because I have the ability to attract people...' To develop and keep positive relationships, Participant #5 had an 'open door' policy.

Themes	
Relationships	<p>Actually I was with the Arab students and I was the head of 100 students and they obeyed me because I had good relationships with them and there were clear limits for each of us. There was also a common goal for all of us. My leadership skills are natural and internal because I have the ability to attract people, listen to others, negotiate with persons and make them love me. Participant #4</p> <p>My relationships were excellent with all people except one or two persons at most. I cannot say that I disliked that person or that person did not like me. This is the truth. My door was open for all people all the time except when there was a meeting. I met with students and sat with them in the hall and even outside the university. The same thing happens in Shura because I have not changed. I meet my colleagues outside</p>

	Shura and we can spend an enjoyable time together. Participant #5
Values and ethics	<p>My goal was not to be a leader. I just did what I thought that it was correct at that time. My father was an ambassador for the Kingdom in Sudan, Rome, Austria and Holland. We moved to England when he worked as an ambassador in London. Therefore, we lived in England for 17 years. This is about my background. My father was very strict, but he had clear goals. He was also very strong and clear concerning his principles. Participant #5</p> <p>Dealing with others gently is the most important value that I have. I am fair with my colleagues and always use the example of the two scales when I deal with them. Participant #1</p> <p>...one of the most important things was that I learned very early that I have to earn what I get and there is nothing easy. I mean that when I wanted to buy a toy, what did I have to do to have the right to buy it? I always had the concept that a person must work, take responsibility or achieve a certain chore to get good results. This was established inside me from the beginning. It was one of the most important things. Participant #3</p>

Participants related the themes of family and society, so they are presented together in the table below. All the women leaders drew on their family to explain the fundamental reason for their leadership achievement. They related nurturing and values gained in their family with the behaviour of society, which often was different and sometimes conflicting. Participant 3# related the very positive nurturing she gained from her family. And Participant #5 drew on her father's role in the affairs of the King involving the oil trade. The negative behaviour of society did not affect Participant #5 because of the positive family influence. And Participant #4 drew on her family experience, independent and self-confidence to draw up a programme to support other women to gain independence and self-confidence. She relates how the programme she initiated helped other women. Participant #1

Themes	
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Family	<p>...but the nature of my family was that they were focusing on me. I remember that when we were going out somewhere with my mother and after coming back she used to give me feedback about my conducts. This means that she always informed me about the right deeds and the wrong ones. Participant #3</p> <p>As a family, we were a very small unit and we lived abroad for a long time. My parents had certain duties and social obligations and these obligations played an important role with us. My father was a leader in his position and he played an important role in the history of the kingdom. When King Faisal made his decision to stop exporting Oil to the Western countries, my father played an important part in this matter. We knew all his great deeds and history and this really affected us. We received all the support from our parents. Participant #5</p>
Society and Culture	<p>I was exposed to positive and negative situations. One of the negative situations is that when a man does not use the lift because I am inside it. I do not care about that. Participant #2</p> <p>We developed a program called Gender Culture In Human Rights because there is an extreme conflict between the human rights and the customs and traditions concerning women. I imposed this program on the organization. I also applied it in the organization although most of the other women were committed to the culture and customs. I was convinced that I could not change without understanding the cultural content within which I work. Through this program, we created a large network between the organization and the different religious institutions that provide services. Participant #4</p> <p>...after thinking carefully I went to the Institute of Public Administration because I found the suitable job and the Institute had a distinguished role in spreading culture in the country in terms of the professional development and the administrative and educational training. Participant #1</p>

Data from the second round interview further corroborates the themes identified in the first round. As noted above, the average number of words of the respondents was 10, 000. All this data confirms the seven themes in more detail, but specific aspects were explored further in the final round three interviews presented next.

5.6 Round Three Final Round of Interviews

The last set of three interviews differ slightly from the first two rounds in that the themes were previously established in the first two rounds from a process of content analysis. The interview questions for the final round were specifically designed to delve more deeply into the meanings of those themes. A total of nine questions were asked of each interviewee in round three, and those questions are noted in Table 10.

Table 10: The interview questions for the final round

Question Number	QUESTION
1	Please discuss how responsibility, independence, and success might differ between men and women in leadership roles in Saudi Arabia (Leadership, Family, Relationships).
2	The research related to female leaders suggests that cultural bias against women leaders make it difficult for women to advance above certain levels or into male dominated professions. How did you deal with possible issues of gender bias both from your superiors as well as those you supervise? (Leadership, Society and Equality, Relationships, Values and Ethics).
3	Some have described the role of female leaders as more complex than that of their male counterparts because of the additional female roles related to family. Would you please describe any differences between the familial responsibilities of male leaders and female leaders and how you have dealt with these additional responsibilities? (Family, Relationships, Society and Equality).
4	We each have many values that make us both interesting and individuals. What are the values that helped you become a successful leader? Are they the same values that sustain you as an effective female leader or have they changed as you matured into your leadership role? (Goals and Characteristics, Personal Values, Values and Ethics).
5	Within the organization in which you currently work or one in which you recently worked, can you describe specific processes or factors that impede your ability to be a successful leader? Are there specific processes or factors that enhance your ability to be a successful leader? (Society and Equality, Values and Ethics, Leadership).

- 6 Of all the questions we have discussed, what three goals and characteristics stand out to you as the most important that have allowed you to become an effective leader? (Personal Values, Goals and Characteristics, Leadership).
 - 7 I appreciate the time you have spent with me. We have talked about a lot of different topics that have helped you become the successful leader that you are. What three words of advice would you give to young Saudi women in Saudi Arabia that want to move up into significant leadership positions? (Open question).
 - 8 What advice would you give about their values to young women leaders who seek to achieve significant leadership positions?
 - 9 What have your values/belief driven you to do and what have they stopped you from doing? What values should young aspirational women leaders have to achieve significant leadership positions?
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At the end of the discussion for round two, there were interview seven questions created for round three. Two additional questions (8 & 9) were added to seek additional insights as to which values the female leaders would espouse most strongly to others, especially young women. The themes developed through round two are included in the parentheses of values one through six.

The specific themes appear more than once within the questions and in relation to other themes. The rationale was to try and understand how the themes might interrelate and affect one another. The occurrence of the themes in the questions is noted in Table 11. The 'X' indicates that a specific theme was integrated into a specific question.

Table 11: Themes noted within each of the first six questions

Theme	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
1. Leadership	X	X			X	X
2. Family	X		X			
3. Relationships	X	X	X			
4. Society and Equality		X	X		X	
5. Values and Ethics		X		X	X	
6. Goals and Characteristics				X		X
7. Personal Values				X		X

5.6.1 The Methodology of Analysis for Round Three

In the first two rounds, the content of the interviews was analysed to find common codes. Those codes were grouped into categories. Sub categories were designated under each category. The categories and their sub categories then provided the material for the seven themes that were examined in round three (Saldaña, 2007).

In the final round, since the themes have already been determined, the goal is to map the various concepts and ideas related to each theme as well as to look at any other metrics that might give additional meaning as to how the themes find context within the lives of the participants. The mapping of themes of concepts allows for the study of connections between the various concepts presented by the participants. Concept or theme mapping is similar to mind mapping, a process that allows individuals to explore and freely associate different ideas and thoughts. Concept mapping, however, differs from mind mapping in that it is typically a more highly structured, hierarchical arrangement of ideas and concepts where the intent is to show *connections or relationships* between those ideas and concepts (Davies, 2001). The goal is to not only understand each of the themes, as applied by these exemplar female leaders, but also to try and understand if there is a cross connectivity between the themes, especially in their real-world application. The cross connectivity is important to understand as these can be complex ideas and it is of interest to better understand how these leaders actually inculcate these concepts and ideas into their everyday lives.

The interviews for the final three interviewees were transcribed and then their responses to each question were compared, side-by-side. The three participants represent three different perspectives of women in leadership roles. These three women leaders were intentionally

selected because they represent three very different occupational perspectives. Each has achieved a high level of education and leadership responsibility within her chosen field.

Research Questions (Restated):

4. Which values can help women sustain or evolve their leadership skills?
5. Which social and cultural dynamics could enable or inhibit women in become leaders?
6. Which organisational factors are critical to the success of women seeking leadership roles in the KSA?

If the interviewees differed widely in their response to the nine questions in round three, then it would be unlikely that there are a shared set of values between accomplished female leaders in the KSA. However, if there are common threads between these three very different individuals, then there might be important information gained as to exactly what those threads might be. The three research questions above form the basis of this study, but were not asked directly of the participants.

The following section is a side-by-side comparison of the three participants to each of the nine questions posed to each. Responses were abbreviated for the sake of room, but none of the responses were changed. Any responses that provided personally identifiable information were removed.

5.7 Analysis of Questions

Analysis of Question #1

Question #1: Please discuss how responsibility, independence, and success might differ between men and women in leadership roles in Saudi Arabia (Leadership, Family, Relationships).

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

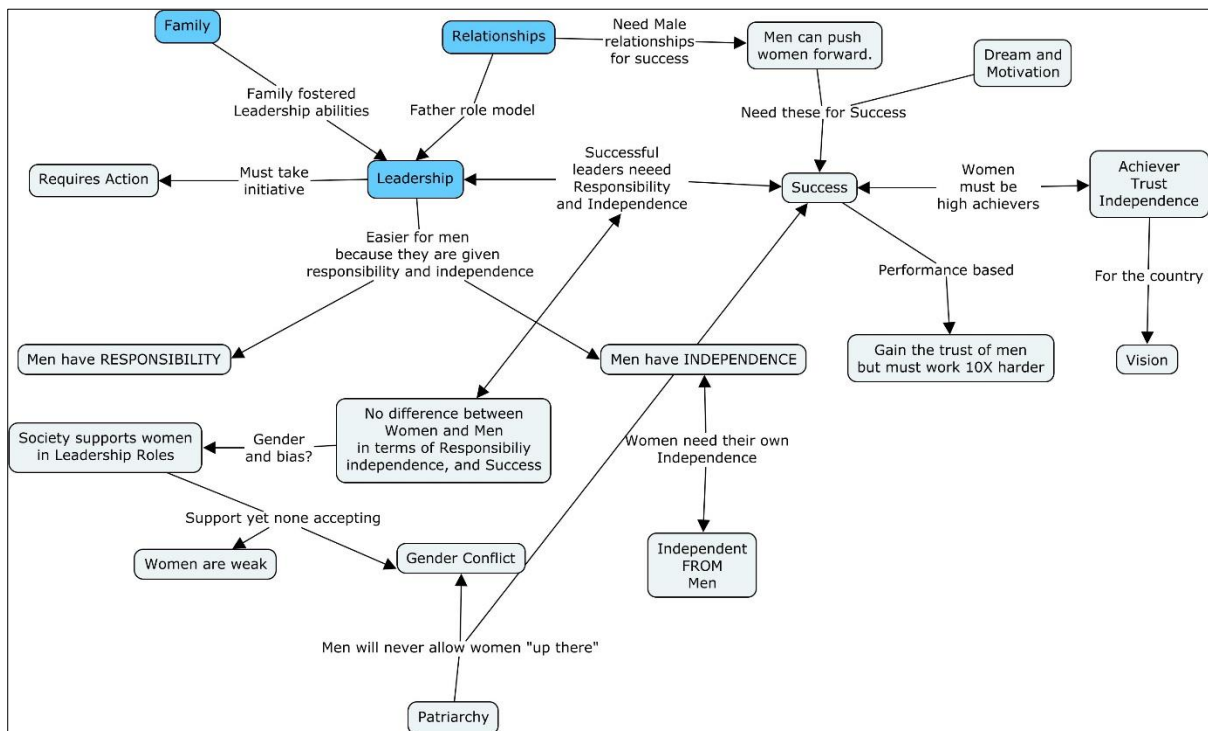
Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men have responsibility and independence, so it is easy for them to reach the leadership positions. • In my opinion, there is no difference between men and women in terms of responsibility, independence and success. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be independent from the man completely, it really depends a lot on two things; your character or personality and how hard of a worker you are. • They evaluate you based on your performance. In order to perform to that level that gains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Men] will never allow women to be up there [in male dominated professions] or as a leader because of culture. • You [must] have a vision of your country • I believe that women can multi-function [multitask].

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no difference between men and women in this issue. • Being a woman does not mean that I cannot succeed • When a person has these things, men and women are equal regarding responsibility, independence and success. • Any person must be active and [take the] initiative for achieving his/her goal. • In addition, if a person has these factors, regardless being a man or a woman, there will not be any difference between men • And women concerning responsibility, independence and success. • Our society supports women to reach leadership, but there are still some issues of gender bias in favour of men. • Men have more responsibility and independence than women so that they can achieve success more quickly. • My principle has been that men and women are equal concerning responsibility, success and independence. • If you have these things, you will have the sense of responsibility and the other persons will let you take this responsibility because of your hard work. • You also should have a dream and the motivation to achieve this dream when facing the difficulties • The people [in my] field laughed at me and told me that I was a weak woman who joined a field that was • Dominated by men. Although I had a doctoral degree, and was an expert, they did not accept me as a woman who wanted to work with them. • I had an internal will which I 	<p>the trust of the men, the woman must work ten times as hard as men. So, hard work is definitely important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have to be an achiever and this goes back to your character. The high achiever characteristics in any woman will [allow her] to survive working with men, and at the same time lend her trust to fly away to her space or authority and be independent from them • You must not always remind them that you are a woman and you have rights. I entered the boys club since the end of eighties. At that time most of the leading positions were limited to men. They could not accept me except some of them who pushed me forward. These persons made a big difference in my life. Thanks to men not women, I became famous 	<p>We can raise our kids, work and do everything in the same time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women can do well if they have talent, good knowledge and leadership in certain sectors, and do not think only in the political positions. This is that kills the country. The women are fighting to be in the Municipal Council or the Shura Council. It is just a replica of bureaucracy. What I want to see women in [are] small and medium enterprises where they [can] succeed. • [In the political positions] They quarrel and put themselves in a level that they lose their respect. Why somebody tell me you are a woman and I will not sit with you. • You should to be professional, try to work in the private sector and pass the knowledge and do not keep it [to] yourself because once you pass it and make a team, this is what you will spread and succeed. • There are women that think if they pass their knowledge [forward], then they will lose their strength. It is the opposite. When you teach somebody and see this person creating more, you will succeed
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<p>gained from my family. I grew up in a family that encouraged me to be a leader. My father was a leader and he made us leading persons when we were young.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person who has good luck and grow up in a family like that will be a leader • It depends on the characteristics of a person and whether he/she has a strong will and a dream or not, as well as the motivation to achieve this dream. • It is a responsibility if you have four things including a strong will, motivation, dream and implementation. The most important thing is that the will must stem from the inside of yourself and not from someone else. • If there is a will, a dream and a motivation to achieve your goal, there is no difference at all [as to gender]. 		
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The excerpts noted above taken from the first question and including all three participants were then mapped by the themes targeted by the question, and subthemes were then connected to the themes. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the conceptual map of the first question. Themes and concepts are used as synonyms.

Figure 1: Conceptual Map of Question 1: Primary themes in blue.

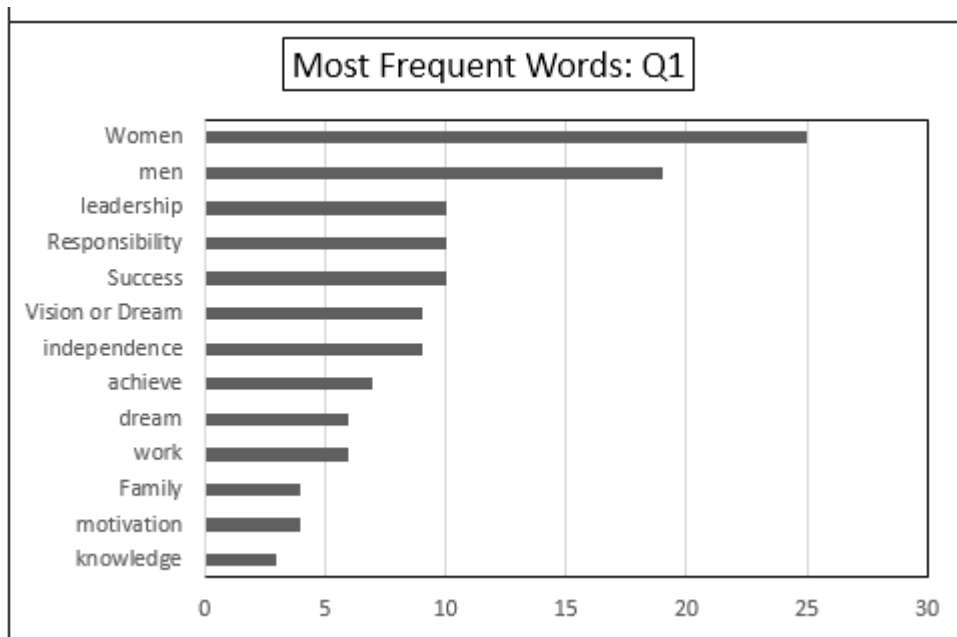


Each question asked of the interviewees had a specific intent. However, while the questions were shaped to a specific purpose, the comments by the participants may have added new topics, opinions, or ideas. These concepts or subthemes help understand how these complex ideas connect to one another.

The first interview question was initially focused on differences between men and women leaders in Saudi Arabia as those differences might relate to *responsibility, independence, and success*. At times, the background of the individual participants might shape responses, but this does not seem to be a significant issue as the discussions were not work related.

In looking for frequency of topics in Figure 2, the most commonly used phrases dealt with issues, differences, or lack of *differences between men and women*. Following is a frequency chart of words used by all the participants for Question 1, where frequencies less than three are not included.

Figure 2 Word frequencies of the responses for Question 1



The frequency of words can be interesting, but the frequencies do not show the context in which the words were used. However, if a word phrase frequency counter is used, then the most common phrases may give a better picture of how the words are being used. For example, the most common phrases referred to gender issues. “There is no difference between men and women” (N=4); In terms of responsibility, independence, and success, there is “no difference between men and women in terms of these” (N=4); and Men have these more (N=2). Achievement or achieving used in relation to vision or dream was used six times.

The concept map may provide the best way to understand not only the concepts, but the interrelationships between the themes and subthemes. Again, there were three main themes built into this question (Family, Relationships, and Leadership), but the concept map shows a predominance of issues between men and women in terms of all three themes. While the participants consistently stated that there is no difference between men and women, they also noted that men have easier access to leadership positions and to more responsible positions.

Question #1 and the Research Questions

Question #1 dealt with the themes of Leadership, Family, and Relationships, and relates directly to research questions (RQ) 1 and 2. The issue of values in RQ1, while not a theme specifically addressed in this question, still appear as the discussion of leadership

demonstrates the need for independence. Independence is also a social and cultural dynamic that demonstrates strong polar opposites related to RQ2.

Analysis of Question #2

Question #2: The research related to female leaders suggests that cultural bias against women leaders make it difficult for women to advance above certain levels or into male dominated professions. How did you deal with possible issues of gender bias both from your superiors as well as those you supervise? (Leadership, Society and Equality, Relationships, Values and Ethics).

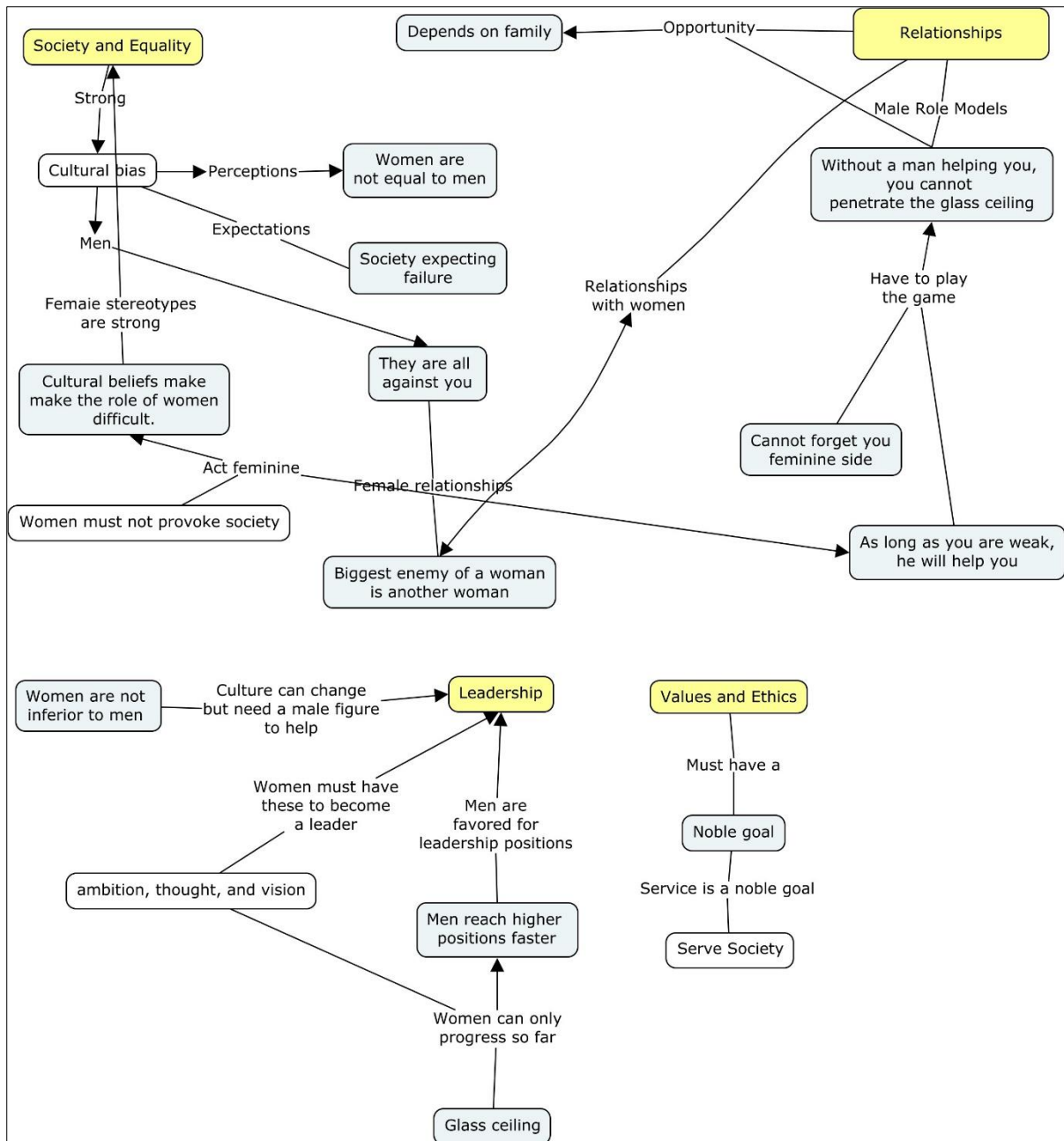
Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the Arab societies have a cultural bias. Therefore, it depends on my ambition, thought and vision. • Women are not all equal. In accordance with the customs and traditions of their society, • They must not provoke their society. Instead, they can make the society support them. • Believe that women are on the way to reach these positions [e.g. minister or ambassador]. • To reach the position of president, this is not our responsibility because this is due to the thought of our country and the existing customs and traditions. However, I think our country is on the right track concerning this issue. • The issue is not a man and a woman. All of us serve our country. There is a cultural ideology and we do not deny it. The societies have different classes • We can set the culture of our society. “Women who do not have a strong will and they need help cannot be leaders.” On the contrary, those who have ambition, strong will and the social goals to serve their society in general, and not just personal goals, will get high positions. • If you have a noble goal, you will become a leader. • You can be a leader if you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culturally, they are all against you. • In the administration field, we have a term called the Glass Ceiling. Man and woman have the glass ceiling, but it is lower in women than men. • A man can reach higher positions faster than a woman. • Without the man helping you, you cannot be pulled or penetrate through the glass ceiling. • The day we start to see women shatter this glass ceiling, it will not up to women but with the help of man. • You have to know how to play this game and be really very keen and analytical to have that eye to know from all the leading men surrounding you the one who is ready to help you. The biggest enemy of a woman is another woman not a man. Other than the cultural bias that the man has, if you can play the game well, come out of the social stereotype and be strong, hard worker, high achiever and not a threat, he will actually help and push you. • I understood the [rules] of the game. If you know these [rules], you will expand the results and the grey area. Inside the grey area, you do not know who the leader is and who the follower is. That is where you play your game and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural barriers exist, but it depends on you and your family. • Concerning the society, they killed me in the back. • The society was expecting my failure every day. • We just fight it like cancer which we cannot fight, but if you do something you value like business and you do not care about your gender. • People do not trust anybody [with] their money. When it comes to money, it is related to the soul. • Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice.

<p>respect the culture of the society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a leader, I mustn't provoke my society through my appearance or words. • Leadership is gained by knowing how to deal with people. • You must follow the traditions in the society so that you can get what you want, and then you gain the satisfaction of the society. • Women are not inferior to men regarding their mind and both of them have the ability to learn. • On the contrary, women are accurate and follow all the details in the practical life. They sometimes have success more than men in certain fields. • Their [cultural beliefs] make the role of women difficult, but women who do not have ambition are different from the leading women who have to go beyond this thought. To be a female leader, you must be a distinct woman who can face a lot of challenges and difficulties 	<p>start to lead without announcing that you are the leader. You achieve your dreams, goals, plans, ideas and work. I am a goal oriented no matter who achieve this goal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The man does not know how to play in the grey area. They just know the black and white. • It is a man's world and let's face it. Man does not resort to woman unless he really needs to her. • I must not deal like a man and forget my feminist side because they will not accept me and I will lose everything. You must remain the woman for him because as long as you are weak, he will help you and I want the help. 	
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The responses above taken from the second question and including all three participants were then mapped by the themes targeted by the question, and subthemes were then connected to the themes. Figure 3 below is a graphic representation of the conceptual map of the second question.

Figure 3: Conceptual Map of Question 2: Primary themes are in yellow



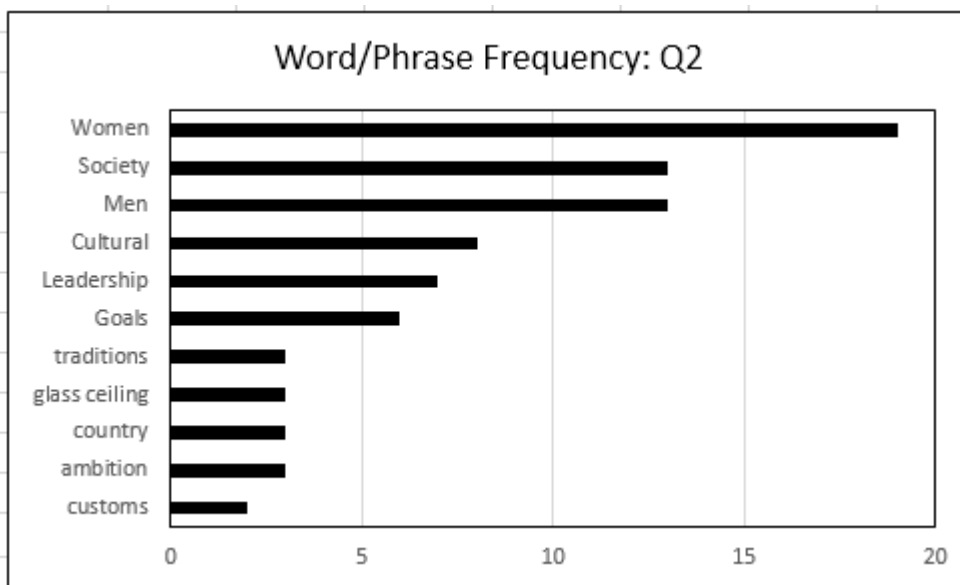
This question was focused on four themes: society and equality, relationships, leadership, and values and ethics. Even the themes themselves are complex constructs. While the theme ‘Values and Ethics’ did not elicit a large number of responses, the other three did, and the complexity of these themes are easy to visualize in Figure 3.

When examining the concept map, we see that the map is essentially cut into two halves. The top half shows the themes of Society and Equality and Relationships. There are strong connections between these two themes, especially in the relationships of women to other women.

The bottom half of the concept map focuses on leadership, but the comments are typically gender based, so it would be easy to draw another connection back to Society and Equality.

If the words themselves are examined, there are many uses and variations of gender phrases. Figure 4 provides one perspective of the words and phrases most commonly noted in the responses to question #2. Uses of the word 'woman' or 'women' was used most often, followed by 'society' and 'men.' The next step is to look at how these are presented in the concept map.

Figure 4: Frequency of words and phrases in responses to Question 2



Question #2 and the Research Questions

Question #2 dealt with the themes of Leadership, Relationship, Society and Equality, and Values and Ethics. These four themes all directly relate to RQs 1 and 2. However, the complexity and the interconnectedness between the themes of Society and Equality and Relationships strongly addresses RQ2, providing a clearer picture of the social and cultural dynamics involved around women striving to become leaders.

Analysis of Question #3

Q3: Some have described the role of female leaders as more complex than that of their male counterparts because of the additional female roles related to family. Would you please describe any differences between the familial responsibilities of male leaders and female

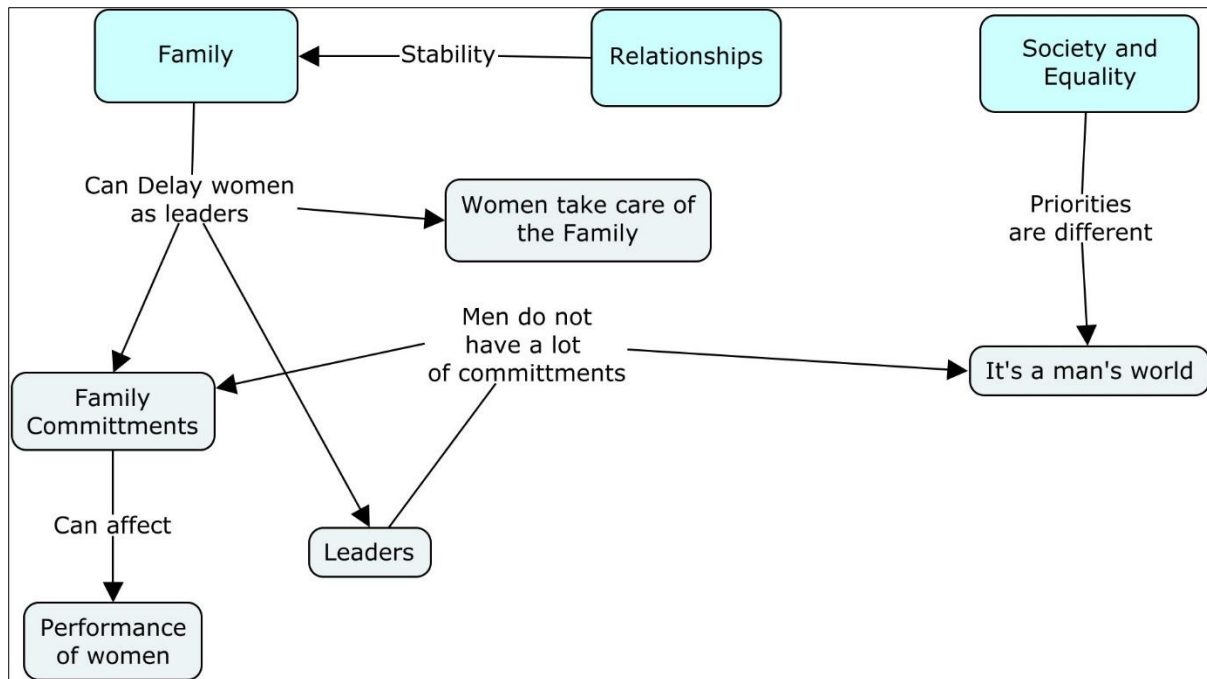
leaders and how you have dealt with these additional responsibilities? (Family, Relationships, Society and Equality).

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family commitments can delay the role of women as leaders. This is true because men do not have a lot of commitments. • In our society, women are responsible for their family and a lot of social affairs. • The family relations it is considered an addition that provides you with stability. • This role affects women concerning time, health and some of the social events. • I set my priorities every morning and the family relations take some time, but I do not let anything stop my work. • I can say that the family, society and relationships have can affect us, but they are not obstacles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family circumstances affect the woman's performance. When my mother suffered from Alzheimer's, I left my work and social life to take care of her. If I am a man, I would not do that because it is not his responsibility. • In the human societies, it is expected that woman takes care of her family and not the man who always keep his job and role outside. • It is a man's world. Woman is the care giver. • Women always have social and family restrictions. • There are societal drawbacks because there are roles that are expected from you. • The woman role as a mother, wife or a daughter takes a priority. • Women can be leaders if the situations in work and house are appropriate. There must not be someone at work who downgrades your value or a system that downgrades your efforts. There must be someone at home who encourages you because the family is the priority for any woman. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I did my PhD while I was raising my three kids alone. My husband was working, so I had to take them to school. Priority goes to my kids and work. I think women can do this much more than men. If you ask a man to care about three kids and do PhD, he cannot do this. There is very limited number of men that can do so. I think women are more entitled to do both functions. • Sometimes you have to do something and you have to be a man. • As a mother, I am the one who takes care of my kids by teaching them and making sure that everything is all right concerning their affairs. I am the one who shares their activities. I also have a husband who is very passive. I am dealing all this and I am leading employees. I am doing the social networking to do my business. I am travelling and at the same time I am taking care of my kids when I am abroad. When my husband travels, he frees his mind for his business. This happens with all the Saudi women.

The responses above taken from the third question and including all three participants were then mapped by the themes targeted by the question, and subthemes were then connected to the themes. Several different images that follow are used to gain a better understanding of the connectivity of the themes and subthemes to the lives of the participants.

The themes that were the focus for the third question were Family, Relationships, Society and Equality. Word counts and phrase counts can offer some quantification of the emphasis on specific topics by the audience. Sometimes a word cloud can also offer a dramatic picture of



The conceptual map for question #3 is less complex than that for the first two questions. Possible reasons for that will be discussed in chapter five. Three themes were the focus: Family, Relationships, and Society and Equality. The question itself specifically included the term ‘familiar responsibility,’ so responses also had the same focus. It was clear from the responses that women perceive themselves as the primary care givers, that this is not a man’s job, and that this is also the societal expectation.

Question #3 and the Research Questions

Question #3, which focused upon family, relationships, and society and equality directly addressed RQ2. The dynamics of the family affecting perceptions of women as leadership, plus stability in relationships was clear. The role of the woman as the caretaker of the family, a potentially important dynamic, was clearly visualized in these three.

Analysis of Question #4

Question #4: We each have many values that make us both interesting and individuals. What are the values that helped you become a successful leader? Are they the same values that sustain you as an effective female leader or have they changed as you matured into your leadership role? (Goals and Characteristics, Personal Values, Values and Ethics).

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My loyalty to the principles and goals that I fought to reach. • I am very sincere concerning my work and I do not accept failure. • I am also honest. • [My values] have increased. • I am an ambitious person who has a limitless ambition. • internal motivation and emotional things that make me serve my society • Serving the society is a priority. • I am a simple, friendly and inspiring person. • I am also strict and strong in my work • I do not care about the position of the person who I deal with when doing anything for the benefit of my country. • I can say that I am a stubborn person. • When I face problems, I do not give up working. • Although I am simple and kind, I am very strict in my work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My value system stems from the past. • I was raised in a society where everyone had the right to correct my behaviour and mistakes. • I was raised according to this value system [uncles, grandfather]. • Adults can apologize for doing something wrong, therefore the young must apologize when they do something wrong. • This behaviour [grandfather] taught me that I must give charity to the needy and I must be honest, sincere and open-minded towards other people • My family affected me a lot whether men or women. • This taught me to love doing good things for others, tolerance and acceptance of others. • [The most important value] Loyalty. Do your work with passion? If you do not love your workplace or you want only the prestige, you will not succeed in your work • You have to have knowledge, ability, passion, desire and loyalty in order to succeed in your work as a leader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My father was my role model in this. • my father always said that I mustn't deal with money which is not allowed by the Islamic law • . My three ethics are wealth creation, job creation and being friendly to the environment. • I believe also in collaboration and team work. • I honestly believe that a person, no matter how talented and intelligent he is, cannot do successful things alone.

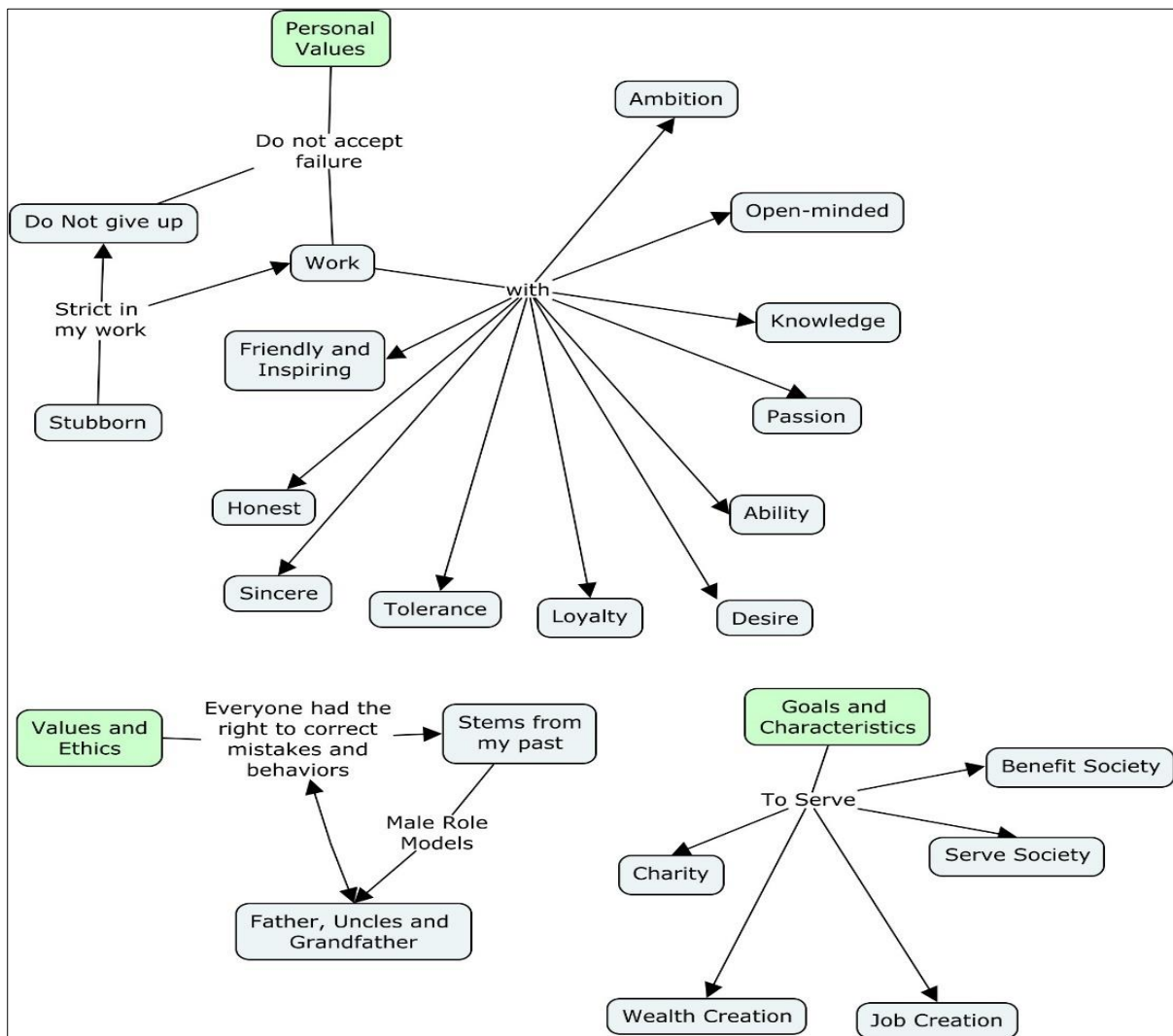
The responses above were then mapped by the themes targeted by the question, and subthemes were then connected to the themes. Several different images that follow are used to gain a better understanding of the connectivity of the themes and subthemes to the lives of the participants. The themes that were the focus for Question 4 were Goals and Characteristics, Personal Values, Values and Ethics.

Figure 8: Frequency of the most common phrases for Question 4

No of times	Phrase
3	I do not
2	succeed in your [work]
2	in your work
2	in my work
2	I was raised
2	I am very
2	I am also
2	I am a

The question asked was specifically focused on leadership, and the response focus on being able to succeed as a leader and the values given to these women by others. In this example, the concept map, Figure 9, can provide better connective information.

Figure 9: Conceptual Map of Question 4: Primary themes in green



The focus is on values and there are 11 values espoused related directly to work. The origins of values appear to be from male role models, although not the husband. Values were developmental as were goals and characteristics focused on serving society.

Question #4 and the Research Questions

The fourth interview question delved into the thematic areas of values and ethics, goals and characteristics, and personal values. All three of these most directly focus on RQ1, related to which values can help women sustain or evolve their leadership skills. Over a dozen specific values were enumerated related to work and personal characteristics, all of which could also be considered as strong values that might help sustain women in leadership roles.

Analysis of Question #5

Question #5: Within the organization in which you currently work or one in which you recently worked, can you describe specific processes or factors that impede your ability to be a successful leader? Are there specific processes or factors that enhance your ability to be a successful leader? (Society and Equality, Values, Leadership).

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My principle has been that men and women are equal <i>concerning responsibility, success, and independence.</i> This principle is also based on that <i>powers are taken and they are not given.</i> • It is a responsibility if you have four things including <i>a strong will, motivation, dream and implementation.</i> • The most important thing is that the will must <i>stem from the inside of yourself and not from someone else.</i> • If you have these things, you will have the <i>sense of responsibility</i> and the other persons will let you take this responsibility <i>because of your hard work.</i> • When I joined this [organisation], I was an outsider. But when [the male leader] observed my work and achievement, he gave me the responsibility and I took this responsibility. • Regarding independence, I built my own personality myself and I was independent but according to the customs and traditions of the [organisation], I <i>let my work and achievements talk about me.</i> • <i>Success stems from the inside of oneself</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you have to be knowledgeable because knowledge makes you an achiever • your personality must be strong enough in order to deal properly with people • You have to be hard worker. • You have to have passion and loyalty. • you must not be a threat to anyone • We have to protect each other in order to build a team • You must not challenge the man and be a threat to him • Working with men is sometimes tricky • If they [men] hear the rumours and do not check out these rumours, they will make you fail. 90% of these rumours come out of women. • The tools used by men and women against you are different. I can fight against the weapons of men because they are clear. Men argue with you and you can discuss with them professionally. But women use under belt weapons. This can destroy you in our society because it harms your reputation. This may be due to position or power without position. This means a woman who has no position can control the place as if she is the manager. In this case, I prefer to withdraw. My withdrawal from 90% of positions was due to women. My wars were with women and men supported me. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen carefully to what [employees] say. They are the ones who teach you how to put the strategy • You have to respect even the most junior staff. • Even the junior staff can knock [on] my door and come [in], but they know that there are limits and they do not come to me unless there is something that is really important

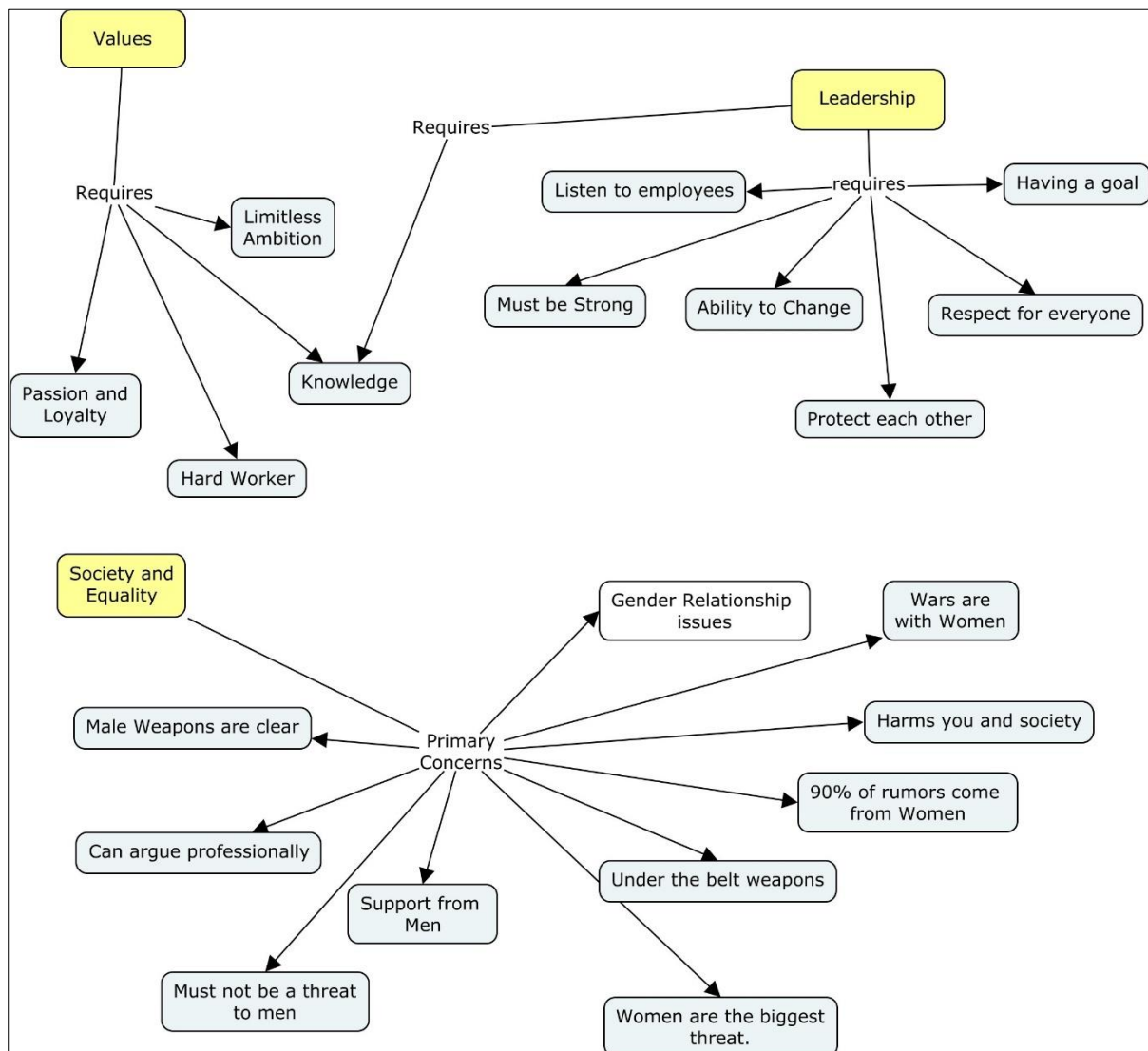
The responses above taken from the fifth question and, including all three participants, were then mapped by the themes targeted by the question, and subthemes were then connected to the themes. Several different images that follow are used to gain a better understanding of the connectivity of the themes and subthemes to the lives of the participants. The themes that were the focus for question #5 were Society and Equality, Values, and Leadership.

Figure 10: Phrase frequency for common responses in Question 5

6	have to	2	must not
5	you have	2	must be
4	to be	2	junior staff
3	to change	2	in order
2	<u>you must</u>	2	even the
2	you are	2	due to
2	threat to	2	do not
2	they are	2	be strong
2	these rumors	2	be a
2	order to	2	a threat

The phrases most commonly used for question #5 are dominated by one interviewee. The three perspectives to this question provide differing and interesting information, and it is of some interest to note the strong emphasis on many of the comments.

Figure 11: Conceptual Map of Question 5: Primary themes in yellow



The concept map for Question 5 as represented above in Figure 11 appears to be well balanced, representing the three operative themes. There is a connection between leadership and values. The theme of society and equality reflects strong gender perceptions and equality seems to be a missing aspect. Relationships between female leaders and their counterparts seems to be the biggest challenge, whereas support from men is essential.

Question #5 and the Research Questions

Of all the research questions, Question 5 most directly addresses RQ3 and the organisational factors that are critical for the success of women who seek positions of leadership, specifically within the KSA. However, when considering organizational factors, these cannot be understood without understanding the dynamics involved, so RQ2 is also inherently

intertwined within this question. In addition, those values related to work also provide another connection to RQ1.

Analysis of Question #6

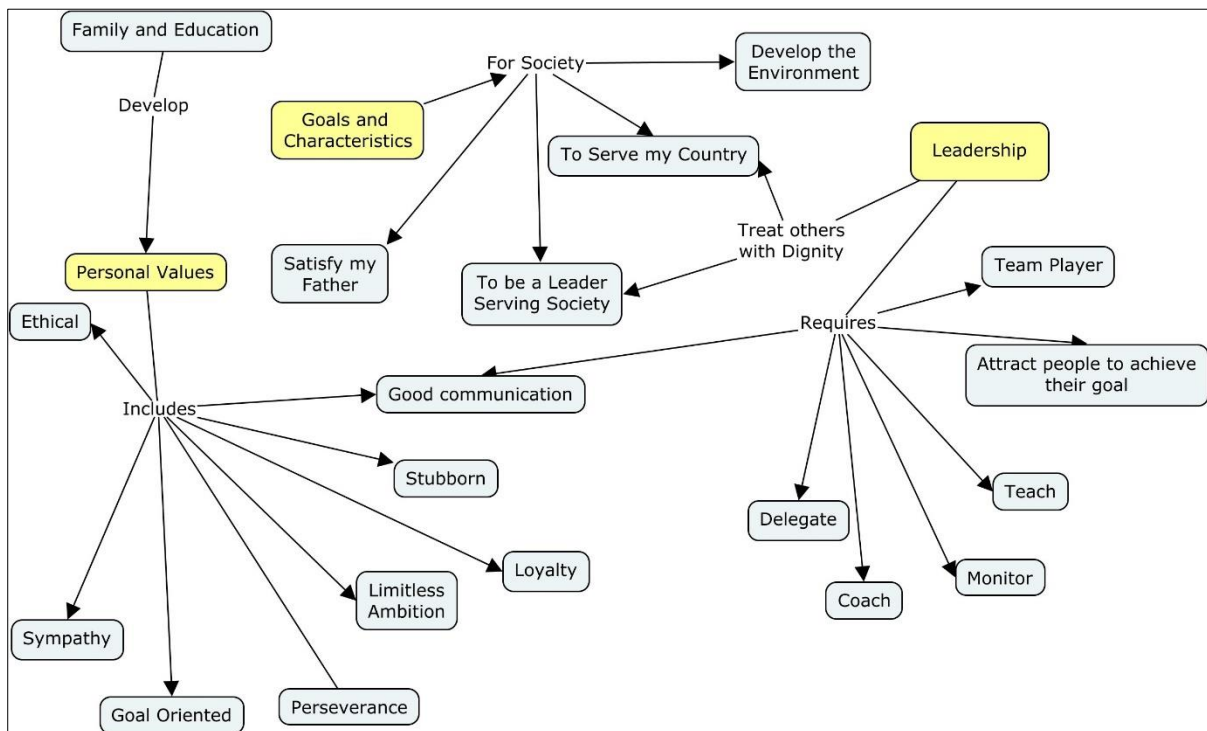
Question #6: Of all the questions we have discussed, what three goals and characteristics stand out to you as the most important that have allowed you to become an effective leader? (Personal Goals and Characteristics, Leadership).

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perseverance • loyalty • stubbornness • limitless ambition • sympathy • My main goal is to serve my country • My goal has been to be a leader for serving the society since I was a little girl because this makes me happy • The second goal is to develop the environment • My goal was to get a doctorate degree to make my father happy • My goal was to become a professor to serve my country and satisfy my father. • A true leader is the one who has the ability to deal with people and attract them to achieve his/her goal • There are some characteristics that need to be developed in order to reach excellence. These characteristics are not inherited. Family and education have a major role in this respect. • If mothers pay attention to their children and develop their talents during their childhood, our society will be different. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a very good communicator • I am stubborn or tenacious until I reach my goal and you may consider it as defect, but I think it is an advantage • I am a team player and those persons, who work with me, are comfortable because I delegate, teach, coach and monitor • All my life, I am very much goal oriented • I am very diligent and ambitious and I can achieve what I want. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have the communication skills and they are very important • My first goal is to add value to people and do what Allah wants me to do and help each other and create options and dignity • I can give people money as a handout, but I want to create jobs for them so they can work and get money with dignity • I really care about people, ethical business and Islamic financing. • Wealth creation, job creation and being friendly to the environment. • I have communication skills and I can pass my knowledge and ideas to others as much as I can • I do not give up. • I love people very much and I want them to be happy.

The responses above taken from question #6 were then mapped by the themes targeted by the question, and subthemes were then connected to the themes. Several different images that follow are used to gain a better understanding of the connectivity of the themes and

Figure 13: Conceptual Map of Question 6: Primary themes in yellow



The concept map shown in Figure 13 shows a balance and an interconnectivity between the three themes. Very specific values and goals and characteristics were listed as were qualities of leadership. These three were connected primarily through the quality of good communication and desires to help the environment and serve the country and society in general.

Question #6 and the Research Questions

The themes specifically address in question #6 were leadership, goals and characteristics, and personal values. These specifically address RQ1 related to those values that help sustain or evolve women in leadership roles. There are some aspects as seen in the conceptual map that suggest dynamics related to RQ2, specifically societal issues.

Analysis of Question #7

Question #7: I appreciate the time you have spent with me. We have talked about a lot of different topics that have helped you become the successful leader that you are. What three words of advice would you give to young Saudi women in Saudi Arabia that want to move up into significant leadership positions? (Open question).

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

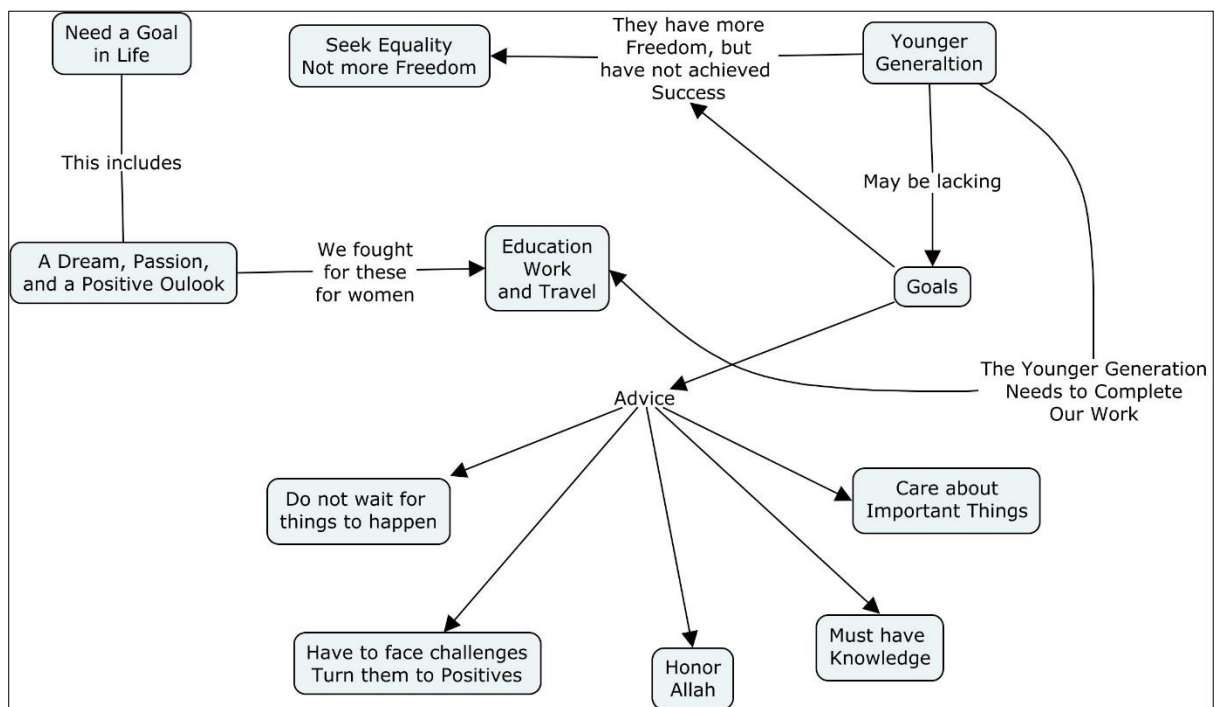
Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a goal in life. There must be a dream to achieve this goal, then the passion for its implementation • have a positive view because the positive person can overcome obstacles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new generation does not know what they want or the issues that they must call for. • I advise them [young Saudi women] to be cause oriented. • This generation has freedom more than our generation, but they have not achieved anything important. • I want equality and not more freedom. • My generation made gains more than this generation. • We fought for education, work and travel for women and I want the new generation to complete this achievement. • When we asked the university female students about the achievement of Saudi women, there was silence. • We asked them about a role model succeeded in achieving something they consider a benefit to them. Two or three of them replied with none and that the Saudi women have not achieved anything. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I always say to women not to wait the things to happen. • You are the one who makes the things happen. • You have a society that undermines your capacity. • You should make things on your way and prove to them that things are happening. Then they will respect you. • You have to obtain this right. You have to face challenges and turn them to positives. This is very important. • They should also care about important things and not little problems. • They should not do anything without full knowledge because they will fail and make others fail as well. • You should make knowledge-based business. • When people see you talking with sense, depth and knowledge, they will definitely respect you and move the barriers they put in your way. • The most important thing is to deal with Allah not humans.

Unlike the previous questions, this question did not have one of the designated themes associated with it. The question is looking for ‘words of advice’ from the participants. The suggestion is that words of advice would equate to positive values help by the interviewees.

In reviewing word counts and phrase frequency, there are no words or phrases that stand out with the exception of ‘new generation’ or just ‘generation.’ No frequency chart was created as all of these comments came from one participant and was not clearly a shared experience.

There were no primary themes included within this question. The focus is on what three words of advice would you give to young Saudi women in Saudi Arabia that want to move up into significant leadership positions?

Figure 14: Conceptual Map of Question 7



The conceptual map for question #7 as represented in Figure #15 offers positive goals, according to the participants, related to knowledge seeking and education, and also emphasizes the need to ‘work’ for your dream. One participant was clear in her beliefs about the differences between the current (‘new’) generation and her own generation.

Question #7 and the Research Questions

Question #7 deals primarily with values and goals and therefore connects most strongly with RQ1. There is also some connection to RQ2 and RQ3 as the discussion around the younger generation, their goals, and their perspectives on education and work. The concern that the younger generation may not be fighting for those values which are now being seen in the organization are now stated as a concern.

Analysis of Question #8

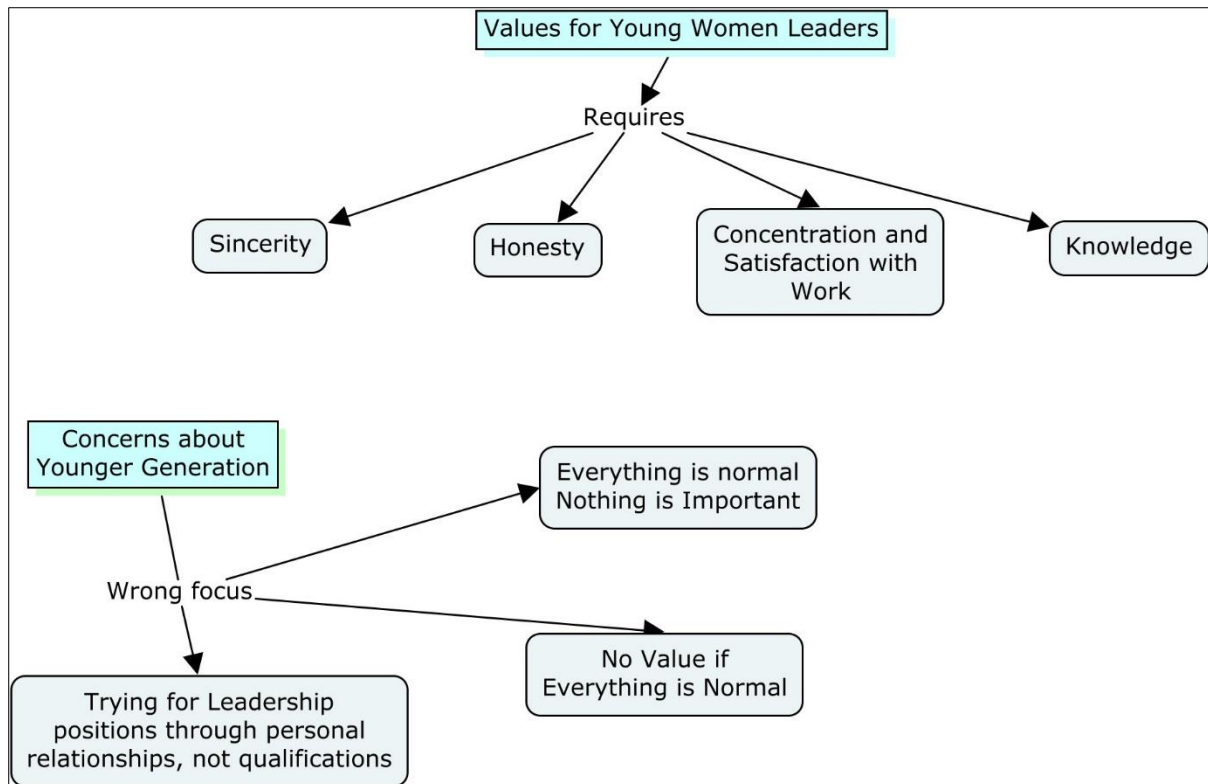
Question #8: What advice would you give about their values to young women leaders who seek to achieve significant leadership positions?

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sincerity and honesty for work because these values distinguish any work and make it continuous. • There must be also concentration and satisfaction with their work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This generation considers everything normal and nothing seems to be important. • If everything is normal, there will be no value. • There are things that are acceptable and things that are unacceptable. • When a female student talks with me impolitely and considers this normal, this means that there is no value. • We must consider this generation unusual and teach them how to know the right and the wrong. • They are so hungry of knowledge, understanding and knowing the right way. • They do not refuse to learn, but they are ignorant because of education. • The home has no room for talking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately, lots of them are trying to have this position by relations and not really by their capacity or qualifications. • If you reach this position and you are not qualified for it, you will fail. • You should have knowledge, experience and communication with people surrounding you. • You should manage your relationships in a professional way. • You should not make only friendships because I might not be your friend, but I can be a very good business partner with you.

Question #8 was similar to question #7, but was specifically focused on suggested values for young women leaders who desired positions of leadership. There were a number of values such as sincerity and honesty, but no consensus. As with the previous question, one of the participants focused more on a more negative perspective of the younger generation, so within the few works within this interview question, there are no strong anchor points.

Figure 15: Conceptual Map of Question 8



There were no primary themes included within this question. This is a follow-up to question #7, with a more specific focus on values. As previously noted, the thematic or conceptual map shows lack of a strong consensus between the interview participants. Four values were suggested. An equal amount of conversation was focused on the “wrong focus” of the younger generation.

Question #8 and the Research Questions

The intent of question #8 was to understand the perceptions of the interviewees as related to the values for young women aspiring to roles of leadership. This touches primarily on RQ1, but also slightly on RQ3, as these values also related to organizational factors. Values such as satisfaction with work, knowledge, and trying to use personal relationships to advance rather than personal qualifications definitely connects to RQ3.

Analysis of Question #9

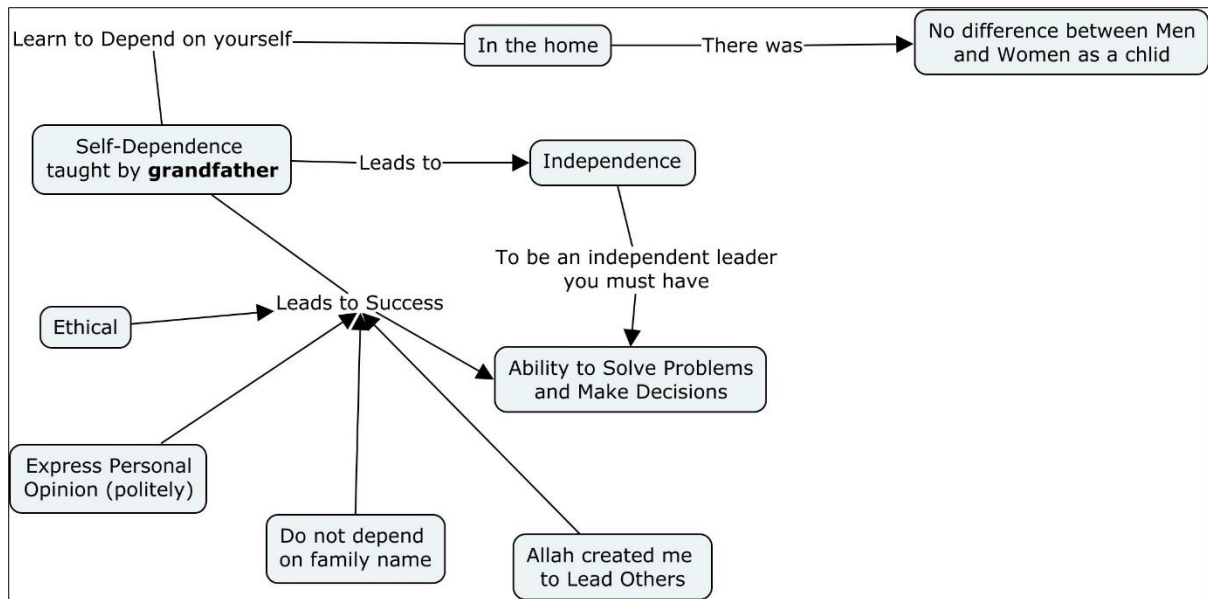
Question #9: What have your values/belief driven you to do and what have they stopped you from doing? What values should young aspirational women leaders have to achieve significant leadership positions?

Following are excerpts from the three interviews:

Interview #1	Interview #2	Interview #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As I have mentioned, I sometimes disagreed with important persons and I told them that clearly. This is my personality. My voice is louder than men in meetings because I express my thought and they should understand that I am equal to them in meetings. This does not mean that I behave badly. On the contrary, I behave in a very gentle manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We were brought up in a big house and there was not the mentality of the difference between man and woman. • When my cousin asked his mother to get him food, my grandfather told him that he must get it himself. This taught us self-dependence and equality because there is no difference between men and women. • If I want something, I should seek to achieve it and do not wait until it comes to me. • I did not depend on my family's name to reach my position. • If I had a problem and asked them to solve it, they told me that I have to depend on myself. • I knew later that they had been following the problem without appearing in the image. I thought they left me alone and they did not want to help me, but they wanted to teach me independence and the ability to solve problems and make decisions. • When I wanted them to help me choose my academic specialization, they did not help me and left me to depend on myself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My values made me really make a combination of a business and social contribution. • I did not do business for the sake of business. • As you notice all my talk is about business because this is my life and my way of living. • I believe that Allah created me as a human to facilitate for others as a leader. • As a leader, you should facilitate and not dictate. • The value that stopped me from doing this is that I cannot accept what is against the Islamic law. • This value stopped me from making a lot of money. • I have ethics and it is no matter how much you will give me. I cannot do something wrong. • It is important to really apply this value because in the business world it is easy to have money, but the fear of Allah has stopped me from doing this.

Question #9, which was the last of the interview questions, was used to bring the focus back to the participants rather than a younger generation. The goal was to find common values or beliefs that either helped them move forward in their careers or possibly worked as a road block.

Looking at the word cloud (Figure 16), some of these responses presented a different picture than previously noted. 'Business' makes its first prominent appearance. Even so, while the most frequently present single word in the interviews, it was only used five times and was the



There were no primary themes included within this question. This is another follow-up of values. The conceptual map for question #9 is one of the simpler maps. The map is almost a condensed version of the earlier thematic maps. Independence and the ability to feel comfortable depending on one's self was a value learned in the home and was taught by a male role model. The need to make it on your own talents while remaining ethical seems to be a key to this question.

Question #9 and the Research Questions

The final question directly connects with RQ1, seeking to understand personal values that might lead to success. There is also some connectivity with RQ2 as the role of societal (specifically family relationships) have a formative effect. There is also a reflection of those characteristics related to organizational factors (RQ3) such as not depending on the family name, the ability to solve problems and make good decisions.

The three research questions were as follows:

Research Questions

1. Which values can help women sustain or evolve their leadership skills?
2. Which social and cultural dynamics could enable or inhibit women in become leaders?
3. Which organisational factors are critical to the success of women seeking leadership roles in the KSA?

Regarding the interest in values that might help women to move into leadership positions, a list from the literature was included in Table 1. However, as the questions progressed, the complexity of values and their interrelationships with the other research questions increased. Values were specifically addressed by questions 2, 4, and 5, but there are aspects apparent in all the other conceptual maps.

The same is true for the second research question about the social and cultural dynamics. The strong theme of patriarchy, a central aspect of the KSA, brings family, relationships, and leadership, as well as goals and characteristics into a web of connections that can be seen in virtually all the concept maps.

Research question #3 about organizational factors was more focused on Question 5 (see Figure 11). However, even though this question was focused on organizational factors, connections to values, leadership, and equality are present. The discussion chapter will be used to discuss the issues of connectivity further.

Summary to the Analysis

A total of three rounds of interviews were conducted with a total of 11 participants. There were three in the first round, five in the second, and three in the last round. In the first round, an exploration of possible values, beliefs, goals, and ideas was started with the object of refining a consistent set of themes. That was completed at the end of round two, and then a set of seven questions (expanded later to nine), were designed to explore deeper into the infrastructure of the themes, their application in real life to the participants, and their significance to these female leaders in particular and to women leaders in Saudi Arabia in particular.

The last round provided a deeper form of analysis, relying most heavily on conceptual or thematic mapping of the key points abstracted from the interviews. Word clouds, word counts, and phrase counting were sometimes used if they offered additional perspectives on the analysis of the interviews.

In the discussion chapter that follows, each round will be considered and the final round of three interviews will be the basis of comparisons within each question, across the questions as a whole related to the various themes, and comparisons to current literature on these topics.

Chapter 6 Discussion of Interview Results

6.1 Round Two: Thematic Discussion

The text for each individual was submitted for content analysis separately. The software used was QDA Miner, and QDA Miner included WordStat, a text analysis tool. The process works in the following manner. First, the text is examined using WordStat. WordStat allows the researcher to look for repetitive words or phrases, and the researcher can adjust the length of the search strings. With the large amount of text available, it was possible to extend the length of the string search to find longer phrases, which then became the codes to be used in the data reduction.

Through the process of inductive reasoning, codes were added together into categories. Narrative coding, as described by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) was used. Narrative coding offers more than simple word counts and categorization. The goal of the research is to attach the meaning of the narrative to the codes through inductive reasoning, and from that, create meaningful categories and subcategories and will lead to themes that are more powerful. Once the categories were established within QDA miner, then the researcher associated subcategories within each category. By assigning subcategories to specific categories, rich themes can then be developed.

This process was followed for each of the five participants individually. Then the analysis was refocused on each question, rather than on each participant. Results were cross-tabulated and each question was examined for frequency of responses. For example, one participant might not talk about a specific issue, while another might discuss the same topic extensively. The primary goal was to see which responses were considered the most relevant to all the participants. By associating relatively equal interests by all participants to specific questions and responses, the narrative coding became easier, and the development of themes was therefore also easier.

Themes for Round Two

Using the process of narrative coding and looking and evaluating where the participants place their primary emphasis, the themes change and consolidate in this first round. The total primary themes now are four. Family as a theme becomes integrated into sections of each of the remaining four themes. The same is true for Society and Equality. The thematic framework becomes deeper. The theme of Value and Ethics from the pilot study is now just values, and incorporates much of the family theme. Table 12 illustrates the new thematic structure.

Table 12: Four Themes with Subthemes of First Round Interviews

1. Relationships	2. Values	3. Self-Confidence	4. Society and Culture
1.1. With Women	2.1. Education	3.1. Success	4.1. The role of women
1.1.1. Female Leaders	2.1.1. Desire to Achieve	3.2 Independence	4.2. Equality
1.1.1.1. Network	2.1.1.1 Hard work		
1.1.1.1.1. Social Network		3.3. Responsibility	4.3. Prejudice against women
	2.2. Family		
1.2. With Men	2.2.1. Work Family Balance	3.4. Achieving Goals	4.4. Government support
1.2.1. Father			
1.2.2. Male Colleagues			
1.3. Influential Leaders			
1.3.1. Managers			

6.1.1 Relationships

Relationships have been a consistent theme through the pilot study and round one. Relationships are seen around gender and influence. The gender issues have been discussed previously in the literature. The comments by Metcalfe (2008) are interesting as they harmonize with comments from the participants. Metcalfe emphasized that even on the global stage, the advancement of women is limited, primarily due to patriarchal cultures and strong cultural values that define gender roles. Similarly, in their study of women leaders in

twenty-six countries, Lyness and Judiesch (2014) note that gendered power regimes and patriarchal values feature consistently across the countries.

1.1 With Women

I also wanted to prove myself before the women, both those who stood by me and those who were against me. I had to prove myself before superiors and the whole world. I wanted to prove that [name removed] was able to occupy this position. (P1)

We should choose these women so that we can ensure that 90% of them can be leaders in the future. When we choose those women, we must work to enable them to be leaders through self-development, education, professional development and training in the areas of leadership. After we finish this stage, we put them in the positions and give them a test period until they gradually reach the leadership positions (P2).

I work and do my best to support the advancement of women (P1)

1.1.1 With Female Leaders

The difference exists inside and outside the Kingdom, whether we liked or not. A woman differs from a man when occupying a leadership position, yet some women try to take on the man's role. (P1)

The society is full of female leaders. But at the ministry of education, which is always men-dominated, we have great female leaders. (P2)

We have an effect on the young female leaders who want to reach high leadership positions and they have hope now (P3).

1.1.1.1 Network

How could I build a relationship with them and I could not meet with them face to face? The communication with them was through the network and we could not build deep communication with them (P4).

Most of the women are liberal and open-minded and there are networks among them. I was trying to make a dialogue even with the illiberal colleagues, but it was difficult to engage in dialogue with some of them. The network of relations has not developed sufficiently (P3).

1.1.1.1.1 Social Networks

I always do my best in my work not for the social network, but work requires me to work with people. When my work is distinct and its results are good, the network increases (P3).

When I made friend with a person, I always knew her social network because I am sociable by nature. The leadership personality must have a lot of features (P5).

1.2 With Men

The relationship was developed and some of them began to say that they were afraid of my arrival because they heard that women are strict and treat others badly (P1).

They attacked me and our colleagues from men were angry with me. I faced all of these things and I could overcome them (P4)

1.2.1 With Father

I gave you an example about my father who used to tell me “You must always be better than them”. This phrase may not mean anything for the other, but it means a lot for me (P1).

Being the oldest among my brothers and sisters, my father, may God protect him and grant him long life, depended on me a lot in the affairs related to our house even during his travels. From this starting point, this was the beginning of the formation of my leadership character (P5).

1.2.1 With Male Colleagues

She should take advantage of other cultures and societies and develop herself by benefiting from her male colleagues (P4).

We should not say that we know everything and we can do everything. Our male colleagues have experiences that we have to benefit and learn from them (P5).

1.3 With Influential Leaders

Those persons who cause confusion are not decision-makers. They do not influence my career development (P1).

She is a woman and a leader at the same time. She will remain a woman. Being a leader does not mean that she can no longer be a woman. I am still a woman. I am still a woman in a Saudi society; I am still a woman who has her duties towards her family and work (P2).

1.3.1 With Managers

In my first year at the bank, I did not want to continue, but there was one of the financial managers who did not make me leave work. Since then, I have believed in myself so that I can do my best (P2).

As managers, we are responsible for their jobs, but we are not responsible for their career. They are responsible for their career and drive them (P3)

In the nine subthemes included within the dominant theme of relationships, it can be seen that in almost every aspect, there are positive and negatives. The only relationship that seemed

consistently positive was that with the father. We see that gender frequently plays a role in how a female is received, even a female leader. As one individual commented that the men she supervised were “afraid” of her. Some even verbally attacked her. As noted by Al-Ahmadi (2011), the challenges continue, although there is a shift. Al-Ahmadi commented that a “lack of resources and lack of empowerment” (p. 149) are now the biggest issue and “cultural and personal challenges [are] ranked last” (p. 149) as far as creating roadblocks in relationships for women.

6.1.2 Values

Values are difficult to define accurately. Almost everyone has a definition, but there are such wide variations as to meaning, that it becomes difficult to have a conversation. Schwartz (1992) completed an exhaustive study of values around the world. His research tool had subjects evaluate what a specific card with a specific value on it meant to that individual. What has been discovered is that there is a high consistency with specific values such as honesty and integrity, but the ability to define those terms may vary considerably even though the individuals seem to have a clear understanding of the meaning.

2.1 Education

When we choose those women, we must work to enable them to be leaders through self-development, education, professional development, and training in the areas of leadership (P1).

I suggest that any girl in our country must be concerned with self-development and communication with others, in addition to education, which is the most important thing (p3).

2.1.1 Desire to achieve

I am a leader but surrounded by people who would frustrate me, and couldn't develop relationship with them that would help me achieve leadership success, I'd certainly fail. So I have to make those people help me to succeed in achieving leadership success (P1).

I did not care about maintaining a good position. I wanted to make sure that I could serve my country, and that was the place where I could take advantage of my experience and achieve an important thing (P2).

2.1.1.1 Hard work

I was looking after my baby and husband and we were at a university full of Saudis. We had good relationships with the countrymen and countrywomen. We had good communication with each other. Although I was a student, yet I worked hard in order to complete my studies before my husband in order to graduate and get the master degree (P1).

They chose me and I had to prove that I deserve their trust. I must work hard, be sincere in my work, and be honest with God and my homeland. I have to be independent and fair and not to

challenge anyone. I was the first woman to hold this position, and if I dealt with the matter stubbornly, this would have a bad impact on the women who would hold such a position after me (P4).

2.2 Family

In every society, a woman has two roles. The first role is with her family as a woman and the second one is a leadership role (P1).

Being the oldest among my brothers and sisters, my father, may God protect him and grant him long life, depended on me a lot in the affairs related to our house even during his travels. From this starting point, this was the beginning of the formation of my leadership character. In that period, our father taught us tolerance, cooperation and integration. When there was a disagreement between my younger brother and me, my father always told me to be better than him. These words had a great effect on the journey of my whole life. My father's words have made me be better than the other people in any situation (P5).

2.2.1 Work family balance

We must achieve the balance among the different categories and levels of society. This is the governing criterion when choosing men and women and not women only (P2).

The balance between life and work. This thing should not be neglected at all. I must identify the limits of work which must not affect my own life and the limits of my own life which must not affect my work. This is one of the most difficult challenges faced by women in Saudi Arabia (P4).

Values are intriguing. They do not make people do things, but rather nudge them towards specific goals depending on the value. The conflict or potential conflict between work and family life is a global consideration. Ahmad (2011), whose research focused on the KSA, noted the struggle that women entrepreneurs in KSA have with work-family-life balance.

The desire to achieve, according to Rokeach's germinal work (1973), is a goal value ("terminal value" in Rokeach's text). Other goal values may enhance achievement or hinder it, values such as family security, health, or equality. The reality is that values, as noted before, are very complex and may not be only social constructs. Maslow (1959) was one of the first to suggest that some values have a biological component and drive an individual to seek food, shelter, and water. Until these physiological and safety values are met, individuals cannot progress to the higher values esteem and self-actualization. While the argument sounds academic, it is definitely not academic to the person going hungry or without shelter

during a storm. These same drives and needs translate into values and the power of these values in relation to other values is worth exploring further in the final round of interviews.

6.1.3 Self-Confidence

The ability to be confident in the face of so many potential obstacles is a defining theme in leadership. O'Neil, Hopkins, and Bilimoria (2015) argued that self-confidence, along with self-esteem and the ability to influence are essential and positive contributing factors in the ability of women to become effective leaders.

3.1 Success

I told him that I would work with them for only one year in order to try myself and make sure that I was successful because I did not have enough experience at that time. When I got that position and did my best, I got the experience and this made me happy (P1).

I have built experiences, capabilities and competences over years and I have to benefit from them. All of these factors have made me more confident in myself and not just [in the] the presence of people around me (P3).

3.2. Independence

I worked very hard to reach my position here. It was not easy and I would not succeed, if I did not work on myself. I understood the industry very well, and then I worked on my leadership skills. I kept my ears open and my ego at the door. I began to listen, understand and take advantage of my experiences and the other persons' experiences. This gave me independence. (P1)

3.3. Responsibility

I am a role model. The responsibility was very heavy and it was not an easy thing (P1).

I would be very impressed with a model of woman who aged 22 or 23 and was married and got a child because she had to balance between her work and family (P2).

3.4. Achieving Goals

Every time I found out that these things that made me feel happy and gave me a sense of achievement have play a role in the leadership. So I realized that I should peruse leadership roles. How I am going to pursue leadership roles? Actually my experience with leadership was shocking and violent. I was appointed for a position in a minute and I was not ready at all (P4).

Studies that focus on women and leadership invariably must address the issue of society and culture. This is especially true in strong patriarchal countries, such as KSA. Abdalla (2015) addressed the issue of high profile female Arab leaders and the opportunities and challenges they face. The challenges to women who may be denied access based solely on gender is a significant issue reflected the responses during round two.

6.1.4 Society and Culture

The theme of society and culture is similar to the findings of Dorfman et al., (2012), but for women participants, rather than men as in Dorfman et al.'s study. They found that leaders are perceived as more successful when they adhere to national cultural stereotypes and expectations. Also, consistent with the participant's experience, they found that value-based leadership is more effective.

4.1. The Role of Women

I am a woman and a leader at the same time. Being a leader does not mean that I am no longer a woman. I am still a woman. I am still a woman in a Saudi society, I am still a woman who has her duties towards her family and work. As women, all of us in any society, Saudi or non-Saudi, Muslim or non-Muslim, often have a role towards her family and work. In every society, a woman has two roles. The first role is with her family as a woman and the second one is a leadership role that has to do with adoption of leaders. So I maintain both roles and I will keep them. (Participant #1)

We wanted to improve their performance concerning dealing with women and their different problems in their societies. It was hard for everyone to understand our demands. I could connect the religious and cultural dimension with the development. (Participant #4)

4.2. Equality

I felt that there would be equality when I evaluated the employee and he/she evaluated me. They were afraid of this evaluation in the organization. (Participant #4)

There were very bad insults concerning our conducts and reputation because we were blended with men in our meetings and conferences. There was no logic about this issue. They could not accept that a woman got a leadership position and became equal to men. (Participant #5)

4.3. Prejudice Against Women

I was a female [Leader], for the first time, the society would not accept it. In my opinion people who accepted this situation were about 40%, but they were unknown and they were very few. On the other hand, 60% did not accept this situation including men, women, extremists and moderates. There was a fierce criticism against me

At that time, (Participant #1)

The issue of achieving things gradually is an obstacle that stands against the empowerment of women and their access to leadership positions. (Participant #4)

4.4. Government Support for women in leadership roles

I broke the barrier that we are underdeveloped and proved that the Saudi women can reach high positions with the support of their governments and societies. (Participant #4).

The government works on this issue and we must empower women gradually in lower positions,

and then promote them to higher positions. I consider it a great responsibility and I want to succeed for those who are confident in me. I wanted to prove that I was put in the right place (P5).

6.2 Discussion of Round Two

From the responses seen in this survey, it is clear that these four themes just discussed are very strong, yet differ between the five participants in this study. The goals mentioned are also goals well studied in the literature. Al-Ahmadi (2011) touched on all four themes when reporting on the challenges facing women leaders in Saudi Arabia. Ahmad (2011), likewise, discussed most of these themes and especially issues around culture. These themes appear to be universal, yet may be differently focused in countries such as KSA.

However, it still is valuable to understand the strength with which each of these themes plays a dynamic role in the development of women leaders in Saudi Arabia. This is a topic for the final interviews.

A first round study included three participants and involved 20 open-ended questions. The participants were all successful women leaders in the KSA. The interviews were relatively short, varying from 1200 words to 2400 words in length. From this first round, through contextual analysis and induction, a set of seven themes were developed which were used to set the framework for the interviews for the second round,

The second round involved five successful Saudi women leaders. There were 15 primary questions, yet the interviews were significantly longer and more in depth. The interviews, which were a series of 15 opened ended questions, also provided the opportunity for probing questions by the researcher. The result was that the richness of the interviews suggested that the themes could actually be reduced in number as the hierarchy of the framework added more depth.

6.3 Suggested Questions for the Third and Final Round

Through a first round and then a more focused larger second round, a set of four themes have emerged. **Relationships**, as an overarching theme and **Values** were two strong themes (based on the number of related responses). **Self-confidence** was also a strong theme, and highly integrated into areas of success, independence, responsibility, and a focus on achieving one's goals. However, the theme of **Society and Culture** is also very strong and

very controversial. Sometimes the participants are reluctant to discuss this topic. Middle-Eastern patriarchal culture, Muslim religious culture, and even family culture all play an important role in encouraging or impeding women who seek to become effective leaders.

Therefore, the goal of the final round is to try and gauge the strength of these themes for the research participants and how they are effectively demonstrated in their successful roles as women leaders within the KSA. The number of questions in the final round are fewer in number (N=7) and more focused. Each potentially relates to one or more of the four emergent themes from the second round of interviews with the exception of the last question, which is an open-ended question that opens the door to possible topics not included within the first question.

1. Please discuss how responsibility, independence, and success might differ between men and women in leadership roles in Saudi Arabia.
2. The research related to female Saudi leaders suggests that cultural bias against women leaders makes it difficult for women to advance above certain levels or into male-dominated professions. Assuming, for the moment, that this is accurate, how do you deal with possible issues of gender bias both from your superiors as well as those you supervise? (Leadership, Society and Equality, Relationships, Value and Ethics)
3. Some have described the role of female Saudi leaders as more complex than that of their male counterparts because of the additional female roles related to family. Would you please describe any differences between the familial responsibilities of male leaders and female leaders and how you have dealt with these additional responsibilities? (Family, Relationships, Society and Equality)
4. We each have many values that make us both interesting and individuals. What are the values that helped you become a successful leader? Are they the same values that sustain you as an effective female leader or have they changed as you matured into your leadership role? (Goals and Characteristics, Personal Values, Values and Ethics)
5. Within the organization in which you currently work or one in which you recently worked, can you describe specific processes or factors that impede your ability to be a successful leader? Are there specific processes or factors that enhance your ability to be a successful leader? (Society and Equality, Values, Leadership)
6. Of all the topics we have discussed, what three goals or characteristics stand out to you as the most important that have allowed you to become an effective leader? (Personal Goals and Characteristics, Leadership)

7. I appreciate the time you have spent with me. We have talked about a lot of different topics that have helped you become the successful leader that you are.
8. What is the most effective way of exchanging information between you and the others?
9. Within the organization in which you currently work or one in which you recently worked, can you describe specific processes or factors that impede your ability to be a successful leader?
Are there specific processes or factors that enhance your ability to be a successful leader?
What three words of advice would you give to young Saudi women that want to move up into significant leadership positions?

6.2.1 Outcomes that informed the third round

Two rounds of interviews were conducted with female leaders working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Three individuals were interviewed in a first round, and five in the second. The final round will include three leaders.

The aim is to gain a better understanding of the values, social and cultural dynamics, and organisational factors that are potentially factors in the ability of Saudi women to be effective leaders.

Questions (N=20) from the first round were based upon the literature of Saudi women leaders, and were opened ended. One goal was to ascertain similarities and differences between the published literature and the participants in this study who were all establish women leaders in the KSA.

After the first round, the interviews were recorded and transcribed, then analysed for frequencies of common phrases (codes), which were then separated into categories and sub-categories. These categories and sub-categories provided the basis by which a set of themes which served as the basis for questions for the second round. The number of questions (N=15) in round two were refined, based on the analysis of the first round. The second round involved five individuals and those five interviews were analysed as described. The analysis of the various themes from round two will them form the basis for the creation of a smaller set of more refined questions in the third and final round.

The final round is comprised of three interviews, with the seven questions listed above.

6.4 Relating the themes to the literature

The purpose of this study, as noted by the three research questions, was to discover which values may help women sustain or evolve their leadership skills, which social and cultural dynamics could enable or inhibit women in becoming leaders, and which organisational factors are critical to the success of women seeking leadership roles in the KSA.

The empirical research has resulted in a unique dataset. The researcher had access to very top level women executives and entrepreneurs. The researcher did not find this level of access and the resulting dataset in the available literature reviewed for this research. Based on the interpretivist analysis, this dataset reveal family, culture and individual personality traits as important and critical factors in Saudi women's achievement of leadership positions.

The four dominant thematic findings that characterise Saudi women's renaissance as leaders are relationships, values, self-confidence and society & culture. Other themes are leadership, family and goals & characteristics. The four dominant thematic findings that characterise Saudi women's renaissance as leaders are relationships, values, self-confidence and society & culture. Other themes are leadership, family and goals & characteristics.

A new thematic finding is family is consistent thread in all related sub-themes. The relationships focus on the father and the family. The relationships fostered here nurtured and supported Saudi women's leadership ambition.

As previously mentioned, strong patriarchal culture is recognised in the literature (Metcalf, 2008). Society too is recognised. Lyness and Judiesch (2014) mention the patriarchal culture role in work-life balance. Similarly, Dorfman et al. (2012) support the theme of culture and its positive effect on leadership.

The theme of values was prominent among the Saudi women leaders. The literature acknowledges the positive role of value-based leadership and recognises that it is more effective. Dorfman et al. (2012) and Copeland (2014) detail the characteristic values and their effect on shaping leaders.

Similar to the society and culture thematic finding, the literature mentions the impact of national culture on leadership expectations (Dorfman et al., 2012). Their evidence shows how the national culture defines leaders' behaviours.

The self-confidence thematic finding is that the Saudi women leaders believed in themselves and were able to put themselves forward as managers capable of leading. Sturm et al. (2014) and Ibarra et al. (2013) found that self-confidence is a critical aspect of women leaders' success aspiration. McGowan et al. (2015) also found that the development of self-confidence is critical in developing young women to become entrepreneurial and leaders. They also recognise social capital is necessary to succeed, which is supported by this research, as the Saudi women emphasised that relationships and networks contributed to their success.

The first two rounds established, through a series of two sets of interviews and textual analysis of those interviews, a set of seven themes. Those themes and concepts were then examined closely in a series of nine questions addressed to three highly successful female Saudi leaders from different professional fields. The intent was to discover their perspectives and understanding of how these seven themes are manifest in their working lives and to also learn how they would advise future women leaders to achieve positions of leadership.

6.4.1 The Theme of Leadership

Leadership was the overarching theme of this research. In the interviews, leadership was one of the themes in Questions 1, 2, 5, and 6 (see Table 3). The interrelationships between leadership and other themes and concepts discussed in this research are clear.

- Leadership is something that is fostered within a family where gender equality is present.
- The role model for leadership is universally that of the father or another male figure.
- Successful leadership requires that the individual act, and not be passive.
- Leadership, or positions of leadership are also easier for men, as they are given independence and responsibility as a norm, which is not the case for women.
- In addition, successful women leaders need male relationships in the work place in order to gain success.

While there are other connections, these are the concepts mapped in relation to the first question and graphically represented in Figure 1.

Question #2 also has leadership as a theme of focus. Probably because society and equality was another theme within this interview question, many of the leadership concepts relate to cultural issues. However, there are concepts that also clearly map with question #1:

- Men are favoured for leadership positions

- Men reach positions of higher authority more quickly than women.
- There is a glass ceiling that prohibits women from going above a certain level.
- The repeated statement that women are not inferior to me, which is frequently countered with the point that this can change, but
- You need a male figure to help.
- Ambition, knowledge, and vision are important.

In the interviews and the concept map for Question #5, where leadership is again a theme, it can be seen a focus on the specific values or attributes that enable a female leader to be successful:

- Listen to staff (employees)
- Protect each other
- Be strong
- Knowledge
- Respect for everyone
- Have a goal
- Able to change

The last question where leadership was a theme was Question #6. The concept map (Figure 12) demonstrates the complexity. A number of the qualities closely reflect Question #5.

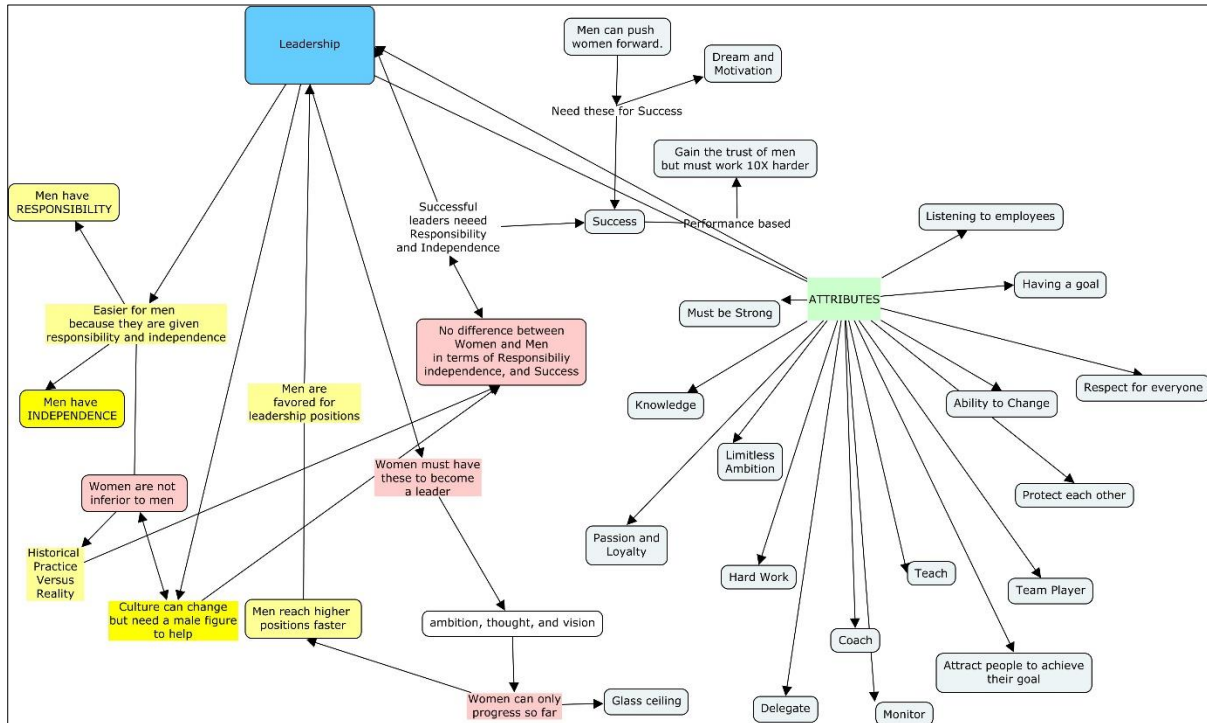
- Team player
- Vision (“Attract people to achieve their goal”)
- Teach
- Monitor
- Coach
- Delegate

In addition, leadership requires good communication as well as a set of ‘higher’ goals:

- To be a leader serving society
- To Serve my country
- Develop the environment
- Satisfy my father

If the concept maps for the theme Leadership is combined from Questions 1, 2, 5, and 6, then the final product looks like the following:

Figure 18: Combined Leadership Characteristics Conceptual Map



The concepts on the left are related to gender issues, many of which are culturally based. On the right side are those attributes or values which the participants in this study feel are important for female leaders to engender and practice to become a successful leader.

Support (or lack of) from the Literature

Ahmad (2011), noting a lack of information about business and survival strategies of successful female entrepreneurs, especially in the KSA, conducted a study similar to this research in which 19 Saudi women entrepreneurs participated in a series of interviews. Ahmad noted the ‘high need for independence and achievement, with a high tolerance for ambiguity and a strong desire to devote all their efforts to achieve pre-set goals’ (p. 138). Ahmad also noted that success, as measured by these successful women, was accomplishing their goals (self-fulfilment), and a balance between work and family. Education was also noted as critical.

One question that needs to be asked is whether or not any of the values associated with successful female leadership in the KSA are unique. Values such as hard work, being a

team player, having a vision and passion for success, knowledge and education, as well as mentoring or coaching others are all values seen throughout leadership literature around the world. While all are important, the suggestion is that none of these are unique to the Saudi Arabia or women in particular. These traits or values have been repeatedly demonstrated as the qualities for any successful leader.

If that is the case, then perhaps the unique aspects for consideration reside in the left half of the concept map (Figure 18). This is an area that will be discussed in greater detail later, including specific comments from the participants. However, the relationships between women and other women, between men and women, and between women and the cultural background of the KSA may be a key factor, and how that is resolved may be a clue as to becoming a successful female leader within Saudi Arabia.

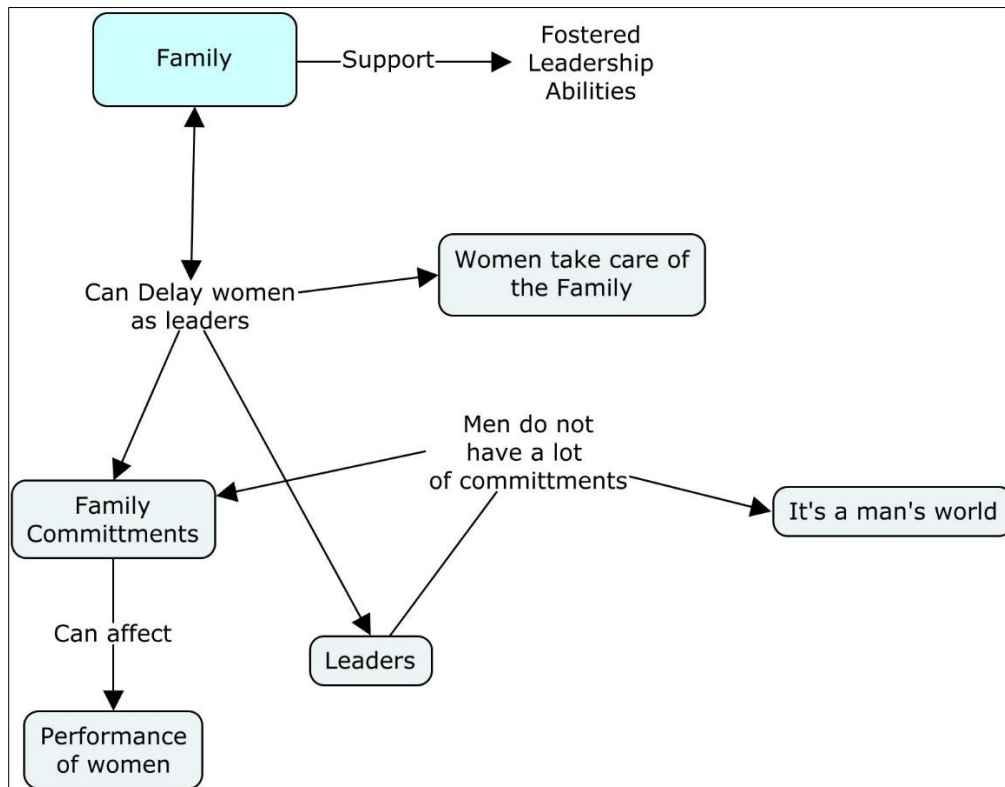
6.4.2 The Theme of Family

The theme of family was specifically addressed in questions one and three. A study by Alexander (2013) of female students in Saudi Arabia found that a lack of family member support of women becoming a leader was a significant issue and concern. Points made in this study suggested that “family responsibilities are not shared and are assumed to be solely a female duty” (p. 143). Therefore, female leaders must face a greater challenge of balancing work and family.

Question #1 showed only one concept, that family fostered leadership abilities. The need for families to provide support for the idea of women becoming leaders and the significant beliefs by female students that this is not common presents a dichotomy between successful female leaders and possibly the majority of women. The abbreviated concept map related to family is shown below in Figure 19.

While it is noted (from Question #1) that support of the family for equal gender roles and the idea that women can become leaders is noted, the preponderance of comments reflect the statements found in Alexander (2013). Family responsibilities can delay women into leadership roles because women are expected to take care of the family. Comments by the participants underline both the need for familial equality and the dichotomy just noted.

Figure 19: Concept Map of Family theme from Questions 1 & 3



Family Support

- “I grew up in a family that encouraged me to be a leader” Participant 1 (P1).
- “The person who has good luck and grow up in a family like that will be a leader” (P1).
- “I agree that cultural barriers exist, but it depends on you and your family” (P3).

Family Responsibilities

- “Family commitments can delay the role of women as leaders. This is true because men do not have a lot of commitments. In our society, women are responsible for the family” (P1).
- “The family circumstances affect the woman’s performance” (P2)
- “It is expected that [a] woman takes care of her family and not the man, who always keeps his job and role outside. It is a man’s world. Woman is the care giver” (P2)

If the cultural norm is for the woman to be the care giver and take care of the family issues, then what tools or behaviours do these successful women add that allow them to become successful?

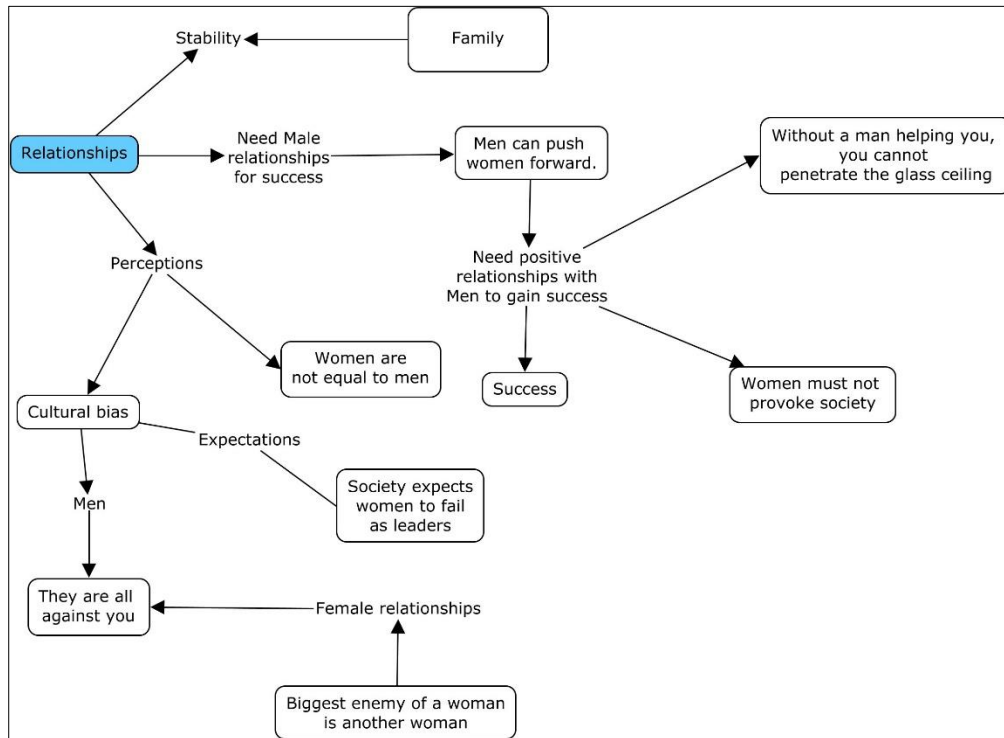
- “The family relations cannot be an obstacle against the success which can be achieved by a woman who has a leadership position or a social activity. On the contrary, it is considered an addition that provides you with stability. There must be a balance because any problem arising in the family can stop this leadership” (P1).
- “I set my priorities every morning and the family relations take some time, but I do not let anything stop my work” (P1).
- “Family, society and relationships can affect us, but they are not obstacles” (P1).
- Labour law (family leave) “gives you an advantage to fulfil the social expectations [in dealing with family sickness or death]” (P2).
- “There must be someone at home who encourages you because the family is the priority for any woman” (P2)
- “I agree that cultural barriers exist, but it depends on you and your family. If you want to face this, do not listen to it and go on in your way or you want to be restricted to the society” (P3).

The participants in these last three interviews, each quite successful in their own fields, acknowledge the cultural expectations of women being the primary care giver. Alexander (2013) suggested that this cultural role is seen as a block to women becoming leaders, yet the three participants have succeeded extremely well. Their response is that they do not deny the cultural imperative, but deal with it by working harder and being well organized in their time management.

6.4.3 The Theme of Relationships

The theme of relationships was addressed specifically in questions 1, 2, and 3. Throughout the three rounds of interviews, relationships have presented a complex mix of associations between different family members, co-workers, and, in particular, the two genders. The rapport or lack of same between men and women and women to women appears throughout the interview process. The combined conceptual map between the first three questions with a focus on relationships is as follows:

Figure 20: Conceptual Map of Relationships theme Questions 1, 2, & 3



The previous comments about the different cultural expectations between men and women become clear when also discussing relationships. While there is a belief among the participants that men and women are not perceived by society as being equal, these individuals, who are aware of the cultural bias, do not believe in that inequality.

- “My principle has been that men and women are equal concerning responsibility, success and independence” (P1)
- “Women are not all equal. and the minority of them reaches the leadership because they can withstand the challenges they face” (P1)
- “If you come across as an equal from the beginning, you are a threat, so he is going to always push you back. If you play the game with intelligence, you can easily manipulate the situation” (P2)
- “When I tried to prove that I am equal to them and I understand work very well, I did not succeed” (P2).

- “In the first two years, I dealt with them as being equal to them and I had enemies so that I became frustrated and they hated me. They called me the trouble maker and decided not to give me any position. After that I decided to play it right. I tried to gain their trust and I succeeded. I understood the roles of the game” (P2).
- “This taught [me] self-dependence and equality because there is no difference between men and women. If I want something, I should seek to achieve it and do not wait until it comes to me” (P2).
- “I tell them that we are here to complete each other, not to fight. I am against [the] call for equality all the time. No one can replace the other. I very much believe in that we have strength and men have strength. We all have brains and we can think beautifully together, but also the genders mix together to make a very good formula” (P3).

The specific comments are interesting in that there is an implicit understanding of the dual roles of women. P1 commented that not all women are equal and her comments relate to how women deal with the cultural and societal expectations. The dual roles of caregiver and leader have already been discussed and the ability to handle these dual responsibilities, which someone come into conflict with one another, seems to be an important aspect of what is required for women to move into high levels of leadership.

The discussion of men seeing women as a threat has been discussed in the literature. Rudman et al. (2012) suggested that when women who are leaders or who want to be leaders, and who act counter to cultural stereotypes, run the risk of social penalties. Women who act outside the stereotypical female role endanger the gender stereotype, according to the authors. The study also demonstrated that women who threaten the status quo are likely to be sabotaged, and that sabotage can be from either gender. Looking at the concept map above (Figure 20), it should be noted that women are considered the biggest enemy. This would seem to indicate that not only men hold tightly to the gender stereotype of the female role, but women do as well, which was also suggested in the research by Alexander (2013).

6.4.4 The Theme of Values and Ethics

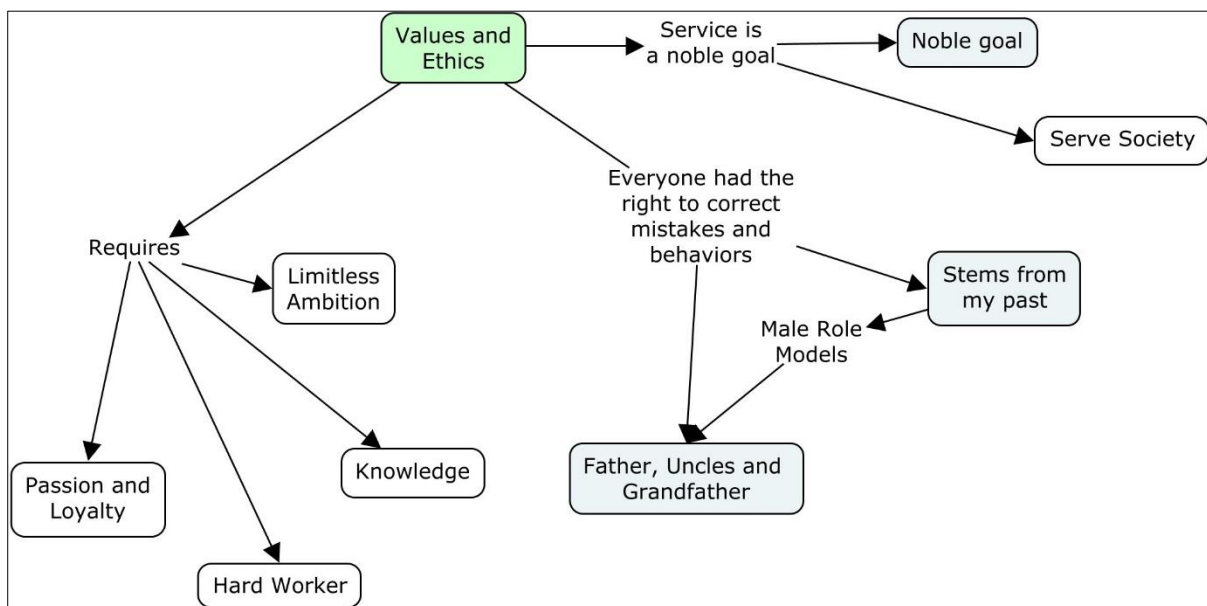
Values and Ethics were one of the themes focused upon in Questions 2, 4, and 5. This was a more difficult discussion as a clear definition of either values or ethics may not be available

or shared among the participants. In question #2, the focus was on having a noble goal and serving society.

To be clear, this theme was separated in intent by the personal values theme. The focus here was on higher values and ethics. In Question #4, the focus shifted to one of correcting behaviour and noted the fact that 1) everyone had the right to correct incorrect behaviour, and 2) male role models (fathers, grandfathers, and uncles) were those who primarily were involved in instructing in proper behaviour.

Question #5 was somewhere in between the high global value of serving society and personal behaviour. In responses to this question, the concepts noted were primarily qualities, specifically ambition (“limitless”), passion and loyalty, hard work, and knowledge. The combined conceptual map for this theme is shown below (Figure 21).

Figure 21: Combined Values & Ethics theme for Questions 2, 4, & 5



It is a potentially interesting question as to why such different perspectives were offered by the three interviewees. There is one focus on attributes, such as ambition, passion, and hard work, while another view focuses on the formation of values and ethics from the past, while the latter focuses on service to society.

- “I think that my loyalty to the principles and goals that I fought to reach is an obvious thing. I think nothing is impossible. I am very sincere concerning my work and I do not accept failure” (P1).
- “When I started [my] work, this was a big challenge to keep my ethics and values jointly with my business. It was a huge challenge but I kept my ethics. I put three major values to my work. My three ethics are wealth creation, job creation and being friendly to the environment” (P3).

One challenge for the participants is that one of the themes dealt with personal values, and these might be hard to disassociate with the values discussed in this theme. Personal values will be the theme discussed next.

6.4.5 The Theme of Personal Values

Personal values were the theme discussed specifically in Questions 4 and 6. While the number of values noted included some 19 specific terms, it appears to have been clearer to the participants that these were personal qualities, and that they felt that these qualities were relevant to both their personal success and would be values they would also promote with the younger generations. The suggestion is that these values are learned both in the home and through education. The list noted is in Table 13.

Table 13: Personal values noted in interview Questions 4 and 6

Ethics	Sympathy	Goal orientation	Perseverance	Ambitious
Loyalty	Stubbornness	Hard work	Friendly	Inspiring
Honest	Sincere	Tolerant	Able	Passionate
Knowledgeable	Open-minded	Desirous	Communicator	

As noted above in the discussion of question #1, some of these values are also considered leadership qualities in that question. For example, ambition, knowledge, hard work, and having a goal appear in both lists. That is not surprising as personal values are the foundation of leadership. As was asked previously, are there any of these values that are distinctly related to women or Saudi Arabia. The answer is no. You can find hundreds or thousands of peer-reviewed articles and texts over the last 50 years that focus on some of these values and attributes.

It was interesting to note in the search of literature that an article by Eagly (2007) discussed much of what this research is about, but from the perspective of the United States. Eagly noted the following:

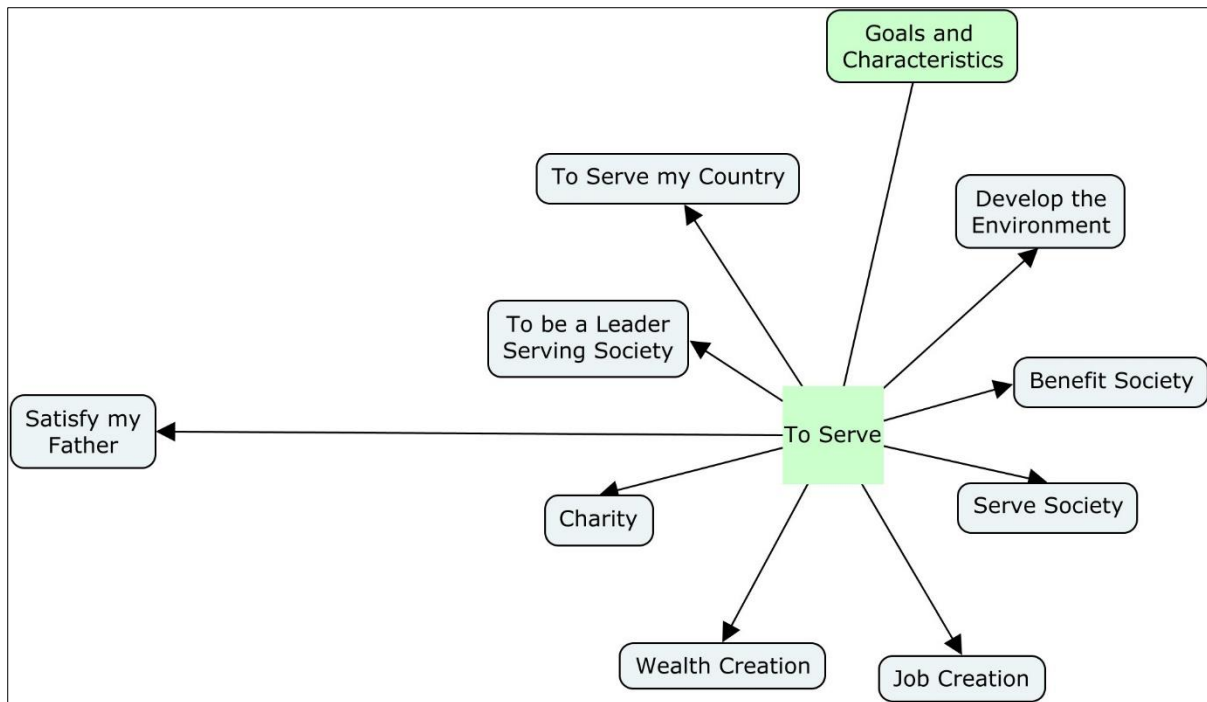
In the United States, women are increasingly praised for having excellent skills for leadership and, in fact, women, more than men, manifest leadership styles associated with effective performance as leaders. Nevertheless, more people prefer male than female bosses, and it is more difficult for women than men to become leaders and to succeed in male-dominated leadership roles. (Eagly, 2007, p. 1)

Eagly (2007) goes on to note that the values associated with good leadership really depend on the situation and possibly the societal context. There are no values in the list above that are specifically masculine. In fact, an argument could possibly be made that values such as sympathy, sincerity, tolerance, friendliness, and passionate might be more feminine than masculine. Regardless, the information is interesting, but does not separate female leadership in Saudi Arabia from other countries or even from men.

6.4.6 The Theme of Goals and Characteristics

The theme of goals and characteristics was also a theme included in questions four and six. The participants being interviewed were consistent between the two questions and the overall focus was primarily on societal actions that would benefit society and the country. Specific goals were to enhance the environment, create new jobs and wealth, and to serve the country and society as a leader. The one comment that was different was to “Satisfy my father.” The conceptual mapping of questions four and six for Goals and Characteristics can be found in Figure 22. The comment, however, about satisfying her father makes sense within the contest as noted below in that the participant’s goals were to achieve a high level of education and serve her country, which would make her father happy.

Figure 22: Combined Goals & Characteristics Conceptual & Thematic Map for Questions 4 & 6



- “I must consider serving our society as a noble goal that I seek to achieve” (P1).
- “When I was very young, my dream was to establish a small society to serve my country” (P1).
- “Those [women] who have ambition, strong will and the social goals to serve their society in general, and not just personal goals, will get high positions” (P1).
- “If [I have to choose between] business or work for serving the society, I tend to choose serving my society. Serving the society is a priority and I have begun to gain its outcome. If I was sincere or honest by 100% previously, I am sincere and honest by 300% now” (P1).
- “My main goal is to serve my country” (P1).
- “So my goal was to become a professor to serve my country and satisfy my father” (P1),
- “My three ethics are wealth creation, job creation and being friendly to the environment. These ethics have to apply to my real life” (P3).

The problem that sometimes occurs with this type of qualitative study is that you can sometimes hit a “hot button” of one of the participants. Their enthusiasm and excitement over a particular idea may skew the metrics of things like phrase counting or even textual analysis. The first participant was enthusiastic about her desire to serve her country, while the second discussed a number of anecdotal stories, but did not return to the main questions. The third participant, quoted in the last statement above, is from the financial world, and her

focus is consistent, but varies from the other two. The ultimate result is that there were no clear and unanimous goals expressed between the three interviewees.

6.4.7 The Theme of Society and Equality

The theme of society and equality was included in questions 2, 3, and 5. Based on the previous two rounds, it seemed likely that the questions that differentiated leadership among women with the KSA would relate, at least partially, to society and cultural norms and concepts of equality. The internal values and beliefs related to this theme seem quite strong with a lot of cultural and societal energy.

Staying within the Societal Boundaries

- “You must follow the traditions in the society so that you can get what you want, and then you gain the satisfaction of the society. I called for the equality at work. Women are not inferior to men regarding their mind, and both of them have the ability to learn. On the contrary, women are accurate and follow all the details in the practical life. They sometimes have success more than men in certain fields” (P1).
- “I want equality and not more freedom” (P2).
- “This taught us self-dependence and equality because there is no difference between men and women. If I want something, I should seek to achieve it and do not wait until it comes to me” (P2).
- “I am against [the] call for equality all the time. No one can replace the other. I very much believe in that we have strength and men have strength. We all have brains and we can think beautifully together, but also the genders mix together to make a very good formula” (P3).
- “Women can reach the leadership positions except those positions that need to be approved by the high authority. We can set the culture of our society. Women who do not have a strong will and they need help cannot be leaders. On the contrary, those who have ambition, strong will and the social goals to serve their society in general, and not just personal goals, will get high positions” (P1).
- “You can be a leader if you respect the culture of the society” (P1).

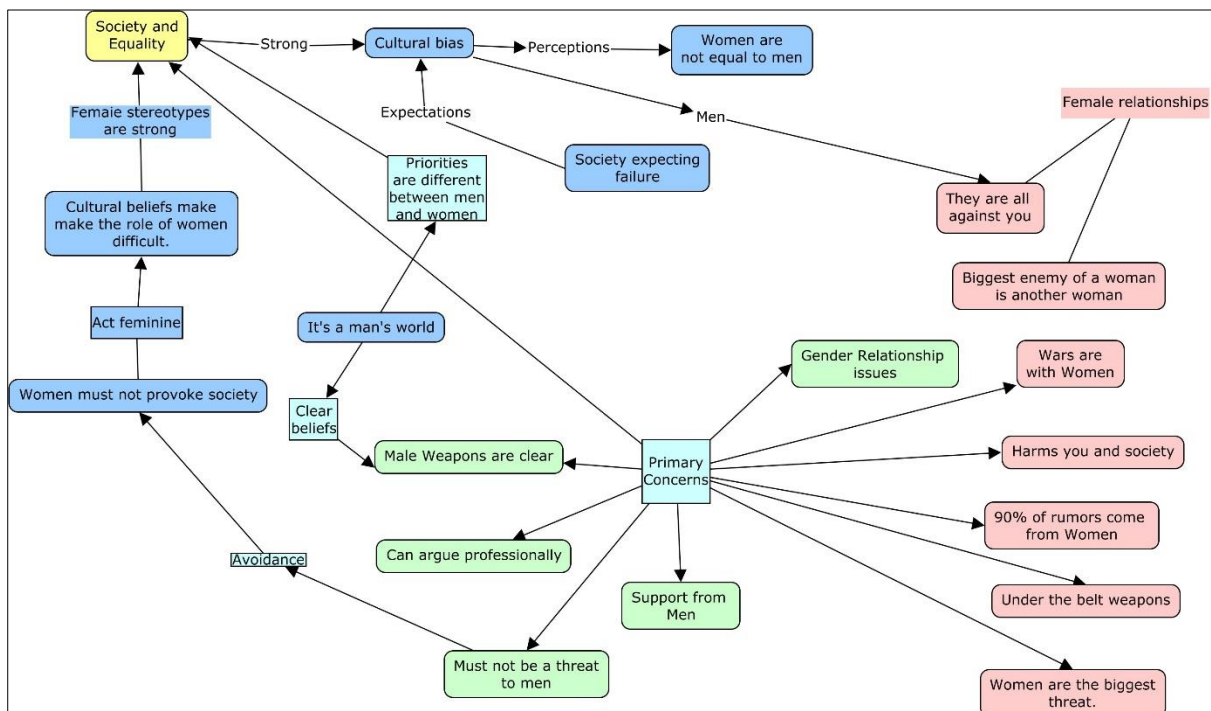
Obstacles

- “You must not challenge the man and be a threat to him. Working with men is sometimes tricky. If they hear the rumours and [are] not be mature enough to check out these rumours, they will make you fail. 90% of these rumours come out of women. 90% [of the rumours of] those who fought against me were women and 10% were men (P2).

- “The biggest enemy of a woman is another woman not a man. Other than the cultural bias that the man has, if you can play the game well, come out of the social stereotype and be strong, hard worker, high achiever and not a threat, he will actually help and push you” (P2).
- In the work field, man makes things complex. If he gives me the opportunity to succeed without putting the culture barriers or his rights as a man, I can slide through the system and climb up the ladder (P2).
- The family circumstances affect the woman’s performance” (P2).
- “Yes I agree that women and male-dominated professions, in some of them, will never allow women to be up there, or as a leader, because of culture” (P3).

A combined conceptual map for questions 2, 3, and 5 related to the theme of Society and Equality provides a broad perspective of the theme and subthemes. Figure 23 is divided into three basic sections.

Figure 23: Combined Society & Equality Conceptual & Thematic Map for Questions 2, 3, & 5



The left side of the map focuses primarily on female stereotypes. Women must act feminine, and should not provoke men or society. It is a man's work where women are not considered the equal of men and society expects that women who try to become leaders will fail.

The middle (green) section refers to the dominance of men, yet men can offer support if you know how to "play the game." Women must not be a threat. Women can argue professionally, in certain venues, but not from the position of being a woman, but as an expert in her field.

The right hand side of the map relates to issues raised about relationships with other women. The primary belief is that women will oppose you, use rumour against you and that if men do not take the time to verify the rumours, this could end or severely hamper your position.

The literature reflects much of this schizophrenic perspective about equality and inequality coexisting in state of unsettled peace. Ibarra et al. (2013) posited that even with the government and some large businesses actively trying to move women into leadership positions – even requiring for a certain number of senior positions – “they are often frustrated by a lack of results” (Ibarra et al., 2013, p. 60). Even mentoring programs still seem to hit a cultural wall that comes from men and perhaps even more strongly, from other women.

Ibarra et al. (2013) argued that there must be a significant shift in identify where women see themselves as a leader first, yet gender bias is still very strong within most organizations. The conversation with P2 about the “new generation” suggested that they believe that women cannot move up into leadership role more than they believe that they can. Toh and Leonardelli (2012) presented similar findings. The authors, however, argued that the issue is not because of the differences found in values or gender roles, but in “culture's tightness.” The authors argued that this cultural tightness relates to a particular society's commitment “to implementing such norms and constraints” (p. 604).

6.5 Women Emerging as Leaders

Toh and Leonardelli (2012) suggested that there are two processes involved in the emergence of women as leaders within societies and cultures that have a strong cultural bias against such emergence. The first is that the woman must be “leader-like.” (p. 605). Women have to be perceived as an expert or an authority in their field. “An individual is more likely to be viewed as a leader and be able to influence her followers when she fits the followers' cognitive representation of an ideal leader or ideal leader prototype” (Toh & Leonardelli,

2012, p. 605). This emergence can be facilitated if the leadership style avoids masculine or feminine traits. The authors, however, also noted that “women leaders may sometimes prefer to cede the formal leadership role to men in the group because they, too, believe that being male or masculine is more leader-like” (p. 605).

6.5.1 The Three Research Questions

As noted by O'Connor (2010) that leadership success is not owned by an individual based on their power, social orientation, and gender. It is owned by a person who is capable and can manage it efficiently, irrespective of their social status and gender. With this shift in power delegation and leadership, a rise of a woman's role is clearly emerging. This ownership and management is related to values, social and cultural dynamics and organizational factors, as investigated in this research.

RQ1: Which values can help women sustain or evolve their leadership skills?

The comments from the three participants in the third round provided a robust list of values, visualized in the conceptual maps for each question except Question #3. Most of those values are listed in Table 13.

RQ2: Which social and cultural dynamics could enable or inhibit women in become leaders?

The social and cultural dynamics would seem to be a key in the opportunity of women to become successful leaders in the KSA. Figure 23, discussed above, combined with discussion of each question strongly suggest that the family is the initial cornerstone of the society dynamic. Strong male figures are key within that family as each participant references masculine figures are providing both the inspiration and the encouragement for females to consider themselves as potential equals to men, something with still goes strongly against the social norm. Each participant acknowledged that the world has changed in that more positions are open to female leaders, but each also acknowledged that to get to the higher levels of responsibility, a position relationship with a male mentor or leader was necessary, and that the very highest positions are still closed to women.

The concerns about the younger generation of young women was also expressed in that they may have accepted the cultural bias against female leaders. It was also suggested that the aspirations of the younger generation do not fit well with the need to be ambitious and independent and that relying on family connections was a preferred choice by some.

RQ3: Which organisational factors are critical to the success of women seeking leadership roles in the KSA?

This research question and its “answer” rest strongly with the second research question and issues of social equality and cultural dynamics. While both the Saudi government and many private businesses have ostensibly made higher leadership positions available to women, even encouraging and mentoring them into those roles, cultural perspectives and social biases still offer strong organizational road blocks.

One clear organizational factor of success was knowing the male leader of the organization. Not provoking authority or confronting men is important. Acting feminine and knowing when you can speak your opinion. Opinions must be based on knowledge.

Successful women leaders go after what they want. They are ambitious, according to the participants, and they work very hard. They still take care of the family, a strong cultural demand. They work hard hours and support their male managers and leaders. Obstacles can be females, who may spread rumours.

6.5.2 Summary

Three Saudi women who have demonstrated excellent leadership skills and who have been recognized within their country and without, were interviewed regarding the values that they felt could help women sustain or evolve their leadership skills (research question #1). They were also asked through multiple questions about which social and cultural dynamics could enable or inhibit women in becoming leaders (research question #2). Last, inquiry was made as to what these three women considered might be organisational factors that might be critical for the success of women seeking to become leaders in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (research question #3).

What has been demonstrated is that there is a complex set of relationships between all seven themes. It is impossible to separate one without some symbiosis with at least one other theme. Leadership may have its roots with the family and in education, and relationships between men and women have a dynamic effect of a women to come to positions of leadership as well as to stay a leader. The norm seems to be that a positive relationship with a successful male leader may be essential, but even then, the highest levels may not be attainable.

Leadership also runs into conflict within the strong patriarchal culture of the KSA. Even within the government, which actively seeks to promote women leaders, and businesses

seeking to do the same, there is frustration at the lack of success of promoting women to senior levels.

Values expressed throughout by these women leaders reflect the literature and the known attributes that relate to effective leadership. None of these values are using to leaders within the KSA, so the defining aspect of the culture and its relationship to women as leaders within that culture seem to be the primary defining aspect as to whether a woman can and will be successful as a leader.

6.6 Findings and Implications

This research had contributed better knowledge of Saudi women leadership achievement. The research revealed culturally based constructs related to gender on Saudi women's successful journey to leadership. The women regarded themselves as no different from men in terms of bearing responsibility, being independent and achieving success. Their success was attributed to empathy with employees, ability to adapt, strength of character, expert knowledge and solidarity among women.

The findings show that certain values help women to achieve, sustain and evolve their leadership skills, aided by their skills to negotiate social and cultural dynamics, and organisational factors critical for their success. There is a role of the family and especially the father's role, individual's aspirations and action, the personal and professional struggle that Saudi women leaders experience, and the interpersonal relationships that they establish with their male counterparts to succeed.

Theoretical understanding is advanced in terms of the complex social, cultural and familial dynamics that underpin Saudi women's achievement of leadership positions. This is in contrast to theories of leadership that seek to explain achievement of leadership through personal traits. This research shows that the context, society, culture and family, as well as personal characteristics are all significant in the achievement of leadership positions by Saudi women. So, a better explanation for the achievement of leadership positions is that the whole is more significant than any individual aspects.

The government context is significant in understanding Saudi women's achievement of leadership. All the participants emphasised the significance of King Abdullah's scholarship programme in their leadership journey. King Abdullah's decree in the *majlis al surah* was the springboard on which Saudi women began to realise their leadership potential. It was the

right context at the right time that provided aspiring Saudi women leaders with the societal and culture legitimacy that they had lacked.

Family, culture and individual personality traits are important and critical factors in Saudi women's achievement of leadership positions. In particular, leadership achievement is attributed to independence, self-confidence, relationships, values and ethics, ability to meet personal goals, family, society and culture, as well as personal qualities. The women saw no difference between men and women in terms of responsibility, independence, and success, but noted issues that they had to confront in order to succeed. Therefore, leadership success is attributed to women ability to negotiate the social and cultural dynamics, revolving around society, equality and relationships including with other women. Relationships between female leaders and their counterparts seems to be the biggest challenge, whereas support from men is essential. The relationships also focus on the father and the family. The relationships fostered here nurtured and supported Saudi women's leadership ambition.

The findings reveal the complexity of values and their interrelationships. The origins of values appear to be from male role models, although not the husband. Values were developmental and included values related to work, as were goals and characteristics focused on serving society. There is a connection between leadership and values. Women noted the quality of good communication and desires to help the environment and serve the country and society in general. Women perceive themselves as the primary care givers, that this is not a man's job, and that this is also the societal expectation.

There are implications of the study for policy and ambitious women's leadership journey. There are clear implications for government policy, as two participants have achieved their leadership ambition in governance. One participant holds high positions in the UN and is a member of the Saudi parliament, as is the other participant. They discussed the implications with the researcher and requested copies of the final dissertation for their consideration for policy implications.

There are also implications at the communal and familial levels for 'future generation' of women leaders, as mentioned by the participants. The model of women's leadership achievement that the findings reveals will be communicated to women's groups and communities, as well as chambers of commerce. One participant heads the Arab British Chamber of Commerce and she also asked for a copy of the final dissertation.

What actually happens with the research finding is important. The communal and familial implications are that various awareness programs in schools, colleges and universities can be based on the research findings. Two participants who asked for the final dissertations are deans of colleges. They mentioned ‘future generation’ of women leaders and expressed an interest in learning how to promote women’s leadership programs.

6.7 Conclusion

The fact that the women participating in these interviews are at very high levels of leadership both within their own country and, in at least one case, internationally, proves that women can advance to very high levels of leadership. Even so, there is at least some belief that they cannot achieve the very highest levels. How do women deal with this?

Part of the issue is that many women seem to accept what they believe to be the reality that their role is primarily that of the family care giver and that significant leadership roles are not available to them. As suggested by Toh and Leonardelli (2012), the issue is that these beliefs are held very tightly by both genders. Until that changes, the issue of a significant number of women moving into important positions of leadership will probably not change much from the current situation, despite the active attempts by some business and the government. How does one “loosen” the societal tightness around issues of cultural gender identity? At present, that is unclear, and some countries may be actually trying to tighten these issues even more. This is fertile ground for future research.

Chapter 7 Conclusions

7.1 Summary

This research investigated cultural and social factors that influence or allow Saudi women to become leaders. It also examined those values that are synchronous with cultural and social factors that may improve access to leadership opportunities for Saudi women.

The empirical data was interpreted to produce a framework focused on leadership and the cultural and social factors that enable or inhibit such leadership. The research revealed culturally based constructs related to gender on Saudi women's successful journey to leadership. Whilst men are given responsibility and favoured for responsible positions, women are not inferior to men. Significantly, the women regarded themselves as no different from men in terms of bearing responsibility, being independent and achieving success. It confirmed the expectation depicted in the conceptual framework that women's attributes or values are critical and significant in women's successful journey to leadership. Sixteen such values and attributes emerged from the data. Significant among them were empathy with employees, ability to adapt, strength of character, expert knowledge and solidarity among women.

By understanding the values that help women to achieve, sustain and evolve their leadership skills, which social and cultural dynamics enable or inhibit them in becoming leaders, and which organisational factors are critical for their success, this research had contributed better knowledge of Saudi women leadership achievement. Knowledge about women leadership in the Saudi context is thus advanced. This reveals that there is a role of the family and especially the father's role, individual's aspirations and action, the personal and professional struggle that Saudi women leaders experience, and the interpersonal relationships that they establish with their male counterparts to succeed.

The research contributed understanding and knowledge of those values held by successful women leaders in the KSA that are both unique and shared with successful leaders around the world. It revealed the social and cultural factors and dynamics, in the opinion of the participants that inhibit or enhance their ability to gain leadership roles and to work as

effective leaders. The research revealed the organisational factors or dynamics affect women leaders. These findings provide theoretical understanding in terms of the complex social, cultural and familial dynamics that underpin Saudi women's achievement of leadership positions. This is in contrast to theories of leadership that seek to explain achievement of leadership through personal traits. This research shows that the context, society, culture and family, as well as personal characteristics are all significant in the achievement of leadership positions by Saudi women. So, a better explanation for the achievement of leadership positions is that the whole is more significant than any individual aspects.

The government context is significant in understanding Saudi women's achievement of leadership. All the participants emphasised the significance of King Abdullah's scholarship programme in their leadership journey. King Abdullah's decree in the *majlis al surah* or consultative council was the springboard on which Saudi women began to realise their leadership potential. It was the right context at the right time that provided aspiring Saudi women leaders with the societal and culture legitimacy that they had lacked. The role of King Abdullah personally too cannot be underestimated. The King is revered and his decrees and dictates form the values and norms accepted by society. So, his scholarship programme and opening of higher government positions to Saudi women gave them the much needed legitimacy and credence they needed to excel.

The King's decree empowered Saudi women. They were able to face their male colleagues in government offices with equal standing. They could now aspire to the higher positions that their knowledge and competency merited. Many of the research participants who had already begun their leadership journey in the private sector indicated how they felt rejuvenated by the King's decree. Others in high government positions expressed their satisfaction at the legitimisation of their leadership roles by the King's decree. This empowerment is now the general environment for all aspiring Saudi women leaders. These young women benefit from the foundation laid by King Abdullah.

Family is a strong value held by the Saudi women leaders. The role of family in Saudi women's achievement of leadership cannot be understated. A woman's family begins in her parents' home and imbues in her the traditions, values and norms cherished by the family, and it then extends to her married family, her husband and children. Both these families are foci for appreciating the leadership ambition, learning to aspire, and being supported in morale and kind to achieve leadership. All the research participants stressed the critical role

that their father's family played in incubating their leadership ambition and related how their fathers were central in the achievement of their ambition. They also related how their husbands had continued to nurture and support them once they were married. Many participants indicated that they may not have achieved their leadership roles had their families not supported them.

Saudi women hold strong principles and standards which are significant in the Saudi women's achievement of leadership success. For example, their strength of characters and their ability to adapt to particular contexts. Additionally, their family and society determine Saudi women's values, ethics and personal goals, and support from the family, in particular the father has a bearing on the level of goals or leadership ambition that the individual woman leader set herself. Women leaders with families of their own were supported by their husbands and balance professional ambition and family commitment. Thus values and family interplay between society and organisation. There is no clear boundary between the two. By understanding society and culture, as perceived by Saudi women, their roles in organisations becomes clearer.

So, women are capable and can manage leadership in this context achieve it more than those who cannot. With this shift in power delegation and leadership, a rise of a woman's role is clearly emerging in Saudi Arabia. This ownership and management is related to values, social and cultural dynamics and organizational factors, as investigated in this research. Therefore, with reference to the research questions, values, social and cultural dynamics and organizational roles do affect the achievement of leadership by Saudi women.

7.2 Further Research

Further research would complement the framework developed in this research. An interesting question arising from the research concerns women's perspective once they have reached significant leadership positions. In particular, with reference to the three research questions, do their values change or evolve once they have achieved their targeted leadership positions? Do they exert influence on culture and society to change it when they have significant leadership power? In particular, how do they influence younger women aspiring to be leaders and who make these successful leaders their role models? Equally, how do these successful women leaders change the organisational culture to become more conducive to women leaders? How do they "loosen" the societal tightness around issues of cultural gender identity?

Given that women have attributes or values that enabled them to engender and practice leadership, how women use them in their leadership practice would be interesting to understand

One question that needs to be asked is whether or not any of the values associated with successful female leadership in the KSA are unique. Since the Saudi experience in terms of tradition and religiosity is significantly different from other North African countries, middle-eastern countries and Gulf countries, have Saudi women developed values and characteristic unique to themselves?

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Appendix 1 Ethical Approval

Ethical approval was obtained for all three rounds of interviews and the approved forms are available from the author.

(It was not possible to copy the forms electronically into the Thesis.)

Appendix 2 Consent Form



Brunel Business School

Research Ethics

Participant Consent Form

Many thanks for agreeing to participate in my research project. The project has to be completed in part fulfilment of my degree programme and so your assistance is much appreciated.

Consent:

I have read the Participation Information Sheet and hereby indicate my agreement to participate in the study and for the data to be used as specified.

Name of participant or informed third party: [INSERT NAME OF PARTICIPANT]

Signature: [INSERT YOUR SIGNATURE]

Date: [INSERT DATE]

This form was shown to all the participants and the interviews were conducted after they consented.

Appendix 3 Rounds of Interview Questions

First Round Interview Questions

- Q1. How did you develop your network of important connections to become a leader?
- Q2. What difference does being a woman make to you becoming a leader?
- Q3. How did your self-esteem affect you in becoming a leader?
- Q4. What role did other peoples' negative views of your ability play in you becoming a leader?
- Q5. How do you build relationships with influential people in the organisation?
- Q6. How did you engage with people while seeking a leadership role in our organisation?
- Q7. What role did your connections play in you becoming a leader?
- Q8. What emphasis do you put on caring for your employees?
- Q9. What is your attitude to becoming a leader?
- Q10. How confident were you in your pursuit of leadership?
- Q11. What prior experience did you have that helped you to achieve your leadership role?
- Q12. What affect did the environment and culture of the company have on you becoming a leader?
- Q13. How did you manage the resistance of men to you becoming a leader?
- Q14. How passionate were you to become a leader? Please give examples of situations.
- Q15. What targets did you set yourself to achieve to become a leader?
- Q16. How did you assess your credibility in seeking leadership?
- Q17. What role did family values have in your becoming a leader?
- Q18. What was the role of morality in you becoming a leader?
- Q19. What kind of ethics did you adopt to become a leader?
- Q20. What was the influence of society on your becoming a leader?

Second Round Interview Questions

Q1: What role have the familial values played that helped you become a leader? What kind of support have you received?

Q2: Was that because you were enthusiastic? Talk about the practical aspect. Before getting this position, you were gradually promoted in other positions. To what extent were you enthusiastic about becoming a leader?

Q3: Certainly, you had goals that you wanted to achieve. What were the goals that you set for yourself to become a leader?

Q4: What difference you have found, being a woman who became a leader? (at work)

Q5: To which extent has your self-esteem helped you become a leader? How much confident you were about achieving a leadership position?

Q6: What was the attitude or the orientation that you adopted towards attaining a leadership position? Surely, you had attitudes in any leadership position and I do not mean goals. Let's concentrate on your last position.

Q7: The next question is related to your words. To which extent your advance towards leadership has been affected by the others' negative views and opinions? For example, some of them may have some negative views that you won't succeed! Have you got the idea of my question?

Q8: In the beginning, you told me about your previous experience that helped you to achieve every leadership position. What was the (previous) expertise that you had and helped you become a leader?

Q9: The next question: In which ways have the society helped you become a leader?

9.1 Q: Everyone is surrounded by a network of connections that has helped him/her to reach his/her goal. How have you managed to build your network of important ties (figures, persons) that helped you become a leader?

9.2 Q: How could you develop this social network to reach this position?

Q10: I want to ask you about the role of your family ties or relationships that helped you become a leader? In the beginning, I asked you about how you developed your relationships and you answered.

Q11: The next question is related to the previous one. What was the role of the moral aspects (the values) that helped you become a leader? What kinds of morals you adopted that helped you become a leader?

Q12: These values are wonderful. You were very brief in your answer and it was very

indicative. How do you evaluate your credibility (honesty, Integrity) in searching for leadership?

Q:12.1 How was your relationship with the people during your quest for a leadership role in the organization? I do not talk about the organization, but I mean the society. Did you avoid attending the social events?

Q: 12.2 How have you managed to build ties with influential figures in the organization?

Q13: I may ask you to kindly talk a little bit about yourself as a leader in this organization? Would you talk about the difficulties, the obstacles, the expertise, the roles and the requirements?

Q14: Let's talk about the important point that we have just talked about! How could you build relationships with the influential people at the ministry such as Prince Faisal?

Q15: What are the principles that you want to be embraced by your staff? Things that they must put into consideration. There could be more than one principle, but what is that principle that must be embraced?

Round Three Interview Questions

Q1. Which leaders from your past (including your parental leader) were influential in encouraging you to be a leader?

Q2 Can you think of anyone who indirectly encouraged you through word or action to focus on leadership as a career path?

2.1 How did they encourage you indirectly, and were you aware of their encouragement at the time?

2.1 Do you think that you or the Saudi women in general receive enough support from the government in terms of empowerment?

Q3. What are the personal traits that helped you become a successful leader?

3.1. Are they the same traits that sustain you as an effective female leader or have they changed as you matured into your leadership role?

Q4. Of the traits discussed in the previous question, are there any that more important to you?

Q5. How familiar are you with networks, social and personal?

Q6. What is your experience with social networks and do they add value?

6.1. Do any of these types of networking situations (voice-to-voice, social media, face-to-face) create barriers for leaders, or do they facilitate the exchange of useful information.

Q7. How do you communicate with your superiors, your peers or those who report to you?

Q8. What is the most effective way of exchanging information between you and the others?

Q9. Within the organization in which you currently work or one in which you recently worked, can you describe specific processes or factors that impede your ability to be a successful leader?

Are there specific processes or factors that enhance your ability to be a successful leader?

What three words of advice would you give to young Saudi women that want to move up into significant leadership positions?

Appendix 4 Sample Interview Data and Coding

Q1. How did you develop your network of important connections to become a leader?

My **relationships** were built on the foundation that you should love for your neighbour what you love for yourself. From this my work path was developed. From the beginning I was committed to giving and getting advice on all aspects of work, that was what I concentrated on and I built my relationships for the benefit of my **career**. My **goals** were to benefit the students and direct my experience towards the benefit of the work. I did not build relationships based on personal affairs, even if I had different views between me and my colleagues we would still work together. My **knowledge and experience** in the place I worked helped me develop my relationships. I would treat my workers **equally**. That is what helped me develop relationships.

Q2. What difference did you being a women make to you becoming a leader?

I did not find any difference and had a lot of **self-confidence**. So I saw that an individual is the one who develops chances and opens opportunities. My self-confidence came from my **experience** in my field in addition to my high degree of **education**. I have a doctorate in my field and it was rare to find this in women. I feel there is no difference between men and women at work and we are **equal**. We all view work as a **goal** to deliver teaching and learning. I would not let men who work for me to feel they work for a woman and they are men. There is a level of **respect** that covered the work and there was no emphasis on me being female. I tried not to let leadership cover my female traits.

Q3. How did your self-esteem affect you in becoming a leader?

I was the kind of person who knew their worth; that I had qualities that were different to others and this gave me **self-confidence**. This gave me the ability to give and help others and work collectively, and that is what made them put me in a leadership position.

Q4. What role did other peoples' negative views of your ability play in you becoming a leader?

Organising people is harder than organising robots. There were negative views not directed at me personally but at all ladies in general. I tried to make it clear that the reality was opposite and that men and women are **equal**. I personally don't like to discuss these issues but prove them through my work and I became a leader **by chance** and did not plan it.

Q5. How do you build relationships with influential people in the organisation?

My **degree** and **in-depth studying in my field** was one of the reasons for building **relationships**. In university doing projects meant connecting with departments so I can build connections the field and develop them. People knew me through my contacts and my **knowledge and experience**. I was chosen for **conferences** and I participated and built

and develop my relationships through this, but for the benefit of work and not personally. I was chosen to grade and rank my students and this benefited the society as a whole.

Q6. How did you engage with people while seeking a leadership role in our organisation?

I would make clear through my interaction with people that I did not talk down to people. I was normal with everyone and helped everyone. I tried to be a good **example**. I had a lot of **respect** for the people around me. This helped me to get to my position. I did not work to get here but **events** put me here.

Q7. What role did your connections play in you becoming a leader?

My **relationships** with leaders had a role in my position. Deriving from **participation in conferences**. The leaders all of them gave me praise and advice which helped me reach my position. And when I reached their they thought it was well deserved.

Q8. What emphasis do you put on caring for your employees?

I would encourage **commitment** at work and try hard to spend a lot of time at work. I try from that to become a good **example** for them. I would raise the commitment at work and its importance to achieve goals, both personally and work related. I dealt with those I was leading with the thought of lead by example.

Q9. What is your attitude to becoming a leader?

My instructions were research and **commitment** to developing teaching by doing research and studying. For the sake of work and the students my **goal** was to improve subjects. I would search for quality to gain acceptance of students and managers. I try to be good natured and try to work to a high standard.

Q10. How confident were you in your pursuit of leadership?

You need to avoid feeling that you are less than others. **Self-confidence** makes you compassionate and this is what makes me different. My self-confidence was not arrogant it was part of my getting to my position.

Q11. What prior experience did you have that helped you to achieve your leadership role?

Experience helped me in a big way to get to my position. My experience helped me on how to help employees. The relationships I built in the field through **conference** and research, and my drive for success to find what is new in the field of learning increased my experience and prepared me for a good position. My experience was due to my work with men so it helped me in how to work with men. It is understood that teaching is not a profession for men or women specifically. So my work with them made it easier to reach my position. I would draw on this experience in how to lead men and women.

Q12. What affect did the environment and culture of the company have on you becoming a leader?

I was committed and there were not a lot of women in this field. The government encouraged women to work so there was an encouraging and accepting environment in this field and they could see from my experience and knowledge that I could be a leader.

Q13. How did you manage the resistance of men to you becoming a leader?

I did not find resistance from men there was respect and appreciation for my work. They felt there is no difference between men and women and there was no resentment when I got to my position because I was capable. The men were understanding of my position and were happy I got it, seeing I was capable of it through experience and knowledge. There was resistance in other fields but not in my field. Women have to compete to get leadership and there is a need for female leaders.

There is division between men and women in religion. But the government encourages women to get to leadership positions. Though there are restricting views of women in some parts of society.

Q14. How passionate were you to become a leader? Please give examples of situations.

I didn't have drive in the beginning of my career but when I got this position I grew so that I could get to a position of power to make changes in the field of teaching. So my drive grew to develop the field.

Q15. What targets did you set yourself to achieve to become a leader?

My goal was to develop teaching and research so I had targets to benefit the university then targets to develop teaching as a whole. I had a goal to do group research to develop teaching in a specific area. I tried to increase the level of learning to be on the standard of the rest of the world.

Q16. How did you assess your credibility in seeking leadership?

I worked with integrity and tried to achieve my goals and from that the goal of the department. So I was transparent and realistic and tried to getting involved in many things to develop myself.

Q17. What role did family values have in you becoming a leader?

My family were the main influence, my siblings were taught to a high standard and that drove my learning. I did a lot of my learning in my country. But because of the passion I had for research, my parents gave me the confidence to travel to develop myself and gain what was not available in Saudi Arabia. I studied my masters and doctorate in the UK, and they made everything easy in relation to my travel and studying. Their encouragement was important during my time at university. During my breaks I would take small courses in relation to my studies.

Q19. What kind of ethics did you adopt to become a leader?

It was my nature to try to be thoughtful and help others and try to help my colleagues because their circumstances did not allow them to travel. I would cover their work during their holidays. The community does not have any tangible opposition. I find it is encouraging and supportive and accepting. I would not do people favours when it came to assigning positions. I would only assign the right person to the right place.

Appendix 5 QDA Miner

QDA Miner is a software package for organising and analysing qualitative data. Using the QDA (Qualitative Data Analysis) software, researcher can code, annotate, retrieve and analyse textual data. The successive rounds of interview data were transcribed and input into QDA and analysed using its coding and analysis functions.

The explanatory factors were found by coding the data in QDA using analytic induction. The process of analytic induction was used to build the explanation of Saudi woman's leadership, by analysing data from the first round of interviews and extending it to the second round and repeating the process for the third round. The data was systematically organised, coded and analysed. It was interpreted to discover emerging themes and sub-themes. The successive rounds of interviews were then interpreted to suggest questions and issues that need to be explored with interviewees in the second and third round of interviews. An emergent framework was used to group the data and then look for relationships. The researcher examined the 'message content' to evaluate the participants' response. This framework helped to structure, label and define data and emerged as the 'coding plan'.

The QDA WordStat facility enables a researcher to perform quantitative content analysis and text mining. This produces numerical and categorical data. QDA has the facility to analysing statistical data too, using the SimStat tool.

Appendix 6 Participant Information

Name	Age	Qualification	Position
Dr Afnan	45		CEO Arab British Chamber of Commerce
Mrs Frydah	60		Dean of private college
Mrs Somayah	50		CEO Jazirh Bank
Mrs Norah	58	Masters	Deputy Minister of Education
Ms Sarah	38		CEO Al Ahli Capital Bank
Mrs Lama	40		CEO Ahli Bank
Dr Thoriya	65	PhD	Director UN Population Fund; Under-secretary General, UN and MP
Dr Hoda	58	PhD	MP
Dr Nadiyah	60	PhD	Dean of private college
Dr Majdah	50	PhD	Deputy Executive Director of Saudi Environment Society
Dr Nahed	50		Founder & CEO Gulf Bank
Total Years of Experience	574		
Mean Age	52		
Max Age	65		
Min Age	38		