Universitetet
i Stavanger

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
NORWEGIAN SCHOOL OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT

MASTER'S THESIS

STUDY PROGRAM:	THESIS IS WRITTEN IN THE FOLLOWING SPECIALIZATION/SUBJECT:
Master's degree in Service Leadership in International Business	Gender stereotypes implicating women's career advancement
	IS THE ASSIGNMENT CONFIDENTIAL?
	No

TITLE:

Exploring how gender stereotypes affect women's opportunities in attaining leadership positions

AUTHOR	SUPERVISOR:
	Rune Todnem By

Student number:	Name:
267695 …………………	Kristin Flatebø Førland …………………………………….
265163 …………………	Michelle Jia Engesbak …………………………………….

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Norway, 84.5% of Managing Director positions are held by men, while women hold only 14.5% (CORE, 2022). Gender stereotypes contribute to the hiring bias favoring male applicants for leadership roles (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001). With this backdrop in mind, this thesis aims to address the research question *"How do gender stereotypes affect females´ opportunities to attain leadership roles?"*; and to shed light on the imbalance in gender representation in Norwegian leadership roles. The research emphasizes the benefits of a gender-diverse leadership team in terms of innovation and financial performance.

The literature findings confirmed the consequences women experience for either confirming or disconfirming gender stereotypes. The study follows an interpretivism research paradigm and employs a correlational research design with mixed-methods. Through theory triangulation and thematic analysis, the research examines four main themes related to gender stereotypes: personality traits/backlash effects, "lack of fit", "glass ceiling", and emotionality. An online survey, employing a 7-point Likert scale, gathered data, and a frequency analysis was conducted to measure the occurrence of each item.

The quantitative findings revealed that gender stereotypes indeed act as barriers for women in attaining leadership roles. Women are perceived to lack the personality traits associated with successful leaders, experience a "lack of fit", face family responsibilities as barriers, and are considered more emotional in decision-making, which hinders their advancement to higher leadership positions. Thus, the recommendations suggested for business practitioners to consider are implementation of management training to strengthen knowledge and commitment to gender-diversity; recruitment transparency measures; training programs promoting equal opportunities for women; educational measures to better understand the benefits of emotionality in decision-making.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Acknowledgement

This thesis was written as the final work of the master's program of Service Leadership in International Business, at the University of Stavanger. The opportunity to explore such an interesting and relevant topic has been a motivational factor throughout this period. After analyzing how gender stereotypes affect women's opportunities in attaining leadership roles, the authors see further questions regarding underlying invisible factors that need to be explored.

The authors of this thesis would express their sincere gratitude towards Professor Rune Todnem By, for dedicating his time to provide helpful guidance throughout this research project. Your valuable advice is highly appreciated for completing this complex study. The authors would also like to thank the participants' contribution by sharing their insightful opinions in the online survey. To our friends and family, your support and encouragement have helped us immensely throughout the challenges and adversities. In times when directions felt unclear, we would like to thank each other for interesting discussions, lively conversations, and compassionate company.

Stavanger, June 15, 2023

Kristin Flatebø Førland & Michelle Jia Engesbak

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Research Question

Although study findings advocate the positive outcomes of increasing diversity among top leadership groups, a recent report from Boston Consulting Group shows that the development of women's share in leadership roles across Norway has stagnated (CORE, 2022; Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021; McKinsey & Company, 2017). To further examine the phenomenon, the research question of this thesis paper is: *"How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?"*. Furthermore, the authors are interested to explore whether confirming or disconfirming gender stereotypes implicate women's career advancement, as these are crucial academic explanations for the imbalanced gender distribution in top leadership positions.

1.2 Research Background

Norway is one of the most gender-equal countries in the world. The Global Gender Gap Report (2022) proves the statement to be true in terms of economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, and health and survival (WEF, 2022). According to the index from Global Gender Gap Report (2022), Norway is ranked third, with a score of 84,5% in terms of gender parity (WEF, 2022). However, the reputation of high gender-equality is questioned when recent statistics from "CORE Topplederbarometer" (2022) show that men are dominating the top leadership positions in the general workforce in Norway. The gender distribution in Managing Director positions consists of 84,5% men and 14,5% women (CORE, 2022).

Furthermore, gender stereotypes can have significant implications for organizations, which can have a negative impact on organizational performance, as research has shown that gender diversity in leadership teams is associated with better business outcomes (Haslam & Ryan, 2007; Hunt et al., 2018; Larson, 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2017; Moreno-Gómez

et al., 2018). More on topics regarding gender stereotypes, gender-diversity, backlash effects of gender stereotypes, personality traits and emotionality for leadership positions are addressed in Chapter 2. When conducting background research on topics related to gender stereotypes and women in leadership, it was noticed that the information was scarce. Various research has explored topics such as gender stereotypes affecting women, gender-diversity in leadership, and leadership traits individually. However, there are limited studies addressing how gender stereotypes implicate women's career advancement. In addition, there is also a lack of research exploring the labor market in Norway. Hence, this research will investigate how literature exploring the above-mentioned themes correlates with the Norwegian work market.

Due to the aforementioned literature gap, a comprehensive literature review was undertaken to identify key themes and patterns which are considered important to investigate further. Based on these key themes and patterns, there was conducted quantitative research to detect the positiveness, agreeableness, and acceptance of the constructs. Through this study, the authors aim to collect data and extend their knowledge in this area of research to provide suggestions for business practitioners and guide further research.

1.3 Objectives & Approach

This study is intended to help businesses understand how employees perceive different gender stereotypes, in order to achieve a gender-inclusive work environment and to increase organizational performance. The study also supports future research on determining how gender stereotypes affect women's opportunities in their career advancement. The main objective of this thesis is to study how females' opportunities to attain leadership roles are affected by gender stereotypes. The second objective is to investigate how women experience any backlash of confirming or disconfirming gender stereotypes. The purpose of this thesis aims to assist businesses to understand how gender stereotypes may cause unbalanced gender

proportions in leadership positions, and how a gender-diverse leadership team can contribute to improved innovation and financial performance.

To achieve the objectives, it is necessary to gather literature and findings regarding subjects related to gender stereotypes in leadership and social settings, the implications and barriers of gender bias, and the consequences of confirming or disconfirming stereotypes. Additionally, a quantitative research method will be conducted to examine the phenomena further. To support the purpose of this thesis, it will therefore be written intelligibly for readers at any professional level to acquire general knowledge and insight into the study's content.

1.3.1 Research Scope

To achieve the thesis objectives, methodological triangulation is employed. This approach involves using multiple data collection methods to ensure objective analysis and minimize researcher bias (Drie & Dekker, 2013). The thesis combines qualitative and quantitative methods, leveraging their complementary strengths. The exploratory sequential design is followed, wherein the qualitative phase of data collection and analysis precedes the quantitative phase. This mixed-methods approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Clark, 2017).

Additionally, the literature review explores the impact of gender stereotypes on women's career progression and leadership positions. It draws from reputable sources such as the United Nations, World Economic Forum, Boston Consulting Group, and McKinsey & Company. The review covers various perspectives, including leadership roles, emotionality, personal and societal aspects, and dimensions of gender stereotypes. It examines how gender stereotypes hinder women's advancement in leadership and influence the perception of their success. The review highlights diversity and inclusion as a solution to overcome barriers and promote gender equality in leadership.

1.4 Thesis Structure

Each chapter (with the exception of 5 & 6) starts with an introduction, from which the contents are generally presented and each chapter summary provides a link between the chapters. Moreover, a chapter summary discussing the main findings is presented after each section. Table 1.1 shows the overall structure of the thesis.

	Description	Where
Research question	How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?	Chapter 1 - Introduction Chapter 2 - Literature Review Chapter 4 - Findings & Discussions Chapter 5 - Conclusion
Aim	To explore the implications of gender stereotypes for women's career advancement opportunities based on the Norwegian work market.	Chapter 4 - Findings & Discussion Chapter 5 - Conclusion
Objective 1	Description of the research question, background, main objectives, and approach.	Chapter 1 - Introduction
Objective 2	Presentation and discussion of current theoretical perspectives exploring the phenomenon.	Chapter 2 - Literature Review
Objective 3	Description of research paradigm, design and methods used to collect and process primary data	Chapter 3 - Methodology
Objective 4	Critical analysis of findings from the quantitative data, discussed against the literature findings	Chapter 4 - Findings & Discussions
Objective 5	Summary of the key findings to answer the research question.	Chapter 5 - Conclusion
Objective 6	A list of recommendations is presented for business practitioners.	Chapter 6 - Recommendation

Table 1.1 Structure of Thesis

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to study a variety of literature examining the topics of gender stereotypes, challenges and barriers women encounter, as well as gender diversity in support of the research question *"How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?"*. Data from Boston Consulting Group (BCG), CORE "Topplederbarometer", and World Economy Forum (WEF) presents a statistical overview of gender diversity in the aspect of the general work market as well as leadership positions in Norway. The chapter includes studies addressing how gender-diverse leadership teams affect business performance. A description of prescriptive leadership traits of men and women and how both genders are affected by them are presented. Further, the main focus of this chapter is to address how gender stereotypes act as barriers limiting women's opportunities to attain leadership positions, as well as other underlying factors causing implications on women's career advancement. The chapter concludes with a summary, and further discussions regarding the literature are presented in Chapter 4.

2.2 Gender-diversity Affecting Business Performance

A top management team is the highest executives in a company, and responsible for directing the company (Whitler, 2021). A study conducted by McKinsey & Company (2018) analyzed data from over 1000 companies across 12 countries (Hunt et al., 2018). Their measurement of business impact on gender diversity in terms of profitability and long-term value creation at different levels of the organization displays a positive correlation between gender diversity on executive leadership teams and measures of financial performance (Hunt et al., 2018). Furthermore, the report from McKinsey & Company (2018) presents statistical data showing companies in the top diversity quartile are 21% more likely to outperform their national industry peers in terms of Earnings Before Interest and Taxes (EBIT) margin,

compared to the companies in the bottom diversity quartile. The top diversity quartile is the 25% of companies in the study which are measured to have the highest gender diversity at different levels of the organization (Hunt et al., 2018).

Additionally, the companies in the top 25% of the diversity quartile were 27% more likely to have industry-leading performance on longer-term value creation compared to companies in the bottom diversity quartile (Hunt et al., 2018). Positive impacts on gender diversity in leadership roles were also addressed by Grant & Sandberg in the New York Times (2014): *"When more women lead, performance improves… innovative firms with more women in top management are more profitable; and companies with more gender diversity have more revenue, customers, market share and profits"* (Grant & Sandberg, 2014).

Furthermore, a survey conducted by McKinsey & Company in 2017, with a sample of nearly 60.000 employees in over 100 companies found that gender diversity is also a corporate performance driver (McKinsey & Company, 2017). The survey used the diagnostic tool "Organizational Health Index" (OHI) to measure the performance and health of the company on nine criteria (McKinsey & Company, 2017).

Figure 2.1. The Organizational Health index at companies with three or more women in the executive committee had better results, 2017, by McKinsey & Company. (https://www.mckinsey.com/women-matter-time-to-accelerate/report)

As shown in Figure 2.1, some of the criteria were the leadership team quality, the company's sense of direction, the work environment and values, its level of innovation, its capabilities, etc. The results found that companies with three or more women on their executive committees scored higher on the criteria measuring the performance and health of the company, such as the work environment and values, the ability to communicate a clear vision and direction, and the quality of the leadership team (McKinsey & Company, 2017).

A study by Larson (2017) found that gender diversity leads to better decision-making. In all-male teams, business decisions are improved 58% of the time compared to individual decision-makers. On the other hand, business decisions made by gender-diverse teams made a 73% improvement in comparison to conclusions made by individual decision-makers (Larson, 2017). Moreover, a study by Moreno-Gómez et al. (2018) found that gender diversity has been invoked as a "necessary solution" to increase the quality of the board´s human capability, thus contributing to achieving its monitoring and strategy-making goals. The results further show a positive effect of women in top management positions by creating value for businesses and improving knowledge-intensive strategy and decision-making tasks within the organization (Moreno-Gómez et al., 2018).

2.3 Gender Distribution in the Workplace in Norway

The Global Gender Gap Report (2022) confirms that Norway currently ranks among the top three countries with the least amount of gender inequality globally. The report examines gender inequality in terms of economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment in 146 economies around the globe (WEF, 2022). According to the index from 2022, Norway enclosed the gender gap by 84,5 %, ranking third after Iceland and Finland (WEF, 2022). However, numbers from the subindex magnifying inequality in the area of economic participation and opportunities indicate that gender parity is still significantly uneven (WEF, 2020; WEF, 2022). An article

published in E24 indicates that little has changed in the past 30 years in Norway, in which women often end up working in low-paid professions, in public sectors, and in part-time jobs (Garder, 2011). The amount of women contributing to the workforce is approximately the same, only with an increase in employment part-time jobs (Garder, 2011).

2.3.1 Gender Distribution in Leadership Positions in Norway

A recent report from Boston Consulting Group shows that the development of women's share in leadership roles across Norway has stagnated (Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021). As shown in Figure 2.2, Norway has dropped from 36th place in 2006 to 68th place in 2020 when compared to all countries included in World Economic Forum's Gender Gap reports in the same interval (Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021).
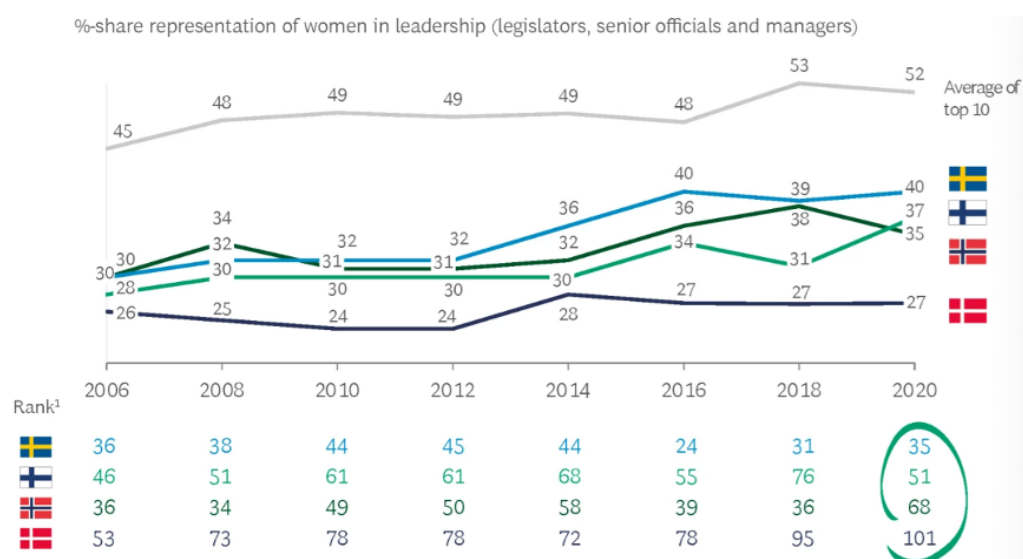
Figure 2.2. *Looking at women´s share in leadership, Nordics´ progress has stagnated, while being outpaced by other counties,* 2021, by Pollman-Larsen et al. (https://www.bcg.com/publications/2021/diversity-inclusion-nordics-region)

Furthermore, the report from Pollman-Larsen et al. (2021) shows that among the 30 largest listed companies in Norway, only three of them have a female CEO. Moreover, 82% of the bottom-line responsibilities, such as CFO, Head of BU, and sales are males (Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021).

Additionally, statistics from "CORE Topplederbarometer" (2022) show that men dominate the top leadership positions in the general workforce in Norway. Statistics by

"CORE Topplederbarometer" (2022) show that the gender distribution in the CEO position consists of 84,5% men and 14,5% women. The statistic (CORE, 2022) further shows that the female proportion in companies with legal requirements for gender balance in the board is equal to 29%, which is almost equivalent to the 26% proportion of female board members in companies without the same requirements. The statistics show that the gender gap in the top leadership groups is rather significant, even in companies with enforced legal requirements of gender balance (CORE, 2022). An article published in E24 suggests that gender quotation works against its purpose and should be limited, as these special rights make employers more skeptical when it comes to hiring women (Gaarder, 2011).

2.4 Gender Stereotypes

In subchapter 2.3, several studies addressed how gender diversity in leadership roles has positive impacts on the organization (Grant & Sandberg, 2014; Hunt et al., 2018; Larson, 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2017; Moreno-Gómez et al., 2018). Data from section 2.3.1 shows that Norway is perceived as gender inclusive in the general job market. However, in leadership positions, it is still quite significant (CORE, 2022; Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021; WEF, 2022). Some researchers claim that gender stereotypes are the cause of such gender imbalance among the leader roles (e.g., Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001).

A stereotype is a belief about the personal attributes of a group of people, and they are occasionally overgeneralized, inaccurate, and resistant to new information (Myers, 2010). United Nations Human Rights (2014) defines gender stereotypes as:

> *".. a generalized view or preconception about attributes, or characteristics that are or ought to be processed by women and men or the roles that are or should be performed by men and women. Gender stereotypes can be both positive and negative."* (United Nations Human Rights, 2014).

Another definition of gender stereotypes is formulated as "*Gender stereotypes are inferences about the personal characteristics and behaviors concerning males and females*" (Durik et al., 2006).

Gender stereotypes can have significant implications for organizations, particularly in terms of promoting diversity and inclusion (Haslam & Ryan, 2007). Stereotypical expectations of gender roles can result in bias during the recruitment, selection, and promotion processes, which can limit opportunities for women to advance in leadership roles (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). This can have a negative impact on organizational performance, as research has shown that gender diversity in leadership teams is associated with better business outcomes (Hunt et al., 2018; Larson, 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2017; Moreno-Gómez et al., 2018). Gender stereotypes are transmitted through media and social, educational, and recreational socialization, which promote gender prejudice and discrimination (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Stereotyping can be understood as the demand on the perceiver, allowing the perceiver to rely on previously stored knowledge to justify the status quo, or in response to social identity (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021).

2.4.1 Gender Stereotypes of Emotion

Women and men hold similar gender stereotypes about emotionality (Hutson-Comeaux & Kelly, 2002). The American Psychological Association defines emotionality as "*the degree to which an individual experiences and expresses emotions, irrespective of the quality of the emotional experience*" (APA, 2023a). Emotionality is associated with weakness, powerlessness, uncontrollability, and impulsivity. Such inferred dispositions are often associated with women (Fischer & LaFrance, 2015). The belief that women are more emotional than men is one of the strongest gender stereotypes held in Western cultures (Brescoll, 2016). A study by (Durik et al., 2006) examined gender stereotypes among four ethnicities in America: European, African, Hispanic, and Asian, where European American

gender stereotypes were most gender-differentiated compared to the other ethnicities. Gender differences in emotionality indicate that *"The general claim that women are more emotional than men tell us more about our cultural stereotypes than about actual sex differences in emotions"* (Fischer & LaFrance, 2015).

Women and men experience the same type of emotion on a daily basis, however, women are believed to be more emotional than men (Brescoll, 2016; Plant et al., 2000). An explanation for this claim is that women display more emotions and are seen as less able to control the outward display of their emotions (Brescoll, 2016; Plant et al., 2000). A study by Plant et al. (2000) examined the gender stereotypes of emotions and their relationship to interpreting emotional expressions. The result indicated that people generally endorse the gender stereotypes of emotions, specifically: women are believed to experience and express the majority of the studied emotions (ref. Table 2.1) in comparison to men (Plant et al., 2000).

Women	Men
Awe	Anger
Shame	Pride
Fear	
Distress	
Happiness	
Guilt	
Sympathy	
Sadness	
Love	
Surprise	
Embarrassment	
Shyness	

Table 2.1: *Emotions believed to be expressed and experienced by women and men*, informed by Plant et al., 2000

2.4.2 Implications of Emotions in Leadership Roles

The perception that women display more emotions is consequential for female leaders because people assume that women who are unable to control their emotional display will affect their ability to make rational, objective decisions (Brescoll, 2016). Women are believed

to not possess enough emotional toughness (e.g., the ability to control the feelings influencing their decision-making) to effectively lead others (Brescoll, 2016; Heilman, 2001). Seo & Barrett (2007) examined the link between affective experience and decision-making performance. The belief that feelings are generally bad for decision-making was proven wrong, as the individuals who experienced more intense feelings achieved higher decision-making performance (Seo & Barrett, 2007).

As presented in Table 2.1, not all emotions are associated with women´s gender stereotypes. In particular, emotions of happiness, sadness, and fear are associated with being more characteristic of women, whereas anger is believed to be more characteristic of men (Hutson-Comeaux & Kelly, 2002). Women who display the same type and intensity of emotions as men may be seen as less capable of controlling how those emotions influence them (Brescoll, 2016). Female leaders who expressed anger were seen as out of control, resulting in granting females less power and status at work. Furthermore, the expressed anger is used as a justifying argument as to why females are not suitable for leadership positions (Brescoll, 2016). Another emotional gender stereotype of women is that they are overly sensitive, responding by not learning from critical feedback and failures (Brescoll, 2016). It is more socially acceptable for women to express gender-stereotypic emotions such as crying or smiling (Fischer & LaFrance, 2015). However, it is important to control the display of emotions, and social roles may overcome gender roles in professions where expressions shall connect with an acquired role (Brescoll, 2016; Fischer & LaFrance, 2015). Since women are expected to express more sadness, it is generally believed that women lack the ability to control their emotions in leadership, affecting their rationality, competence, and improvement from criticism (Brescoll, 2016).

2.4.3 Gender Stereotypes in Leadership Positions

Gender-related barriers and biases have declined over the years; however, gender stereotypes continue to create problems in the progress of women´s careers (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Gender stereotyping is considered a significant issue obstructing women's career progression in leadership (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Women are underrepresented in leadership positions partly because of gender stereotypes that favor men and their achievement-oriented traits (Lawson et al., 2022). Both female and male managers continue to favor men over equally qualified women in hiring, compensation, performance evaluation and promotion decisions, which limits women's opportunities and deprives organizations of valuable talent (Grant & Sandberg, 2014).

Successful female leaders are less liked than their male counterparts and less preferred as managers. However, this does not apply in fields considered feminine or gender-neutral (Heilman et al., 2004; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Evidence of this claim can be found in statistical data from Norway, conducted by Boston Consulting Group, showing an equal gender distribution in support roles such as Head of HR, Head of Legal, and Head of Marketing (Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021). Negative reactions toward successful female leaders are due to their violation of gender stereotypes rather than their success itself (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). As a result, some women avoid the detrimental backlash of success, and the challenges women can encounter on the path to upper echelons of power and authority in an organization (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007).

Gender stereotypes are identified through two broad clusters, namely communal and agentic, as presented in Table 2.2:
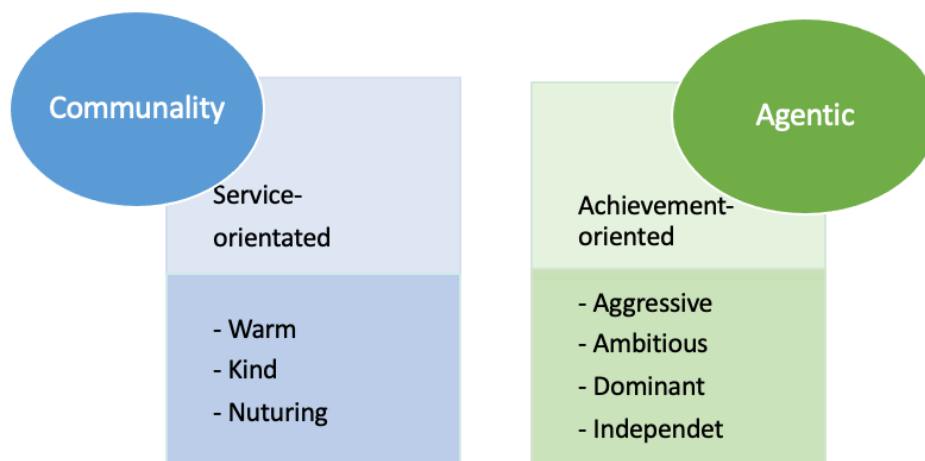
Table 2.2. *Communality and agentic gender stereotypes,* informed by Brescoll, 2016; Heilman, 2001

Women leaders are viewed as communal, but agentic personality traits are believed to be required for leadership roles (Brescoll, 2016). Our culture´s strong gender stereotypes extend beyond image to performance, leading us to believe that men are more competent than women (Grant & Sandberg, 2014). The "think manager - think male" paradigm tested how characteristic participants found communal and agentic traits to be for "men in general", "women in general", or "successful middle manager" (Fischbach et al., 2015). The findings showed a strong correlation between traits for men and managers, whereas the correlation between women and managers was zero, confirming that successful managers possess traits typically associated with men (Fischbach et al., 2015). Women engaging in agentic behavior and acting more dominant can however result in not being chosen for leadership roles (Brescoll, 2016).

2.5 Backlash Effects for Disconfirming Gender Stereotypes

Backlash effects are defined as *"social and economic reprisals for behaving counter-stereotypically"* (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). The roles men occupy in society align with the roles of leadership needed in an organization, but this is not the case for women (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Women who engage in agentic behavior often experience backlash effects because they are seen as having insufficient communality and violating a proscription against

enacting dominance (Brescoll, 2016). When women violate the attributed prescriptive of social norms to contradict the ideology of the "lack of fit" model by behaving agentic, even if it is to succeed in traditionally male-dominated environments, it may evoke backlash effects in many aspects (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). The backlash effects in the context of females obtaining leadership positions are defined as social and economic repercussions, for disconfirming prescriptive stereotypes (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Women risk social and economic reprisals, even though they must attribute themselves with prescriptive masculine traits such as self-confidence, assertiveness, and competitiveness to be considered qualified for leadership roles deemed as masculine (Heiman et al., 2004; Rudman & Phelan, 2008).

Although women who are more agentic are rated as highly competent and capable of leadership positions, they are more disliked by both males and females and viewed as socially deficient (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). As a result, successful female managers are perceived as more aggressive, selfish, and confrontational compared to their male counterparts (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Women are often situated in dilemmas due to either confirming gender stereotypes or disconfirming them (Fiske and Steven, 1993). Females who attempt to meet job-specific requirements may be negatively evaluated for not adhering to stereotypical gender expectations (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Conversely, women who conform to gender stereotypes may be perceived as lacking the ability to succeed in their careers (Rudman & Phelan, 2008).

2.5.1 Backlash Effects on Hiring

Self-promotion, such as highlighting past achievements and emphasizing one´s expertise during a job interview is especially important for women (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Thus, women face challenges of defying the stereotype of being subordinate and incompetent, hence presenting themselves with agentic attributes as confident and capable (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Although necessary for high competence ratings, self-promotion decreases

women's likeability ratings and the likelihood of being hired (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). On the contrary, the normative pressure to be modest is not faced by men. Men who self-promote themselves are rather viewed as highly competent, likable, and hirable (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Furthermore, a study (Rudman et.al., 2012) demonstrated that women may face bias by using the same direct and assertive strategy when applying for a job.

2.6 Barriers to Women in Attaining Leadership Positions

"To break down the barriers that hold women back, it's not enough to spread awareness. If we don't reinforce that people need — and want — to overcome their biases, we end up silently condoning the status quo" (Grant & Sandberg, 2014). Gender stereotypes are used to explain why women are not hired into organizational leading positions that possess power and prestige (Heilman, 2001). Gender biases influence evaluations in work settings in which a woman's competence provides no assurance for advancement in the same organizational levels as an equally performing man (Heilman, 2001).

2.6.1 "Glass Ceiling"

The phenomenon "glass ceiling" is an invisible barrier hindering women's careers and is viewed as a natural consequence of gender stereotypes regarding the expectations required of a woman's behavior (Heilman, 2001). Women often encounter a "glass ceiling" in career advancement, whereas men fast-accelerate into higher leadership positions (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) defines gender norms as "*ideas about how women and men should be and act*" (EIGE, 2023). A study conducted by Rudman and Phelan (2008) discovered that females violating their gender norms can result in poor performance evaluations and be disadvantageous for promotion opportunities (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Agentic women competing for top leadership roles were deemed interpersonally hostile (e.g., abrasive, pushy, and manipulative), resulting in being disapproved of higher-paying, prestigious positions (Rudman & Phelan, 2008).

2.6.2 The "Lack of Fit" Model

The "lack of fit" model is based on the idea that expectations about how successful or unsuccessful a person will be in a particular job are a driving force underlying personnel decisions (Heilman, 2001). The performance expectations are determined by the fit between the individual's attributes and the job's requirements in terms of skills and abilities (Heilman, 2001). Success is expected if the perceived fit is good, and failure is expected if the fit is poor (Heilman, 2001). The perceived fit in a particular profession affects the evaluation process, and the requirements of traditionally male jobs and stereotypic attributes ascribed to women are therefore likely to produce expectations of failure (Heilman, 2001). The "think manager - think male" paradigm found that managers possess traits typically associated with men (Fischbach et al., 2015). Regardless of the equal qualifications of a female and male applicant, the male is more likely to get the job in a leadership position because of the stereotypical fit regarding job characteristics and individual traits (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001).

2.6.3 "Fear of Success"

The phenomenon "fear of success" was based on the idea that a woman´s motivation in achievement situations was inhibited by their fear of disapproval for not being feminine (Heilman et al., 2004). Women who violate the gender-stereotypic prescriptions by being successful are apt to take the form of social censure and personally directed negatively (Heilman et al., 2004). A woman who behaves in typical ways reserved for a man is found to be less socially appealing (Heilman et al., 2004). Women who experience a conflict between emotions suitable for their role as leaders and those suitable for their role as a woman is an additional role stressor and might result in leadership roles appearing less attractive to them, preventing females from striving for higher leadership positions (Fischbach et al., 2015).

2.6.4 Family Responsibilities

Women are often considered the primary caregiver, and family responsibilities such as household duties, caring for elderly family members, and children can limit women's opportunities to pursue leadership professions (Subramaniam et al., 2013; St. Catherine University, 2021). Also, in households with dual income where both parties share family responsibilities, the ideal role arrangement targets women with additional duties (Subramaniam et al., 2013). This imbalance of responsibility affects professional women's advancement and can require them to make personal sacrifices such as downshifting their careers or resigning from their positions (St. Catherine University, 2021).

In organizations where high commitment is expected, a combination of family and occupation can hinder women's career development (Subramaniam et al., 2013). In an article published in E24, it is suggested that it is not the organization's culture that holds women from the boardrooms, but rather women's wish to prioritize family (Gaarder, 2011). However, some research claims that organizations look less favorably at married women with children when it comes to promotion, compared to single women (Subramaniam et al., 2013). In the West, female managers must therefore make difficult choices such as remaining single or childless in comparison to their male counterparts to achieve top leadership positions (Subramaniam et al., 2013). To emphasize this, a study shows that half of all women in top leadership positions in the UK are childless (Gaarder, 2011).

2.7 Chapter Summary

Gender stereotypes affect women's opportunities to achieve leadership positions. However, far more complex implications act as invisible barriers. Several studies show that gender distribution in leadership positions leads to a positive impact in business areas such as financial performance, innovation, and overall effectiveness (Grant & Sandberg, 2014; Hunt et al., 2018; Larson, 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2017). Nevertheless, statistical data shows

that there is an unbalanced gender distribution in leadership positions (CORE, 2022; Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021). In top leadership roles, women only occupy 14,5% of the CEO positions in Norway (CORE, 2022). The gender stereotypical picture of a woman does not fit the prescriptive image of a successful leader, and women who try to fit the image experience backlash effects and fall out of the societal norms (Heilman, 2001; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Due to the risk of falling out of the gender stereotypical image, women fear success and do not strive for higher leadership positions (Fischbach et al., 2015; Brescoll, 2016). Thus, suggesting that gender stereotypes mostly act as surface barriers (Brescoll, 2016; Durik et al., 2006; Fischer & LaFrance, 2015). Other societal and cultural factors have stronger implications on women's opportunities to attain leadership positions (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Fischer & LaFrance, 2015; Heilman, 2001; Plant, 2001).

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter presents the selected methodology to answer the research question *"How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?"*. Research methodology is the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic (Kothari, 2004). The objectives of this chapter are to outline the study's rationale and research procedures, ensuring a systematic structure to solve the research problem. As such, the methodology section allows the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability (Kothari, 2004).

Following the identification and justification of the research paradigm and research design, the selected research methodology, chosen method, and reasoning are outlined and explained. Furthermore, the procedure for data collection, sampling and data analysis is described. The chapter ends with a reflection on the study's validity and reliability, research ethics and limitations. Before the study was conducted, it was reviewed for compliance against the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) regarding personal data storage, sharing and security. The online advice was an assurance of approval for executing the survey, which confirmed that it was unnecessary to notify the project due to its anonymity.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Research often relies on a research paradigm as its philosophical framework, which represents a set of beliefs and understandings that guide the theories and practices of a research project (Neuman, 2013). Research paradigm refers to a researcher's worldview and philosophical assumptions about how knowledge is constructed, understood, and validated (Creswell, 2013). A research process consists of three major dimensions: ontology (i.e., nature of reality), epistemology (i.e., how we know what we know), and methodology (i.e., the process of research) (Creswell, 2013). According to Neuman (2013), ontology deals with

the nature of being or what exists and questions reality and its fundamentals, whereas epistemology is the issue of how we know the world around us or what makes a claim about it true and includes what we need to do to produce knowledge.

There are a few research paradigms with different philosophical assumptions. However, the interpretivism research paradigm is rooted in the belief that social phenomena are complex and cannot be reduced to simple cause-and-effect relationships (Creswell, 2013). Crewell (2013) explains that researchers operating within this paradigm seek to understand the subjective meanings, values, and experiences of individuals or groups under study. Rather than aiming for generalizability, interpretivism researchers focus on gaining an in-depth understanding of specific social contexts and processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Therefore, this thesis follows the interpretivism research paradigm as it seeks to understand how gender stereotypes affect females' opportunities to attain leadership roles. It does so by interpreting the subjective meanings and experiences of individuals within social contexts where gender stereotypes are implicated. Furthermore, the empirical research results are not meant to be generalized to support a hypothesis nor to prove causes for the observations, but rather aim to gain an in-depth understanding of gender stereotypes and their implications as a social phenomenon. See Table 3.1 below for a more detailed description of some of the main research paradigms available to researchers.

Paradigm	Ontology *What is reality?*	Epistemology *How can I know reality?*	Theoretical Perspective *Which approach do you use to know something?*	Methodology *How do you go about finding out?*	Method *What techniques do you use to find out?*
Positivism	There is a single reality or truth (more realist).	Reality can be measured and hence the focus is on reliable and valid tools to obtain that.	Positivism Post-positivism	Experimental research Survey research	Usually quantitative, could include: Sampling Measurement and scaling Statistical analysis Questionnaire Focus group Interview
Constructivist / Interpretive	There is no single reality or truth. Reality is created by individuals in groups (less realist).	Therefore, reality needs to be interpreted. It is used to discover the underlying meaning of events and activities.	Interpretivism (reality needs to be interpreted) • Phenomenology • Symbolic interactionism • Hermeneutics Critical Inquiry Feminism	Ethnography Grounded Theory Phenomenological research Heuristic inquiry Action Research Discourse Analysis Femenist Standpoint research etc	Usually qualitative, could include: Qualitative interview Observation Participant Non participant Case study Life history Narrative Theme identification etc
Pragmatism	Reality is constantly renegotiated, debated, interpreted in light of its usefulness in new unpredictable situations.	The best method is one that solves problems. Finding out is the means, change is the underlying aim.	Deweyan pragmatism *Research through design*	Mixed methods Design-based research Action research	Combination of any of the above and more, such as data mining expert review, usability testing, physical prototype
Subjectivism	Reality is what we perceive to be real	All knowledge is purely a matter of perspective.	Postmodernism Structuralism Post-structralism	Discourse theory Archaeology Genealogy Deconstruction etc.	Autoethnography Semiotics Literary analysis Pastiche Intertextuality etc.
Critical	Realities are socially constructed entities that are under constant internal influence.	Reality and knowledge is both socially constructed and influenced by power relations from within society	Marxism Queer theory feminism	critical discourse analysis, critical ethnography action research ideology critique	Ideological review Civil actions open-ended interviews, focus groups, open-ended questionnaires, open-ended observations, and journals.

Table 3.1 *Research Paradigm,* 2015, by Patel (https://salmapatel.co.uk/academia/the-research-paradigm-methodology-epistemology-and-ontology-explained-in-simple-language/)

3.3 Research Design

As mentioned in the previous section, this thesis follows the interpretivism paradigm which believes that gender stereotypes and their implications on women's career opportunities are a complex social phenomenon, and cannot be reduced to a simple cause-and-effect relationship (Creswell, 2013). The empirical study of this thesis aims to explore the relationship between gender stereotypes and women's opportunities for career advancement in Norway, and how different demographics perceive the stereotypes and their implications. Thus, a quantitative approach is chosen for the empirical study to achieve the objectives of the research question, as it seeks to understand the correlational relationship between different factors by measuring opinions from a sample, representing a population (APA, 2023b; Neuman, 2014).

Furthermore, a correlational research design is particularly suitable for the empirical study, as it allows for the measurement of the strength and direction of the relationship between variables without manipulating them (WSSU, n.d.). In this case, the variables of interest are emotional traits, career advancement opportunities for women and how sociodemographic factors may influence perceptions of gender stereotypes and opportunities. By examining the associations between these variables, the study can identify which factors may contribute to gender inequalities in the workplace and provide strategies on how to address these concerns. Correlational research also allows for the use of statistical techniques to analyze data and identify patterns or trends, which can provide valuable insights for policymakers, employers, and other stakeholders seeking to promote gender equality in the workforce (WSSU, n.d.). However, as presented in Table 3.2, correlational research design does not measure cause-effect. While this type of research recognizes trends and patterns in data, it does not generate an analysis to prove the causes of the observations (WSSU, n.d.).

Types of Quantitative Design	Research Design Description
Descriptive research	seeks to describe the current status of an identified variable. These research projects are designed to provide systematic information about a phenomenon. The researcher does not usually begin with a hypothesis but is likely to develop one after collecting data. The analysis and synthesis of the data provide the test of the hypothesis. Systematic collection of information requires careful selection of the units studied and careful measurement of each variable.
Correlational Research	attempts to determine the extent of a relationship between two or more variables using statistical data. In this type of design, relationships between and among a number of facts are sought and interpreted. This type of research will recognize trends and patterns in data, but it does not go so far in its analysis to prove causes for these observed patterns. Cause- effect is not the basis of this type of observational research. The data, relationships, and distributions of variables are studies only. Variables are not manipulated; they are only identified and are studied as they occur in a natural setting.
Causal-comparative/ Quasi-experimental research	attempts to establish cause-effect relationships among the variables. These types of design are very similar to true experiments, but with some key differences. An independent variable is identified but not manipulated by the experimenter, and effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable are measured. The researcher does not randomly assign groups and must use ones that are naturally formed or pre-existing groups. Identified control groups exposed to the treatment variable are studied and compared to groups who are not.
Experimental research	uses the scientific method to establish the cause-effect relationship among a group of variables that make up a study. The true experiment is often thought of as a laboratory study, but this is not always the case; a laboratory setting has nothing to do with it. A true experiment is any study where an effort is made to identify and impose control over all other variables except one. An independent variable is manipulated to determine the effects on the dependent variables. Subjects are randomly assigned to experimental treatments rather than identified in naturally occurring groups.

Table 3.2 *Types of Quantitative Research Design*, Informed by WSSU, n.d.

3.4 Research Methods

When studying the implications of gender stereotypes for women's career advancement, both quantitative and qualitative research methods can be useful. A qualitative method gives insight into standpoints, whereas a quantitative method can determine how widespread the different standpoints are in the population and to what extent various opinions are added by different groups (Grønmo, 2023). The literature review chapter provided valuable insight into different aspects regarding the implications of gender stereotypes. However, to pursue the intent of the research objectives, the quantitative research method is considered more fitting to further explore how employees in different industries within the Norwegian population agree with those implications. The American Psychological Association defines quantitative research as *"a method of research that relies on measuring variables using a numerical system, analyzing these measurements using any of a variety of*

statistical models, and reporting relationships and associations among the studied variables" (APA, 2023b).

Combining both qualitative and quantitative research analysis, this thesis follows a mixed-methods research blueprint. Mixed-methods research is an examination method which combines and integrates a qualitative and quantitative research approach in a single research study (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This particular method involves collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to better understand a phenomenon in order to answer the research questions (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Furthermore, the research study implements theory triangulation, which involves using different theories to study a phenomenon from multiple perspectives (Drie & Dekker, 2013). The empirical research of this thesis is based on qualitative theoretical research presented in the literature review chapter of this thesis. Information gathered in the literature review is based on academic research and past theories, thus qualitative secondary data. The triangulation method allows the integration of secondary qualitative data into primary data collection, thus supporting the empirical research to further examine the measurement of phenomena based on real-life experiences (Drie & Dekker, 2013).

3.5 Likert-scale

Stereotypes are generalized beliefs about a population's personal attributes. These attributes can be understood as the demand on the perceiver, allowing the perceiver to rely on previously stored knowledge to justify the status quo, or in response to social identity (Myers, 2010; Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Thus, a 7-point Likert scale is chosen as the quantitative assessment tool for the empirical study of this thesis. The Likert scale is applied as one of the most fundamental and frequently used psychometric tools in social science research and measures human attitudes, perceptions, and opinions (Joshi et al., 2015). The scale was developed to provide an ordinal-level measure of a person's attitude (Neuman, 2014). As a

result, the analysis of the Likert scale will provide a visualized data collection to demonstrate the relationship between selected variables. The Likert scale is a set of statements/items offered for an actual hypothetical situation under study (Joshi et al., 2015). Participants are asked to show their level of agreement, from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with the given statement on a metric scale (Joshi et al., 2015). Other modifications are also possible, such as participants' approval and belief (Neuman, 2014). For this thesis, participants have rated claims from the literature from 1 (strongly disagree/negative/unacceptable) to 7 (strongly agree/positive/acceptable), which will be used for comparison and further discussion in later chapters.

3.6 Sample

The primary purpose of quantitative research studies is to create a representative sample, which is a selected small collection that closely produces features or interests in a population (Neuman, 2014). With correct sampling, the data can be examined and generalized to accurately represent an entire population (Neuman, 2014). For this thesis, the initial thought was to sample 385 people using simple random sampling. This number is based on the population of workers in Norway, consisting of 2,7 million people, calculated with a sample size calculator with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% (Berge, 2023; SurveyMonkey, 2023). An agreement with one of the largest union organizations in Stavanger was desirable, in order to obtain their assistance in distributing the survey to their members.

Non-random samples mean they rarely determine the sample size in advance, and there is limited knowledge about the population from which the sample is taken (Neuman, 2014). Convenience sampling falls under the category of non-random sampling. The primary criteria in convenience sampling are that the sample is easy to reach, or readily available (Neuman, 2014). For this thesis, convenience sampling became one of the selected sampling

methods when the initial approach was not feasible to accomplish. Convenience sampling was combined with snowball sampling, an approach where sampling begins with one or a few people, and is spread out based on links to the initial cases (Neuman, 2014). An important use of snowball sampling is to sample a network, in which a crucial feature is that each person is connected with another through a direct or indirect linkage (Neuman, 2014).

The survey was distributed to contacts working in different businesses/industries, and a request was made to share the survey amongst their colleagues. The survey program used was "SurveyXact", which made it possible to distribute the survey through an internal link. Industries that have been targeted are service and sales, oil and gas, health and dental, flight and aircraft operations, as well as banking. This was to acquire a wide variety of participants, providing a broader view of opinions represented in a population. After the sampling, the total number of respondents was 103, which was a lower number than initial expectations. For this reason, the sample cannot be generalized to a population. However, it can examine sociodemographic differences and provide quantitative data to compare with the qualitative data from the literature.

3.7 Data Collection

As a part of the research process, data collection is a crucial component in gathering and measuring information on variables of interest in a systematic manner. This particular strategy enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses and evaluate outcomes (Joshi, 2022). To implement the correlational research design for the empirical study, a survey was conducted to collect data in order to understand, describe, and predict the nature of a phenomenon, providing a numeric description of trends, attitudes, and opinions of a population (Neuman, 2013).

The survey is a primary data collection which acquires data directly from the source. It also doubles as a tool to gather data in quantum by asking questions to a population of people

who are considered to have desired information, or opinions on a specified topic (Joshi, 2022). The instrument used for primary data collection was "SurveyXact", a free-access tool provided by the University of Stavanger, for the production, distribution and analysis of surveys. Before starting the survey, the respondents were informed that the answers were to be used for research purposes in regard to a master's thesis at the University of Stavanger. Specifically, the respondents were assured that the survey was completely anonymous, in accordance with NSD's GDPR regulations.

The survey questions were formulated based on various findings from the literature review section, addressing gender stereotypes and their implications on women's career advancement and opportunities. Demographic questions such as age, gender, and educational level were also asked to see whether those factors implicate the results. Each theme started with a terminology definition (e.g., gender stereotypes, gender norms) to act as a general guideline for the respondents. The questionnaire asked the participants to rate their agreeableness with certain statements or beliefs regarding women's and men's personality traits, leadership attributes and social roles. Furthermore, it surveyed employees in various industries to determine how the respondents perceive gender stereotypes in social and leadership aspects, and if gender stereotypes affect women's opportunities to attain leadership positions. See the Appendix under the section *"1. Online Survey Questionnaire"* for detailed survey questions.

3.8 Data Analysis

Following the mixed-methods research approach, thematic analysis was used to analyze the information gathered by using the Likert-scale survey. While thematic analysis is primarily a qualitative approach, it can be used in conjunction with quantitative analysis to enrich the understanding of research findings (Maguire & Delanhunt, 2017). For instance, in mixed-methods research, thematic analysis can be used to explore qualitative data alongside

quantitative data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research question. The goal of thematic analysis is to identify themes, e.g., patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue (Maguire & Delanhunt, 2017).

The qualitative insights gained through thematic analysis can help explain or contextualize the quantitative results, adding depth and nuance to the overall analysis (Maguire & Delanhunt, 2017). On the other hand, quantitative data analysis refers to the systematic examination and interpretation of numerical data to uncover patterns, relationships, and trends, which involves the use of statistical methods and techniques to analyze data collected through structured surveys, experiments, or other quantitative research methods (APA, 2023b).

Table 3.3. presents an overview of the themes identified from the qualitative research in the literature review chapter. The thematic analysis was used to identify the themes in the Likert-scale questionnaire such as backlash effects of gender stereotypes, "lack of fit" for women in leadership positions, glass ceiling phenomenon and emotionality traits for men and women in leadership and social contexts. To detect whether there are patterns in the data that are important or interesting, a frequency analysis was used to measure the occurrence agreeableness in each of them. Frequency analysis means counting whether something occurs and if it occurs, how often, and deals with the number of occurrences (frequency) to analyze measures of central tendency, dispersion, percentiles, etc. (Neuman, 2014).

Theme	Main category	Pattern
Backlash effects	Communal traits of men and women in society & leadership	Kind
		Nurturing
		Warm
	Agentic traits of men and women in society & leadership	Independent
		Aggressive
		Dominant
		Ambitious
Lack of fit		A woman must adapt the environment more than men
		A woman does not apply to a leadership position due to gender norms
		A woman does not feel the gender matches with a leadership role
		A woman can be a good leader in male- dominated profession
		A male can be a good leader in female- dominated profession
Glass Ceiling		Gender stereotypes negatively affected the career
		Family acts as a barrier for women in career advancement
		Gender-diversity strengthens the organization's performance
	Gender norms act as a barrier for women	In hiring process
		In achieving promotions
		In achieving salary raise
Emotionality	Acceptability of emotional display for male and femal leaders	Happiness
		Fear
		Sadness
		Anger
		Pride
	Acceptability of emotional display for male and femal in social settings	Happiness
		Fear
		Sadness
		Anger
		Pride

Table 3.3 An Overview of the Themes and Patterns

3.9 Validity & Reliability

Neuman (2014) describes reliability as dependability or consistency, suggesting that repeated, stable outcomes are the same under identical or similar conditions. Due to limited time, the research was not able to be repeated for this study. However, since the survey is based on previous research, it will be dependent on literature review findings. Furthermore, Neuman (2014) describes validity as truthfulness and refers to how well an idea about social reality fits with actual empirical reality. The survey program "SurveyXact" enables complete

anonymization, so that it is impossible to trace the data back to the respondent. The participants were informed of this, which potentially increases the reliability and validity with truthful answers. In social research, it is desirable to have reliable and valid measures because it helps to establish the truthfulness, credibility, and believability of the findings (Neuman, 2014).

3.9.1 Reliability

Perfect reliability is rare to achieve. However, for this thesis, the authors have improved the reliability through Neuman's (2014) four suggestions:

1. Clearly conceptualizing constructs
2. Using precise levels of measurements
3. Using multiple indicators
4. Using pilot tests

By clearly conceptualizing all constructs, clear theoretical definitions have been presented in the survey. It has been defined at the start of the page regarding the concept, e.g., a definition of gender stereotypes is presented before questions regarding the topic. By implementing this, the respondents have the same conceptual perception before answering. Furthermore, increasing the level of measurement is more likely to be reliable because the measurement picks up more detailed information (Neuman, 2014). Considering the respondents' reliability from survey participation, chances are that a 7-point scale may perform better compared to a 5-point scale (Joshi et al., 2015). The 7-point scale provides more options, increasing the probability of meeting the objective reality of people. Thus, a 7-point scale was utilized for this survey (Joshi et al., 2015). By using multiple indicators of a variable, it has been formulated multiple questions measuring the same claim. Using multiple indicators lets one take measurements from a wider range of the content of a conceptual definition (Nauman, 2014). It measures different aspects of the construct, each with its own indicator (Neuman,

2014). For example, multiple questions regarding "gender stereotypes" and "emotions" have been measured in the survey. Lastly, a pilot study has been executed. A preliminary version of the measures was tested on a couple of participants before the final version was distributed. Since the survey tends to test claims other researchers have discovered, the pilot study was mainly to review wording, and whether to keep, add or discard any questions.

3.9.2 Internal Validity

In qualitative research, the notion of reliability as one of the quality concepts is to be solved in order to claim the study as part of proper research (Golafshani, 2003). Hence, the reliability of the survey, which was based on the literature review, is one factor that improves the internal validity. This concept is called triangulation and is a method used to increase the credibility and validity of research findings (Noble & Heale, 2019). By implementing theory triangulation as a validity procedure, where it is searched for convergence amongst multiple and different sources of information, themes and categories in the study have been formed (Golafshani, 2003; Noble & Heale, 2019). Articles, books, and internet sources used in the literature review have been critically checked for validity and reliability before being implemented in this thesis. Internet sources have been gathered from well-established newspapers and statistical organizations (e.g., Boston Consulting Group), as well as universities and glossaries. The research papers have been collected from known databases (e.g., Wiley and Researchgate), whereas articles and authors have been checked for citation and journal publication. Furthermore, updated research and theory have been desirable in this thesis. However, some older theoretical formulations and articles have been necessary to implement, due to the lack of newer research.

3.9.3 External Validity

Moreover, a valid measure deviates from the construct it represents (Neuman, 2014). A sample with little sampling error permits estimates that deviate little from population

parameters (Neuman, 2014). Sampling error is based on the sample size and the amount of diversity in the sample (Neuman, 2014). For this thesis, the desire has been a low sampling error. As shown in Table 3.4, the gender distribution is equal and fairly balanced in the different age groups. However, the proportion of age has not been optimal for generalizing answers represented in the different age groups. Thus, the external validity is considered weak.
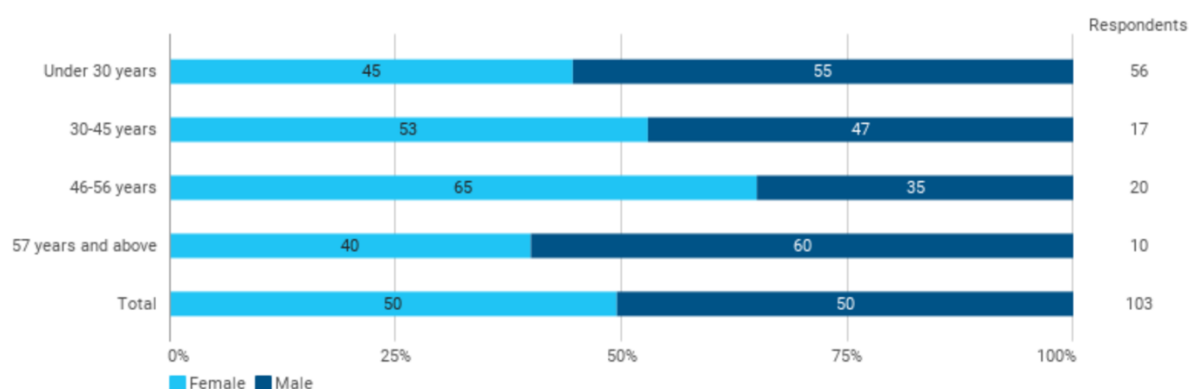

Table 3.4 Gender and age distribution from survey participation

A reason for the imbalance in age, as well as sector and education, can be explained by how the survey has been distributed. Non-random sampling is unlikely to represent the studied population, which affects the validity of the results (Neuman, 2014). Convenience sampling can therefore not be used to generalize accurately towards the population (Neuman, 2014). However, since the research tends to find different opinions in a population with a focus on employees in the general work market, the analysis will also contribute to exploring the differences amongst the samples. Furthermore, a larger sample size contributes to a smaller sampling error (Neuman, 2014). For this thesis, there have been 103 survey participants. This is a representative number for analyzing quantitative data, however, there was a desire for more survey participation because of the large population of employees in Norway. For this reason, the sample is not large enough to generalize the answers to a population. The data will give quantitative indicators used to discuss and compare with the literature.

3.10 Research Ethics

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a European regulation to strengthen privacy when processing personal data throughout the EU and EEA (UiS, 2022). Anonymized information is not considered personal data. The rules in the "Personal Data Protection Regulation" and the "Personal Information Act" with regulation, therefore, do not apply to the processing of such information (UiS, 2023). The sampling and data used for this thesis are anonymized through the survey program "SurveyXact", which protects human participants in accordance with the legislation. NSD is a public administrative body under the Ministry of Education and Research, with a mission to help Education and Research achieve its goals by providing shared, value-adding service (Sikt, 2023). NSD ensured that the online survey did not need to be notified.

In survey research, the situation or condition is not manipulated - as it simply asks people numerous questions in a short time period (Neuman, 2014). The conditions of the participants are not familiar since the survey was online. However, the conditions have not been influenced by the researchers, as the participants have been informed of its anonymity. Also, no comments are stated which potentially could influence the participants.

3.11 Limitations

Major limitations include time, costs, access to resources, approval by authorities, ethical concerns, and experience (Neuman, 2014). Due to limited time as the agreement for sampling with the help from the union organization was unavailable, the sampling method used was not a validated method for data gathering. There were a total of 143 respondents in the survey, however, 40 of the participants did not complete; and only answered the socio-demographic questions. As such, they had to be removed prior to the analysis. The reason for not completing the survey is unknown. Hence, this made the gathering of participants more time-consuming than anticipated. Furthermore, there have been limited articles exploring how

gender stereotypes implicate women in leadership positions. There were many articles available for the theories individually. However, there were few articles which also included women in leadership roles. For this reason, some older articles and theories had to be implemented in the thesis (e.g., Fiske and Steven, 1993; Heilman 2001;2004, Plant et al., 2000). Also, there was limited research in the Norwegian work market, thus the theories based on American or European cultures might differ from the findings gathered from quantitative data collection.

3.12 Chapter Summary

The thesis follows the interpretivism research paradigm, as it seeks to understand how gender stereotypes affect females' opportunities to attain leadership roles. The research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. The research design is correlational, as it allows the measurement to give strength and direction to the relationship between variables without manipulating them (WSSU, n.d.). Combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods, the thesis follows a mixed-method. Theory triangulation which involves using different theories to study a phenomenon from multiple perspectives was implemented (Drie & Dekker, 2013). The qualitative data was retrieved from secondary data, including academic articles and online sources, whereas the quantitative data is retrieved from the survey as the primary source. The online survey was constructed using a Likert-scale method. Respondents rated their agreeableness, positiveness, and acceptance on a scale from 1-7. The sample size included 103 respondents and was collected using convenience and snowball sampling. The data collection was analyzed by using thematic analysis. This method was used to uncover themes and patterns in the data, combined with a frequency analysis that measures the occurrence of the agreeableness of each item. The key themes and patterns from the literature findings presented in Table 3.3 were included as statements in the survey, to investigate how the literature findings correlate with the Norwegian work market. As the

sample was retrieved through non-random methods, it affects the external validity. Thus, the

data cannot be generalized to a population. Furthermore, the personal data of the respondents

are anonymized and the GDPR of the research was ensured by NSD.

4.0 Findings & Discussion

4.1 Chapter Introduction

As discovered in the previous section, there is a wide variety of sources exploring the research question *"How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?"*. The literature discovered the implications of gender stereotypes and how these act as barriers limiting women to achieve leadership positions. The primary objective is to determine how gender stereotypes correlate with or even implicate women's opportunities in career advancement. Secondly, this chapter addresses how different sociodemographic factors (e.g., gender, age, educational level) perceive gender stereotypes, and experience the implications in their career.

The intent of the empirical study is to explore various findings presented in the literature review section and compare participants' agreement with the literature statements concerning gender stereotypes in leadership positions. The survey sample is employees and leaders in Norwegian businesses from all sectors, where demographic factors are explored, and opinions are measured on a 7-point Likert scale. The chapter starts by presenting the respondent´s profile which addresses the overall distribution of the sociodemographic factors. Overall, the result findings cover the following themes: personality traits/backlash effects, "lack of fit", "glass ceiling" effect and emotionality. Each analyzed construct is then addressed with an information table and findings, followed by a discussion of a combination of primary and secondary data. The chapter concludes with a summary addressing the overall literature-, and empirical findings. Moreover, findings on the sociodemographic factors under each section addressing different items/ constructs are included in the Appendix, under *"2. Sociodemographic findings from the online survey"*. Genders are included and discussed under each section, as it is the most important variable from the literature. Otherwise, only the most noteworthy sociodemographic factors are discussed for each construct/item.

4.1.1 Approach

The empirical research followed an interpretivism research paradigm and sought to understand how gender stereotypes affect females' opportunities to attain leadership roles. Combining both the qualitative secondary data with the primary quantitative data, it aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the research question *"How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?"*. The correlational research design allows for the measurement to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between variables (WSSU, n.d.). The quantitative data gathered for this thesis does not seek to generalize the results nor prove any cause. The sample from the quantitative data is not large enough to generalize the answers to a population, nor are the non-random sampling methods which this thesis used to gather the data. The external validity of the findings is therefore crucial to consider in the Findings and Discussion section.

The sociodemographic variables and the measured items were retrieved from the 7-point Likert scale survey; and are analyzed with each item, to gain a broader understanding of the construct. Thematic analysis which is a mixed research method was used to explore quantitative data alongside qualitative data. The analysis can help explain the quantitative results, by adding depth and nuance to the overall analysis; thus, uncovering patterns, relationships, and themes of the conducted survey (Maguire & Delanhunt, 2017). To detect whether there are patterns in the data, a frequency analysis measures the occurrence of agreeableness, positiveness, and acceptance of each item.

The findings from the Literature Review section are discussed together with the empirical findings, under each analyzed item. A visualized graph measuring the percentage of each item/construct is presented, including the calculated means of the items. A mean from a 7-point Likert scale does not present a real image of the measured item, as the middle value will be a neutral response. However, it will provide an overall picture of how the respondents

have answered. The closer the mean is to 7, the more positive, acceptable, or agreeable the respondent is to the statement.

4.1.2 Findings

Construct/items	Mean
Personality traits women	
Communal traits of a leader (Kind, nurturing, warm)	5,653
Agentic traits of a leader (Independent, aggressive, dominant, ambitious)	4,715
Communal traits in society (Kind, nurturing, warm)	6,086
Agentic traits in society (Independent, aggressive, dominant, ambitious)	4,387
Personality traits men	
Communal traits of leaders (Kind, nurturing, warm)	5,433
Agentic traits of leaders (Independent, aggressive, dominant, ambitious)	5,115
Communal traits in society (Kind, nurturing, warm)	5,650
Agentic traits in society (Independent, aggressive, dominant, ambitious)	4,967
Lack of fit	
A women must adapt the environment more than men	4,290
A woman does not apply to a leadership position because of gender norms	4,572
A woman does not feel gender match with a leadership role	3,960
A women can be an equal good leader as a man in a man-dominated profession	5,460
A man can be an equal good leader as a woman in a women-dominated profession	5,580
Glass ceiling	
Have gender stereotypes negatively affected your career	2,970
Family act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership roles	5,097
Gender norms act as a barrier for women in the hiring process	4,174
Gender norms act as a barrier for women in achieving promotions	3,902
Gender norms act as a barrier for women for achieving salary raise	4,398
A gender-diverse management team strengthens the organization´s performance	5,680
Women are too emotional in decision-making	3,120
Women are more emotional than men in decision-making	4,610
Emotionality woman	
How acceptable is it for female leaders to show happiness, fear, sadness	4,740
How acceptable is it for female leaders to show anger and pride	4,780
How acceptable is it for females to show happiness, fear, sadness in a social setting	5,977
How acceptable is it for females to show anger and pride in a social setting	4,820
Emotionality men	
How acceptable is it for male leaders to show happiness, fear, sadness	4,446
How acceptable is it for male leaders to show anger and pride	5,110
How acceptable is it for males to show happiness, fear, sadness in a social setting	4,850
How acceptable is it for males to show anger and pride in a social setting	5,225

Table 4.0. Construct/items and mean

The research findings sought to provide answers to the research question *"How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunities in attaining leadership roles?"*. Table 4.0 represents the mean from the 7-point Likert scale regarding the response on the different statements. These corresponding themes and patterns are listed in Table 3.3. Furthermore, the patterns detected in each theme are referred to as constructs or items in the findings and discussions of the analysis. This does not convey any information regarding the findings. However, the derived means represent the average of the respondent's positiveness, agreeableness, and acceptance of each measured item, thus providing an overview of how the quantitative data correlates with the detected themes from the literature studies.

4.2 Respondent's profile

The respondent's profile from the conducted survey is presented in Table 4.1. It shows that out of the 103 respondents, the genders are equally distributed. Most of them are under 30 years, have a higher educational level and work in the private sector. Furthermore, most of the respondents have experience with a male leader, whereas 81% have experience with a female leader. The sociodemographic groups primary/secondary school, PHD, and the voluntary sector were removed from the analysis, as the distribution was not representative.

Item	Number
Gender	%
Male	50
Female	50
Age	%
Under 30 years	54
30-45 years	17
46-56 years	19
57 years and above	10
Education level	%
Primary/secondary school	1
High school	19
Bachelor´s degree	44
Masters degree	33
PHD	3
Sector	%
Private sector	70
Public sector	28
Vountary	2
Leadership role in the organization	%
Yes	29
No	71
Experience with female leader	%
Yes	81
No	19
Experience with male leader	%
Yes	98
No	2
Number of survey participants	103

Table 4.1 Respondent's profile from the survey

4.3 Personality Traits

For the section investigating personality traits, the findings for communal and agentic traits will be presented and discussed together for each gender. The perception of personality traits is different for both men and women. However, the traits are mutually exclusive depending on given settings or environments. The reason for investigating these traits is because the literature provided by Brescoll (2016) & Fischbach et al. (2015) highlights these traits in the given category (i.e., communal and agentic). Additionally, the traits are investigated due to the implications of backlash effects women experience by not adhering to the ascribed traits in leadership and social settings. Men were included as a part of the study in order to compare gender-related traits and to investigate how gender stereotypes are perceived by the sociodemographic groups. The sociodemographic factors will also be investigated to see how different sociodemographic groups perceive those traits under different circumstances. More specifically, the respondents were asked to rate how positive/negative they experience each trait for both men and women as a leader and in a social setting.

4.3.1 Findings #1: Communal & Agentic Traits, Women

Communal traits. The communal traits investigated for this thesis are kind, nurturing and warm. According to the literature, those traits are more associated with women (Brescoll, 2016). The average of the traits regarding women in a leadership position is 5,653, and for women in a social setting, it is 6,086. This indicates that communal traits in a leadership position are less positive than communal traits in a social setting. In Table 4.2, an analysis of the individual traits is presented. See the Appendix, under the section *"Communal and agentic traits, Women"* for detailed measurements of the sociodemographic factors for each addressed item/construct.

Construct/ Item	Response	Mean
Communal traits: Women		
Kind	In a leadership role:	5,830
	In a social setting:	6,020
Nurturing	In a leadership role:	5,700
	In a social setting:	6,210
Warm	In a leadership role:	5,430
	In a social setting:	6,030

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ☐ 6 Positive
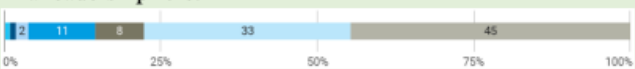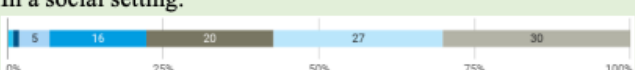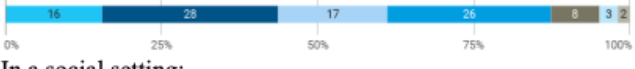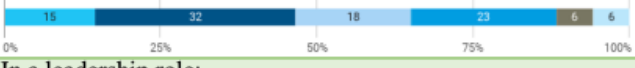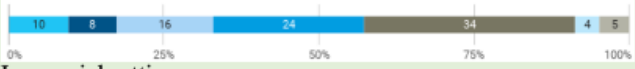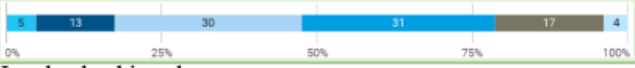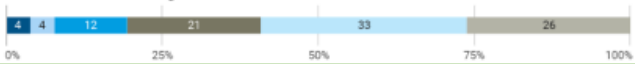☐ 7 Strongly Positive

Table 4.2 Communal traits: women.

Kind. Compared to men, women are 16% more strongly positive about the trait in a leadership position and 11% more in a social setting. Furthermore, 31% of those in the private sector, and 62% of respondents in the public sector are strongly positive of the trait in a leadership role. Respondents with no leadership role in the organization are 27% more strongly positive than those with a leadership role.

Nurturing. Compared to men, women are 16% more strongly positive about the trait in a leadership position, and 9% more in a social setting. Compared to respondents working in the private sector, the public sector is 30% more strongly positive about the trait in a leadership role.

Warm. 27% of women and 23% of men are strongly positive about women being warm in leadership positions. Furthermore, respondents working in the public sector are 36% more strongly positive about the trait in a leadership role, compared to those working in the private sector.

Agentic traits. The agentic traits investigated for this thesis are independent, aggressive, dominant, and ambitious. According to the literature, those traits are more associated with men (Brescoll, 2016). The average of agentic traits is 4,715 for women in a leadership position, and 4,387 in a social setting. This indicates that the respondents are slightly less positive about agentic traits for a woman in a social setting. In Table 4.3, an analysis of the individual traits is presented.

Construct/ Item	Response	Mean
Agentic traits: Women		
Independent	In a leadership role:	6,010
	2 / 11 / 8 / 33 / 45	
	In a social setting:	5,550
	5 / 16 / 20 / 27 / 30	
Aggressive	In a leadership role:	2,990
	16 / 28 / 17 / 26 / 8 / 3 / 2	
	In a social setting:	2,910
	15 / 32 / 18 / 23 / 6 / 6	
Dominant	In a leadership role:	3,960
	10 / 8 / 16 / 24 / 34 / 4 / 5	
	In a social setting:	3,550
	5 / 13 / 30 / 31 / 17 / 4	
Ambitious	In a leadership role:	5,900
	2 / 3 / 11 / 12 / 31 / 42	
	In a social setting:	5,540
	4 / 4 / 12 / 21 / 33 / 26	

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive ■ 7 Strongly Positive

Table 4.3. Agentic traits: women.

Independent. Compared to men, women are 17% more positive or strongly positive about the trait in a leadership role and 18% in a social setting. Respondents with experience of a female leader are 13% less strongly positive about the trait in a leadership role, compared to those who have experience.

Aggressive. Compared to men, women are 15% more strongly negative, negative, or somewhat negative about the trait in a leadership role, and 19% in a social setting. Those working in the public sector are 40% more strongly negative or negative of the trait in a leadership role, compared to those working in the private sector. Respondents with a leadership position in their organization are 19% less strongly negative or negative to the trait in a leadership role, compared to those who do not have a leadership role.

Dominant. Both genders are less negative to women being dominant in a leadership position, compared to a social setting. The distribution amongst the gender is approximately the same. Those holding leadership roles in their organization have 19% more respondents in the positive columns, compared to those who do not inherit a leadership role.

Ambitious. Compared to men, women are 15% more strongly positive or positive about ambitious traits in a leadership role, and 26% in a social setting. Respondents with a leadership position in their organization are 12% more strongly positive about the trait in leadership roles. In a leadership role, those with no experience of a female leader are 16% more strongly positive than those with experience.

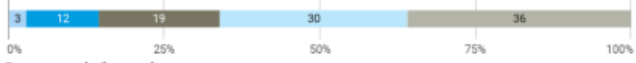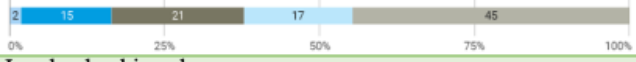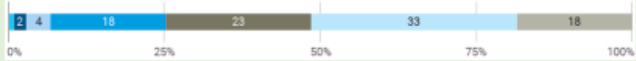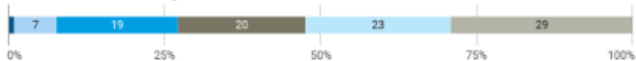### 4.3.2 Discussion #1: Communal & Agentic Traits, Women

Women leaders are viewed as communal, however, leadership roles require agentic (Brescoll, 2016). Women are underrepresented in leadership positions partly because of gender stereotypes that favor men and their achievement-oriented traits (Lawson et al., 2022). The quantitative data suggest that women should appear less communal in leadership positions. This corresponds to earlier literature findings which point out that women who are more agentic are rated as highly competent and capable of leadership positions (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). On the other hand, the quantitative data of gender distribution suggest that the female respondents perceive both communal and agentic traits more positively for women. This finding contradicts existing literature, which suggests that women exhibiting agentic

traits are frequently met with disapproval from both males and females, and are often perceived as socially deficient (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Consequently, this particular research finding does not support the notion presented in the literature that both genders perceive these traits equally.

Even worse than the risk of being more unliked by their peers, earlier studies found that women who engage in agentic behavior often experience backlash effects because they are seen as having insufficient communality (Brescoll, 2016). Studies suggest that women engaging in agentic behavior and acting more dominant can result in not being chosen for leadership roles (Brescoll, 2016). The quantitative data show that agentic traits for women in leadership positions are 4,715. This suggests that the respondents perceive the agentic traits of women in leadership as positive. Thus, does not support the literature findings.

4.3.3 Findings #2: Communal & Agentic Traits, Men

Communal traits. The average of communal traits regarding men in leadership positions and social settings are 5,433 and 5,650, respectively. This indicates that the respondents experience communal traits in leadership roles less positive than communal traits in social settings. In Table 4.4, an analysis of the individual traits is presented. See the Appendix, under the section *"Communal and agentic traits, Men"* for detailed measurements of the sociodemographic factors for each addressed item/construct.

Construct/ Item	Response	Mean
Communal traits: Men		
Kind	In a leadership role:	5,840
	In a social setting:	5,880
Nurturing	In a leadership role:	5,340
	In a social setting:	5,610
Warm	In a leadership position:	5,120
	In a social setting:	5,460

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive
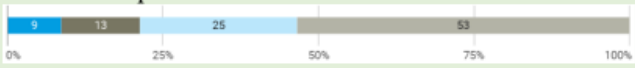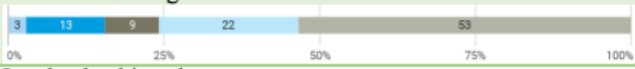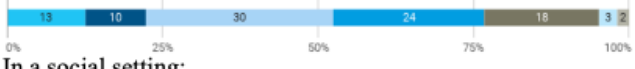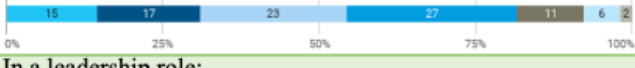
Table 4.4 Communal traits: Men.

Kind. Compared to men, women are 28% more strongly positive or positive about the trait in a leadership role, and 21% more in a social setting. Respondents working in the public sector are 30% more strongly positive in both settings, compared to those working in the private sector.

Nurturing. Compared to men, women are 23% more strongly positive or positive to nurturing traits in a leadership role, and 21% more in a social setting. Compared to the other education levels, respondents holding a master´s degree are ca. 20% less strongly positive about the trait in both settings. Respondents working in the private sector are 13% less positive about the trait in a leadership role, and 36% less in a social setting, compared to the public sector.
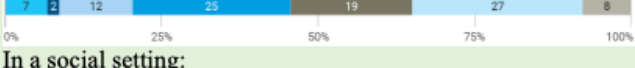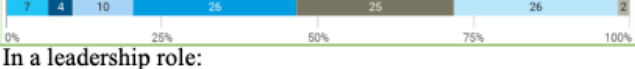
Warm. Compared to men, women are 24% more strongly positive or positive about the trait both in a leadership role and in a social setting. Respondents working in the private

sector are 17% less positive or strongly positive of the trait in a leadership role, and 33% less in a social setting compared to respondents working in the public sector.

Agentic traits. The average of the agentic traits regarding men in leadership positions and social settings are 5,115 and 4,967, respectively This indicates that agentic traits in a leadership position are more positive than agentic traits in a social setting. In Table 4.5, an analysis of the individual traits is presented.

Construct/ Item	Response	Mean
Agentic traits: Men		
Independent	In a leadership role:	6,230
	9 / 13 / 25 / 53	
	In a social setting:	6,110
	3 / 13 / 9 / 22 / 53	
Aggressive	In a leadership role:	3,430
	13 / 10 / 30 / 24 / 18 / 3 / 2	
	In a social setting:	3,280
	15 / 17 / 23 / 27 / 11 / 6 / 2	
Dominant	In a leadership role:	4,610
	7 / 2 / 12 / 25 / 19 / 27 / 8	
	In a social setting:	4,460
	7 / 4 / 10 / 26 / 25 / 26 / 2	
Ambitious	In a leadership role:	6,190
	10 / 12 / 28 / 50	
	In a social setting:	6,020
	14 / 10 / 33 / 43	

Legend: ■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive ■ 7 Strongly Positive

Table 4.5 Agentic traits: Men.

Independent. Both men and women are equally distributed regarding the trait in a leadership role and in a social setting. Compared to the private sector, those working in the public sector are 25% more strongly positive about traits of independence in a leadership role, and 17% in a social setting.

Aggressive. Compared to women, men are 8% less somewhat negative, negative, or strongly negative of the trait in a leadership role, and 14% in a social setting.

Dominant. Both genders are equally distributed regarding their view on dominant traits in a leadership role and in a social setting. Compared to the private sector, respondents working in the public sector are 25% more somewhat positive, positive, or strongly positive to dominant traits in a leadership role, and 20% more in a social setting.

Ambitious. Both genders are equally distributed regarding views on ambitious traits in leadership roles and social settings. Compared to high school and bachelor educations, respondents with a master's degree 22% less strongly positive about the trait in a leadership role. Respondents working in the public sector are 25% more strongly positive about the trait in a leadership role.

4.3.4 Discussion #2: Communal & Agentic Traits, Men

The findings based on communal and agentic traits for men are primarily used to compare findings and literature exploring women's experience of backlash effects in leadership, as the traits are categorized according to gender. The roles men occupy in society align with the roles of leadership needed in an organization (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). The quantitative data shows that the mean of agentic traits for men in a social setting is 4,967 and 5,115 in a leadership position. For women, the mean of the agentic traits in a social setting is 4,387 and 4,715 in a leadership role. Additionally, the average of communal traits explored in the quantitative data is 5,653 for women in leadership and 5,433 for men. Thus, the findings support the literature suggesting that women are viewed as more communal, and men as more agentic (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015). Overall, the female respondents consistently rated all communal traits more positively than their male counterparts, regardless of whether the leaders in question were male or female The female respondents rated the communal traits even more positively for male leaders. On the other hand, the male respondents saw the communal traits of both male and female leaders as less positive. The literature addresses that

men and women are equal in the perception of female acting agentic (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). However, the quantitative data seems to suggest otherwise.

By looking at how the explored items above answer the research question, it seems that women behaving more agentic is not a significant barrier in attaining a leadership position. The real stereotypical perception regarding the personality traits in men and women lies in the differences between how both genders perceive the traits in leadership positions and in social settings. Thus, it is considered to have an implicating effect whereby women may feel the need to adapt their inherent communal traits in order to fit into a leadership role.

4.4 "Lack of Fit"

For the section investigating "lack of fit", each item presented in Table 4.6 is investigated. The Table also presents an overview of the response and the mean of the statements. The reason for investigating the construct "lack of fit" is because the literature address how a man is more likely to get a job in a leadership position because of the stereotypical fit regarding job characteristics and individual traits (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001). Thus, deemed as a crucial factor when investigating how it affects women's opportunity in attaining a leadership position.

Each item is presented with the findings and discussed against the literature findings. The respondents were asked to rate how agreeable they experience each statement regarding the construct. The statements *"A woman does not feel gender match with a leadership role"*, *"A woman can be an equally good leader as a man in a male-dominated profession"*, *"A man can be an equally good leader as a woman in a female-dominated profession"* are discussed together. The statements explore the same topic. However, the last two statements are intended to investigate outside the literature findings, thus adding value to answering the research question. See the Appendix, under the section *"Lack of Fit"* for detailed

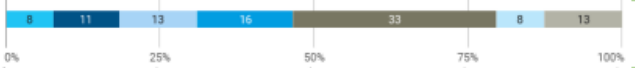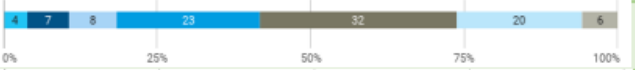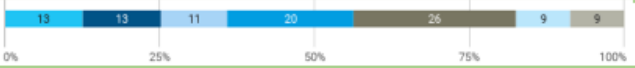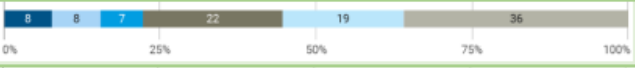measurements of the sociodemographic factors for each addressed item/construct.
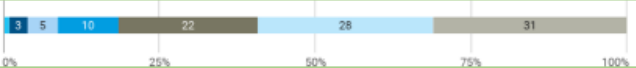
Construct/ Item	Response	Mean
Lack of fit		
A women must adapt the environment more than men	8 11 13 16 33 8 13	4,290
A woman does not apply to a leadership position because of gender norms	4 7 8 23 32 20 6	4,572
A woman does not feel gender match with a leadership role	13 13 11 20 26 9 9	3,960
A women can be an equal good leader as a man in a man-dominated profession	8 8 7 22 19 36	5,460
A man can be an equal good leader as a woman in a women-dominated profession	3 5 10 22 28 31	5,580

■ 1 Strongly disagree ■ 2 Disagree □ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral
■ 5 Somewhat agree □ 6 Agree □ 7 Strongly Agree

Table 4.6 Lack of fit

4.4.1 Findings #1: Environment

The mean of the statement *"Women have to adapt their personality traits to a greater extent than men, based on the environment they are in"* is 4,290. Compared to men, females have 38% more respondents in the agreeable columns. In the public sector, 23% more participants somewhat agree, agree or strongly agree with the statement in contrast to those working in the private sector.

4.4.2 Discussion #1: Environment

As the average of the respondents is 4,290, it indicates that women must adapt to the environment to a greater extent than men. It can therefore have an impact on how it affects women's opportunities in attaining a leadership role. The high agreeableness amongst women might suggest that they are experiencing the dilemmas of either confirming gender stereotypes or disconfirming them to fit into the surrounding environment. When women violate the attributed prescriptive social norms may evoke backlash effects in many aspects (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Furthermore, earlier literature findings show that women are often situated in dilemmas due to either confirming gender stereotypes or disconfirming them

(Fiske and Steven, 1993). Conversely, women who conform to gender stereotypes may be perceived as lacking the ability to succeed in their careers (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Thus, it can be interpreted that the literature findings presented in the earlier chapter support the quantitative data. Furthermore, those working in the public sector agree to a greater extent than those working in the private sector. This may indicate that more people working in the public sector find it harder to adapt to their environments.

4.4.3 Findings #2: Applying Process

The mean of the statement *"A woman does not dare to apply to a leadership role because of gender norms"* is 4,572. 65% of women somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement, whereas 52% of men somewhat agree or agree. Respondents working in the private sector are 22% less strongly agreeable or agreeable about the statement, compared to the public sector. The group lacking experience with female leaders have 27% more respondents in the agreeable columns in comparison to their respective counterparts.

4.4.4 Discussion #2: Applying Process

For women applying for a leadership role, the phenomenon "fear of success" is relevant to investigate from the literature. The phenomenon was based on the idea that a woman´s motivation in achievement situations was inhibited by their fear of disapproval for not being feminine (Heilman et al., 2004). The quantitative data shows that more women agree with the statement. However, the number of men agreeing is also quite high. This can indicate that both women and men believe women who behave in ways typically reserved for men are less socially appealing, thus do not dare to apply for the position (Heilman et al., 2004). Also, women who experience a conflict between emotions suitable for their role as leaders and those suitable for their role as a woman are an additional role stressor and might result in leadership roles appearing less attractive to them (Fischbach et al., 2015).

Furthermore, 24% of the respondents who find it less agreeable work in the private sector, which might indicate that jobs in the private sector are more flexible than the public sector and require less typical male qualifications. The group with no experience of a female leader is 27% more agreeable to the statement than the group with experience. It can be interpreted that the group with no experience of a female leader might consider gender norms in the application process as a bigger barrier for women.

The mean shows 4,572 agreeableness regarding the statement. This indicates that it is a real situated concern and confirms how gender stereotypes affect women's opportunities in attaining a leadership role. The amount of agreeableness might suggest that women do not dare to apply for higher leadership positions due to the risk of falling out of the gender stereotypical image, making them more inclined to social disapproval (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman et al., 2004). Thus, the findings confirm the literature findings addressing "fear of success" might have an impact on women's desire to apply for leadership positions.

4.4.5 Findings #3: Gender Match Leadership Position

The mean of the statement *"A woman does not feel gender match with a leadership role"* is 3,960. The genders are equally distributed. The private sector has 26% fewer respondents in the agreeable columns, compared to those in the public sector. Amongst participants lacking experience with female leaders, 20% somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree as opposed to those who have experience.

4.4.6 Findings #4: Gender-dominated Professions

The mean of the statement *"A woman can be an equal good leader as a man in a man-dominated profession"* is 5,460. Compared to men, 23% more women strongly agree or agree. The private sector has 26% more strongly agreeable respondents, compared to the

public sector. Moreover, participants holding no leadership responsibilities in their organization are 13% more strongly agreeable than those without.

The mean for the statement *"A man can be an equally good leader as a woman in a women-dominated profession"* is 5,580. Compared to men, women are 20% more strongly agreeable. The respondents with a master's degree are 24% more strongly agreeable than those with high school.

4.4.7 Discussion #3 & #4: Gender Match & Gender-Dominated Professions

The quantitative data shows that both genders are equally distributed regarding the statement of whether women do not feel gender match with a leadership role. The performance expectations are determined by the fit between the individual's attributes and the job's requirements in terms of skills and abilities (Heilman, 2001). Success is expected if the perceived fit is good, and failure is expected if the fit is poor (Heilman, 2001). The mean shows 3,960 agreeableness regarding the statement, indicating that most of the participants do not find the statement as a crucial barrier for women.

Statistics from "CORE Topplederbarometer" (2022) show that men dominate the top leadership positions in the general workforce in Norway. The statistic from the literature shows that 84% of CEO positions in Norway consists of men, whereas the gender distribution is fairly balanced in the profession within the Head of HR, Head of legal, and Head of Marketing (CORE, 2022; Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021). The quantitative data show that the proportion of participants finding women equally good leaders in a male-dominated profession is slightly lower than male leaders in women-dominated professions. Women are more strongly agreeable in both statements exploring gender-dominated professions. However, the proportion is higher regarding men in a women-dominated profession. The respondents working in the private sector are more agreeable to both gender-related professions, and less agreeable if a woman´s gender matches a leadership position. This

strongly indicates that those in the private sector find women as leaders more acceptable, compared to those working in the public sector.
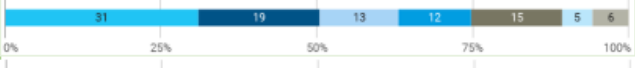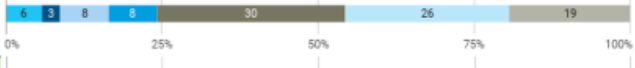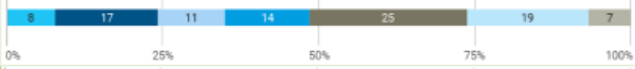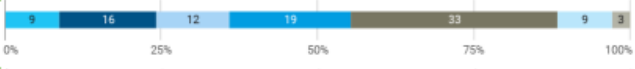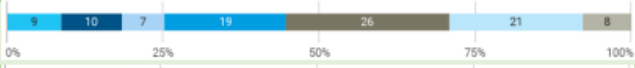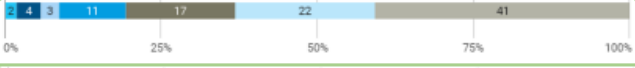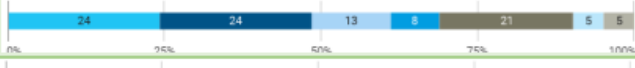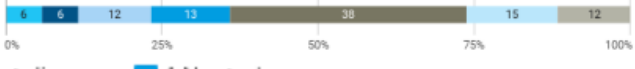
The "think manager - think male" paradigm found that managers possess traits typically associated with men (Fischbach et al., 2015). Regardless of the equal qualifications of a female and male applicant, the male is more likely to get the job in a leadership position because of the stereotypical fit regarding job characteristics and individual traits (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001). The quantitative data do not support this claim, as the proportion of differences between the gender-stereotypical jobs is quite low. However, women perceive themselves as less suited for a male-dominated profession in comparison to a profession that is predominantly female. This is also investigated in the literature, highlighting that the "lack of fit" backlash in a leadership role does not occur in fields perceived as feminine or gender-neutral (Heilman et al., 2004)

4.5 "Glass Ceiling"

For the section investigating "glass ceiling", each item presented in Table 4.7 is investigated. The Table also presents an overview of the response and the mean of the statements. The reason for investigating the construct "glass ceiling" is because the literature addresses this as an invisible barrier hindering a woman´s career and how it affects women in career advancement (Heilman, 2001; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Additionally, it is viewed as a natural consequence of gender stereotypes regarding the expectations required of a woman's behavior (Heilman, 2001). Thus, deemed as a crucial factor when investigating how it affects women's opportunity in attaining a leadership position.

Each item has been presented with the findings and discussed against the literature findings. More specifically, the respondents were asked to rate how agreeable they experience each statement regarding the construct. However, the statements regarding gender norms are discussed together, and so are the statements regarding women's emotions in decision-

making. The statements explore the same topic but address the topics from different aspects. See the Appendix, under the section *"Glass Ceiling"* for detailed measurements of the sociodemographic factors for each addressed item/construct.

Construct/ Item	Response	Mean
Glass ceiling		
Have gender stereotypes negatively affected your career		2,970
Family life (e.g., children) act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership roles		5,097
Gender norms act as a barrier for women in the hiring process		4,174
Gender norms act as a barrier for women in achieving promotions		3,902
Gender norms act as a barrier for women for achieving salary raise		4,398
A gender-diverse management team strengthens the organization´s performance		5,680
Women are too emotional in decision-making		3,120
Women are more emotional than men in decision-making		4,610

■ 1 Strongly disagree ■ 2 Disagree □ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral
■ 5 Somewhat agree □ 6 Agree ■ 7 Strongly Agree

Table 4.7 Glass Ceiling.

4.5.1 Findings #1: Gender Stereotypes Affecting Career

The mean of the statement *"Have gender stereotypes negatively affected your career?"* is 2,970. Compared to men, 43% more women answered somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree. 2 male respondents somewhat agreed and 2 strongly agreed. 38% of the female participants who have been negatively affected by gender stereotypes have a leadership role in their organization.

4.5.2 Discussion #1: Gender Stereotypes Affecting Career

Gender stereotypes are used to explain why women are not hired into organizational leading positions that possess power and prestige (Heilman, 2001). The quantitative data shows that there are almost twice as many women who agree that gender stereotypes have negatively affected their careers. Negative reactions toward successful female leaders are due

to their violation of gender stereotypes rather than their success (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Furthermore, 38% of the female respondents who have been negatively affected have a leadership role in their organization. This might suggest that they have experienced challenges in their own career advancement. Thus, indicating that women might be negatively affected by gender stereotypes to a greater extent than men. Also, the low agreeableness among the male participants might be because women often encounter a "glass ceiling" in career advancement, whereas men fast-accelerate into higher leadership positions (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Thus, men might not experience the same challenges, as career advancement generally positively affects men to a greater extent.

As explored in the quantitative data, approximately half of the female respondents agree with the statement. In regard to how this particular finding answers the research question exploring if gender stereotypes act as a barrier for women in attaining leadership positions, the concern cannot be fully disregarded. However, this might create a foundation for further research investigating which industry gender stereotypes have a stronger impact on women's opportunities in career advancement.

4.5.3 Findings #2: Family Life

The mean of the statement *"Family life (e.g., children) act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions"* is 5,097. 42 out of 51 female respondents somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree. Out of the total respondents, 8 of those attending the survey hold a leadership role in their organization. 72% of the male respondents also view family life as an active barrier for women in achieving leadership positions.

4.5.4 Discussion #2: Family Life

Women are often considered the primary caregiver, and family responsibilities such as household responsibilities, caring for elderly family members, and childcare can limit women's opportunities to pursue leadership professions (Subramaniam et al., 2013; St.

Catherine University, 2021). The quantitative data shows that almost every female respondent agrees that family life acts as a barrier for them in achieving leadership positions. Furthermore, 8 of the women who agree with the statement have a leadership role. This might be due to organizations where high commitment is expected. Hence, a combination of family and career can hinder women's professional development (Subramaniam et al., 2013). Another reason might be women's wish to prioritize family (Gaarder, 2011). The high agreeableness might also indicate that organizations look less favorably at married women with children when it comes to promotion, compared to single women (Subramaniam et al., 2013). Moreover, the high agreeableness among the male participants might be because they have experienced their female partners making personal sacrifices such as downshifting their careers and resigning from their positions (St. Catherine University, 2021).

The high agreeableness to the statement corresponds to the research question of how gender stereotypes act as a barrier for women in attaining leadership positions in terms of family life. The barrier itself is not the family life, nor the responsibilities related to it, but the societal image and gender bias considering women as the primary caregiver of the family (Subramaniam et al., 2013; St. Catherine University, 2021). This might affect women's opportunities in achieving leadership positions as organizations look less favorably at family-established women in terms of promotion, or pressure women to make personal sacrifices such as downshifting their careers and resigning from their positions (St. Catherine University, 2021; Subramaniam et al., 2013).

4.5.5 Findings #3: Gender Norms

The mean of the statement *"What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Gender norms in an employment process"* is 4,174. Compared to men, 45% more women somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree that gender

norms act as a barrier in an employment process. 90% of female respondents in the agreeable columns work in the public sector.

The mean of the statement *"What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Opportunities for promotion."* is 3,902. Compared to men, 48% more women somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement. 90% of women in the agreeable columns work in the public sector.

The mean of the statement *"What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Opportunities for salary raise."* is 4,398. Compared to men, 37% more women somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement. Respondents with high school or master education are ca. 20% more strongly agreeable or agreeable to the statement, compared to bachelor educators. The public sector has 23% more respondents who strongly agree or agree, compared to the private sector.

4.5.6 Discussion #3: Gender Norms

There is a great difference between the males' and females' agreeableness to whether gender norms act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions in terms of employment, opportunities for promotion, and salary raises. 45% more women are agreeable in terms of employment, 48% more women are more agreeable to promotion, and salary raises 37% of the women are more agreeable. The difference between both genders' agreeableness may be because men and women experience gender norms differently, and thus do not share the same perception of the gender norms' implications in women's career advancement. Furthermore, findings from the earlier literature studies present that gender biases influence evaluations in work settings in which a woman's competence provides no assurance for advancement in the same organizational levels as an equally performing man (Heilman, 2001)

Literature studies showed that both female and male managers continue to favor men over equally qualified women in hiring, compensation, performance evaluation and promotion decisions, avertedly limiting women's opportunities and depriving organizations of valuable talent (Grant & Sandberg, 2014). Women with more agentic traits applying for top leadership positions risk being disapproved of higher-paying, prestigious positions (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). However, the overall quantitative data shows that the agreeableness is not specifically high for either barrier, as the mean suggests respondents are close to neutral. Although there is no clear indication that gender norms have a significant impact on women's opportunities in achieving leadership positions in terms of employment, promotion and salary raise, it is suggested to conduct further research to investigate what other barriers related to gender stereotypes that women experience in their career advancement.

4.5.7 Findings #4: Gender-diversity in Organizations

The derived mean of the statement *"A gender-diverse team strengthens the organization's performance."* is 5,680. Compared to men, 19% more women somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement. 24 of the total respondents in the agreeable columns hold a leadership position in their organization.

4.5.8 Discussion #4: Gender-diversity in Organizations

The quantitative data shows that the mean of the statement is close to 6, indicating that most participants firmly agree that gender diversity strengthens the organization. Earlier studies suggest that gender-diverse teams make better decisions 73% of the time, than individuals and all-male teams (Larson, 2017). Additionally, a study by McKinsey & Company suggests that the most gender-diverse companies were 27% more likely to have industry-leading performance on longer-term value creation than companies with low gender diversity (Hunt et al., 2018). However, the gender distribution in the CEO positions is still quite imbalanced, consisting of 84,5% men and 14,5% women (CORE, 2022). Moreover, 24

of the agreeing respondents have a leadership role, which might suggest that they have experienced the effectiveness of gender diversity firsthand. The high agreeableness is a positive indicator which suggests that most acknowledge that gender-diversity increases organizational performance. However, the gender distribution in top leadership positions is still quite skewed (CORE, 2022). Thus, raises other questions to be investigated in future research, of why such imbalanced gender distribution exists.

4.5.9 Findings #5: Emotions in Decision-making

The mean of the statement *"Women are too emotional in decision-making."* is 3,120. Women and men are equally agreeable about the statement. Respondents with a master´s degree do 16% more strongly disagree or disagree, compared to the other education levels. Also, 30% of the respondents in the agreeable columns hold a leadership role in their organization.

The mean of the statement *"Women are more emotional than men in decision-making."* is 4,610. Compared to men, 18% more women somewhat agree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement. Respondents with no experience with a female leader are 11% less strongly agreeable or agreeable. 74% of the respondents in the agreable columns hold leadership positions.

4.5.10 Discussion #5: Emotions in Decision-making

Women are believed to not have the ability to control how their feelings influence their decision-making (Brescoll, 2016; Heilman, 2001). However, the literature shows that both genders experience the same type of emotions on a daily basis, as well as more feelings in decision-making strengthen the decision-making performance (Seo & Barrett, 2007). The quantitative data shows that most of the respondents are somewhat disagreeable with women being too emotional in decision-making. The genders are fairly distributed and thus do not support the literature findings of women being too emotional.

However, the mean of the statement regarding women being more emotional than men in decision-making is higher, being 4,610. Interestingly, more women agree with the statement compared to men. Since women are expected to express more sadness, it is generally believed that women lack the ability to control and influence their emotions in leadership, affecting their rationality, competence, and improvement from criticism (Brescoll, 2016). The quantitative data do somewhat support the statement. Also, more men with leadership responsibilities in their organization share agreeableness compared to females in leadership positions. This might indicate that the male leaders have experienced their female peers being more emotional in decision-making. A major share of the respondents who agree that women are more emotional in decision-making possess leadership positions. In a situation of strategic importance, the perception of women being more emotional than men in decision-making can affect the selection process, thus being deemed as a barrier for women in attaining a leadership position.

4.6 Emotionality

The perception of emotionality traits is different for both men and women. However, the traits are mutually exclusive depending on given settings or environments. The reason for investigating these emotions is because the literature suggests that emotions of happiness, sadness, and fear are associated with being more characteristic of women, whereas anger and pride are believed to be more characteristic of men (Hutson-Comeaux & Kelly, 2002; Plant et al., 2000). The belief that women are more emotional than men is one of the strongest gender stereotypes held in Western cultures (Brescoll, 2016). The perception that women display more emotions is consequential for female leaders because people assume that women who are unable to control their emotional display will affect their ability to make rational, objective decisions (Brescoll, 2016). Thus, it is relevant to explore this as a barrier for women in attaining leadership positions. Men were included as a part of the study in order to compare

gender-related emotions and to investigate how gender stereotypes are perceived by the sociodemographic groups. More specifically, the respondents were asked to rate how acceptable/unacceptable they experience each trait for both men and women as a leader and in a social setting.

4.6.1 Finding #1: Emotionality, Women

In Table 4.8, an overview of the response and the mean from the questions regarding the emotionality of women is presented. The respondents were asked to rate their acceptableness for women to display the following emotions in a social setting and in a leadership role. See the Appendix, under the section *"Emotionality, Women"* for detailed measurements of the sociodemographic factors for each addressed item/construct.

Construct/ Item	Response	Mean
Emotionality woman		
Happiness	In a leadership role:	6,500
	In a social setting:	6,621
Fear	In a leadership role:	3,580
	In a social setting:	5,737
Sadness	In a leadership role:	4,140
	In a social setting:	5,572
Anger	In a leadership role:	3,510
	In a social setting:	3,970
Pride	In a leadership role:	6,050
	In a social setting:	5,669

Legend: 1 Strongly unacceptable, 2 Unacceptable, 3 Somewhat unacceptable, 4 Neutral, 5 Somewhat acceptable, 6 Acceptable, 7 Strongly acceptable

Table 4.8 Emotionality Women.

Happiness. Women and male respondents have equal responses in both leadership roles and social settings. Both genders agree that it is more acceptable for women to show happiness in a social setting than in a leadership role.

Fear. The genders are fairly distributed; and find it more acceptable for women to display fear in a social setting than leadership positions. Out of the total respondents, 51% who believe that exhibiting fear in leadership roles in the unacceptable columns, have had prior experience with female leaders.

Sadness. Both women and men are equally distributed regarding their view on traits related to sadness in leadership roles and social settings. There are 15% more respondents in the unacceptable columns for displaying sadness in leadership roles, who lack experience with female leaders.

Anger. More male respondents think it is more acceptable for women to display anger in both leadership roles and social settings. 71% of female respondents do not find it acceptable for women to display anger in a leadership role. 57% of female respondents find it unacceptable for women to display anger in a social setting.

Pride. In terms of views associated with pride as a trait, the gender distribution is equal in both leadership roles and social settings.

4.6.2 Discussion #1: Emotionality, Women

Overall, the numbers show that the respondents agree that it is more acceptable for women to display emotions in a social setting than in a leadership role. The emotions that are the least acceptable for women to show are fear and anger. The average of emotions associated with being more characteristic of women was 5.977 in a social setting and 4,740 in a leadership role. This strongly supports the literature, suggesting that it is important to control the display of emotions, and social roles may overcome gender roles in a profession where expression shall connect with an acquired role (Brescoll, 2016; Fischer & LaFrance,

2015). The literature is also supported by the quantitative data in terms of emotions associated with being more characteristic of men, where the mean is 4,780 in a leadership position and 4,820 in a social setting. The differences are however much lower, suggesting these emotions are equally perceived in both settings.

4.6.3 Finding #2: Emotionality, Men

In Table 4.9, an overview of the response and the mean from the questions regarding the emotionality of men is presented. The respondents were asked to rate their agreeableness for men to display the following emotions in a social setting and in a leadership role. See the Appendix, under the section *"Emotionality, Men"* for detailed measurements of the sociodemographic factors for each addressed item/construct.

Table 4.9 Emotionality Men.

Happiness. Compared to men, women are 13% more acceptable or strongly acceptable of the trait in a leadership position. The genders are equally distributed regarding social settings. Furthermore, 17% of those who hold no leadership position in their organization find it more strongly acceptable or acceptable in leadership roles. 25% of the respondents without experience surrounding female leaders are more strongly acceptable for displaying happiness in a leadership position.

Fear. Both genders are equally distributed regarding the trait in a leadership role and in a social setting. Respondents working in the public sector find the trait 34% more strongly unacceptable in leadership roles.

Sadness. Compared to women, 16% more men find it more acceptable to display sadness in a social setting; and are equally distributed in leadership roles. 23% of the respondents lacking experience with female leaders find it less acceptable to show sadness, than those with experience in leadership positions.

Anger. Compared to men, 21% of women find it less unacceptable to show anger in a position of leadership. There are 21% more respondents with no experience of a female leader in the acceptable columns, compared to those with experience in leadership positions.

Pride. Women and men are equally distributed regarding their view on pride as a trait in leadership roles and social settings. Participants who have had experience with female leaders are 19% more strongly acceptable or acceptable of the trait in a leadership role.

4.6.4 Discussion #2: Emotionality, Men

The average of the data measuring the emotions associated with characteristics of men was 4,820 for women in a social setting and 4,780 in a leadership role. For men, the mean was 5,225 in a social setting and 5,110 in a leadership position, indicating that it is more acceptable for men than women to display emotions ascribed to men in both settings. For the emotions associated with the characteristics of women, the mean was 4,740 for women in a

leadership position and 5,977 in a social setting. In contrast, men had 4,446 in leadership

positions and 4,850 in social settings. This indicates that the associated emotions of each

gender from the literature (Plant et al., 2000) are supported by quantitative data. The literature

suggests that women and men hold similar stereotypes about emotionality (Hutson-Comeaux

& Kelly, 2002). As discovered in the sociodemographic factors, this is the case for most of

the studied items.

Both women and men experience the same type of emotions on a daily basis.

However, since women tend to display more of their emotions, they are believed to be more

emotional (Seo & Barrett, 2007). Nonetheless, as discovered through the literature, as

opposed to male leaders, female leaders who expressed anger were seen as out of control,

resulting in granting females less power and status at work, consequently justifying how

females are not suitable for leadership positions (Brescoll, 2016). Thus, the gender stereotype

of emotion can be a major limitation for women in attaining a leadership position.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The findings and discussion explored differences and similarities regarding the studied

literature and the quantitative data to answer the research question *"How do gender*

stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?". By looking at the

quantitative data, some of the statements found in the literature studies were to some extent

less implicating barriers to women's career development in leadership. The quantitative data,

as well as the literature findings, confirm that a gender-diverse leadership team strengthens

the organization's performance (McKinsey & Company, 2017). However, as seen in statistical

data from Norway, there is an unbalanced distribution (Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021).

The literature discusses the major invisible factor, the "glass ceiling", that hinders

women from reaching leadership responsibilities. The quantitative data showed that the

female respondents were most agreeable to the "glass ceiling" construct, suggesting that the

societal image is more inclusive than women might think. As the literature states, the gender ratio is equally distributed in the belief that women are more emotional than men (Brescoll, 2016). Once again, the female respondents' agreeableness is higher with this claim. This could be interpreted as a sign of doubt about females' own self-image. However, when asked if gender stereotypes have negatively affected the respondent's career advancement, the female respondents showed to be more agreeable compared to the male respondents. This might suggest that women may have encountered implications that men might be unaware of or overlook as barriers specifically faced by women, given that these stereotypes align with the cultural context. Moreover, as explored in the quantitative data, family life (e.g., children) is deemed to be one major obstacle for women attempting to achieve leadership positions.

The preferred personality traits ascribed to women also give a strong indication of how gender stereotypes affect women's self-image, by not fitting the attributes of a leader. Leadership roles often require agentic traits. However, women are perceived as less agentic than men, as observed through the quantitative data and literature review (Brescoll, 2016). The quantitative data shows that it is more positive for women to possess agentic traits in a leadership position, as opposed to a social setting. The "lack of fit" might impact women´s wish to attain leadership positions, as it requires more effort from women to adapt their personality traits to fit the environmental standards than men (Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001).

5.0 Conclusion

Chapter 5 concludes the study by summarizing the key findings from the research in accordance with the research question "*How do gender stereotypes affect females' opportunity to attain leadership roles?*". Exploring available literature clearly implied that gender stereotypes affect women's opportunities to attain leadership roles. This provided a solid foundation to further explore the main themes such as personality traits/backlash effects of disconfirming gender traits, the "lack of fit" phenomenon, "glass ceiling" effects, and emotionality. The quantitative research study was conducted targeting the Norwegian work market. The research findings support most of the literature findings, confirming that gender stereotypes affect females' opportunities in attaining leadership positions. Furthermore, the implications of the gender stereotypes will be addressed and discussed.

5.1 Personality Traits/Backlash Effects

Women are viewed as communal, whereas leadership roles require agentic personality traits (Brescoll, 2016). As discovered in the primary data, the respondents rated women as more communal and men as more agentic. The literature findings suggest that the gender stereotypic woman does not correlate with the agentic traits required of a leader, and that those who adapt a more agentic behavior in leadership positions experience backlash effects by not fitting a prescribed societal image of a woman (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001, 2004; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Plant, 2001; Rudman & Phelan, 2008). This suggests that the gender-stereotypical personality traits ascribed to women can serve as an obstacle to their chance of achieving a leadership role.

5.2 "Lack of Fit"

The phenomenon of "lack of fit" explores how women do not fit the stereotypical leadership traits necessary for succeeding in the position (Heilman, 2001). The primary data investigated how the respondents agreed with women having to adapt to the environment

more than men, not daring to apply due to gender norms, that women do not feel gender match in a leadership role, and if men and women can be equally good leaders in the opposite gender-dominated professions. The findings suggested that the respondents somewhat agreed with the statements, whereas women agreed with the statements to a greater extent than men. Thus, the findings indicated that women do not feel that their gender fits with the gender-stereotypical image of a leader, which is often associated with typical characteristics ascribed to men. However, the literature explored that these findings did not occur in the field perceived as feminine or gender-neutral, as reflected in the statistical data from Boston Consulting Group (Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021). The phenomenon is therefore considered as a barrier to women attaining a leadership role in professions that are not perceived as feminine or gender-neutral.

5.3 "Glass Ceiling"

Although several studies confirm the positive impact of gender diversity in leadership positions on organizational performance, the statistics still show an unbalanced distribution (Larson, 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2017; Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021). The implications of the imbalanced gender distribution in leadership can be explained through different aspects of gender stereotypes which affect women's chances of being hired, as well as their chances to successfully apply for leadership positions (Brescoll, 2016; Fischbach et al., 2015; Grant & Sandberg, 2014; Heilman, 2001). Thus, emphasizing the importance of investigating the construct "glass ceiling", which is explained as invisible barriers that affect women from leadership positions (Heilman, 2001). The primary data also explored how the respondents agreed with the statement, a gender-diverse management team strengthens the organization's performance.

The most interesting finding is that family life is deemed to be a crucial barrier to women's career advancement, as women are considered the primary caregiver of the family

(Subramaniam et al., 2013; St. Catherine University, 2021). Family-oriented women might be perceived as less attractive in attaining leadership roles or feel pressured to down-prioritize their careers (St. Catherine University, 2021; Subramaniam et al., 2013). Additionally, the primary data explored that women were rated as more emotional than men in decision-making, which can affect employment and promotion opportunities for women. The literature also addressed this as a crucial barrier for women, because women are believed to not possess enough emotional toughness (e.g., the ability to control the feelings influencing their decision-making) to effectively lead others (Brescoll, 2016; Heilman, 2001).

5.4 Emotionality

Both women and men have similar attitudes regarding gender stereotypes of emotionality and hold similar beliefs of women being more emotional than men (Brescoll, 2016; CORE, 2021; Grant & Sandberg, 2014; Hutson-Comeaux & Kelly, 2002; Plant et al., 2000; Pollman-Larsen et al., 2021). Female leaders, but not male leaders, which expressed anger were seen as out of control, resulting in granting females less power and status at work, and justifying how females are not suitable for leadership positions (Brescoll, 2016). The primary data studied emotions perceived as more related to both women and men. The findings suggested that the emotions related to women and those related to men were deemed more acceptable for each gender. However, the related literature findings addressed that displaying more emotions is consequential for female leaders because people assume that women who are unable to control their emotional display will impact their ability to make rational, objective decisions (Brescoll, 2016). Moreover, it is generally believed that women lack the ability to control and influence their emotions in leadership, affecting their rationality, competence, and improvement from criticism (Brescoll, 2016).

5.5 Thesis Contribution & Methodological Implications

The studies and evaluations of the existing literature found that although various studies on general gender stereotypes and gender diversities have been conducted individually, academic literature and research exploring how gender stereotypes impact women's career advancement are limited. In addition, there is not sufficient research focusing on the Norwegian work market. Thus, this thesis delivers an academic contribution by exploring how stereotypical gender barriers implicate women's opportunities to attain a leadership role that correlates with the Norwegian work market. Furthermore, this study helps justify the collected theories' reliability, by testing how the quantitative data correlates with the literature findings. However, the research requires a bigger sample size and a random-sampling method to measure the validity of the study.

6.0 Recommendations

This chapter aims to demonstrate the value and contribution of the research to academic studies and proposes opportunities for future research. A wealth of academic literature and recent research has explored the correlation between gender diversity and various performance outcomes. Several studies have shown that gender diversity tends to positively impact business areas such as financial performance, innovation, and overall effectiveness (Grant & Sandberg, 2014; Hunt et al., 2018; Larson, 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2017). Whereas Norway seems to have stagnated the progression of gender balance in leadership, it is suggested that quotation as a tool for increasing gender equality has worked against its purpose (Gaarder, 2011). Based on the findings in this thesis, it is highly recommended to focus on educational and training initiatives to increase the awareness of the effectiveness gender-diversity has on organizational performance. Implementation of transparency policies in recruitment processes helps to secure equal opportunities and qualifications for both men and women. Mentorship and career development counselling help women to clarify advancement paths and achieve goals. See Table 6.1 for recommendations related to the analysis themes.

Recommendation for business practitioners	
1: (See Chapter 2, 4, 5)	**Gender-diversity in management**: Educational measures such as management training help to strengthen top managers' knowledge and commitment to gender balance and diversity
2: (See Chapter 2, 4, 5)	**"Glass Ceiling"**: Organizational measures to promote transparency in recruitment processes, as well as clarification of career paths
3: (See Chapter 2, 4, 5)	**"Lack of Fit"**: Training programmes for women to promote equal opportunities; and mentorship and counselling for career development
4: (See Chapter 2, 4, 5)	**Emotionality**: Educational measures help to understand how emotions in decision-making cause higher decision-making performance

Table 6.1 Recommendations

6.1 Future Research

The intriguing question after examining the literature is how women can develop in society by fitting the prescribed leader image in the hiring and applying process without being exposed to backlash effects and gender barriers. The required change seems to be held in cultural factors and attitudes that are ascribed to women, which have not followed the development of society paralleled with a broader gender-balanced work market. Gender stereotypes are barriers mostly perceived on the surface value, whereas other invisible underlying limitations are far more challenging and complex. Therefore, future researchers should delve into investigating the gender-stereotypical barriers women encounter in leadership roles.

Based on the quantitative findings, future researchers are suggested to investigate the following are of interests:

- In which industries do gender stereotypes have a stronger impact on women's opportunities for career advancement?

- Other than gender norms, are there other barriers related to gender stereotypes that inhibit women in their career advancement?

- Which are the most implicating factors that cause imbalanced gender distribution in leadership positions?

References

APA (2023a). Emotionality. *American Psychological Association.* Retrieved

from: https://dictionary.apa.org/emotionality

APA (2023b). Quantitative research. *American Psychological Association*. Retrieved

from: https://dictionary.apa.org/quantitative-research

Berge, C. (11.05.2023). Hvor mange jobber er det i Norge? *Statistisk Sentral Byrå.* Retrieved

from: https://www.ssb.no/arbeid-og-lonn/sysselsetting/statistikk/antall-arbeidsforhold-

og-lonn/artikler/hvor-mange-jobber-er-det-i-norge

Brescoll, V. L. (2016). Leading with their hearts? How gender stereotypes of emotion lead to

biased evaluations of female leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly Volume 27, Issue 3,*

Pages 415-428. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.02.005

CORE (2022). Topplederbarometer 2022. *Samfunnsforskning*. Retrieved from:

https://www.samfunnsforskning.no/core/publikasjoner/coretopplederbarometer/2022/p

df

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among*

Five Approaches (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods*

research (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative*

research. Sage.

Drie, V. J., Dekker, R. (2013). Theoretical triangulation as an approach for revealing

the complexity of a classroom discussion. *British Educational Research Journal*,

39(2), 338–360. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24463934

Durik, A. M., Hyde, J. S., Marks, A. C., Roy, A. L., Anaya, D., Schultz, G. (2006). Ethnicity and gender stereotypes of emotion. *Sex Roles*, 54(7-8), 429-445. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-006-9020-4

EIGE. (2023). Gender Norms. *European Institute for Gender Equality.* Retrieved from: https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1194

Fischbach, A., Lichtenthaler, P. W., Horstmann, N. (2015). Leadership and

Gender Stereotyping of Emotions: Think manager – think male? *Journal of Personnel Psychology, 14(3), 153–162.* https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000136

Fischer, A., Lafrance, M. (2015). What Drives the Smile and the Tear: Why Women

Are More Emotionally Expressive Than Men. *Emotion Review*, *7*(1), 22–29. https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073914544406

Fiske, S. T., Stevens, L. E. (1993). What's so special about sex? Gender stereotyping and discrimination. In S. Oskamp & M. Costanzo (Eds.), *Gender issues in contemporary society* (pp. 173–196). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Gaarder, J. (20.01.2011). Likestilling hemmer karrieren. *E24.* Retrieved from: https://e24.no/karriere-og-ledelse/i/LA3qx9/likestilling-hemmer-karrieren

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 8(4), 597-606. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2003.1870

Grant, A., Sandberg, S. (06.12.2014). When Talking About Bias Backfires. *The New York Times.* Retrieved from: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/07/opinion/sunday/adam-grant-and-sheryl-sandberg-on-discrimination-at-work.html

Grønmo, S. (16.01.2023). Kvantitativ metode. *Store Norske Leksikon.* Retrieved from: https://snl.no/kvantitativ_metode

Heilman, M. E. (2001). Description and Prescription: How Gender Stereotypes

Prevent Women's Ascent Up the Organizational Ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*,

57(4), 657–674. https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00234

Heilman, M. E., Okimoto, T. G. (2007). Why are women penalized for success at male

tasks? The implied communality deficit. Journal of Applied Psychology, 92(1), 81–

92. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.81.

Heilman, M. E., Wallen, A. S., Fuchs, D., & Tamkins, M. M. (2004). Penalties for

success: Reactions to women who succeed at male gender-typed tasks. *The Journal of

Applied Psychology, 89, 416–427.* DOI: 10.1037/0021-9010.89.3.416

Hunt, D. V., Yee, L., Prince, S., Dixon-Fyle, S. (18.01. 2018). Delivery

through diversity. *McKinsey & Company.* Retried from:

https://www.mckinsey.com/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity

Hutson-Comeaux, S. L., & Kelly, J. R. (2002). Gender Stereotypes of Emotional

Reactions: How We Judge an Emotion as Valid. *Sex Roles*, *47*(1/2), 1–10.

https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1020657301981

Josh, K. (25.11.2023). What is Data Collection? Why is it Important for Your

Business? *Emeritus.* Retrieved 12.05.2023 from: https://emeritus.org/blog/data-

analytics-what-data-collection/

Joshi, A., Kale, S., Chandel, S., Pal, D. (2015). Likert Scale: Explored and Explained. *British

Journal of Applied Science & Technology*, *7*(4), 396-

403. https://doi.org/10.9734/bjast/2015/14975

Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques.* New

Age International (P) Limited. https://books.google.no/books?id=8c6gkbKi-F4C

Larson, E. (21.09.2017). New Research: Diversity + Inclusion = Better Decision Making At

    Work. *Forbes.* Retrieved from:

    https://www.forbes.com/sites/eriklarson/2017/09/21/new-research-diversity-inclusion-

    better-decision-making-at-work/?sh=3af2e6de4cbf

Lawson, M. A., Martin, A. E., Huda, I., & Matz, S. C. (2022). Hiring women into

    senior leadership positions is associated with a reduction in gender stereotypes

    in organizational language. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*,

    119(9). https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2026443119

Lorenzo, R., Voigt, N., Krentz, M., Abouzahr, K. (2018). How Diverse Leadership Teams

    Boost Innovation. *Boston Consulting Group.* Retrieved from: http://boston-consulting-

    group-brightspot.s3.amazonaws.com/img-src/BCG-How-Diverse-Leadership-Teams-

    Boost-Innovation-Jan-2018_tcm9-207935.pdf

Maguire, M., Delahunt, B. (2017). *Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide*

    for learning and teaching scholars. All Ireland Journal of Higher Education, 9(3).

McKinsey & Company (2017). *Women matter: Time to accelerate.* Retrieved from:

    https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/featured%20insights/women%20matter

    /women%20matter%20ten%20years%20of%20insights%20on%20the%20importance

    %20of%20gender%20diversity/women-matter-time-to-accelerate-ten-years-of-

    insights-into-gender-diversity.pdf

Moreno-Gómez, J., Lafuente, E., Vaillant, Y. (2018). Gender diversity in the board, women's

    leadership and business performance. *Gender in Management: An International*

    Journal, *33*(2), 104–122. https://doi.org/10.1108/gm-05-2017-0058

Myers, D. G. (2010). *Social Psychology (10th ed.).* McGraw-Hill, New York. Retrieved

    from: https://diasmumpuni.files.wordpress.com/2018/02/david_g-

    _myers_social_psychology_10th_editionbookfi.pdf

Neuman, W. L. (2013). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh.

Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Basics of Social Research: Qualitative / Quantitative Approaches (3rd edition).* Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh.

Noble, H., Heale, R. (2019). Triangulation in research, with examples. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, 22(3), 67-68. http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/ebnurs-2019-103145

Plant, E. A., Hyde, J. S., Keltner, D., Devine, P. G. (2000). The Gender Stereotyping of Emotions. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *24*(1), 81–92. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.2000.tb01024.x

Pollmann-Larsen, M., Poulsen, M-B., Jensen, T., Uehigashi, K., Kristoffersen, B., Hansen, J., Harboe, R., Nummela, R., Skeel-Gjørling, B., Wigh, A. (26.05.2021). Finding the Value in Diversity: Diversity and Inclusion Isn´t Just a Fix. *Boston Consulting Group.* Retrieved from: https://www.bcg.com/publications/2021/diversity-inclusion-nordics-region

Rudman, L. A., Moss-Racusin, C. A., Phelan, J. E., & Nauts, S. (2012). Status incongruity and backlash effects: Defending the gender hierarchy motivates prejudice against female leaders. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *48*(1), 165-179.

Rudman, L. A., Phelan, J. E. (2008). Backlash effects for disconfirming gender stereotypes in organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *28*, 61-79. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2008.04.003

Haslam, S., Ryan, M. (2007). The Glass Cliff: Exploring the Dynamics Surrounding the Appointment of Women to Precarious Leadership Positions. *Academy of Management Review*, *32*, 549-572. https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2007.24351856

Seo, M.-G., Barrett, L. F. (2007). Being Emotional During Decision Making—Good or Bad? an Empirical Investigation. *Academy of Management Journal*, *50*(4), 923–940. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2007.26279217

Sikt. (n.d.). *Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research.* Retrieved 15.04.2023 from: https://sikt.no/en/about-sikt

St. Catherine University (16.04.2021). *Overcome Barriers to Female Leadership.* Retrieved from: https://www.stkate.edu/academics/women-in-leadership-degrees/barriers-to-female-leadership

Subramaniam, I. D., Arumugam, T., Abu Baker Akeel, A. B. A. (2013). Demographic and Family Related Barriers on Women Managers' Career Development. *Asian Social Science*, *10*(1). https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n1p86

SurveyMonkey (2023). *Sample Size Calculator.* Retrieved 12.05.2023 from: https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/sample-size-calculator/

Tabassum, N., Nayak, B. S. (2021). Gender Stereotypes and Their Impact on Women´s Career Progression from a Managerial Perspective. *IIM Kozhikode Society & Management Review*, 10(2), 192-208. https://doi.org/10.1177/2277975220975513

UiS (05.08.2022). Personvernerklæring DigUp. Retrieved from: https://www.uis.no/nb/personvernerklaering-digup

UiS (27.04.2023). Om informasjonssikkerhet og personvern ved UiS. Retrieved from: https://www.uis.no/nb/student/om-informasjonssikkerhet-og-personvern-ved-uis

United Nations Human Rights (2014). *Gender stereotypes and Stereotyping women´s rights.* Retrieved from: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/OnePagers/Gender_stereotyping.pdf

Whitler, K. A. (05.06.2021). What Is The Executive Leadership Team? 33 Board And C-Level Leaders Explain. *Forbes.* Retrieved from: https://www.forbes.com/sites/kimberlywhitler/2021/06/05/what-is-the-executive-leadership-team-33-board-and-c-level-leaders-explain/?sh=577e560f6dbf

WSSU (n.d.). Key Elements of a Research Proposal Quantitative Design. *Winston-Salem State University.* Retrieved 12.05.2023 from: https://www.wssu.edu/develop-quantitative.pdf

World Economic Forum. (2020). *Global Gender Gap Report 2020.* Retrieved from: https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-index-2020

World Economic Forum. (2022). *Global Gender Gap Report 2022.* Retrieved from: https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-index-2022

APPENDIX

1. Online Survey Questionnaire

Answers from this survey will be used for research in a master's thesis at the University of Stavanger. The survey will be answered anonymously, in accordance with the university's GDPR regulations.
Thank you for your contribution!

Sociodemographic Factors

	Female	Male		
Gender	(1)	(2)		

	Under 30 years	30-45 years	46-56 years	57 years and above
Age	(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)

	Primary/ Secondary school	High school	Bachelor´s degree	Master´s degree	PHD
Education level	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)

	Private sector	Public sector	Voluntary
What sector do you work in?	(1)	(2)	(3)

	Yes	No
Do you have a leadership role in your organization?	(1)	(2)

Gender of manager

	Yes	No
Experience with female leader	(1)	(2)
Experience with male leader	(1)	(2)

Regardless of whether you have/do not have experience with questions concerning gender in this survey, you can base your answers on what you think fit the given statements the most.

Personality traits of a female leader

	1 Strongly negative	2 Negative	3 Somewhat negative	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat positive	6 Positive	7 Strongly Positive
Kind	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Nurturing	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Warm	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Independent	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Aggressive	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Dominant	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ambitious	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

Personality traits of women in general in the society

	1 Strongly negative	2 Negative	3 Somewhat negative	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat positive	6 Positive	7 Strongly Positive
Kind	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Nurturing	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Warm	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Independent	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Aggressive	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Dominant	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ambitious	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

Personality traits of a male leader

	1 Strongly negative	2 Negative	3 Somewhat negative	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat positive	6 Positive	7 Strongly Positive
Kind	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Nurturing	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Warm	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Independent	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Aggressive	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Dominant	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ambitious	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

Personality traits of men in general in the society

	1 Strongly negative	2 Negative	3 Somewhat negative	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat positive	6 Positive	7 Strongly Positive
Kind	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Nurturing	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Warm	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Independent	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Aggressive	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Dominant	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ambitious	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

Gender stereotypes are defined as: "..a generalized view or preconception about attributes, or characteristics that are or ought to be processed by women and men or the roles that are or should be performed by men and women.." (United Nations Human Rights, 2014).

Rate on the scale from 1-7

Have gender stereotypes negatively affected your career?
(1) 1 Strongly disagree
(2) 2 Disagree
(3) 3 Somewhat disagree
(4) 4 Neutral
(5) 5 Somewhat agree
(6) 6 Agree
(7) 7 Strongly Agree

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are too emotional in decision-making"
(1) 1 Strongly disagree
(2) 2 Disagree
(3) 3 Somewhat disagree
(4) 4 Neutral
(5) 5 Somewhat agree
(6) 6 Agree
(7) 7 Strongly Agree

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are more emotional than men in decision-making"
(1) 1 Strongly disagree
(2) 2 Disagree
(3) 3 Somewhat disagree
(4) 4 Neutral
(5) 5 Somewhat agree
(6) 6 Agree
(7) 7 Strongly Agree

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women have to adapt their personality traits to a greater extent than men, based on the environment they are in (e.g., at work/home)"
(1) 1 Strongly disagree
(2) 2 Disagree
(3) 3 Somewhat disagree
(4) 4 Neutral
(5) 5 Somewhat agree
(6) 6 Agree
(7) 7 Strongly Agree

How much do you agree with the statement: "A woman can be an equally good leader as a man in a male-dominated profession"

(1) 1 Strongly disagree
(2) 2 Disagree
(3) 3 Somewhat disagree
(4) 4 Neutral
(5) 5 Somewhat agree
(6) 6 Agree
(7) 7 Strongly Agree

How much do you agree with the statement: "A man can be an equally good leader as a woman in a female-dominated profession"

(1) 1 Strongly disagree
(2) 2 Disagree
(3) 3 Somewhat disagree
(4) 4 Neutral
(5) 5 Somewhat agree
(6) 6 Agree
(7) 7 Strongly Agree

How much do you agree with the claim: "A gender-diverse management team strengthens the organization's performance through increased profitability and value creation" (McKinsey & Company, 2017)

(1) 1 Strongly disagree
(2) 2 Disagree
(3) 3 Somewhat disagree
(4) 4 Neutral
(5) 5 Somewhat agree
(6) 6 Agree
(7) 7 Strongly Agree

Gender norms are defined as: "Gender norms are ideas about how women and men should be and act" (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2023).

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions?

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat disagree	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly agree
Family life (e.g., children)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Gender norms in an employment process	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Does not dare to apply due to gender norms	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Does not feel like gender matches with the leader role	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

How do you think gender norms affect women in an organization?

	1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat disagree	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat agree	6 Agree	7 Strongly agree
Opportunities for promotion	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Opportunities for salary raise	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a social setting?

	1 Strongly unacceptable	2 Unacceptable	3 Somewhat unacceptable	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat acceptable	6 Acceptable	7 Strongly acceptable
Happiness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Fear	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Sadness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Anger	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Pride	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role?

	1 Strongly unacceptable	2 Unacceptable	3 Somewhat unacceptable	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat acceptable	6 Acceptable	7 Strongly acceptable
Happiness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Fear	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Sadness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Anger	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Pride	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a social setting?

	1 Strongly unacceptable	2 Unacceptable	3 Somewhat unacceptable	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat acceptable	6 Acceptable	7 Strongly acceptable
Happiness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Fear	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Sadness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Anger	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Pride	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role?

	1 Strongly unacceptable	2 Unacceptable	3 Somewhat unacceptable	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat acceptable	6 Acceptable	7 Strongly acceptable
Happiness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Fear	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Sadness	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Anger	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Pride	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

2. Sociodemographic finding from the online survey

#1 Communal and Agentic traits, Women
Item *Kind* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a female leader - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
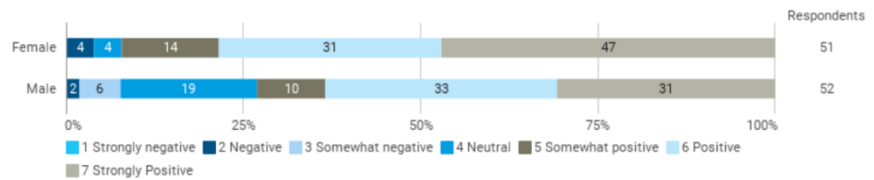
Personality traits of women in general in the society - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
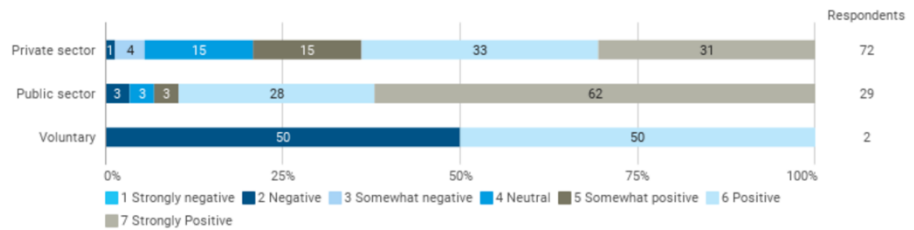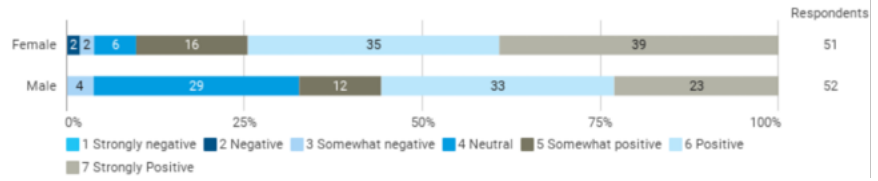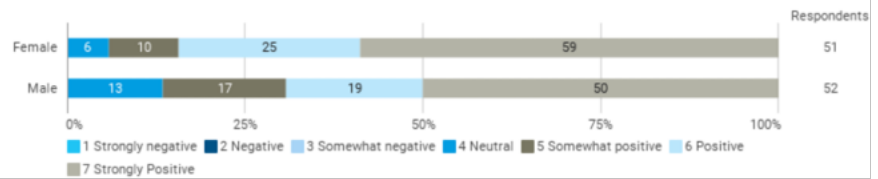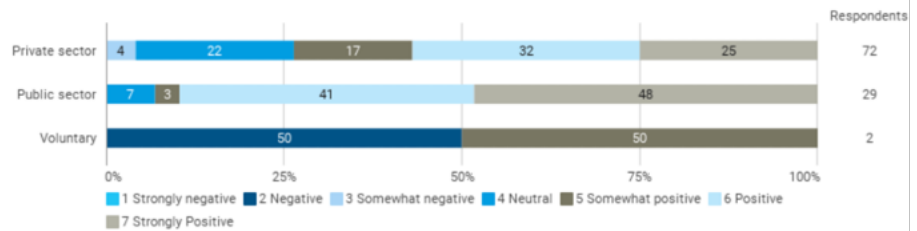Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
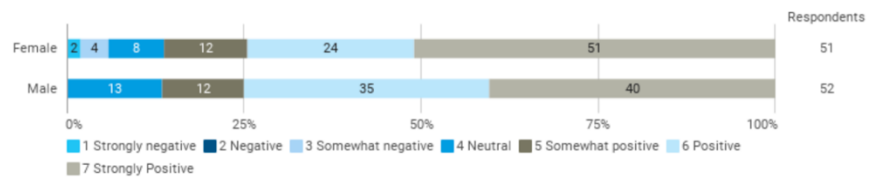
- **Sector**

Personality traits of a female leader - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
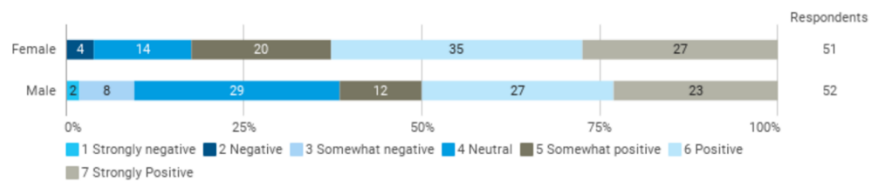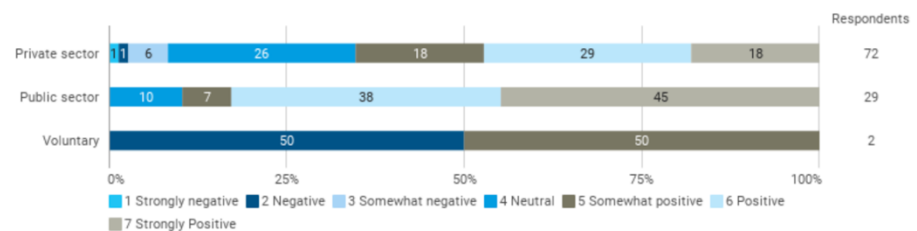Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

- **Leadership role**

Personality traits of a female leader - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

Item *Nurturing* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a female leader - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

		Respondents
Female	2 2 6 16 35 39	51
Male	4 29 12 33 23	52

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Personality traits of women in general in the society - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

		Respondents
Female	6 10 25 59	51
Male	13 17 19 50	52

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

- **Sector**

Personality traits of a female leader - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

		Respondents
Private sector	4 22 17 32 25	72
Public sector	7 3 41 48	29
Voluntary	50 50	2

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Item *Warm* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a female leader - Warm - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

		Respondents
Female	4 14 20 35 27	51
Male	2 8 29 12 27 23	52

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

- **Sector**

Personality traits of a female leader - Warm - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

		Respondents
Private sector	1 1 6 26 18 29 18	72
Public sector	10 7 38 45	29
Voluntary	50 50	2

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
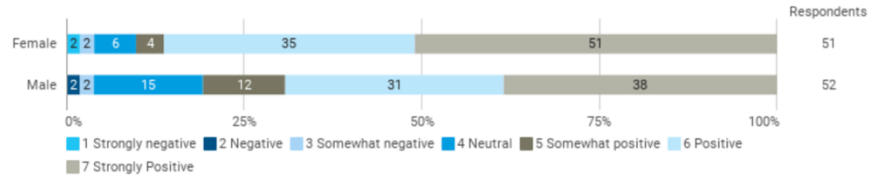■ 7 Strongly Positive

Item *Independent* crossed with:
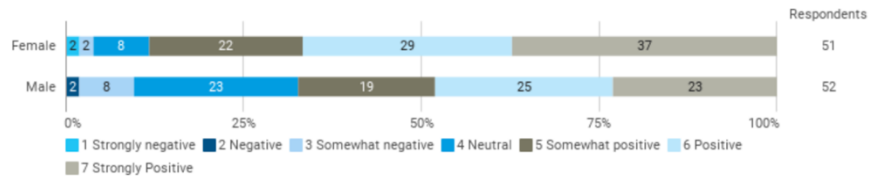
- ### Gender

Personality traits of a female leader - Independent - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Personality traits of women in general in the society - Independent - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
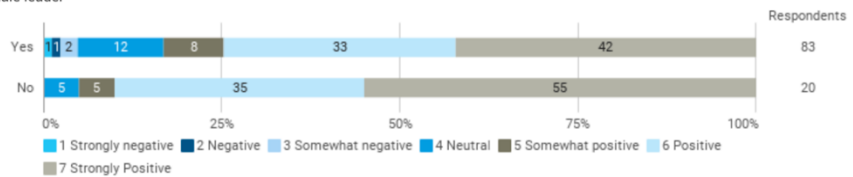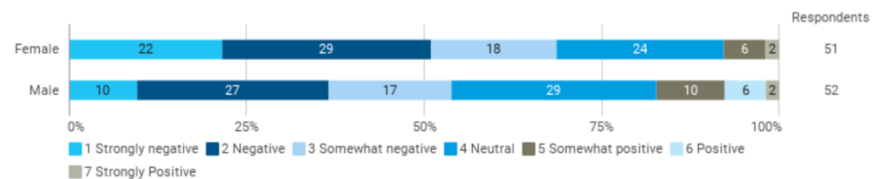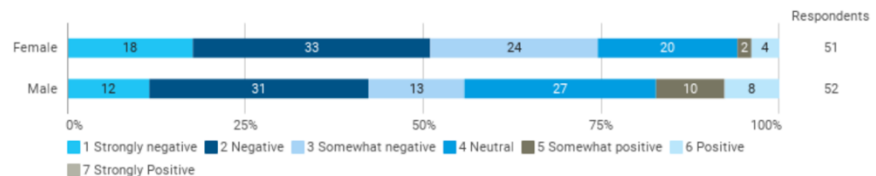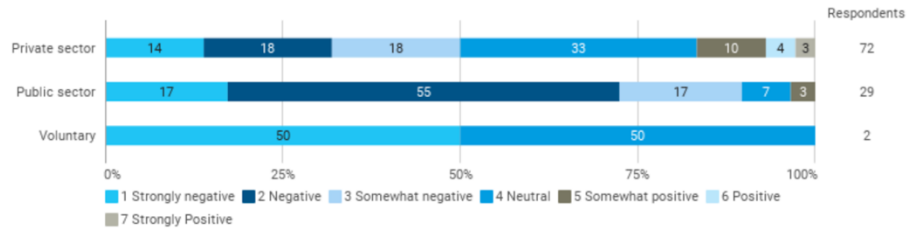Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- ### Experience with female leader

Personality traits of a female leader - Independent - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

Item *Aggressive* crossed with:

- ### Gender

Personality traits of a female leader - Aggressive - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Personality traits of women in general in the society - Aggressive - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Sector**

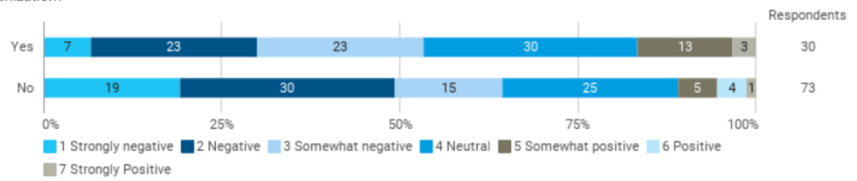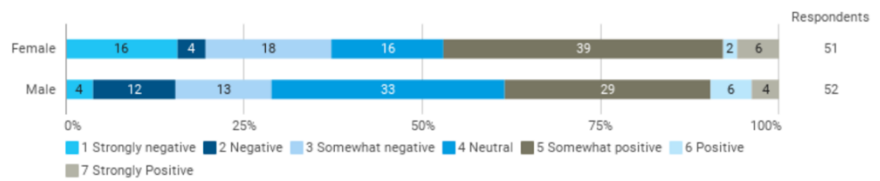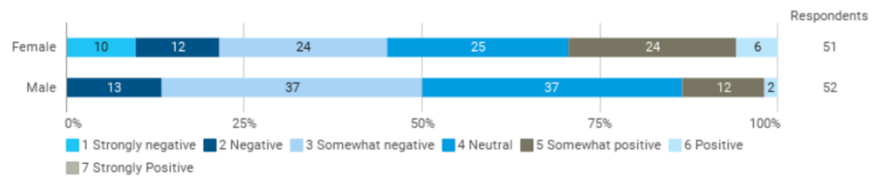Personality traits of a female leader - Aggressive - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

	Respondents
Private sector — 14 / 18 / 18 / 33 / 10 / 4 / 3	72
Public sector — 17 / 55 / 17 / 7 / 3	29
Voluntary — 50 / 50	2

1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

- **Leadership role**

Personality traits of a female leader - Aggressive - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

	Respondents
Yes — 7 / 23 / 23 / 30 / 13 / 3	30
No — 19 / 30 / 15 / 25 / 5 / 4 / 1	73

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Item *Dominant* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a female leader - Dominant - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

	Respondents
Female — 16 / 4 / 18 / 16 / 39 / 2 / 6	51
Male — 4 / 12 / 13 / 33 / 29 / 6 / 4	52

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Personality traits of women in general in the society - Dominant - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

	Respondents
Female — 10 / 12 / 24 / 25 / 24 / 6	51
Male — 13 / 37 / 37 / 12 / 2	52

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

- **Leadership role**

Personality traits of a female leader - Dominant - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

	Respondents
Yes — 10 / 7 / 10 / 17 / 43 / 3 / 10	30
No — 10 / 8 / 18 / 27 / 30 / 4 / 3	73

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Item *Ambitious* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a female leader - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Personality traits of women in general in the society - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
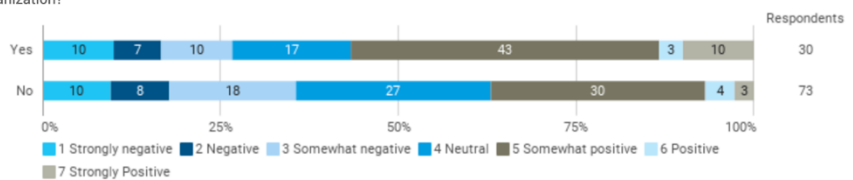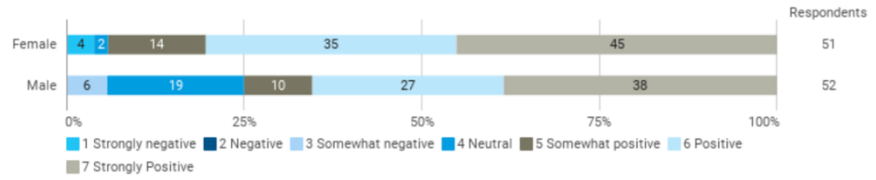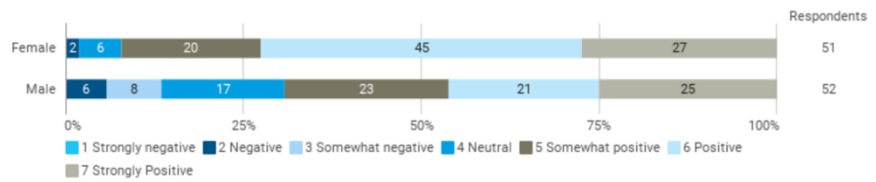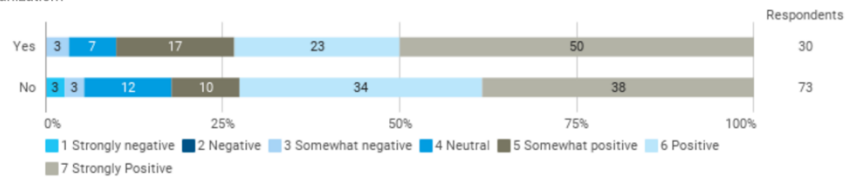Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Leadership role**

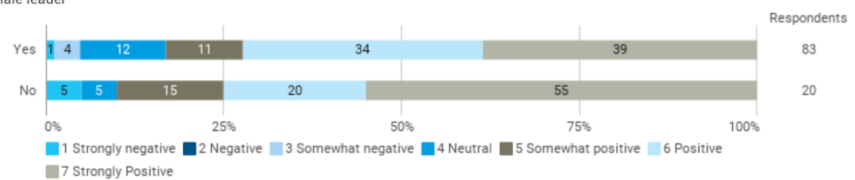Personality traits of a female leader - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

- **Experience with female leader**

Personality traits of a female leader - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

#2 Communal and Agentic Traits, Men

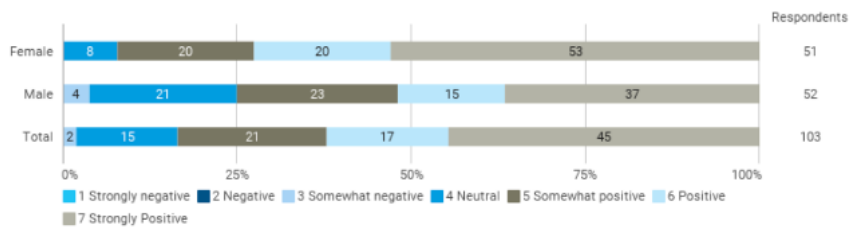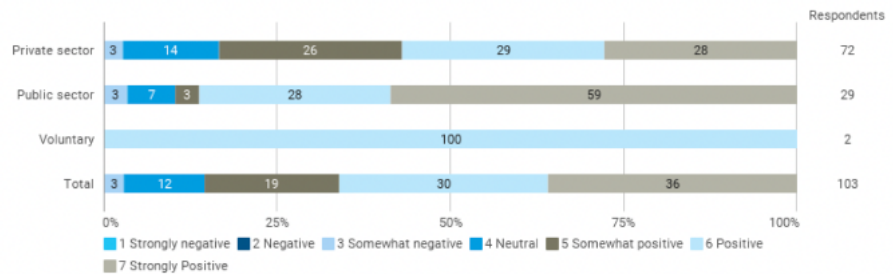## Item *Kind* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a male leader - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Respondents

Female	4	16	39	41	51
Male	6	19	23	21	31	52
Total	3	12	19	30	36	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

1 Strongly negative　2 Negative　3 Somewhat negative　4 Neutral　5 Somewhat positive　6 Positive
7 Strongly Positive

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Respondents
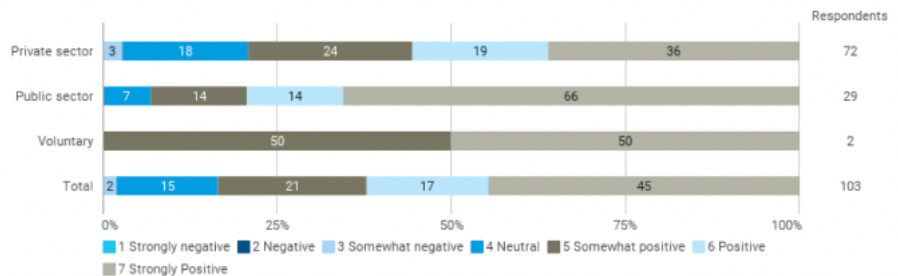
Female	8	20	20	53	51
Male	4	21	23	15	37	52
Total	2	15	21	17	45	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

1 Strongly negative　2 Negative　3 Somewhat negative　4 Neutral　5 Somewhat positive　6 Positive
7 Strongly Positive

- **Sector**

Personality traits of a male leader - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

Respondents

Private sector	3	14	26	29	28	72
Public sector	3	7	3	28	59	29
Voluntary		100			2
Total	3	12	19	30	36	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

1 Strongly negative　2 Negative　3 Somewhat negative　4 Neutral　5 Somewhat positive　6 Positive
7 Strongly Positive

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Kind - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
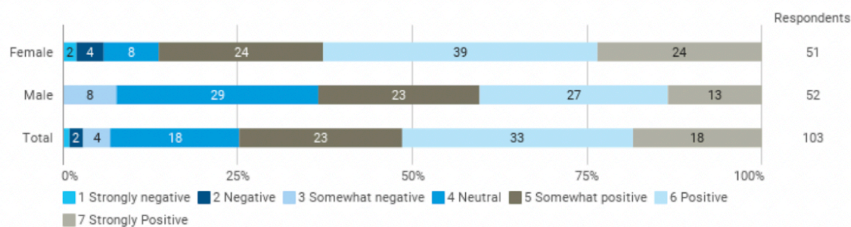Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

Respondents

Private sector	3	18	24	19	36	72
Public sector	7	14	14	66	29
Voluntary	50	50		2
Total	2	15	21	17	45	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

1 Strongly negative　2 Negative　3 Somewhat negative　4 Neutral　5 Somewhat positive　6 Positive
7 Strongly Positive
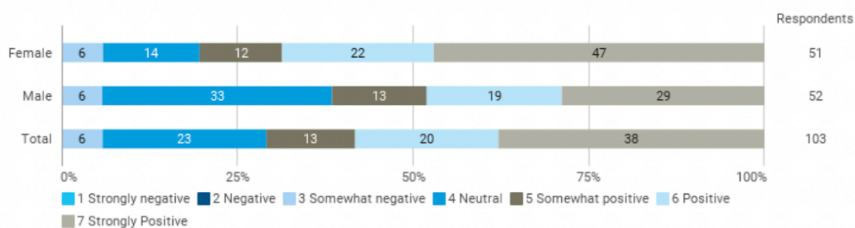
Item *Nurturing* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a male leader - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
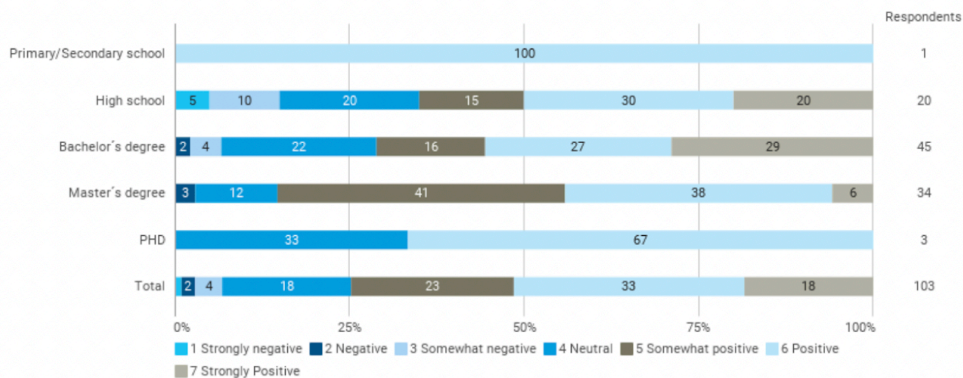Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
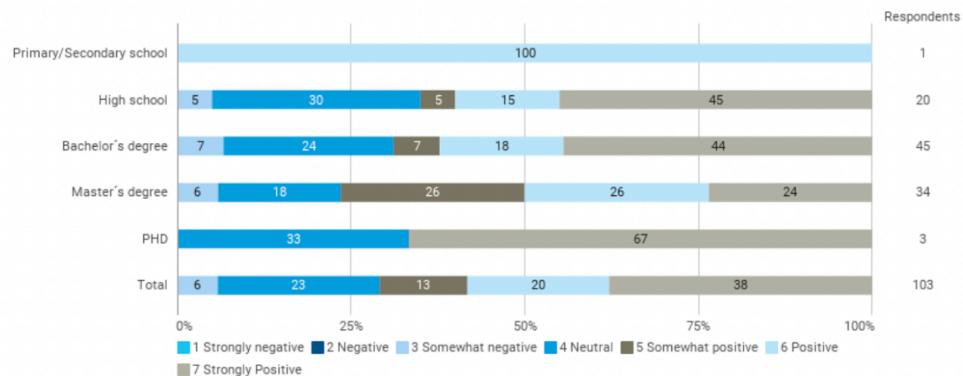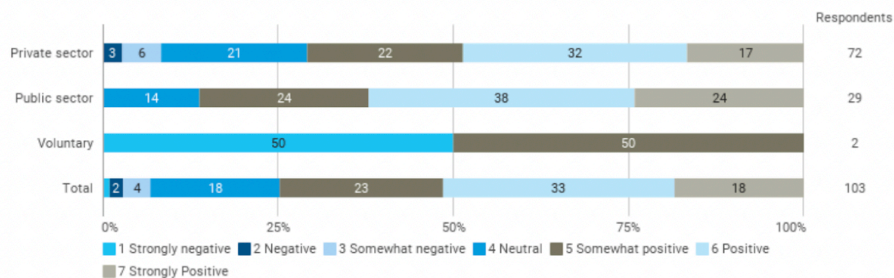

- **Education level**

Personality traits of a male leader - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Education level

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
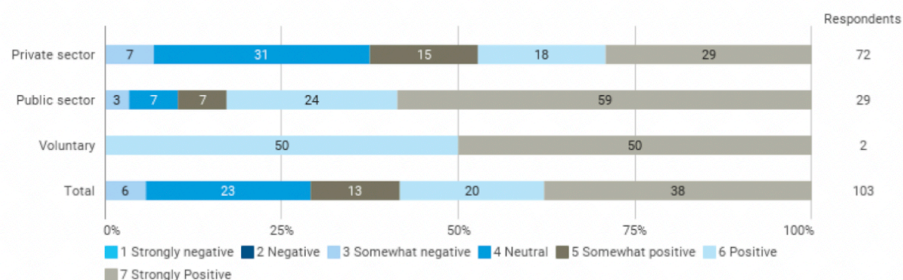Crossed with: Education level

- **Sector**

Personality traits of a male leader - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Nurturing - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
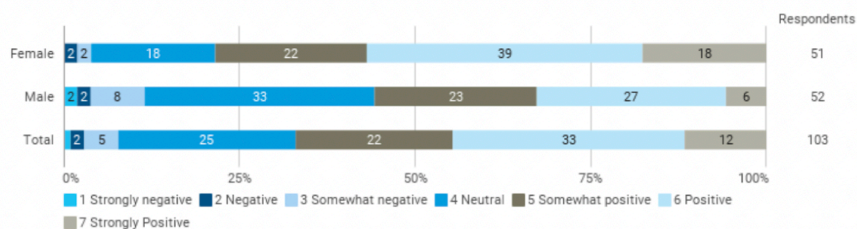Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

Item *Warm* crossed with:
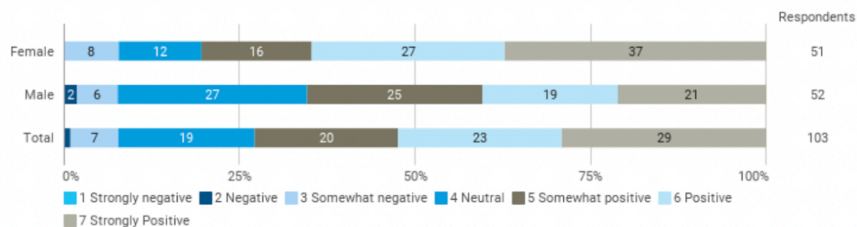
- **Gender**

Personality traits of a male leader - Warm - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

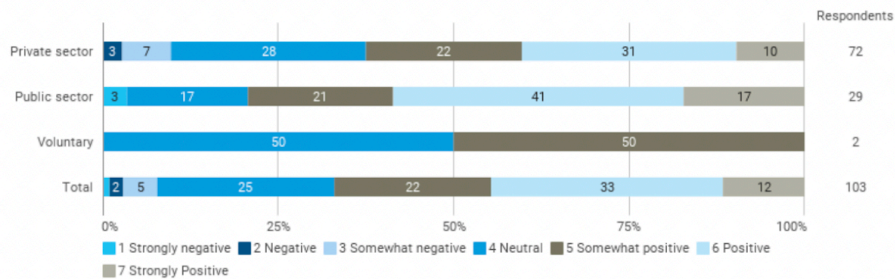Personality traits of men in general in the society - Warm - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
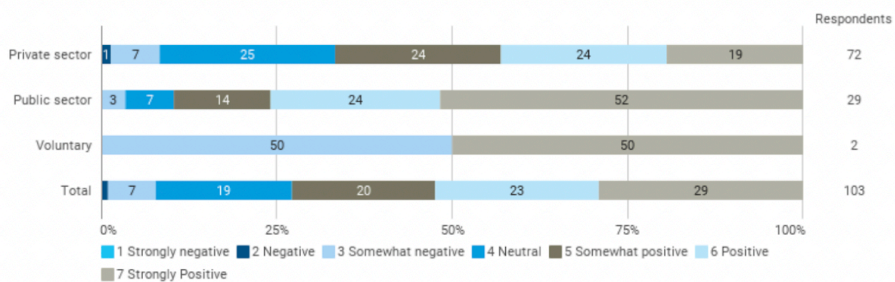Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Sector**

Personality traits of a male leader - Warm - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Warm - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
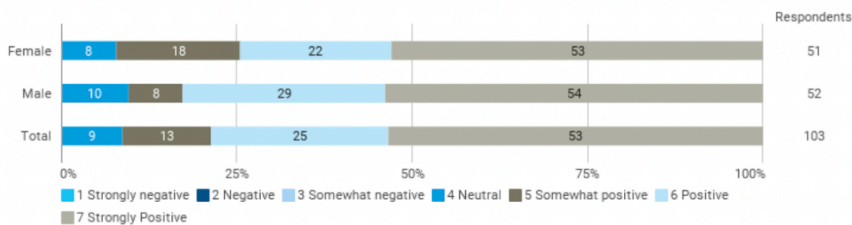Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

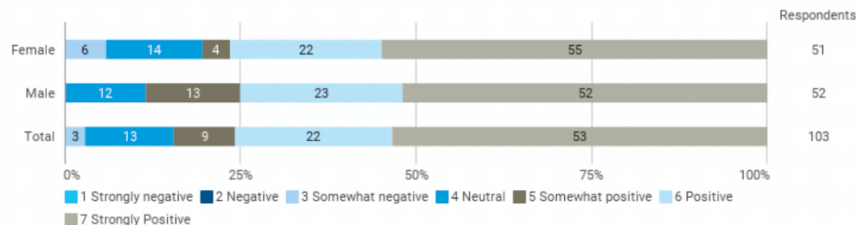## Item *Independent* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a male leader - Independent - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Independent - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
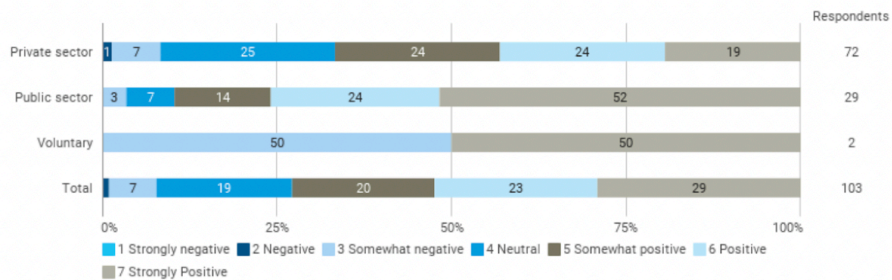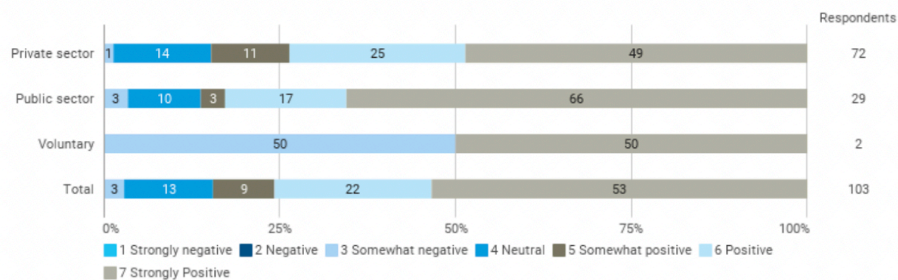Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Sector**

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Warm - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Independent - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
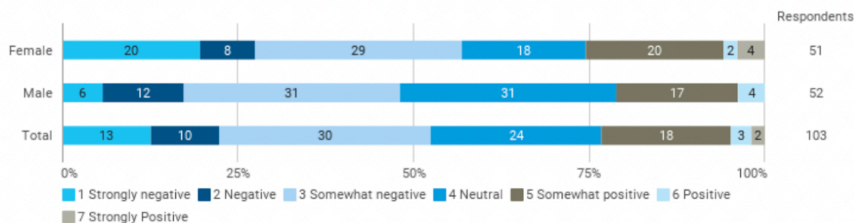Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

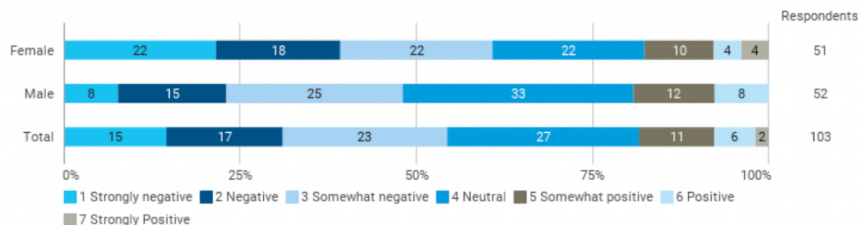# Item *Aggressive* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a male leader - Aggressive - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Aggressive - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
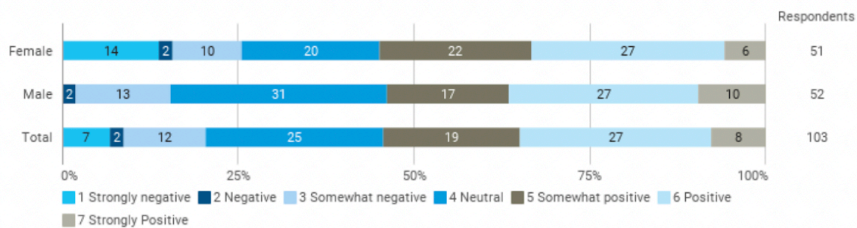Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
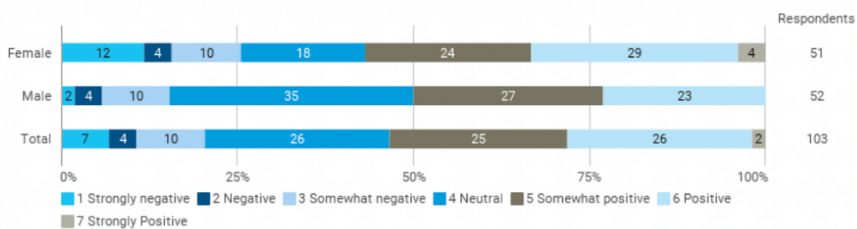
Item *Dominant* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a male leader - Dominant - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

					Respondents
Female	14	2	10	20	22	27	6	51
Male	2	13	31	17	27	10	52
Total	7	2	12	25	19	27	8	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Dominant - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

					Respondents
Female	12	4	10	18	24	29	4	51
Male	2	4	10	35	27	23	52
Total	7	4	10	26	25	26	2	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

- **Sector**

Personality traits of a male leader - Dominant - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

					Respondents
Private sector	8	3	10	32	18	21	8	72
Public sector	3	14	10	24	41	7	29
Voluntary	50	50	2
Total	7	2	12	25	19	27	8	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Dominant - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

					Respondents
Private sector	7	4	8	32	22	25	1	72
Public sector	7	3	10	10	34	31	3	29
Voluntary	50	50	2
Total	7	4	10	26	25	26	2	103

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

■ 1 Strongly negative ■ 2 Negative ■ 3 Somewhat negative ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat positive ■ 6 Positive
■ 7 Strongly Positive

Item *Ambitious* crossed with:

- **Gender**

Personality traits of a male leader - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

Personality traits of men in general in the society - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
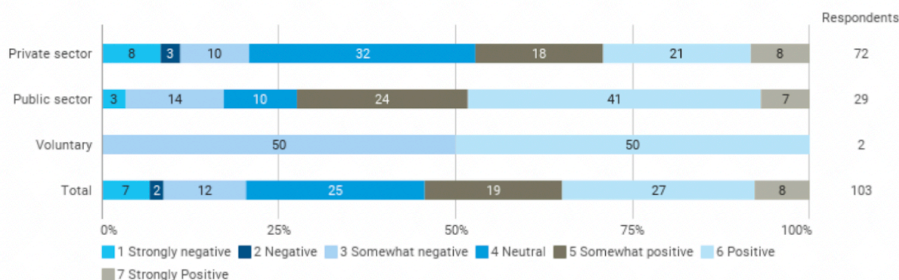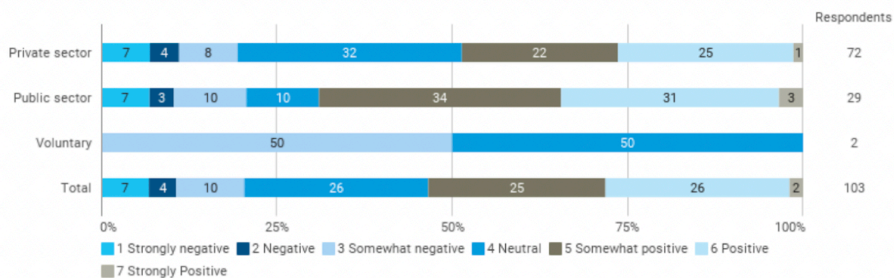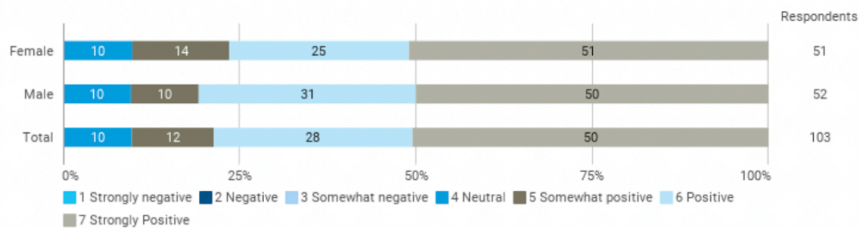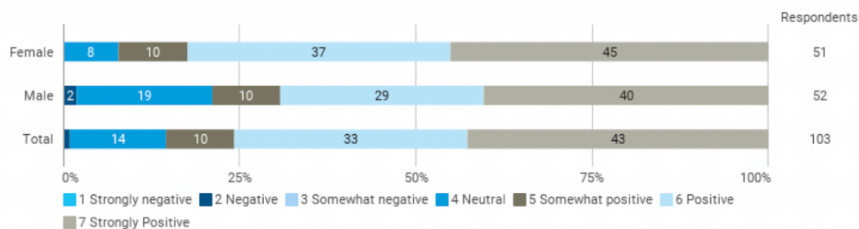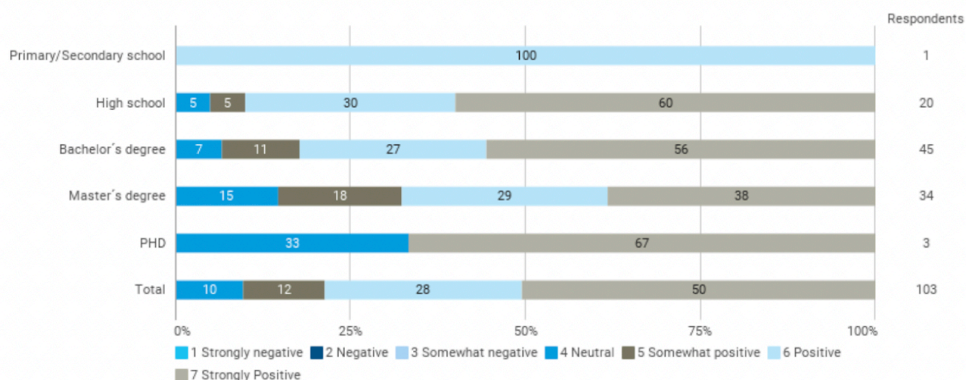Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Education level**

Personality traits of a male leader - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
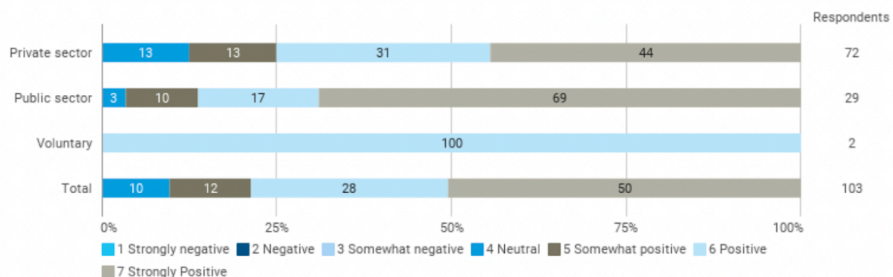Crossed with: Education level

- **Sector**

Personality traits of a male leader - Ambitious - Rate what you think on the scale from 1-7
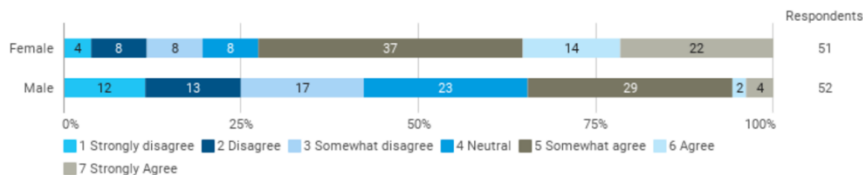Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

"Lack of Fit"

#1 Environment

- **Gender**

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women have to adapt their personality traits to a greater extent than men, based on the environment they are in (e.g., at work/home)"
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Sector**

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women have to adapt their personality traits to a greater extent than men, based on the environment they are in (e.g., at work/home)"
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?
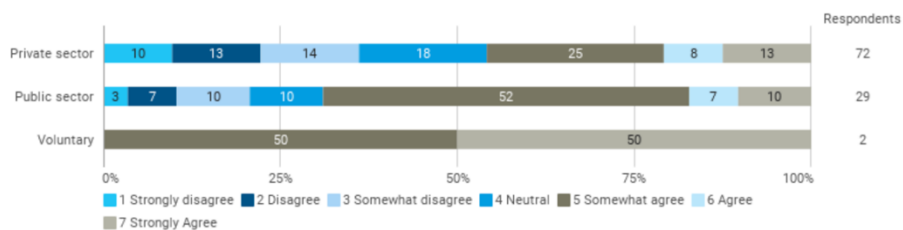
#2 Applying Process

- **Gender**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Does not dare to apply due to gender norms
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
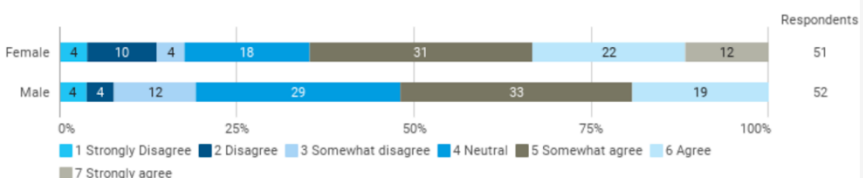
- **Sector**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Does not dare to apply due to gender norms
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

- **Experience female leader**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Does not dare to apply due to gender norms
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

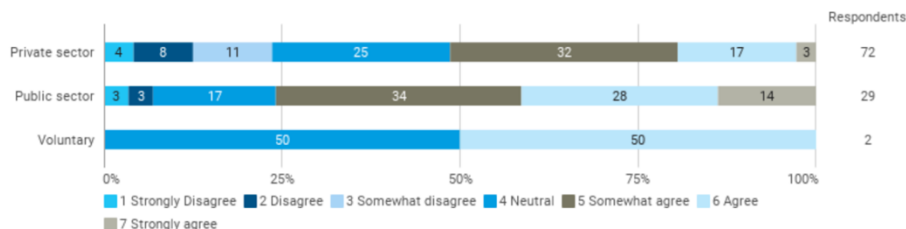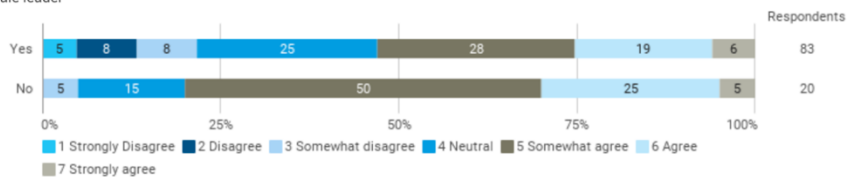|							Respondents
Yes	5	8	8	25	28	19	6	83
No	5	15		50		25	5	20

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

■ 1 Strongly Disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
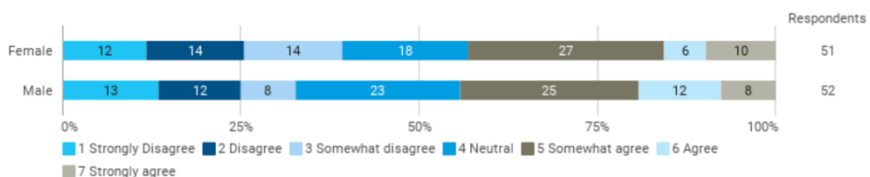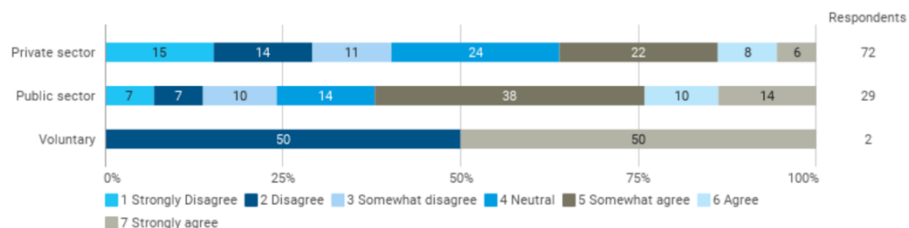■ 7 Strongly agree

#3 Gender Match Leadership Position

- **Gender**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Does not feel like gender matches with the leader role
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

								Respondents
Female	12	14	14	18	27	6	10	51
Male	13	12	8	23	25	12	8	52

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

■ 1 Strongly Disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
■ 7 Strongly agree

- **Sector**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Does not feel like gender matches with the leader role
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

								Respondents
Private sector	15	14	11	24	22	8	6	72
Public sector	7	7	10	14	38	10	14	29
Voluntary		50			50			2

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

■ 1 Strongly Disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
■ 7 Strongly agree

- **Experience with female leader**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Does not feel like gender matches with the leader role
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

								Respondents
Yes	12	14	10	24	27	6	7	83
No	15	5	15	5	25	20	15	20

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

■ 1 Strongly Disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
■ 7 Strongly agree

#4 Gender-dominated Professions

- **Women in male-dominated professions**

- **Gender**

How much do you agree with the statement: "A woman can be an equally good leader as a man in a male-dominated profession"
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

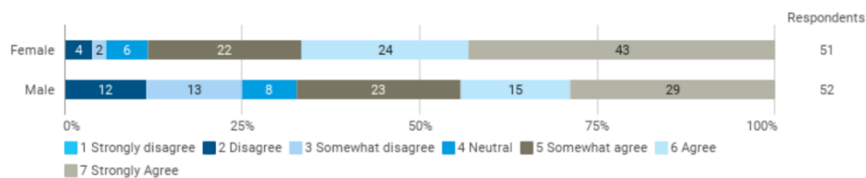|								Respondents
Female	4	2	6	22	24		43	51
Male	12	13	8	23	15		29	52

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Somewhat disagree 4 Neutral 5 Somewhat agree 6 Agree
7 Strongly Agree

- **Sector**

How much do you agree with the statement: "A woman can be an equally good leader as a man in a male-dominated profession"
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

							Respondents
Private sector	6	8	6	19	18	43	72
Public sector	14	7	10	31	21	17	29
Voluntary		50			50		2

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Somewhat disagree 4 Neutral 5 Somewhat agree 6 Agree
7 Strongly Agree

- **Leadership role**

How much do you agree with the statement: "A woman can be an equally good leader as a man in a male-dominated profession"
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

							Respondents
Yes	10	13	3	13	33	27	30
No	7	5	8	26	14	40	73

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Somewhat disagree 4 Neutral 5 Somewhat agree 6 Agree
7 Strongly Agree

- **Men in women-dominated professions**

- **Gender**

How much do you agree with the statement: "A man can be an equally good leader as a woman in a female-dominated profession"
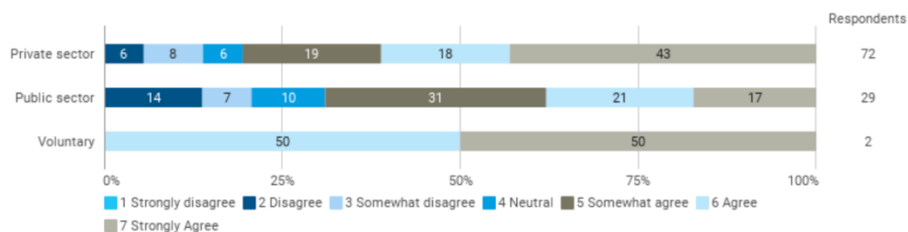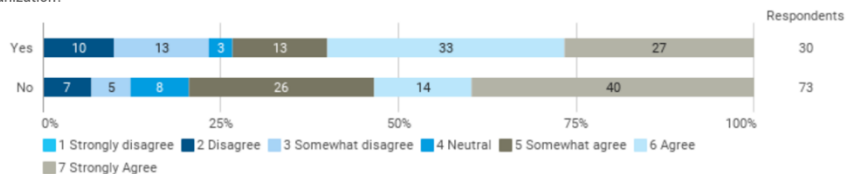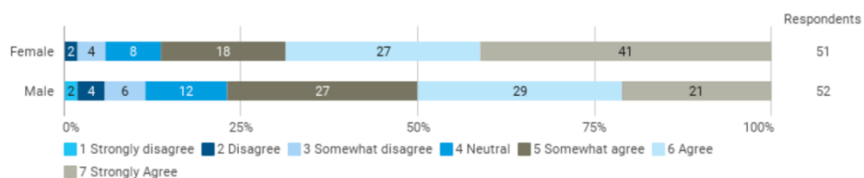Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

								Respondents
Female	2	4	8	18	27		41	51
Male	2	4	6	12	27	29	21	52

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

1 Strongly disagree 2 Disagree 3 Somewhat disagree 4 Neutral 5 Somewhat agree 6 Agree
7 Strongly Agree

- **Education level**

How much do you agree with the statement: "A man can be an equally good leader as a woman in a female-dominated profession"
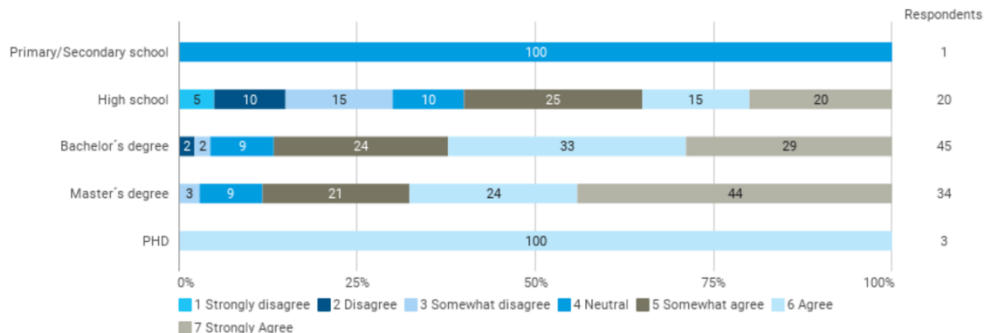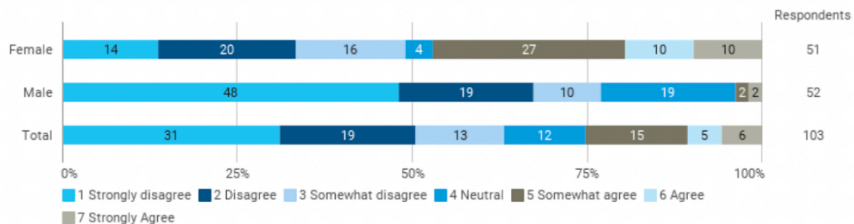Crossed with: Education level

"Glass Ceiling"

#1 Gender Stereotypes Affecting Career

- **Gender**

Rate on the scale from 1-7 Have gender stereotypes negatively affected your career?
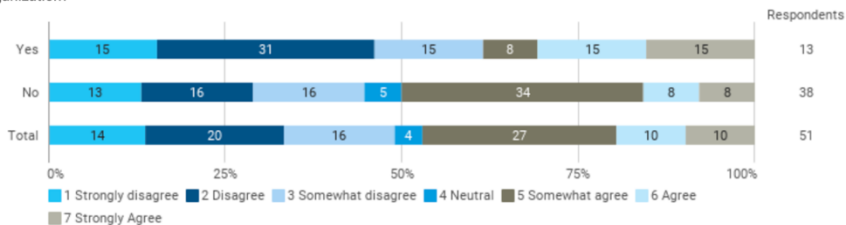Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Leadership role crossed with gender**

Demographic Factors - Gender = [Female]

Rate on the scale from 1-7 Have gender stereotypes negatively affected your career?
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

#2 Family Life

- **Gender**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Family life (e.g. children)
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

	Female	Male	Total
1 Strongly Disagree	0	6	5.8%
2 Disagree	2	1	2.9%
3 Somewhat disagree	3	5	7.8%
4 Neutral	5	3	7.8%
5 Somewhat agree	13	18	30.1%
6 Agree	14	13	26.2%
7 Strongly agree	14	6	19.4%
Total	51	52	103

- **Leadership role**

Demographic Factors - Gender = [Female]

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Family life (e.g. children)
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

|	Yes	No	Total
1 Strongly Disagree	0	0	0.0%
2 Disagree	2	0	3.9%
3 Somewhat disagree	0	3	5.9%
4 Neutral	3	2	9.8%
5 Somewhat agree	3	10	25.5%
6 Agree	2	12	27.5%
7 Strongly agree	3	11	27.5%
Total	13	38	51

#3 Gender Norms

- **Employment process**

- **Gender**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Gender norms in an employment process
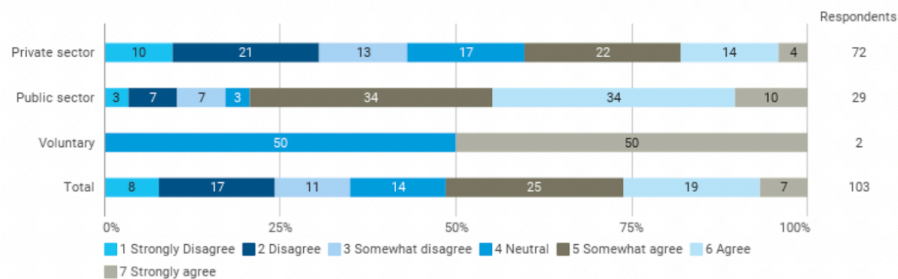Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
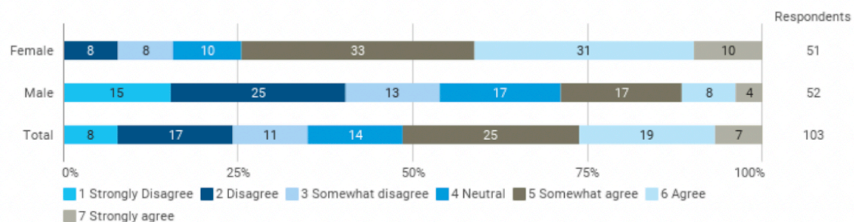
- **Sector**

What factors do you think act as a barrier for women in achieving leadership positions? - Gender norms in an employment process
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

- **Opportunities for promotion**

- **Gender**

How do you think gender norms affect women in an organization? - Opportunities for promotion
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Sector crossed with gender**

Demographic Factors - Gender = [Female] and Demographic Factors - Gender = [Female]

How do you think gender norms affect women in an organization? - Opportunities for promotion
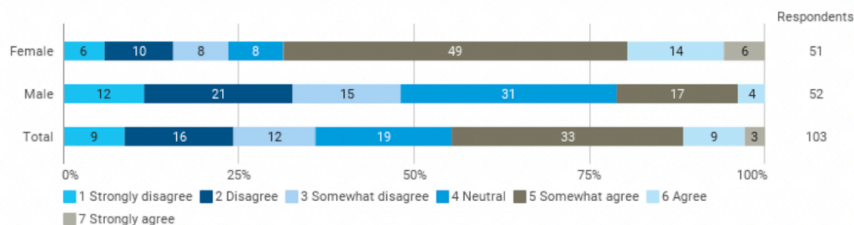Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

- **Opportunities for salary raise**

- **Gender**

How do you think gender norms affect women in an organization? - Opportunities for salary raise
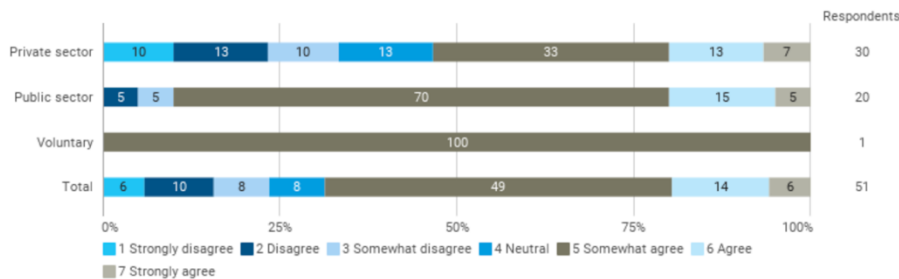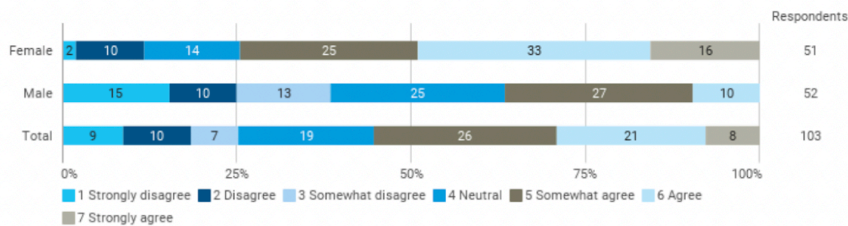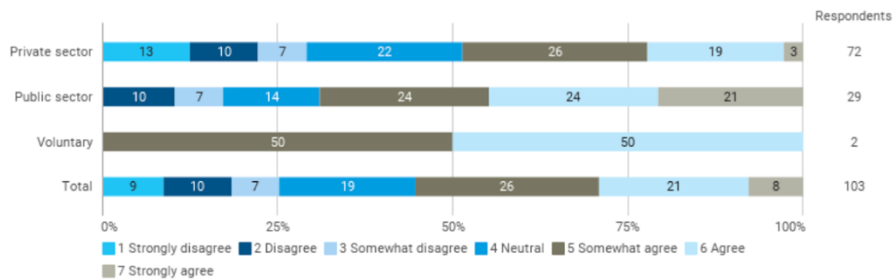Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Sector**

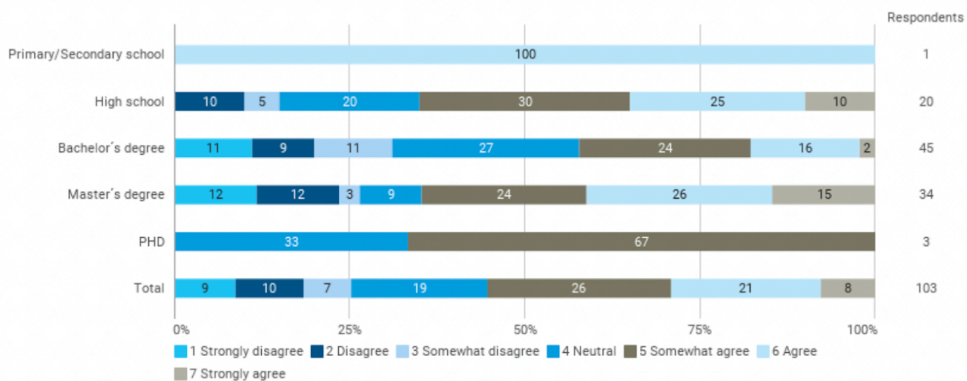How do you think gender norms affect women in an organization? - Opportunities for salary raise
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

	Respondents
Private sector	72
Public sector	29
Voluntary	2
Total	103

Private sector: 13 | 10 | 7 | 22 | 26 | 19 | 3
Public sector: 10 | 7 | 14 | 24 | 24 | 21
Voluntary: 50 | 50
Total: 9 | 10 | 7 | 19 | 26 | 21 | 8

1 Strongly disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Somewhat disagree | 4 Neutral | 5 Somewhat agree | 6 Agree | 7 Strongly agree

- **Education level**

How do you think gender norms affect women in an organization? - Opportunities for salary raise
Crossed with: Education level

	Respondents
Primary/Secondary school	1
High school	20
Bachelor´s degree	45
Master´s degree	34
PHD	3
Total	103

Primary/Secondary school: 100
High school: 10 | 5 | 20 | 30 | 25 | 10
Bachelor´s degree: 11 | 9 | 11 | 27 | 24 | 16 | 2
Master´s degree: 12 | 12 | 3 | 9 | 24 | 26 | 15
PHD: 33 | 67
Total: 9 | 10 | 7 | 19 | 26 | 21 | 8

1 Strongly disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Somewhat disagree | 4 Neutral | 5 Somewhat agree | 6 Agree | 7 Strongly agree
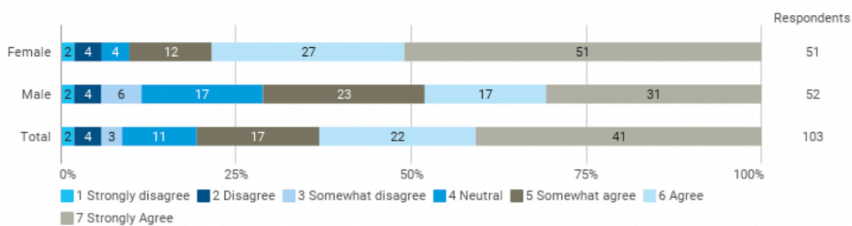
#4 Gender-diversity in Organizations

- **Gender**

How much do you agree with the claim: "A gender-diverse management team strengthens the organization's performance through increased profitability and value creation" (McKinsey & Company, 2017)
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

	Respondents
Female	51
Male	52
Total	103

Female: 2 | 4 | 4 | 12 | 27 | 51
Male: 2 | 4 | 6 | 17 | 23 | 17 | 31
Total: 2 | 4 | 3 | 11 | 17 | 22 | 41

1 Strongly disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Somewhat disagree | 4 Neutral | 5 Somewhat agree | 6 Agree | 7 Strongly Agree

- **Leadership role in the agreeable columns**

How much do you agree with the claim: "A gender-diverse management team strengthens the organization's performance through increased profitability and value creation" (McKinsey & Company, 2017)
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

|	Yes	No	Total
1 Strongly disagree	0	2	1.9%
2 Disagree	3	1	3.9%
3 Somewhat disagree	0	3	2.9%
4 Neutral	3	8	10.7%
5 Somewhat agree	5	13	17.5%
6 Agree	7	16	22.3%
7 Strongly Agree	12	30	40.8%
Total	30	73	103

#5 Emotions in Decision-making

- **Women are too emotional in decision-making**

- **Gender**

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are too emotional in decision-making"
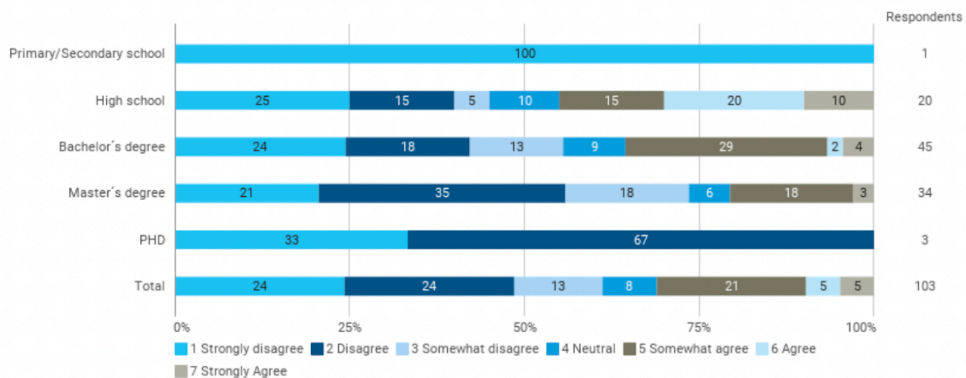Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
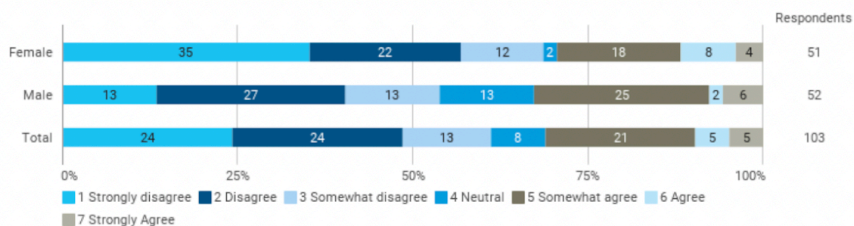
- **Education level**

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are too emotional in decision-making"
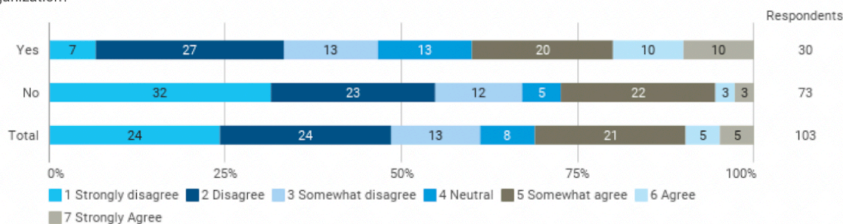Crossed with: Education level

- **Leadership role**

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are too emotional in decision-making"
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

		Respondents
Yes	7 / 27 / 13 / 13 / 20 / 10 / 10	30
No	32 / 23 / 12 / 5 / 22 / 3 / 3	73
Total	24 / 24 / 13 / 8 / 21 / 5 / 5	103

0%　25%　50%　75%　100%

■ 1 Strongly disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
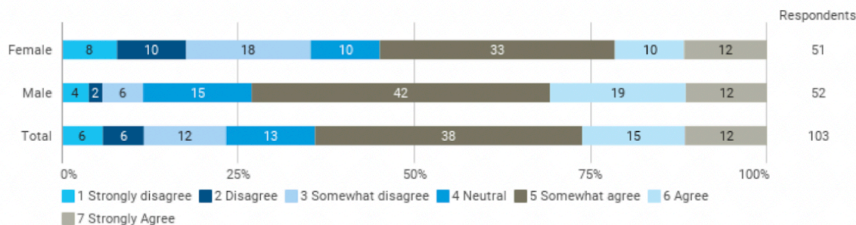■ 7 Strongly Agree

- **Women are more emotional than men in decision-making**

- **Gender**

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are more emotional than men in decision-making"
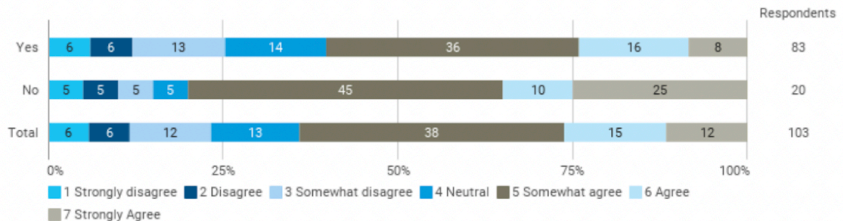Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

		Respondents
Female	8 / 10 / 18 / 10 / 33 / 10 / 12	51
Male	4 / 2 / 6 / 15 / 42 / 19 / 12	52
Total	6 / 6 / 12 / 13 / 38 / 15 / 12	103

0%　25%　50%　75%　100%

■ 1 Strongly disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
■ 7 Strongly Agree

- **Experience with female leader**

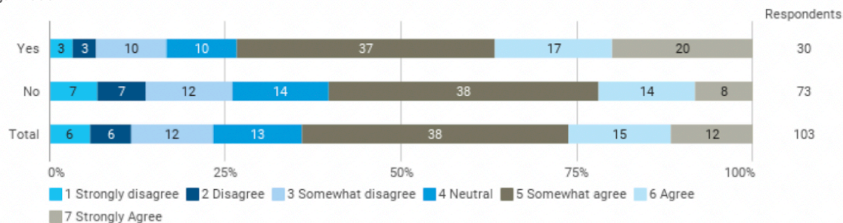How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are more emotional than men in decision-making"
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

		Respondents
Yes	6 / 6 / 13 / 14 / 36 / 16 / 8	83
No	5 / 5 / 5 / 5 / 45 / 10 / 25	20
Total	6 / 6 / 12 / 13 / 38 / 15 / 12	103

0%　25%　50%　75%　100%

■ 1 Strongly disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
■ 7 Strongly Agree

- **Leadership role**

How much do you agree with the statement: "Women are more emotional than men in decision-making"
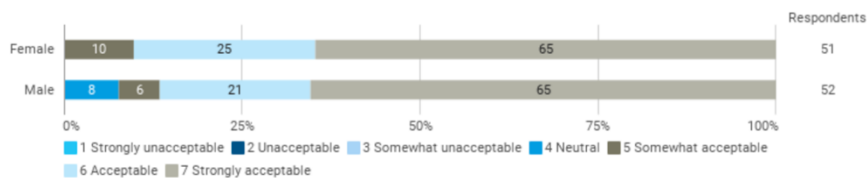Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?

		Respondents
Yes	3 / 3 / 10 / 10 / 37 / 17 / 20	30
No	7 / 7 / 12 / 14 / 38 / 14 / 8	73
Total	6 / 6 / 12 / 13 / 38 / 15 / 12	103

0%　25%　50%　75%　100%

■ 1 Strongly disagree ■ 2 Disagree ■ 3 Somewhat disagree ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat agree ■ 6 Agree
■ 7 Strongly Agree

#1 Emotionality, Women
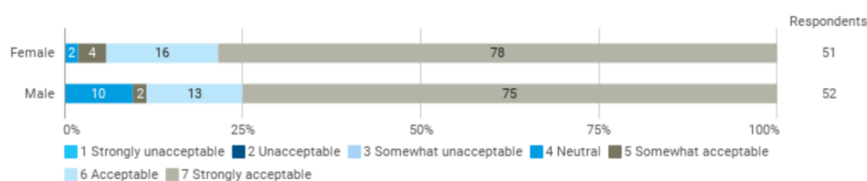
Item *Happiness* crossed with:

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Happiness
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

			Respondents
Female	10	25	65	51
Male	8	6	21	65	52

1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Happiness - Rate on a scare form 1-7
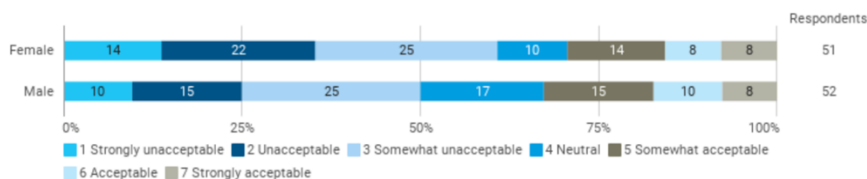Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

			Respondents
Female	2 4	16	78	51
Male	10 2	13	75	52

1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable
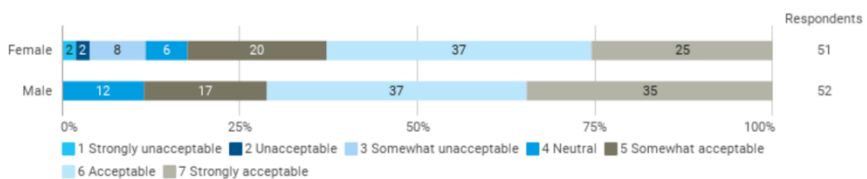
Item *Fear* crossed with:

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Fear
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

			Respondents
Female	14	22	25	10	14	8	8	51
Male	10	15	25	17	15	10	8	52

1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Fear - Rate on a scare form 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

			Respondents
Female	2 2	8	6	20	37	25	51
Male	12	17	37	35	52

1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable

- **Experience with female leader**

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Fear
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

			Respondents
Yes	11	16	24	17	14	10	8	83
No	15	30	30	15	5 5	20

1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable

Item *Sadness* crossed with:

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Sadness
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

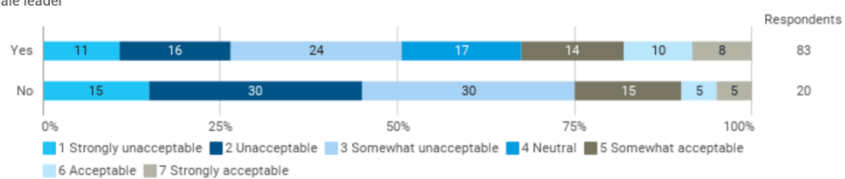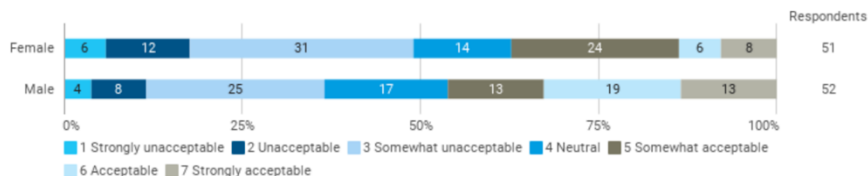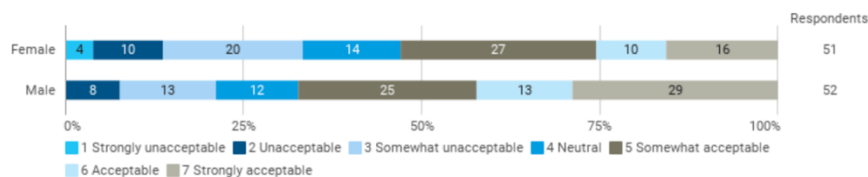How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Sadness
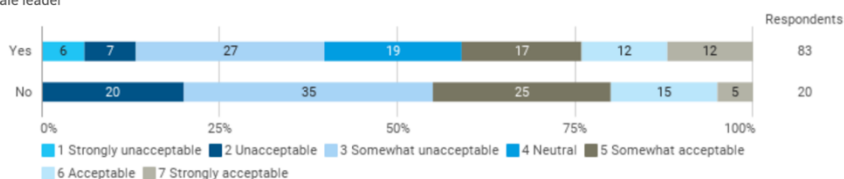Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Experience with female leader**

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Sadness
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader
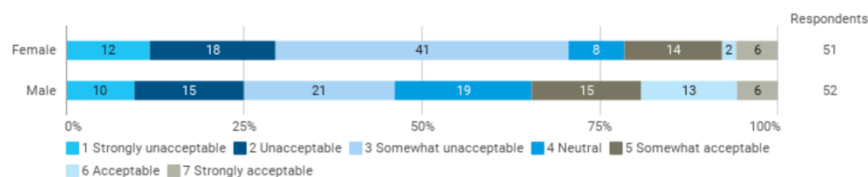

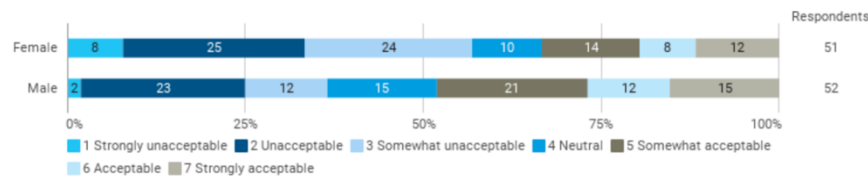## Item *Anger* crossed with:

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Anger
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Anger - Rate on a scare form 1-7
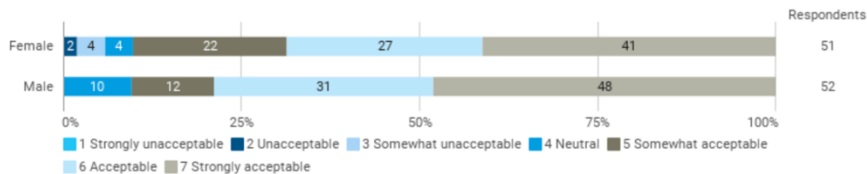Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
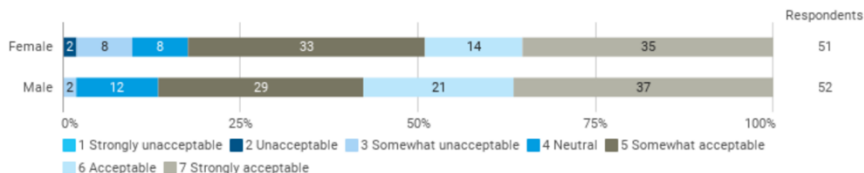
Item *Pride* crossed with:

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Pride
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Pride - Rate on a scare form 1-7
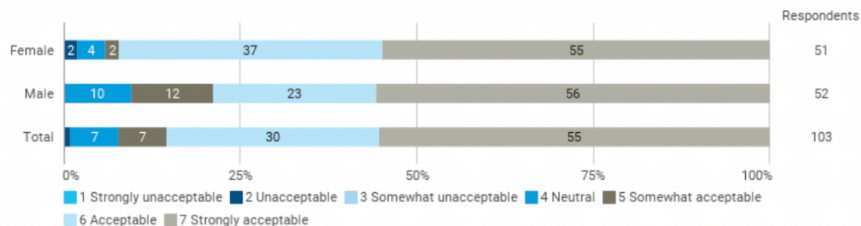Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

#2 Emotionality, Men

Item *Happiness* crossed with:

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Happinness - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Happiness
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Leadership role**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Happinness - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: Do you have a leadership role in your organization?
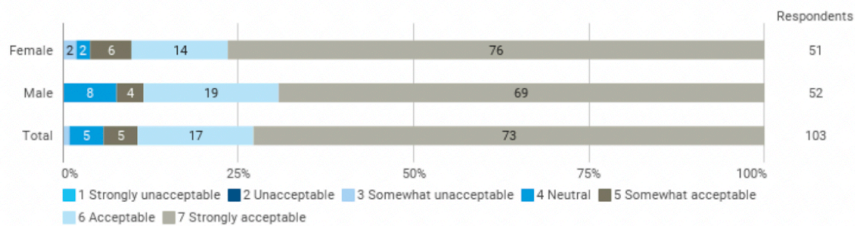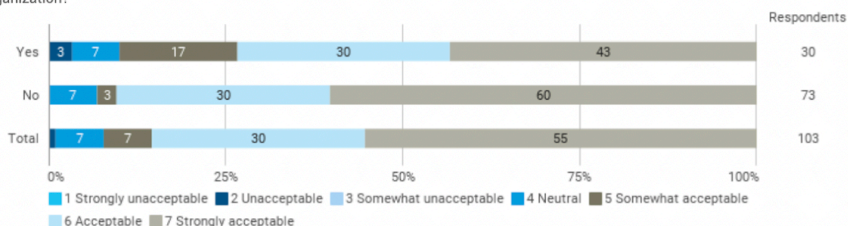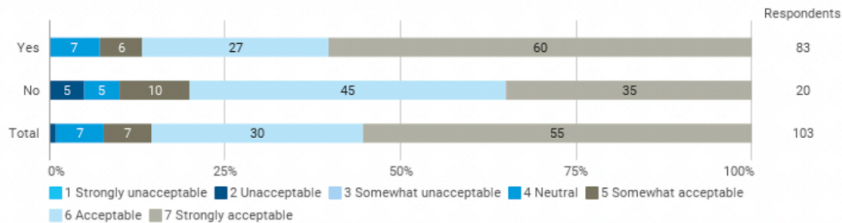
- **Experience with female leader**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Happinness - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
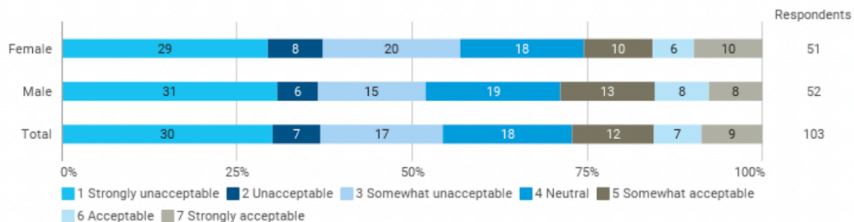Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

					Respondents
Yes	7	6	27	60	83
No	5 5	10	45	35	20
Total	7 7	30	55		103

1 Strongly unacceptable · 2 Unacceptable · 3 Somewhat unacceptable · 4 Neutral · 5 Somewhat acceptable · 6 Acceptable · 7 Strongly acceptable

Fear

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Fear - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

							Respondents
Female	29	8	20	18	10	6 10	51
Male	31	6	15	19	13	8 8	52
Total	30	7	17	18	12	7 9	103

1 Strongly unacceptable · 2 Unacceptable · 3 Somewhat unacceptable · 4 Neutral · 5 Somewhat acceptable · 6 Acceptable · 7 Strongly acceptable

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Fear
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

							Respondents
Female	8	12	25	14	12	14 16	51
Male	2	17	27	10	10 8	27	52
Total	5	15	26	12	11	11 21	103

1 Strongly unacceptable · 2 Unacceptable · 3 Somewhat unacceptable · 4 Neutral · 5 Somewhat acceptable · 6 Acceptable · 7 Strongly acceptable

- **Sector**

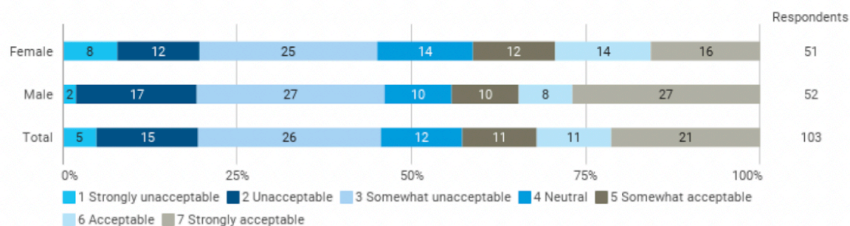How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Fear - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: What sector do you work in?

							Respondents
Private sector	21	10	21	24	11	6 8	72
Public sector	55	7 7	10	10	10		29
Voluntary	50		50				2
Total	30	7	17	18	12	7 9	103

1 Strongly unacceptable · 2 Unacceptable · 3 Somewhat unacceptable · 4 Neutral · 5 Somewhat acceptable · 6 Acceptable · 7 Strongly acceptable

Sadness

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Sadness - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

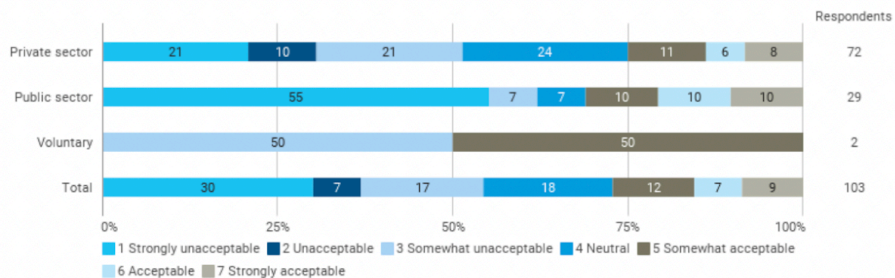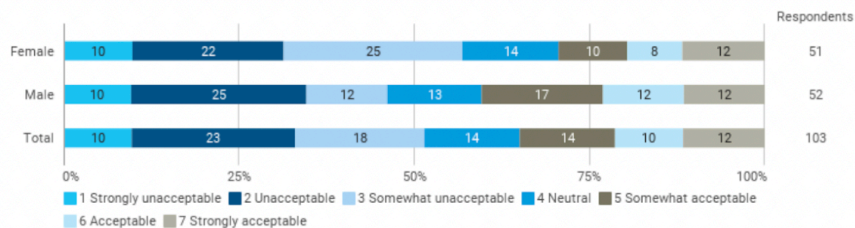How acceptable do you think it is for women to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Sandness - Rate on a scare form 1-7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender
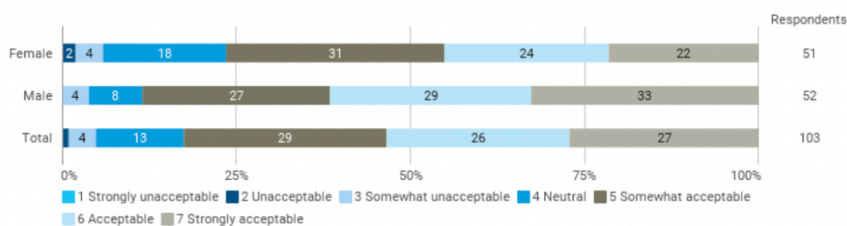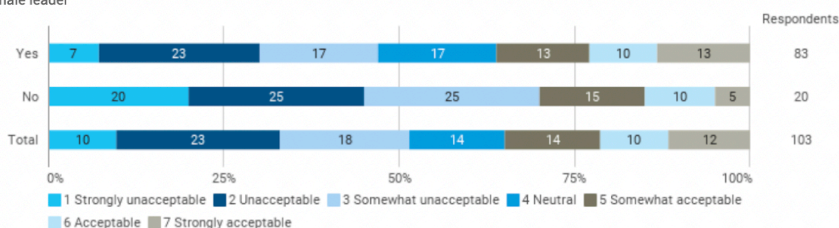

- **Experience with female leader**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Sadness - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

Anger

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Anger - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

- **Experience with female leader**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Anger - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
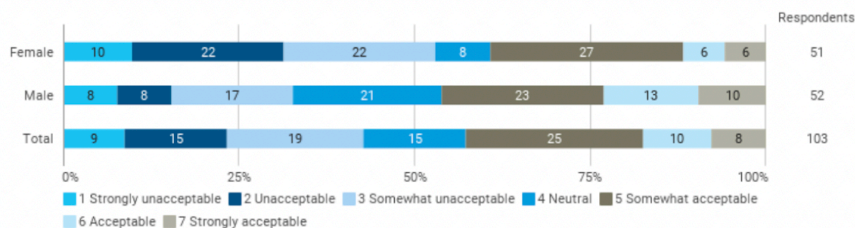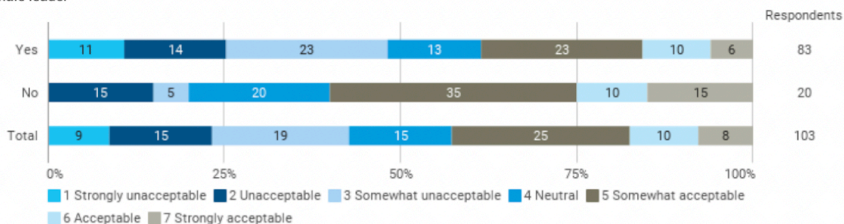Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

			Respondents
Yes	11 · 14 · 23 · 13 · 23 · 10 · 6		83
No	15 · 5 · 20 · 35 · 10 · 15		20
Total	9 · 15 · 19 · 15 · 25 · 10 · 8		103

■ 1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
■ 6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable

Pride

- **Gender**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Pride - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

			Respondents
Female	2 · 4 · 8 · 27 · 59		51
Male	2 · 8 · 12 · 23 · 56		52
Total	6 · 10 · 25 · 57		103

■ 1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
■ 6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a social setting? - Pride
Crossed with: Demographic Factors - Gender

			Respondents
Female	2 · 6 · 10 · 29 · 53		51
Male	8 · 19 · 23 · 50		52
Total	7 · 15 · 26 · 51		103

■ 1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
■ 6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable

- **Experience with female leader**

How acceptable do you think it is for men to show the following emotions in a leadership role? - Pride - Rate on a scale from 1- 7
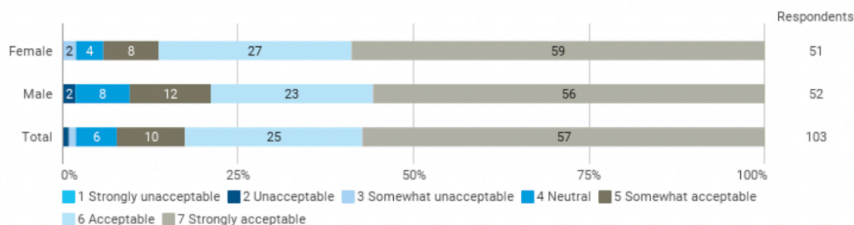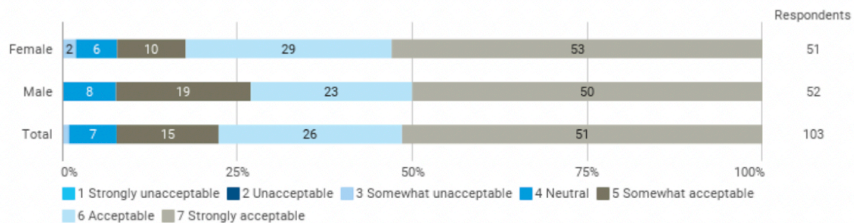Crossed with: Gender of manager - Experience with female leader

			Respondents
Yes	1 · 6 · 8 · 25 · 59		83
No	5 · 5 · 15 · 25 · 50		20
Total	6 · 10 · 25 · 57		103

■ 1 Strongly unacceptable ■ 2 Unacceptable ■ 3 Somewhat unacceptable ■ 4 Neutral ■ 5 Somewhat acceptable
■ 6 Acceptable ■ 7 Strongly acceptable