Summary of Contents

List of Tables xv
List of Figures xvi
Acknowledgements xvii
About the Authors xviii
Guided Tour xx
How to Use Your Book’s Online Resources xxi
Praise for the first edition of Studying Leadership xxii

Introduction: Mapping Different Approaches to Studying Leadership 1

Part I Traditional Approaches to Leadership 11
1 Leadership and Management 13
2 Leadership Competencies: Traits, Personality, Skills, Styles and Intelligences 25
3 Contingency and Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theories of Leadership 43
4 Charismatic and Transformational Leadership 72

Part II Current Issues in Leadership 93
5 Perspectives on Leadership Context 95
6 Followership, Psychoanalytic and Relational Approaches to Leadership 117
7 Leadership and Power 141
8 Strategic Leadership and Leading Change 160
9 Distributed Leadership 179
10 Leadership and Culture 195
11 Leadership Learning and Development 227
## Summary of Contents

**Part III  Critical Issues in Leadership**  
12  Leadership, Gender and Diversity  
13  Leadership, Ethics and Toxicity  
14  Leadership, Language and Identity  
15  Leadership, Arts and Aesthetics  
16  Researching Leadership  

*Epilogue: The Future of Leadership Studies*  
*Appendix: Case Studies*  
*Glossary*  
*References*  
*Index*
Chapter Aims

- Introduce the links between gender, diversity and leadership
- Critically evaluate the differences between male/female and masculine/feminine leaders
- Explore the arguments for and against a feminine advantage
- Discuss critically informed views on the study of gender and leadership
- Outline different forms of diversity and their links to leadership

Watch the following videos at https://study.sagepub.com/studyleadership2e to reinforce your understanding of the aims of this chapter:

- Could you Define the Topic of Women’s Leadership?
- Why do we Need New Leadership Theories Made Specifically for Women?
- What are the Key Debates or Research Questions in Organizational Leadership and Diversity Management?
- How has the Practice of Leadership Changed in Recent Years?
- How has the Academic Field of Women’s Leadership Changed in Recent Years?
- What are the Major Academic Debates in this Field? What are the Principal Areas of Contention and why?
- The Different Forms of Diversity
Leadership, Gender and Diversity

Gender and diversity have been a focus in the field of leadership studies for quite some time now. These considerations of gender and diversity have been predominantly concerned with how differences and similarities between female and male leaders affect their effectiveness, and have pondered the relevance of diversity (recognising difference in race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical ability, etc.) within groups as something that a leader or manager has to enhance and/or cope with. Yet, this focus on gender and diversity has recently taken a more critical turn in which stereotypical views of male/female and masculinity/femininity have been questioned, and dominant gendered, ethnic or heterosexual representations in leadership theory and discourse have been problematised. In this chapter, we will outline and discuss a wide range of approaches to gender and diversity and highlight their implications for leadership. We will explore generally whether and why gender may matter for leadership and critically evaluate views on a feminine advantage in leadership. We will further discuss persisting challenges for women as leaders and outline different forms of diversity and their relevance for leadership.

Critical Thinking Box 12.1

Critical leadership scholars have increasingly highlighted the masculine, white, middle-class, heterosexual nature of many 20th-century leadership theories and the extent to which this inhibits other, more diverse forms of leadership. The dominance of masculinity and whiteness associated with leadership is particularly deeply embedded within western societies and organisations.

Why Gender Matters

One of the most popular questions, according to Jackson and Parry (2011), in relation to leadership, is that of whether and what the difference is between a male leader and a female leader. At the beginning of the field of organisational leadership studies there was the Great Man theory and with it the prime focus on what we can learn from great male leaders in history. Subsequently, many of the early leadership theories outlined in Chapters 2–4 were developed from research conducted in male-dominated contexts and have long been criticised for therefore being too masculine in nature and focus. Since then, and particularly in the 1990s, we have seen a certain feminisation of leadership studies through which feminine characteristics of care and support have
been viewed as a strategic advantage for organisational effectiveness and well-being (Jackson and Parry, 2011). Transformational leadership has been specifically claimed to fit into this wave of seeing feminine traits and behaviours as a leadership advantage.

Yet, there have also been more critical views on the possible perpetuation of gender stereotypes that these approaches may bring (Billing and Alvesson, 2000). Indeed, what deserves further consideration is whether our concerns for gender differences should be focused on the body (that is, male/female) or certain personal characteristics (that is, feminine/masculine) or indeed an interaction of both. In addition, what is relatively certain is the continuing glass ceiling that many female leaders face in their career; often related to their child-bearing and -rearing duties as well as dominant societal and cultural structures across many organisations and countries. If the question is one of equality, then there is still a lot to be done to unpack gender stereotypes in relation to modern society, organisations and leadership, as well as to ascertain whether gender is indeed of such importance to leadership.

**Male Leaders or Female Leaders? What Is the Difference?**

The question of difference in relation to gender and leadership has particularly focused on leader effectiveness in organisations. We will review in this section some of the most well-known studies that have investigated this particular question.

The difference between male and female leaders has been the focus of research studies, particularly since the 1970s (Bass, 1985b; Book, 2000; Eagly and Carli, 2003; Eagly et al., 1995; Helgesen, 1990), yet with rather mixed results. No ‘hard’ evidence exists to suggest that female leaders are more or less effective than male leaders and are indeed consistently different in traits and behaviours compared to male leaders (Dobbins and Platz, 1986; van Engen et al., 2001; Powell, 1990).

**Key Findings of Gender Differences**

Among these research studies on gender difference, there are some notable meta-analyses of existing research studies in the literature that we will address here. Meta-analyses by Eagly and Johnson (1990) and van Engen (2001), for example, showed that female leaders do not necessarily fall into the stereotypical assumptions of feminine versus masculine leadership behaviours. They were therefore not found to be more interpersonally and less task-oriented than male leaders. These studies as well as other studies on transformational leadership did, however, provide some evidence that female leaders are more participative and democratic in their preferred leadership style compared to male leaders. Eagly et al.’s (2003) study showed indeed that female leaders tended to be more transformational and engage more in contingent reward behaviour than male leaders. Although this difference was small, Eagly et al. (2003)
Leadership, Gender and Diversity

concluded that the findings were robust and represented a feminine advantage as these leader behaviours are linked to higher leader effectiveness. We will explore this argument further later on in this chapter.

Hoyt (2007: 267) highlights other interesting findings such as a meta-analysis by Eagly et al. (1992) that discussed research findings that showed how female managers were ‘devalued compared to men when they led in a masculine manner’, worked in masculine roles and masculine industries, and when they were evaluated by men. These findings stress the prejudice that female leaders have for a long time encountered and continue to face in many countries and industries. Other studies such as Eagly et al. (1995) add to this insight by demonstrating that female and male leaders tend to be more effective in gender congruent roles, that is, female leaders were found to be less effective than men in military positions but more effective in, for example, education. This was linked to different uses of interpersonal skills in these different gendered contexts. The interest in gender differences continues to grow strongly in current research studies. Javidan et al. (2016), for example, have explored gender differences in global leadership self-efficacies amongst 1,187 managers from 74 countries. They found that women showed stronger global leadership self-efficacies in the areas of passion for diversity, intercultural empathy and diplomacy. Men, on the other hand, scored stronger regarding global business savvy, cosmopolitan outlook and interpersonal impact. Grossman et al. (2015), on the other hand, looked at leader–follower interactions in groups and found that followers behaved the same towards their leader irrespective of their gender. They also found that female leaders and followers interacted more cooperatively than their male counterparts, yet that female leaders hesitated to lead in mixed-gender environments and particularly when they feared followers’ refusal to follow.

Reflective Question 12.1

Think of female and male managers and/or group leaders (at work or in a social context) you have known. To what extent did they differ in their leadership style? If there were differences did this matter? How and why? May this change depending on whether you are looking at a social or a work context?

Outstanding Questions

What we can conclude at this point is that research so far has not provided robust insights that would confirm a clear difference between leadership styles and leader effectiveness in relation to the gender of the leader. But, as Jackson and Parry (2011) suggest, maybe we are not asking the right questions. Indeed, these studies have
not unpacked what exactly we mean by gender. They have studied the differences between men and women without questioning in detail whether it is indeed the biological difference, that is, male/female, that needs attention or whether it is feminine and masculine personal characteristics often associated with one sex more than the other that we should consider (Ely and Padavic, 2007). Some studies have indeed conflated the two rather than explored where they interact.

Yukl (2010) summarises key limitations of the dominant comparative studies on gender and leadership and suggests that other contextual variables affecting the comparability of male and female leadership behaviours have seriously contaminated the results of these studies. We recommend the exchange of articles between Vecchio (2002, 2003) and Eagly and Carli (2003) in *The Leadership Quarterly* for an in-depth reading of the methodological and conceptual issues around these meta-analyses of gender-related differences in leadership. In this chapter, we help readers unpack gender further by introducing some of the main problems that women in leadership positions have faced in recent history, and critically consider feminine leadership as an alternative approach. Here we will also address the interaction of body and character in the genderising of leadership and organisations.

**Female Leaders and Feminine Leadership – Opportunities and Persistent Challenges**

In light of the positive changes over the last few decades in terms of percentage of female graduates, employees and managers, the greater part of research into challenges for female leaders is focused on their access to top managerial positions. Despite the rise in numbers of women in managerial positions overall, statistics for leaders in top political and organisational positions continue to show a relatively low proportion of women in these positions. Research findings into gender bias and stereotyping continue to produce mixed results. For example, a recent comparative study by Kaiser and Wallace (2016) in the USA, Western Europe and Australia, found no bias against women as leaders within upper levels of management. On the other hand, Crites et al. (2015) report a continuation of gender stereotyping across their two groups of participants. In light of these statistics and mixed research results, many scholars suggest that inequalities and persistent challenges continue to exist (Carli and Eagly, 2011; Hoyt, 2007). We will first highlight several theories and ideas as well as research findings that try to explain these challenges. We will then also review some of the literature on what has been termed a 'feminine advantage' as a counter-movement or possible remedy to the seeming inequalities for female managers. Through this contribution, we will also highlight the differences between female and feminine and their implications for more critical current and future gender and leadership studies.
Challenges for Female Leaders

Hoyt (2007) has looked in particular at the so-called ‘glass ceiling’ that is preventing women from being promoted into top hierarchical positions and therefore perpetuating the unequal distribution of female and male leaders across an organisation’s hierarchy. She identified three main reasons for the persistence of this invisible barrier: human capital differences, gender differences and prejudice. Hoyt draws on a wide range of research (Eagly and Carli, 2004; Haslam and Ryan, 2008; Powell and Graves, 2003) to explore the different forms and impact of human capital differences, that is, the relatively lower level of education, training and work experience of women compared to men. One of the key issues discussed here is the culturally, socially and legally ingrained notion of child-bearing and -rearing responsibilities, where women seem to naturally take more time out of work, seek less full-time employment, drop out of employment more often and find re-entry into employment more difficult than men in many countries. Yet, with rising numbers of female graduates, the increasing number of women choosing not to have children and the more active involvement of men in child-rearing responsibilities (Carli and Eagly, 2011), this cannot be seen as the only explanation for low numbers of female leaders throughout all hierarchical levels. Indeed, a recent qualitative study by Diehl and Dzubinski (2016) with 26 women revealed a total of 27 barriers at a micro (personal), meso (organisational) and macro level (societal).

At a personal level, Diehl and Dzubinski (2016) found that women may be constrained in their career choices by their communication style, work–life conflict and other psychologically rooted factors. At an organisational level, Diehl and Dzubinski (2016) found a myriad of barriers for women, such as inequality in standards and processes, discrimination, male gatekeeping, gendered culture and lack of support and mentoring. Hoyt (2007) draws on Powell and Graves’ (2003) work to show similar findings on women’s weaker access to key informal mentoring relationships and general development opportunities than their male counterparts. Bowles and McGinn (2005) have further argued that women tend to be more strongly represented in organisational roles and departments that do not naturally lead to top leadership positions (such as HR). Haslam and Ryan (2008) have further explored this latter aspect of career transition and found a ‘glass cliff’ rather than a glass ceiling. This means that female leaders are more likely to be promoted into top positions in times of crisis or poor organisational performance. These appointments into higher positions are seen as highly risky and female leaders inevitably end up being associated with the current failures in organisations, which are out of their control yet lead to a problematic continuation of their career in top managerial positions. A recent study by Glass and Cook (2016) shows that women continue to be more likely to be promoted into high-risk leadership positions and then lack the necessary support or authority to succeed in the role. Indeed, Ryan et al.’s (2016) review of insights into the glass cliff over the last 10 years shows that the glass cliff phenomenon not only applies to women but...
also more widely to black and other minority groups. In reflection on mixed evidence (e.g. Cook and Glass, 2014) on the glass cliff, Ryan et al. (2016) stress that it should be treated as an observable phenomenon only and not a theory in its own right. They argue that some of the factors found to be contributing to the glass cliff are a selection bias in the context of crisis (i.e. in favour of women) driven by implicit leadership theories that nurture the focus on communal leader behaviours and therefore ‘think crisis–think female’ slogans. Ryan et al. (2016) further suggest that the glass cliff may be affected by women’s choices and organisational choices for strategic change.

Linked to this first explanatory area of the glass ceiling or glass cliff is the issue of natural and nurtured gender difference, that is biological as well as socially constructed gender notions. This area is linked to some extent to the research introduced in the previous section on differences in leader style and effectiveness in relation to gender. As noted previously, the evidence to justify the outright support of a clear difference in female and male leaders is rather mixed and weak. Another gender difference highlighted by Bowles and McGinn (2005) is the relative hesitancy by many women to identify themselves and promote themselves as leaders. This may be also linked to the historically masculine definitions of what is deemed to be appropriate and effective leadership (Ford, 2010), and has to be seen in light of research findings into the gender bias in perceptions of the appropriate ways of behaving as women and female leaders. Liu et al. (2015) explored media representations of CEOs in Australia in relation to perceptions of authenticity and found that a leader has to behave in line with gender norms to be deemed to perform authentically. Vial et al. (2016) note further the potential for a self-reinforcing cycle of illegitimacy where female senior leaders are often seen to be less legitimate than their male counterparts. This can trigger negative behaviours by female leaders which then serve to reinforce the perceived notion of illegitimacy by subordinates. Other research by Small et al. (2007) further suggests that women are less inclined to negotiate than men – a skill that the authors posit is crucial for leadership. This ultimate nature–nurture debate of whether these gender differences are biologically imposed or socially constructed (developed in line with social norms and expectations) is ongoing, and there has arguably not yet been enough exploration of dominant, transitional and resistant notions of the body, gender attributes and sexuality in different societies. Several scholars have recently looked at the intersection of culture, gender and ethnicity and argued that we can only fully understand their relevance for leadership if studied in interaction. Showunmi et al. (2016), for example, explored how gender and ethnicity influenced leadership experiences amongst a mixed ethnic sample of British women. They showed distinct differences in leadership constructions, enactments and perceptions on barriers by white women compared to minority ethnic women. Gambrell (2016) and Chamberlain et al. (2015), on the other hand, have explored indigenous leadership through the lens of women and argue that, so far, leadership studies has not considered the intersection of gender and culture sufficiently.
A third area of concern is that of prejudice, that is, stereotypical assumptions and judgements in relation to gender. Eagly and Carli (2003) make reference to ‘sex-typed’ theories of leadership that suggest men and women behave consistently differently and hence impose stereotypical judgements on those they observe. Bolden et al. (2011) draw a link here to leadership in the sense that leadership has been stereotyped over time as masculine and hence associated with competition, control and change and as therefore standing in clear contrast with feminine stereotypes of care, support and stability. As biological gender difference is often conflated with the personal characteristics associated with feminine/masculine, we can see how this leads to female leaders being expected to be feminine and hence being perceived as inapt to perform the masculine leadership roles that society provides. Eagly’s (1987) social role theory further argues that in order to avoid being outcasts and to receive praise, leaders want to behave in accordance with society’s gender expectations. This leads to continuing gender stereotyping into the caring and task-focused camps of female and male leaders.

**Reflective Question 12.2**

Reflect critically on a social group and/or organisation you know. How masculine/agentic (that is, competitive, controlling, focused on change) is the group/organisation? Alternatively, how feminine/communal (that is, caring, supporting, focused on stability) is it? What implications does this have for how effective leadership is defined and how does this create or inhibit ‘real’ equal opportunities?

Carli and Eagly also talk about a double bind situation in which ‘highly communal female leaders are criticized for not being agentic enough, but highly agentic female leaders may be criticized for lacking communion’ (2011: 108). Communal is here defined as warm, supportive, kind and helpful and associated with female leaders, whereas agentic is seen as assertive, dominant, competent and authoritative and as stereotypical for male leaders (Carli and Eagly, 2011). It is this double bind situation that has proven particularly limiting in female leaders’ ability to work against the organisational and culturally ingrained assumptions that define effective management and leadership as an outcome of agentic behaviours.

**Addressing the Challenges**

Attention has, of course, also been paid in the literature to ways in which we can work towards reducing this invisible barrier, the glass ceiling or glass cliff.
Hoyt (2007) usefully summarises some of the existing suggestions and highlights the need for a wider role renegotiation of women at home and at work – both at an immediate social and wider societal level. She draws on Powell and Graves (2003) who suggest that women have the choice to circumvent the glass ceiling through seeking organisations that are dominated by women entrepreneurs. A compelling alternative opportunity that has also become more widely known as the ‘feminine advantage’ is the popularity of an allegedly feminine leadership style: that of transformational leadership.

**Feminine Advantage**

We highlighted earlier in this chapter research by Eagly et al. (2003) that has shown women to be more natural at engaging with transformational and contingency-reward type leadership behaviour which has been – over the last few decades – seen as particularly successful and popular in organisations. This finding is not entirely surprising as transformational leadership is associated with more traditionally feminine characteristics such as caring for, supporting and considering followers than necessarily masculine attributes. Based on their research findings Eagly et al. (2003) suggest that women should play this feminine advantage and embrace their natural tendency for transformational leadership behaviours, as future organisations will only continue to promote and value this type of leadership style. Similar arguments and findings have been provided recently by Hogue (2016) in relation to servant leadership, which has a similar focus on traditionally feminine characteristics of caring for, supporting and considering followers above all else. Vecchio’s (2003) critical response to meta-analyses carried out on the subject of the feminine advantage warns that the research findings supporting the assumption that a feminine advantage does exist are rather weak and inflate the real existence of such an advantage. He calls for a more cautious evaluation of such research, especially also in light of the limitations and danger of over-relying on the wonders of transformational leadership (see Chapter 4). Finally, Carli and Eagly (2011) also draw on research by Twenge (1997, 2001) to argue that women have changed and have become more assertive, dominant and masculine, and hence better able to combine the communal and agentic aspects of leadership that have previously created tensions and a double bind situation for female leaders. Yet, Lanaj and Hollenbeck (2015) have most recently conducted research in self-managing teams and shown that if women behave contrary to society’s role expectations and engage in agentic behaviours, they are more likely to be recognised as leaders than their male counterparts. They found this to be the case even if men displayed the same behaviours and irrespective of effectiveness. This would suggest that the dominant leader image continues to be agentic and masculine.
VIGNETTE 12.1

Extracts from Case Study 7 illustrating some of the many complexities of gender differences

To ... allow Debbie to focus on the strategic vision of DesignCo – and with Sue pregnant and planning to take some maternity leave in due course – Debbie and Sue decide to bring [in] Sue’s husband Steve ... [who] brings with him years of management and operations experience in large multinational engineering organisations, which he is expected to draw on to ensure that the growing company continues to be successful ... Having been on a number of management and leadership development programmes, Steve feels ready to take on the challenge and is committed to work inclusively with the workforce on any challenges that lie ahead of them. Steve immediately sets about to assess and evaluate DesignCo’s working patterns and structure, paying particular attention as operations director to the effectiveness and efficiency of individual members of staff and teams. His observations confirm what Debbie and Sue have for some time sensed but not wanted to address due to the close family-type relationships that they have developed with some employees at DesignCo. Some of the original workforce have become complacent in their working style and reluctant to constructively engage with the ongoing changes at DesignCo. Wrapped up in their memories of the glorious initial days at DesignCo and their close relationship with Debbie and Sue, these employees have come to assume that they have a special status within the company that allows them to do what they want to do, when they want to do it ... In order to work against this emerging sub-culture, Steve starts to plan and implement significant changes to the structure and processes at DesignCo ... Steve feels himself changing in the way he deals with staff in the office. Feeling under pressure to ensure the effectiveness of day-to-day operations, gain new business and failing to fit into Debbie’s shoes as the charismatic, visionary leader the workforce misses, he increasingly grows impatient and angry. He is short-tempered in meetings, changes his mind quickly, and slowly but surely finds himself in a negative spiral of controlling his underperforming middle managers closely due to a lack of trust whilst blaming them for their lack of independence.

1 Debbie and Sue have naturally adopted a feminine, transformational approach to leading at DesignCo. Critically evaluate the implications this has had for the business and Steve’s effectiveness as a leader.

2 Employees often lament the absence of Sue who has returned on a part-time contract after her maternity leave. How may this impact her relationship with
Leadership, Gender and Diversity

her employees? What influence may Steve’s presence in the company have on Sue’s image as a leader at DesignCo?

Steve tries but fails to fit into the feminine, transformational approach to leading that Debbie and Sue have introduced at DesignCo. Critically reflect on the gendered expectations that come with Steve’s role as an operations director, the popularity of Debbie as a leader and the impact this has had on Steve’s leadership. Has Steve – the only male leader at DesignCo – been disadvantaged due to his gender?

Critical Views on Gender and Leadership Studies

Whether or not a feminine advantage exists in the way it has been formulated in the literature, we contend that we have not unpacked enough of what we mean by feminine and masculine and how this interacts with the more biologically focused notion of gender. Jackson and Parry (2011) also suggest that future research needs to focus more on issues of power, context, style, identity and social construction, so as to enhance our understanding of the link between gender and leadership and to explore the implications for effectiveness, fairness and ethics in organisations. Indeed, more recent critically focused leadership research into gender has addressed these interconnections of the feminine/masculine and the female/male body and explored the socially co-constructed and power-infused nature of the meaning of these. Billing and Alvesson, for example, have critically reviewed the suggestions of a feminine advantage or feminine leadership and argue that ‘constructing leadership as feminine may be of some value as a contrast to conventional ideas on leadership and management but may also create a misleading impression of women’s orientation to leadership as well as reproducing stereotypes and the traditional gender division of labour’ (2000: 144). They argue that both biological notions of gender and notions of femininity and masculinity have been overly focused on opposites and assumed to be clearly different and separate from each other. They suggest that this is a rather simplistic view of gender and that we need to recognise the constantly changing and culturally constructed nature of what is feminine and masculine and how this is linked to biological notions of gender. This calls for research that sheds further light on different constructions of gender across cultures and over time, and also on how feminine and masculine interact on their own and with the biological notions of gender in a particular context. Such research will help to address our understanding of inequality and fairness for male, female and transgender leaders.

Other research has further explored the performative impact that the dominant, masculine discourse has had on women managers (Ford, 2010; Stead and Elliott, 2008) – and arguably male managers. It has particularly highlighted the extent to which women – and men – in leadership positions feel pressured to conform to the
dominant image of a successful – masculine – leader in speech and behaviour in order to be accepted by and have influence on others. This has also been found to create tensions for those female managers with regard to who they would like to be and how they would like to interact with others and the style they feel they have to adopt to conform and be successful. Carli and Eagly (2011), in contrast, argue that notions of leadership are changing and becoming more communally focused and consequently less masculine. Collinson (2011) recognises the latter changes in leadership studies but argues that it continues to be highly gendered and polarises the similarities and differences between women and men as well as between women and between men. He argues we are therefore no step further from the categorisations of biological and personal notions of gender. Drawing on critical feminist contributions (Bligh and Kohles, 2008; Bowring, 2004), Collinson (2011) also highlights the possibly interlinked nature of gender and power in society and leadership, where women – similar to followers – are seen as the Other (rather than the leader). Indeed, Ford (2006) has argued that the prevalence of masculine discourses of leadership in organisations (see also Knights and McCabe, 2016) has led to a genderisation of the leader–follower relationship, where the follower takes up a feminised position. Ryan and Dickson (2016) explore the marginalisation of women as a result of the dominant presence of groups of men and the masculinised, invisible norms of leadership in the context of sport. They argue that the environment of sport allows them to gain unique insights into how sport influences and is influenced by the inequalities of gender, race, class and age. This casting of the leader as a masculine image has also had a negative impact on non-heterosexual leaders. Liberman and Golom (2015) found that gay and lesbian employees were less likely to be seen to meet the stereotype of a successful manager. Chang and Bowring (2017) have further explored the complexities that queer leaders face in their relationship with followers. Similar to Billing and Alvesson (2000), Collinson (2011) calls for a more nuanced view of gender in different contexts and particularly as interlinked with ethnicity, class and sexual orientation. Recent contributions by Mavin and Grandy (2016a, 2016b) follow this call and explore the complexities of female elite leaders' identity work. In one article, Mavin and Grandy (2016b) advance our understanding of how women in powerful roles remain marginalised as their feminine bodies are out of place in the organisation. They discuss gender strategies for female elite leaders who are faced with both disgust with and attraction to their female body and experience in organisational life. In the other article, Mavin and Grandy (2016a) look at the tensions that women elite leaders experience between the embedded notions of leadership as masculine and expectations of embodied femininity. Paying particular attention to the role of body and appearance in the discursive and relational process of establishing respectable business femininity, Mavin and Grandy (2016a) pave the way towards a more nuanced, embodied view of gender and leadership.

Adding to the above, Hoyt (2007) stresses that the key weakness of current gender and leadership research is its heavy emphasis on research conducted in western
societies. It is hence in itself biased by its culturally limited view of gender roles and the meaning of masculinity and femininity. More research in different cultures needs to be conducted to broaden our view on this. Hoyt (2007) further argues that gender could be subsumed under the broader heading of diversity. We would argue the other way around, that gender currently receives more attention in leadership textbooks and leadership studies than diversity as a broader phenomenon. It is hence diversity that we address in the final section of this chapter.

VIGNETTE 12.2

Extract from Case Study 5 highlighting the complexity of what is gender

When asked whether as a woman June brought something different to the table, this was difficult for her to answer. Perhaps her response would be this: June feels for humanity and acts in all she does to make the world a better place.

1 June Burrough is the successful founder of a social enterprise and has quite strong views on many aspects of leadership. Yet when asked about gender, she is lost for words. What is your interpretation of her belief in humanity and striving to make the world a better place? Is this a feminine approach?

2 Is our definition of feminine as communal and caring applicable here? Could there be other culturally informed views of gender and femininity?

Diversity and Leadership

The broad term of diversity has served as an umbrella for many specific foci such as ethnicity, age, gender, education, class and sexual orientation (Yukl, 2010). Diversity as a catchphrase has then within the wider field of business and management received a lot of attention over the last couple of decades owing to the increasing importance it has for global organisations where employees from a large range of diverse backgrounds come to work together. Rickards (2012) stresses particularly the literature’s focus on diversity in teams at all hierarchical levels and the complexities of expatriate leaders’ work. Within leadership studies, diversity has not received as much attention on its own but has rather in the past been subsumed within three different areas: gender as a form of diversity; cross-cultural studies of leadership (and expatriate leaders); and in leadership textbooks as an element of groups and group leadership in organisations.
So, with regard to the first area mentioned above, we can see strong parallels between what we have said throughout the chapter about the challenges for women as leaders and feminine leadership and the challenges that minorities face within organisations. Critical leadership scholars are highlighting similar issues of exclusion and prejudice that the dominant white, male, middle-class image of leaders has for leaders from other ethnicities, classes and sexual orientations (Collinson, 2011). Rickards argues that this has encouraged minorities to circumvent this ‘diversity dilemma’ by ‘becoming entrepreneurial founders of business of various kinds’ (2012: 178). It is then the overcoming of the glass ceiling that women and minorities face that creates their shared social identity and drives their entrepreneurial aspirations. Liu and Baker (2016) use media representations of 12 business leaders engaged in philanthropy in Australia to demonstrate the deeply embedded, normalised and celebrated whiteness of leadership. They show that ‘doing leadership’ is associated with ‘doing whiteness’ and illustrate the presence of whiteness in leadership discourses sustaining white power and privilege. We have also recently seen work using queer theory (Harding et al., 2011) to unpack sexuality and leadership in organisations further, and particularly with a view to homosexual and heterosexual aspects of dominant leader images and a queer reading of dominant leadership texts. Muhr and Sullivan (2013) have further contributed to this area of research through their case study of a transgender leader. They showed that employees pay attention to the leader’s body, presumed gender and gendered appearance to make sense of their leadership. This reinforces the gendered nature of leadership and its deep-rooted assumption of gendered dichotomy, i.e. either male/masculine or female/feminine. These gendered social norms and expectations create restrictions for leaders and the way that they should perform leadership. Muhr and Sullivan (2013) call for queer leadership that stays open for the exploration of relationships between bodies, gender, sexuality and leadership. Gaining a better understanding of these issues will enable us not only to work against inequality but also to work towards changing the dominant masculine, white, middle-class image of leaders and make it more inclusive of other, diverse forms of leadership. Such explorations should be open to all forms of diversity, including that of (dis)ability and appearance – an area that to date has received very little attention by leadership scholars. This may have significant implications for organisations in terms of their ethical, sustainable nature and their creativity and performance.
Expatriate Leadership

The second area of leadership in different cultures, leading followers from different cultures and expatriate leaders, has to a large extent been addressed in Chapter 10 in this book. It is the latter complexity of expatriate leadership that has not received as much attention within leadership studies per se. It has been explored, particularly in relation to the technical training and competence of expatriate leaders in the cross-cultural and comparative management literature (Black and Mendenhall, 1990; Toh and Denisi, 2003), but remains underexplored with reference to the exploration of the expatriate leader–local follower relationship. Hailey (1996) has stressed the culture shock that many expatriates experience owing to inadequate cultural training and awareness. Western expatriates often find it difficult to adjust to local culture and their behaviours and attitude are then often perceived as a ‘colonial mentality’ by local employees (Hailey, 1996: 263). The expatriate leader–follower relationship is bounded by the complexity of this culture clash and indeed the short-term, fixed nature of the expatriate’s placement in the local culture. The perception of the expatriate as stranger (Richards, 1996) by the locals and equally the perception of the local context as a strange environment for the expatriate leader create an immediate tension that is very difficult to subsequently overcome. More research is needed to unpack and understand the added complexity that these time and culture issues bring to the leader–follower relationship. These insights will have direct implications for the successful performance of expatriate managers and indeed organisations working within different countries.

Diversity Management

Finally, Yukl (2010) draws our attention to the work that has been done on the management of diversity in groups and the potential benefits and challenges that this poses for leadership and the organisation (Ashikali and Groeneveld, 2015; Kochan et al., 2003; Triandis et al., 1994). The main advantages of having a diverse workforce are the likely increase in creativity and innovation as well as a greater potential talent pool and more balanced decision-making process that an influx of different views and values of a diverse workforce brings. Yukl (2010) warns though that with greater diversity in the workforce may also come more opportunities for distrust and conflict due to less shared commitment and identity in the group. With a view to the management of diverse groups, this research has also focused on ways in which an appreciation of and tolerance for diversity can be enhanced and equal opportunities created. Boekhorst (2015), for example, explored the role of authentic leadership in fostering workplace inclusion and showed that authentic leaders share cooperative goals with their followers and thereby encourage authentic behaviours in their followers leading to goal attainment. Insights from critical and feminist studies on gender and diversity as highlighted above do, however, call into question the extent to which any such diversity training measures are able to make a difference, and to what extent they
may instead lead to a perpetuation of stereotypes and an emphasis on the difference between different forms of diversity.

**Vignette 12.3**

*Extract from Case Study 1 highlighting diversity in action*

The engineering industry is renowned for continuously winning/losing contracts. With this comes a Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employees) (TUPE), where employees who work on that contract are transferred across with the contract to the new supplier. For leaders this means fresh talent, and it can also mean a diverse mix of capabilities, cultures and work standards. There have been instances where companies have used TUPE to transfer across employees who are not as capable, to ensure they keep a good talent pool in their organisation.

1. Reflect on how this example of ‘diversity management in action’ relates to Yukl’s (2010) views on the opportunities and challenges of diversity.
2. What may be the challenges of frequent changes in staffing for leadership?

**Critical Thinking Box 12.2**

A significant problem with equal opportunities policies and diversity management programmes is their inevitable perpetuation of gender and other diversity-related stereotypes. This is because they have to define diversity categories and locate individuals within these in order to ensure that each individual falling into a minority category is given equal opportunities within the organisation. Unfortunately, this deepens rather than removes stereotypes in organisations and society. What can organisations do to ensure equal opportunities without naming and perpetuating stereotypes?

**Summary**

In this chapter, we have first introduced the reader to several key fields of leadership studies in relation to gender. We have particularly focused on the research and
Leadership, Gender and Diversity

meta-analyses conducted over the last three decades on the existence of differences between female and male leaders and their effectiveness in organisations. Through this review we have also highlighted some of the persistent challenges that female leaders face in light of the well-known notions of the glass ceiling and glass cliff in organisations. We have also highlighted claims in the wider literature for a feminine advantage in leadership and sought to unpack further how this holds up to critical and feminist views on a deeply ingrained structural and cultural bias towards the male and masculine. In light of these more critical views of gender and leadership we have also highlighted the danger of viewing biological notions of gender as well as personal gender characteristics as separate, distinct entities and as clearly different and opposite. This therefore recognises research that explores feminine and masculine as fluid, shifting and socially constructed notions of gender and looks at how these interact with each other and with biological forms of gender in the context of organisations. Secondly, we explored the broader term of diversity that not only includes gender but also recognises difference in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical ability, etc. We highlighted similarities in opportunities and challenges for these other forms of diversity in light of the dominant white, male, middle-class image of the successful leader in western countries. We also stressed that the wider notion of diversity has often been subsumed under other topics such as gender, culture and team leadership and briefly reviewed each of these areas. We concluded on the note that more in-depth research is needed on different forms of diversity and their influence on dominant leader identities as well as the leader–follower relationship.

Additional Reflection Questions

1. What is the difference between research into female leaders and feminine leadership? What can we learn from either about leadership?
2. Many research studies have shown a difference in styles between female and male leaders. Critically discuss and relate this to your own experience.
3. Is there a feminine advantage?
4. What are the dangers of promoting a feminine advantage?
5. Critical leadership scholars argue that women are seen as the 'Other'. What does this mean?
6. Critically reflect on the opportunities and limitations of gender studies into leadership and their potential to work against or reinforce stereotypes.
7. Drawing on both the gender difference and critical gender literature on leadership, analyse the defeat of Hilary Clinton in the 2016 US Presidential Election.

(Continued)
Leadership, Gender and Diversity

8. What can be described as a diversity dilemma and what solutions can we find to it?
9. How does diversity (e.g. race, age, sex) affect the leader–follower relationship? What challenges and opportunities may different forms of diversity pose for leader–follower relations? Critically reflect on examples from your experience within social groups and/or organisations.

Case Study Questions

1. Read carefully through Case Study 3 and note down specific behaviours and attributes that Ken, Mike and Frank display. To what extent are these behaviours and attributes masculine or feminine (as defined in this chapter)? How masculine or feminine are the organisation and culture they are working in? What influence may this have on their effectiveness as a leader and follower?
2. Case Studies 4 and 5 describe the particular views of two female leaders on their approach to running organisations. Compare and contrast the relative agentic and/or communal nature of their views and set these in the context of the particular organisations they work in. Link your analysis back to mainstream and critical ideas on gender as discussed in this chapter.
3. Diversity is often associated with either gender or ethnicity. What other forms of diversity are visible in Case Study 8? What does diversity mean in the specific socio-historical and political context of this case study?
4. This chapter has highlighted the problematic nature of diversity management. June Burrough reflects in Case Study 5 on equality and the importance of showing everybody equal respect. How can she embed this belief in an active practice of equal opportunities in her organisation and avoid the pitfalls of traditional diversity management?

Please visit the website at https://study.sagepub.com/studyleadership2e for Multiple Choice Questions that test your understanding of the concepts and theories introduced in this chapter and for links to online videos and interactive questions that engage you in further reflection on the subject.

Further Reading

Sage Articles Accessible through the Online Resources

Wider Key Reading and Critical Reviews on Leadership, Gender and Diversity


