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LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN EXECUTIVES IN PUBLIC SECTOR

ORGANIZATIONS IN GHANA.

BY

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1

DECLARATION

I, Mensah Diana Delali, hereby declare that except for references made to other people's work, which I have duly acknowledged, the study herein presented is my original research work conducted under supervision at the Centre for Social Policy Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, during the 2017/2018 academic year under the supervision of Prof. Ellen Bortei-Doku Aryeetey. This work has never been submitted in any form, whole, or part for a degree in this University or elsewhere.

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(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God and my wonderful family for the immense contribution and support they gave me during my research work.

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I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to individuals who have made significant contributions towards the success of this work.

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to investigate the leadership experiences of women executives in selected public sector organisations in Ghana. The study adopted qualitative research methods to gather data from twenty (20) participants from six (6) public sector organisations. Purposive sampling technique was used to select twelve (12) women executives in senior management and eight (8) tenured staff from the same organisations. The study employed a semi-structured interview guide for data collection. The data gathered from the interview were transcribed and thematic analysis used to analyse the data accordingly. Results from the study identified formal attributes of leadership in the organisations such as, accountability, delegation, empowerment, creativity, innovation and coordination. The leadership styles adopted by women executives included democratic, autocratic, democratic-autocratic and transformational leadership styles. Some of the barriers that impede female leadership strategies and decisions are organisational culture, inflexible human behaviour, bureaucracy, poor coordination among team, poor team work and resistance to change. The findings revealed that, some men and women subordinates do not comply with the instructions of women executives. Attributes of leadership for men and women were however, found to differ. Men's leadership attributes were listed as domineering, authoritarian, individualistic and controlling. In contrast women executives were described as motherly, participatory and team oriented. The findings revealed that women executives use several decision-making and supervision strategies to help them to be successful. It is recommended that these findings be documented to serve as case study material for training executives in the public service and to also serve as new ideas to expand knowledge on leadership style.

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In all social institutions men historically dominate leadership positions while women seem to be marginalised in office holding or at best have token representation (Ridgeway, 2001). According to Chandler (2011), even though women continue striving to rise to the top as corporate leaders, heads of state and media practitioners, gender-based discrimination reinforces their subordinate status. Among the explanations that are given is the view that women do not make themselves available for leadership due to a number of pressures. For example, women leaders constantly have to navigate between professional and occupational duties and domestic and family responsibilities at home. These conflicting responsibilities make it difficult for them to compete with their male counterparts (Eagley & Karau, 2002).

In spite of these setbacks, some traditional African women played significant leadership roles in society and influenced society greatly. These brave and gallant women fought to become leaders in African traditional societies. An example is Nana Yaa Asantewaa of the Asante kingdom of Ghana who led the Asantes in a war against the British Imperial powers (Boahen, 2003). Queen Nzhinga, Queen of Ndongo and Matamba in Angola who made her mark as an outstanding example of female governance in Africa and showed a lot of political acumen, brilliant military tactics, diplomatic skills, ability to forge numerous strategic alliances, knowledge of trade and religious issues which served well in resisting Portugal's colonialist aspirations (Onyebuchi Eze, 2013).

1

Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) denote that even though a lot of research has been carried out in the last decades on leadership and gender, there still persist challenges in the advancement of women to more senior positions and this needs to be further analysed. In many cases due to equal rights legislation, the problem of gender is often assumed to have been solved. The reality however is that there are still barriers for women such as the glass ceiling or the '*hidden dimensions of power'* (Broadbridge & Simpson 2011:477) that undermine female careers. Eagly and Carli (2007) claim women are not well represented in managerial positions, however instead of discussing negative barriers like the glass ceiling, they prefer to introduce the metaphor of the labyrinth. The labyrinth concept represents a shift of paradigm which emphasises that "for women who aspire to top leadership, routes exist but are full of twists and turns, both unexpected and expected" (Eagly & Carli 2007:64).

A female's ability to lead is often questioned in terms of how well she can handle leadership, compared to men. There is a plethora of literature on leadership that describes how males tend to rate themselves as better leaders than females, based on their perception of leadership an example is the study of Richardson and Loubier (2008). Often, women find themselves acting differently from prevailing female values in an attempt to comply with the male definition of leadership, which highlights charisma. For decades more females tend to underrate their leadership abilities and competencies compared to men in similar roles.

Doubts about women's leadership skills have been attributed to the misconception people have on feminism. This has been linked to perceptions of incompetence and a devaluation or exploitation of women's labour. Given the prejudice people harbour about women in authority, men may work well with female subordinates but become uncomfortable when working with female peers and superiors, particularly in male dominated work settings (Chandler, 2011). This is because women

are viewed as suited to service tasks and subordinate positions which reinforce the impression of nurturance, dependence and lack of leadership ability (Chandler, 2011). Women have to deal with these responses of male peers and subordinates who may not welcome their entry into previously male dominated territory. This may explain why some women do not aspire for certain powerful positions and even if they do aspire, end up adopting male attributes and suppressing aspects of femininities (Kerfoot and Knight 1998 Wacjman, 1998).

The absence of women in senior positions of leadership and management at universities is well documented (Astin and Davis 1993, Fine 2003, Forster 2001, Kettle 1996, Petersen & Gravett 2000, Soldewell 1979,), and many of these studies have also investigated the barriers that prevent women from advancing into senior leadership and management positions, but research to investigate what happens to women once they attain positions of leadership and management in organisations is less common, especially in African countries. Thus the story of women who have against all odds, 'shattered the glass ceiling' in the academic world is not well known.

1.2 Problem Statement

The area of leadership and gender, roles in the workplace has focused on self-perception or subordinates' perceptions of leaders' behaviour. Particularly, these studies have relied on measures of behaviour and leadership styles that were rated by leaders themselves or subordinates. Though it is important to compare leaders' self-perceptions and those whom they lead, it is also as important to examine leaders' perceptions of other leaders, particularly female leaders. This is necessary to gain an understanding of whether females continue to be viewed as less effective leaders despite their abilities and successes, regarding competencies and abilities today, by their male and female counterparts (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

Many women are also seen to undermine the authority of their superior women in leadership and this is because, the strategies they use with men are inappropriate for women. They find it difficult to react to their fellow women as bosses while it is easy for them to cope with men as bosses (Wacjman, 1998).

It is widely believed that most women working or in higher positions experience negative reactions from their subordinates (Ely,1994). This underestimates the abilities of women which negatively affect their choices, opportunities and relations. More research such as this dissertation is needed to establish the extent to which these views are supported by the experiences of women executives in Ghana.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of the study is to investigate the leadership experiences of women executives in selected public sector organisations in Ghana. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify formal and informal gender attributes of leadership profiles in selected public sector organisations

2. To investigate decision-making and supervision strategies adopted by women executives

3. To examine how management and staff respond to the authority of female executives.

4. To explain how management and staff assess the performance of women executives

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions will be asked to help achieve the research objectives of the study.

1. Which gender attributes of leadership profile is adopted in public sector organisations?

2. Which decision making and supervision strategies do women executives adopt?

3. How do management and staff respond to the authority of female executives?

4. How do management and staff assess the performance of women executives?

1.5 Significance of the Study

More than 20 years after the fourth world conference on women in Beijing (1995) people continue to have mixed reactions about women in leadership. Research on women in leadership is growing steadily in Ghana though slowly. My study will contribute to the existing literature to change the negative perceptions staff have about women in leadership positions and the experiences of these women executives. Policy makers can use the information to strengthen existing opportunities for women's leadership.

1.6 Organisation of the study

The study was organized in five (5) chapters.

Chapter 1 covered background, statement of the problem, research questions, and objectives of the study, significance / relevance of the study, scope and limitation of the study. Chapter 2 discussed relevant literature on the topic. In chapter 3, methods of data collection and analysis are discussed. This includes research design, research population, sampling procedures and techniques of data collection. Chapter 4 discussed data analysis and findings and chapter 5 formed conclusion, recommendations and suggestions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature on the leadership experiences of women executives in public organisations. It begins with theoretical perspectives on women executives. This is followed by empirical literature from other researchers in relation to the topic under study and a conceptual framework that helps to explain the links between women's attributes and experiences of leadership.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives on Women Executives

2.2.1 The Sex-Based-Bias Argument

Several writers have suggested that other mechanisms hold women back, regardless of their qualifications. They have argued that women do not receive the same support and assistance as their male peers and that they are subjected to greater scrutiny and expectations than men (Dezso, 2016). It is further argued that characteristics associated with women's performance, and behaviours are vastly detrimental to their success in organizations, and that they are not rewarded as highly as men who have made comparable achievements Frenkiel, (2014).

Evidence for the existence of gender-based bias against women at the workplace is high, especially at higher corporate levels. Head-hunters report that organizations still prefer male candidates for senior executive positions over equally experienced women (Williams, 1988).

Sutton and Moore (1985) reported that among respondents to a Harvard Business Review Survey, men consistently reported higher salaries than women at the same experience level, except for those with under-five years' experience. Almost 60 percent of their male respondents indicated that a woman must be exceptional to succeed in business; about 58 percent of the men and 33 percent of the women believed that women have at least an equal opportunity for advancement in the companies where the respondents worked. The survey respondents also indicated that top management is one of the employment sectors in which women have the fewest opportunities (Bonte et al, 2009). Similarly, the results of a recent study by Stroh, Brett, & Riley, (1992) in Britain by tracking 1,000 male and female midlevel managers indicated that women's salaries and job transfers lagged behind those of men over a period of five years, even though both groups had the same qualifications in terms of education, career orientation, functional and hierarchical experience. One of the authors concluded that "the women were not only disadvantaged but discriminated against" (Business Week, 1992: 76).

Hitt and Barr (1989), drawing on a sample of managers and professionals, found that sex was an issue in selection decisions for midlevel and upper-level management positions: despite equal qualifications (educational level and experience), women had lower probabilities of being selected than men. Further, applicants' sex interacted with other job-irrelevant variables (age and race) to affect such decisions. Proponents of the sex-based-bias perspective hold that the highest cadres of corporations function as old boys' clubs with "glass ceilings" limiting the ascension of women to the topmost leadership ranks (Solomon, 1990).

The "good old boys" barrier enforced by stereotyping, excluding women, and causing them social discomfort keeps women down (Haskell, 1991). As a result of the 400 female executives surveyed in two studies, 70 percent of one group and 56 percent of the other reported a male-dominated corporate culture and the existence of a glass ceiling as obstacles to their success (Business Week, 1992).

In support of the view that women face enormous barriers in the form of sex-based bias, Kanter (1977) presented evidence that regardless of their qualifications, when placed in groups in which they are significantly outnumbered by men, women become tokens and are faced with predictable treatment from others that force them into roles that limit their probabilities of success. No matter how qualified they are, women in senior positions become subject to excessive scrutiny, their differences from men are highlighted and exaggerated, and their attributes are distorted so that they become trapped in stereotypical roles. Understanding the implications of this sex-based bias can minimize incidents of unfair employment and work place practices and assist in encouraging fair treatment of women who have made it into leadership positions despite the odds.

2.2.2 The Glass Ceiling Theory

The "glass ceiling" is one of the most compelling metaphors for analyzing inequalities between men and women in the workplace (Hyun, 2015). The expression has been used widely in the popular media as well as in official government reports and academic publications. The scenario suggests that although it may now be possible to see women being able to get through the front door of managerial hierarchies, at some point they hit an invisible barrier that blocks any further upward movement. According to the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (1995), the term "glass ceiling" refers to the unseen, yet unbreakable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper ranks of the corporate ladder regardless of their qualifications or achievements.

Taken literally, the metaphor of the "glass ceiling" implies the existence of an impermeable barrier that blocks the vertical mobility of women; Below this barrier, women are able to get promoted; beyond this barrier, they are not (Zamfirache, 2010). Such a situation can be considered the limiting case of a more general phenomenon: situations in which the disadvantages women face relative to men intensify as they move up organizational hierarchies. In relation to the study, women in leadership at a point in time experience barriers that impede their chance of climbing the career ladder; these include work and family life balance with responsibilities at the work place. Some women in most cases tend to withdraw from competing for opportunities at the workplace due to childbirth or family life that may hinder their performance in those areas. This implies that for every woman in position, there are challenges that may serve as barriers to move beyond a certain point of leadership. In breaking through those barriers, they tend to go through certain experiences in terms of how management and staff accept and cooperate with their leadership.

2.2.3 The Experience-Based-Bias Argument

Proponents of the experience-based-bias argue that the dearth of women leaders of corporations occurs because women have not acquired the necessary inputs for leadership. Particularly at the highest decision-making levels, women are considered to be underrepresented only because they are less likely than men to possess characteristics desirable for inclusion at these levels.

The substantive argument of the above perspective, thus, is that men and women will be treated equally if and when they have equal qualifications. Advocates of this perspective concur with the view articulated by a respondent to a Harvard Business Review survey of executives' attitudes towards women in management that: "Men and women follow the same career path if their capabilities are equal" (Sutton & Moore, 1985: 50). Recent studies investigating the evaluation of men and women, which have found that information about women's high-performance abilities defrays negative judgments have provided some support for this view. For example, Heilman,

Martell, and Simon (1988) found that undervaluing of women's competence and likely career success dissipated when information on their high performance was provided. Similarly, Heilman, Block, Martell, and Simon's (1989) extension of Schein's (1973) study showed that when female managers were identified as successful, differences in perceptions of female and male managers in general vanished.

Additionally, there is some evidence in the literature regarding lack of gender discrimination in the recruitment of qualified managers. Hitt, Zikmund, and Pickens (1982) for example, found that for equally qualified holders of Masters of Business Administration (M.B.A.) degrees, race but not sex influenced opportunities for employment in entry-level professional positions. Similarly, other research has suggested that qualifications substantively explain sex differences in selection and performance evaluation (e.g. Graves & Powell, 1988; cf. Olian, Schwab, & Haberfeld, 1988). Powell suggested that "male and female managers certainly differ in their success because men usually enter the job market earlier than women and they tend to stay longer than women. This could be due to the average male manager being older and more experienced than the average female manager. In other words, while women are take maternity leave and others quit their job to be able to take care of the family, the men maintain their positions and work towards attaining higher positions in their field. If there were no basic differences between male and female managers, it would be just a matter of time until the proportion of women was about the same at all managerial levels" (1990: 68-69). Similarly, Friedman (1988) and Williams (1988) pointed out that it may still be too early for women to have attained proportional representation in high management positions, since young women who received their M.B.A.s and entered management in the mid- 1970s still are younger than the average senior executive. This was as a result of the cultural system that existed in the early days causing most women to be at home rather than going to school.

Although the literature cited above primarily pertains to women's representation in the ranks of management rather than in firm governance, clearly the experience-based-bias argument can be extended to explain the composition of boards' standing committees. At such high levels of corporate leadership and decision making women are generally less likely to be qualified for committee membership than men because of women's relatively recent entry into management (Martell, et al. 1998). Thus, the experience-based-bias argument suggests that the experience of male and female directors, and not their sex, influences committee membership odds. Relating this to the current study, leadership experiences of women executives in the public sector is mostly associated with biases that affect women in their leadership role.

2.4 Women's Leadership Experience

Women's leadership experience can be defined as the experience women have as they lead successful organizations that prioritize profit, employee wellbeing and making a positive impact. Although women make majority of the population of the world, men hold the vast majority of leadership positions in the corporate and political arenas. When it comes to leadership experiences women are underrepresented in higher positions. A clear example is the inability of Ghana to elect a woman to the presidential office. Women hold less than a quarter of senior leadership positions across the globe, with a third of businesses having no women at all in senior roles (Gipson, Pfaff, Mendelsohn & Catenacci, 2017). There is the need to consider the influence of cultural worldviews and socialization on shaping leadership style.

2.4.1 Women's leadership styles

Despite the controversy about gender and leadership, research on how women lead is growing. Leadership style is viewed as a composite of "relatively stable patterns of behaviour that are manifested by leaders" (Eagly & Johannessen- Schmidt, 2001, p. 781). Work on female leadership

12

style tends to conclude that "women are better educational leaders" than men (Coleman, 2003, p. 41; Shakeshaft, 1987, 1993). This claim is justified in terms of women's relationships, teaching and learning and community building. In a Greek study, female principals interpreted women's leadership more positively than men's leadership. They argued that women lead more flexibly, intuitively and holistically (Lyman et al., 2009). Some argue that women embrace superior leadership styles (Coleman, 2003). In most cases women tend to deviate from the positive nature that is assumed to be portrayed. Research has identified collaborative, participative and instructional leadership style, transformational leadership style and androgenous leadership styles as leadership styles adopted by women leaders (Coleman, 2003; Eagley & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001; Oplatka, 2006). These are explained below.

☐ *Collaborative, Participative and Instructional Leadership*

Some researchers suggest that women prefer teamwork, and tend to be more accessible, caring and supportive. They emphasize students' learning achievement through instructional leadership (Coleman, 2003, 2005; Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2009). Numerous studies have shown that women employ a collaborative and participative leadership style (Coleman, 2002, 2003; Franzén, 2005; Hall, 1996; Lyman et al., 2009; Morris et al., 1999; Neville, 1988; Ouston, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1993; Stelter, 2002). When adopting this style, women encourage inclusiveness (Shakeshaft, 1993) and use collaborative decision-making (Lyman et al., 2009). One way of interpreting women leaders' effectiveness is the higher standard they have to meet in attaining their leadership positions and the perception that they "have to maintain better performance to retain these roles" (Eagly & Johannessen- Schmidt, 2001, p. 793). However, few researchers explain why these styles are more likely to be embraced by women. It could be argued that the positive women's stereotype as "nurturing, caring and people orientated" might account for it (Noddings, 1984 as cited in Coleman, 2003, p. 40). Coleman (2003) seems to believe that it is due to being in the field of

education, which is an environment that "predisposes its leaders... towards a more democratic and participative style" (p. 46).

Eagly and Johannessen-Schmidt (2001) argue that it may be "the attitudinal bias against female leaders that arises from the incongruity of the female gender role and many leader roles" (Eagley & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001) that renders democratic and participative styles more favourable to women than men.

□ *Transformational leadership*

The thesis that women's leadership styles are superior to men's is strongly supported by some research findings which indicate that women's styles are associated with transformational leadership (Coleman, 2003; Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Eagly & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly, & Johannessen-Schmidt and van Engen, 2003; Hackman, Furniss, Hill, & Paterson, 1992; Weyer, 2007). Transformational leadership was first proposed by Burns (1978) and then developed by Bass (1985a) as an effective style which builds on "interpersonal relationships and the sharing of power and information" (Weyer, 2007, p. 490). The focus of this style is "individualised consideration", which means that subordinates' mentorship, development and individual needs are prioritised by leaders (Eagly & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 787). These characteristics make transformational leadership communal, and given women's stereotype as nurturing, caring and people oriented, this leadership style is easier for female leaders to achieve.

□ *Androgynous leadership*

The debate on leadership styles is further complicated by the concept of androgynous leadership, which combines both masculine and feminine leadership styles. Androgynous leadership has been

14

studied by Coleman, 2000; Cubillo and Brown, 2003; Davis and Johansson, 2005; Hall, 1996; Morris et al., 1999; and Oplatka, 2006. These authors claim that good leaders have both male and female characteristics available to them and can select the most appropriate for a particular situation (Singleton, 1993 as cited in Cubillo & Brown, 2003). In other words, a good leader is one who combines both male and female attitudes and characteristics in leading people. One of the most important findings in favour of this leadership style comes from Oplatka's (2006) review of 14 major journals in educational administration, gender studies and comparative education in developing countries, which found evidence that female leaders in these countries seem to adopt an androgenic style. This is clearly illustrated in Morris et al.'s (1999) study which compares the findings of research into leadership style of Singaporean principals and English head teachers. In both studies in the two countries, Bem (1977) and Gray's (1989) gender paradigms were used.

The findings show that the participants chose attributes from both paradigms, which created "an image of a leader that differs from both masculine and feminine stereotypes" (Coleman, 1996, p. 166). Interestingly, the Singaporean female principals tended to choose more "masculine" attributes of leadership than their English counterparts. This may be related to the socio-cultural differences resulting from difference in locations of these individuals.

With regard to androgyny, whilst it is inescapable that leadership style is influenced by gender, what forces women to cross their gender stereotype boundaries to adopt a more masculine style? The explanation for the participants' choices in the above study is perhaps linked to cultural differences (between Singapore and England) (Morris et al., 1999), and to "a strong male-dominated culture" in developing countries (Oplatka, 2006, p. 615). The literature suggests that leadership practice is strongly influenced by culture.

There are recurrent themes about the factors that enable women and gender advocates to develop voice, influence and leadership capacities across the political, economic and social spheres – and in the factors that signal active modes of resistance.

Women in Leadership in Ghana's Educational Sector

The proportion of women in the labour force and career development has been significantly increased especially in the education sector in Ghana (Atiah, 2013). The passion of women for success pushed most of them to advance in the working life. Though it has not been easy for them to reach executive positions having started as workers, some women have been able to attain leadership positions. Segkulu and Gyimah (2016) indicated that women entered in school leadership as a result of an external catalyst, a mentor, which inspired a process of self-empowerment that led to their pursuit of leadership positions. Though most women are aspiring these days to enter into leadership in the educational sector, few are found holding leadership positions in Ghana. The reason for few women in leadership positions in the educational sector ranges from gender stereotyping and socialization factors. This is associated with barriers such as hiring practices, and lack of role models. History indicates that women were introduced into the profession as the school system expanded in the nineteenth century. The reasons for the introduction of women into the school system was on the basis that women could be hired for less money than men and was thought that women suited to teach young children (Pearman, 1999). This has affected most women in acquiring leadership positions and has initiated the mindset that women do not have the ability to lead well in most societies in Ghana

2.5 How Work Environment adds to Women's Work Experience

An environment that encourages women to engage in activities that increases their level of knowledge and skills is worth encouraging (Coleman, 1996, p. 166). Some individuals in most working environments understand female leadership as the fact that women can be and are leaders. Others may define it from a feminist point of view and as a matter of equality and the right to have the same opportunities. Some say, it refers to certain feminine characteristics which are valuable in today's organizations. (Palmu-Joronen 2009, 172). Others think that leadership should not be differentiated as female leadership at all.

2.5.1 Leadership and Career

Leadership is culturally binding and changes over time, so it is hard to give one definition which applies to all leadership. However, to understand female leadership and what is meant by it, the fundamental nature of leadership will be explained next.

The concept of leadership comprises of three aspects; people, goals and influence. Leadership is an influential action used to achieve goals. Leadership is people-driven and the ability to inspire people helps to achieve the set goals of an organization. (Daft & Kendrick &Vershinina 2010, 565.) Leadership can be seen as a tool or a process of motivating people. The motivation aims to achieve particular goals by the action of those people. The different styles of leadership derived from different ways of motivating people, different kind of goals and the nature of the organizations. (Hannagan, 2008)

Hence, leaders set the direction for others to move forward to future and motivate them to reach the set goals by certain way of functioning or acting. Good leaders do not just lead and say where

17

to go, they have to participate in it themselves as well. In other words, a good leader gets involved in every activity delegated to followers as this makes the followers identify the leader as one who is willing to serve and not only be served. Similarly, a good leader's involvement in activities or projects sends a message of one who understands what is expected of every follower. Leaders need to act on their visions, as they are easily judged by their action, not by what they say (Hannagan, 2008, 40). Leaders should have responsibility and authority, and they must have vision for the future and be confident enough to lead everyone there.

2.5.2 It All Starts from Your First Job

It is worthwhile to examine the meaning and importance of a career. After all, to become a leader experience is needed, which is usually gained from earlier working and life experiences.

Career constitutes different events and activities. Career is a lifelong process, on which education, different working experiences and positions, family and different activities happening outside of work all have an effect. (What is a career 2013.) As organizations change, so does the structure of career also. Traditionally, career had a more straightforward structure, people being loyal to a company or a position and building a career inside an organization. Today, careers have a more flexible structure [what do you mean]. Other activities, such as communal activities and different kind of life roles also contribute to the formation of a career. In one's career it is possible to move up to higher positions and then go back to a less demanding position, and later move up again. People do not only want a job or a career for the sake of it, but also experiences and the possibility to fulfil themselves (Airo & Rantanen & Salmela 2008, 10).

Career has different meanings to organizations and individuals. These two dimensions can be divided to have a subjective meaning and an objective meaning. The subjective meaning of a career refers to the individual's process in work life. An individual creates a professional identity for him

or herself by moving from different levels of organizations to another, usually hierarchically. The meaning of a career is created by the individual him/herself. The objective meaning of a career refers to organizations' operational model regarding careers and what kind of structures careers might have in those organizations. (Aaltio-Marjosalo 2001, 188.)

2.6 Decision Making Strategies Adopted by Women

In Rwanda all of the companies with more than three women in their management had better effectiveness regarding the organizational dimensions than companies with less than three women in management (Kantengwa, 2004). According to the study by Kantengwa (2004), work environment and values, vision, coordination and control improved most where companies had more than three women in their management. Innovation, accountability and capability had only one-point difference and thus did not make that much difference between companies with less or more women in management.

2.6.1 Traditional Gender Roles and Expectations

Traditional gender roles are still prevalent and those who try to avoid falling for stereotyping, often find themselves acting according to their "role", in some level, whether it is at work or at home. People are affected by the dominant gender roles throughout their lives and gender roles often have the effect of a self-fulfilling prophecy. In this case, the stereotypes that women work less than men or in less demanding positions or earn less, are very much alive (Sandberg 2013, 39).

The stereotype of women as horrible bosses has inspired many book titles about female leadership, for instance Caitlin Freemand and Kimberly Yorio's book "The Girl's Guide to Being a Boss (Without Being a Bitch). They argued that when female leaders were few they had to prove themselves by being hard and cold in order to gain credibility and authority.

Women who choose careers over family or want to be leaders and still have a family too, are often labelled as somehow different, greedy or even strange. Stereotypes and prejudice still affect women's career development strongly. More than 70 per cent of women who answered the survey

by Talouselämä (2013), said that traditional gender roles and certain expectations of women make women's career development slower. They noted, however, that in addition to men women themselves have certain perceptions that make getting ahead more difficult.

Nevertheless, women often have to prove themselves much more than men and women managers or leaders who make mistakes are judged much more easily. McIlroy (2007). According to a study on stereotypes of women, female leaders are expected to act differently than men and adapt their behaviour to what is expected (Steady, 2011). However, they should not be too different but rather to be able to act according to situations and expectations and use both masculine and feminine traits (Heiskanen 2013, 38).

2.7 Conceptual Framework

When it comes to organizations in Ghana, there are two sectors namely private and public sector. Therefore, the framework underlying the research on leadership experiences of women executive's focuses on the public sector. The public sector was selected due to accessibility and well organized management structure which will help achieve a better framework of the topic. The framework will address selected public sector organizations in Ghana focusing on supervision and decision-making roles. Towards this research questions on attitudes, confidence, business culture as well as traditional gender roles were investigated. Also, the study

Defining Women's Executive Leadership

Leadership experiences of women is a general term used to describe women exposure to leading other people in various settings. If you have ever supervised other people as part of your job, you have leadership experience. It is important to note that management and leadership are two different things. You do not have to be a manager to be a leader. Leadership involves the ability to manage and direct employees in an organization to influence and guide these individuals towards a certain goal. Executive leaders usually have a mix of soft skills and hard skills that are used to inspire employees and leverage their attributes to improve business processes.

Attitudes and Confidence

Confidence is one of the most important elements to being a compelling leader and it all starts with attitude. Building confidence and changing attitudes that women can be leaders without sacrificing their family should start from an early age. Both girls' and boys' way of thinking about career opportunities should be broadened by offering possibilities for them to visit and familiarize themselves with different business sectors, which are either male-dominated or female-dominated.

Business Culture

Business culture or organizational culture refers to expectations, beliefs and values which the leader practices. These core values of the leader affect employees' attitudes, operations of the organization and the overall nature and culture of the organization. Organizational culture is commonly shared in the work community and this holds it together. Hence, the leader's own values, vision and way of operating makes the nature of the organizations by practicing them either consciously or unconsciously. This has a direct effect on decision making and leadership.

Traditional Gender Role

The projection of traditional gender roles can also be seen in the growing gender division in most organizational fields and in the clear distinction between industries in which women and men want to work in. Traditional and societal factors are indirect factors, which influence both organizational and individual behaviour. Society sets standards, expectations and customs to organizations and individuals and thus affects female leadership. Societal factors are the most difficult and time taking factors to change as they have an effect on various dimensions of life and cannot be easily controlled (Eagley & Karau, 2002).

Reaction of Subordinates

This refers to the attitudes displayed by subordinates when women leaders give directives and instructions in their organisations. Female co-workers and subordinates often react negatively to other women's orders (Heim, 1990).

According to findings by Ely (1994), female subordinates in male dominated law firms had generally negative attitudes toward the female partners in the firm. They criticised the female partners for acting like men, rated them as having unpleasant personalities and viewed them as illegitimate despite high competitive ratings (Ely, 1994). These findings indicate that even when women successfully obtain leadership roles, they still have the negative attitudes of co-workers to contend with. With the above characteristics in mind, the questions included in the interview guide have been designed based on the various roles women play generally and specifically in the public sector and the business environment.
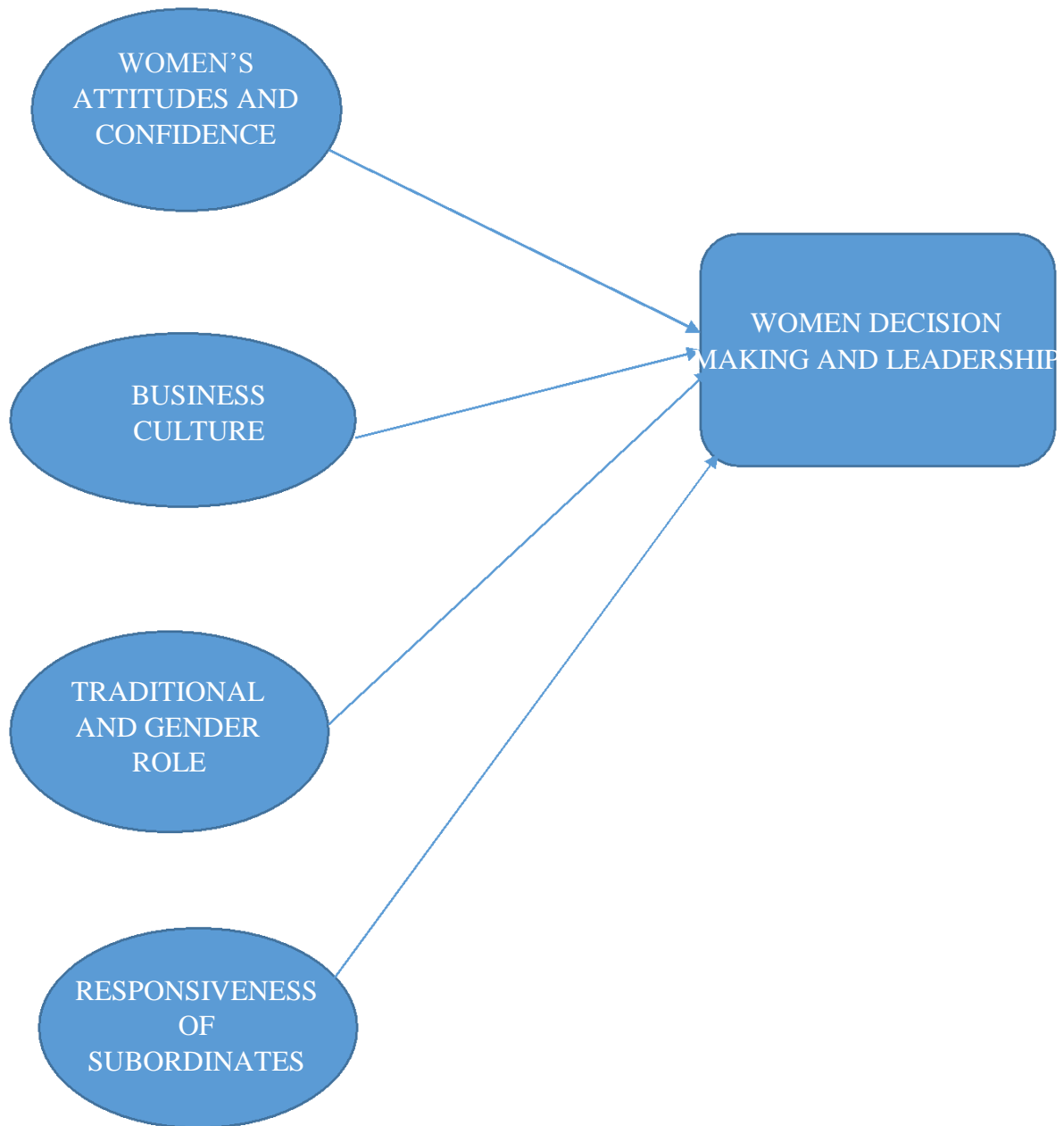
Figure 2.1. A conceptual framework on decision making and experiences

There are two major types of personalities that can be found in an organisation (Franzén, 2005). These two personalities are goal-oriented and people-oriented personalities. Goal-oriented individuals are firm with strict minds on achieving their goals. They are willing to take risks, work as a team, set targets and strive to achieve their objectives whilst people-oriented individuals are preoccupied with building relationships with people or communities to accomplish their task. Based on the brief description on goal-oriented and people-oriented individuals with regard to the techniques of women executives and management in an organisation, the study results revealed that most of the women executives are goal-oriented. According to the results, women executives have the desire to assist, pay close attention to the productivity and efficiency in the organisations. Furthermore, there are other leadership traits identified in the current study among women executives in the organisations. These traits include motherly, motivation and communication.

Conceptual Framework on The Possible Outcome

In this section, the conceptual framework explains the relationship between the possible outcomes in the study. The possible outcome of the study is presented in accordance to the research objectives which are gender attribute, decision-making and supervision strategies, women's response to authority and assessment of women executive's performance.

Figure 1
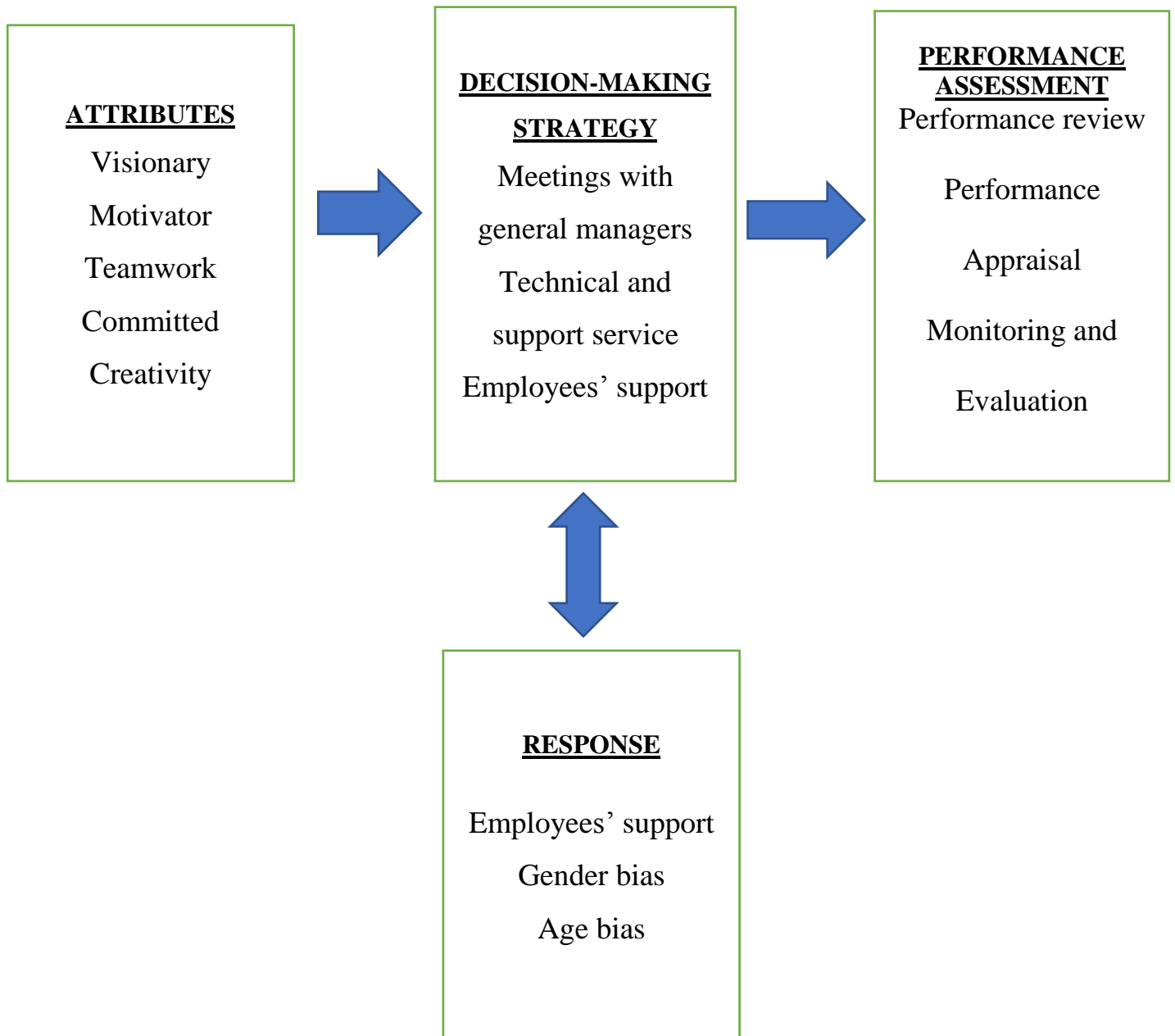
Source: Researcher's construct, 2019

From the above diagram, women in leadership play a crucial role in the growth and development of an organisation. Women in leadership are visionary, motivators, team players, creative and committed to their responsibilities. According to Kantengwa (2004), these attributions enable women in an executive position engage general managers, employees, technical and support services to improve the decision-making process in an organisation. The performance of women in an executive role is assessed using performance review, performance appraisal, and monitoring and evaluation. In relation to the responses, Sandberg (2013) stated that women in an executive position receive negative responses from their subordinates. These responses occur as a result of gender and age difference. Also, women in executive positions receive support from their employees.

2.8 Definition of Terms

2.8.1 Definition of Experiences

A practical contact with and observation of facts or events. Or an event or occurrence which leaves an impression on someone.

2.8.2 Leadership

Among scholars there is no agreement around the definition of leadership (CIPD, 2012) even two of the main elements of leadership are evident in the literature and often highlighted as crucial: the role of a leader and the process of leading people (CIPD, 2012; Manning and Robertson, 2011; Yukl ,2006). For instance, Yukl (2006:8) emphasises both aspects stating that '*leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree what needs to be done and how to do it and the process of facilitating individual and collective effort to accomplish shared objectives.*' On the other hand, Manning et al. (2011:8) stress the *'process of transformative change both individually*

27

and as a team'. However, the CIPD (2012:5) asserts *'it is almost impossible to capture [the definition]' because 'there is no agreement of knowledge and behaviours that leaders need to perform effectively'*.

2.9   Conclusion

From the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that the existence of gender-based bias against women at the workplace is vast, especially at higher corporate levels. Thus, organizations still prefer male candidates for senior executive positions over equally experienced women. Similarly, men have higher salaries than women at the same experience level, except for those with under-five years' experience. Also, women's job transfers lagged behind those of men over a period of five years, thus the literature established that even though men and women have the same qualifications in terms of education, career orientation, functional and hierarchical experience, men are preferred for key positions. This seem to suggest that women are not only disadvantaged but discriminated against. The theories considered for the study also identified that women in leadership at a point in time experience barriers that impede their chance of climbing the career ladder. Some women in most cases tend to withdraw from competing for opportunities at the workplace due to childbirth or family life that may hinder their performance in those areas. Generally, the reviewed literature revealed that when it comes to leadership experiences, women are underrepresented in higher positions. However, literature shows that in instances where women are given the chance to take up executive positions, they lead more flexibly, intuitively and holistically. Some studies also showed that women embrace superior leadership styles. Again, the review literature showed that collaborative, participative and instructional leadership style, transformational leadership style and androgynous leadership styles as leadership styles are usually adopted by women leaders. The reviewed literature established that women taking up executive position are increasing in recent times since most women are aspiring for higher education.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter gives detailed descriptions of the study's methodology which includes the organization/setting in which the study took place, the sample size and its characteristics, the sampling technique, the research design, and the materials employed in the study. The chapter as well, explores the data collection procedures in line with ethical guidelines and practical challenges and discusses how data collected was managed and analysed.

3.2 Ethical Consideration

Ethical consideration is important in a study. The standard or norm that helps to distinguish right and wrong in a study is described as ethics. The study faced issues on ethics like seeking of permission from management in the institutions, seeking the consents of the participants before including them in the study. Therefore, the researcher adhered to ethical principles and the first principle adhered was informed consent where the researcher explained the aim and objectives of the study to participants for a better understanding of the questions they will be asked.

Secondly, the principle of confidentiality was adhered to where participants were assured that the study was solely for research and educational purposes and information provided will be presented in a way that the respondents will not be identified. Also, permission was sought from the institutions under study before including them in the study

3.3. Population/Sample

The population for this study comprised women in managerial positions in the public sector across Greater Accra Region occupying senior and middle management positions. The public sector is the part of an economy that is controlled by the state and the non-public sector is the part of the economy controlled by private entities (International Labour Organisation, 2008)

The institutions from which the women were selected were Ministry of Finance, University of Ghana, Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana Police Service, Judicial Service and Ghana Health Service. The institutions were selected based on availability of participants therefore convenience sampling method was used in selecting the institutions for the study. Also, the study sampled twelve (12) women in managerial positions and eight (8) tenured staff using purposive sampling technique. In this case, the tenured staffs are employees who have worked with the institutions for two (2) to five (5) years. According to Teddlie and Yu (2007), purposive sampling techniques are mostly employed in the use of qualitative studies. Based on the aim of the study, purposive sampling technique was used in sampling the women from the selected institutions because it offered a crucial advantage over other sampling techniques. This is because it allowed the researcher to concentrate, identify and address only women in managerial positions and their subordinate staff who were the main concern of the study.

The selection criteria of inclusion were women in managerial position who had been on the job for at least two years for senior management positions and two to five years for tenured staff as at the time of the study. The basis of this selection criterion is that women in managerial positions with the required two (2) years of experience and tenured staff with the required two (2) to five (5) years of experience would be able to understand the organizational behaviour, ins and outs of their jobs since most government institutions promote staff between three to four years of occupying the position.

30

The sample frame for the study comprised of six (6) public organizations including: Ministry of Finance, University of Ghana, Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana Police Service, Judicial Service and Ghana Health Service. The six organizations were sampled because of the diversity in the services they provide from finance, education, food and drugs, security, law and health as well as availability of participants to engage in the study. Similarly, all the public organizations that were selected were from the Greater Accra Region. The Region was selected due to the high concentration of major organizational headquarters believed to engage highly skilled women in Ghana. Out of a population of 500 participants, twelve women in managerial position were selected as well as eight tenured staff. The selection was done at a saturated point of twelve and eight respectively. The saturated point was attained by asking questions. A total of twelve (12) women in the managerial positions of the reputable Ghanaian public sector organisations were interviewed for this study together with eight (8) tenured staff.

This sample size was settled on because, the study reached saturation at the point. Saturation refers the point in a qualitative study where additional participants provide similar responses to questions that have been provided by earlier participants (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

3.4. Study Area

This research was carried out in Accra the regional capital of Greater Accra region as well as national capital of Ghana. The Greater Accra region has a population of 4,010,054 of which comprise 1,938,225 male population and 2,071,829 female population according to the Ghana Statistical Service in 2010. Accra has the largest share of the regional population (46%) of the regional population due to in-migration from other regions such as Volta, Western, Eastern, Northern, Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Upper East and West and natural increase.

Many of the employed population is in the private informal sector of employment (73%) and some of these include financial and commercial sector, manufacturing of processed food, lumber, plywood, textiles, clothing and chemicals. Some of the major economic activities include trading, farming and fishing.

Accra has more males (10.1%) in its public sector than females (5.9%) and its corporate governance is done by administrative heads (Chief Directors, Directors), political heads (Minister) and management board (Board of Directors) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014)

3.5 Research Design

A qualitative methodology was employed to address the research questions in the study. According to Cassell and Symon (1994), qualitative design allows for an in-depth examination of participants' subjective perceptions or 'lived experience'. Thus the choice of qualitative design for the present study is to help achieve the study's aim uncovering the leadership experiences of women executives and how their performance is assessed by management and staff. This allowed participants to provide rich, in-depth descriptions of their experiences which is vital to understanding the phenomenon.

3.6. Data Collection Techniques

The researcher collected data using an interview guide. The interview sessions were recorded using a tape recorder which was later transcribed and analysed. The interview guide consisted of a semi- structured format giving a certain level of consistency for all respondents though flexible enough to allow participants to come up with relevant information that will lead to new areas. In

addition, the interview guide was used in asking questions that revealed interesting observations which the researcher manually recorded in a notebook.

The main source of data collection was the use of one-on one or individual interviews. Prior to the main study, a pilot study was conducted on two women executives to ascertain their response and validity of the questions as well as add or minus some relevant or irrelevant questions.

3.7. Data Analysis

The audio recorded interview was transcribed verbatim as a true representation of each respondent's thought. This is because transcription allows audio or visual data to be translated or converted into written text or form.

Using Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach, the interview data was analysed using thematic analysis. They highlight that data analysis is made up of three concurrent stages known as data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification stages. These stages are concurrent because they are intricately linked such that they are not overly independent of each other.

In the data collection stage, the data collected from the field was edited, categorized and organised. This was done by writing summaries, coding, teasing out themes, making partitions, writing memos among others which are inherent in the data (Punch, 2005). At the second stage which is the data display stage, the data was put in a compressed assembly of information to permit conclusions to be drawn from it. Based on synthesis of the information into themes and sub-themes tables were constructed to present the summarized data. The last stage was the conclusion drawing/ verification stage and they are the conclusions the researcher drew from the findings and subsequent interpretation of the findings from the data.

3.8. Thematic Tables

The thematic table used themes to identify patterns of meaning across a data set that provide an answer to the research question being addressed. Under each specific objective, the study came up with global themes based on the responses from the participants. These themes are represented by the quotes from the participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSES AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussions of the data collected. Each of the research study is addressed in a separate section. The study aimed at investigating the formal and informal gender attributes of leadership profiles in selected public sector organizations, investigating the decision-making and supervision strategies adopted by women executives and what in their view enables or impedes the successful implementation of these strategies and finding out how management and staff respond to the authority of female executives and how they assess their performance.

The recorded audio was transcribed, edited, categorized and organised. This was done by writing summaries, coding, teasing out themes, making partitions, writing memos among others which are inherent in the data. After that the data was put in a compressed assembly of information to permit conclusions to be drawn from it. Based on synthesis of the information into themes and sub-themes tables were constructed to present the summarized data. Finally, conclusions were drawn to reflect the specific objectives of the study.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

Participants were asked about their age, marital status, and educational background and positions held in their respective organizations.

Age

Majority 18 (90%) of the participants indicated that they were above 45 years whilst the remaining 2 (10%) fell between the ages of 35 and 40 years.

Education

The educational qualification of the women executives ranges from Doctorate being the highest of the qualification and Master's Degree being the least. Four (4) women executive respondents have obtained a Doctorate Degree with the remaining eight (8) women executives being Master's Degree holders. The subordinates range between a Diploma and a First Degree with five (5) out of the eight (8) tenured staff being First Degree holders and the rest three (3) Diploma.

Marital Status

On the marital status of respondents, 16 (80%) of the participants were married whilst 4 (20%) participants attested to being single.

Occupation

A total of two (2) of the participants were from the Ministry of Finance, two (2) from the University of Ghana, two (2) from the Food and Drugs Authority, 4(20%) from Ghana Health Service, four (4) from the Ghana Police Service and the remaining four (4) from the Judicial service.

4.3 Formal and Informal Leadership Attributes of Women Executives

Five major themes were identified in the interviews on decision making and supervision as described in Table 1. Each major theme is associated with a list of codes

Table 1: Formal and Informal Leadership Attributes of Women Executives

Theme	Sub-themes	Description
Formal And Informal Leadership Attributes Of Women Executives	Leaders should be Visionary and Motivated	A leader must be visionary, set targets, engage in training and development activities and motivate all employees under him or her
	Gender Attributes	Male Attributes include dominant position, and individualistic in leadership. Female Attributes include being motherly, use participatory approach to leadership and exhibit goal oriented leadership skills.
	Job Description and working procedure	Formal techniques by highlighting work duties in appointment letters
	Leadership styles	Exhibition of democratic, autocratic and the blend of democratic-autocratic leadership
	Characteristics of leadership	Democratic leadership styles include the encouragement of group members to share ideas and opinions, distribution of responsibility, empowering group members and aiding group decision making. The autocratic leadership style enables leaders retain all power, authority, and control. Democratic-Autocratic includes firmness, goal oriented, opinionated and team player In transformational leadership a leader is able to keep their ego in check, self-management, and ability to take the right risks and make difficult decisions.

Professional Experience

With respect to positions held in their respective organisations, 90% of the participants have held managerial positions for 5 years and beyond. Positions held include Director, Chief Executive Officer and Judge. All (20) of the participants have a plethora of experience which enabled them attain their positions. One of the participants accounted that *"I had to challenge the male executives*

in my organisation with my experiences in the field and educational background in getting that position. It was not easy though but I proved myself worthy of the position."[R1, 15-05-18]

Another participant stated that "*My professional experience worked the magic and was supported by my friends and employees in my organisation. They saw my potential as well as my age and appointed me to my current position. I contested with four males for that position even though it was not easy for me but I made it to the top.*" [R3, 17-05-18]

A participant also indicated that, "*The experience my male counterparts had could not march my experience. They were nowhere close to what I had achieved so the position was just given to me because I deserved it*". [R5, 15-05-18]

Leadership Techniques

Participants were asked to describe the formal leadership techniques mostly used in their respective organisations. Seven (7) of the women executive respondents noted the ability of a leader to be visionary. Other three (3) participants also said in order to achieve the set goals of an organisation, a leadership should set targets, agree on performance index, educate and train employees on their responsibilities and also ensure that employees work together as a team to successfully attain organisational objectives. The rest two (2) participants also indicated that, leaders should have the attitude of motivating employees, ensure the highest coordination among employees and also interact with employees to achieve desired goals.

One of the participants said, "*The supreme attribute of leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success can be achieved by the organisation. As a leader, I exhibit some leadership trait that draws the employees close to the development of the organisation. I have principles that I follow as a leader and these principles includes commitment, accountability, delegation and empowerment, creativity and innovation are important for an organisation that seeks to attain success.* [R4, 11-05-18]

One of the Chief Executive Officers said *"I have carried along with me three important packages and these are motivation, vision and goals. A leader without these values cannot manage an organisation. I motivate my employees towards the vision and goals in my organisation and it has really moved my organisation to greater heights."*[R6, 9-05-18]

Result from the current study showed that, executives and managers of the public sector must possess certain leadership qualities. These qualities, according to the findings, include vision embrace meetings and set up strategies to ensure that employees work together toward achieving the vision of the organisation. Other qualities discovered in the study results include effective operation by setting targets, agreeing on performance index, enlighten followers/ employees on what is expected of them in achieving the set targets or goals and, ensure coordination and development through training and teamwork.

Gender Attributes of Leadership

According to the data collected on the field men and women exhibited different forms of attributes which helped to corroborate the stereotypes assigned to male and female leaders in the introductory background of the study. According to eight (8) of the women executive respondents, men tend to be individualistic in their leadership unlike women who encourage team work and tend to look out for themselves by putting self-interest ahead of the collective interest

i.   Male Attributes

A respondent noted that *"what I have actually observed is that most of the time I see the men having a bit of a dominant position and behaviour because they see themselves as the head and the boss and it applies since maybe in their homes that is how people see them so equally they bring that into their workplaces"* [R13, 23-05-18]

Another participant noted that, *"my experience has been, men are more authoritarian a bit, controlling a bit" [R15, 24-05-18]*

A Participant also said *"men are more often individualistic in their approach. They prefer to do the work and take the glory rather than encouraging team work" [R19, 25-05-18]*

ii Female Attributes

Motherly

Women executives exhibit motherly traits in their leadership approach by showing keen interest in the wellbeing of their subordinates as well as building a cordial relationship with subordinates both at work and after work. This is illustrated in the quote below.

"………at times they come to the level of a mother when it comes to certain decision making they cross over they leave behind that stern strict leadership position and they try to descend into the role of the mother and try to put things at the right place at times" (R15,29-05-18)

Another respondent had this to say "*it's said that sometimes women are motherly … they take their time to understand the problems of their subordinates and offer assistance and sometimes outside their professional parlance. Sometimes you come to work and notice that your secretary is not as efficient as she used to so you have to probe and you at times get interesting information and you try in your own small way to assist in order to improve her productivity'' [R11, 28-05-18]*

Participatory and Team Oriented

According to the data women use a participatory approach to leadership as well as advocating for team work to achieve the set goals of their organisations *"we tend to be more participatory and more team oriented in our leadership as women* [R13, 25-05-18]. Participants were further asked to identify the types of leadership techniques used and observed in their respective

organisations. Sixteen (16) of the participants identified goal oriented leadership technique whilst other participants identified the unique way of organising employees. Other four (4) participants also indicated effective communication between management and employees. One of the women executive respondents said "*one of the techniques I mostly use is communication. Communication is an effective tool that brings my employees together to execute a project. After work, I send messages to my employees through the mail to discuss the work ahead. Also I make sure to interact with them with respect to family responsibilities and office work just to identify their flaws. And this makes me their favourite leader in the organisation.*" [R9, 23-05-18].

Another woman executive respondent explained that "*I am goal oriented and this helps me to orient my subordinates to the task at hand, create realistic expectations and prevent them from straying to tasks that have no link to the desired result of the organisation.*"[R10, 24-05-18].

This result is supported by a study conducted by Franzén (2005) stating that, women employ a collaborative and participative leadership style in their daily operations. Result from the study further indicated that, the organisation endorses the techniques used by the women executives on the basis of it being formal.

Job Description and working procedure

Participants were further asked whether these leadership techniques were endorsed in their respective organisations. Seven (7) out of the twelve (12) of the women executive participants responded that most of the techniques exhibited in the organisation were endorsed if only the techniques were formal. Five (5) participants revealed that their job descriptions were highlighted in the appointment letter hence any techniques different from their duties needs to be endorsed by the board of directors. One of the participants said "*I had to seek the consent from the board of directors even though I was the chief executive officer in my organisation to implement a new*

41

technique of working. Every organisation has departmental heads and it will be impolite to interfere in the affairs of others hence I need to seek their consent before introducing any technique." [R14, 14-05-18]

Another participant gave a typical example of her experience *"I once had the opportunity to implement a new technique that will enable employees interact with the managers of the organisation through a direct mail. I spoke with the board of directors and was endorsed but before it could be implemented, it needs to be accepted by the employees and departmental heads in the organisation. This showed how our communication channel was effective in the organisation." [R14, 07-05-18]*

Participants were asked whether the organisation had a manual on standard operating procedures that highlights the job responsibilities of a leader. Four of the women executive participants attested that their appointment letter had their specific job description while five (5) of these respondents had to attain the position before the job description is assigned to them.

Other three (3) women executives said they did not receive any job description in their appointment letters and so had to learn on the job from what other departmental heads were doing.

Job descriptions are the duties or responsibilities assigned to a leader or an employee in an organisation.

One of the respondents indicated, *"one of the descriptions I remember in my appointment letter was to manage and lead a team of employees, communicate the company's goal and deadlines and keep the management updated with the performance of the employees."* Another participant who shared her experience said *"even though all of us have specific jobs described in the appointment letters, there are other duties that were not formally spelled out to us in the appointment letters."* *[R17, 08-05-18]*

42

Leadership styles

Participants were asked to describe the leadership styles they adopt in their organisations and the findings indicate that out of the twelve (12) female executives, five (5) adopted the democratic style of leadership, three (2) use the autocratic style, two (2) adopt the transformational style whilst the remaining three (3) adopted a blend between autocratic and democratic style of leadership.

Democratic Style

Democratic leadership style gives the employees the opportunity to interact and share ideas in relation to the vision of the organisation. One of the participants said, "*I always exhibit democratic leadership style to address the issues confronting my employees and the performance of the*

organisation. So far I have witnessed certain changes in our performance as well as the employees." [R15, 02-05-18]

Consider also another participant's account *"Some decisions are taken by seeking the opinions of workers especially administrative decisions, its good when you sometimes try to test their mind to know their views concerning a particular matter. I use the democratic style of leadership" [R11, 01-05-18]*

Autocratic Style

Other participants preferred autocratic leadership in their organisation. One of the participants explained that *"autocratic leadership style gives me the upper hand to implement decisions that will increase the growth of the organisation. As the leader, I am supposed to oversee the management and growth of the organisation. When I fail, the board of directors will blame me for*

not implementing policies that will enhance productivity so therefore I adopt the autocratic leadership style to boost productivity" [R16, 22-05-18]

Another participant had this to say, *"I'm very firm and very straight forward. I do not take excuse my language, nonsense*" [R9, 16-05-18]

Democratic-Autocratic Style

Some women executives prefer a blend of the democratic and autocratic style of leadership *"I'm firm and I expect everyone to perform their duties as expected. Occasionally, you will seek opinions but not opinions to change your decisions but a general view on the decision you are going to make and usually, those ones are administrative concerning who should be manning certain position at a point in time you will require the opinion of the registrar to enquire who will be free at that point in time to carry out your instruction either than that l don't need their opinion to put somebody there. Democracy, yes, but it starts and ends somewhere because everybody has their duties" [R6, 17-05-18].*

Also*, "if you are too democratic, the team takes over and you lose control so I prefer to blend the two"*

Every leader has a leadership and implementation style in addition to providing direction to employees to work together to achieve a common organisational goal. There are three major types of leadership styles namely transformational, autocratic democratic leadership style and democratic-autocratic style. Transformational leadership style engages employees in decision-making and promotes the interest of the organisation. Autocratic leadership style talks about leaders who provide and implement decisions without the views of the employees. Supervision is the only option of achieving or accomplishing their objectives while transformational leadership style focuses on working to change the needs of the employees and redirect their thought.

44

Democratic-autocratic leadership style makes room for minimal team views and makes sole decision making the preserve of the woman executive. Based on this analysis, the current study results revealed that women executives covered in the study adopted the democratic leadership style as the major leadership style used in their respective organisations. According to the women executive respondents, they needed the cooperation of the employees to succeed in the task assigned to them. The result is supported by a study conducted by Eagly and Johannessen-Schmidt (2001) stating that, democratic and participative styles are more favourable to women than men.

Characteristics of Leadership

Democratic Characteristics

Leadership styles come with varied characteristics that portray a leader's personality and values. The characteristics associated with the democratic leadership style include the encouragement of group members to share ideas and opinions, distribution of responsibility, empowering group members and aiding group decision making. One of the women executive participants said "*if not for anything, a good leader must learn to encourage his or her employees towards achieving a common goal. The strength of an organisation is not only in the type of leadership but also the leadership trait exhibited among the employees. I always encourage and share ideas with my male and female workers*" [R10, 09-05-18]

Autocratic Characteristics

The autocratic leadership style enables leaders retain all power, authority, and control, and also reserve the right to make all decisions. One of the women executive participants who supports autocratic leadership style said *"I have used autocratic leadership style for three different organisations and have achieved different outcomes. I believe if you depend on the employee's*

45

decision or give them room to take certain action or decisions, they might end up committing certain mistake that will cost the organisation". [R17, 28-05-18]

Democratic- Autocratic Characteristics

Some leaders prefer to blend the democratic and autocratic characteristics because from their experience, subordinates usually take their superiors for granted if they exhibit too much democracy. Their characteristics include firmness, goal oriented, opinionated and team player *"a combination of democratic-autocratic leadership style. Per the nature of this job, you cannot be democratic fully because the job requires that you follow rules and also require that you are very decisive, disciplined, and I like team work but also firm, decisive, very forceful and unbending when I have to apply the rules". [R4, 03-05-18]*

Transformational Characteristics

In transformational leadership characteristics such as the ability of a leader to keep their ego in check, self-management, and ability to take the right risks, make difficult decisions, share collective organisational consciousness, inspire employees and motivate employees to develop their skills and abilities. One of the women executive participants said "*the only reason why a leader will adopt transformational leadership style is to see an effective transformation in the organisation that will yield positive outcome." [R20, 31-05-18]*

The study results discovered some of the characteristic associated with the leadership style of women executives in their organisations. Some of the characteristics identified include encouragement of group members to share ideas and opinions, distribution of responsibility, empowering group members and aiding group decision making. Under the autocratic leadership,

the study results identified retaining of all power, authority, and control, and also reserving the right to make all decisions by other lower level managers or subordinates.

Also under the transformational leadership style, the result discovered the ability of a leader to keep their ego in check, self-management, ability to take strategic risks, make difficult decisions, share collective organisational consciousness, inspire employees and help employees to develop their skills and abilities. According to Eagly& Johannessen-Schmidt (2001) these characteristics make transformational leadership communal, and identify women as nurturing, caring and people oriented, this leadership style is easier for female leaders to achieve. The current study revealed that these leadership styles help enhance the morale and performance of the employees. The current study also revealed that transformational leadership style has inspired change driven by a strong purpose, and has been able to create a culture of trust and innovation within the organization. Respondents of the study stated that autocratic leadership style has also fostered discipline and efficiency among employees.

4.4 Decision-making and Supervision

Ten global themes were identified in the interviews on decision making and supervision as described in Table 1. Each global theme is associated with a list of codes

Table 2: Decision-making and Supervision

theme	Sub-themes	Description
Decision-making and supervision	Decision-making process	Identification of decision, information gathering and writing of memo
	Supervision	Direct supervision of support and direct staff Delegation of supervisory role to departmental heads
	Technical Roles and Support Services	Brainstorming with team Use of technical roles and support services in decision making.
	Government and Managers	Board of Directors, Director Generals, Vice Chancellors, Inspector Generals, Chief Justice and Ministers help in facilitating the decisions that move their organisations toward success.
	Employee's Support	Supportive employees as well as employees who do not support women in managerial positions existed in the organisation.
	Performance Assessment	Quarterly and annual review of employee performance, external appraisals, monitoring and evaluation.
	Employee's Participation	Full participation of every employee.
	Role of the Superiors	Delegation of work duties to subordinates and taking up supervisory duties.
	Superiors Influence on the Growth of Organisation	Bosses put in a lot of effort to ensure that the achieves their set targets. Some are reluctant in taking strategic decisions. Others believe their decision does not have any bearing on the organization
	Barriers to Leadership Style and Decisions	Organisational Culture and human behavior hinders the productivity, efficiency, team work and the overall success of the organisation.

Decision-making Process

In the decision making process, most of the participants revealed that they first identify the decision, gather information so that the organisation can make a decision based on facts and data and then take the necessary action. Eight of the women executive participants said the decision making process in the organisation is done through memo. One of the participants indicated, *"we use the memo process where an officer requiring a decision puts up a memo and explain why she wants a decision, directive or guidance depending on the type of decision which has to be taken and if it comes to me I will take a decision, if its beyond me I will forward it to either the chief director or the minister. Another way is that, it starts from a meeting or agenda setting issues and we discuss it in a weekly or monthly meeting that is where proposals are made"* Other participants said, *"we are the decision makers and in every aspect of our work, we employ our discretionary powers" [R4, 03-05-18]*

Participants were asked to judge the success at shaping the decisions of their various organisations, majority of the participants said they were very effective when it comes to shaping the decision of the organisation. Eight (8) of the participants indicated that it has not been easy but a little cooperation from the employees, decision making was made easy and successful. One of the participants said "*the structure of the organisation made it very difficult to make decisions. The decision has to pass through a number of channels before it becomes applicable in the organisation and it has been a challenge to us as an organisation. Sometimes, it takes a couple of days before it gets to our office especially when the organisation is a large one.". [R20, 31-05-18]* Another participant gave a different insight pertaining to the theme. She said "*my organisation has been effective when it comes to decision-making because of its number of staff. Decision pertaining*

to the organisation takes a couple of days and it enhances the productivity of the organisation." [R15, 02-05-18]

Supervision

Ten (10) women executive respondents stated that supervision in most public sector organisations adopted two styles which is categorised into direct supervision of support and direct staff and delegation of supervisory role to departmental heads who directly supervise their subordinates *"We are the administrative heads as well as run the courts, you also delegate administrative duties to the registrar as you directly supervise it, we take our administrative duties seriously by directly supervising decisions and administrative duties of the registrar to our core duty of dispensing justice".[R1, 01-05-18]*

Technical Roles and Support Services

Participants were asked to identify the actions they take to shape the decisions of their organization and nine (9) of the women executives said because they know what to do and the target, they are able to manage the resources and the people by making employees think outside the box in order to ensure that decisions in the organisation are effectively executed. Three (3) of the women executive participants also indicated that, they use technical roles and support services at meetings to shape the decision of the organisation. One of the participants said *"we sometimes observe the technical and support services from the organisation to implement our decisions that arise in the organisation. For instance, certain decisions in the organisation do not need any technical assistance but resources to make it applicable."* (*R12, 26-06-18*)

Government and Managers

All twelve (12) of the women executives revealed that the Board of Directors, Director Generals, Vice Chancellors, Inspector Generals, Chief Justice and Ministers also helped in facilitating the decisions that move their organisations toward success. "*most of the board of directors are government officials and it is impolite to take a decision without their consent so therefore, it is appropriate to engage them in the decision process or allow them use their veto power to win more contracts for the organisation.*" [R4, 04-05-18]

Employee's Support

Subordinates or employees who believe and trust in the ability of their women executive to make sound decisions offer unflinching support for decisions made by their leader pertaining to the organisation. Subordinates who worked closely with the women executives before her appointment into an executive position trust her management decisions as compared to new staff who have not worked with the women executives for a longer period. Other forms of support provided by subordinates include administrative support, informal support in terms of extracurricular and personal activities or errands.

Five (5) of the women executives interviewed knew the people who would support their agenda during a meeting *"there are some who believe in you and trust your judgement, others don't and I prepare for that all the time".* However, four (4) of the women executives indicated that they knew those individuals who oppose their decisions during meetings; the remaining three (3) women executives said it was difficult to deduce who would or would not oppose their decisions during a gathering. One of the participants said *"I have been part of the board for three years now*

51

and any decision I brought on board, I always have employees who supported me without my knowledge. Can you imagine that even now, I still cannot identify those people (R5,04-05-18)?

Another participant said *"I do not need anybody at a staff meeting to support my agenda, if you like what I've said take it and if not leave it. Nobody really says anything; they just try to explain whatever complaint that has been lodged at the meeting but for hostility or disagreement, no"* *(R16, 22-05-18)*

Performance Assessment

Women executives are assessed on a quarterly or annual basis by the board of directors, colleagues, through monitoring and evaluation, performance appraisal forms coupled with interviews. The aim of this performance appraisal is to ensure that women executives perform well to achieve organisational results. The outcome is that the organization is able to identify competency gaps and areas of improvement in performance, training needs of the women executives and feedback given on their performance. A higher score coupled with remarkable comments make the woman executive legible for promotion when they have served their tenure of office which sometimes takes between four to six years.

Employee's Participation

Participants were further asked to mention the factors that influence the successful implementation of their leadership decisions. All of the women executives said they ensure that all decisions and initiatives are strictly followed by employees and that they partake in all activities that they entrust to their subordinates. One of the participants said *"leadership must exhibit some example so therefore; I partake in every decision implemented by the organisation. If we are supposed to*

52

report to work at 8am... even me the leader must be at work at 8 am and this leadership trait boost

the morale of the employees to follow the decision." [R16, 22-05-18]

Role of the Superiors

The tenured staff were asked to describe the effectiveness of the instructions of their respective superiors, five (5) of the tenured staff said their superiors normally delegate works that are not too demanding to them. The other three (3) staff also intimated that their supervisors always follow up on the work assigned to them in order to ensure it is effectively executed. One participant said "*I only get support from my superior upon request and even with that it takes hours before she attends to me*."

Superiors Influence on the Growth of Organisation

The staff were asked to describe how the decisions of their superiors influence the growth of the organisation, the tenured staff said their bosses put in a lot of effort to ensure that the organisation achieve their set targets. One of the staff said "*my boss feels reluctant to take strategic decisions which affect the growth of the organisation*" Considering another staff she said, "*the decision of my superior does not have any negative repercussion on the growth of the organization*"

Barriers to Leadership Style and Decisions

The woman executive from the financial sector stated that leadership styles and decision making strategies adopted by women executives face certain barriers which hinder productivity. Likewise, another woman executive from the educational sector stated that the leadership styles and decision making strategies adopted by women executives face barriers which hinders efficiency whiles

53

participants from food and drugs, security, law and health stated that the leadership styles and decision making strategies adopted by women executives face barriers which hinders teamwork and the overall success of the organisation. When employees are used to doing things in a certain way, it becomes difficult if not herculean for them to adjust to new and modern trends. "*when an organisation is used to a particular culture, it is difficult to lead change in such an organisation*". *[R16, 22-05-18]*

Another outlined barrier hindering the implementation of leadership decisions and strategies was human behaviour which enshrines poor coordination among team, poor team work and resistance to change. These challenges have influenced the ability of leaders to achieve negative outcomes in their organisations. One of the participants denoted, "*It is the vision of every leader to uplift the image of an organisation however, these challenges has always affected our productivity each and every year.*" *[R10, 06-05-18]*

Other women executives said *"Stubborn human behaviour, people who want to still stay in their old ways. The public sector is steeped in old ways, copy and paste and nobody wants to change so the difficulty you will face is when you are trying to implement changes to suit your style of management and you know it's difficult for the people to want to change from their old ways to new ways of doing things, so consistently you will have to be calling the same person on the very thing the person is doing" [R 3,05-05-18]*.

According to one of the participants, in using the democratic style, subordinates tend to take you for granted; *"if you give them an inch they tend to take a whole yard"*. The autocratic style most of the time also causes disaffection for the female executive and creates fear among the subordinates; *"because you are firm, sometimes your own people do not like you, they think that you are something else but under normal circumstance where l sit if you like me or do not like me it won't affect me because that is my job"*.

Another participant also noted that, *"Sometimes you summon your subordinates and you realise they are literally shaking out of fear even though you just wanted clarification on some work done". [R 6, 04-05-18]*

In assessing the performance of women executives by management and tenured staff, the women executive respondents revealed that management resort to periodic performance reviews, quarterly and yearly performance appraisals with a team of internal and external evaluators as well as monthly monitoring and evaluation of work done. These approaches, according to the respondents, is to ensure that the women executives are delivering on their mandate as expected to move their organisations forward and that their output exceeds the set target of the organisation. According to the study, tenured staff assessed women executives as being efficient, effective and knowledgeable in discharging their professional duties but wish they can be more patient and tolerant with their subordinates. Tenured staff also revealed that the bureaucracy in the public sector delays decision making and implementation of certain decisions and policies. Despite the efforts, there are barriers that hinder the effective implementation of policies and decisions in these organisations. These barriers, according to the study results, include organisational culture, inflexible human behaviour, poor coordination among team, poor team work and strong resistance to change.

4.5 Response to Women Executive's Authority

Three global themes were identified in the interviews on decision making and supervision as described in Table 3. Each global theme is associated with a list of codes

Table 3: Response to Women Executive's Authority

Theme	Sub-themes	Description
Response to women Executive's Authority	Senior managers Reaction to Leadership	Some line managers are supportive of women leadership whiles others are not as well as negative reactions from colleagues. There is information dissemination from senior managers to the entire organisation. Existence of gender and age bias in the organisation.
	Subordinate's Reaction to leadership	Subordinates support women in leadership even though a few show signs of rebellion.

Participants were asked to express their view on how other senior women in the organisation react to their leadership, seven (7) of the women executives said the line managers are supportive of their leadership. Three (3) respondents said some managers criticize them in their absence and the remaining two women executives indicated that they do not have any issue with the leadership style of their colleagues but most of them were not in support of their style of leadership. One of the participants said "*I have been a victim to negative reactions from my fellow colleagues in my office. When they see around, they pretend to follow my orders or instructions then later meet up in the washroom to gossip about my position.*" [R6, 04-05-18]

Other participants attested to the fact that "*In general, men don't appreciate the efforts of women playing the same role with them. I give them some instruction and they in turn refer the instruction to a junior officer. Others practice such behaviour right in my presence.*" [R16, 22-05-18]

Also. "*I entered the service with some of the current directors right after school but have been promoted higher than them and they still treat me like their colleague and not their boss*" (R12 27-06-18)

56

Subordinate's Response

According to the women executive respondents, their subordinates support their leadership and even though their subordinates do not openly rebel, they have their way of exhibiting their displeasure. One of the participants in a cheerful voice said *"I was received warmly when I resumed work as a superior in my organisation. The employees worked hand in hand with me towards achieving the company's goal."* Another participant said *"In all my three years stay in my organisation, the employees proved to me that they were willing to work with any female executive that comes in. I was impressed with their actions.*"

Employee Followed Instructions

Participants were asked to explain how the senior women/men follow their instructions. The women executives indicated that the senior women ensure that the decisions taken are implemented by the entire employees and the senior management irrespective of the nature and outcome it holds. The women executives also indicated that senior men in the organisation support their instruction. One of the participants said *"In my organisation, the entire leaders or managers follow any instructions I propose. Because it is for the good of the entire organisation, managers follow the instructions".* Though subordinates comply with their instructions and also ensure that their colleagues adhere to the instructions of the women executives, there always exist some subordinates who are intolerant and do not fully comply with instructions but protect and support each other in open arguments in the organisation.

57

Biases Against Women Executives

Participants were further asked if management and staff treat them differently from the way they treat male executives. The biases have been categorised into two; gender and age bias

Gender Bias

Gender bias behaviours are attitudes and behaviours exhibited by colleagues against the women executives which are not done to her male counterparts. According to four (4) of the respondents, their position has been domesticated, *"normally, you'll hear the female subordinates calling me auntie Eva, they find it difficult referring to me as director. I have never heard them call any of the male directors uncle". [R13, 12-05-18]*

Age Bias

Three (3) of the female executives intimated that, their subordinates exhibited certain unlikely attitudes towards them in view of the fact that they appear younger than some of their subordinates. One noted that, *"I am young so I turn to come off as snobbish and it has a cascading effect on the decisions or how l run things because people feel that if it's not some things like I would have been their first daughter"*. *[R10, 08-05-18]* Another respondent has this to say, "*I am older so they see me like lm my own madam so if l say something, in their mind I'm older than them so they see wisdom in my decisions and comments and that is the problem we have in our public sector. In the Ghanaian society when you are younger and you point to someone that what you are doing is wrong, they see it as a sign of disrespect" [R14, 13-05-18]*

Also, *"It's about people feeling that they can give birth to you and its societal values that compromise people. When you are older than your subordinates and you speak, they are willing to listen to you without rethought as opposed to I who is younger and you ask them or say what*

they are doing the response is she doesn't respect not because they have been disrespected but because they are biased by the fact that I am younger. It's not because what you are asking them is wrong or that they are correct but just the fact that you are young and this is my personal experience. It's not like they disrespect me in my face, they do it and you will hear those comments they make in their offices" [R13, 04-05-18]

The study results revealed that the women executives developed cordial relationships with management. This approach, according to the study results, paved way for employees to respond to their authority and support any instruction given them. There are others who do not support the decisions and instructions given by women executives but are unable to speak up but rather murmur and engage in gossip with other colleagues because of the respect and reverence for the women executives. However, there are other employees who secretly criticise the leadership of women executives. The result also showed that, although female executives head the organisations, they still engage other line managers and heed their advice since the women executives expect the line managers to also comply with their instructions. Thus, seniour women subordinates, seniour male subordinates as well as male and female subordinates respond well to authority in spite of any prejudice, stereotype or sentiments for or against women executives.

Subordinate Response to Female Leadership

One of the themes discovered in the study results was subordinate support and response. The study also revealed that, subordinates support the authority of female leadership however there are some subordinates who do not openly rebel but have diverse ways of responding to authority. The result shows that, senior women subordinates ensure that decisions taken in the organisation are

implemented with the support of the entire employees and the seniour management. The study also revealed that, male executives responded very well to instructions of female executives. Likewise, subordinates also comply with the instructions of female executives and also ensure that their colleagues adhere to their instructions.

Biases against Women Executives

The study revealed that women executives encounter some forms of biases and discriminations in their respective organisations. The biases faced include gender and age bias. The findings of this study indicated that, the position of the women executives have been domesticated therefore their subordinates refer to them as auntie instead of director even though they refer to the male executives as directors and not uncle. Also, some of the entitlements due them take a longer time to be redeemed or at times not given at all even though their male counterparts accessed theirs. The study also revealed age biases against women executives. Subordinates are willing to listen to older female executives as compared to younger female executives and any effort of correction and reprimanding is misconstrued as disrespect due to societal values and the women executives viewed in the context of older male and female subordinates as offspring.

Organisation's Performance

Participants were asked to identify who assesses the performance in the organisation, most of the participants said Director and the counseling chair. Other participants said the Chief Director. One of the participants said "*the judicial counsel or sometimes, external lawyers assesses the performance in my organisation* "

Assessing Leaders' Performance

In assessing the performance of women executives, views and suggestions are gathered from line managers and performance reviews. One participant said "I was *assessed through an employee satisfaction survey, self-assessment or appraisals and the reaction from customers*."

According to the study five (5) tenured staff believes their women executives merit their current positions though three (3) respondents do not share similar sentiments. One of the participants said "*I had the chance to occupy my position in the organisation based on my experience and relationship I have with my co-workers. Now we work together as a team irrespective of the gender differences.*" Another participant said *"I am lucky to have these employees as my co-workers because they have the desire to work hand in hand with any gender appointed to head the department."*

Although a study by Heiskanen (2013), showed that, female leaders are expected to act differently from men and be more willing to change their behaviour according to other people's expectations and still be themselves, result from the current study revealed that, female executives in the organisation merit their current position and their role help the organisation achieve its objectives. The performance of women executives is assessed by management through performance reviews, yearly appraisals where they are scored and feedback given on the assessment. Subordinates equally assess their performance via verbal reportage with external coordinators or assessors.

Proximity and Work Family Duties

Participants were further asked if the leaders encounter any challenges in the organisation and six (6) of the staff said proximity to their work and family responsibilities were factors hindering their

61

productivity in the organisation whiles other two (2) participants said their superiors do not report to work on time and frequently.

4.6 Conclusion

To Identify Formal and Informal Gender Attributes of Leadership Profiles in Selected Public Sector Organisations

The chapter revealed that the formal and informal attributes of leadership exhibited by women executives denotes that leaders should be visionary and motivated. Women executives use several techniques in their leadership which ensured that employees work together toward the vision of the organisation. Also women executive in the organisation ensured effective operation by setting targets, agreeing on performance indicators, enlighten followers of what is required of them, ensure coordination and development through training and teamwork. Also the executive women in the organisation used four leadership styles which include autocratic, democratic, democratic-autocratic and transformational leadership style in their management. The result is supported by a study conducted by Eagly and Johannessen-Schmidt (2001) stating that, democratic and participative styles are more favourable to women than men. The study however concludes that, the leadership styles women executives adopted in the institutions have helped enhance the morale and performance of the employees in the organisation. According to Eagly& Johannessen-Schmidt (2001) these characteristics make transformational leadership communal, and identify women as nurturing, caring and people oriented, this leadership style is easier for female leaders to achieve.

To Investigate Decision-making and Supervision Strategies Adopted by Women Executives

The chapter further revealed that on the decision-making and supervision strategies that enable the successful implementation of the strategies of women executives. The study identified some of these decisions as highlighting concerns during meeting to help shape the decision of the organisation. Likewise, the organisation has technical roles and support services that facilitate the successful implementation of the strategies. This result is supported by a study conducted by Franzén (2005) stating that, women employ collaborative and participative leadership style in their daily operations. The study however concludes that, women executives are effective at shaping the decisions of the organisations and also help in facilitating the decisions that move the organisation towards success. The study also identified organisational culture, bureaucracy, stubborn human behaviour, poor coordination among team, poor team work and resistance to change as barriers to the successful implementation of strategies in the organisations.

To Examine How Management and Staff Respond and Assess the Authority of Female Executives and how they Assess their Performance

Finally, the chapter revealed that, management and staff responds well to the authority of female executives in the organisation and also ensures that their colleagues also adhere to the instructions of the women executives. The study further concludes that, organisation, staff and other mangers exhibit some forms of gender and age bias towards women executives. The study also concludes that the performance of female executives is assessed by management, external assessors or coordinators and subordinates through performance reviews, appraisals, monitoring and evaluation. Although a study by Heiskanen (2013), showed that, female leaders are expected to act differently from men and be more willing to change their behaviour according to other people's expectations and still be themselves, result from the current study revealed that, female executives

in the organisation merit their current position and their role help the organisation achieve its objectives. The performance of women executives is assessed by management through performance reviews, yearly appraisals where they are scored and feedback given on the assessment. Subordinates equally assess their performance via verbal reportage with external coordinators or assessors.

. This is evident in the study as the result showed that, male executives and the subordinates in the organisation comply with the instruction of senior women

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Chapter introduction

This section presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of the study. The summary of the study is first presented and it covers the overview of the study and key findings. The conclusion and recommendations are subsequently presented.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Overview of the study

The study sought to investigate the leadership experiences of women executives in selected public sector organisations in Ghana. To effectively address the objective, the study adopted three specific objectives which are; study formal and informal gender attributes of leadership profile in selected public sector organisations, to investigate decision-making and supervision strategies adopted by women executives and what in their view enables or impedes the successful implementation of these strategies and finally, to find out how management and staff respond to the authority of female executives and how they assess their performance. The study adopted a qualitative approach to gather data from twenty (20) participants in six (6) institutions (Ministry of Finance, University of Ghana, Food and Drugs Authority, Ghana Police Service, Judicial Service and Ghana Health Service). Purposive sampling technique was used to select twelve (12) women executives or senior management and eight (8) tenured staff from the various institutions. The study made use of a semi structured interview guide for the data collection. The interview guide consisted of

65

questions which covered all the specific objectives. The data gathered from the interview were transcribed and discussed accordingly.

5.2.2 Summary of key findings

Findings of the study showed that, women executives use several techniques in their leadership. These techniques include visionary initiatives, promotion of inclusive meetings and use of strategies to ensure that employees work together toward the vision of the organisation. Majority of the participants identified some of the attributes of leadership profiles in their organisation as understanding the behaviours of employees, ensuring the highest coordination among employees and also interacting with employees to achieve a desired goal. Result from the current study also highlighted attributes such as integrity, commitment, accountability, delegation and empowerment, creativity and innovation as important leadership attributes for organisational success. The study differentiated male leadership attributes from female attributes. The male attributes are dominant position and behaviour, individualistic, authoritarian and controlling. Female leadership attributes identified are motherly, participatory and team oriented. The result of the study identified democratic leadership style, autocratic leadership style, democratic-autocratic and transformational leadership style as the major leadership styles used among women executives in public sector organisations.

The findings of the study also revealed that the decision making strategies adopted by women executives. These include identification of the decision, information gathering so that the organisation can make a decision based on facts and data and then take the necessary action. Pertaining barriers faced by women executives in the implementation of leadership decisions and strategies, the study revealed the barriers such as organisational culture, stubborn human behaviour, bureaucracy, poor coordination among team, poor team work and resistance to change.

The findings from the study showed that, management support did not have any issue with the leadership of the female executives and supported their leadership role in the organisation. The study also revealed that, male executives respond very well to instructions of senior women. Likewise, subordinates also comply with the instruction of senior women and also ensure that their colleagues also adhere to their instructions. The findings of the study finally revealed that, female executives in the organisation performed good leadership roles and their role helps the organisation to achieve its goal and aim for greater heights.

5.3 Conclusions of the study

Based on the findings in this study, it can be concluded that the formal and informal attributes of leadership exhibited by women executives denotes that leaders should be visionary and motivated. Women executives use several techniques in their leadership which ensured that employees work together toward the vision of the organisation. Also women executive in the organisation ensured effective operation by setting targets, agreeing on performance indicators, enlighten followers of what is required of them, ensure coordination and development through training and teamwork. Also the executive women in the organisation used four leadership styles which include autocratic, democratic, democratic-autocratic and transformational leadership style in their management. The study however concludes that, the leadership styles women executives adopted in the institutions have helped enhance the morale and performance of the employees in the organisation.

The study further concludes, on the decision-making and supervision strategies that enable the successful implementation of the strategies of women executives. The study identified some of these decisions as highlighting concerns during meeting to help shape the decision of the organisation. Likewise, the organisation has technical roles and support services that facilitate the successful implementation of the strategies. The study however concludes that, women executives

67

are very effective at shaping the decisions of the organisations and also help in facilitating the decisions that move the organisation towards success. The study also identified organisational culture, bureaucracy, stubborn human behaviour, poor coordination among team, poor team work and resistance to change as barriers to the successful implementation of strategies in the organisation.

Finally, the study concludes that, management and staff respond very well to the authority of female executives in the organisation. This is evident in the study as the result showed that, male executives and the subordinates in the organisation comply with the instruction of senior women and also ensure that their colleagues also adhere to the instructions of the women executives. The study further concludes that, organisation, staff and other mangers exhibit some forms of gender and age bias towards women executives. The study finally concludes that the performances of female executives are assessed by management, external assessors or coordinators and subordinates through performance reviews, appraisals, monitoring and evaluation.

5.4   Recommendation

 The results of the study identified inflexible human behaviour as one of the barriers to the successful implementation of leadership strategies by women in the organisation. The study recommends that, various employees at organisations should be educated on the benefits associated with organisational change so as to mitigate this barrier and ensure the successful implementation of strategies to enhance performance.

The study also revealed that some subordinates do not fully comply with the leadership and authority of female executive in the organisation because of prejudice, stereotype or sentiments against women executives. The study recommends that, the public organisations should take strict action such as transfers, demotion and suspension to subordinates who do not comply with the authority and instruction of women executives in the organisation.

It is recommended also that case studies on female and male leadership styles should be discussed in management training programmes to make both parties better prepared to handle gender diversity in executive leadership.

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APPENDIX A:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WOMEN EXECUTIVES

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL POLICY STUDIES

TITLE OF STUDY: LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN EXECUTIVES IN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANISATIONS IN GHANA

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WOMEN EXECUTIVES

CONFIDENTIALITY CLAUSE:

REGION: GREATER ACCRA   DISTRICT:

LOCALITY:

RESPONDENT'S ORGANISATION

DATE:

INTERVIEWER:

Section A: Demographic

a. SEX:

AGE (COMPLETE YEARS

RELIGION

MARITAL STATUS

ETHNICITY

b. COMPLETED EDUCATION:

c. CURRENT PLACE OF WORK

DEPARTMENT

OFFICAL GRADE

D. CURRENT POSITION

E. NUMBER OF YEARS IN POSITION

PREVIOUS POSITION IN THIS

ORGANISATION IMMEDIATE PAST

EMPLOYMENT

LAST POSITION HELD IN PAST EMPLOYMENT

YEARS SPENT IN PAST EMPLOYMENT

F. NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Section B:

FORMAL AND INFORMAL GENDER ATTRIBUTES OF LEADERSHIP PROFILE

1. Describe the formal techniques you think men and women should use in leadership
2. Describe differences you have observed in the formal techniques men and women use in leadership
3. How do people acquire the formal leadership techniques you describe?
4. how are these formal techniques endorsed by the organisation?
5. Does your organisation have a manual on standard operating procedures that spells out the job description of a leader?

DESCRIBE THE LEADERSHIP STYLES THAT OTHER LEADERS HAVE USED IN YOUR ORGANISATION

6. What leadership style do you adopt in this organization?
7. What are the main characteristics OF this leadership style?
8. What advantages and disadvantages has it presented?
9. Have you borrowed any of the strategies for leadership used by previous heads of your organisation? explain

Section C:

DECISION MAKING AND SUPERVISION STRATEGIES

10. What are the processes by which organizational decisions are made in your workplace?
11. What actions do you personally take to shape the decisions of your organisation?
12. How do you judge your success at shaping the decisions of your organisation?
13. Besides yourself who else facilitates the decisions that move your organisation forward (ranks not names)?
14. Who normally sit on the fence when decisions are being made (ranks not names)

15. What kinds of colleagues provide you with constructive criticisms?

16. What kinds of colleagues tend to frustrate your efforts to steer decisions and how do they frustrate?

17. Before you sit in meetings to take decisions can you anticipate who will support your agenda and how do you know?

18. Before you sit in meetings do you know who will oppose your agenda and how do you know?

19. Explain your sources of intelligence information from within your organisation on what people say about your leadership and personality

20. What formal discretionary powers do you have? Explain

21. what do you understand by informal leadership strategy?

22. describe your informal leadership strategy

23. when do you use informal leadership tactics?

24. How you exercise your discretionary powers

25. describe the attitudes of your colleagues when you use your discretionary powers

26. How do you supervise your subordinates in the discharge of their duties?

27. What enables the successful implementation of your leadership decisions?

28. What barriers do you face in trying to implement leadership decisions and strategies?

c: Section D

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF RESPONSE TO THE AUTHORITY OF FEMALE EXECUTIVES AND HOW THEY ASSESS THEIR PERFORMANCE

29. How do other senior women in your organisation react to your leadership?

30. Explain how other senior women support you or do not support you

31. Explain how other senior women follow your instructions or do not take your instructions

32. How do women subordinates react to your leadership?

33. Explain how the women subordinates support you or do not support you

34. Explain how the women subordinates follow your instructions or do not take your instructions

35. How do other senior men react to your leadership?

36. Explain how other senior men support you or do not support you

37. Explain how other senior men follow your instructions or do not take your instructions

38. How do men subordinates react to your leadership?

39. Explain how men subordinates support you or do not support you

40. Explain how men subordinates follow your instructions or do not take your instructions

41. Do management and staff treat you differently from the way they treat male executives

42. What aspects of the attitude of management and staff towards you would you describe as gender biased and why?

43. Who assesses your performance in your organisation?

44. How does your assessor assess your performance as a leader?

APPENDIX B:

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TENURED STAFF

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF RESPONSE TO THE AUTHORITY OF
FEMALE EXECUTIVES AND HOW THEY ASSESS THEIR PERFORMANCE

1. How effective are her instructions on the work to be done or does she leave you to handle assigned tasks by yourself with or without supervision?
2. How does her decision influence the growth of the organization?
3. In your view do you think some of her decisions have negative repercussions on the organization?
4. In your view, do you think she merits the leadership position
5. Yes, she rose through the ranks to become director
6. What are the challenges you face in working with her?
7. How do you react or feel with her being your leader?
8. How will you assess her abilities as a leader?
9. How do you appraise her work and human relations?
10. How do you react to her leadership?
11. Explain how you support or do not support her?
12. Explain how do you follow her instructions?
13. How do other senior men react to your leadership?
14. How do men subordinates react to her leadership?
15. Do you treat her differently from the way you treat other male executives?
16. Are there attitudes towards her that you would describe as gender biased and why?