

Is there such thing as feminine leadership?

Being a leader and not a man in the hospitality industry

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Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine and discuss whether women executives in the hospitality industry in Hong Kong adopt a feminine, masculine or gender-neutral approach to leadership.

Design: This study focuses on women with positional power in senior level leadership roles within the hospitality and tourism industry in Hong Kong. A qualitative approach was taken to capture the multiple dimensions of these female executive's leadership orientations. The participants included 24 women executives.

Findings: Participants' representations show that women have a multitude of leadership styles that operate on three continua. Not all women executives display leadership orientations that adhere to their indigenous culture values. Individual differences or differences related to the organizational culture are still relevant.

Research limitations: A low number of women in leadership positions in Hong Kong limited the selection process of participants. There might be a selection bias based on that the participants volunteered to participate in the research study, and some declined. Findings are based on participants' memory to reflect on their leadership styles.

Originality: Due to the traditional and conventional definitions of leadership, women leaders might feel that they should behave in a masculine way to be taken seriously as a leader. There is a need to understand whether women executives today manage to defeat these stereotypes and comfortably display a feminine approach to leadership. A culture that values and leverages feminine approaches in addition to masculine approaches is likely to have higher engagement and retention of women.

Keywords: women, leadership, hospitality, feminine, masculine, gender-neutral.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine and discuss whether women executives in the hospitality industry in Hong Kong adopt a feminine, masculine or gender-neutral approach to leadership. Northouse (2004, p. 3) defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” Executive leadership is often represented and dominated by corporate masculinity, where women are commonly depicted as the “other” (Collinson and Hearn, 2001; Marshall, 1995; Maier, 1999). Lack of fit model developed by Heilman (1983, 2001) and role congruity theory developed by Eagly and Karau (2002) provide explanation to the bias toward women leaders. However, having women leaders and different leadership styles are important for organizations. For instance, Clerkin (2017) studied 745 executives, examining why companies should want women. She reported that having more women in an organization is associated with more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication, more meaningful work and decreased burnout. Hoogendoorn, Oosterbeek, and Van Praag (2013), along with Badal (2014), found that gender-diverse teams and business units produce higher revenues compared to less diverse business units. These studies show that having women in leadership positions does more than improve the bottom line.

Feminine and masculine leadership are controversial terms and have been discussed and criticized extensively in the literature in different contexts (Eagly and Carli, 2003). Feminine leadership refers to utilizing female values while making decisions in a leadership position. Female values are characterized by “interdependence, cooperation, receptivity, merging, acceptance, awareness of patterns, wholes and contexts, emotional tone, personalistic perception, being, intuition, and synthesizing” (Marshall 1993, p. 124). The feminine leadership style is aligned with transformational leadership (Eagly et al., 2003). Masculine leadership seems to be

at the forefront, with men dominating most senior level positions in almost every country in every industry around the world (Budworth and Mann, 2010). Kanter (1977, p. 22) defined masculine values as the traits that are assumed to belong to some men and are necessary for effective management: “a toughminded approach to problems; analytic abilities to abstract and plan; a capacity to set aside personal, emotional considerations in the interests of task accomplishment; and a cognitive superiority in problem-solving and decision-making.” Stereotypically masculine traits are identical to a society’s stereotypical beliefs about proper leadership, whereas stereotypically feminine traits are not (Eagly, 2007; Ryan, Haslam, Morgenroth, Rink, Stoker, & Peters, 2016). Gender-neutral leadership, however, takes the gender out of the definition of leadership (Bartol and Martin, 1986), and it largely excludes sex-related differences in leadership (Eagly and Johnson, 1990; Eagly et al., 2003; Ely and Rhode, 2010).

Women executives in hospitality have identified stereotypes as an important barrier to women’s advancement (Boone, Veller, Nikolaeva, Keith, Kefgen, and Houran, 2013). Women in leadership positions are frequently judged negatively by both genders (Jonsen, Maznevski, and Schneider, 2010). The paradox is that if they display feminine traits, they are often considered too nice and thus not capable. If they display more masculine traits, they are considered too harsh (Catalyst, 2007a; Jonsen et al., 2010). Due to the traditional, conventional definitions of leadership, women leaders might feel that they should behave in a masculine way to be regarded as a proper leader by their peers and subordinates. There is a need to understand whether executive women today manage to defeat these stereotypes and can comfortably display a feminine approach to leadership. Employees are more engaged if they feel included, valued and supported by their organizations (Saks, 2006). If women executives can comfortably display their leadership styles and feel supported by their organizations, they will be more engaged with

their work. Therefore, a culture that values and leverages feminine approaches as well as masculine approaches is likely to have higher engagement and retention of women (Koenig et al., 2011; Olsson and Walker, 2004). This way of thinking would result in and sustain gender diversity at senior levels of organizations.

The research questions of this study take such diverse approaches into account, and are as follows:

1. Do women executives in the hospitality industry in Hong Kong perceive their management approach to be different from that of their men counterparts?
2. Do women executives in the hospitality industry in Hong Kong adopt a feminine, masculine or gender-neutral approach to leadership?

Hospitality education programs around the world are traditionally dominated by female students. For instance, women have represented more than 70% of the undergraduate students enrolled each year in a hotel and tourism management school in Hong Kong since 2012. More women begin their careers in hospitality industry compared to men. Especially in this industry, it is important to understand whether feminine traits displayed by women are seen as barriers to career advancement or as an advantage to lead hospitality organizations.

Understanding leadership approaches of women is ultimately not only a matter of women feeling comfortable and engaged with their work, it is about women in senior leadership roles having significant contributions to company's bottom line. According to Catalyst (2007b), there is a positive relationship between corporate performance (referring to return on equity, return on sales and return on invested capital) and women's presence on boards across many industries. Contributions of women in senior leadership roles to a company's bottom-line is highlighted in the literature for decades (Hoobler, Masterson, Nkomo, & Michel, 2016). Hwang (2004) in an

interview with Janet Crawford, a leadership development expert, states the following on feminine leadership: ‘promoting feminine leadership is less an issue of male vs. female, but a question of whether we are overlooking qualities that may be crucial to navigating 21st century business challenges’. In this respect, exhibiting feminine leadership qualities is not just a women’s issue. It is a business problem. Gerzema and D’Antonio (2013) interviewed 64,000 women and men in 13 countries to identify the most important traits for leadership and success among other things. They discuss that feminine values are essential leadership traits of the future.

1.1 Study Context

The context of the current research is the hospitality industry in Hong Kong, where many corporate headquarters and regional offices of leading hospitality and tourism firms are located (Knight, 2012). Thanks to the prominence of the hospitality and tourism industry in Hong Kong and South East Asia, there are many expatriate female executives in the workforce in addition to the local women executives. This allows an examination of the perspectives of a diverse group of women, including Asian and Western women, in an Asian context. Most studies on women in leadership have been conducted in Western contexts (Ng and Pine, 2003). Tuminez (2012), in a report on women’s leadership in Asia, stated that leadership in Asia is associated with men, similar to other parts of the world, and stereotyping persists. Given the similar premises, examining women’s perceptions in Hong Kong, an international and multicultural executive scene, will contribute to the understanding of the growing female executive population in other world cities with a hospitality and tourism industry.

Hong Kong is also unique in that even though it was under British influence for more than 150 years, it is predominantly Chinese in many ways, and Chinese values are interwoven in the society and way of life (Bond, 1986; Westwood and Posner, 1997). According to Lau and Kuan (1988, p. 2), two social scientists from Hong Kong, “Hong Kong ethos represents a mixture of

traditional Chinese culture and modern cultural traits...” Hofstede’s (1980) cultural dimensions theory can be used to explain the effects of Chinese societal culture on the values of its people. The six value dimensions used by Hofstede are power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and indulgence. Figure 1 shows a comparison of these six values in Hong Kong versus three other countries, the United Kingdom, United States and Turkey. Hong Kong is reputedly characterized by high power distance, collectivism, masculinity, low uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and low indulgence (Hofstede Insights Compare Countries, 2018).

*** Insert Figure 1 about here***

2. Literature Review

This literature review includes four sections. The first section discusses transactional and transformational leadership in relation to feminine and masculine leadership styles. The second and third sections provide discussions on masculine and feminine leadership orientations. The last section reviews the hospitality and tourism literature on women executives. These four sections come together to explain the reasons for and against categorizing leadership orientations under feminine and masculine contexts, as well as to discuss the challenges women executives face in the hospitality and tourism industry.

2.1 Contemporary theories on gender differences

Leadership is about social interactions between leaders and their colleagues, managers, supervisors and employees. Burns (1978) introduced a theory based on politicians’ behavioral differences and suggested two terms to describe two distinct types of leadership: transactional and transformational. The introduction of these styles as a part of contemporary leadership theory opened a platform for observing gender differences in leadership styles (Eagly et al.,

2003). Qualities such as competitiveness, control and authority, generally considered common traits in males, are considered as significant features of the transactional leadership style (Klenke, 1993). In contrast, the transformational leadership style is about leaders' efforts to identify the potential in their followers and inspire them, which in turns motivates and enables them to achieve the objectives set by the company (Burns, 1978). According to Kouzes and Posner (2003), five practices that represent transformational leadership are: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act and encourage the heart. Klenke (1993) goes as far as aligning feminine leadership with transformational leadership.

Another school of thought maintains that there are no leadership differences between male and female leaders (Bartol and Martin, 1986). This is the gender-neutral approach to leadership and encourages taking gender- and sex-related differences out of leadership. Therefore, development for leadership roles should be same for both genders. Powell and Mainiero (1990) argued that female and male leaders similarly display task-oriented and people-oriented behavior. Femininity and masculinity are not fixed concepts. They are subject to evolve and change in different cultural and temporal contexts. There is no consensus on whether these traits are biologically given or socially constructed, and Billing and Alvesson (2000) warned against using masculinity and femininity to describe leadership styles, instead recommending going beyond these terms. They further suggested using terms such as traits. They stress that masculine and feminine traits are present in all persons to different degrees. The criticism of this approach, however, is that it ignores gender differences with respect to life experience and gender socialization (Budworth and Mann, 2010). According to O'Neil, Hopkins and Bilimoria (2009, p. 76), "applying a 'gender-neutral/gender-free' strategy for developing women does not adequately address women's specific developmental needs or consider the gendered contexts in which women

work.” The most typical difference stated in the literature between the leadership styles of men and women is that women take care and men take charge (Martell and DeSmet, 2001).

Mandell and Pherwani (2003) provided evidence that females achieve a higher score in transformational leadership in leadership style surveys compared to men. In a more recent study, Ibarra and Obodaru (2009) discussed the outcomes of the Global Executive Leadership Inventory survey, completed by close to 3,000 students from around the world. The survey included 10 different topics closely related to leadership qualities. Results showed that female students overwhelmingly had better scores than male students. A similar study conducted by Zenger and Folkman (2012) comprised more than 7,000 leaders considering 16 different leadership qualities. Once again, women did better than men with the exception of developing a strategic perspective.

2.2 Leadership and masculinity

Historically and traditionally, leadership is defined in masculine terms. This masculine approach to leadership has been discussed over the years in many different contexts. It should also be noted that masculinity and femininity are categories defined by culture. These values have had interwoven cognitive, emotional and social forces for hundreds of years (Keller, 1985). Masculinity in leadership is mostly associated with the following qualities: action-oriented, analytic, explicit, objective, the ability to set aside emotions and rationalism (Hines, 1992; Kanter, 1977).

Both men and women can be masculine. Fagenson and Jackson (1993) found that women with more masculine characteristics are perceived as more successful compared to their less masculine counterparts. Billing and Alvesson (2000) stated that executive women do not necessarily identify themselves with feminine orientations. In different contexts, femininity is

viewed in complementary and corresponding terms to masculinity, and gender stereotypes are widely accepted by men and women universally across cultures (Heilman, 2001; Wood and Eagly, 2010). “Gender stereotypes are categorical beliefs regarding the traits and behavioral characteristics ascribed to individuals on the basis of their gender” (Duehr and Bono, 2006, p. 816). In line with social role theory (Eagly, 1987), women often are stereotyped as more communal (e.g., caring, emotional) and men as more agentic (e.g., active, decisive).

As times change, organizations seem to be increasingly moving away from the polarization of masculinity and femininity. In fact, contemporary leadership styles such as transformational leadership seem to be in harmony with feminine values. However, these values are almost never linked to gender outside the gender literature (Fondas, 1997; Gherardi, 1995).

2.3 Feminine leadership

The image of leaders and leadership is transforming to include female perspectives in management. Femininity in leadership is mostly associated with the following qualities: creativity, compassion, cooperation, empathy, intuition, personalistic perception, sensitivity and synthesizing (Grant, 1988; Hines, 1992; Marshall, 1993). The notion of feminine leadership is controversial because it might come across as reinforcing stereotypical views on women. Defining a leadership style as masculine or feminine is regarded as gender-stereotyping. However, a positive feature of feminine leadership is that it enables putting gender in the leadership agenda and problematizes male domination (Billing and Alvesson, 2000). The introduction of feminine leadership might be useful in helping women get managerial positions and considering leadership styles other than traditional ones. Perhaps more importantly, feminine leadership can help the de-masculinization of leadership, referring to the moving away from defining leadership in masculine terms and conventional ideas on management. The main critique of feminine leadership, however, is it being

“a stereotypical, idealized and essentialistic view on talents and orientations contingent upon the female sex” (Billing and Alvesson, 2000, p. 155).

2.4 Women executives in the hospitality industry

The earliest study in the literature on women executives in the hospitality industry was conducted in 1993. Brownell (1993b) started the discussion on the hospitality industry by delving into why few women are present in management positions, even though many of them pursue degrees in hospitality management. She identifies women’s career obstacles as inadequate access to information networks, lack of women mentors and the impact of unique job characteristics. In a similar study, Brownell (1993a) also examined the old boys network, family/work conflicts and equity in pay as additional career challenges for women.

Knutson and Schmidgall (1999) conducted a study with 234 members of the Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals (HFTP) network, focusing on women’s career development. They found the four personal qualities needed to be successful in business, including personality, street smarts, political savvy and intellectual ability. Using the same dataset from their 1999 study, Knutson, Schmidgall, and Cichy (2002) additionally identified seven dimensions of women leaders: perseverance, trust, inner values, responsibility, stewardship, communication and vision. They stated that those qualities unique to women in the study are inner values, responsibility and stewardship. In this study, they emphasized the differences between the leadership traits of men and women.

Later studies have continued to discuss career success factors in the hospitality industry, but with little to no discussion on the leadership orientations of women executives (Boone et al., 2013; Ng and Pine, 2003; Walsh, Fleming, Enz, 2014). In a paper produced by the Hospitality Industry Pipeline Coalition, Baum and Cheung (2015) discussed barriers facing women in

hospitality and made recommendations for commercial and practical change across stakeholder groups.

Prior research in the hospitality literature shows that there are no studies related to the leadership styles of executive women in Asia. Much of the research has been concerned with the identification of female career barriers and enablers. The context of these studies has mostly in North America, with the exception of a few studies done in Asia over 10 years ago (Li and Leung, 2001; Ng and Pine, 2003).

3. Research Paradigm

Since the researcher's paradigm is so influential on the investigation's development and resulting conclusions, it is important to explicitly describe the paradigm from which this study is conducted. Among interpretive frameworks that develop and shape the qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994), the paradigm guiding this study is social constructivism (Creswell, 2013). In this approach, the focus is on understanding the participants and their interpretation of the world around them. Through understanding the participants and their interpretations, the reality of social construction is revealed (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998). In this paradigm, following Strauss and Corbin (1990), grounded theory approach guides the data analysis. Assumptions about this paradigm include a subjectivist epistemology, a relativist ontology, a naturalist methodology and a balanced axiology (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

3.1 Method

In order to understand women executives' perspectives and examine the discourse that reflects their leadership orientations, data for this study is collected through in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews accommodate for personal experience and insights (Boyce and Neale, 2006), helping to provide critical descriptions and unique representations of these women's leadership

styles, which are not possible through quantitative research methods. The participants were identified through the database of industry contacts of a Hotel and Tourism Management department of a university in Hong Kong. This convenience sample consisted of women who achieved an executive level position in the tourism and hospitality industry in Hong Kong. An executive level position refers to director, senior director, vice president, general manager, senior vice president, executive vice president, president, chief financial officer, chief marketing officer, chief operating officer, chief information officer or chief executive officer. In the context of this study, the hospitality and tourism industry includes: lodging, food service, travel and tourism segments.

In-depth interview questions start with background inquiries on a participant's education, work experience and career path. In order to tackle the first research question, we posed questions on whether, in the participant's opinion, she handles her leadership role and tasks in her position differently from how a man would, as well as whether the participant believes that women have characteristics that might be an advantage, compared to men, in an executive position such as hers. The discourse emerging from the participants' answers was examined in order to answer the second research question.

Interview questions and the source are listed in Appendix 1. These questions were developed as a part of a larger study on women's career development. Of the 37 women approached to take part in this study, 24 agreed to participate. Invitations were sent to 37 women through an email in February 2016. In the invitation email, participants were provided information on the research topic and research team. They were also reminded that answers to the questions would be kept confidential. Participants were assured that personal identifiers would not be disclosed during the write up of findings. They were informed that their participation was

voluntary, and they could choose to withdraw at any time. The in-depth interviews were conducted with each participant separately and mostly by one researcher with the objective to create a comfortable environment. The in-depth interviews took place between March and July 2016. Each interview was recorded for analysis purposes. The average length of the interviews was about 48.4 minutes and the total interview time was 19.36 hours.

3.2 Data analysis

The NVivo software was employed to aid the data coding and analysis phases. Data of this study are language-based and constitute the verbatim transcription of the 24 in-depth interviews. Interviews were transcribed by research assistants soon after recording while the researcher continued conducting interviews. Data coding started as soon as the first transcription was available; by then, five interviews had already been done. This was beneficial to the process, since the researcher had already started to become familiar with the topics. Data analysis aimed at understanding how these participants understood leadership in relation to being a woman in the hospitality industry in Hong Kong, in the context of her experiences and perspective. Therefore, qualitative content analysis was undertaken with the objective of identifying themes in how participants perceived and described their experiences (Bengtsson, 2016).

In order to tackle the two research questions, inductive coding was considered most appropriate. This approach entails codes created from the data as opposed to being pre-established and imposed onto the data (Bengtsson, 2016). Mostly, an inductive data coding approach allows the patterns explaining the data to emerge, potentially adding breadth to the understanding of the concepts investigated. Questions underlying the coding process were: “How do participants talk about their opinions and representations? How do they describe and understand their experiences?”

What assumptions are they making?” Keeping these questions in mind, data coding was performed in four stages (Bengtsson, 2016).

The first stage consisted of identifying units of analysis, i.e., the smallest portion of text that contains information related to the research questions (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo and Kyngas, 2008). Units of analysis are sentences or groups of sentences describing participants’ perceptions of their approach to leadership, other women’s and men’s approaches to leadership and incidents brought as examples. Every unit of analysis is assigned to an identifying label or code. This process is also known as open coding (Bengtsson, 2016). Since the coding process is inductive, the amount of codes increased as more data became available. Some examples of those codes that identified units of analysis are “like a man,” “cultivate relationships,” “binary thinking” and “insecure.”

The second stage began once all transcripts had been coded and involved checking the original text from the start to ensure that all content that helped answer the research questions was coded and that the remaining text could be excluded from analysis (Bengtsson, 2016). At the third stage, similar and dissimilar codes were grouped into higher order categories, which identified the major themes that are central to these participants’ perceptions (Bengtsson, 2016; Elo and Kyngas, 2008). For example, in participants’ descriptions of their perceptions of their leadership orientations, some identified recurring codes were “nurturing” and “I am a woman,” among others. These were grouped under the code “feminine leadership.” The categories of “feminine,” “masculine” and “gender-neutral” identified the main themes of the captured perceptions. Table 1 shows leadership orientations themes, code and unit of analysis examples.

*** Insert Table 1 about here***

In the fourth stage, the two primary investigators first discussed the appropriateness of the categories and themes, which were finalized when a consensus was reached; subsequently, the final compilation was compared to the literature (Bengtsson, 2016). Although data was inductively coded, a deductive approach was applied in the data analysis finalization stage in order to answer the second research question. The finalized themes and codes compilation was compared against literature on feminine, masculine and gender-neutral leadership, and the codes belonging to the theme “leadership orientations” were assigned to one of the following categories: “feminine,” “masculine” and “gender-neutral” (Elo and Kyngas, 2008).

The trustworthiness of a study employing qualitative research methods is contingent on dealing with three criteria: *the researcher’s subjectivity*, which is concerned with the inevitable presence of the researcher(s) in the data analysis and interpretation; *confirmability* addresses the risk of meaning distortion; and *repeatability* aims at providing information for the transferability of findings and the repeatability of the study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Silverman, 1993). The research was planned in such a way as to best satisfy these criteria, and the methods implemented are reported here and summarized in Table 2.

Data was coded by the researcher who conducted the majority of interviews. To mitigate subjectivity, this researcher would keep personal memos about each interview experience, with the objective of highlighting personal attitudes, likes and dislikes, as well as elements that surprised and challenged the researcher’s assumptions. The other primary investigator on the research team listened to the interview recordings. Data coding and preliminary interpretations were discussed in regular meetings in order to continuously check that they were reasonable (Bengtsson, 2016).

To ensure the confirmability of study findings, the following procedures focused on preventing and checking for the distortion of meaning. The coding process and preliminary findings were regularly discussed between the researcher analyzing the data and the other primary researcher familiar with the recorded interviews (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). This procedure gave the latter researcher the opportunity to judge whether emerging results were reasonable (Bengtsson, 2016). When differences in perspective arose, they were discussed until an agreement was reached. Participants were provided with the verbatim transcripts of their interview to check their accuracy; the researcher remained in contact with participants, when needed, to clarify unclear statements that emerged during data analysis.

Transferability has two aspects: transferability of the findings to a similar context and repeatability of the study under similar conditions. The former criterion was addressed by providing detailed information about the context of the study while respecting participants' privacy (Krefting, 1991; Elo and Kyngsa, 2008), the latter by reporting the choices and processes employed throughout this research, including participants' recruitment, methods and tools for data gathering and data analysis procedures (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Krefting, 1991).

*** Insert Table 2 about here***

4. Findings

4.1 Participants' backgrounds

A profile of participants is presented in Table 3. Participants come from a variety of backgrounds. Eleven interviewees were Hong Kong born, raised and ethnically Chinese. Those remaining were raised in Europe, North America, South East Asia and Australia. Their positions as director and vice president included specifications such as event management, human resources

management, revenue management, marketing and strategic management, in addition to CEO, CFO and COO titles.

*** Insert Table 3 about here***

Two interviewees started working after high school and have not resumed formal education. Nine of the interviewees who pursued a master's degree and a doctoral degree (in progress at the time of interview) resumed their formal education part-time while already working full-time. Of the 22 participants who obtained a degree after high school, 12 pursued their degrees in their countries of origin. Two were enrolled in distance-learning programs with an overseas university. The other eight participants obtained their university or higher diploma degrees overseas. Five of the 11 native Hong Kong interviewees pursued their degrees in Hong Kong. Overall, only three participants have not had any experience residing outside of their home country. Two interviewees have a partner who lives and works in another country, and one interviewee remarried after a divorce. Among the partners, 11 work in a non-hospitality industry, five of whom are entrepreneurs; the remaining six are employed, four of whom hold positions of leadership. Of the nine partners pursuing a career in the hospitality industry, three are hotel general managers, while the remaining six hold other positions of responsibility. All of the nine participants who have children are married or live with a partner and fall in the 40-49 and 50-59 age ranges; four of them are Hong Kong natives. Three of the currently single interviewees previously went through a divorce. Only two of the interviewees with no children spontaneously expressed the possibility of having them in the future. Four interviewees, three born and raised in Hong Kong and one in Macau, were the main caretaker of other family members but with no children of their own. One of these interviewees is a caretaker for both her own family and her partner's family.

4.2 Women versus men leaders

We asked participants whether there was anything they believed a man would do differently in their position. Multiple aspects emerged that participants believed are generally displayed by women in their positions, as well as some aspects that they believe belong more to a man in an equivalent position.

4.2.1 Representations of women leaders' characteristics

Eighteen participants expressed their belief that women are generally more “transformational leaders” compared to men. Women are believed to be more sensitive and capable of empathy (9) and intuitive (4) in their understanding of others, whether counterparts, subordinates or customers. They are also believed to be natural relationship builders (11), especially within their work environment. They value their teams greatly and invest in them continuously (11), strengthening the team by increasing its cohesiveness as well as training and empowering its members. Women leaders are believed to be more patient (4) than men in dealing with people, studying details and listening to different perspectives.

In addition to being more “transformational leaders,” seven interviewees believed that women are generally more meticulous. According to these participants, this reflects in their attention to detail in different situations ranging from aesthetics of decorations or promotional material to their decision-making process. Six interviewees maintained that digging into the details of a matter before taking a position on it is a trait predominantly found in women. These participants described seeing themselves differently from their male counterparts in their preference to include different perspectives on a matter before making a decision.

“I think [as] a female leader, I observe that in my team, one of the things they love [is] to come to my office and share more than work. Like, they would say, ‘You have time?’ and I say, ‘Yeah, of course,’ and I will always have time for them and ‘listen.’ I think female

leaders have the ability [and] better skills to listen to people. And that is a key strength. I don't see it that much in male leaders. Like, 'Don't give me problems. It's your problem. Your personal [problem]. Don't talk to me'" (Interviewee 8, Director of Revenue Management and Analytics, MSc in Marketing, 30-39 years old).

Other qualities were mentioned by a small number of participants. Three interviewees believed that women are in general better communicators. Two believed that they are generally more charming, and it is powerful when they can use their charm professionally. Finally, four participants maintained that women are generally more resilient than men, and it shows during tough times.

The most common traits that the interviewees felt were lacking were assertiveness, decisiveness and knowledge. In this context, to the detriment of women's perceived professionalism, there is also a reported common stereotype of women in a position of power being domineering and jealous, as addressed by four participants.

4.2.2 Representations of male leaders' characteristics

From listening to participants' accounts of what they believed they did differently from their male counterparts, male leaders' attributed characteristics emerge. Men in positions of leadership, but also men in general, are believed to be assertive, almost arrogant, as opposed to respectful and willing to listen. Seven participants believed that men executives only see the big picture and are generally either not capable or not interested in the details of a matter, nor in different opinions and perspectives. These participants describe men's decision making as "binary," as opposed to women, who ponder decisions more in order to include more perspectives:

"I think I'm a bit more broad in the elements I consider in making a decision. I take more elements into account. I...am more of a facilitator than my male counterparts...men tend

to be, I think...quite binary in the way they make their decisions. Whereas women tend to include a few more discussions points, a few more options, a few more angles” (Interviewee 24, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, MSc in Business Administration, 40-49 years old).

Seven interviewees maintained that men generally do not engage with their staff as much as women leaders do. They tend to be detached. They do not aim to get to know their staff and therefore understand each situation individually. They are also believed to have a more mechanical and less genuine way of dedicating time to their staff in comparison to women.

4.3 Leadership orientations of women executives

In this section, the second research question of this study is addressed, i.e., to understand whether women executives in the hospitality industry take a feminine, masculine or gender-neutral approach to leadership. In order to answer this question, the units of analysis constituting the theme “leadership orientations” were compared against the literature’s description of masculine, feminine and gender-neutral leadership. Text reflecting one of the orientations was coded to the respective category. This last round of coding made it possible to examine what type of leadership style was displayed by which participant and whether participants displayed a single orientation or multiple orientations simultaneously. The following section presents these findings by first, examining the content of the three leadership orientation categories, and secondly, examining who displayed them.

4.3.1 Masculine leadership

Masculine leadership orientation manifested in the speech of five participants. It appears that some gender-based stereotypes are still deeply rooted, to the extent that women who had to defeat these stereotypes themselves seem to consider them generally valid. In some cases, these

expectations seemed to perpetuate stereotypical gender-based images. Five participants compared their character traits and behaviors to traits or behaviors considered undesirable but “typical.” For example, women executives are said to be domineering and unapproachable. In order to distance themselves from these stereotypical images, participants used phrases such as “many women are... but I am not...” or “most women do not have/are not...but I do/am...” When these participants wished to highlight that they display desirable characteristics for a leader, such as determination, assertiveness, decisiveness, as well as being outspoken and disciplinary, they used the phrase “I am more like a man...” This formula is intended to reduce the distance between the interviewee and what is desirable in a leader—usually attributed to men:

“...even my head of sales said I’m [like a] man. Sometimes I’m a man, sometimes I’m a woman, you know...So, I’m very determined, very decisive. I know exactly what I want...So I’m like a man...I’m quite outspoken and...I have quite a strong opinion. I have my own [way of] thinking by experience. [Although], sometimes I find men are even more like a woman, like, not direct...” (Interviewee 5, Hotel General Manager, Higher Diploma in Hotel Management, 40-49 years old).

From this perspective, character traits reflect the traditional portrayal of a leader, which coincided with men. The desirable character traits of a leader are still typically men’s traits, and if a woman displays them, she is a special case. It might be that these participants believe they will be perceived as successful by their peers and followers if they display masculine traits in their leadership style (Fagenson and Jackson, 1993).

4.3.2 Feminine leadership

Feminine leadership orientations were present in the discussion of 13 participants. The content coded at the feminine leadership category exposed an ongoing renegotiation of what are

the defining traits and combinations of characteristics of the growing population of contemporary women bosses and leaders. The renegotiation favors traits and leadership characteristics of women in executive positions who do not emulate men's leadership and behavior; they are, rather, redefining what leadership looks like when it is displayed by a woman. This discourse is noticeable because it stands in contrast with the recurring "being like a man" self-description. The following quote is emblematic of this discourse:

"I think that the future of female success and female leadership is not about... fighting head-to-head to get up in the ranks, but more of the emotional connection, you know. Listening to your team; understand[ing] what their needs are. I think that's one of the beauties of the female, is that they have that capacity to be empathetic... Balancing... assertive[ness], because you need it, but also balancing... empathy, in which is the strength of a female because naturally you are born with that. You carry a child, that's in you, right? How do you take that part, and bring it to life, but at the same time, have that assertiveness [needed] in the business environment? And I think those...real, lasting female leaders...have [a] balance of both. Not to say men are not empathetic. I mean, there are some really great male bosses...But [women] use what's naturally in them to propel in a different way. You don't have to be the same successful person in that same exact way and copy it. You can still be successful in a different way" (Interviewee 18, Regional Vice President, BSc in Marketing, 30-39 years old).

An integral part of the feminine-leadership-in-the-making discourse is a cool mind that is able to mitigate or counteract gender-based biases, opting instead for an appropriate strategy, for example, by deliberately avoiding undesirable and stereotypical behaviors or by carefully selecting the most suitable outfit for a desired effect. The renegotiation of the image of women executives

is past the phase of emulating men and is characterized instead by deliberate choices. The following participant explained that she is determined to establish her style, which distinguishes her from her male-dominated business surroundings and goes hand-in-hand with the establishment of her authority:

“As I move up to this position, I really try to establish my own style...A man has to be confined in the social status, their appearance, the dark suit, the tie, the well-polished shoes, the hair and all that, right?...As I said to my husband, they all look like funeral masters. And you know you can identify the hoteliers. From far [away], they all look the same!...I can wear different colors...I have to, as I said, [dress] appropriate to the event. I can wear [a] cocktail dress when a man wears [a] dark suit. I can wear a suit in the business setting where a man still wears [a] dark suit. I can wear different outfits on site-inspection when a man still wears dark suit. So nowadays I try to wear a lot of *Changshan*, the Chinese outfit...to make people remember who I am, a Chinese woman. And from the [outside in], I’m all there” (Interviewee 9, Managing Director, MSc in Management, 50-59 years old).

4.3.3 Gender-neutral leadership

Six participants felt that there are no different leadership styles specific to a gender and that differences in leadership orientations are due to an individuals’ personality, which is not necessarily linked to gender. Below is a quote from a participant supporting this perspective:

“I think women in general are more personable, warmer and more accommodating. I do have colleagues, Japanese colleagues, who are so rigid. [They say], ‘No I cannot go beyond the time.’ I [also] have Japanese colleagues who can accommodate and go beyond the time, [and] I have colleagues who are from Hong Kong that are so willing to do the extra time but others [who are] not, so it’s not about...gender, it’s not about the nationality and culture; I think it’s

more the attitude of that person and the intention of that person when they are doing the job” (Interviewee 12, Learning and Development Executive, MSc in Business Administration, 40-49 years old).

However, despite stating this position, only four participants demonstrated consistently gender-neutral orientations throughout their speech; the remaining displayed varying degrees of feminine leadership orientations in their interviews.

4.4 Multiple leadership orientations simultaneously

Ten participants displayed feminine leadership orientations only; four participants displayed gender-neutral orientations only; and only one participant displayed masculine orientations only. Nine participants displayed two leadership orientations simultaneously in their speech. For example, Interviewee 8 demonstrated some feminine leadership orientation in her speech:

“...we listen. I think female leaders have the ability, a better skills to listen to people. And that is a key strength. I don't see that much in male leaders. Like 'don't give me problem. It's your problem. Your personal. Don't talk to me'. But for female leader I think, we tend to listen more” (Interviewee 8, Director of Revenue Management and Analytics, MSc in Marketing, 30-39 years old).

She also displays masculine leadership orientations:

“...this kind of thing I think need to change. So, to be like man in a way, [in] that we are decisive, we dare to make decision[s]...by nature women are showing...like...caring...So if you come into an organization, with [a] softer personality, or [do] not [try] to be the same as a male worker, then the chance for you to be a star...will be less. So sometimes when I [am] in a meeting, I have to change my tone of voice, to...[be] a bit lower, and it works,

by the way...” (Interviewee 8, Director of Revenue Management and Analytics, MSc in Marketing, 30-39 years old).

These findings discourage attempting to categorize individuals into gendered leadership orientations. While some individuals have a more consistent leadership orientation, others have mixed leadership orientations.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

Our findings indicate a connection between transformational leadership, representation of women leaders’ characteristics and feminine leadership, which is supported by prior research (Mandell and Pherwani, 2003; Klenke, 1993). The terms used to describe transformational leadership are similar to those expressions describing representations of women leaders’ characteristics and feminine leadership traits. To answer the question posed in the title of this study: is there such a thing as feminine leadership? Our findings show that there is; however, these findings discourage attempting to categorize individuals exclusively in gendered leadership orientations. While some individuals have a more consistent leadership orientation, others have mixed, or less polarized leadership orientations.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

We examined participants’ backgrounds to identify any patterns that might help explain the differences in leadership orientations of participants. We examined their origins, place of childhood, education, place of education, career positions, tenure in the company, company country of origin and age groups. An interesting finding is that older participants in the sample have gender-neutral and feminine leadership orientations. Participants with masculine leadership orientations, on the other hand, were younger compared to their counterparts. Age can be a good

proxy for work experience. Participants with feminine and gender-neutral leadership orientations were older and held higher level executive positions compared to their younger counterparts with masculine leadership orientations. One plausible explanation might be that executive women with more experience in their life and career embrace their femininity and do not shy away from showing it or do not find it necessary to display masculine leadership orientations to get ahead in the corporate world. The average tenure in the current position for participants with masculine, feminine and gender-neutral leadership orientations are 3.8, 10.45 and 12 years, respectively. The participants with gender-neutral and feminine leadership orientations stayed with the same company for many years or changed the company they worked for less frequently than others in the sample with masculine leadership orientations. It can also be argued that the participants with a longer tenure are more likely to be familiar with the corporate culture in comparison to participants with shorter tenure with their companies. Those companies the participants worked for originated in Hong Kong and the United States. There are no differences observed in leadership orientations based on the company's country of origin.

The participants vary in terms of their origins, educational backgrounds and upbringing. We did not observe any distinguishing patterns in these factors among the participants with feminine, masculine and gender-neutral leadership orientations. Ten out of 24 participants were raised and educated outside of Hong Kong. Five out of these 10 participants displayed feminine leadership orientations, three displayed masculine leadership orientations and two demonstrated gender-neutral leadership orientations. All three leadership orientations include participants who were raised and educated in Hong Kong, raised in Hong Kong and educated outside Hong Kong, and raised and educated outside Hong Kong. This is an indication that the place a person is raised and educated in might not be directly relevant to their leadership orientations. For example, six participants were

raised and educated in Hong Kong. According to Hofstede (1980), Hong Kong is a somewhat masculine society and has a high power distance score, an indication that inequalities are seen as acceptable amongst people there. In addition, Hong Kong is a collectivist society with a very low score (17 out of 100) in indulgence. This indicates three important points. First, Hong Kong society cares very much about the interest of the group and not necessarily of the individual. Second, people in societies with a low indulgence score tend to control their desires based on the way they were raised. Third, masculine societies emphasize male assertiveness and being tough. In other words, they might have a tendency to not behave like their actual selves at work and/or they might be more likely to display masculine leadership orientations based on the social fabric of Hong Kong and, at large, Chinese society. Based on these societal characteristics, it can be expected that the women executives raised and educated with these values should display masculine leadership characteristics. However, the findings of this research indicate otherwise. Among the six participants who were raised and educated in Hong Kong, one displayed a masculine leadership orientation and five displayed a feminine leadership orientation. Another example are two women executives from Turkey. According to Hofstede (1980), Turkey scored 66, 37, 45, 85, 46 and 49 in power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and indulgence, respectively. In contrast to Hong Kong, Turkish society has a low masculinity score and higher indulgence score. Based on these scores, one might expect that the women executives who were raised and educated in Turkey displayed feminine leadership orientations. However, they displayed masculine leadership orientations.

Ely and Rhode (2010) held that the differences among leadership styles depend mostly on differences in the specific situation. The findings of the current study seem to support this statement, in that participants displayed different leadership orientations at different stages

throughout their interview when referring to different aspects and situations relevant to their position. It appears that different national cultures do not seem to be a relevant factor. Instead, participants' experiences and beliefs related to gender and leadership, along with other organizational factors, are likely to contribute to women's leadership orientation.

Figure 2 represents an attempt to illustrate the leadership orientations findings. The triangular shape represents three continua of leadership orientation, from masculine to feminine leadership orientation, from feminine to gender-neutral (or situational) leadership orientation, and from gender-neutral to masculine leadership orientation. The three conjunction points in the angles of the triangle represent the maximum polarization of each continuum. If a participant appears at these poles, it represents that her coded speech was 100% ascribed to either a feminine, masculine or gender-neutral leadership orientation. For example, moving from gender-neutral leadership to feminine leadership, a leader displays more feminine leadership traits and less situational leadership characteristics. Moving from a feminine leadership orientation to a masculine leadership orientation, a leader displays less feminine and more masculine leadership traits. Moving from a masculine leadership orientation to a gender-neutral leadership orientation, a leader displays less masculine leadership traits and more situational leadership characteristics.

*** Insert Figure 2 about here***

Participants' speech can be ascribed to feminine, masculine and gender-neutral leadership orientation categories once it is broken down into units of analysis. However, not all participants can be labelled with one definite leadership orientation. Some of these women executives displayed two orientations simultaneously, including feminine-neutral or feminine-masculine. These findings support Billing and Alvesson (2000) in that both masculine and feminine traits are

present in most participants to different degrees. Hence, the leadership styles are presented on continua rather than categories.

5.3 Practical Implications

There are several important practical implications for this study. First, not all women executives display leadership orientations that adhere to their indigenous culture values. This indicates that individual differences or differences related to the organizational culture are still relevant. Second, age, work experience and tenure in the company appear to be more relevant in explaining the feminine, masculine and gender-neutral leadership orientations of women executives in the hospitality and tourism industry compared to cultural values. Third, this study showed that some executive women still opt for masculine traits in order to survive in the business environment. This may create a culture that asks women to hide their authentic selves. On a positive note, the majority of the women in the executive level positions in this study displayed feminine leadership orientations and did not shy away from bringing their authentic selves to work.

The fourth implication is the need to redefine leadership by considering both masculine and feminine traits as strong and desirable leadership qualities. This can enable women to lead in their own ways rather than having to adopt masculine leadership traits. For many women out there, the findings of this study will encourage them to embrace themselves and see their traits as strengths. For men, it is about encompassing a wider spectrum of positive leadership qualities. This progress is likely to contribute to a more equal and inclusive future in the workplace in today's increasingly diverse and complex business environments.

Fifth, this study shows that women executives in the study were still subject to their own stereotypes of men and women within their managerial styles. Women's self-representations of leadership orientations constitute an unresolved paradox. Future research may explore the nature

and the extent of these stereotypes and their consequences on relationships to wider patterns of social change. Among the practical implications of this study, perhaps the most important one is related to those organizational career management programs offering training to both men and women executives. These programs should include the teaching of leadership concepts congruent with both masculine and feminine traits. Women can be specifically trained on bringing their authentic selves to work, which would make them more comfortable and happy at work. Implicit bias training (Spigel, 2018) can be introduced in organizations to raise awareness about the coded language that enforces gender-bias. For instance, Google provides this training on an ongoing basis (Spigel, 2018). Raising awareness and paying attention to implicit gender bias also has important implications for the education field. MacLellan (2018) draws attention to the issue of unconscious gender bias in business school case studies and states that educators should pay attention to this bias when writing cases or choosing them. This understanding is especially important in hospitality management programs where majority of the students are likely to be females. The notion of accepting both masculine and feminine traits as appropriate leadership qualities and making this notion a part of organizational culture is likely to result in a shared vision for the organization's future and subsequent organizational change. Additional research should be done with a larger number of participants from various backgrounds to understand how organizational culture, culture in general, women executive's age and tenure in the company, both independently from each other and in complex interactions with one another, bring about differences in leadership orientations.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. A low number of women in leadership positions in the hospitality and tourism industry in Hong Kong limited the selection process of the participants.

There might also have been a selection bias, in that the participants volunteered to participate in the research study while some declined. Findings are based on participants' memory in order to reflect on their leadership styles and practices and to recall past experiences. Future research should consider the perspectives of peers and followers in addition to the participants to reduce the same source bias. More research should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of feminine, masculine or gender-neutral approaches to leadership displayed by both men and women executives. Another limitation of the study is related to the masculine versus feminine culture of the companies that women executives work for. The culture of an organization, or even the department or business unit, can have an impact on the degree to which a female executive's feminine or masculine traits fit. Gender bias in this study is examined through explicit measures. Future studies on gender bias can be conducted using implicit measures instead of self-reported measures such as Implicit Association Test (Greenwald, McGhee, Schwartz, 1998).

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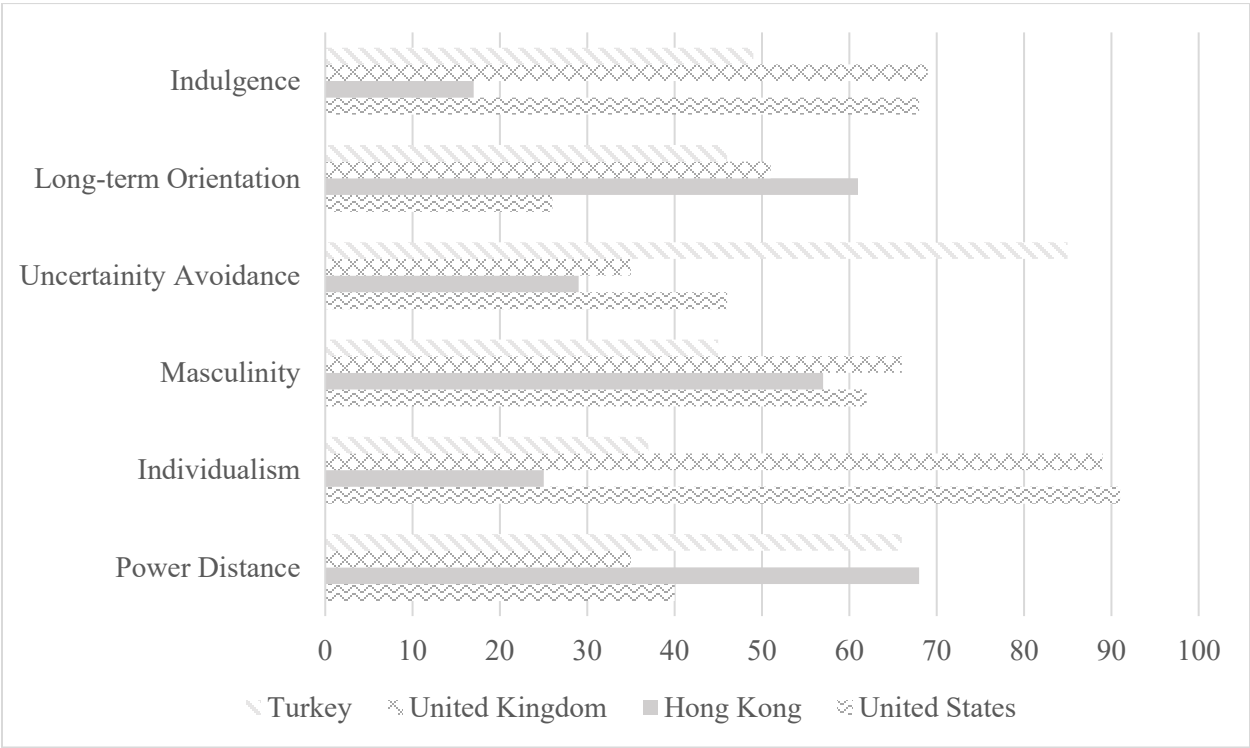
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Figure 1

Comparison of Hong Kong versus 3 other countries based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions



Source: Source: Hofstede Insights Compare Countries (2018)

Note: Scores range between 0 and 100.

Figure 2

Proposed Leadership Orientations Continua

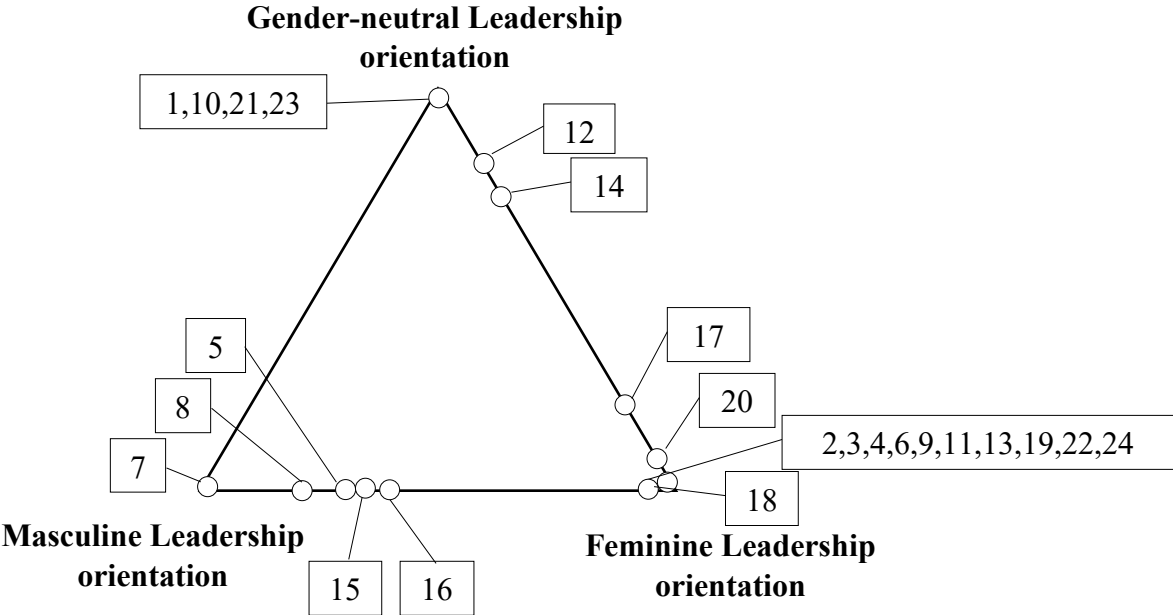


Table 1 Example of inductive data coding: Leadership orientations themes

Units of analysis examples	Code examples	Category	Theme	Participants
<p>'I am a very typical female... I am more like nurturing...'</p> <p>'... make people remember who I am, a Chinese woman... from look to the mind, I am there'</p> <p>'I am a very typical female... never tried to be a man'</p> <p>'being a woman is advantage'</p>	<p>"nurturing"</p> <p>"I am a woman"</p>	Feminine	Leadership orientation	13
<p>'many women are... but I am not...'</p> <p>'most women do not have/are not... but I do/am...'</p> <p>'I am more like a man...'</p>	<p>"more like a man"</p>	Masculine	Leadership orientation	5
<p>'it is not about gender.'</p> <p>'.. a style that suits..'</p> <p>'women not different'</p> <p>'I don't believe in difference between female executive and male executive'</p>	<p>"styles"</p> <p>"no difference"</p>	Gender-neutral	Leadership orientation	6

Table 2
Trustworthiness procedures

Trustworthiness criteria	Procedures	Tackled criteria's dimensions
Researcher's subjectivity	Memos of critical self-reflection Regular discussion with other researchers	Mitigate one-researcher's bias
Confirmability	Participants' check (transcripts' accuracy, findings) Check plausibility of findings by consultation with author of previous study; and against literature	Prevent and check for distortion
Transferability	Provide detailed context of study Provide details about data collection and analysis procedures	Findings transferability Study repeatability

Table 3

Backgrounds of the participants

Participant	Industry	Position	Company country/region of origin	Tenure*	Last degree	Age range	Educated in	Country/Region of origin	Mas/Inv**	Leadership Orientation
Interviewee 1	Consulting/ Entrepreneur	Director and Founder	Hong Kong	9 years	MSc in Business Administration	60 or more	Hong Kong, Canada	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Gender-neutral
Interviewee 2	Private Club	General Manager	Hong Kong	13 years	MSc in Business Administration	50-59	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Feminine
Interviewee 3	Hotel	Director of Events	Hong Kong	4 years	MSc in Hospitality Management	40-49	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Feminine
Interviewee 4	Hotel Group	Executive Vice President	Hong Kong	9 years	MSc in Hotel & Tourism Management	50-59	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Feminine
Interviewee 5	Hotel	General Manager	Hong Kong	4 years	Higher Diploma in Hotel Management	40-49	Switzerland	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Masculine
Interviewee 6	Consulting/ Entrepreneur	Master of Wine	Hong Kong	9 years	MSc in Public Policy	50-59	USA	American	Masculine/ Individualistic	Feminine
Interviewee 7	Hotel Group	Corporate Director of Human Resources	Hong Kong	5 years	MSc in Hotel & Tourism Management	40-49	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Masculine
Interviewee 8	Theme Park	Director of Revenue Management and Analytics	USA	3 years	MSc in Marketing	30-39	Thailand, Australia	Thai	Feminine/ Collectivistic	Masculine
Interviewee 9	Convention Management	Managing Director	Hong Kong	11 years	MSc in Management	50-59	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Feminine
Interviewee 10	Hotel Group	Regional Director of	USA	14 years	MSc in Hospitality Administration	50-59	Hong Kong, USA	Hong Kong	Masculine/ Collectivistic	Gender-neutral

		Talent Management								
Interviewee 11	Hotel Group	Vice President of Hotel Development	USA	12 years	BSc in Hotel Administration	30-39	USA	Singaporean	Feminine/Collectivistic	Feminine
Interviewee 12	Airline	Learning and Development Executive	Hong Kong	10 years	MSc in Business Administration	40-49	Philippines, Hong Kong	Philippines	Masculine/Collectivistic	Gender-neutral
Interviewee 13	Hotel	General Manager	Hong Kong	11 years	MSc in Business Management	50-59	Hong Kong	Macau	Unknown but likely to be similar to Hong Kong	Feminine
Interviewee 14	Hotel Group	Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing	Hong Kong	15 years	MSc in Professional Studies	50-59	USA	Hong Kong	Masculine/Collectivistic	Gender-neutral
Interviewee 15	Hotel	Director of Revenue Management	Hong Kong	4 years	BSc in Tourism & Hospitality Management	30-39	Turkey	Turkish	Feminine/Collectivistic	Masculine
Interviewee 16	Hotel Group	Global Director of Rooms	Hong Kong	3 years	High School Diploma	40-49	Turkey	Turkish	Feminine/Collectivistic	Masculine
Interviewee 17	Restaurant Group	Director of People, Asia	Hong Kong	14 years	BSc in Hospitality Management	40-49	Scotland	British	Masculine/Individualistic	Feminine
Interviewee 18	Travel Group	Regional Vice President	USA	10 years	BSc in Marketing	30-39	USA	American	Masculine/Individualistic	Feminine
Interviewee 19	Hotel	Director of Strategy and Business Development	Hong Kong	8 years	Higher Diploma in Anatomy and Physiology	40-49	UK	British	Masculine/Individualistic	Feminine
Interviewee 20	Hotel Group	General Manager, Area Vice-President, Hong Kong & Thailand	Hong Kong	14 years	High School Diploma	50-59	Hong Kong	Hong Kong	Masculine/Collectivistic	Feminine

Interviewee 21	Hotel Group	Vice President of Public Relations	Hong Kong	13 years	MSc in Communication Management	40-49	Australia	Malaysian	Masculine/Collectivistic	Gender-neutral
Interviewee 22	Hotel Group	Vice President of Revenue Management	Hong Kong	12 years	BSc in Hotel Management	40-49	Norway	Norwegian	Feminine/Individualist	Feminine
Interviewee 23	Hotel Group	Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer	Hong Kong	11 years	BSc in Hotel & Restaurant Management	50-59	USA	Hong Kong	Masculine/Collectivistic	Gender-neutral
Interviewee 24	Hotel Group	Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer	France	13 years	MSc in Business Administration	40-49	Australia, Singapore	Australian	Masculine/Individualistic	Feminine

Notes:

- * Tenure refers to number of years in the present company.
- **Mas/Inv refers to Hofstede's cultural dimensions on masculinity and individualism. If a country's score is lower than 50 in masculinity and individualism, the country is categorized as feminine and collectivistic.