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## The Effect of Gender and Culture on Leadership Styles in Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi Uku Delta State

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the effect of culture on leadership styles. There is a growing concern as to whether culture has an impact on leadership style. It is believed that what might be applicable to one gender might be different from the other and this can affect their leadership styles. Hofstede's four cultural dimensions of uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity and power distance were used as independent variables to explain culture and leadership style. The multi-factor leadership questionnaire was adopted for the study. A questionnaire made up of five separate scales investigated the perceptions of 182 employees from a tertiary institution. Regression analysis and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data gathered for this study. Findings revealed that low uncertainty avoidance, femininity, collectivism and low power distance were associated with transformational leaders, whereas high uncertainty avoidance, masculinity, individualism and high power distance were associated with transactional leaders. Females were also shown to be more transformational than their male counterparts lending support to the findings of previous research. Hence, this research recommends that both men and women should feel free to adopt leadership strategies that will help them succeed. Also, women should be given opportunities to lead where necessary and not discriminated against to make the organization benefit from their potentials.

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### INTRODUCTION

In recent times, studies on the effect of culture on leadership styles have aroused significant research interest. Due to cultural differences, leaders tend to lead differently from one another. It is believed that culture can be a major factor responsible for gender inequality. Culture plays an important role in all societies. For example, in the olden day Nigeria, culture determined which gender could sacrifice education for the other when financial resources were scarce. Males were preferred over females in terms of educational opportunities until recently, hence the wide gap between the male and female gender. Till date, the gap in education varies from one geo-political zone to another, and even from one community to the other. Globalization in recent times has brought about a change in the opinion about the female gender being left behind. Even though there are female leaders today, they are few and still strive to catch up with their male counterparts. They are not able to achieve their potentials, thereby, promoting what Salami (2011) describes as the glass ceiling syndrome.

Hofstede (2011) opined that the dimensions of culture has two unequal ends either high or low. He argues that these dimensions are linked with different leadership styles. The study of culture and leadership styles would bring to limelight whether or not different leadership styles result from different cultures. Studying Leadership style would help to know how best these styles could be applied to situations by leaders.

### Statement of the Problem

There is a growing concern as to whether culture affects leadership style. The roles of females as well as males ought to be put into consideration in order to properly utilize human resources especially when the concern is to promote organizational performance. There is the need to find out whether culture affects the style of leadership practices in organizations especially when leaders are faced with challenging situations.

This study seeks to determine the extent to which culture predisposes gender to particular leadership styles. This is because culture integrate personal values of people in society to reflect in a national identity. main focus of this research is on national culture. National cultural values depicts the psychological dynamics of conflict and compatibilities that society portrays in their everyday living. National culture is essentially the integrated personal values of people in society and reflects aspects of their personal culture integrated in a national identity.

### **Research Objectives**

The general objective of this study is thus to access the impact of culture on gender predisposition to leadership styles in organizations. Below are the specific objectives;

1. To ascertain the impact of power distance on leadership style.
2. To determine the effect of individualism and collectivism on leadership style.
3. To determine the relationship between femininity/masculinity and leadership styles.
4. To ascertain the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and leadership styles.

### **The Hypotheses below were Tested**

**HO<sub>1</sub>.** Power distance has no significant impact on leadership styles.

**HO<sub>2</sub>.** There is no significant relationship between individualism and collectivism and leadership styles.

**HO<sub>3</sub>.** There is no significant relationship between femininity/masculinity and leadership styles.

**HO<sub>4</sub>.** There is no significant relationship between uncertainty avoidance and leadership style.

### **Significance of the study**

Research on the influence of culture on leadership styles is limited. Gibson (1995) recommended more research into gender characteristics and cultural orientations, particularly Hofstede's (2011) dimensions, in order to gain a greater understanding of the influence of culture on leadership. This present research will hopefully shed new light on that issue

The fifth and sixth dimension of Hofstede's cultural dimensions was used to explain culture as an important variable in this paper. In the 2000s, research by Bulgarian scholar Michael Minkov using data from the World Values Survey (Minkov, 2007) allowed a new calculation of the fifth and the addition of a sixth dimension (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010).

This study does not just focus on the existence of the male and female gender but highlights the existence of the androgynous leader which many studies on gender and leadership have ignored. Curiously, a new dimension to gender role surfaces: there are three, not two, genders in the mix of variables: male, female and androgynous (Appelbaum, Audet & Miller, 2003). The study would reveal whether the unequal ends of Hofstede's cultural dimensions affect the style a leader adopts.

### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The main focus of this study is Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku, which was established in 2002. This is an institution of higher learning with various departments and their different heads. This institution was picked out of the three existing polytechnics in delta state as it would give a clearer understanding of gender in relation to leadership style because as at the time the study the institution had 16 departments headed by 9 males and 7 females. The leadership styles of these leaders in the institution will be studied to determine the differences across genders. The questionnaires were administered in 2013.

The scope of the study is limited to the selected variables, gender culture and leadership styles. Additionally, the data for this study was collected from a single organization and the sample is random. Therefore, it can be assumed that the results of this study will be generalizable to employees of other organization.

### **Conceptualizing Culture**

Nicole Schwab (2013), opined that “the current corporate gender gap is a reflection of the lack of alignment between the cultural norms of the workplaces – mostly unchanged since the 19th century - and the current needs and expectations of the workforce”,

Culture consists of values, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior of a group of people. It plays a predominant role in the way people think, learn, lead, follow and communicate. Culture influences employee motivation, superior-subordinate relationships, authority, leadership behavior and interpersonal relationships (Osuoha, 2002). According to Rudman & Glick (2008), the cultural approach shows how social conceptions of gender influence people's beliefs and behavior but may overemphasize social causes to the exclusion of biological differences, particularly those that pertain to reproduction.

Culture makes most women reluctant to participate in leadership roles and prefer to stand aside while the males take charge. Hofstede (2011) states that the societal, national and gender cultures which children acquire from the earliest youth onwards are much deeper rooted in the human mind than organizational cultures acquired on the job. The latter are exchangeable when people take a new job. Hofstede (2005) in Wu & Pan (2006), posits that culture consists of various levels, since almost everyone belongs to a number of different groups and categories at the same time, and every group or category of people carries a set of common mental programs that constitutes its culture.

Hofstede (2005) describe the different layers of culture that exist at the following levels;

- The national culture: It is associated with the nation as a whole.
- The organizational culture: it is associated with the particular culture of an organization. Moreover, it is applicable to those who are employed.
- The regional culture: It is associated with ethnic, linguistic, or religious differences that exist within a nation.
- The gender culture: It is associated with gender differences (female vs. male)
- The generation culture: It is associated with the differences between grandparents and parents, parents and children.
- The social class culture: It is associated with educational opportunities and with a personal occupation or profession. Concerning various layers of culture mentioned above, we choose to focus only on national culture, which is defined by Oudenhoven (2001) in Wu et. al. (2006) as: “profound beliefs and values, and practices that are shared by the vast majority of people belonging to a certain nation.” The focus of this study is on national culture.

#### **Hofstede’s Four Cultural Dimensions of National Culture**

Geert Hofstede did a survey using IBM employees in over 50 countries around the world, He identified common problems among societies. The IBM employees he analyzed had similarities in all areas except nationality, which showed how authentic and important national differences was.

All the four dimensions are:

- Power distance (from small to large).
- Collectivism versus Individualism.
- Femininity versus Masculinity.
- Uncertainty Avoidance (from weak to strong).

**Power Distance:** This can be defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu &Pan 2006).

**Collectivism versus Individualism:** This means the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side we find societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, we find societies in which people from birth on are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups. Moreover, in collectivist society, the interests of the group prevail over the interests of the individual. The issue addressed by this dimension is an extremely fundamental one, regarding all societies in the world (Wu &Pan 2006).

**Masculinity versus Femininity:** refers to the distribution of roles between the genders which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions are found. A society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough,

and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. On the other hand, a society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu &Pan 2006).

Concerning masculinity versus femininity issue, there are two levels of analysis. Firstly, if we try to compare individuals within societies, the individual can be both masculine and feminine at the same time. This means even if she is a woman, she may be assertive and tough just like a man is supposed to be. Secondly, if we try to compare the cultures of entire societies, then the national culture may be either predominantly masculine or predominantly feminine.

**Uncertainty Avoidance:** can be defined as the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations. This feeling is, among other things, expressed through nervous stress and in a need for predictability: a need for written and unwritten rules (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu &Pan 2006).

### **Leadership Styles**

Leadership is complex and influenced by relationships, circumstances, personalities, and many additional factors within the realm of the workplace (Murdoch 2013; DeCaro, 2005). Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically (Nwobodo2013; Ajayi 1998). Despite the multitude of definitions that exist on leadership, a popular conceptualization is a person's ability to influence a group of people to achieve a particular goal (Hersey, Blanchard & Natemeyer, 1979; Northouse, 2007). Leadership style is the particular pattern or strategy a leader applies in a particular situation to achieve specific goals of an organisation. Porter (2006) portrays leaders as strategists. According to Bartol (2010), Leadership Style can be defined as a leaders' way of getting things done such as accomplishing goals and set targets. This has either a positive or negative effect on the subordinates. According to Salami (2011), there are three broad categories of leadership styles; Authoritarian or autocratic, Democratic Style, Laissez-Faire (Free Rein Style). This study focuses on two dimensions of leadership styles; transactional and transformational leadership styles and highlights the androgynous leadership styles. Transactional and transformational leadership were first conceptualized by Burns (1978) and later developed by Bass (1984).

### **Transformational Leadership Style**

A transformational leader is a person who stimulates and inspires (transform) followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes (Robbins and Coulter, 2007). Transformational leadership theory is all about leadership that creates positive change in the followers whereby they take care of each other's interests and act in the interests of the group as a whole (Warrilow, 2012). Transformational leaders are leaders who engage with followers, focus on higher order intrinsic needs, and raise consciousness about the significance of specific outcomes and new ways in which those outcomes might be achieved (Hay, 2012). Sometimes charismatic leadership and transformational leadership are used as synonyms, but often charisma is considered a sub dimension of transformational leadership, along with the sub dimensions inspiration, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration (Bass, Avolio & Atwater, 1996). According to Carless (1998), transformational leaders "... articulate a vision, use lateral or non-traditional thinking, encourage individual development, give regular feedback, use participative decision making, and promote a cooperative and trusting work environment."

Studies have shown that managers in different settings, including the military and business found that transformational leaders were evaluated as more effective, higher performers, more promotable than their transactional counterparts, and more interpersonally sensitive (Rubin et al, 2005; Judge and Bono, 2000). Empirical evidence also shows that transformational leadership is strongly correlated with employee work outcomes such as: lower turnover rates, higher level of productivity, employee satisfaction, creativity, goal attainment and follower well-being (Eisenbein and Boerner, 2013; Garcí'a-Morales et al, 2008; Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006; Keller, 1992). According to Belasen & Frank (2012) authors often refer to transformational leadership as a feminine leadership style (e.g. Carless, 1998; Helgesen, 1990; Loden, 1985; Yammarino, Dubinsky, Comer & Jolson, 1997). Research by Hackman, Furniss, Hills and Paterson (1992), however, showed that transformational leadership is associated with both feminine and masculine characteristics, which suggests that transformational leadership is a stereotypically gender-balanced style.

### **Transactional Leadership Style**

Transactional Leadership, also known as managerial leadership, focuses on the role of supervision, organisation, and group performance. Transactional leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader promotes compliance of his followers through both rewards and punishments (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013). Transactional leadership comprises (a) contingent reward, negotiated agreements between leaders and followers about objectives and task requirements and suitable rewards; and (b) monitoring and correcting of, and intervening in, follower performance, called management-by-exception (Bass et. al., 1996). One way that transactional leadership focuses on lower level needs is by stressing specific task performance (Hargis et al, 2001). According to Odumeru & Ogbonna 2013, Transactional leaders tend to be more passive as transformational leaders demonstrate active behaviours that include providing a sense of mission. Transactional leaders use reward and punishments to gain compliance from their followers. They are extrinsic motivators that bring minimal compliance from followers. They accept goals, structure, and the culture of the existing organization. Transactional leaders tend to be directive and action-oriented (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013).

### **The Androgynous Leader**

Through Appelbaum, Audet & Miller (2003), a new dimension to gender role surfaces. They argue that there are three, not two, genders in the mix of variables: male, female and androgynous. Androgyny is an amalgamation of male and female styles. An androgynous leader combines males' traditional characteristics such as dominance, assertiveness, and competitiveness with traditional female's characteristics such as cooperativeness and concern for people. Leadership styles should be varied to meet challenges of different situations. Schein (1989) condemns the entire idea of an androgynous leadership style as a "foolhardy and dangerous one." The accommodation of different leadership styles is an increasingly important issue for today's organizations (Moran 1992).

### **Theoretical Paradigm on Culture and Leadership Styles**

#### **The Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory**

Yoshioka (2006), opined that the situational leadership model defined a leader's leadership style as the combination of strengths of a leader's relationship behavior and task behavior, and a follower's readiness level as the combination of degrees of ability and willingness to accomplish a certain task (Hersey and Blanchard 1969; Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson, 2001). The Situational Leadership model was introduced by Hersey and Blanchard for the first time as the Life Cycle theory in their article in Management and Training in 1969 (Yoshioka, 2006). Their Life Cycle theory claimed that effective leadership styles in organizations were similar to parents' child-raising styles which change corresponding with their children's maturity (Hersey and Blanchard 1969; Blanchard and Hersey 1996; Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson 1996, 2001). Yoshioka, 2006 notes that at a later time, they revised their Life Cycle theory into the Situational Leadership model to suit the workplace, and improved it, first with Situational Leadership and then with Situational Leadership II (Blanchard and Hersey 1996; Hersey et al. 1996, 2001). Hersey and Blanchard revised the Life Cycle Theory as the Situational Leadership model in their Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources in 1972 (Yoshioka 2006).

The Situational Leadership defined a leader's leadership style as the combination of strengths of a leader's relationship behavior and task behavior, and a follower's readiness level as the combination of degrees of the ability and willingness to accomplish a certain task (Yoshioka, 2006). Hanke, (2011) posits that this model is based on the amount of direction (task behavior) and the amount of socio emotional support (relationship behavior) a leader must provide given the situation and the level of "readiness" of the follower or group. Yoshioka (2006), noted that the discovery of these two dimensions greatly influenced later leadership theories to change researcher's perspectives to reflect the two dimensions, although the previous main stream of the leadership theories had focused on only one dimension, a bipolar one stretching between high relation and high task behavior (Hersey and Blanchard 1969)

The Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory takes into cognizance the transactional and transformational leadership styles which are found in both genders in one form or the other. Some researchers are of the opinion that women are more transformational (relationship oriented) while men

are transactional (task oriented). It is important to note that these two leadership styles are not restricted to different cultures, but the situation determines the style a leader uses at a particular time. The logic is that successful transformational leaders need transactional skills to effectively manage day-to-day events (Hooper 2004).

### **Power Distance and Leadership Styles**

Power distance is the dimension of national culture that reflects how people deal with the fact that people are unequal (Hofstede, 1980, 1984, 2001; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) defined power distance as the extent to which less powerful individuals in institutions or organizations of a country accept that the distribution of power is not equal. Dickson et al. (2003) argued that power distance is directly related to leadership since subordinates in high power distance societies are less likely to challenge or disagree with their leaders. Leadership styles are associated with power and status.

Hofstede's holds a view of power distance in workplace, that there are big differences between managers that operate with small power distance and large power distance. In a large power distance situation, superiors and subordinates consider each other as unequal. Organizations centralize power as much as possible in a few hands. Subordinates expect to be told what to do (Hofstede, 2005). Based on the characteristics of transactional leadership identified earlier, transactional leaders seldom give their subordinates personal attention and advices. Besides, their subordinates expect to be told what to do. Based on the factors above, we can see that some characteristics of large power-distance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership style.

In a small power-distance situation, subordinates and superiors consider each other as equal. The ideal boss is a resourceful democrat (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu & Pan 2006). Superiors pay more attention to how to intellectually stimulate the followers' use of their abilities, and their subordinates expect to be consulted. Transformational leaders care more about their subordinates' advices, and they give their subordinates adequate rights to take part in decision-making process. Then we can see that some characteristics of small power-distance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transformational leadership style (Wu & Pan 2006). The employees feel free to contribute ideas, in fact they are creative and innovative and courageously handle tasks.

### **Collectivism/Individualism and Leadership Styles**

Over the years, scholars have investigated the complexity of culture and identified many dimensions along which cultures vary, many of which help in understanding management and managerial practices (Robert, Probst, Martocchio, Drasgow & Lawler, 2000 in Wu & Pan 2006). One of the cultural dimensions that lead to differences in leadership style is that of individualism and collectivism. In collectivist cultures, individuals are generally “interdependent within their groups (family, tribe, nation etc.)” (Triandis, 2001 in Wu & Pan 2006).

Based on Hofstede's view of collectivism versus individualism in workplace, key differences in leadership style between collectivist managers and individualist managers exists. In a collectivist culture, managers stress employees' dependence on the organization. The employer-employee relationship is basically moral, like a family link. Relationship prevails over task (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu & Pan 2006). As a result of the characteristics of transformational leadership identified previously, transformational leaders pay more attention to the relationship between managers and employees, and they care more about their subordinates.

Based on the factors above, we can see that some characteristics of collectivism in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transformational leadership.

Wu & Pan (2006), believe that in an individualist culture, managers stress the employee's independence from the organization. The employer-employee relationship is a contract between parties on a labour market. Management in an individualist society is management of individuals. Task prevails over relationship. If incentives or bonuses are given, these should be linked to an individual's performance (Hofstede, 2001 in Wu & Pan 2006). Transactional leaders generally reward or discipline the follower depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance. An extensive review of studies of individualism at the individual level was published by Oyserman, Coon and Kemmelmeier (2002) as cited in Hofstede (2010).

Accordingly, we can see that some characteristics of individualism in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership style.

### **Femininity/ Masculinity and Leadership Styles**

Osuoha (2002), posits that the Masculinity-Femininity dimension describes the extent to which socially prescribed gender roles are perceived in a society. Masculinity describes "a society in which social sexual roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life" (Hofstede, 1996 in Osuoha, 2002). Femininity describes a society, which has "preference for relationships, modesty, caring for the weak and the quality of life" (Hofstede, 1985 in Osuoha, 2002). Hofstede (2001) in Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010) holds that masculine and feminine cultures create different leader hero types. The heroic manager in masculine cultures is decisive, assertive, and aggressive. In feminine cultures, the “hero” is less visible, seeks consensus, and is intuitive and cooperative rather than tough and decisive.

In a masculine culture, a humanized job should give more opportunities for recognition, advancement and challenge. Besides, organizations in masculine societies stress results and try to reward it on the basis of employees' performance (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu & Pan 2006). Transactional leaders generally reward their subordinates depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance. Therefore, we can see that some characteristics of masculinity in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership.

In a feminine culture, a humanized job should give more opportunities for cooperation and social contacts. This means managers in feminine cultures tend to ask their subordinates for advice and give their subordinates adequate rights to take part in decision-making process. Besides, organizations in feminine societies are more likely to reward people on the basis of equality, that is, to everyone according to need (Hofstede, 2005). Based on the characteristics of transformational leadership identified in the previous chapter, transformational leaders encourage their subordinates to share their ideas with them, and allow them to take part in the decision-making process. Based on these factors mentioned above, we can see that some characteristics of femininity in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transformational leadership style.

### **Uncertainty Avoidance and Leadership Styles**

According to Wu, Pan & Pan (2006), Hofstede's view of uncertainty avoidance in workplace, some differences between individuals with weak uncertainty avoidance and strong uncertainty avoidance are described. In a strong uncertainty avoidance society, managers try to avoid uncertainty and ambiguity by providing stability for their subordinates, establishing more formal rules. They tend to discard deviant ideas and behaviors. There is a strong need for written rules, formalization, regulations and rituals (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu, Pan & Pan, 2006). Based on the characteristics of transactional leadership identified earlier, transactional leaders focus on formal rules, standards, etc; they intervene only if standards are not met. So we can conclude that some characteristics of strong uncertainty avoidance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership style.

In a weak uncertainty avoidance situation, managers more easily accept the uncertainty inherent in the workplace. Thus, they encourage innovation and creation. Besides, managers in weak uncertainty avoidance cultures are more flexible, and depend not as much on experts as on themselves (Hofstede, 2005). According to characteristics of transformational leadership identified earlier, transformational leaders encourage others to be creative in looking at old problems in new ways, and create an environment that is tolerant of seemingly extreme positions. Thus, we can see that some characteristics of weak uncertainty avoidance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transformational leadership style.

### **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010) carried out a research on culture and leadership and discovered that autocratic leadership is more acceptable and effective in high Power Distance societies and that power distance also plays a role in employees'

Willingness to accept supervisory direction, and on their emphasis on gaining support from those in positions of authority. Rosener carried out a research on gender and leadership styles in 1990 and opined that from a gender perspective, male managers have a more transactional leadership style,

while female managers' leadership style could be described more as transformational (Wu & Pan 2006). Vinnecombe and Cames research in 1998 showed that female managers see themselves and their superiors as androgynous; whereas male managers see themselves and their superiors as masculine or feminine (Wu & Pan 2006). On the contrary, Gardiner & Tiggemann 1999 research showed that female manager lead companies in ways that are more similar than different to men in male dominated industries (in Wu & Pan 2006). In a meta-analysis of gender and leadership literature, Eagly and Carli (2003), found that women exhibited more tendencies of transformational or charismatic leadership than did men despite typical stereotypes of women as less effective leaders. US professor Judy Rosener (1990), carried out the first major research that explained findings relating to gender and leadership style, in relation to the 'new paradigm' model of transformational leadership. Studying US corporations, she asserted that women were, generally, more transformational in leadership style, while men, were more transactional. As various researchers (Eagly and Carli, 2003; Young and Hurlic, 2007) have asserted, any substantial leadership style differences between women and men that might exist, should not disadvantage women and can even offer a female advantage. This is because glass ceiling makes it so difficult for women to attain elite leadership positions, thereby making the ones who do make it to tend to be very competent.

Kunkel et-al, (2007) also concluded, that based upon the results of an extensive meta-analysis, there seem to be more support for gender similarities than for differences. One research amongst 201 Norwegian companies found that the leadership styles differed amongst the sexes for specific tasks and situations. They state that women and men do not differ in their ability to perform operational tasks, but rather bring a different perspective to strategic decision-making through their increased sensitivity to others (Nielsen & Huse, 2010). Another research finds that there is no gender difference in effectiveness of board members but there are gender differences in certain behaviours (Yukl, 2002). Another meta-analysis researched other types of leadership such as transformational (being a role model), transactional (reward and punishment) and laissez-faire (neglect of responsibility), and found some provocative findings (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). Women were more likely to show transformational leadership and to give rewards. Men were more likely to exhibit the punishment element of transactional leadership, as well as the laissez-faire style (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). Every individual leader irrespective of gender has a different style and a different approach to the job based on the fact that factors like personality for instance exists.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study is to empirically evaluate the impact of culture on gender predisposition to leadership styles. In order to answer the research questions raised in this study, four hypotheses were formulated concerning the correlation between gender, culture and leadership. With the aim to test the hypotheses, a cross-sectional survey design using a questionnaire was carried out and it provided us with an efficient way of collecting responses from a large sample prior to quantitative analysis. Another reason for conducting a questionnaire is to provide the users of the information with reliable results by using the statistical analysis software SPSS, whose data should be based on the questionnaire. The population in this research comprised the academic and non-academic staff who are in leadership positions at Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku. The total staff strength is eight hundred and eighty seven (887). (Source: Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-uku Personnel records, 2014). The simple random sampling was used for this study. It allowed all participant an equal chance of being selected thus making it possible to draw externally valid conclusions about the entire population based on the sample. This explains why it was adopted for this study. Taro Yamen's formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \text{ with a level of significance of 0.05, was used to calculate the sample size (276). Two}$$

hundred and seventy six (276) employees were selected at random from the various departments of the organization. A survey using a closed ended questionnaire based on the four hypotheses

A five- point Likert scale was used. Response choices ranges from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. For each factor item, respondents were asked to indicate on the five-point scale their level of agreement for each factor. The levels are: 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = undecided 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Leadership was measured with twenty-one items from the Multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) measured on a five point Likert type scale using Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.96 as contained in the study done by Wu & Pan, 2006. An example of the item is ‘my leader makes others feel good to work with him/her’. The questions on culture were generated from Hofstede’s Cultural Value Scale also using a five point Likert type scale and has Cronbach Alpha reliability of 0.63 for power distance, 0.81 for uncertainty avoidance, collectivism and individualism, 0.61 for masculinity and femininity.

### **Data Presentation and Analysis**

Simple linear regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The researcher distributed a total of two hundred and seventy-six questionnaire to the assessable population representing 100% of the total population spread across the sixteen departments/ units of Delta State Polytechnic Ogwashi-Uku. Out of this, a total of one hundred and eighty-two (182) was successfully retrieved representing 65.9% of the total sample population. This figure represents 65.9% of the total population, which is sufficient and acceptable for generalization of the findings according to Abdullah (2010). This was subjected to further analysis that resulted in generalization and conclusion.

### **Background Characteristics of Respondents**

The data gotten from the field work using sixteen leaders in sixteen departments/ units of Delta State polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku, Comprising 9 male leaders and 7 female leaders are presented below, and shows the background characteristics of the respondents

**Table1.** Showing background Characteristics of Respondents

Background variables	Number of respondents	Percentage (%) of sample population (182) being analyzed.
<b>GENDER:</b>		
Female	84	46.2%
Male	98	53.8%
<b>AGE:</b>		
Below 30	41	22.5%
31-40	67	36.8%
Above 40	74	40.7%
<b>MARITAL STATUS:</b>		
Single	56	30.8%
Married	126	69.2%
<b>EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:</b>		
Secondary School	47	25.8%
N.C.E/ Polytechnic	52	28.6%
B.Sc. Degree	59	32.4%
Master’s Degree	24	13.2%
<b>YEARS WORKED:</b>		
1-5	48	26.3%
6-10	76	41.8%
Above 10	<b>58</b>	31.9%
<b>GENDER OF BOSS</b>		
Male	98	53.8%
Female	84	46.2%

**Source:** Distributed Questionnaire

### **Hypotheses Testing**

The decision rule for the hypothesis testing stated that if the p (probability) value calculated is greater than the critical level of significance which is been set at 0.05 (5%), the null hypothesis will then be accepted but if the p (probability) value of 0.000 is less than the critical value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), this will call for the rejection of the stated null hypothesis in favor the alternative given that there is a statistical significance (Gujarati & Porter, 2009) in the given parameter. The p (probability) is the least significant level at which a null hypothesis can be rejected. It is seen as the exact probability of committing a type one error.

**Hypothesis One (HO<sub>1</sub>):** Power distance has no significant relationship with leadership styles.

**Table2.** Showing the Result for the Test of Hypothesis One

**HO<sub>1a</sub>:** Power distance has no significant relationship with transformational leadership style.

**Table2.1.** Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	102.628	2.277		45.077	.000
	powerdistance	-5.078	.206	-.879	-24.697	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transformational leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

**HO<sub>1b</sub>:** Power distance has no significant relationship with transactional leadership style

**Table2.2.** Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	4.437	.580		7.645	.000
	Power distance	1.631	.052	.918	31.115	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transactional leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 shows that the exact level of significance (0.000) is less than the critical value (0.05). This means that the null hypothesis as stated in HO<sub>1a</sub> and HO<sub>1b</sub> should be rejected and the alternate hypothesis that states that Power distance has a significant positive relationship with leadership styles should be accepted.

**Hypothesis Two (HO<sub>2</sub>):** There is no relationship between individualism and collectivism and leadership styles.

**Table3.** Showing the Result for the Test of Hypothesis Two

**HO<sub>2a1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between individualism and transformational leadership style.

**Table3.1.** Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	98.936	1.201		82.354	.000
	Individualism	-4.979	.112	-.957	-44.285	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transformational leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

**(HO<sub>2a2</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between individualism and transactional leadership style.

**Table3.2.** coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	6.604	.438		15.087	.000
	Individualism	1.502	.041	.939	36.653	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transactional leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

**(HO<sub>2b1</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between collectivism and transformational leadership style.

**Table3.3.** coefficients

Model		Un standardize Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	4.094	1.111		3.685	.000
	Collectivism	4.757	.109	.956	43.513	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transformational leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

( $H_0_{2b2}$ ) There is no significant relationship between collectivism and transactional leadership styles.

**Table3.4. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	34.922	.460		75.956	.000
	Collectivism	-1.405	.045	-.918	-31.048	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transactional leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 have same level of significance and reveals that the exact level of significance (0.000) is less than the critical value (0.05). There is the need therefore to accept the alternate hypothesis that states that there is a significant relationship between individualism and collectivism and leadership styles instead of the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between individualism and collectivism and leadership styles.

**Hypothesis three ( $H_0_3$ ):** There is no significant relationship between femininity/masculinity and leadership styles.

**Table4. Showing the Result for the Test of Hypothesis Three**

$H_0_{3a1}$ . There is no significant relationship between femininity and transformational leadership styles.

**Table4.1. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	12.454	.620		20.090	.000
	Femininity	4.062	.062	.980	66.020	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transformational leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

$H_0_{3a2}$ . There is no significant relationship between femininity and transactional leadership styles.

**Table4.2. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	32.128	.391		82.259	.000
	Femininity	-1.163	.039	-.913	-30.001	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transactional leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

$H_0_{3b1}$ . There is no significant relationship between masculinity and transformational leadership styles.

**Table4.3. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	100.705	1.329		75.754	.000
	Masculinity	-5.059	.123	-.951	-41.245	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transformationalleadershipstyle						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

$H_0_{3b2}$ . There is no significant relationship between masculinity and transactional leadership styles.

**Table4. 4. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	7.089	.646		10.974	.000
	Masculinity	1.426	.060	.872	23.928	.000
a. Dependent Variable: transactional leadership style						

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 above have same level of significance and reveals that the exact level of significance (0.000) is less than the critical value (0.05). There is the need therefore to accept the alternate hypothesis that states that there is a significant relationship between femininity/masculinity and leadership styles, instead of the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant positive relationship between femininity/masculinity and leadership styles.

**Hypothesis Four (Ho<sub>4</sub>):** Uncertainty avoidance is not significantly related to leadership style.

**Table5.** Showing the Result for the Test of Hypothesis Four

**Ho<sub>4a</sub>** Uncertainty avoidance is not significantly related to transactional leadership style.

**Table5.1.** Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	6.607	.997	6.625	.000
	Uncertainty avoidance	4.538	.098		
a. Dependent Variable: transactional leadership style					

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

**Ho4b Uncertainty avoidance is not significantly related to transformational leadership style.**

**Table5.2.** Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	33.519	.535	62.697	.000
	Uncertainty avoidance	-1.269	.053		
a. Dependent Variable: transformational leadership style					

**Source:** Analysis of Field Survey, 2014.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 have same level of significance and reveals that the exact level of significance (0.000) is less than the critical value (0.05). There is the need therefore to accept the alternate hypothesis that states that there is a significant positive relationship between uncertainty avoidance and leadership styles.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis was done using two dimensions of leadership styles which was the dependent variable. The independent variables were Hofstede’s cultural dimensions as proposed in the research questions and hypothesis. These dimensions had two different ends/side; low and high level. These dimensions were analyzed with respect to their relationship with the dependent variable. Below are the findings of the analysis as regards the research questions;

### What is the Impact of Power Distance on Leadership Styles?

It was found that power distance was more related to transactional leadership style than transformational leadership styles, which showed that there was little relationship between both variables. In other words, low power distance was related to transformational leadership style. 77.1% (0.771) change in transformational leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of power distance. 84.2% (0.824) change in transactional leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of power distance.

These findings are in line with results from some researchers like Wu and Pan, 2010; Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010). According to Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010), Power distance also plays a role in employees’ willingness to accept supervisory direction, and on their emphasis on gaining support from those in positions of authority.

According to Wu and Pan (2006), some characteristics of small power-distance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transformational leadership style, the employees feel free to contribute ideas, in fact they are creative and innovative and courageously handle tasks.

### To What Extent does Individualism and Collectivism Affect Leadership Styles

The analysis showed that individualism was more related to transactional leadership style than transformational leadership styles, which showed that there was little relationship between both

individualism and transformational leadership styles. In the case of collectivism, findings showed that collectivism was more related to transformational leadership styles, which showed that there was little relationship transactional leadership style and collectivism. In other words, 91.5% (0.915) change in transformational leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of individualism, while 88.1% (0.881) change in transactional leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of individualism. 91.3% (0.913) change in transformational leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of collectivism, also 84.2% (0.842),  $P < 0.01$  change in transactional leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of collectivism. According to Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010), collectivism positively affects the role of participative leadership and supports transformational leaders. In a collectivist culture, managers stress employees' dependence on the organization. The employer-employee relationship is basically moral, like a family link. Relationship prevails over task (Hofstede, 2005 in Wu & Pan 2006). According to Wu and Pan (2006), characteristics of transformational leadership identified previously, transformational leaders pay more attention to the relationship between managers and employees, and they care more about their subordinates. Wu & Pan 2006 carried out similar research and discovered that some characteristics of individualism in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership style. According

According to Wu & Pan (2006), in an individualist culture, managers stress the employee's independence from the organization. The employer-employee relationship is a contract between parties on a labour market. Management in an individualist society is management of individuals. Task prevails over relationship. If incentives or bonuses are given, these should be linked to an individual's performance (Hofstede, 2001 in Wu & Pan 2006). Transactional leaders generally reward or discipline the follower depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance.

### **What is the Relationship between Feminity/Masculinity and Leadership Styles?**

It was found that feminity was more related to transformational leadership styles than transactional leadership style. Masculinity was more related to transactional leadership style than transformational leadership styles. Results from the regression analysis showed that, which showed that there was little relationship between both variables. In other words 88.1% (0.881) change in transactional leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of feminity and 90.4% (0.904),  $P < 0.01$  change in transformational leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of masculinity. 76.1% (0.761) change in transactional leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of masculinity. Hofstede (2001) in Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010) holds that masculine and feminine cultures create different leader hero types. The heroic manager in masculine cultures is decisive, assertive, and aggressive. In feminine cultures, the “hero” is less visible, seeks consensus, and is intuitive and cooperative rather than tough and decisive.

### **What is the Relationship between Uncertainty Avoidance and Leadership Styles?**

It was found that Uncertainty avoidance was more related to transactional leadership styles than transformational leadership styles. In other words Uncertainty avoidance was strongly related to transactional leadership style. 92.2% (0.922),  $P < 0.01$  change in transactional leadership style (coefficient of determination) is as a result of uncertainty avoidance, 76.3% (0.763) change in transformational leadership style coefficient of determination) is as a result of uncertainty avoidance. Wu & Pan (2006) carried out a research on culture and leadership styles and discovered that transactional leaders focus on formal rules, standards, they intervene the idea only if standards are not met. They concluded that some characteristics of strong uncertainty avoidance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership style.

Wu & Pan also discovered that in a weak uncertainty avoidance situation, managers more easily accept the uncertainty inherent in workplace. Thus, they encourage innovation and creation and concluded that some characteristics of weak uncertainty avoidance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transformational leadership style.

## **SUMMARY**

As it has been discussed throughout this paper, the important role of culture on the style of leadership a leader uses at any point in time cannot be over emphasized. The general objective of this study was to access the impact of culture on leadership styles in organizations. Transformational leadership

styles and transactional leadership styles were explored and the responses from subordinates who had female leaders differed from those who had males as their leader. It was discovered that the males were more transactional than the females who happened to be more transformational than the males this was similar to results obtained from some researches in this area (Wu & Pan, 2006; Engen & Willemsen, 2001; Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013), which showed that gender was significantly related to leadership styles. The first specific objective was to ascertain the impact of power distance on leadership style. Results from the data collected and analyzed showed that the male leaders had a high power distance with respect to leading their subordinates while the women had lower power distance. This was similar to the result obtained from Wu & Pan 2006. High power distance was related to transactional leadership styles and low power distance transformational leadership styles. The second specific objective was to establish the effect of individualism and collectivism on leadership style. It was discovered that individualism was linked to the male leaders and collectivism to the females. Also, transactional leadership style shared same characteristics as individualism while transformational leadership shared similar characteristics as individualism.

The third specific objective was to determine the relationship between femininity and masculinity and leadership styles. Female leaders were linked with femininity which was in turn connected closely with transformational leadership style, the male leaders were connected significantly to masculinity and transactional leadership styles. The last specific objective was to assess the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and leadership styles. Contrary to Wu and Pan 2006, findings in this study linked high uncertainty avoidance to women and low uncertainty avoidance to men which made the male leaders transformational than the females in terms of uncertainty avoidance. Based on the results of the survey, the researcher will make recommendations regarding possible areas of improvement. These improvements may prove to be beneficial to the overall health of the organizations.

## **CONCLUSION**

Following the successful effort of the researcher in studying the effect of culture on leadership styles, the under listed inferences can be drawn from this research. It is pertinent to note that the style of leadership adopted by a manager is central to the growth and development of any organization. The research questions were addressed as seen in the discussion of findings.

The first research question: What is the impact of power distance on leadership styles? Led to the discovery that power distance was more related to transactional leadership style than transformational leadership styles, which showed that there was little relationship between both variables. Which was similar to other findings as in Wu and Pan, 2010; Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010).

When there is small power-distance between leaders and subordinates makes employees close to leaders in terms of leadership style and shares similarities with those of transformational leadership style. The subordinates are liberal and do not hoard ideas and opinions, they are creative and innovative and courageously handle tasks. As a result of low power distance females listen better than males and are hence more emotionally intelligent than males. The females are more transformational than males as they have low power distance between them and subordinates.

The second research question; to what extent does individualism and collectivism affect leadership styles?

In the case of collectivism, we could conclude that collectivism was more related to transformational leadership styles based on the findings of this research, which showed that there was little relationship transactional leadership style and collectivism. While individualism is related to transactional leadership styles. This result is similar to those of Gholamreza, T., Davood, S. & Ali, T. (2010), Wu & Pan (2006) whose result of similar research shows that collectivism positively affects the role of participative leadership and supports transformational leaders, and some characteristics of individualism in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership style. Task prevails over relationship. Transactional leaders generally reward or discipline the follower depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance.

The third question; what is the relationship between femininity/masculinity and leadership styles? Yielded similar result to Wu & Pan (2006). It was found that femininity was more related to transformational leadership styles than transactional leadership style. Female leaders were found to be more transformational than their male counterparts. Masculinity was more related to transactional

leadership style than transformational leadership styles. We therefore conclude that females are more transformational than the males who appear to be strongly linked with the transactional leadership style.

The fourth research question; what is the relationship between uncertainty avoidance and leadership styles? Was addressed and findings led to the conclusion that low uncertainty avoidance was related to transformational leadership styles and strong uncertainty avoidance was linked with transactional leadership style. This is synonymous to the conclusion of Wu & Pan (2006) in a research on culture and leadership styles which showed that some characteristics of strong uncertainty avoidance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transactional leadership style.

Wu & Pan 2006 also discovered that in a weak uncertainty avoidance situation, managers more easily accept the uncertainty inherent in workplace. Thus, they encourage innovation and creation and concluded that some characteristics of weak uncertainty avoidance in terms of leadership style share similarities with those of transformational leadership style.

All the null hypothesis were rejected according to our results. As regards culture, low power distance, low uncertainty avoidance, collectivism and femininity were found to be positively associated with transformational leadership style. High power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, individualism and masculinity were found to be positively associated with transactional leadership style. It seems that transformational leadership style is perceived as a more effective leadership style in the face of overwhelming competition in international business. Nevertheless it is important to note that no leadership style is superior or better than the others. The situation and readiness level of the employees according to the Hersey Blanchard situational theory, determines the suitable style for each scenario. Accordingly, we may conclude that gender and culture has an impact on leadership styles.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The primary recommendation is for organizations to recognize the importance of both males and females and not treat them unequally. They both contribute in one way or the other to development. Females should be encouraged and given the opportunity to acquire education in order for the economy at large to benefit tremendously from their potentials. Leaders should apply any suitable style that seems appropriate for a given situation.

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