Learning to Lead: The Social Nature of Women's Development in Sport Leadership

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Abstract

Despite the ubiquitous political and educational strategies aimed at redressing gender inequality in sport in Australia for the past 30 years, the number of women in sport in decision-making and leadership positions has remained low when compared to men. While a number of studies have explored women's under-representation in sport leadership roles, there is limited understanding of how women practice sport leadership and how they develop as leaders. To address this gap in the literature, this study took a humanistic approach to account for, and consider, the nature of experience and the influence of context. This study sought to provide a more personal, nuanced, and socially situated understanding of how women practiced and learned to lead in sport.

An interpretive qualitative research design framed by a social constructivist lens was used for this study to examine 23 women's accounts of what constituted and framed their leadership practices, including how they learned leadership from their engagement in day-to-day social practices and life experiences over time. Data for this study were generated through in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with each of the participants over a period of two years. A multi-case study approach was used to analyse the data.

It was found that the participants' leadership practice featured distinctive feminine characteristics. However, for those participants at the elite level their approaches to leadership were characterised by interaction that seemed to be traditional masculine features of leadership with the participants' "core" feminine approaches to leadership. The participants' leadership practice focused on social interaction and relationship building underpinned by a strong sense of moral and ethical values. Key features included collaborative decision-making, taking a team-oriented approach, using open dialogue, valuing relationships and caring about others, and positive modelling. The model of authentic leadership offered a useful way of conceptualising how the participants' approached their practice of leadership.

An examination of the participants' accounts of their experiences of the ways they learned their leadership highlighted that leadership development for these women was a relational and social process of learning over a lifelong journey that was influenced by individual, personal experience situated within larger socio-cultural contexts. The relational nature of

the participants' learning of leadership was fundamentally connected to, and drawn from their interactions and interplay within their day-to-day social practices and life experiences from their early childhood through to their adulthood. The findings of study revealed that a range of past and present experiences and social factors influenced and shaped the participants' values and beliefs about their leadership practice such as the development of their awareness and self-belief in their ability, the value of relationship building, and development of strength of character associated with resilience. This study also identified the significance of the informal social nature of the development of leadership through the participants' "lived" experiences but also recognised the importance of some formal learning in developing the human capital aspects of the participants' leadership.

Findings from this study have contributed to the relatively small body of literature concerned with the examination of leadership practice and learning leadership for women in a context of sport. This study has drawn attention to the different sets of relationships that women draw on to develop their leadership practice from a young age through to their adulthood, and has highlighted the multidimensional role of relational dynamics in the construction of leadership. This study has also illustrated the importance of experiential and situated learning that occurs during the formative years through to adulthood in terms of developing women's social skills and social awareness. These findings have implications for the way in which women's sport leadership practice is viewed and encourages a rethinking on how affirmative action policies address the leadership developed for women in sport in Australia.

Statement of Authorship

Except where explicit reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma. No other person's work has been relied upon or used without due acknowledgement in the main text and bibliography of the thesis.

Signed: _____   Signed: _____

Dated: ___12/12/2014___   Dated: ___12/12/2014.___

Suzanne J. Brown   Professor Richard Light

Candidate   Principal Supervisor

succeed, especially when faced with adversity and challenges. And finally, to my parents, Eric and Maureen, I hope I have made them proud.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and purpose of the study

In May 2012, *The Australian* published a list of the 50 most influential people in Australian sport, and only four females made that list, one of which was the horse, Black Caviar. In the same issue, journalist Nicole Jeffery wrote an article in response to the lack of women's presence in *The Australian's* list of most influential people in Australian sport, concluding that "Despite the many achievements of leading female athletes, sport remains a man's world in coaching, in administration and in the media" (as cited in Brown & Light, 2012, p.185).

As a woman with previous involvement in the sport management industry as an employee and volunteer, and now involved in educating the next generation of sport administrators in the higher education system, this example of publicity is troubling and of concern. Unfortunately this is not uncommon with numerous articles in the media publicly ignoring the value and contribution women make toward sport. Women have long been under-represented in decision-making and leadership roles in sport in Australia. The number of women in sport leadership positions (23% for women as board members on national sporting organisations) (Australian Sports Commission, 2011) is disproportionately low when compared to the makeup of the Australian workforce population (79% males and 65.2% females during 2012/2013) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014).

Despite the ubiquitous political and educational strategies aimed at redressing gender inequity in sport, sport continues to be dominated by men and masculinity, making it extremely challenging for women to reach the highest echelons of sport regardless of their credentials (Anderson, 2009; Burton, 2014; Greenhill, Auld, Cuskelly, & Hooper, 2009: Shaw, 2006; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003; Sibson, 2010). Indeed, Kentel (2012) described gender equity in sport as a myth, arguing that despite decades of political and educational strategies aimed at redressing gender inequity, the status quo remained impenetrable.

For over three decades past governments and sport bodies in Australia have failed to redress the under-representation of women in sport. This situation remains despite the introduction of gender equity policies and affirmative action programs since 1987 with the adoption of the first *National Policy and Plan for Women in Sport* by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC). This failure led the Australian Federal Government in 2006 to conduct a Senate inquiry into women in sport and recreation in Australia with one of the terms of reference specifically focused on women in leadership roles in sport. It was not surprising that the inquiry found that women remained under-represented in leadership and decision-making positions in organised sport in the professional and voluntary sectors in Australia. A number of barriers were identified as hindering the advancement of women in leadership roles. In response to these findings, the Senate Committee made three recommendations specifically focused on providing education and training opportunities for women in the area of leadership (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006).

Four years after the Federal Government's Senate enquiry, very little had changed, with women still significantly under-represented in leadership and decision-making roles across all levels of sport in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). In particular, women had low levels of representation in the management of sport as paid executive officers, as board members, and as coaches and referees (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The ASC reported that the representation of women on the boards of government funded national sporting organisations (NSO) in Australia in 2010 was at 23% (ASC, 2011). Eight years after the Federal Government's Senate enquiry, the Sydney Scorecard reported in 2014 that women as Board of Directors on NSOs was at 28.69%, this was an increase from the 2009-2012 data reported at 22.25% (International Working Group in Women and Sport, 2014). However, while women as Board of Directors experienced an increase in 2013-2014, the number of Women as Board Chairs on NSOs had decreased from 20% in 2009-2012 to 11.54% in 2013-2014. Women as Chief Executives of NSOs also decreased from 20.83% in 2009-2012 to 18% in 2013-2014 (International Working Group in Women and Sport).

While it appears to be difficult for women to break into positions of leadership in sport across all levels in Australia, the industry is at a crisis point as it struggles to meet the growing demands of the delivery of sport (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009). In Australia, the sport system relies heavily on the leadership of volunteers and employed staff to govern and facilitate the delivery of sport across Australia (Cuskelly, Hoye, & Auld, 2006; Hoye, Smith, Nicholson, Stewart, & Westerbeck, 2012; Shilbury & Kellett, 2011). Within the context of growing concern with lifestyle diseases such as obesity, type II diabetes, and cardio-vascular disease, the Federal Government's sport policy in Australia has aimed at increasing participation in sport and physical activity (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). However, there is a trend showing a steady decline in the number of volunteers in the Australian sport sector, dropping from 10 percent in 2007 to nine percent in 2010 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010).

The next decade or so will likely see a significant expansion in sport and other physical activity participation due to population increases and the effects of the Federal Government's sport policy (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). This expected increase in participation, however, will occur in the face of declining volunteer numbers in sport, as well as demands for more professional delivery and financial sustainability (ASC, 2008b; Commonwealth of Australia, 2009). These developments place pressure on the sport industry not only to maintain but also to recruit and develop more volunteers and employed staff to move into leadership positions.

1.2 Women's leadership

One critical area of leadership that has received limited research attention is how women practice leadership and how they develop as leaders. Within the broader context of research on gender equity in leadership and recognition of the dominance of a masculine approach, there has been an increased interest in gender-specific ways in which women lead (Rosener, 1990; Sinclair, 2005). While there is a growing body of research focusing upon women in the business sector using a transformational model of leadership (see, Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller, 2003; Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996; Burke & Collins, 2001; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Rosener, 1990; Van Engen &

Willemsen, 2004), very little is known about the style of leadership women practice in sport.

Since 2000, a number of studies have been conducted on women's leadership in sport in an attempt to explain women's under-representation in leadership roles. The majority of these studies have focused on factors limiting women's success and/or the choices available to them to engage in leadership roles. For example, the success of the "old boys" network, women's lack of networks, limited professional opportunities for women, a lack of support systems for women, lack of self-confidence, perceived lack of women mentors and role models, and family responsibilities and commitments have all been identified by women as key barriers for women's under-representation in coaching and administration positions (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007; Edwards, Skinner, & O'Keeffe, 2000; Hovden, 2000b; Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore, 2000; Pfister & Radtke, 2006, 2009; Shaw, 2006; Wensing, 2000). Although this body of research has provided important knowledge about women's leadership, it has only examined one aspect of a complex issue.

Furthermore, there appears to be limited understanding of how women learn to be leaders. While there is a growing interest appearing in the research literature in leadership development, Stead and Elliott (2009) argued that the literature is "gender neutral" and has failed to adequately represent women's experiences of becoming leaders. They suggested that the literature "sustains narrow and shallow understandings of leadership development that have limited relevance to women leaders" (p.29). The lack of empirical research into women's leadership practice and how they develop as leaders, highlights the need for further critical examination. In particular, if the dilemma of women's under-representation in decision-making and leadership roles in Australian sport is to be addressed with more women being encouraged to develop their leadership, there is a need to understand how women practice leadership, and how it is constructed over time.

1.3 My background

As the researcher of this study, and to assist in adopting a reflexive approach (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002), it is important to share my

background and experiences in the introduction chapter. This information is aimed at providing the reader with an insight into how my previous experiences, knowledge, and dispositions have shaped my perspective and motivation for undertaking this study. It is also important to provide context for the circumstances that led me to the topic of women's leadership being investigated in this study.

Sport, in some capacity, has played an enormous role in my life since I was a child. At the young age of 10, I was heavily involved in the sport of ballroom dancing at a national level. To compete at an elite level, similar to gymnastics, required a demanding training schedule with up to 25 hours of weekly practice. At the age of 14, I became disillusioned with what I thought was the pretentious culture of the sport. To the disappointment of my parents and dance teachers, I walked away from dancing for a sport that was not based on subjective judgment but, instead, on "black and white" athletic performance. Although I never reached the same level of success competing in athletics as I enjoyed in dancing, it gave me a far greater sense of achievement than dancing did. I put that down to the fact that in athletics, I had to work extremely hard to achieve such small gains in performance and I enjoyed the personal satisfaction arising from challenging myself and striving to achieve. It was through my involvement in athletics where I eventually met my husband and continued to compete as a middle distance runner into my mid-30s.

In regard to my educational background, I made the choice not to pursue higher education while in my later years at secondary school in the late 1970s. At the time, I was undecided about what I wanted to pursue as a career and saw no value in going on to complete a degree in an area that I wasn't interested in or had no intentions of working in. This led me to make the decision to leave school at the end of year 11 at the age of 17 to work in a banking institution. It was during my employment in the early 1980s with the bank that I became acutely aware of gender discrimination in the workplace where junior males were promoted into more senior roles despite their lack of experience or display of competency. Female employees with years of experience were constantly overlooked with an acceptable assumption that females were not given opportunities for promotion as they would eventually leave the organisation once they were married to start a family. I became

frustrated with the injustice of the situation and left the bank after two years to experience the same attitude at a Local Government Authority (LGA). Unaware at the time, I had entered into an institution that appeared to be a "sacred" bastion of male privilege. I was the first female to be appointed as head cashier in the history of the LGA's existence and was constantly reminded by a male colleague that I was only second choice behind a male for the position who "unfortunately" declined an offer for the position to take up a better offer elsewhere. During the three years I was employed by the LGA, I once again witnessed males receiving promotions while females appeared to stagnate in their "mundane" clerical positions.

At the age of 25, I was no longer working at the LGA, and had become a mother with three sons (all under the age of three), I continued to be involved in athletics as a competitor and club captain, and began teaching as a professional ballroom dance teacher. While I enjoyed and valued my time being a young mother and bringing up a family in my early 20s, deep down I regretted not having gained a higher education degree. In the early 1990s, my husband and I made a significant decision to change our "city" lifestyle and move to the country for his employment and to provide our three young sons with a "country" environment to grow up in. While initially I struggled with the change and deeply missed my support network (family and friends), I had the opportunity and time with the support of my husband to complete a higher educational degree in Human Movement and Sport Science, an area I was interested in and passionate about.

While completing the degree as a full-time student, in my second year of studies I also started working part-time for a regional sports assembly, a not-for-profit organisation that looked at addressing regional issues impacting on participation in sport and physical activity. My studies and work at the regional sports assembly not only opened my mind intellectually but also awakened my interest in gender in sport. This interest began to grow as I developed and coordinated a program in primary schools specifically targeting girls in a bid to increase their level of enjoyment and confidence in participating in sport.

At the completion of my Honours degree, I went on to full-time employment at the regional sports assembly in the role of Executive Officer until 2002 where I became an academic staff member and Lecturer of Sport Management at the University of Ballarat. Shortly after my appointment at the University, I was contacted by a former colleague who knew of my previous work with the sports assembly and my interest in promoting opportunities for girls and women in sport, to encourage me to apply for a government research grant evaluating the Victorian State Government's Women in Sport leadership program.

That one phone call heralded the beginning of a journey into the maze of leadership theories on style and leadership development, in particular for women. I took up the opportunity to conduct a three-year research project evaluating the impact of the State Government's leadership program for women in the sport sector. As the principal researcher, I had the opportunity to be involved in evaluating the Victorian State Government's grant scheme during 2003-2005. The research provided me not only with the opportunity to gather additional data looking at the style of leadership practice in the sport sector but it also allowed me to gain an insight into the processes involved in a women's leadership development program and an excellent opportunity to examine women's leadership through the lens of the government's affirmative action intervention. This work has formed the basis for my doctorate.

After completing the research project for the State Government, I was contacted by the Federal Government seeking my interest in evaluating the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) women's leadership program. I went on to assemble a research team in 2005 and again in 2008 to evaluate the impact of the ASC's Sport Leadership Grants program for women in the sport sector. I am proud to say the findings of the evaluation conducted in 2008 were used to support the decision for the Federal Government to keep the program going, and also led to the program receiving significantly more funding from another government department.

When I reflect back on my early days of employment, I realise how unfair and unjust the attitude towards women in the workplace was while men enjoyed the privilege of

employment advancement. No one ever questioned such actions or attitudes; they were just accepted as the norm. Thanks to the determination of the feminist movement in provoking the introduction of equal opportunity laws, women now enjoy better prospects in the workforce than I and many others experienced in the 1980s. Even with the presence of equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination laws in Australia for the past 30 years, my own experience encourages me to think that we still have a way to go within the sporting industry in regard to reaching gender equity in positions of influence, in the face of masculine domination. Indeed, from the beginning of sport in nineteenth century England, its values and practices have been shaped by masculine hegemony (Connell, 2005).

Since the early 2000s, I have sat on a number of regional boards and advisory committees related to sport and physical activity. In most cases, memberships on these boards and committees have been dominated by men, and on a number of occasions I have found myself being the only woman member. During this time, I have experienced both ends of the continuum with being supported in a positive, collegial, and respected working environment, to being treated as the "token women" and deliberately being marginalised with my comments consistently ignored. There have even been a few instances when it has been assumed by male board members that my sole purpose and role on the board was to record the minutes of the meeting and make tea and coffee for everyone. I am glad to say that in more recent times those negative experiences are becoming less frequent and I have received wonderful support and respect from my male colleagues. Nevertheless, I still have concern that when the discussion of having more female representatives on boards is raised, I am constantly reminded by male board members that they, "would love to appoint more women on our boards but simply there aren't any women available to take up these positions." I do find these comments to some degree quite frustrating when I know there are a number of women out in the community who are more than capable and would make a positive contribution to a number of boards I have sat on. My real frustration is that we need these women to have more confidence in their ability and be prepared to promote themselves into positions of leadership.

1.4 Objectives of the study

In response to the gap in the literature on women's leadership in sport, this study has sought to understand how women practice and learn leadership within a sporting context by exploring the accounts of women leaders' experiences within the Australian sport system across community (local clubs and regional sport associations) and elite (state and national sporting organisations) levels in the state of Victoria. Specifically, this study has addressed the following central question:

> *What are women's approaches to sport leadership practice, and in what ways do they learn to lead this way?*

The principal unit of analysis for this study was the women who were recipients of the Victorian State Government's Women in Sport Leadership (WISL) program during 2003, 2004, and 2005. In recognition of the under-representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles in sport, in 2003 the Victorian State Government introduced a women's leadership grant scheme in their attempt to increase the number of women in leadership and decision-making positions in the sport and recreation industry in the state of Victoria. The WISL program targeted women who were involved in sport at various levels (club, regional, state, and national) in some form of leadership role with the aim of providing them with the opportunity to increase their skill and knowledge levels to assist their leadership capacity.

While Stead and Elliott (2009) argued that gender has a significant and fundamental impact on women leaders, it has not been the main focus of this study to examine gender and power in relation to the participants' experiences of leadership practice and how they have learned to become leaders over time. Instead, this study has used a social constructivist theoretical framework to explore how women learn and practise leadership within a sport context from their engagement in day-to-day social practices and life experiences over their lives in sport and sport leadership. Importantly, it conceives that the development as a sport leader as being a process of learning that is explicit and implicit, occurring at conscious and non-conscious levels, and as a lifelong process. The study utilised an interpretive qualitative research design and a multiple-case study approach to explore

beneath the surface of the ways in which women lead in sport, and to understand how their leadership approach was constructed through, and shaped by, social experience. Data for this study were generated through in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with each of the participants over a period of two years, and the collection of key relevant documents such as the participant's grant applications and final reports.

1.5 Delimitations

This study was limited to recipients of the Victorian State Government's Women in Sport Leadership (WISL) program during 2003, 2004, and 2005. The participants in the study came from a variety of not-for-profit sporting organisations from local, regional, state, and national levels based in the state of Victoria. These women were chosen for this study because of their involvement in the WISL program which targeted women who were operating in a sport leadership role. No claims for significance of the study beyond these delimitations will be made.

1.6 Rationale for the study

In an attempt to achieve a more equitable balance of women leaders and decision-makers in sport in Australia, there is no doubt that more research needs to be undertaken in this area to understand what constitutes and frames women's leadership practices, including how they learn to be leaders. This study endeavoured to make a significant and meaningful contribution to the development and generation of knowledge about women's leadership experiences in sport and how the capacity of women as leaders and decision-makers in sport can be developed.

The knowledge gained through this study contributes to existing theories on leadership models specifically in relation to women, and provides some insight into the style of leadership adopted by women in the sport environment. It has also aimed to contribute toward knowledge on leadership development in relation to women in sport. From a more practical perspective, the findings from this study may serve as a guide for future decisions

about leadership programs and training for women in the sport domain provided by state and federal governments, and sporting organisations.

1.7 Outline of thesis

The following chapter provides the background on how sport in Australia has evolved over time, and what government intervention has taken place to address gender inequity in decision-making and leadership roles in sport. Chapter 3 reviews the literature on leadership theories, leadership development, and women's leadership. Chapter 4 provides an explanation for the theoretical framework used for the study. It describes and justifies the research design and methodology used including recruitment of participants and data analysis. Subsequent chapters (5, 6, 7 and 8) present the findings of the study and provide a brief discussion at the conclusion of each chapter. Drawing on these four chapters, chapter 9 provides a discussion and conclusion of the findings, identifies the major limitations, explains the implications for theory and for women's leadership development, and makes recommendations for future research.

2. The Australian Sport System and Government Sport Policies: An Historical Context

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the history of sport in Australia and how it has evolved over time in order to place the current study of women's experiences of leadership practices and development in context. The chapter includes a brief overview of the present Australian sport system and discusses how it has been shaped over time into a culture that privileges masculinity. This chapter endeavours to provide an historical account of important events and policy development relating to sport and gender. Finally, the impact of affirmative action and policies on women's leadership in sport is discussed.

2.1 The evolution of the Australian sports system

The Australian sporting landscape has been transformed since the early 1970s with many of the structural changes being aligned to government involvement (Phillips & Magdalinski, 2008). With the financial support from the government, the Australian sport system has evolved into a complex federated network of approximately 30,000 professional and not-for-profit voluntary sport organisations across national, state, regional, and local levels (Hoye & Nicholson, 2010).

Prior to the 1970s, the foundation of Australian sport was the not-for-profit, amateur club-based sport system that was primarily managed and delivered by volunteers who received minimal Federal Government support (Nicholson, Peters, Smith, Stewart, & Westerbeck, 2004). From an historical context, the phenomenon of voluntarism has its roots in colonial and post-colonial sports (Deane, 2011). The beginnings of organised sport in Australia dates back to the early days of British colonisation with the Australian colonies established as outposts of the British Empire and as a penal settlement where British cultural practices were introduced. Significantly, the development of the colonies occurred during a period of belief by the British in the games ethic that had a particularly strong influence on the rise to prominence of sport in Australian culture from the second half of the nineteenth

century (Cashman, 1995; Light, 2008b).

As the population grew through free settlement, the establishment of clubs to organise sport on a more permanent and continuing basis were introduced to Australia with the formation of the Sydney Turf Club in 1825, followed by the Australian Cricket Club in 1826 (Cashman, 1995). Between the 1850s and the 1880s, sport in colonial Australia experienced far-reaching changes shaped by the influence of the discovery of gold and the establishment of private secondary schools and universities (Cashman, 1995). Cashman suggested that this was an important period during which sport played a profound role in the development of a sense of national identity and strength of character. It was also during this period that sport evolved from a local competition to inter-colonial and international competitions (Cashman, 1995).

While private and government schools played an important role in the development of sport in Australia from federation in 1901 to the 1960s, sport was mainly delivered by not-for-profit, member-based clubs run by volunteers that provided playing facilities and teams to participate in local and regional competitions. At the state level, state sport governing bodies coordinated regional competitions and organised state championships. At the national level, national sport governing bodies were primarily responsible for coordinating national championships and supporting national teams to compete against other countries (Nicholson et al., 2004).

Since the early 1970s, the Federal Government's influence on the Australian sports system has been increasingly significant in setting the agenda for sport development in Australia. During 1973, a report commissioned by the Department of Tourism and Recreation entitled, *The Role, Scope and Development of Recreation in Australia* formed the basis for defining the Federal Government's involvement in sport. Since 1973, the Federal Government's provision of financial investment in sport has grown significantly from $6.2 million in 1973/74 financial year to $307 million in 2012/13 (Jolly, 2013). In 1985, the Federal Government established the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), a statutory authority with legislative responsibility for the coordination of sport policy in Australia. The intervention of the Federal Government via funding distributed through the Australian

Sports Commission has had a significant influence on sport at the elite level by encouraging national and state sporting organisations to become more professional with paid administrators responsible for the delivery and management of their sport (Shilbury & Kellett, 2011; Stewart, Nicholson, Smith, & Westerbeck, 2004). As a tradeoff for National Sport Organisations (NSO) receiving financial support from ASC, the ASC has been able to influence their implementation of the government's sport policy and initiatives across all levels of their sport (Hoye & Nicholson, 2010).

In particular, in more recent times, the Federal Government's sport policy and distribution of funding has encouraged NSOs to adopt best-practice management and governance systems, address elite sport development and performance, anti-doping policies, growth in community sports participation, adoption of fair play in sport practices, and improvement in economic efficiency (ASC, 2008a). Influenced by the funding received from the ASC, the NSOs have worked with, and provided leadership to, their affiliated state sporting organisations (SSO) to deliver sport development programs in each of the eight states and territories in Australia. The SSOs have also received varying amounts of funding support from their respective state or territory government which they have used to provide support and leadership for regional and local clubs who are predominately driven by volunteers to operate and deliver sport at the grass root level (Cuskelly, Hoye, & Auld, 2006; Shilbury, Deane, & Kellett, 2006).

Despite the shift towards the "professionalisation" of sport over the last 15-20 years, influenced by government funding, volunteers continue to form the backbone of Australia's sport delivery system with many sports still reliant upon volunteers to ensure the ongoing sustainability of sport in Australia (Shilbury & Kellett, 2011). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006) over 1.7 million Australians aged 18 years and over volunteered their time to enable sport to operate in Australia with an estimated input value to the sector of $3.9 billion (Frontier Economics, 2010). While volunteers are integral to delivering the Australian sport system, they are faced with a number of constraints and barriers created by societal and institutional pressures (Cuskelly et al., 2006). The range and complexity of tasks and responsibilities required volunteers to become more

professional has increased dramatically over the past 20 years (ASC, 2008b). The heightened expectations of consumers for sporting organisations to provide a quality service, the pressures exerted by government agencies to meet compliance and accountability requirements, the increasingly litigious environment inherent in sport participation, along with changes in society and people's priorities and perceived time pressures have resulted in a decline in volunteers. Many volunteers are taking on multiple responsibilities across diverse roles such as administrators, board and committee members, coaches, team managers, and officials (ASC, 2008b; Cuskelly et al., 2006).

2.2   The culture of Australian sport

The culture of sport in Australia is in many ways similar to the culture of sport practised in other Western societies (Coakley, Hallinan, Jackson, & Mewett, 2009; Phillips & Magdalinski, 2008) yet has its own particular cultural features tied into its history (Light, 2008b). It is widely recognised that in contemporary Western cultures, sport forms a cultural practise that exerts a powerful influence on the enculturation of boys, girls, men, and women and upon their development of personal and gendered identity (Coakley et al., 2009; Connell, 1983). In fact, sport has formed a central mechanism for the reproduction of gender inequity (Light, 2007). For example, in an Australian context, sport has been identified as a gendered activity where the reproduction of perceived differences between appropriate female and male physicality has been established and accepted (Phillips & Magdalinski, 2008).

Sport has also been recognised as a male institution where hegemonic masculinity is a dominant culture within sport organisations in which the practices of masculinity are cultivated, reinforced, and celebrated (Anderson, 2009; Burgess, Edwards, & Skinner, 2003; Coakley et al., 2009; Connell, 2005; Humberstone, 2002; Light & Kirk, 2000; Whisenant, 2008; Whitson, 2002). Connell (2005) appropriated the term hegemony to explain how both masculine domination, and the control of particular form of masculinity becomes common sense, accepted, and unquestioned yet operates to reproduce gender inequality. Connell made significant reference to the role that sport, in all developed societies, played in this process including Australia.

A range of practices prevalent in sport in Australia contribute toward the construction of a culture that privileges masculinity while marginalising femininity, and promotes an exemplary form of masculinity over others (Light, 2007) while also promoting homophobia (Connell, 1998; McKay, 1997; Phillips & Magdalinski, 2008). Sport has been dominated by discourses of masculinity where men are highly valued in sporting organisations, while in contrast, women's roles are associated with positions that are undervalued (Shaw & Hoeber, 2003). A male-dominated culture within sport has led to institutional and organisational practices that favour men and disadvantage women, which has resulted in few women holding leadership positions in sport (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007; Edwards, Skinner, & O'Keefe, 2000; Greenhill, Auld, Cuskelly, & Hooper, 2009; McKay, 1997; Phillips & Magdalinski, 2008; Shaw & Frisby, 2006).

Furthermore, the dominance of masculinity reproduced through sport is both celebrated and idealised by the discriminatory and masculine bias of coverage of male and female sport portrayed through the media. This has contributed to the perception that sport has limited relevance to women and has reinforced the ideology that sport is a masculine culture, marginalising women and minority groups (Humberstone, 2002; Kay & Jeanes, 2008). In Australia, the culture of masculine domination in sport is constantly reinforced by media exposure of men's sport and the limited coverage of women's sport that conveys and legitimises messages of gender domination associated with physical strength, courage, assertiveness, competitiveness, and leadership (ASC, 2010; Bryson, 1990; Humberstone, 2002; McKay, 1991). For example, despite the international success of Australian female athletes and the relatively high levels of girls and women over the age of 15 (approximately 1.725 million) participating in a playing role in organised club sport in Australia in 2009 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010), there was a disproportionate balance of all sports coverage in Australian television news media between men's (81%) and women's (9%) sport, which represented sport as a traditionally male culture and reinforced the male dominance of sporting culture in Australia (ASC, 2010).

2.3 Government policies on gender in Australian sport

Historically, sport in Australia revolved around an amateur pursuit within community,

club-based sport organisations run by volunteers. There was very little government involvement other than state and local authority governments' investment largely in facilities such as sports grounds and pavilions (Phillips & Magdalinski, 2008; Stewart et al., 2004). In order to compete at national and international levels, athletes were required to rise through the local community club-based system where they represented their region in interstate competitions and the elite were then selected to compete at national and international levels. The club-based sport system, philosophically, provided an inclusive structure for mass sport participation that allowed people the opportunity to participate at a level graded by their ability (Shilbury et al., 2006; Stewart et al., 2004).

During the 1970s, the viability of maintaining this traditional sports system was questioned, resulting in a fundamental shift towards a reformed sports structure incorporating support from the three tiers of government (federal, state, and local) and increased support for elite athletes (Shilbury et al., 2006; Stewart et al., 2004). This was further shaped in the early 1980s by public outrage and the ensuing government response to Australia's poor performance in the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, where the country finished in 32nd position with no gold medals—a situation that led to the formation of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS). Due to these changes, progressively over time the Australian sport system has transformed into a more professional industry. The increase in professionalism has occurred in a range of ways with funding provided by the Federal Government via the ASC, which has played a key role in shaping the Australian sport system (Shilbury et al., 2006; Stewart et al., 2004). The following section examines the evolution of government policy with specific emphasis on women in sport.

2.3.1   Policy development during the 1970s

The 1970s saw the beginning of an important shift in government policy that set the foundations for the institutional framework for the delivery of sport in Australia (Cashman, 1995; Stewart et al., 2004). Until that time, sport policy had not featured on the Commonwealth Government's agenda. The government had very little involvement or influence on the development of sport and sporting organisations that provided sporting opportunities for Australians (Bloomfield, 1973; Stewart et al., 2004). It was not until 1972

that the Labor Party, under the leadership of Gough Whitlam, commissioned an inquiry directed by John Bloomfield, a physical education professor from the University of Western Australia, to examine the role, scope, and development of recreation in Australia (Bloomfield, 1973). Bloomfield's (1973) report presented a strong case for the need for the development of recreation in Australia to address the poor state of the nation's health (Bloomfield, 1973). Key recommendations made by Bloomfield included that the Commonwealth Government: establish a national recreation system that would encourage development of community recreation facilities at the local government level which all the community would have access to; supplement the voluntary leader system with professional expertise; and establish a national institute of sport and recreation to provide leadership and sport programs for Australia's elite athletes (Bloomfield, 1973).

Within the report Bloomfield (1973) did not specifically address the issue of gender, and made limited reference to women's participation in sport, while acknowledging that Australian women, along with their male counterparts who had excelled at the international level of sport, were great ambassadors for Australia. The only other reference to women in the report was in relation to Bloomfield's discussion on the societal challenges facing the Australian population's recreation trends. He stated:

> There is also a growing problem of the intelligent and often well-educated woman who has grown up in the mentally stimulating environment of our various educational institutions and then abruptly finds herself cut off from meaningful contact with anyone but her immediate family (Bloomfield, 1973, p.2).

Bloomfield's (1973) comment reflected the attitude towards women's status in the Australian society at the time. In the 1970s, despite women's steadily increasing participation in paid employment, they made up only 35% of the officially recognised Australian workforce (Bryson, 1994). Women were still perceived as second class citizens in Australia, defined by their domestic work (Kingston, 1996).

Although not all of Bloomfield's 74 recommendations were adopted by the Whitlam Government (Stewart et al., 2004), the report formed the blueprint for the Australian sport

system as it is known today. The report became a catalyst for the Whitlam Government to argue strongly for government to have a greater involvement and commitment to sport in Australia (Stewart et al., 2004). However, the Whitlam Government's commitment was not to come to fruition with the election of the Liberal Party in 1975 under the leadership of Malcolm Fraser. The Fraser Government took the view that sport should run its own affairs with little government interference (Stewart et al., 2004).

2.3.2 Policy development during the 1980s

The 1970s has been recognised as a significant period in the development of sport in Australia with the Commonwealth Government's increased funding for sport, and sport infrastructure (Cashman, 1995; Deane, 2011). However, minority groups such as women were not on the sport agenda of either government at the time. It wasn't until a change of government in 1983, back to the Labor Party under the leadership of Bob Hawke, that women's participation in sport was put on the agenda. The Hawke Government's policy mandated a more coordinated and balanced approach to sports development in Australia that represented all sporting interests, not just at the elite level (Cashman, 1995; Stewart et al., 2004). In 1985, the ASC was established to provide leadership and direction at the national level. The ASC was responsible for delivering increased funding to NSOs and assist with consolidating their sport development programs (Stewart et al., 2004).

In 1984, under the auspices of the Hawke Government, a working group on women in sport was established to prepare a report to government, which contained recommendations for a long-term strategy to provide a fairer deal for women and girls in sport in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 1985). According to the working group, the Commonwealth Government had largely ignored women's participation in sport, despite the fact that problems facing women in sport had been well documented (Commonwealth of Australia, 1985). The report prepared by the working group, titled *Women, Sport and the Media*, recommended that two types of action were necessary for change. First, sports associations needed to adopt new processes and practices that encouraged more opportunities for women and girls to participate in sport. Second, the structural barriers facing women in sport needed to be removed, in particular, by examining ways the Federal Government and

the media industry could work together to become more aware and responsive to the needs of women in sport. Combinations of these actions were recommended with the aim of achieving a more equitable balance of opportunities for women, including a fairer coverage of women's sports by all media in Australia.

The *Women, Sport and the Media* report also recommended that a Women's Sports Promotion Unit be established under the auspices of the ASC to undertake the task of implementing the recommended changes and to provide advice to Federal Government on all aspects of women in sport in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 1985). In 1987, two years after the report was released, a task-force for women in sport was established and the first national policy and plan for women in sport was adopted by the ASC (ASC, 1991; Shilbury et al., 2006). In the same year, a separate Women's Sport Promotion Unit was established within the ASC, which was responsible for women's participation in sport. The Unit's prime focus was to improve public awareness of women in sport, provide advice, and develop policies on women and sport issues across all ASC programs and the broader community (ASC, 1991; 1992).

2.3.3   Policy development during the 1990s

In 1990, the ASC increased its support for women in sport when it designated affirmative action as a priority area for research by funding three research projects through its Applied Sports Research Program (McKay, 1997). In the same year, a committee was established by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs to report on the progress made towards the achievement of equal opportunity and equal status for Australian women. Part of the committee's inquiry involved preparing a discussion paper on sport, leisure and recreation (ASC, 1991). In February 1991, a joint seminar was held by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs and the ASC at which 300 representatives from national and state sporting organisations, media agencies, the education sector, and government agencies discussed issues of equal status and equal opportunity for Australian women in sport (ASC, 1991; McKay, 1997). At the seminar, the Executive Director of the ASC, Jim Ferguson, confirmed the Federal Government's commitment to improving the opportunities for

women to participate in sport at all levels (ASC, 1991). At the conclusion of the seminar, Ferguson acknowledged that the criticisms of the ASC's programs for women in sport throughout the seminar, and in submissions received from organisations to the committee, were to some extent justifiable. He also emphasised the ASC's level of commitment to "vigorously pursue action in the area of women in sport" (ASC, 1991, p.253). Prior to the seminar, the ASC had begun to shift their approach to addressing women's participation in sport by changing the name of the Women's Sport Promotion Unit to the Women and Sport Unit, with the intention that the Unit would have more of a focus on policy development rather than promotion (ASC, 1991).

In June 1991, the ASC, in conjunction with the New South Wales International Sporting Events Council, held the "Sportswomen Step Forward Conference" in Sydney, Australia as an initiative to develop women as leaders in sport. The focus of the conference was to increase women's confidence, and to develop their leadership and management skills, with the intention of encouraging more women to participate in decision-making in Australian sport (ASC, 1992). In her opening address to the conference, Ros Kelly, the Federal Minister for Sport, reiterated the Federal Government's support for women in sport by stating that 1991 heralded the time for action and she wanted to lead the way for women to achieve equity in the 1990s (ASC, 1992). Kelly noted that "women have a great contribution to make as leaders in the area of sport but presently they were severely under-represented in the decision-making echelons of the sports world" (p.6) and emphasised that "every Australian must have equal access to sport and this type of conference is essential in reaching that goal" (p.7).

During 1996, the Labor Government, which had been in power since 1983, was replaced by the Liberal Government under the leadership of John Howard. The Howard Government's sport policy entitled *Encouraging Players, Developing Champions,* confirmed its commitment to maintain funding levels to NSOs and the AIS, but also made a commitment to increase assistance to minority groups, including the promotion of women's sport (Stewart et al., 2004). Due to the need for a more collaborative approach between both federal and state agencies, in 1997 the Howard Government reviewed and

revised the *National Policy and Plan for Women in Sport,* adopted by the ASC in 1987. The revised national policy was also developed in response to the 1994 *Brighton Declaration on Women and Sport,* an international set of guiding principles to increase women's involvement in sport at all levels, and the 1998 *Windhoek Call for Action* which reinforced the Brighton Declaration and acknowledged the need for greater cooperation and coordination between agencies and organisations (ASC, 1999a). The revised policy released in 1999 was titled *Active Women: National Policy on Women and Girls in Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity 1999-2002* and provided three guiding principles aimed at increasing the involvement of women and girls in sport, recreation and physical activity at all levels: equity and equality; participation and well-being; and education and information (ASC, 1999a).

The ASC also produced a resource to complement the *Active Women: National Policy on Women and Girls in Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity 1999-2002.* The resource was a guide for organisations working towards a position of equity and outlined practical strategies and examples of good practice. Under the guiding principle of *participation and well-being*, the ASC put forward a number of strategies addressing leadership and decision-making. These included: organisations to provide equal opportunity recruitment procedures; promotion of career pathways and opportunities available for women in administration, coaching, and officiating from club to international levels; acknowledgement of women's contribution to sport; and the provision of mentoring programs for women (ASC, 1999b).

In the same year that the revised national policy for women in sport was released, the Minister for Sport and Tourism, Jackie Kelly, appointed the Sport 2000 Task Force to conduct a comprehensive review of the Commonwealth Government's involvement in Australian sport and recreation. The purpose of the review was to advise the Commonwealth Government on the appropriate structures, arrangements, and delivery services for sport beyond 2000 (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999). The report, *Shaping Up: A Review of Commonwealth Involvement in Sport and Recreation in Australia,* recommended that the government change their priorities and put more emphasis on

providing resources and funding into recreation and physical activity (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999; Stewart et al., 2004). Within the report, the Task Force referred to the Commonwealth Government's commitment to women in sport with the release of their revised national policy on women and sport during the review. The Task Force discussions with sporting organisations about women's participation in sport revealed that their main concerns related to women's access to participation and leadership positions. The Task Force concluded that the Commonwealth Government had a continuing role to play in assisting sporting organisations to adopt strategies to encourage women and girls' participation in sport and recreation. The Task Force recommended that the government assist sport and recreation organisations to adopt and implement the government's national policy on women and sport (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999).

2.3.4   Policy development during the 2000s

In 2001, the Howard Government launched their new sport policy titled *Backing Australia's Sporting Ability: A more active Australia* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). Despite the Sport 2000 Task Force's recommendations for increased resources and funding into recreation and physical activity (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999), the Howard Government increased funding for elite sport development and prioritised participation in organised club-based sport over informal physical activity (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001; Nicholson et al., 2004). The Howard Government's sport policy statement omitted to mention women's participation in sport.

In 2006, the Howard Government directed the Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Reference Committee to conduct a Senate inquiry into women and sport and recreation in Australia, with particular reference to: the health benefits from accessibility to women's participation in sport and recreation; women's sport in the media; and women's leadership roles in sport (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). In relation to leadership and governance, the committee found that women continued to be under-represented in the decision-making structures of sporting organisations and faced a number of barriers hindering their advancement into leadership roles. Strategies discussed by the committee to increase the number of women in leadership roles included: the

introduction of quotas or targets for the proportion of women on NSO boards; and the encouragement of NSOs to provide professional development, leadership training, networking opportunities, and mentoring for women. The committee recommended that the ASC's Sport Leadership Grants for Women scheme be continued and funding for the scheme be increased; that the ASC continue to provide professional development opportunities for women to develop networking techniques; and that sporting organisations be funded by the ASC to provide leadership training for women (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006).

Not long after the Howard Government released the Senate report titled, *About time! Women in sport and recreation in Australia* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006), there was a change of government back to the Labor Party under the leadership of Kevin Rudd. Within months of being elected, the Rudd Government released a national policy paper on sport titled *Australian Sport: emerging challenges, new directions* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). The paper outlined the Rudd Government's proposed reforms to the Australian sport system, at both the elite and community levels. The Rudd Government named three key priority areas it intended to focus on during its parliamentary term, one of which was the improvement of the status of women in sport. The national policy paper stated there would be an examination of the Senate Committee Report on Women in Sport and Recreation Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). There was also a commitment given: to help televise two national women's sport leagues (soccer and netball); create more training opportunities for women; recognise the achievements of women; and continue to provide funding for the Sport Leadership Grants for Women program.

In November, 2009, the Crawford Report titled, *The future of sport in Australia* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009) was released by the Federal Minister for Sport. The report was produced by an independent sport panel led by David Crawford and was commissioned by the Rudd Government. Its aim was to review the Australian sporting system to ensure that the system remained prepared for future challenges at both the community and elite levels. In June, 2010, Kevin Rudd's leadership of the Labor

Government was challenged internally and Julia Gillard was sworn in as the first woman and 27th Prime Minister of Australia and re-elected by the Australian public at the August 2010 federal election as Prime Minister in her own right. Prior to the change of leadership and Federal election, in response to the Crawford Report and in preparation for the upcoming election, the Rudd Government released a national policy paper stating the Labor Government's new vision of sport titled, *Australian sport: The pathway to success* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010) to which the Gillard Government committed to in the 2010/2011 budget (Jolly, 2013).

Within the policy paper, breaking down the barriers to women's and girl's participation in sport, and the promotion of women in leadership roles in sport were identified as key priority areas. In the 2010/2011 budget, the Gillard Government committed to providing additional funding and resources to: improve the media coverage of Australian women's sport; establish a Women in Sport Leadership Register to assist the placement of women on boards and in executive positions; continue with the provision of funding sport leadership grants and scholarships for women; and to establish Women in Sport Awards to recognise exemplary initiatives which provide special support for women's and girl's participation in sport (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). Furthermore, with some controversy, in 2013 the ASC announced the introduction of a targeted gender quota of a minimum of 40% female representation on all of the 55 NSOs' boards by 2015 as part of their condition for receiving government funding (ASC, 2013).

2.4   Affirmative action and women's leadership in sport

Despite the various Federal Governments' attempts from the mid-1980s onward to address women's participation in sport through the introduction of a number of affirmative action initiatives and policies, their efforts have had minimal impact on increasing the number of women in leadership and key decision-making roles (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010; ASC, 2011; Commonwealth of Australia, 2006; Edwards et al., 2000; Ferris, 2000; McKay, 1997; Wensing, 2000). In the 12 months prior to April 2010, an estimated 26% (4.5 million) of the Australian population aged 15 and over reported they were involved in organised sport and physical activity (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010). Of the 4.5

million persons, 1.6 million were involved in non-playing roles such as coach, referee and committee members. A closer look at the gender breakdown of roles shows males have had a significantly higher involvement as a coach (4.3%) compared to females (3.1%), and as a committee member or administrator (3.1%) compared to females (2.9%) in the same role. Between 2007 and 2010, the Australian sport industry experienced a significant downward trend in the number of men and women as coaches and administrators/committee members in sport (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010).

Despite the Federal Government's commitment to addressing women's participation in sport, the government's affirmative action initiatives in sport have failed to make a real impact on the number of women in leadership roles in sport in Australia. For example, in the upper echelons of Australian sport organisations the gender distribution of women in leadership and decision-making roles was significantly skewed favouring men. In 2005, the national average of women on NSOs boards was one woman to seven men, and there were only 13% of female executive directors in the top 40 funded NSOs in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006). In 2010, the ASC reported the representation of women on the boards of government funded NSOs in Australia was 23% (ASC, 2011).

McKay (1997) offered an explanation for the disproportionate representation of women in leadership roles based on his study analysing how managers of sport organisations across Australia implemented affirmative action programs for women in sport organisations funded by state and federal governments. McKay found that during the 1990s sporting organisations had either marginalised or trivialised affirmative action initiatives introduced by the ASC. He argued that women's under-representation in leadership positions was due to institutional barriers that favoured men and disadvantaged women. However, since McKay's study, limited research has been undertaken to further investigate why the government's affirmative actions have had minimal impact.

3. Review of Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the theoretical frameworks and principles that seek to explain the concept of women's practice of leadership and development in a sport context. The review of the literature is organised into four sections. Section one reviews the literature on leadership theories and approaches; section two discusses the concept and theory of leadership development; section three reviews the literature on women's leadership; and the final section focuses specifically on women's leadership in sport.

3.1 Leadership theories and approaches

While the study of leadership has been widely discussed and researched, it remains "an elusive and hazy concept" (Rosenbach & Taylor, 2006, p.1). Over time, the field of leadership research has offered a plethora of theories, models, and principles to describe the act of leadership to the point of being confusing and fragmented with no agreed paradigm for its study (Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley, & Beresford, 2000; Gill, 2006; Rosenbach & Taylor, 2006; Yukl, 2006). Gill has been particularly critical of the status of leadership theory, noting that many of the theories have been based on limited and biased research that has resulted in "self-fulfilling prophecies and at best explain only some aspects of leadership" (p.60). To make sense of the myriad theories on leadership, this section of the review of literature provides a brief discussion on the definition of leadership, presents a brief overview of the early development of dominant theories on leadership, and examines in more depth the leadership theories pertinent to this study such as transformational and authentic leadership.

3.1.1   Definition of leadership

Despite the abundance of literature published on leadership, a universal definition of leadership has remained problematic amongst the academic fraternity and "suffers from the lack of an acceptable definition" (Sarros, Cooper, Hartican, & Barker, 2006, p.14). Stogdill's (1974) review of leadership literature concluded that there were "almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept"

(p.259). For the past 40 years since Stogdill's review, the concept of leadership has remained unresolved with many different meanings and connotations of leadership being discussed in published literature and no universally accepted definition (Gill, 2006; Hsu, Bell, & Cheng, 2002; Rosenbach & Taylor, 2006; Yukl, 2006). Yukl's (2006) more recent summation of the different leadership definitions over the past 50 years concluded that leadership had generally been defined in terms of "traits, behaviors, influence, interaction patterns, role relationships, and occupation of an administrative position" (p.2). Yukl found that most definitions of leadership reflected, in some capacity, the assumption that leadership involved an influence process within a group or organisation, whereby one person intentionally exerted influence over other people to guide, structure, or facilitate activities. Supported by Gill, Yukl also made the point that scholars of leadership research had tended to "define leadership according to their individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them" (p.2) rather than working towards agreeing on a definition of leadership.

3.1.2   *Overview of leadership theories*

While the subject of leadership dates back to early civilization through myths and legends about the achievements of great leaders, the study of leadership has only become more formalised during the twentieth century as the emergence of leadership theories coincided with the age of the industrial revolution (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 2006). Despite the fragmented nature of the study of leadership, it has been commonly accepted throughout the mainstream body of literature that the history of leadership research has generally followed a sequence of three primary areas of study: the study of leadership traits; the study of leadership behaviours; and the examination of leadership in the context of its settings, commonly referred to as situational and contingency theories of leadership (Sashkin, 2006). More recently, trends such as authentic and values based leadership have emerged.

The study of leadership traits and behaviours

Early approaches to the study of leadership dating as far back to the 1900s focused predominantly on personal traits and the characteristics of leaders. These theories sought to identify traits such as personality, values, motives, and skills that differentiated leaders

from non-leaders (Rosenbach & Taylor, 2006; Weese, 1995; Yukl, 2006). While many studies of this type were conducted during the 1930s and 1940s, Stogdill's (1948) critique on 128 published research articles on leadership traits and characteristics, concluded that the studies failed to identify a common set of traits and attributes that differentiated leaders from non-leaders across a variety of situations. In more recent times, academics (Armandi, Oppedisano, & Sherman, 2003; Rosenbach & Taylor, 2006; Weese, 1995; Yukl, 2006) have argued in support of Stogdill's findings that the trait approach at that time was far too narrow in its focus and did not take into account the intervening variables associated with leadership, such as leader-follower interactions or situational factors.

Influenced by Stogdill's (1948) review of leadership research and studies conducted by Ohio State University and the University of Michigan (Bass, 1990; Hunt, 1999), a behavioural approach to leadership emerged and dominated the research and theory during the 1950s and 1960s. The behavioural research mostly concentrated on two spectrums of leadership behaviour. The first examined the leader's orientation to the task, measuring their patterns of activities, responsibilities, and functions. The second focused on the relationship and interactions between the leader and their followers. While the behavioural theories of leadership found that leaders exhibiting high task and high supportive leadership behaviours were the most successful, they were not considered effective in all situations (Rosenbach & Taylor, 2006; Weese, 1995).

Study of situational and contingency theories of leadership

The gaps exposed in the behavioural theories of leadership led to a new focus on leadership research which explored situational influences and contextual factors in leader effectiveness. Situational and contingency theories such as Situational Leadership Theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977), Trait Contingency Model (Fielder, 1967), Path-goal Theory (House & Mitchell, 1974), and Leader-Participation Model (Vroom & Yetton, 1973) attempted to define the leadership style required to be used by a leader in different situations based on the assumption that a certain style of leadership was more effective in one situation but not appropriate or effective in other circumstances or contexts (Robbins, Bergman, Stagg, & Coulter, 2003).

During the 1970s and 1980s, influenced by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1985), a new paradigm, the transactional and transformational models of leadership, emerged that placed emphasis on change and the development of followers. Burns (1978) conceptualised leadership as either transactional or transformational, with the view that they were at the opposite ends of a continuum (Bass, 1990; Bass & Riggio, 2005; Yukl, 2006). Bass (1985) elaborated on Burns's (1978) transactional-transformational model by suggesting that although transformational and transactional leadership were distinctly separate concepts in theory, in practice the categories were blurred, with leaders displaying dimensions of both transactional and transformational styles of leadership. This led Avolio and Bass (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1998) to develop a "full-range of leadership" model that identified transformational leadership behaviours along with transactional and non-leadership behaviours. Bass (1999) supported the full-range of leadership model by arguing that "every leader displays a frequency of both the transactional and transformational factors, but each leader's profile involves more of one and less of the other" (p.11). The full-range of leadership model included the four dimensions of transformational leadership, the three dimensions of transactional leadership (contingent-reward, management-by-exception-active, and management-by-exception-passive) and a non-leadership dimension (laissez-fair behaviour) (Bass & Riggio, 2005; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Laissez-faire leadership is the avoidance or absence of leadership and often referred to as non-leadership behavior and is regarded as the most ineffective and dissatisfying style of leadership (Avolio, 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

In regard to transactional leadership, Bass (1990) described it as a relationship between a leader and follower where the exchange of contingent–reward and active/passive management-by-exception were used by the leader to influence the motivation of individuals in return for compliance with the leader's expectations. Avolio (2002) referred to contingent-reward as a constructive transaction between the leader and follower where the leader assigned what needed to be achieved and promised rewards as an incentive in exchange for satisfactorily completion of the assignment by the follower. Management-by-exception could either be active or passive (Avolio, 2002). A leader who practised active management-by-exception monitored the follower's deviations from standards and

errors, and took corrective action as necessary by enforcing rules and procedures (Avolio, 2002; Gill, 2006). A leader who practised passive management-by-exception set work objectives and performance standards for followers, rather than monitor deviations and mistakes. These leaders waited for problems to occur and only then intervened reluctantly to take corrective action (Avolio, 2002; Gill, 2006). Avolio (2002) described passive and active management-by-exception as a corrective transaction between the leader and follower.

Furthermore, Bass (1999) and Bass and Riggio (2005) stated that transactional leaders were either directive or participative in their style of leadership. In contrast, Gill (2006) argued that transactional leaders avoided the use of consultative, participative, or delegative styles and appeared to be strongly associated with being directive. According to Gill, this style of leadership resulted in compliance rather than commitment from others. While resulting in short-term achievement, Gill argued that this directive style of leadership ran the "risk of stifling human development, with consequential loss of competitive advantage" (p.51).

3.1.3   Transformational leadership

In comparison to transactional leadership, the transformational model of leadership has been regarded as a more contemporary vision of leadership that emphasised influence and empowerment of self and others, rather than exercising a form of power through the exchange of rewards to achieve goals associated with transactional leadership practice (Bass, 1990, 1999; Yoder, 2001). Bass and Riggio (2005) suggested that transformational leadership was an expansion of transactional leadership that raised leadership to the next level with leaders inspiring followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes. Bass (1999) referred to transformational leadership as leaders moving their followers beyond immediate self-interests and generating awareness and acceptance of the purposes and the mission of the group. Yukl (2006) described transformational leadership as essentially an influence process that appeared to be "inspiring follower commitment to shared objectives, increasing social identification, and developing follower skills and collective efficacy" (p.271).

The theory of transformational leadership has been conceptually clustered around four correlated dimensions: idealised influence or charismatic leadership; inspirational leadership; intellectual stimulation; and individualised consideration (Bass, 1990). *Idealised influence* or *charismatic leadership* referred to leaders who engendered trust and respect among their followers by doing the right thing. They provided a vision and sense of mission that excited and inspired others to follow. Bass and Riggio (2005) suggested that idealised influence occurred when transformational leaders served as role models for their followers and were perceived to have extraordinary qualities that their followers wanted to emulate. Those qualities included: demonstration of high standards of ethical and moral conduct; reliability; and consideration of the needs of others before their own needs (Avolio, 2002). *Inspirational motivation* highlighted the ability of the leader to communicate a vision and build their followers' commitment to goals.

Transformational leaders motivated and inspired their followers by providing meaning and challenge to their work. Leaders clearly communicated their expectations to followers and demonstrated their commitment to achieving shared goals (Avolio, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2005). *Intellectual stimulation* referred to a leader's ability to intellectually stimulate their followers by challenging current reality and old ways of thinking. They provided interesting and challenging tasks for their followers with the intention of encouraging them to solve problems with creative and innovative ideas (Avolio, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2005). *Individualised consideration* referred to a leader taking a fair approach to their leadership to allow their followers to have opportunities for developing and learning. Transformational leaders recognised and accepted individual differences in terms of their followers' needs for achievement and growth, and delegated tasks to followers as a means of development. The transformational leader acted as a coach or mentor and provided continuous feedback and support to meet the followers' concerns and developmental needs (Avolio, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2005).

According to Avolio (2002), transformational leaders were either participative or directive in their style of leadership depending on the context and circumstances they practiced their leadership in. Avolio presented his case by suggesting that while transformational

leadership was often associated with democratic, participative leadership, it could also be "directive, decisive, and authoritative" (p.6). Avolio argued the point that transformational leaders could still be highly directive by using inspiration in their appeals to influence others, and direct followers by employing radical solutions when faced with a crisis. Gill (2006) supported Avolio's perspective, acknowledging that transformational leaders were more active and flexible in their leadership behaviour and tended "to use the consultative, participative and delegative styles as well as the directive style to a significant extent" (p.53).

From a different perspective, Sashkin's (2006) concept of transformational leadership has been based around the notion that character drove the behavior of leaders. Sashkin identified the following four behaviours considered important for transformational leaders to rely on: communication leadership; consistent leadership; caring leadership; and creating empowering opportunities. According to Sashkin, *communication leadership* contributed to the effective communication between leaders and their followers that involved the leader focusing the attention of followers on key ideas. *Consistent leadership* required the leader to establish trust with their followers by taking actions that were consistent over time. This in turn, built the leader's credibility in fulfilling commitments and producing feelings of trust in followers. *Caring leadership* involved the leader showing respect and genuine concern for people despite the leader's feelings or judgments about a person's actions. *Creating empowering opportunities* referred to the leader allowing followers to accept challenges.

Transformational leaders were also considered to be *socialised* leaders rather than *personalised* leaders (Avolio, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2005). The concept of socialised leadership has been formed on the notion of egalitarian behaviour, where leaders used positive emotional influence such as motivation, empowerment, and encouragement of pro-social thinking to develop and empower others (Avolio, 2002; Popper, 2005). Socialised leaders tended to use legitimate channels of authority and had an unselfish concern for the welfare of others (Avolio, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2005). In contrast to this notion, the theory of pseudo-transformational leadership attempted to explain the unethical

behaviours of charismatic and inspirational leaders who used their influence for self-serving purposes (Barling, Christie, & Turner, 2008; Bass & Riggio, 2005). Avolio (2002) described pseudo-transformational leadership as "personalised" leaders who were "self-orientated, self-aggrandizing, exploitative, and narcissistic" (p.8). Personalised leaders' behavior tended to exploit others by using personal dominance and authoritarian behaviour for self-interested reasons (Avolio, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2005). This type of leader also showed disregard for established rules and regulations, and relied on manipulation, threats, and punishments to coerce others to perform tasks (Avolio, 2002). Barling, Christie, and Turner (2008) developed and tested a model of pseudo-transformational leadership that found pseudo-transformational leadership was manifested in a combination of transformational behaviours, such as low idealised influence and high inspirational motivation.

In contrast to the notion of pseudo-transformational leadership, Burns's (1978) concept of transformational leadership was based on the assumption that in order for leaders to be transforming they had to be morally uplifting. Burns surmised that "transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both" (p.20). In support of Burns (1978), Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) argued that leaders who were grounded in moral foundations of legitimate values were regarded as authentic transformational leaders. To support their argument, Bass and Steidlmeier differentiated between authentic and pseudo-transformational leadership in terms of the four components of transformational leadership: idealised influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualised consideration. They determined that authentic transformational leadership was when the leaders had an awareness of their own true-self characterised by high moral and ethical standards. These leaders were genuinely concerned with the desires and needs of followers, and created an environment where they fostered a higher moral maturity in their followers that moved them beyond their self-interests for the betterment of the group. Work such as Bass and Steidlmeier's suggestion that transformational leaders could either be pseudo or authentic, led to a reignited scholarly interest in the constructs of authentic leadership (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009).

3.1.4   Authentic leadership theory

Primarily over the last 10 to 15 years, the theory and conceptual development of authentic leadership has been emerging in the research literature (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, & McKee, 2014). Over time, the definition of authentic leadership has evolved around several underlying dimensions from the fields of leadership, ethics, positive psychological capabilities, and positive organisational behaviour (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). Fundamental to the conception of authenticity is the notion of self-awareness and knowing one's self (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Eagly, 2005). Based on this concept, authentic leaders require a heightened understanding of their "unique talents, strengths, sense of purpose, core values, beliefs and desires" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p.324) and "know who they are, what they believe and value, and…act upon those values and beliefs while transparently interacting with others" (Avolio et al., 2004, p.803).

George's (2003) publication has contributed prominently to the emergence of interest by both practitioners and academics in the concept of authentic leadership (Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011). In his book, George argued that in order for leaders to be authentic, they needed to have self-awareness and an understanding of themselves, their passions, and underlying motivations in order to disclose their unique purpose. With this in mind, George described authentic leaders as having a desire to serve others, who were guided by passion and compassion, and committed to empowering others to make a difference. George identified five qualities that authentic leaders demonstrated: they led with purpose, meaning, and values; built enduring relationships with people; demonstrated self-discipline by converting good values into consistent actions; refused to compromise their principles; and were dedicated to developing themselves.

Ilies, Morgeson, and Nahrgang (2005) proposed a model of authentic leadership focused on four components: self-awareness; unbiased processing; authentic behaviour; and authentic relational orientation. Adding another dimension to the concept of authentic leadership, Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, and Walumbwa (2005) proposed a self-based

model of authentic leadership and follower development. Their model focused on the self-awareness and self-regulation associated with authentic leadership such as internalised regulation, balanced processing of information, relational transparency, and authentic behaviour. The role modelling of the authentic leader's self-awareness and self-regulation influenced the development of the follower's self-awareness and self-regulation.

Luthans and Avolio (2003) defined authentic leadership as drawing on both positive psychological capabilities and highly developed organisational context that fostered positive self-development of leaders, which resulted in leaders having a greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviours. Walumbwa et al. (2008) modified Luthans and Avolio's definition of authentic leadership to reflect the dimensions proposed by Ilies et al. (2005) and Gardner et al. (2005). They defined authentic leadership as:

> …a pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, and internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development. (Walumbwa et al., p.94).

Walumbwa et al. (2008) elaborated on the theoretical dimensions of authentic leadership by developing and validating a higher order, multidimensional model of the authentic leadership construct. Walumbwa et al. tested their theory-based measure of authentic leadership by performing a confirmatory factor analysis using data obtained from two independent samples from the People's Republic of China (212 full-time employees from a large state-owned company), and the United States (224 full-time employees from a large high-tech manufacturer). The findings supported Walumbwa et al.'s model of the authentic leadership construct of four related dimensions that they viewed were all necessary for a person to be considered an authentic leader. The four dimensions were: self-awareness; relational transparency; balanced processing; and internalised moral perspective. *Self-awareness* referred to the level in which the leader understood their strengths and weaknesses, and having an insight into how they derived and made meaning of the world and how this impacted on the way they viewed themselves. *Relational transparency*

referred to the leader who presented their authentic self to others. Openly sharing information and expressing the true self promoted trust through disclosure. *Balanced processing* referred to leaders who objectively analysed all relevant information before making a decision. *Internalised moral perspective* referred to an internalised form of self-regulation guided by internal moral standards and values, resulting in decision-making and behaviour that are consistent with the leader's internalised values.

3.1.5   *Traits and characteristics of leadership*

The growing interest in the concept of moral and ethical approaches to leadership, such as theories of authentic leadership, has led to resurgence on the discussion of traits and characteristics of leaders (Avolio, 2007; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Sashkin, 2006; Sarros, 2009). As previously highlighted in this chapter, early leadership research conducted in the 1900s on personal traits and characteristics of leaders failed to identify a common set of specific traits that differentiated effective leaders from ineffective leaders (Armandi, Oppedisano, & Sherman, 2003; Rosenbach & Taylor 2006; Weese, 1995; Yukl, 2006). In more recent times it has been acknowledged through an accumulation of research that some common universal traits and characteristics have been associated with effective leadership (Avolio, 2007). These included: "persistence, tolerance for ambiguity, self-confidence, drive, honesty, integrity, internal locus of control, achievement motivation, and cognitive ability" (p.28).

Sarros, Cooper, Hartican, and Barker (2006) examined Australian managers and leaders to identify and better understand the dimensions of character associated with leadership. However, it should be noted that the respondents for the study were predominantly male (56.7%), aged 30-49 years (71.1%) and from upper middle level management (73.1%). The respondents completed Barlow, Jordan, and Hendrix's (as cited in Sarros et al., 2006) Character Assessment Rating Scale and Sarros and Barker's (as cited in Sarros et al., 2006) Virtuous Leadership Scale. The following top five character dimensions of Australian managers were identified from the study: integrity; cooperativeness; fairness; self-discipline; and honesty. Sarros et al. described *integrity* as the cornerstone of character and a basic component of ethical leadership that was associated with morality and being true

to oneself. *Cooperativeness* was the second most important attribute recognised by the respondents. Sarros et al. explained cooperativeness as the willingness of the leader to work as a team with others to accomplish a common goal or purpose. They also associated cooperation with the leader influencing attitudinal change by appealing to the followers' sense of identity within the organisation. This, in turn, encouraged the followers' commitment to the organisation's cause and built a more cooperative workplace environment. *Fairness* was viewed as treating people in an equitable, impartial, and just manner. Leaders who practiced fairness in the workplace provided information, education and assistance to workers, and promoted policies that advanced workers' rights. Leaders who promoted equitable treatment of workers demonstrated their commitment to others and were viewed as being transparent. *Self-discipline* was associated with a leader having self-confidence, self-responsibility, and self-directedness to make rational and logical decisions. *Honesty* involved the leader being consistently truthful with others. Honesty and ethical behaviour were viewed by Sarros et al. as essential elements to leadership; where honesty and trust were compromised, the damage to the reputation of a person or organisation could be felt for years.

From another perspective, Sashkin (2006) reexamined the characteristics of leadership by looking at Stogdill's (1948) five clusters of traits, and the "five-factor" personality theory (McCrae, 2003). Sashkin identified three common elementary aspects of leader character which they regarded as the fundamental building blocks of personality: visionary leadership; confident leadership; and follower-centered. Sashkin defined *visionary leadership* as the will of the leader to think critically about cause and effect over time. *Confident leadership* referred to the will of the leader who elected to act and engage in goal-directed behaviour rather than be complacent and take no action. *Follower-centered* referred to the will of the leader to use power to gain control that benefited the group or others and not just themselves.

In relation to authentic leadership, Luthans and Avolio (2003) identified six characteristics associated with the profile of authentic leadership. The first characteristic related to an authentic leader being "guided by a set of end-values that represents an orientation toward

doing what's right for their constituency" (p.248). The second characteristic referred to the leader acting out their values. Luthans and Avolio made the point that in order for a leader to achieve this characteristic, they had to have a deep understanding of their own core values to enable them to project them consistently to their followers. The third characteristic referred to the leaders' ability to be aware of their vulnerabilities and turn them into strengths. For example, leaders openly discussed their vulnerabilities with others as a testing ground to ensure they were heading in the right direction. The fourth characteristic required the leader to lead from the front and take risks as a way of inspiring others to take action. The fifth characteristic referred to the leader's genuine commitment to developing others' capacity and strength to lead over time. The last characteristic referred to the leader's moral capacity to judge issues and dilemmas in a credible approach that was consistent with their end-values.

3.2 Leadership development

While research on leadership theory has a relatively long history, in comparison, scholarly theory and research on leader and leadership development has a somewhat shorter history (Day et al., 2014). This section will provide an overview of the literature related to leadership development to provide an understanding of the process of how leaders and leadership are developed. In particular, this section will address the recent emergence of leadership development models, examine the contribution personal histories and trigger or critical events contribute to the leadership development process, and investigate the literature on the evaluation of leadership development interventions.

3.2.1   Leadership development models

Despite the field of leadership being widely discussed and researched, leadership development has attracted limited attention in the scholarly literature (Avolio, 2007; Olivares, Peterson & Hess, 2007; Stead & Elliott, 2009). More recently, in an effort to systematically explain how leaders and leadership are developed, there have been attempts by academics to formulate theory on leadership development (Avolio, 2007; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Day, 2001; Luthans, & Avolio, 2003). Much

of the recent debate on leadership development has focused on two broad approaches: the *human capital* approach that attends to the development of the individual leader; and the *social capital* approach that attends to the multiple relationships a leader may have with others with a focus on enhancing leadership capacity (Day et al., 2014; Stead & Elliott, 2009).

Table 3.1

Summary of Day's (2001) Leadership Development Model

Comparison Dimensions	Development Targets	
	Leader	Leadership
Capital Type	Human	Social
Leadership Model	Individual	Relational
	Personal power	Commitments
	Knowledge	Mutual respect
	Trustworthiness	Trust
Competence Base	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal
Skills	Self-awareness	Social awareness
	Emotional awareness	Empathy
	Self confidence	Service orientation
	Accurate self-image	Political awareness
	Self-regulation	Social skills
	Self-control	Building bonds
	Trustworthiness	Team orientation
	Personal responsibility	Change catalyst
	Adaptability	Conflict management
	Self-motivation	
	Initiative	
	Commitment	
	Optimism	

Note: Sourced from Day, 2001, p.584.

The adoption of a "human and social capital" lens applied to leadership development appears to have been led by Day's (2001) leadership development model that is comprised of two distinct elements: leader development and leadership development. Day argued that leader development focused upon building the capacity of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with formal leadership roles. Day referred to this as human capital that invested in building the intrapersonal competence of an individual to lead. Key

components of intrapersonal competence included: self-awareness (emotional awareness, self-confidence, accurate self-image); self-regulation (self-control, trustworthiness, personal responsibility); and self-motivation (initiative, commitment, optimism). In contrast to leader development, Day argued leadership development involved a complex interaction between people and their social and organisational environments. Day referred to this as social capital that was built on the development of relationships that were created through the leader's interpersonal exchange such as social awareness (empathy, service orientation, political awareness), and social skills (building bonds, team orientation, change catalyst, conflict management). Table 3.1 provides a summary of Day's leadership development model and highlights the differences between leader development and leadership development.
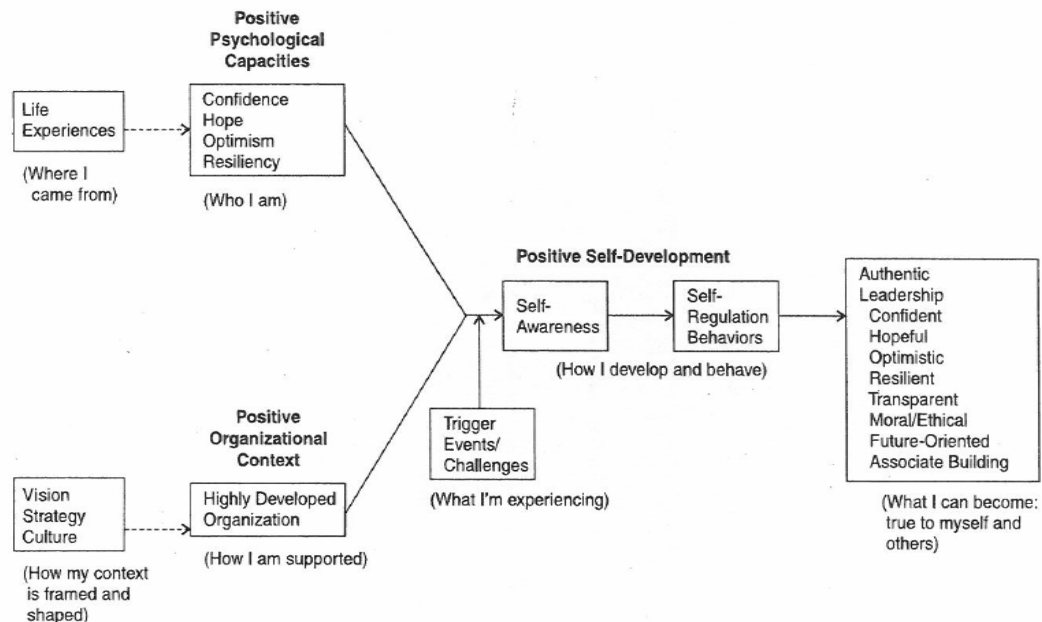
Figure 3.1   Luthans and Avolio (2003) Authentic leadership development model
Sourced from Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p.251.

Following on the work of Day (2001), Luthans and Avolio (2003) developed their own authentic leadership development model drawing from positive organisational behaviour theory, along with leadership theories of transformational/full-range of leadership, and ethical leadership. A central construct of authentic leadership development in Luthans and

Avolio's model involved the life experiences of leaders that shaped their perspectives, values, and behaviours. Luthans and Avolio recognised that authentic leadership development was a "dynamic lifespan process, whereby trigger events at various points in the life stream are shaping development over time" (p.252). Luthans and Avolio argued that both planned and unplanned trigger events and challenges further "strengthen a leader's authenticity through learned capacities such as confidence, hope, optimism, and resiliency" (p.250). This, in turn, developed a deeper and more positive sense of the leader's self-awareness and self-regulation of behaviours, resulting in the leader further developing their leadership capacity. Luthans and Avolio's model also acknowledged that an organisational context or culture played an important role in the development of leaders. The more highly developed organisational context or culture was considered more supportive of the type of self-regulation required for a leader to develop to a higher level of authentic leadership. Figure 3.1 illustrates the developmental process of Luthans and Avolio's model of authentic leadership development.
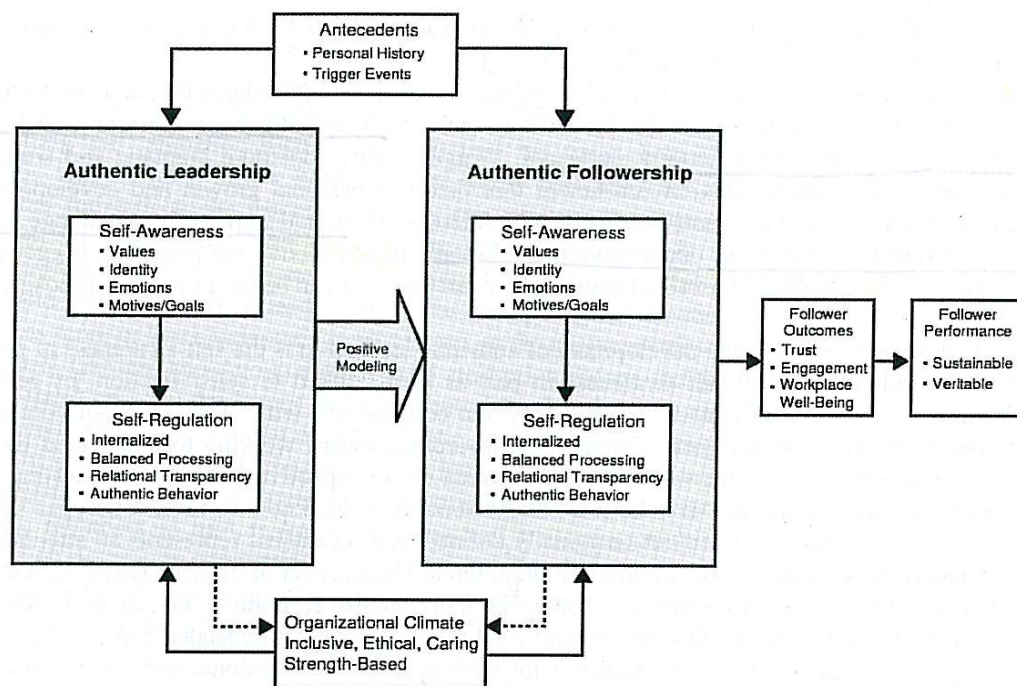
Figure 3.2   The conceptual framework for authentic leader and follower development developed by Gardner et al. (2005). Sourced from Gardner et al., 2005, p. 346.

Gardner et al., (2005) further extended Luthans and Avolio's (2003) model of authentic leadership development (refer to Figure 3.2.) by including the followers' development within the model as an integral component and consequence of authentic leadership development. Gardner et al. based their rationale for this inclusion on the notion that "authentic followership development is largely modeled by the authentic leader to produce heightened levels of followers' self-awareness and self-regulation leading to positive follower development and outcomes" (p.346). Gardner et al. viewed role modelling as a key element in forming an authentic relationship between the leader and followers that represented a mechanism for "leaders to impart positive values, emotions, motives, goals and behaviors for followers to emulate" (p.360). Gardner et al. asserted that over time, authentic relationship between the leader and followers created a positive, meaningful organisational culture, and produced high levels of trust, engagement, and wellbeing among followers in the workplace.

Similar to Luthans and Avolio's (2003) leadership development model, the authentic leader's personal history and key trigger events experienced over their lifetime such as: family influences, roles models, early life challenges, and educational and work experiences, were considered key factors of Gardner's et al. (2005) leadership development model as an antecedent to authentic leadership development. According to Gardner et al., these trigger events facilitated leaders' personal growth and development by raising their self-awareness or personal insight. They posited that this assisted leaders in building a greater understanding of their identity, what they valued, and an awareness of their emotions. According to Gardner et al., this provided the leader with a sense of self that formed the basis for the leader's goals and motives. The other fundamental component to Gardner's et al. model was *self-regulation*. According to Gardner et al., self-regulation required a leader having self-control of internal standards that involved a balanced, unbiased process in making decisions that resulted in behaving authentically and acting in accordance with the leader's values. Self-regulation also involved a leader having relational transparency that involved the leader valuing and achieving openness and truthfulness in close relationships with others.

Furthermore, Popper (2005) presented a conceptual framework with emphasis on leaders' experiences to further understand how they developed as leaders. Popper argued that leaders' development was a continuous process through: experiential learning; vicarious learning; and the transformation of learning from critical periods. Based on Popper's concept, a leader's *experiential learning* was based on experience and reinforcement, which led to more complex thinking and greater understanding of the leader's judgment of others. Popper argued leaders' experiential learning further developed their self-confidence and self-efficacy. *Vicarious learning* was based on the leader's observation of other's behavior. Popper argued that "the possibility of learning by observation is important because it expands the opportunities for learning a broad range of behaviors occurring in situations that are too complex to be created artificially for learning purposes" (p.67). In terms of the *transformation from learning from critical periods,* Popper viewed the development of leaders as taking place throughout their lifetime with the focus of development occurring at different stages. Popper explained that these "critical periods" of development occurred at different periods of a person's life where different aspects of leadership were developed. For example, Popper explained how "experiences gained in infancy lead to learning in the area of emotional trust, while, experiences during adolescence mostly engender learning in areas of identity formation in social contexts" (p.67).

From a different perspective, Shamir and Eilam (2005) offered a life-story approach to authentic leadership development. Rather than focus on the emphasis of the development of skills and behavioural styles. They argued that the construction of life-stories was a major element of the development of authentic leaders. Shamir and Eilam defined authentic leaders as having a highly developed self-knowledge that in turn provided them with self-concept clarity about their own values and convictions. They posited that leaders acquired these characteristics by constructing, developing, and revising their life-stories. This in turn, provided the leaders with a "meaning system" that they acted and justified their actions on. Through the construction of leaders' life-stories, Shamir and Eilam made the point that this placed an emphasis on leaders' self-development, in particular, the development of their self-concepts.

3.2.2 *Personal background and early experiences*

Despite the importance of personal histories and trigger events experienced by leaders over a lifespan in the leadership development process highlighted in the previous section, there is a dearth of scholarly attention paid to leader development at an early age (Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Oliver et al., 2011). To take this further, Murphy and Johnson proposed a framework of leader development based on childhood antecedents to define early development factors that shaped leaders' development over time. Specifically, their framework focused on factors such as: genetics; the role of parenting style; early learning experiences; and early leadership experiences. Murphy and Johnson suggested that the extent to which experiences shaped leaders' identity and self-regulatory capabilities was dependent on an individual's development stage, the extent of societal expectations, and the historical setting that reflected the values of society.

However, from a contextual perspective, scholars have long acknowledged the role family environment has contributed to leader development. According to Bass (1990), the leadership development process begins at an early age with factors such as family background, early childhood development, education, and role models a young person encounters shaping their performance as a leader in adulthood. In support of Bass's perspective, a number of studies have explored the importance of family as a context for leader development, providing evidence that suggests that the roots of leadership may begin early in life (Avolio & Gibbons, 1988; Bass & Riggio, 2005; Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Madsen, 2007; Wood, 1998; Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway, 2000).

According to Kelloway and Barling (2000), parents play an important role in the early stages of leadership development; the way parents behaved and interacted with their children influenced the children's work-related beliefs and aspirations. Earlier research conducted by Gibbons (1986, cited in Avolio & Gibbons, 1988) investigated retrospective life histories of 16 individuals and identified seven factors that attributed to the development of transformational leadership. Two of the seven factors related to parental and family situation. Gibbons found that parental encouragement and expectations to set high standards for achievement, coupled with moderately high levels of early

responsibility in the family, established predispositions of high expectations, high standards, and responsibility of the children in adult life. Furthermore, transformational leaders had learned within the family environment how to deal with conflict and disappointment. Avolio and Gibbons (1988) similarly found that highly transformational executives came from families that provided a strong supportive home environment, stressed high standards of excellence, and provided exposure to difficult challenges.

Zacharatos, Barling, and Kelloway (2000) examined the effect of parents' attitudes and behaviours on adolescents' development of leadership. Their study investigated the influence parents had on the style of leadership adopted by adolescent high school students. Zacharatos et al. found that where adolescents perceived their parents, in particular their father, exhibiting consistent transformational leadership when interacting with them; they in turn adopted those behaviours when interacting with their peers in a sport team context. Similarly, Popper and Mayseless (2003) demonstrated a link between "good" parenting and the development of transformational leadership. By applying a parenting perspective to transformational leadership development, Popper and Mayseless highlighted how parents and early life experiences, to some degree, shaped the development of transformation leaders in adulthood. They found that parents' values and moral standards, and leadership behaviours acted as precursors of creating children's interest in leadership and influenced how they led into adulthood. Popper and Mayseless argued that, "what good parents do and how they behave with their children closely corresponds with what transformational leaders do and how they behave with their followers" (p.44).

In an effort to determine the relationship between supportive parenting in adolescence and transformational leadership in young adults, Oliver et al. (2011) examined longitudinal data spanning a 17-year interval. Quality parenting and self-esteem were assessed during adolescence and self-reported transformational leadership was later measured at age 29. They found that where parents provided a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment during adolescence, leadership potential was mediated by an enhanced self-esteem and self-concept held by adolescents, which in turn related to transformational leadership qualities in adulthood.

3.2.3   *Leadership development intervention*

In relation to the effectiveness and impact of formal leadership intervention approaches to the development of leaders, the evaluation of leadership programs has, to a large extent, been ignored by academia (Day et al., 2014; Hartley & Hinksman, 2003; Ilies & Preece, 2006; Reichard and Avolio, 2005). Hartley and Hinksman's (2003) review of leadership development research found that systematic evaluation (quantitative and qualitative) of leadership programs was quite rudimentary for a number of leadership development approaches. Similarly, Humphris and Connell (2004) identified a gap in leadership research within the evidence based on the perceived impact and return on investment of leadership development interventions. They also noted that very little empirical research had extended beyond the evaluation of the individuals' immediate learning outcomes and most research had ignored the impact on their leadership development over a prolonged period of time.

While Humphris and Connell (2004) argued that the theory for the evaluation of leadership development interventions was not well-developed, they did acknowledge that Kirkpatrick's (1994) framework for the evaluation of training programs was widely used and accepted. The Kirkpatrick evaluation framework is comprised of four levels of evaluation (Hartley & Hinksman, 2003): Level 1 referred to the participant's reaction to the program and planned action in relation to a specific development experience, and level of satisfaction with the program; level 2 referred to the skills and knowledge learned from training; level 3 referred to the application of skills learned as a result of training and measures changes of behaviour; and level 4 referred to the business impact, measuring the business impact achieved by participants (and may include output, costs, quality, and consumer satisfaction).

Although Kirkpatrick's model was the most commonly used framework to evaluate training programs, it has come under criticism for not addressing the return on investment of training interventions (Humphris & Connell, 2004; Phillips & Phillips, 2001). In an attempt to address this gap, Phillips and Phillips (2001) modified Kirkpatrick's model to include a fifth level, comparing the monetary value of the business impact with the costs

of the program. Even though they modified the model to include five levels of evaluation, they acknowledged that not all training programs would necessarily be evaluated to level 5, with the majority not going beyond levels 2 and 3.

To date, the most comprehensive study of the impact of leadership intervention programs has been conducted by a team of researchers at the Gallup Leadership Institute (GLI) (Reichard & Avolio, 2005). The GLI team investigated all of the literature on leadership intervention studies conducted over the last 100 years, including studies conducted in the field and the laboratory (Reichard & Avolio, 2005). Using a meta-analysis qualitative technique to assess the effects of each of the 200 leadership intervention studies, they classified all leadership models into two categories: traditional leadership (leadership theories up to the 1970s such as trait, behaviour, and contingency approaches) and new genre leadership (leadership theories dominating the research in the 1980s, including transformational and charismatic leadership). Of the 200 studies reviewed, less than half of the studies reported the gender of the leader; 72% of the studies were conducted within the United States with; and 64% of the studies were conducted in laboratory settings and 33% in field settings. The majority of studies ($n = 129$) were conducted in educational settings with the majority of those ($n = 114$) conducted in a laboratory setting using students as study participants. The types of leadership interventions implemented in the studies were divided into six categories: formal training ($n = 62$); role play ($n = 39$); scenario/vignette ($n = 35$); assignment based, focused on group task performance ($n = 34$); Pygmalion leadership which manipulated leadership expectations ($n = 14$); and other types of interventions ($n = 16$). Of the 200 studies, only 9% of the interventions exceeded a seven-day period with only 11 of these studies lasting longer than a one month period.

Despite the limitations of the majority of studies reviewed by the GLI team, they concluded that the leadership interventions in the studies had worked to some degree by having a positive and moderate impact on outcomes of developing leaders (Reichard & Avolio, 2005). This was regardless of the type of intervention used or the type of leadership theory the intervention was based on, as the traditional leadership and new genre leadership theories were both found to have a moderate, positive effect. However, interventions

testing Pygmalion leadership (the phenomena of self-fulfilling expectations) had significantly larger effects on leadership development than interventions based on any of the other theories where "participants receiving Pygmalion intervention had up to 79% chance of having a positive outcome, as compared to 50% chance at random" (p.217).

3.3 Women's leadership

Historically, the vast majority of leadership literature has examined theory and practices through a gendered lens, with the majority of mainstream leadership literature drawing largely on studies of men in the corporate, political, and military sectors (Chin, 2007; Stead & Elliott, 2009). As a consequence, there is a lack of empirical research on women's leadership (Chin, 2007; Stead & Elliott, 2009). The following section will examine the research on women's leadership; specifically, it will examine women's style of leadership, how women conceptualise leadership, and explore how women develop as leaders.

3.3.1 Women's style of leadership

The topic of gender and leadership style has created much debate amongst the academic community for a number of years (Bass & Riggio, 2005; Chin, 2007; Eagly & Carli, 2003). As more women enter the workforce with an emphasis on achieving fulfilling careers in their chosen fields, along with the introduction of equal employment opportunity legislation, it has become important for organisations to understand whether women and men differ in leadership style (Bass & Riggio, 2005; Eagly & Carli, 2003). There appear to be contradictory schools of thought presented in the leadership literature on this topic, with a range of views concerning gender differences and similarities in the way men and women lead. One perspective has claimed that men and women have no differences in leadership style (Carless, 1998; Davidson & Burke, 1994; Kolb, 1999) while contrasting research has found women do lead differently from men (Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller, 2003; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Rosener, 1990).

To make sense of these conflicting perspectives, Eagly and Johnson (1990) conducted a meta-analysis of 162 empirical studies conducted during 1961-1987 on gender and

leadership styles. They concluded that when comparing the leadership style of men and women, gender influenced leadership style. They found that women were more likely to adopt a more democratic or participative style of leadership, while men were more likely to adopt an autocratic or directive style.

To address the issue of gender in relation to specific leadership styles, Eagly et al. (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 45 studies that had compared transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles of men and women. They concluded that women were more often transformational leaders than men were. However, they also found that women engaged in rewarding good performance by adopting contingent reward behaviours that were a key component of transactional leadership. Vinkenburg, van Engen, Eagly, and Johannesen-Schemidt's (2011) study further supported the work of Eagly et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis. Vinkenburg et al.'s investigation of the *descriptive* gender stereotypes about leadership styles found the participants (272 business travelers 122 US and 149 Dutch descent with 44% being female) of the study believed women displayed more transformational and contingent reward behaviours, and few management-by- exception and laissez-faire behaviours than men.

Adding to the work of Eagly and Johnson (1990), Eagly et al. (2003), and Van Engen and Willemsen (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of research on sex differences in leadership styles published during 1987-2000. Their analysis included research that examined leadership styles that were interpersonal, task-orientated, democratic, autocratic, transformational, and transactional. Van Engen and Willemsen's analysis found that while there was no sex differences found with most styles of leadership, women tended to use more democratic and transformational styles of leadership than men did. These findings supported Bass, Avolio, and Atwater's (1996) study that found female leaders were rated by both female and male subordinates as displaying transformational leadership behaviours more frequently than male leaders.

Burke and Collins (2001) challenged the notion that gender differences in leadership styles existed by conducting a study to investigate gender differences in self-reported leadership

styles and management skills of certified public accountants (CPA). A multi-factor leadership questionnaire was mailed out to 5,600 members of the American Women's Society of Certified Public Accountants and American Institute of Certified Public Accountants of which 1,031 (females *n=711*, males *n=320*) completed the questionnaire. The results of the study found that gender differences in leadership styles of CPAs did exist with females self-reporting themselves as more transformational than their male counterparts. Female CPAs were more likely than male CPAs to serve as positive role models for their subordinates; they used inspiration to achieve a common purpose, encouraged subordinates to be creative problem solvers and question assumptions; and they spent more time developing, teaching, and coaching their subordinates. Furthermore, females reported higher perceived effectiveness in communication, coaching and development, and time management skills than males.

Rosener's (1990) research on leadership styles found that most women in her study described their style of leadership as transformational while men viewed their leadership as transactional. Based on the findings of her study, Rosener proposed an interactive leadership model to describe women's style of leadership. Her model of interactive leadership focused on women's interaction with subordinates and characteristics of transformational leadership. The model was based on women's encouragement of participation (inclusiveness, consultation, and involvement in decision-making), sharing of power and information (women's willingness to share information rather than use it as a form of power), enhancement of the self-worth of others, and energizing others (by using enthusiasm and creating challenges).

In regard to the style of leadership adopted by women, Van Engen and Willemsen (2004) suggested that leadership was a contextualised phenomenon contingent upon the context in which male and female leaders operated. In an earlier study, Eagly, Karau, and Makhijani (1995) found that male and female leaders were equally effective in settings that matched their gender roles. They found that women were perceived as being more effective leaders in female dominated settings while men were more effective in male dominated

settings. This is an interesting aspect to consider in relation to women's leadership in the sporting environment which is dominated predominantly by males in leadership roles.

3.3.2   Women's concept of leadership

In order to understand women's leadership and what intervention is required to develop them as leaders, it is important to explore how women perceive the concept of leadership. According to Sinclair (1998) women were often reluctant to identify themselves as leaders as they saw leadership as requiring single mindedness, and ruthlessness, and driven ambition to succeed. They tended to undervalue their performance and contribution, and avoided boasting about their achievements to avoid being judged harshly by their peers. As Sinclair stated in her study of Australian women and men business leaders, "Women generally found it quite difficult to talk about themselves, and themselves as leaders, describing it as 'feeling self-indulgent' "(p.10). This aspect of women's leadership described by Sinclair presents real challenges for the development of women's leadership. The reluctance and difficulty for women to identify and categorise themselves as potential leaders represents women's disconnect with the conventional discourse of leadership (Sinclair, 1998).

The language used for leadership also appears to be confusing for women. Henderson-Kelly and Pamphilon's (2000) study on leadership and management practices of children's services found that the women in the study did not always identify with the language surrounding leadership and management, which they perceived to be masculine. Kelly and Pamphilon argued that this had implications for women understanding what constituted leadership, resulting in women not being able to relate to or identify themselves as leaders based on leadership models presented from the traditional male experience. However, some caution must be taken in Henderson-Kelly and Pamphilon's study as their findings were based on only three case studies involving female child care directors from different sectors (family day care, occasional care, and long day care).

Sinclair's (1995) study of leadership brought a different perspective to the construct of leadership and how it was defined by women at the time. Sinclair's work explored the

meanings of sexuality as a conscious and unconscious expression, with particular emphasis on physicality, gender identity and aspiration for women in leadership roles as executives. The purpose of her paper was to highlight the diverse ways in which women expressed themselves in leadership roles as women. Sinclair challenged the notion that women should not have to compromise their sexuality as a woman to assert their leadership against a norm of masculinity. Sinclair based her argument on data collected from a previous study, "Trails at the Top" (Sinclair, 1994) where interviews were conducted with 11 senior executive women and 11 men who were chief executives from the Australian workforce. Sinclair argued that women's sexual identities were excluded from the constructs of leadership, which were connected to masculine heterosexuality. For example, in order for women to be established or be accepted as leaders they were required to minimise their sexual identity from their leadership persona. Sinclair concluded by arguing a strong case for a need to develop a women-centered discourse of sexuality of leading that introduced the notion of womanliness, sexuality, and physicality to leadership. While Sinclair provided a convincing argument to support her case, she acknowledged that the findings from her study should be treated only as suggestive rather than conclusive, inviting further testing and analysis to be conducted.

Although Sinclair's (1995) study related to the corporate sector, it does raise an interesting perspective on the construction of leadership for women in the sport domain, which is also primarily a male dominated environment. It also raises the question of whether women in sport feel they too have to compromise their sexual identities in order to be appointed in leadership positions and whether it has an impact on their style of leadership or the way they construct their leadership.

3.3.3   *Women's leadership development*

While leadership development research has attracted scholarly interest in recent times, unfortunately limited attention has been afforded to understanding how women develop as leaders. A significant gap in critical studies based on empirical research on women's leadership development exists and remains relatively unexplored (Stead & Elliott, 2009, 2012). However, women's early stages of leadership development appear to have attracted

some research interest as a starting point to understand the role early life experiences of women contributed to the leadership development process. For example, Sinclair (1998) argued that it was important to recognise the role played by early influences, which enabled women not to feel constrained by social stereotypes of what girls and women do. Sinclair claimed it was important to examine early experiences because they shaped people's understanding of what leadership looked like, and their belief about eligibility for leadership. Sinclair stated that "early experiences are important in shaping women's belief about leadership, about themselves and their capabilities" (p.80).

Similar to Sinclair (1998), Cubillo and Brown's (2003) study of women in positions of senior management within educational institutions found early histories and familial support shaped the women's thinking to aspire to higher education and role achievements. Wood's (1998) study of women at principal level in the Tasmanian Education Department also found that parents had been most influential in the women's early lives by placing high expectations on the women to succeed in education and beyond.

Furthermore, Madsen's (2007) study investigated the perceptions and experiences related to the lifetime development of leadership skills, abilities, and competencies. Her research focused on the childhood experiences of 10 women university presidents; nine were from public universities and one from a private post-secondary institution, all located in America. Madsen found that positive school experiences played an important role in developing women's leadership at a young age. The women all had a strong commitment to education and understood its importance in life. They all enjoyed their experience at school and appreciated having caring teachers who recognised their abilities and contributions, and acknowledged their intellectual and social competence.

Madsen (2007) also found some of the most influential learning identified by the women was through the experience of challenging, difficult, and traumatic events. Madsen found that women who experienced hardship in their childhood learned to change and adjust their own behaviours and expectations to deal with the situation. Earlier, Cubillo and Brown (2003) similarly found women in their study "displayed remarkable qualities of resilience,

courage and self-reliance" (p.289). Cubillo and Brown found that women who experienced some form of hardship had higher levels of self-confidence, and self-reliance to tackle challenging situations.

3.4 Women's leadership in sport

Very little is known about how women practice and learn leadership in a sport context, with a lack of critical studies using empirical research on women's leadership in sport. However, over the past few decades, more studies have examined the under-representation of women in leadership positions in sport in an attempt to understand the challenges and barriers associated with the lack of women in leadership roles (Burton, 2014). The following section presents an overview of research into women's leadership in sport, highlighting studies associated with explaining women's under-representation as leaders in sport.

3.4.1 Women's under-representation in leadership roles

Women and girls' participation in sport has steadily increased over the past 30 years in Australia and internationally, yet women have been significantly under-represented in leadership roles at all levels in sport (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010; Burton, 2014; Commonwealth of Australia, 2006, 2009; International Working Group on Women and Sport, 2012). During the past 30 years Australia has seen considerable legislative, policy, and social change to improve the equity of women represented in organisations; however women have not attained leadership and decision-making positions in significant numbers in the management and board levels in both the private and public sectors (Still, 2006). A similar story can be told within the sport domain in Australia. In an attempt to improve the status quo of women in sport in Australia, during the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, a number of affirmative action programs were initiated by the Australian Sports Commission and various state government departments. Despite these efforts, there continues to be a serious imbalance between the level of women and girls' participation in sport and the number of women in sport leadership roles (ASC, 2011; Commonwealth of Australia, 2009).

As an institution, sport has been widely recognised as being dominated and controlled by men, and has operated as a site to define and reproduce the culture of hegemonic masculinity (Anderson, 2009; Connell, 2005; Light, 2007; McKay, Lawrence, Miller, & Rowe, 2001; Whisenant, 2008). According to Burton (2014), hegemonic masculinity has operated as an institutionalised practice within sport organisations, restricting women's access to leadership positions within sport. For example, Whisenant (2008) found hegemonic masculinity permeated sports at the grassroots level of interscholastic athletics, constraining women's access to athletic director positions. Further, Greenhill's et al. (2009) case study of an Australian state sporting organisation found that organisational strategies, systemic barriers, and the support of a hegemonic masculinity culture within the organisation sustained the dominance of male coaching while marginalising women.

In an earlier study, McKay (1997) examined how Australian sporting organisations implemented affirmative action programs for women initiated by State and Federal governments in the 1990s. McKay's study showed that affirmative action initiatives at the time had either been marginalised or trivialised by sporting organisations. According to McKay, the culture and practices prevalent in sport in Australia constructed a culture that supported masculinity and marginalised women and had contributed to the demise of the few women holding leadership positions in sport, due to institutional barriers favouring men and disadvantaging women. Furthermore, Edwards, Skinner, and O'Keefe (2000) explored whether the dominant masculine discourse that existed within sporting organisations had a negative impact on the leadership experiences and management ability of women in leadership positions. Five female managers of high profile Australian sporting organisations and their support staff were interviewed several times. A total of 29 interviews were conducted. The findings revealed that there was a strong dominance of a "macho masculine" discourse that existed in the Australian sport organisations that supported men and created barriers for women. Leadership styles with masculine attributes were highly valued within the organisations, and attempts by women to introduce alternative leadership styles or values were degraded. It was also found that male support staff perceived that leadership roles held by women were not necessarily based on their management skill and ability, but rather due to their "sexual" attributes.

To understand how the dominant masculine culture surrounding sporting organisations had impacted on employment opportunities for females, Shaw and Hoeber (2003) investigated whether this dominant discourse influenced female's access to power and promotion opportunities. Thirty-five employees from three national governing bodies of sport in England were interviewed and related organisational documents were analysed to gain a meaningful insight into the social dynamics of the organisations. Similar to Edwards, Skinner, and O'Keefe's (2000) study, Shaw and Hoeber found that masculine discourses were highly valued for leadership positions by organisations, and feminine discourses were considerably undervalued and associated with positions of minor influence and responsibility.

Schell and Rodriguez's (2000) discussion paper provided an interesting perspective on how the theory of hegemonic masculinity impacted on the prevalence of gender based discrimination in sport. They argued that hegemonic masculinity stratified women within sport in three domains: economic; social; and political. Economically, they found that women had limited access to be involved in the more prestigious events in the fields of coaching, management, and participation, and therefore had a significantly reduced earning capacity. From a social perspective, females were restricted at an early age to involvement in typically "feminine" sports. Those women who moved outside the accepted norm and pursued male dominated sports were negatively perceived by others. In the political domain, there appeared to be gender imbalances within the major decision-making centres of many sporting organisations. Schell and Rodriguez explained the ramification of this imbalance as it filtered down within the values of organisations.

West, Green, Brackenridge, and Woodward (2001) attempted to gain an insight into why few women were represented in coaching roles in the United Kingdom (UK). West et al. found that patriarchal ideologies about women and coaching limited women's access to higher level coaching roles. Women felt that their suitability to coach was questioned because there was a perception held that coaching was a masculine role where athletic ability was highly regarded. They held a perception that because men generally achieved higher standards of athletic performance than women, men were perceived to be better

coaches. They also felt that women's commitment to coaching was scrutinised because there was a belief that women could not juggle the demands of being a mother with the role of a coach, particularly at the higher levels. To overcome these perceptions, the women perceived that gaining coaching qualifications provided tangible evidence of their ability and competence to coach. They also felt that qualifications conveyed a message of their seriousness and commitment to coaching. Another strategy used by women to justify their inclusion in coaching roles was via the competitive success of their athletes. This was deemed by the women to be an important criterion for judging a coach's ability and competence. It also provided women with self-belief in their ability to coach at a higher level and to challenge others who questioned their ability to coach.

3.4.2   *Gender relations and women's under-representation in leadership*

The policies and procedures adopted by sport organisations have influenced the gender relations and composition of leadership roles within sport organisations. These have acted to preserve the male dominance and under-representation of women in leadership positions (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007, 2012; Shaw & Frisby, 2006). In her examination of gender relations of New Zealand regional sports trusts, Shaw (2006) found that a gender suppression discourse existed throughout the organisations' practices of employment. This was regardless of having gender equity policies in place and the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the organisations stating their "desire to employ the best person for the job, regardless of gender" (p.559). Shaw found that despite the CEOs' expressed desire to portray their organisations as "homogenous and non-gendered" (p.560), they also revealed a gendered association with various job roles. For example, women were employed to work with the development of physical activity in young children, and in contrast men were employed to work with older age groups via coaches and secondary school sport.

Further evidence of the preservation of gender suppression in sporting organisations was provided by Sibson (2010). Sibson examined the gender relations within a six member voluntary Board of Directors of an Australian grassroots sport organisation. She found the practice of exclusionary power was exercised by male board members through limiting the participation and input of female board members. In regard to recruitment and selection

of board of directors in sporting organisations and the influences of gendered relations, Claringbould and Knoppers (2007) found that male board members of Dutch national sporting organisations controlled board decisions "by affirming and negating affirmative action policies and by framing the process of recruitment and selection…to reproduce the male-dominated culture in the board" (p. 495). Hovden's (2000a) study illustrated the dominance of male influences on the appointment of board members. Hovden examined the recruitment and selection processes used by Norwegian sporting organisations for the appointment of committee members at the elite national level. Nine men and five women from two national and two local committees were interviewed. Hovden found that participants identified that individuals' performance was often based on their time and availability, demonstration of skills related to economic management and organisational development, and having had an extensive business network; these were all regarded as selection criteria for the appointment of committee members used by Norwegian sporting organisations at the national level. Hovden found that male committee members both consciously and subconsciously maintained masculine norms by nominating and appointing other male committee members onto their boards who had similar backgrounds to themselves.

Furthermore, Hovden (2000b) focused on the meaning of gender in regard to the selection process and election of committee members of Norwegian sporting organisations. Hovden collected extensive data via observations and interviews over a three-year period from one local and two national organisational bodies of the Norwegian Confederation of Sport. It was found that positions of leadership were selected based upon criteria of personal traits and skills that were closely related to the corporate sector of "heroic" masculine traits. These traits were often promoted as being gender neutral, but due to their strong association with masculine behaviour, only a few women were seen to meet them. Hovden found that there was a general perception that because women did not fit the desired behavioural criteria, they were not competent and lacked the skills required for successful leadership. Hovden argued that this perception of "women's individual deficiencies and under-representation, further facilitated the justification and normalization of masculine competencies as superior" (p.28).

The lack of networks and mentors for women has also been associated with the under-representation of women in decision-making and leadership roles in sport. Inglis, Danylchuk, and Pastore (2000) identified limited availability of mentors, role models, and organisational support for Canadian and American women working as athletic directors and coaches at a professional level. They also found that there was an imbalance between the treatment of men and women in areas such as allocation of resources, wage, job security, and workload. While Inglis et al. acknowledged that women experienced individual paths to empowerment; they suggested that systemic changes were needed to address the issues raised by the women in this study to improve women's working conditions and reverse the decline in female representation in sport. In a further study, Wensing (2000) conducted a review of literature on Australian and New Zealand women in sport organisations to explore the benefits of mentoring. Wensing found that despite affirmative actions, barriers were evident and continued to prevent equal representation of women in sports leadership. Numerous barriers were identified: women's lack of self-confidence (internal barrier); lack of mentors and role models for women (internal barrier); and the prevalence of male networks (external barriers).

Balancing work and family commitments has also been identified as a factor impacting upon women's pursuit of leadership roles. Fundamental societal changes experienced over the past decade have seen a shift in working behaviours with the rise in dual career couples and mothers with young children pursuing careers (Cinamon & Rich, 2005). Maintaining balance between family obligations and work demands is becoming increasingly difficult, with conflict occurring between the two domains (Dixon, Bruening, Mazerolle, Davis, & Crowder, 2006). For example, Dixon and Bruening (2007) found that at an organisational level, the demands and expectations placed on a head coaching role in sport not only required spending long hours in the office, the role required substantial traveling commitments. Dixon and Bruening found that these demands and expectations at the organisational level, contributed significantly to work-family conflict for female head coaches with children. Furthermore, Pfister and Radtke (2006) concluded that to enable women to combine both their involvement in sport with their private lives, they required family acceptance and support.

The retention of women in leadership positions has also been considered by academics. Pastore, Danylchuk, and Inglis (1999) found that work balance and conditions, support, acknowledgement, respect, and a discrimination free work environment were important retention factors for Canadian and American intercollegiate athletic staff. An inclusive work environment was also highly valued with women rating it higher than men. In an earlier study, Pastore (1994) attempted to understand the strategies implemented to retain women in coaching positions. The retention strategies explored included developmental opportunities such as education, program support, financial incentives, a clear job definition, and open communication. The results showed communication was rated as the most used tool for retaining female coaching staff, and developmental opportunities such as education and training were seldom utilised. Interestingly, men tended to perceive that retention strategies were used in the coaching profession to a greater extent than women perceived them. A possible explanation for this result, provided by Pastore, was the fact that the average male coach had been within the system longer than most women and that they may have had a better understanding of the organisational processes. Pastore also suggested that the strong organisational networks established by men may have altered their perceptions of the strategies used.

Strawbridge's (2000) investigation of the professional preparation of women in sport leadership positions in the USA provided an insight into the types of skills and knowledge women considered necessary to become a successful leader. Twenty-eight female administrators who held various leadership positions ranging from athletic directors of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Athletic programs, and directors or presidents of national and international governing bodies were surveyed. Strawbridge found that the women perceived "hands on experience" was essential to their performance of the job. They considered this to be the most valuable aspect of their preparation, providing them with a diverse background of experience resulting in greater self-belief and confidence in their ability to perform the role. They also identified the opportunity to develop knowledge of the business aspect of sport, personal mentoring, and education as important components to their leadership development. The women surveyed were well educated, with 26 women having had completed undergraduate and postgraduate

degrees. The women felt this was crucial to their credibility and perceived competence. In relation to the types of knowledge and skills women required to develop their leadership, the women identified business management related with budgeting and finance, business law, fundraising, promotion, and public speaking as factors lacking in their professional development. The lack of female mentors was also seen as a problem by the women, especially early in their careers, as well as a need to develop negotiating skills or gaining knowledge of conflict resolution theory and practice. They felt this would put them in a better position to be able to "play the game." The women identified writing, public speaking, a strong business sense, and motivational systems as personal development opportunities that should be included in formalised professional preparation programs. Although the sample size of the study used by Strawbridge was small, the results provide an important insight into the pathway and process required for the development of women's skills and capacity to lead.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented literature relevant to key themes associated with leadership theories including leadership development, women's practice and concept of leadership, and women's leadership in a sport context. The literature indicated that even though the field of leadership has been extensively researched over the past decade and has produced a myriad of leadership theories, the notion of leadership still remains ill-defined and confusing. In an attempt to make sense of the maze of information on leadership, an overview of key leadership theories presented a picture of how leadership theories have been developed over time. This has provided a useful basis for the analysis of leadership styles for this study.

The more recent theories of leadership such as transformational and authentic leadership remain a popular choice of leadership theory currently being used by academics. According to the literature, a transformational leader influences and empowers their followers beyond immediate self-interests and generates awareness and acceptance of the purposes and the mission of the group. Common dimensions of a transformational leadership model include idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual

stimulation, and individualised consideration. Fundamental to the theory and conceptual development of authentic leadership are the notion of self-awareness and knowing one's self. Common dimensions associated with authentic leadership models include self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and a leader having an internalised moral perspective.

The emergence of leadership development theory to explain how leaders and leadership are developed has focused on two broad approaches: human capital and social capital. To further explain the construct of leadership development, dimensions of authentic leadership theory have featured in a number of conceptual frameworks and leadership development models. The leadership development models discussed in this literature have acknowledged and recognised that leadership development was a dynamic lifespan process involving "life" experiences of leaders starting at a young age that shaped their perspectives, values, and behaviours. The importance of personal histories, trigger or critical events, and early leadership experiences all contribute to the leadership development process overtime. Furthermore, the leadership development process begins at an early age with factors such as family environment, early childhood development, education, and the influence of role models a young person encounters. These factors have all been found to shape a person's performance as a leader in adulthood. While the literature has illustrated the contribution of personal histories and trigger or critical events experienced by leaders at an early age to the shaping of, and influence on their leadership practice in adulthood, limited literature was available specifically looking at a sport leadership context focused on females.

In relation to the style of leadership adopted by women, the literature supported the view that women and men have different styles of leadership, with women adopting a more transformational style of leadership. It also found that women were more effective leaders in a female dominated setting than in a male dominated setting. However, the majority of literature has focused on the management/corporate sector, so the style of leadership women adopt in the sporting domain is less known. This is a similar state of affairs for research undertaken on women's conception of leadership. The literature suggested that

many women working in the corporate/management sector tend to undervalue their contribution and performance as a leader, are reluctant to identify themselves as leaders, and find it hard to identify with the language surrounding leadership. While these perspectives contribute to the understanding of women's leadership practice, there have been few studies that have specifically looked at how women conceptualise and construct their leadership in a sport context.

In regards to women's leadership in the sport domain, much of the literature has focused predominantly on explaining the barriers responsible for inhibiting women either succeeding or choosing to engage in leadership roles. The success of the "old boy's" network, women's lack of networks, limited professional opportunities for women, a lack of support systems for women, lack of self-confidence, perceived lack of women mentors and role models, and family responsibilities and commitments have all been identified by women as key barriers for women's under-representation in coaching and administration positions. Furthermore, the literature highlighted the use of discriminative practices in the recruitment and selection of women in leadership and decision-making roles by sporting organisations. For those few women, who have been appointed to leadership positions, they have faced a variety of challenging issues created by stereotypical attitudes that favour a male dominated culture. It would also appear from the literature that the introduction of affirmative action policies to address the issue of equity and under-representation of women in leadership roles has had limited impact to date.

4. Research Design and Methodology

This chapter provides justification and details of the methodology used to investigate the research questions outlined in chapter one. It briefly discusses the theoretical research perspective and epistemology used to frame this study, describes the research design (qualitative research approach and methodology strategy), provides a rationale for using case study methodology, describes the selection and recruitment of research participants, and details the data collection procedures and methods of data analysis used.

4.1 Theoretical framework

This study explored the nature and development of women's leadership styles in the context of sport as a process of learning emerging from engagement in day-to-day social practices and life experiences over their lives in sport and sport leadership. Based on this concept of developing leadership styles as learning, the study adopted a social constructivist theoretical framework.

Constructivism is based on a theory of learning that derives from the field of psychology and social psychology (Fosnot, 2005; Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Primarily, constructivism incorporates the cognitive and social process that contributes to the process of learning to focus on knowledge and how it is constructed and changed over time (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). From a constructivist perspective human beings learn by constructing their knowledge of reality from a linguistic, social, and historical context to view learning as a social, interpretative and ongoing process (Fosnot, 1996; Schwandt, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Constructivism sees individuals as coming to understand and interpret the complexity of their world through lived experiences that are enacted in daily life where all knowledge and meaningful reality are constructed through interaction between human beings and their world (Crotty, 1998).

A constructivist view of learning does not see the generation of knowledge as an external object, but rather as a complex process that includes a range of implicit learning and

knowledge that is enacted (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2000; Light & Dixon, 2007). Constructivism focuses on the meaning-making activity of the individual and believes that, "particular actors, in particular places, at particular times, fashion meaning out of events and phenomena through prolonged, complex processes of social interaction involving history, language, and action" (Schwandt cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p.222). From this perspective, in order for human beings to make sense of their experience, they invent and continually test and modify concepts, models, and schemes in light of new experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Although there are various theories of knowledge and learning termed constructivism, two main types are seen in the literature: cognitive constructivism and social constructivism (Fosnot, 2005; Light, 2008; Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Cognitive constructivism (also referred to as psychological constructivism or personal constructivism) has been influenced by the early research conducted by Piaget in the field of cognitive development. Piaget (1973) developed a theory around children's stages of development and construction of knowledge. Piaget concluded that children learned best when they were active learners, personally engaged in the learning process and sought their own solutions to problems. According to Youniss and Damon (cited in Rovegno & Dolly, 2006), Piagot's theory remains an important and valuable theory in the field of cognitive development to explain how social experiences influence the construction of knowledge. Piaget background as a biologist shaped his view on learning as a process of adaptation that Davis et al. (2000) described as a Neo-Darwinist view. Cognitive constructivism views learning as an active process of constructing knowledge and understanding (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). It recognises that the generation of knowledge encompasses more than the process of just adding on new knowledge in isolation but is rather a "process of the learner constructing unique knowledge through the interaction of his or her previous experience and knowledge and new experiences" (Light, 2008a, p.24).

Social constructivism differs from cognitive constructivism through its emphasis on the role played by social processes and cultural themes on the generation of new knowledge and understanding. Social constructivism originates in the ideas of Vygotsky (1978) and

was later developed by others such as Bruner (1996). Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development explained the social origins of cognition, emphasising social interaction and language. Vygotsky suggested that experiences in a social context provided opportunities for knowledge and understanding to be advanced through interactions with others. For example, Vygotsky's theory suggested that a child's development of knowledge and understanding is inseparable from social and cultural activities, where "the teacher is viewed as a facilitator who helps students to learn new knowledge by creating positive learning environments that take into account the child's prior knowledge, experience, development level, and culture" (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006, p.244).

4.2   Core assumptions of social constructivism

There are a number of assumptions underpinning social constructivist epistemology that were used to guide this study (see for example, Burr, 2003; Crotty, 1998; Fosnot, 1996; Light, 2008a; Rovegno & Dolly, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of this study, a social constructivism lens views the ways in which the participants adapted and developed their understandings of leadership and their particular approaches to it, as a process of learning. As Piaget (cited in Rovegno & Dolly, 2006) suggested, learning can be seen as a process of adaptation to change and this is how this study looked at the participants' development as leaders in sport. From a social constructivist point of view, interpretations and understanding of the meanings the participants gave to their experiences associated with their leadership style and leadership development were shaped by their histories of experience in particular cultural and social contexts.

According to Burr (2003), there is not one feature alone which could be said to identify a social constructivist position on how human beings learn and construct knowledge but rather the foundation of a social constructivist approach may consist of one or more of the following primary assumptions. The first assumption is that social constructivism takes a critical stance toward taken-for-granted knowledge as a way of understanding the world. Social constructivism sits upon epistemological assumptions that views knowledge, not as an object that is transmitted, but as being inseparable from the individual, with learning being a process of change. In social constructivism the learner and what is learned are

inseparable (Light, 2008a). Its assumptions challenge the view "that conventional knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world" (Burr, 2003, p.3). For example, from a constructivist perspective, learning and the generation of knowledge are not restricted to what is consciously apparent constructivism adopts a holistic view of learning and cognition that includes implicit learning and knowledge that are enacted in daily life (Light, 2008a). The basis of constructivism assumes that, "we as human beings have no access to an objective reality since we are constructing our version of it, while at the same time transforming it and ourselves" (Fosnot, 2005, pp.27-28).

The second assumption is that knowledge is both constructed through, and sustained by, social processes. In other words, knowledge is constructed through daily social interactions between people where their versions of knowledge become established (Burr, 2003). From a social constructivist perspective, social interaction is viewed as a setting for learning (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). As suggested in physical education literature, this means that learning is essentially an ongoing social process where cognition is seen as a collective process rather than an intra-individual process, and where social interaction with a group provides greater understanding and capabilities than are possible at an intrapersonal level (Light, 2008a). For example, processes of social interaction, such as the sharing of ideas, discussing and justifying beliefs, and negotiating conflict and differing viewpoints can all contribute to the learning process (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006).

The third assumption refers to the categories and concepts that we use to understand the world that are historically and culturally specific and relative to particular cultures and periods of history. Burr (2003) suggested that, "particular forms of knowledge that abound in any culture are therefore artifacts of it, and we should not assume that *our* ways of understanding are necessarily any better, in terms of being any nearer the truth, than other ways" (p.4). A social constructivist perspective on learning emphasises the importance of the role that particular cultures and shared understanding of those cultures play in the construction of knowledge (Fosnot, 2005; Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Crotty (1998) explained that social constructivism "emphasizes the hold our culture has on us: it shapes the way in which we see things (even the way we feel things!) and gives us a quite definite

view of the world" (p.58). Burr (2003) argued that all forms of knowledge are historically and culturally specific, and that people constructed knowledge through their daily interactions with other people in the course of their social life, and that is where individuals' versions of knowledge became established. Furthermore, social constructivism assumes that the process of knowledge construction involves external experiences being internalised through the means of language (Vygotsky, 1978). It is through shared systems of intelligibility such as the conventions of language that the mental functions are transmitted to generate meaning (Gergen, 1985; Vygotsky, 1978).

4.3   Qualitative methodology

An interpretive qualitative research design was chosen for this study to explore beneath the surface of the ways in which women lead in sport, and seek to understand how their leadership approach is constructed through, and shaped by, social experience. In particular, the study strives to understand how these women made sense of their social experiences in sport, and the meaning they made of it in relation to their style and development of leadership.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), the purpose of qualitative research methods is to explore and uncover the socially constructed nature of reality, and how social experience is created and gives meaning to a phenomenon. Qualitative methodology was chosen for this study to interpret the experiences of the participants and to develop a deep understanding of the interaction between their experiences of life and the development of their sport leadership approaches. As Denzin and Lincoln argued that, "quantitative researchers are seldom able to capture their subjects' perspectives because they have to rely on more remote, inferential empirical methods and materials" (p.10).

Furthermore, the majority of research on leadership has been dominated by a quantitative research approach that has tended to illuminate broad patterns and enabled a degree of prediction but which has not provided more nuanced understandings of individual experience and the influence of specific socio-cultural contexts. As Heck and Hallinger (1999) suggested, qualitative approaches to researching leadership allowed for a more in-

depth understanding of how leadership is defined and implemented, and how leaders are shaped by their backgrounds and belief. They argued that quantitative methods commonly used for leadership research, such as questionnaires, cannot uncover these characteristics of leadership. The social constructivist framework for the study is consistent with the interpretive paradigm and qualitative methodology (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 2002). Furthermore, according to Burr (2003), the use of a social constructivist paradigm leads logically to the choice of qualitative methods due to the importance of the analysis of language to understand the social meaning of accounts and discourses.

4.4   Research design: Case study approach

To explore how women conceptualise and construct leadership within a sport context, this study adopted a multiple-case study approach (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2014). The following section outlines the reasons for this choice.

A case study design offers a means of investigating complex social units in real-life situations (Merriam, 1998) and can provide a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon. Yin (2014) described a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within the real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p.16). Yin argued that, "a case study allows investigators to focus on a 'case' and retain a holistic and real-world perspective-such as in studying individualistic life cycles" (p.4).

A case study design can be approached in various ways depending on the circumstances of the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014). A single-case design focuses on one individual case and is best used where a case is a rare or unique event (Yin, 2014). For this study, a single-case design was not considered appropriate as each individual woman's situation was not considered as a rare or unique case.

In contrast to a single-case design, a multiple-case design involves studying a range of similar and contrasting cases. A multiple-case sampling is considered to provide a more compelling and robust study. It also strengthens the trustworthiness and the confidence of the findings (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2014).

4.5   Selection of case studies (units of analysis)

According to Patton (2002), units of analysis, which can also be referred to as cases, are "usually determined during the design stage and becomes the basis for purposeful sampling in qualitative inquiry" (p.447). This process also includes decisions having to be made about both the sample size and sampling strategies, depending on the choice of appropriate unit of analysis to be studied (Patton, 2002).

In determining the sample size (cases) for this study, Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested that a study with more than 15 cases can become unwieldy due to the volume of data generated and the high number of permutations to account for. However, they also recognised that the use of multiple cases increased the trustworthiness of the findings and added confidence to a study. He argued that a multiple case approach provided the opportunity for the researcher to understand the processes and outcomes across many cases resulting in more sophisticated descriptions and explanations.

Furthermore, Yin (2014) stated that "any use of multiple-case design should follow a replication logic, not a sampling logic" (p.63). He argued that, "cases should serve in a manner similar to multiple experiments, with similar results (a literal replication) or contrasting results (a theoretical replication)" (p.63). According to Yin, analysing a range of similar and contrasting cases further strengthens the validity and stability of the findings.

Taking all this into account, the primary units of analysis for this study were the women who were recipients of the Victorian State Government's Women in Sport Leadership (WISL) program during 2003, 2004, and 2005. The WISL grant scheme was introduced by the Victorian Government sponsored through Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV), as part of their commitment to increasing the number of women in leadership and decision-

making positions in the sport and recreation industry in Victoria. The WISL program targeted women who were involved in sport in Victoria at various levels (club, regional, state, and national) in some form of leadership role. The aim of the WISL program was to provide women with the opportunity to increase their skill and knowledge levels to assist their leadership capacity.

Applications to participate in the WISL program were offered annually whereby women who were over the age of 18 years and resided in the state of Victoria submitted an application and were selected based on criteria set by Sport and Recreation Victoria, a unit of the Victorian State Government's Department of Victorian Communities responsible for the delivery of the WISL program. During 2003-2005, a total of 30 women received funding through this program. Sixteen of the women undertook the sport management development category and 14 women undertook the coach and official development. The majority of women (*n*=20) who went through the program performed their leadership role in a voluntary capacity. There was a reasonable spread across the different sectional levels, with nine participants involved in their leadership role at the community level (local clubs and regional associations) and 14 at the elite level (state and national sporting organisations). The participants' leadership roles at the various levels included coaching, chairperson/president, secretary, and management positions. The majority of women held two or more leadership roles within their sport. In a number of cases they combined administration roles with coaching.

In order to apply "replication" logic to the multiple-case design, there needed to be an adequate number of cases with similar and contrasting results (Yin, 2014). Having a number of the women who participated in the WISL program who were operating in leadership positions across the two sector levels (community and elite) of the Australian not-for-profit sport industry provided me with the opportunity to apply "replication" logic to the study by exploring how the women operated their leadership across the two different sectors (community and elite) of the sport industry.

Due to the large number of participants, the study only went as far as investigating the women's perspective on their leadership without fully investigating the contexts where they were enacting their leadership. It should be acknowledged that excluding the voice of other actors in the context of the women's settings where they were acting out their leadership may be considered a limitation to the study. However, having a substantial number of cases, 23 in total, not only allowed for a replication logic to be applied to the study but also provided for the generation of data across a larger number of participants working in a variety of settings than might normally be expected in a qualitative study such as this one.

4.6   Boundaries for selection of case studies

To satisfy Yin's (2014) replication logic for a multiple-case design and to identify information-rich cases that showed different perspectives of the phenomenon under investigation, purposeful sampling was used to select the cases for this study (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2002). In selecting the most appropriate cases for this study, a "bounded system" (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014) process was used to determine specific boundaries and limitations for each case. According to Creswell (1998), a case study is an exploration of a bounded system, "bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied-a program, an event, an activity, or individuals" (p.61).

For the purposes of this study, the following specific boundaries were established to guide the selection of multiple cases. The multiple cases were restricted to women who had been grant recipients of Sport and Recreation Victoria's Women in Sport Leadership program during the 2003-2005 period. The following summary presents the rationale for this decision:

1. The WISL program provided access to women operating in a leadership role in sport. In order to be selected as a recipient of the WISL program, the selection criteria employed by SRV required the successful applicants to provide evidence that they were in a leadership role within their chosen sport.

2. The WISL program provided a spread of women operating in leadership roles in sport across the various sector levels (club, regional, state and national). This

provided a further insight for the researcher exploring how women lead at the different levels, and whether they experience different barriers and facilitators to their leadership development. It also provided an insight into the different stages for women within their leadership development and within the context where they were operating.

3. The WISL program provided a spread of women from different geographical locations (rural, regional and metropolitan areas). This provided further insight into whether the location where the women were operating as leaders had any bearing on their leadership development or style of leadership.

4.7 Recruitment process for participants

Thirty recipients of the SRV's WISL program for 2003 ($n=12$), 2004 ($n=11$), and 2005 ($n=7$) were invited to participate in the study as part of a 3-year research project conducted by the University of Ballarat on women in sport leadership funded by SRV. The SRV Manager of the WISL program initially contacted the grant recipients to explain the research project and to provide the researcher's contact details for those willing to participate in the project. Where the WISL program participants indicated their interest to be involved, a covering letter with the plain language statement and consent forms (refer to Appendix 1) and the proposed format of questions for both interviews (refer to Appendix 2) were either mailed out or emailed to the recipient. A follow-up phone call was made to the grant recipients by the University of Ballarat's researcher to answer any questions regarding the study and their involvement. A total of 23 recipients of the WISL program for 2003 ($n=9$), 2004 ($n=10$), and 2005 ($n=4$) accepted the invitation to be involved in the study and signed the University of Ballarat's ethics consent form agreeing to be participants of the study. The seven recipients of the WISL program who did not accept the invitation to participant in this study, had withdrawn their involvement in the WISL program after the program commenced due to personal circumstances.

4.8 About the participants and sites

Of the 23 women who agreed to participant in this study, nine were operating in sport leadership roles at the community level (local club and regional associations) and 14 at a state sporting association and national sporting organisation levels, referred to in this study as elite levels. The age range of the participants at the time of commencing the WISL program was between 23-68 years of age, with a mean of 40 years of age, and a median of 40.5 years of age. The majority of participants performed their leadership in a metropolitan setting (*n=17*) with the majority being volunteers (*n=17*). The leadership roles varied across the two sector levels (community and elite), including senior management and administration positions, directors and board members of sporting organisations, and head coaching roles. A total of 14 participants gained their WISL grant to develop their leadership in the sport management/administration area and nine participants received their grant to develop their leadership in coaching. Table 4.1 provides a further breakdown of information about the participants into the two sector levels (community and elite). For a more comprehensive details about the participants' leadership roles refer to Appendix 12.

Table 4.1

Summary of information about the participants and leadership site

Sector Level (#)	Age Range (#)	Leadership Setting (#)	Leadership Capacity	Leadership Role (#)	WISL Grant (#)
Community (9)	20-29 (1) 30-39 (3) 40-49 (3) 50-59 (2)	Rural (2) Provincial (2) Metro (3)	Volunteer (6) Paid employee (3)	Head coach (3) Club secretary (1) Board Member (2) Recreation Facility Manager (1) Exec Officer (1) Administrator (1)	Sport Management (6) Coach/Official (3)
Elite (14)	30-39 (5) 40-49 (4) 50-59 (2) 60-69 (3)	Metro (14)	Volunteer (11) Paid employee (3)	Board Member (5) Head coach (6) CEO (1) Senior Manager (1) Project Officer (1)	Sport Management (8) Coach/Official (6)

4.9 Data collection methods

Data for this study were generated through: 1) in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with each of the participants over a period of two years; and, 2) the collection

of key relevant documents such as the participants' grant applications and final reports. The following section provides a more comprehensive description of the data collection methods used.

4.9.1   *Interviews*

According to Yin (2014), interviews are an essential source of case study information. The purpose of conducting interviews as part of a case study research method is simply to find out what has happened, why, and what it means more broadly through the lenses of the person being interviewed (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). From a constructivist perspective, conducting interviews helps the researcher draw out the interviewee's "views of their worlds, their work, and the events they have experienced or observed" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.28).

Two in-depth, semi-structured interviews (60–90 minutes range of duration) were conducted over a two-year period with each of the 23 participants. The first round of collection of data commenced in 2004 with the final collection data phase completed in 2008. Over this period, a total of 46 interviews were conducted with participants that were structured by an interview guide (refer to Appendix 3). The guide provided a framework for the issues that were explored and probed in interviews. According to Patton (2002), the advantage of using this approach to structure the interview is that it encourages the limited time available for the interview to be used effectively and encourages a more systematic and comprehensive approach when interviewing a number of different people. In addition to this, Rubin and Rubin (2005) emphasised that in order to gain a deep understanding of what is being studied; the design of the interview questions should also have an element of flexibility to cater for questions that may emerge only during the course of the interview and cannot be fully worked out in advance.

To complement a constructivist philosophy, Rubin and Rubin (2005) developed a model for responsive interviewing that recognised the ethical obligations of the interviewer and emphasised how the goal of the interview process should be to generate depth of understanding rather than breadth. For the purposes of this study, the Rubin and Rubin

"Characteristics of the Responsive Interviewing Model" (p.36) (refer to Appendix 4) was taken into consideration when developing the list of interview questions and when conducting the interviews with the participants. For example, broad, general questions were asked to avoid limiting the participant's answers. Also having a semi-structured interview format was intended to encourage a responsive interviewing design to allow the interviewer to follow up and explore insights and new points raised by the participants during the interview.

All of the interviews with the participants for this study were conducted by me and were recorded by using a Dictaphone, then transcribed into separate computer files saved in Microsoft Office Word. The first interview conducted with the participants took place at the completion of their WISL grant period. For the majority of the participants, the WISL program lasted for approximately an 18-month period. The in-depth, semi-structured interview was conducted face-to-face with each of the participants for approximately 60-90 minutes at a location chosen by the participant. The purpose of the first interview was to gain an understanding of the participant's concepts of leadership, to discuss her perception of her own style of leadership, and to explore how her earlier and current experiences had contributed to her leadership style and behaviour. This interview also explored with the participant, whether she perceived that the WISL grant had contributed to the development of her leadership. In particular, the participant's views on the value of WISL program for her development as a leader were explored.

A second one-on-one interview was conducted over the telephone approximately 12-18 months after the first interview and recorded using a Dictaphone. The purpose of the second interview was to follow up on the development of the participants' leadership since the completion of the WISL program. To view the interview questions that guided the second interview with the participants, refer to Appendix 5.
To ensure reliability and authenticity of the data generated, the interviews were transcribed within seven days of being recorded. A copy of the transcribed interview was then emailed to the participants to allow them to read over the interview and make any additional comments or changes to incorrect transcription of wording. In making those changes, the

participants were requested to use the Microsoft Office Word tracking tool to allow the researcher to see where changes had been made to the transcript. In most cases, the participant returned the transcriptions within seven days of receiving them with minimal changes being made to the transcription. In total, approximately 290,000 words of data were transcribed for 48 interviews. In preparing the data to be analysed, each of the MS Office Word files was then saved in Rich Text Format and imported separately into NVivo.

4.9.2   Documents

In addition to the interviews, the participants' WISL program application and their final report relating to the WISL program were also used as data. The purpose of analysing these documents was to identify the participants' reported outcomes of the program in relation to their leadership development as a complementary data source for the interviews. These documents were useful in providing specific details to corroborate information from the participants' interview data. However, it should be noted that due to the reporting nature of these documents by the participant to the funding body (in this case, Sport, Recreation and Victoria), reporting bias may have existed (Yin, 2014).

4.10 Data analysis

According to Patton (2002), where a case study is based on a program, a number of case studies may be done on participants of that program. Patton explained that with this type of approach, "the analysis would begin with the individual case studies; then the cross-case pattern analysis of the individual cases might be part of the data for the program case study" (p.447). This approach also meets Yin's (2014) replication logic for a multiple-case design where each case is initially analysed as a "whole" study in itself; then the findings of each case form information needing replication by other individual cases. The analysis used for a replication approach involves establishing whether a particular finding was demonstrated or not across cases.

For this study, each case was initially analysed individually to gain an in-depth and rich understanding of each participant's situation and the context in which her leadership was

played out. These individual case studies were then analysed using a cross-case pattern approach within a multiple-case design approach. In total, three stages of data analysis, as presented in Table 4.2, were undertaken for this study. The following section describes in more detail the process used to manage and analyse the data for stages 1 and 2.

Table 4.2

Stages of data analysis summary

	Analysis approach	Rationale
Stage 1	Individual case analysis	To gain a rich understanding of each woman's situation and context
Stage 2	Cross-case analysis	To identify patterns and themes that extended beyond the individual cases
Stage 3	Interpretive phase	To discuss and make sense of the findings from the multiple cases

4.10.1 Individual case analysis

Consistent with the data treatment procedures recommended by Patton (2002) and Miles and Huberman (1994), the coding and analysis of the interview transcripts conducted by the researcher were undertaken in the following manner.

Prior to conducting the first interview, a basic provisional "start list" of codes (Miles and Huberman, 1994) was established on NUD*IST Vivo software program (NVivo) based on the conceptual framework and research questions outlined in chapter 1. The initial start list of codes consisted of three general categories, sub-categories (tree nodes), and individual codes (sibling codes) as listed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Provisional start list of codes

General Category	Sub-category	Individual code examples
Leadership	Women's notion of general leadership	Communication Decision-making
	Women's notion of female leaders	Communication Decision-making
	Women's approach to their leadership	Communication Decision-making
Informal leadership development	Significant event or other in childhood	Mother Father School experiences
	Significant event or other in adulthood	Mentors Informal networks
	Barrier inhibiting leadership development	Family conflict Time commitment Masculine culture
	Leadership development facilitators	Leadership opportunities Networking
Formal leadership development	Professional development/education	Impact of increased knowledge
	WISL grant – short term impact	Knowledge and skill development
	WISL grant – long term impact	Knowledge and skill development Leadership style

To avoid confusion when commencing the process of analysing the data, Patton (2002) recommends initially reading through the interview transcripts several times and making comments in the margins as the "first cut" at organising the data into categories and codes. For this study, once the participants' edited transcripts were emailed back to me, each of the transcripts was then first read through two to three times to gain a familiarity with the content of the transcripts, and to seek a greater understanding of the context in which the participant spoke about her leadership. Each time the transcripts were read through, brief notes and comments regarding dominant themes or concepts relating to the research questions were made in the margins of the transcript. In addition, coloured pens were used to highlight words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs in preparation for the first stage of

the coding process. An example of this stage of the coding process used can be seen in Appendix 6.

Once this stage was completed, the transcripts were then coded individually into NVivo, initially using the provisional start list of codes (refer to Table 4.3) as a framework to manage the coding categories within the research questions. Additional codes (sibling nodes) were then added to the provisional list of codes as they were identified in the transcripts. Sentences, and paragraphs from the participant's transcripts pertaining to the respective codes were highlighted and placed under the relevant sibling nodes. A document coding report for each of the participants (refer to Appendix 7 to view an example) was then produced for the next stage of the analysis of the coding.

In order to begin to make deeper and more conceptually coherent sense of the participants' voices, the process of pattern coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was employed. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), pattern coding is a process of "grouping those summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs" (p.69) and forms the groundwork for cross-case analysis. At this stage of the analysis process, a memo framework was used to write up the researcher's ideas about the codes and their relationship with the research questions for each of the participants. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommend "memoing" as a sense-making tool that, "helps the analyst move easily from empirical data to a conceptual level, refining and expanding codes further, and building toward a more integrated understanding of events, processes, and interactions in the case" (p.74). The memo framework used for this study was developed around the research questions and themes surfacing from the participants' interviews.

The participant's document coding report (refer to Appendix 7) was used to inform the content of the memo framework. The framework included a section outlining the participant's employment, family status, and age, the researcher's ideas of the different concepts, and selected quotes from the participant's transcripts to support the themes and concepts discussed by the researcher. To view an example of the memo framework used for this study, refer to Appendix 8.

4.10.2 Cross-case analysis

Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that the purpose of conducting cross-case analysis is to provide "a powerful way to move from case-specific explanations to findings that bridge to the discovery or reinforcement of constructs" (p.228). For this study, cross-case analysis was used to identify a common set of patterns regarding the participants' approaches to their leadership and how they developed as a leader that extended beyond the individual cases. In order to begin the process of comparing and contrasting the themes and categories between and among cases, NVivo was used to merge the participants' individual document coding reports into one document, and the process of refining sub-categories (tree nodes) and individual codes (sibling codes) took place. During this process, some of the sub-categories and codes were either merged or deleted where there was not sufficient relevance and a final list of codes was formed consisting of four general categories, nine sub-categories, and 115 individual codes. The final list of codes can be seen in Appendix 9.

The next stage of the cross-case analysis involved printing the merged document of sub-categories and individual codes. Brief notes and comments regarding dominant themes or concepts across cases (pattern matching) were made in the margins of the transcript and coloured pens were used to highlight words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs in preparation for identifying relevant quotes that best represented the description of the code. An example of this stage of the coding process can be seen in Appendix 10. In preparation for writing up the findings, each of the quotes chosen for the sub-categories and individual codes was saved in a Microsoft Office Word document and further notes were made in the margins (refer to Appendix 11).

4.11   Trustworthiness and authenticity

The validity of qualitative data is addressed by establishing trustworthiness and authenticity in collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that trustworthiness in conducting research is essential to evaluating its worth. Trustworthiness involves establishing confidence in the credibility of the findings, to show that they are transferable in other contexts, that they are

consistent and dependable, and confirm a degree of neutrality (Lincoln & Guba). To help deal with these issues in case study research, Yin (2014) states that three principles should be followed: use of multiple sources of evidence; creation of a case study database; and maintenance of a chain of evidence. Other verification procedures or techniques identified by Creswell, Lincoln and Guba, and Patton include: triangulation; member-checking; thick descriptions; an audit trail; and reflexivity. In order to provide trustworthiness and authenticity for this study, the following strategies were put in place by the researcher.

Triangulation

The use of multiple sources of evidence commonly referred to as triangulation of data sources extends beyond just using multiple methods of data collection (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2014). Methods of triangulation include "checking out the consistency of different data sources within the same method" (Patton, 2002, p.556). To address this, I employed multiple methods of data collection, via in-depth interviews and document analysis of the participants' applications and final reports where available. These documents were used to check and corroborate with what the participants' reported in their interviews about the WISL program. Data were also collected at different points in time to check for the consistency or change of view of what the participants said about their leadership experience over time.

Another type of triangulation used to establish credibility, is analyst triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). The use of multiple analysts (as opposed to a singular analyst) to independently analyse the data and compare their findings, reduces the potential for bias and provides a check on the consistency of the interpretation of the data (Lincoln & Guba; Patton). For this study, two persons (myself and Associate Professor, Peter Swan) separately analysed the participants' interviews to identify themes embedded within the data, we then compared our findings. This strategy provided a check on any bias in analysing the data, and was useful in ascertaining any oversights in the interpretive analysis phase. Furthermore, to establish dependability of the analysis of the data, a replication logic (Yin, 2014) was applied in checking out the consistency of the findings generated by the data.

Member checking

Member checking is considered a further technique for establishing credibility and validity of the collection and interpretation of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checking provides an opportunity for participants involved in a study to re-assess the adequacy and interpretation of the data that was initially offered by participants (Lincoln & Guba).

The nature of this study required the participants to reflect on their own experiences of their past and present leadership development and leadership practices. This involved the participants reflecting on their childhood and adolescent years to identify a key significant person or event they felt had contributed to their leadership development. It also involved the participants identifying and discussing any barriers they felt had inhibited their ability to develop as a leader in sport. To ensure the participants' recollections of their experiences represented their perceptions accurately and to the best of their ability, member checking was employed. All of the participants were emailed a copy of their transcribed interviews to allow them the opportunity to make additional comments, and/or to make note of any omissions in any of the content of the interview. By doing this, it was my intention as the researcher for this study that the participants' words were represented faithfully.

Thick descriptions

According to Patton (2002) "thick, rich description provides the foundation for qualitative analysis and reporting (p.437). Lincoln and Guba (1985) described thick description as a strategy for achieving a type of external validity by providing sufficient detail of the phenomenon being studied to enable judgments of transferability. In this study, detailed description and extracts from the data have been provided. This is evident from the length of the report and the results being presented in four chapters as a consequence to meet the need for thick, rich description.

Audit trail

To establish confirmability and trustworthiness of a research study, it is important to have a transparent description of the research design, data collection processes, and steps taken to manage and analyse the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The audit trail confirms the rigor

and confirmability of the processes used to collect, analyse, and report on the data that should enable them to be traceable and defendable (Patton, 2002). For this study, a case study database was established in order to maintain a chain of evidence and audit trail to enhance the validity and trustworthiness of this study. The qualitative software program NVivo was used to assist with the data storage. All data collected through the study were coded, and comprehensive notes of the analysis of the case studies were maintained. To assist in construction of an audit trail, a memo framework was also maintained by myself when analysing data.

Reflexivity

In respect to addressing the issue of research bias raised by Creswell (2003), Patton (2002), and Lincoln and Guba (1985), this study required a high degree of reflexivity which involved the process of reflecting critically on myself as the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). To clarify any bias and the multiple identities that I as the researcher may have brought to the analysis of this study, a reflective journal (Lincoln & Guba) was maintained throughout the data collection and analysis periods of the study. The type of entries kept in the diary included my own personal reflections of my values and beliefs at the time, and a reflection on the interview process including my perspectives and assumptions from the experience of interviewing the participants.

4.12 Limitations

The following three major limitations should be considered in light of this study. The first limitation concerns the qualitative research methodology and the size of the sample utilised for this study and the extent to which the findings cannot be generalised beyond the 23 cases studied. However, it was never the intention of the findings of this study to be generalised and this is consistent with qualitative methodology. The aim was exploratory in nature to gain a deeper understanding of a specific example of women practising leadership in a sport in the state of Victoria, and within a particular context that "qualified" them for the WISL program. Through the use of detailed "rich" description in the within-case analysis together with the cross-case analysis, the primary focus of this study was to

find commonalities through emerging themes and to provide insights into the nature and context of practice and of learning how to lead.

The second limitation is how the findings of this study have been based upon what the participants' said about their leadership approaches and beliefs were, with no form of triangulation involving observations of the participants practicing their leadership in the field. While acknowledging that viewing leadership as socially constructed, embedded, and reproduced through social practices and structures including organisational and institutional cultures (Stead & Elliott, 2009), this study has focused on individuals and their recall of their accounts of their leadership practice and their learning experiences. It has not examined the various other significant others involved in the participants' leadership practices to gain another perspective of, or confirmation of the participants' interpretation of their perceived leadership practice.

The third limitation concerns the length of time elapsed in the collection of the data and completion of the thesis. The collection of data commenced in 2004 and was completed in 2008 as was originally planned in the design of the study. However, due to competing family commitments and work demands in my role at Federation University Australia (formally known as University of Ballarat), and multiple changes in principal supervisors (due to retiring or resigning from their position at the University), delayed the process in allowing me to complete the write up of the thesis in a timely manner. I acknowledge the context in which the participants were practising their leadership around the time the data was collected may have changed. This may be viewed as a limitation to the findings of this study in relation to the participants' practice of leadership and influences of the participants' leadership development in adulthood. However, I believe this to be minimal when taking into consideration during 2008–2014 periods, women's representation in leadership and decision-making roles only experienced a slight increase of women as Board of Directors on NSOs (28.69 %). During this same period, there was a decrease of women as Board Chairs and Chief Executives of NSOs during this same period (International Working Group in Women and Sport, 2014).

4.13   Ethical considerations

To protect the identity of the participants and confidentiality of their responses, each of the participants was allocated a code number at the commencement of the data collection process. All information and data provided by the participants were only identifiable under their allocated code number and not by their real name. During the write-up phase of the results, a pseudonym was given to each of the women in place of their code number. While I was the only person who knew the real identity of the participants, substantial attempts were made by me to mask their biographical details and work contexts of the participants in the writing up of the results for this study in order to protect their identity.

Transcriptions of the audio-taped data were completed by a designated transcriber rather than by me. To protect the identity of the participants and the content of the interviews, the designated transcriber was required to sign a "declaration of confidentiality by transcribers for taped data" form before commencing transcribing the tapes.

Throughout the duration of the study, all audiotapes of interviews were kept in a locked, secured filing cabinet and were only accessed for transcribing purposes. The transcripts and analysis of transcriptions when not in use were also kept in a locked, secured filing cabinet in the researcher's office at the Federation University Australia (formerly known as the University of Ballarat), Mt Helen campus. Where data were stored on a computer, a password protected computer was used for the duration of the study.

Following the completion of the study, the audiotapes and transcriptions of the participants' interviews, along with copies of their grant applications and reports have been stored together in a locked filing cabinet in the School of Health Sciences' archive room for a period of five years after this thesis has passed the requirements for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy. After that time has elapsed, all hard copies of the participants' transcriptions and grant applications will be shredded, and audiotapes and computer disks stored will be destroyed.

The following four chapters will present and discuss the empirical findings of this study. Chapter 5 presents the findings for the first part of the research question that addresses the participants' approaches to their sport leadership practice. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 relate to the second part of the research question that addresses how the participants' sport leadership practices were developed overtime. The order of the chapters 6, 7, and 8 represent the timeline of the participants' leadership development (i.e. chapter 6 relates to the participants' childhood experiences, chapter 7 relates the participants' adult experiences, and chapter 8 refers to the participants' participation in the WISL program). A brief discussion section has been included for each of the chapters.

5. Leadership Approaches and Influencing Factors

This chapter examines the participants' approaches to leadership, their sets of beliefs and values about "good" leadership, and what they see as being distinctive features of women's leadership underpinning them. It begins by examining the participants' beliefs about "good" sport leadership that underpin their practices as leaders. The section on *Beliefs about good leadership* provides useful insights into their values and beliefs about what constitutes "good" leadership practices. The responses of the participants to the WISL program suggested the influence of masculine domination (Anderson, 2009; Bourdieu, 2002; Connell et al., 2009; Light, 2007) on the development of the participants' leadership that is further explored in *Views on distinctive features of women's leadership.* This section assists in "getting a feel" for the ways in which the domination of masculine values and approaches to sport leadership shaped their learning and development as leaders and to what extent their own practices of leadership might have developed over time in response to this dominance. The final section in this chapter, *Perceptions of own practice of leadership*, focuses how the participants in this study saw their own practice of leading and their general approach to their work as sports leaders.

5.1 Beliefs about good leadership practices

From analysis of participants' responses to being asked for their views on what makes a good leader, three first order themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) emerged. Over 80% of participants felt that that "good" leadership involved: 1) providing direction; 2) leading by example; and 3) engaging in collaborative decision-making.

5.1.1 *Providing direction*

The majority of participants thought that a "good" leader provided clear direction for others to follow or work towards. This did not refer to a leader telling others what to do, but was instead, more focused on collaboration, facilitation, and inspiring others to excel and strive to be better. There was an emphasis on a "good" leader being confident and

having a clear and strong vision arising from facilitating a collective approach, being flexible, and engaging others in a shared vision and effort.

Most participants felt that an effective leader provided direction by influencing others to create a shared vision and then striving to achieve a common goal for the good of the organisation or cause. Through the display of passion and enthusiasm about a vision, a "good" leader influenced and inspired others to buy into and to embrace a shared vision. For example, Heather (community level) felt that a leader needed to demonstrate "passion and enthusiasm about their vision that inspired other people, to the point of them begging for more." Most participants also felt that a good leader needed to be self-motivated and confident in their commitment to a vision.

For Jane (community level), "a leader needs to be someone who is positive, open, and driven themselves…who knows what they need to do to get the job done"; while Helen (elite level) was adamant that it was important for a leader "to have a strong vision of what they are trying to achieve and then be able to articulate that vision to others so that other people would also want to achieve that vision." A strong vision in this instance referred not only to leaders being clear about what they wanted to achieve, but also requiring them to have confidence in their belief and ability to be able to influence and inspire others. Participants also suggested that a "good" leader needed to be flexible in achieving the end result. This required the leader to be prepared to consider alternative options but at the same time still be clear about what it was they wanted to achieve "as someone who has a goal in mind and has a pathway that allows flexibility in that that still gets to an outcome" (Claire, elite level).

In developing a shared vision and creating a clear direction, most participants felt that it was important for a leader to stimulate the thinking of others by challenging their assumptions and encouraging them to think about new ways to achieve outcomes. Claire (elite level) described this as "Developing a sense of direction…getting people to think about what they have to do, how they have to do it, and making sure that a path is chosen and that they stick to it." A "good" leader's role was seen to facilitate engagement with

others and to provide them with the appropriate support to allow them to take ownership and contribute to the organisation's goals in a meaningful way For example, Mary (community level) explained that "Leadership is trying to provide people with a way to achieve their goals and tasks and to give them guidance along the way." Helen (elite level) said that a "good" leader was "somebody who didn't necessarily do everything themselves but rather was able to inspire the group around them to actually take on tasks and want to achieve and finish those tasks for the greater good of the organisation."

5.1.2   Leading by example

There was widespread agreement among the participants that it was important for a leader to demonstrate the qualities they expected others to have and lead by example. For example, Vicki (community level) said that: "Whatever a leader does they have to actually walk the talk as well…they need to be a good example…it's just showing people the way"; and Amanda (elite level) was of the opinion that a leader needed to lead by "following through with projects and decisions and setting good examples of behaviour and the kind of things that they expect from the people in the organisation."

The majority of participants saw leading by example as involving "being a responsible ethical person" (Amanda, elite level) and a "good moral citizen within their community" (Angela, community level). When describing what Angela meant by a "good moral" leader, she said that they needed to be "a model of good community behaviour, take a sound ethical and moral stance, and raise their concerns in a confident manner." Angela also emphasised that as a role model, she felt that it was essential that a leader was "willing to listen to others and not be rigid or inflexible in the way that they take on board other people's point of views and opinions."

5.1.3   Collaborative decision-making

The third theme to emerge was that an effective leader took a collaborative approach towards decision-making. They took a fair and open approach, and considered all points of view before making a decision that was in the best interest of all parties: **"**I think a good

leader has a collaborative approach, so they seek feedback from all the interested parties and are willing to listen to different points of views, they then try to achieve a consensus agreement amongst the group" (Helen, elite level). Taking a collaborative decision-making approach was viewed by most participants as requiring a leader to develop a trusting relationship with others through an open communication style. Indeed, open communication was seen by the majority of participants as being a characteristic of a leader who was inclusive and mindful of others and would "know when to open up and talk about things, but then also to know when to sit back and let other people talk about things so that they belong" (Sally, community level).

While emphasising the importance of dialogue, compassion, and open communication when making decisions, there was also a strong belief that a leader needed the confidence and self-belief to make effective and appropriate decisions: "Leaders need to value themselves, be confident in their decisions. A confident and positive attitude, as much as ability, is the mark of a good leader" (Claire, elite level). This need for a leader to be strong extended to being unwavering once a decision was made; "When a leader has made an important decision, that's what they go with and don't change their mind or modify it. Even if there's some resistance to it, once the decision has been made, they should stay with it" (Alicia, elite level). It was also felt that a "good" leader needed to be confident and assured of their ability in order to stand up to criticism and take a strong stance on important issues and decisions:

> A leader needs to have a hard shell because when they are in a leadership
> position people like to knock them down, so they have to be mature, they
> have to be open for discussion, be impartial, and be transparent. (Robyn,
> elite level)

5.2 Views on distinctive features of female sport leaders

The majority of participants in this study worked and developed their leadership within the male-dominated field of sport, with their responses to the WISL program suggesting it formed a significant influence on them. This section looks into how their practices might have been shaped by what Bourdieu (2002) calls masculine domination and what the

distinctive characteristics of female sport leadership were. The four first order themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) presented here in order of importance indicate that female leaders in sport were: 1) inclusive; 2) used open-ended questioning; 3) employed collaborative decision-making; and 4) were quietly self-confident and had strong personalities.

5.2.1 *Female leaders are inclusive*

The majority of participants felt that women in sport leadership roles were seen to be more team-oriented than their male counterparts by being inclusive and empowering others. Donna (elite level) made this very clear when asked what she thought constituted effective leadership for women in the sporting domain:

> Women are more inclusive or include people more than men do. From what I see, men tend to lead from the front and I guess expect everyone to follow, whereas women take people with them and would ask for those people to lead their own sort of leadership to take the group forward. So a male may lead from the front whereas a female brings the group with them. (Donna, elite level)

Most participants held the view that female sport leaders were seen to prefer to work together as a team, take a "hands-on" approach and take a role as facilitator rather than being overtly in command and telling staff what to do as they felt most men did: "Well they (female sport leaders) get involved with the running of organisation…actually working side by side with people rather than dictating that this is how things will be" (Angela, community level). They were seen by the participants as being "organisers" and "facilitators" who helped make things happen rather than the person at the front of the pack directing and making decisions. They encouraged "people to participate and setting up registration forms and creating an environment where people can come and enjoy it, so they're the facilitators and the organisers" (Tammy, elite level).

5.2.2   *Female leaders employ open communication styles*

According to the majority of participants, female sport leaders have a different communication style than that of their male counterparts. They suggested that women had a more open and approachable communication style than men and one that encouraged inclusiveness as a feature of female leadership styles: "I think generally most women tend to be far more open for other people to be involved to a certain extent or exploring other options" (Jessica, elite level). Female sport leaders were seen to communicate in ways that did not alienate anyone or create tensions within working groups because they "get their message across in a manner that doesn't get everybody's backs up." Good female leaders avoided appearing aggressive or dominating in contrast to male leadership approaches:

> I see women have a completely different communication style to men. Women do not want to succeed as in "win" nearly as much as men do, and it's more about participation and communication. I think for women to be successful leaders they need to be less vocal and lead by example by just being there…let people do their thing and understand that everyone else participating is actually leading to the overall leadership role and so that everyone can become leaders and become comfortable in their own environment within the team. (Tammy, elite level)

5.2.3   *Female leaders engage in collaborative decision-making*

Most participants felt that female leaders' approach to decision-making was far more collaborative than that of men: "My image of females, at least in sport, is that they are far more consensus driven than men, and don't tend to make lone decisions as quickly as males do" (Claire, elite level). For Angela (community level), female leaders were "more open to negotiation…and willing to listen to another person's point of view." On the other hand, there was also general agreement that when it came to making decisions, women were more vulnerable to internalising issues and becoming more emotionally involved:

> Some things that might affect them [women sport leaders], is that they take things a little bit more to heart. Someone might be criticising them and I think women will talk more about the little things than men will talk…I

think they tend to move on from the little issues faster than women do…men are not as sensitive as women are. (Karen, community level)

5.2.4 *Female leaders are quiet but confident*

One prominent theme to emerge from the study was the notion of balance that female leaders valued. While the participants consistently emphasised the need for women to have self-confidence, they felt that it should never be made too explicit. The emphasis placed on self-confidence seemed to be largely in response to the challenges of working in a field dominated by masculine values and ways of practising. They felt that female leaders in sport needed to possess a higher level of confidence and self-belief than most other women because of the gender related challenges they dealt with on a daily basis: "Women in sport have to be so much more confident in their own ability (than men) because of the lack of support or network available to them" (Donna, elite level). This sense of having to negotiate a male dominated environment was evident in references to women working in isolation where they, "really have to be strong within themselves to progress because they may not have another woman there in a supporting role" (Donna, elite level).

The need for female leaders to be "assertive" and demonstrate "strength of character" was typically justified as a response to the pressure of working in an environment in which they needed a "strong" presence to be respected and taken seriously. This was made clear in a quote from Jenny (community level), who said that women sport leaders "need to stand their ground and project positively, because particularly in a male dominated field, I think the male sort of perceives any feminine people as being weak."

However, this perceived need to be strong, confident, and assertive is balanced against the need to display some of the more valued traits of feminine approaches to leadership that could be seen as being softer. Many participants emphasised how women leaders should not have to adopt an aggressive and masculine leadership style to be "strong" and should do so in a feminine way. For example, Vicky (community level) suggested that female leaders displayed a feminine form of strength. She felt that women leaders could still take

a feminine approach and have "that earthiness" about them but at the same time have a "strong will and pretty much know where they are at, and know where they are going."

5.3 Perceptions of own practice of leadership

The following results focus on identifying the leadership styles of the 23 participants by presenting five prominent themes. These are first-order themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) that were evident in the interviews of at least 80% of the participants. Presented in descending order of importance from most important to least important, the features of the women's leadership styles were as follows: (1) taking a collaborative approach to decision-making; (2) taking a team-oriented approach; (3) having an open communication style; (4) valuing relationships within the organisation; and, (5) leading by example. This is followed by a section on the core values identified by the participants that they perceived underpinned their leadership practices.

5.3.1   Collaborative decision-making

The strongest theme to emerge was the emphasis placed on collaborative decision-making, with the majority of participants prioritising consultation and seeking consensus in decision-making. They felt that it was vital to consult with others by seeking their ideas, views, and feedback before reaching their own conclusions: "Before making a decision I like to get everyone's opinions and I like to consult widely by making sure that I have got all the information and considered all the implications and considered lots of different points of view" (Alicia, elite level).

In the process of consulting, the majority of participants across the community and elite levels emphasised the importance of listening to others to gather information in regard to the problem at hand. They spoke about their willingness to listen to others as a way of gathering as much information as possible on the issue, and then to use it to analyse the best solution to the problem. For example, Sally (community level) explained that when it came to making decisions, she felt it was important to listen to others' opinions with an open mind to assist her to process the information in an objective manner: "I listen more

and think to myself, 'Perhaps I'm wrong and perhaps they're wrong'. I think that's the way that I look at it. I don't always assume that I'm right, I don't always assume that they're right either." She further emphasised her rationale for taking this approach: "I aim to take everything on board and listen to what people have to say, then I will make my decision."

While collaboration was highly valued among most of the participants, when faced with having to make a contentious decision that was important to the organisation, there were marked differences between those working at community and elite levels. Participants operating at the community level prioritised consensus regardless of the importance of the issue being dealt with. They were hesitant about making decisions that might be unpopular because they were concerned about the consequences of upsetting group harmony, values, and interpersonal relationships. In contrast, the participants operating at the elite level were more assertive when making difficult decisions and prepared to make the "tough" decisions to achieve desired outcomes. This was even at the expense of their own personal reputation on behalf of the organisation as they felt that in order to take the organisation forward they needed to take unpopular action to change the culture of the organisation. Participants felt that it was their responsibility to make difficult decisions for the good of the organisation and to take responsibility for them even in the face of criticism and the likelihood of upsetting workplace harmony. They accepted that they were not always going to be able to please everyone when having to make difficult decisions. For example, Stacy (elite level) felt that in her leadership having "strength of character" was critical and accepted that she was not always going to please or be liked by everyone in her role as leader when having to make difficult decisions: "…if I have got a few people who don't like me, I don't really care, that's just part and parcel of being in a leadership role, so I don't really worry." However, Stacy believed that she was respected by people for taking a "hard-line" stance on the big issues.

5.3.2 Team-oriented approach

All participants stressed the importance of working as part of a group and having a "team-oriented" approach as a feature of their leadership style. Most emphasised creating an environment that provided opportunities for others to contribute as a "team member" in a

collaborative way, reflecting the emphasis placed by most participants on collaboration and collective effort. This invariably meant empowering others to take responsibility and ownership of their actions within the team as a core concern of the participants at both levels. For example, Donna (elite level) held regular meetings to provide her team members with opportunities to provide feedback and input regarding their management roles with an expectation that each team member had ownership of her own management projects. This theme of empowering others in a collective effort was articulated by Jenny (community level) who said that because the group, including herself, were doing it all together, they were to be "equally responsible and everyone should have extra expertise that they can bring to those decisions and I guess sounding it out together is a good way to make sure that we can come up with the right answer."

When talking about their "team orientated" approach, many of the participants were reluctant to view themselves as a leader but appeared to feel more comfortable with referring to themselves as a member of a team: "I guess in one sense, I don't see myself as a leader…I see myself as somebody who is part of the team and we're trying to do the best we can do as a team" (Jane, community level). When asked how they viewed their role as a leader, the participants described themselves as being a "team leader" of a group of people aiming to achieve the same goal. Claire (elite level) explained her role as a leader as being a facilitator of a group who provide guidance when needed who was, "consensus driven and slightly leading from the rear, and only throwing in comments when needed to be made." She described herself as "a team leader who was just a cog in a wheel, I'm just the main cog I think, I don't see myself as an individual."

5.3.3   Open dialogue

Most participants across both community and elite levels said that they used a communication style that encouraged open and transparent dialogue with others. They spoke about their willingness to share information and recognised that this approach created trust and respect amongst their followers. For example, Sally (community level) emphasised being honest and open with her communication was important to her leadership. She felt it was necessary to keep her followers informed of relevant information

to keep them engaged and up-to-date on current issues. Sally explained; "I always make sure that if there are problems or if a decision is to be made, I let everyone know what is going on…I make sure they know about it." By making sure all of her followers were kept informed of issues, Sally was emphatic that this encouraged an inclusive and trusting environment, "so that everyone knows just as much as you do I suppose…there's nothing worse than being left out of the loop."

In regards to adopting an open communication style, the majority of participants were adamant that it was important for others to feel comfortable in approaching them to discuss various issues and embraced an "open-door" policy. For example, Alicia (elite level) spoke about how she encouraged her staff to discuss issues with her by keeping her office door open and making the time to speak with them when they approached her: "I think they know that if they have a problem they can come to me, or if they don't like something they can come and tell me and they know that I will take it on board." In another example, Jane (community level) deliberately created a positive environment with her followers to break down any barriers they may have to approach her: "I'm a big fan for encouragement and creating an environment that is positive and encouraging…I have managed to do that by communicating…I'm always saying…especially if you have got any questions come and see me."

The majority of participants said that they encouraged open dialogue with others to develop an inclusive and trusting environment and to help others feel comfortable in approaching them. For example, the national sporting organisation that Alicia (elite level) was managing had been having problems with a lack of trust from their state bodies. To address this, she conducted forums in each state to improve the dialogue between the states and national organisation. At the forums, she worked at preventing the representatives of the state bodies from feeling intimidated or threatened and encouraged them to ask her as many questions as they liked regarding their concerns: "I spoke to them all and then I stayed and I also spoke with some of the coaches, I just sat down and had a chat to them over a drink." Alicia emphasised that she was prepared to make herself approachable to ease the tension: "You find a way to relate to everybody and it doesn't worry me about tackling difficult

situations or difficult people." Alicia said that the reason she used open communication was because she wanted to know, "what all our groups were doing within the sport and I needed to know what they were thinking so that we could run the sport along those lines."

There was also consensus among participants about using open dialogue to avoid conflict. By being approachable and prepared to discuss issues with others, most participants felt it assisted them in dealing with conflict in a more effective manner. For example, Sally (community level) explained that she often had disgruntled parents approach her who were upset with different issues at the club. The way Sally handled these situations was to avoid being emotional and let the parents have their say and then she would explain the reasons for the way the club was handling the issue: "I would just be agreeable and we would talk about it and they would say 'I am really glad I talked to you' so it probably wasn't a conflict in that regard."

The majority of participants indicated that listening to others was also a critical aspect to their communication style. For example, Robyn (elite level) was emphatic that listening was a two-way process: "…it's also listening to your team, listening to feedback…." She also emphasised it was important to be objective when listening: "I think a good leader is also communicating without making it personal…you have to be mature, you have to be open for discussion, be impartial and be transparent."

In addition, most participants highlighted that by listening to others they were better able to critically reflect on the issue that needed attention. As Sally (community level) explained: "I listen more…I take that on board and listen to what people have said…so you are evaluating and that's a listening thing again and I think that's important." Although not a prominent theme, some participants spoke about how they looked for non-verbal cues to further analyse and interpret the meaning of what others were saying. For example, Sandra (community level) explained: "You do need to listen to people and sometimes it is not just listening about what they are saying but how they are saying it and the way they are saying it." Observing body language for non-verbal cues was also considered important in the process of the participants' communication approach with their followers:

I actually spent a fair bit of time moving around and just watching how each athlete communicated. They were all quite different, just listening to how they said things, what they did, and their style gave me a greater insight into each athlete. (Tammy, elite level)

5.3.4 *Valuing relationships, trust, and caring about others*

The majority of participants valued building a positive and productive relationship with their colleagues and staff. Most participants felt that before they could get to the point at which others felt comfortable to discuss issues or problems with them, they needed to develop a trusting relationship. This usually involved them befriending their followers in order to build a rapport with them and to gain trust and respect. As Tracey (elite level) explained: "I built relationships with them all, and I think that is really important. Before you start telling people what to do it is important to build some sort of rapport and relationship." As another example of this need to understand people and how they felt Alicia (elite level) said that it was important to "develop empathy with them [her staff] or an understanding…being fair and listening to people, honesty, being approachable." To develop these relationships some felt that they needed to be honest and direct, even if that meant providing feedback that was not always favourable. For example, Helen (elite level) felt that her ability to win the confidence and trust of others required her being honest and direct with them:

> Building up trust is being about able to provide honest and constructive feedback to them, to be able to provide them with the guidance that they need, to be able to keep the feedback to a level that they know that if they come and ask you for your opinion that you are going to give them an honest answer. (Helen, elite level)

The emphasis placed by most participants on relationships extended to having a sense of care and consideration (including empathy) for others and of the organisation; this also emerged as a strong theme: "I feel I am there for the members and that I want to work for the members, I am not there for any other reason really" (Kay, elite level). Indeed, participants across both levels felt that it was important to be compassionate and

considerate of the needs of others to be a good leader: "I think the most important thing is to care about people, and have a genuine care about people. That's what I am always telling myself...you really need to be really personable, approachable, and non-judgmental" (Vicki, community level). Furthermore, most held a high respect for the dignity and worth of others, with Sally (community level) saying that she needed to have empathy. She valued the importance of caring about each other in the workplace; in discussion about one particular member who was dealing with a difficult situation away from the workplace, Sally said: "As a group, we share the load, if someone can't do something, someone else is there to pick it up if needed…and that's what we've done in this case to help her out."

5.3.5   Leading by example (positive modelling)

Positive modelling, commonly referred to by the participants as "leading by example", was an idea that was evident across both groups but which was more prominent with those working at elite level. Many participants felt that it was critical for them to act as a role model and set the right example through their own actions. They saw this as an important aspect of their leadership and were insistent that it was essential for them to practise a high standard of work ethic as a way of setting what they considered acceptable behaviour:

> For me, this is coming very much from my perspective of what is involved in leadership, it comes as mentoring and providing good role models for other people in the organisation, taking on roles of organising, following through with projects and decisions and setting good examples of behaviour and the kind of things that you expect from the people in the organisation…also being a responsible ethical person. (Amanda, elite level)

The majority of participants emphasised that it was critical to "lead by example" as a way of providing guidance and influencing others to change their behaviours. For example, in her role as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for a national sporting organisation, Alicia (elite level) wanted to change the culture of the organisation to adopt a more disciplined work ethic. The way Alicia went about changing the culture was to lead by example. She elaborated that she achieved this by setting a high standard through her own practices as an example for her staff to follow. Alicia explained that when she commenced in her new

position as CEO for the organisation, she had inherited staff with a laissez faire and non-committal attitude towards their work practices, for example arriving late to work and leaving early to go home. In setting a good example for her staff, Alicia made sure that she was always the "first in every day and last to leave." While she explained that she did not "expect the group to do excess hours", she did expect them to show more commitment. Alicia felt that by setting an example from day one of what she expected this had instant results with staff arriving to work early and leaving on time to go home.

Linked to their preference for setting an example through their actions, most participants commonly described themselves as taking a "task-orientated" approach to their leadership. Rather than asking others to take on tasks, many participants placed importance on setting a good example through their actions: "I like to see my leadership role as non-vocal, yet supportive, consistent and leading by example, as in having a high work ethic and doing a good job" (Tammy, elite level). Many were also insistent that they would not ask others to behave in a certain manner or take on tasks unless they, as leaders, were prepared to do it themselves. For example, when Robyn (elite level) was asked to describe what she thought was important to her leadership approach, she answered, "Definitely to lead by example, I always use a quote that says, 'there's no point in pointing my finger, I have to point with my feet'." Robyn said that she did not feel comfortable promoting herself and felt that her actions spoke louder than words. She emphasised that her achievements in her sport and the way she had handled herself on and off the field had helped her earn respect and credibility as a leader, which she considered was important if she was to influence others to change their behaviour.

In setting a good example, some of the participants felt there was a perception held by others that they were expected to take on tasks because of their reputation for seeing a task through to completion. As Tammy (elite level) stated: "…they see me as the one who will go and do things, and who will go and negotiate, and find out how do things." In Stacy's (elite level) example, she had a strong sense of obligation and commitment to take on extra tasks due to her reputation. As she explained: "…because they knew that I had been in the role and I would actually take action, they [Stacy's followers] automatically assumed that

I would address something, even if it was hard I would have a go at it." It appeared that participants were prepared to take on the extra work due to their strong sense of obligation. For example, even though some of the participants were aware that their leadership role required them to be more strategic, if they saw something needed to be done and nobody was prepared to put their hand up, they felt a sense of obligation to take on the task: "If I see something that I think needs to be done and I can't see anybody around doing it, I'll give it a go" (Claire, elite level). This was despite the fact that Claire was more than aware that she had over committed herself constantly by taking on extra tasks:

> I sometimes think I take on too much and these are things that I constantly have to tell myself…say 'no', say 'no'…like you turn up to meetings because you think you are obligated and people will stick you on a committee. (Claire, elite level)

In contrast to the emphasis placed on setting an example through action and being explicitly task-oriented, many participants acknowledged that they should take a more strategic and less "hands-on" approach to their leadership. This was despite the fact that they enjoyed being busy and involved in the action. For example, Karen (community level) explained: "I always liked doing extra things…even like today, I don't like free time…I don't have a lot of free time and I like to keep it that way. I enjoy doing those things." However, while Karen enjoyed taking on lots of work, she did confess that she found it difficult to delegate: "I find it very hard to pass things off on to other people to do because they don't do the job…I like to get a job done properly, so I usually end up doing it myself." While some participants acknowledged they were aware they should be less involved in operational "day-to-day" practices and delegate responsibility and authority to others (staff and members), they admitted that they felt uncomfortable delegating tasks to others. It appeared that it was not until participants felt their commitments had become too onerous that they recognised that they had to learn to delegate. For example, Heather (community level) recognised that for her to become successful in her role it was important for her to free up some of her time. Learning to delegate for Heather was initially quite a challenge; "It was a big change for me to have to let go, being hands-on at the organisation for five years, it has been a big challenge." Heather explained that it was all about relinquishing of

some of the control of the operational "day-to-day" tasks and putting trust in her staff by first recognising their ability, and second, giving them the opportunity to demonstrate it: "For me to do that I have had to estimate the skill level of my staff and trust that they can get the job done without my close supervision." Similarly, Robyn (elite level) came to the realisation that she could no longer do everything herself and in order to take the organisation to the next level, she needed to recruit competent people who she could trust to take on some of the tasks. Robyn explained; "…you've obviously got to pinpoint your drivers, your key drivers, and then it's getting confidence that people can and will do it."

5.3.6   Core values

The cornerstone of all of the participants' leadership was their embracing of a strong sense of values that appeared to underpin their leadership practices and behaviours. These included a demonstration of integrity and high ethical standards, a strong sense of equality and fair treatment of others, and to act at all times with honesty and trustworthiness.

Most of the participants regarded integrity as an essential core value of their leadership. They looked upon integrity as consistently adhering to a moral or ethical code expressed through their practice of leadership. This sense of integrity for the participants was manifested through their ability to gain trust and respect of others through their actions. As Helen (elite level) explained:

> Integrity in some ways is similar to having honesty and being up-front with people, but having integrity is also about honouring your commitments, being able to be relied upon…so for me having integrity is about being able to trust not only just in my ability as a coach, but also in my ability as a human being to be able to honour their [Helen's followers] confidences if you like and treat them with respect and all those sorts of things. (Helen, elite level)

Along with integrity, most of the participants considered honesty was essential to their leadership in building trusting relationships with others. Although they spoke about being honest through open and direct communication, they also recognised it was important for

them to be transparent through their actions and behaviours. For example, Tammy (elite level) emphasised how "being hard working, healthy, dedicated and responsible" was important for her to be seen by others as a person who "lived" by her values. She also felt quite strongly about gaining respect from others by being "approachable and genuine." She also valued treating others with respect by being honest and frank in regards to providing feedback: "I am not very subtle, so people pretty much know what is going on for me, which is a good thing because it means that it's transparent and people know that I am fairly honest."

Most of the participants also recognised fairness as a core value of their leadership. Their concept of fairness was associated with treating others in an equitable, impartial, and inclusive manner. For example, Tracey (elite level) emphasised that it was important to provide opportunities for all people, no matter what skill level they were at, "you have to be fair to everyone. It doesn't matter if it's the raw beginner or the true professional, you need to include them all and treat them respectfully." The majority of participants also strongly associated transparency with their concept of fairness. They considered being open through their communication with others. They believed that "being fair and listening to people, honesty, being approachable" (Alicia, elite level) encouraged respect and trust with others. To further highlight this, Sally (community level) elaborated further on her thoughts regarding fairness and the need to be transparent:

> For a leader, the values, you have to be like transparent, you've really got to be fair and respect is huge for me. I think if people see you as a fair person and that people see that you are not just doing little things for yourself all the time and that you are open and that everyone knows what's going on, so I think that's fair. (Sally, community level)

Through their leadership, most participants held strong viewpoints regarding the issue of equity. They were big supporters of providing opportunities for all people and respected the diversity among individuals with different backgrounds or cultures. They considered equality was an important factor in a show of respect to other's rights and demonstrated values of fairness and inclusiveness. For example, Sandra (community level) stated that it

was important for a leader to have a sense of community with valuing people and making them feel included. She emphasised that a leader should provide opportunities for all people to be involved and should not be "discriminated against because of their age, their gender, their sexuality or their particular ethnic group so that everybody has an opportunity to be involved, to have their say without fear of being discriminated against." Sandra went on to explain that leaders should be prepared to represent their community and stand up and challenge the status quo on their behalf. She suggested that a leader should be:

> Someone who can without fear or favour take on some additional roles that would challenge powers at the next level and challenge their thinking about what influence their policies might be having on the broader community. They should feel comfortable with challenging the values of other people by raising questions such as: 'What about the other generations? What about people who are coming after us? Will the pathways that they're providing encourage other people to follow in their footsteps? (Sandra, community level)

Most participants also valued a sense of commitment and responsibility towards others. From what the participants spoke about, they appeared to act in a selfless manner, placing the needs of others, including the sporting organisation they were associated with, ahead of their own needs: "I feel I am there for the members and that I want to work for the members, I am not there for any other reason really" (Kay, elite level). As a sign of commitment and responsibility, they also wanted to be seen as doing the right thing by others. They had a deep sense of commitment to doing the right things in the right way: "It makes me always check that I am impartial; always check that I am following the rules and the constitution because someone is ready to pounce" (Robyn, elite level).

5.4 Chapter discussion

This chapter identified approaches to leadership in sport practised by all participants that featured: collaborative decision-making, taking a team-oriented approach, using open dialogue, valuing relationships and caring about others, and positive modelling. This supports the findings of other studies that identified a particular, feminine approach to

leadership (Fine, 2009; Rosener, 1990; Stead & Elliot, 2009). For instance, elements of Rosener's (1990) proposed model of women's leadership being participative and interactive with characteristics of transformational leadership could be found with participants in this study where they valued collaboration and teamwork, and taking an inclusive and consultative approach to decision-making. In the process of achieving an inclusive and collaborative approach to their leadership, open communication and team building were also found to be an important feature of the participants' leadership. These findings were similar to Fine's (2009) study where women in leadership roles stressed the importance of building a team, seeking consensus, and getting all points of view when providing leadership. They also held the belief that open communication defined as a two-way process was a critical element in their leadership, and was grounded in honest, open, and collaborative behaviour.

The participants' awareness of a gendered discourse embedded within sport dominated by men and masculine values and practices was evident with their recognition of female sport leaders having distinctive feminine features of leadership practice as compared to males' masculine approach. Despite this awareness, the participants chose not to compromise their core values or beliefs of what they viewed as "good" leadership practice within their own practice of leadership to comply with the demands of a dominant masculine culture operating in the field of sport. However, there were some differences found between how the participants approached leadership at the elite level and at community level. Most significantly, this involved the adoption of what can be seen as masculine values and practices which were more prominent with participants at the elite level. Although all participants valued leading by example and by "doing" or taking a "hands-on" approach, the participants operating at the community level adopted what could be considered to be a more feminine approach to leadership that emphasised good relationships and harmony in the work environment, regardless of how important the decisions might be. Those operating at the elite level articulated similar "core" feminine values and beliefs but drew on what could be seen as more masculine values and practices of sport leadership when it came to making difficult and unpopular decisions. They were prepared to make pragmatic decisions for the good of the organisation despite the threat this might present to

maintaining collaborative and harmonious relationships in the workplace. At this level they were prepared to make difficult "unpopular" decisions in the face of criticism and the likelihood of upsetting staff in exercising their power to achieve the best outcomes for the organisation, which could be seen to be a more masculine feature of their approach.

In regard to the participants' beliefs about what they considered was characteristic of "good" leadership, and how they viewed women's leadership in a sport context, there were commonalities that reflected the participants' dispositions and practices of their own leadership. These included collaborative decision-making, open dialogue and communication, and positive modelling.

However, there appeared to be a point of tension between the participants' own practices of leadership and what they espoused to be "good" leadership that needed to provide clear and strong direction for others to follow. This latter perspective was not evident or reflected within the participants' view of female sport leaders' characteristics, or within their own practice of leadership. The participants placed more emphasis on inclusiveness and team-oriented approach to leadership with highlighting the importance in building relationships of trust as a method of influence. This approach to leadership further supports the notion of building relationships as important to a female leadership approach, as highlighted by the work of Stead and Elliott (2009) explaining women's leadership from a relational understanding. It also supports the notion of relational transparency identified as one of the dimensions of authentic leadership (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

This chapter also highlighted the participants' strong sense of values that appeared to underpin their leadership practices and behaviours. These included a demonstration of integrity and high ethical standards, cooperativeness as willingness of participants to work as a team with others to accomplish a common purpose, a strong sense of equality and fair treatment of others, and to act at all times with honesty and trustworthiness. These were all dimensions of "character" associated with ethical and moral leadership identified by Sarros et al. (2006) and with the profile of authentic leadership (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

The following Chapters 6 and 7 examine how experiences, places, and people over the participants' lives have shaped and developed their beliefs about leadership, and dispositions toward ways of leading as discussed in this chapter. These two chapters present how the participants learn to lead as a lifelong process that is implicit, ongoing, social in nature, and deeply situated. The chapters deal with the range of informal and formal influences shaping the participants' development of beliefs about, and dispositions toward, sport leadership over two periods of their lives: (1) childhood (up to 18 years of age); and (2) adulthood.

6. Early influences on Leadership Development

This chapter focuses on the influences identified by the participants as shaping their leadership over their childhood. It begins by examining the influence of family identified and reflected on by the participants as having significantly impacted on shaping their leadership at an early age. The section on *Early sport experiences* provides useful insight into the role sport plays in providing an environment for the participants to learn the value of commitment and determination. The section on *Influences of school experiences* highlights the importance of the school as a site for providing opportunities for leaning and practicing leadership at an early age. It also recognises the role teachers' play in regard to acknowledging the participants' intellectual and social competence. The final section in this chapter focuses on those participants who experienced hardship and adversity during their childhood and examines how they felt these experiences contributed to their own practice of leadership.

6.1 Influence of family

A common theme across all of the participants was their recollection of their relationship with their family during their childhood having shaped and influenced their leadership practices and values into adulthood. Family relationships between the participants' mother and father emerged as key theme, followed closely by the participants drawing on their unique female experiences with their brothers, grandmothers, and aunties.

6.1.1 Mothers

The majority of the participants identified their mother as a key person having significant influence in shaping their leadership during their childhood. There were two distinctive areas where the participants attributed their mother's influence on their notion of leadership. First, they recognised that their mother had acted as a female role model who provided them with examples of dedicated commitment to help others. The participants felt this had played an important role in forming the basis for their own approach to leadership in later years. Secondly, they identified that the encouragement and support provided by their

mother had contributed to the growth of their own confidence and self-belief to take on new experiences during their formative years.

In terms of the participants acknowledging their mother as a "role model", most of the participants felt that their mother's active involvement in the community in a voluntary capacity influenced their dispositions toward leadership. For example, when Mary (community level) reflected on her mother's influence on her as a child, she highlighted her mother's extensive level of involvement in leadership roles in various community groups: "She [Mary's mother] founded the association up here and has been president on and off for many years. She was president of the Parents Club, and president of the School Council. She was president of all sorts of things."

Karen (community level) also reminisced about the passion her mother had for sport and her commitment to involvement in running different sport programs in her local community. Karen felt that her mother's involvement in the community had provided her with a learning platform for her own leadership: "She [Karen's mother] guided us along; we were always up with things that were happening and helping to make things happen in the things that she was running. She always instilled good values in us." Karen also emphasised how observing her mother's commitment and willingness to help others in the community had greatly influenced her own preparedness to volunteer her time to help out in her community.

When reflecting on their mother's involvement in community organisations, most participants commonly described their mothers as being "highly organised" and "hands-on" in their communities. It was also common for the participants to make reference to their mother as a person who chose to provide leadership from behind the scenes rather than be the "up front" person: "Mum would always be the one to get everything prepared…she didn't like to be in the limelight, she preferred to work in the background but was the driver behind it all" (Stacy, elite level). The majority of participants also felt their mother's commitment and motivation to making a difference in their community had taught the participants a strong sense of commitment and determination. Mary (community level) explained: "My mother was an achiever in the sense that she would always finish everything she started…where she could see something that needed to be done she would strive to achieve it."

The majority of participants also noted that their mother's involvement in their community taught them the importance and value in developing relationships with others. They achieved this by providing examples of building a strong rapport with people and showing them compassion and spending time to listen to their concerns. Sally (community level) described her mother as a "wonderful communicator" who was prepared to be put herself out to help anyone in the community who needed help. Sally fondly spoke about her mother "being there to support people, all the young ones trusted her. She was reliable and just knew what was right and wrong."

It was also common among the participants to acknowledge that the support provided by their mother during their early childhood and adolescent years had encouraged them to believe in their own ability. From the participant's perspective, this self-belief provided them with the drive and confidence to take on new experiences and challenges. As Jane (community level) explained: "My mother always encouraged me to believe in myself in anything that that I did." As for Tracey (elite level), she recognised that her mother gave her the confidence and belief in her ability by instilling in her gender neutral values in regard to her own achievements: "I was lucky that I had a mother who believed girls were just as clever as boys and that they should be treated as individuals." For Alice (elite level), she acknowledged that her mother was instrumental in developing her confidence and self-belief by helping her "…to make my own decisions and when I made a decision she would assess it and would support me where she needed to."

Most participants also spoke about how their mother challenged them to set high standards and commitment in their endeavours, as Heather (community level) explained when talking about her mother and how she had taught her at an early age the value of commitment. Heather reminisced over an incident when she was 10 years old involving her mother explaining to her about the commitment required to look after her horse: " 'If you're not going to start leading all the way, then don't do it. You can't do things half-heartedly, you either do it or you don't'. Mum's words have stuck in my head ever since, being one hundred percent committed" (Heather, community level).
In a majority of cases, the participants also made reference to their mother playing a key role in providing them with opportunities and encouragement to participate in sporting activities and schooling throughout their childhood and adolescent years. For example,

Angela (community level) explained how her mother had encouraged both herself and her sisters to embrace their sport and education at a young age:

> Mum was the first in her family to gain a tertiary education and she was very encouraging and supporting in that girls could do anything that they wanted to…in fact she probably bent over backwards to make sure that her four daughters felt like they could do whatever they wanted to do in their sport, their education, and their careers. (Angela, community level)

In a similar example, Tara (elite level) spoke about how highly both of her parents valued being educated, and in particular, how her mother had made it a high priority with her children; "While my father was working, my mother was the one doing all the homecare and looking after us. So as far as she was concerned, she was responsible for what happened to us." Tara's mother was "pretty strong about us getting an academic background and also having grounding in sporting activities…she constantly instilled in us that an education was going to provide us with a way of getting a good job." She also highlighted how her mother was instrumental in providing her children with as many opportunities as possible to participate in and experience different sporting activities: "Mum was also pretty pushy about getting us all involved in sport and having experience in swimming, tennis, and volleyball…without her influence, I don't think I would have ever been involved in sport."

For some of the participants, despite their mother's limited knowledge and interest in sport, the participants still valued and regarded the supportive role their mother provided as important to them. As Alice (elite level) explained: "Mum would come down here and do whatever she could to help, she knew very little about the sport but she was always very involved. She would come and help me clean if I needed it or anything." For Robyn (elite level), even though she admitted that her mother disliked her playing sport, it was important for her to know that her mother was proud of her achievements. Even though her mother "hated" her playing sport due to the risk of injury, she was still very supportive of her: "Mum would never say 'don't play', she would speak very highly of my sporting achievements to her friends which indicated to me that she was very proud of my involvement in sport. To me that approval was very important."

6.1.2   Fathers

The majority of participants also identified their father as another person of significant influence on their leadership during their childhood and adolescent years. Commonly, the participants spoke about their father being a role model for them through their community involvement, and also in their professional capacity. Most of the participants identified that observing and interacting with their father taught them essential skills at an early age. Along with their mother, they also credited their father's involvement in the community with their own sense of commitment to give back to their community. From a professional sense, they held their father in high regard and respected their actions and advice in their professional capacity.

Leading by example and demonstrating a strong sense of social responsibility were traits commonly identified and valued by the participants when talking about their father's influence on their leadership in their younger years. For example, Amanda (elite level) spoke about her family valuing community involvement and had attributed that to her father's "heavy involvement in community activities as a volunteer." Amanda nominated her father's willingness to be involved in the community, including her own sport, as having had a big influence in shaping her own interest and desires to give back to her community:

> I think my Dad taught me a great sense of social responsibility. When I started my sport my Dad was always helping out in the canteen at Nationals and things like that. It seemed to make sense to me to help out as well and so when I was a little bit older as a teenager in Sydney, I started becoming interested in how competitions were run so I went and asked and watched and learnt how to do it and helped out. (Amanda, elite level)

In Heather's (community level) example, she also spoke proudly about her father's involvement in the community and emphasised in positive terms the impact it had on her family: "Just seeing all of the community work Dad's done and seeing how much people appreciated it. The hard working side of things has really played an important and happy part in our family life which has been really good." Heather attributed her father's involvement in the community as a source of her own sense of commitment to give back to her own community.

Some of the participants said that their father's interest in their sport during their childhood and adolescent years was extremely important to them. For example, Robyn (elite level) spoke admiringly about her father's involvement in her sport, during what she regarded as a difficult time in her early sporting career. Robyn described her father's support in her sport as "tremendous." She explained how at the age of 15 she made the difficult decision to stop competing in her sport at the national level because she no longer had the desire. Despite her father's "disappointment" and "devastation" caused by her decision she was grateful that her father continued to support her in her new sport with the same enthusiasm. She said that her father's ongoing support was "really important to me to know that he was there for me and respected my decision."

Fathers of participants at the elite level tended to hold professional positions of leadership during the participant's younger years. These participants held their father in high regard and respected their advice and their actions in their professional capacity at an early age. For example, Alicia (elite level) reflected on her father's professional and sporting roles while she was growing up and the impact she felt they had on shaping her own leadership. Despite Alicia admitting that she was not totally aware of the significance of her father's professional and sporting achievements during her childhood, she reflected on how he subconsciously provided her with an example to model her own desire to achieve both in her own professional life and in her sporting career. Alicia was very proud of her father's achievements as a General Manager for a chemical company: "Dad always held positions of leadership…I guess while I was growing up I didn't really think about it, but it was there, and he always encouraged me in a supportive way to try lots of different experiences." When explored further with Alicia, she explained how through her father's example she had learned how to be "persistent, being fair, listening to people, and about honesty." Alicia also acknowledged how her father had taught her that being approachable and listening to other people's issues were important, and explained how she had adopted her father's approach into her own leadership: "I have an open door policy…they [Alicia's staff] know that if they have a problem they can come to me, or if they don't like something they can come and tell me, they know that I will take it on board."

In regard to seeking advice when the participants (elite level) were faced with a problem, it was common for the participants to turn to their father rather than their mother for direction. For example, despite Amanda's (elite level) father having limited knowledge

about her sport, while she was growing up she regularly sought his advice when faced with a challenging situation in her sport: "Dad's not really a sporting person but when I had a problem I would talk to him about it. Dad would always give very sound advice." Amanda also spoke about how her father discussed how to manage conflicting situations with her during their family mealtimes when she was growing up. Amanda acknowledged that through these conversations she had learned a lot about how to manage different challenges:

> I often heard table conversations about my father's interaction with people, his struggles with people…activities he was involved in. My sense was, that he was working towards doing something good but there were always obstacles and barriers, so I must have picked up a lot of those things as well and handling challenges, handling different personalities or conflicting personalities…certainly my Dad could do that, he was in a leadership role for work and so I would always be hearing about the clashes and how he went about trying to get things done. (Amanda, elite level)

Similar to Amanda, Donna (elite level) spoke about how her father had introduced her to the decision-making process at an early age: "When I was growing-up, if I had a question for Dad, he would always ask me to provide different ideas, then expect me to make the decision." In Kay's (elite level) case, despite the fact she felt that she did not have a close relationship with her father and to some degree felt intimidated by his presence, she respected his position of leadership and sought his advice on various issues. Despite Kay's perceived "awkward" relationship with her father, she still "respected him because he was a leader. He was a chairman of a corporation in Australia." Kay acknowledged that her father was more than willing to discuss matters with her when she approached him and often asked for his help while she was growing up. Reflecting back on the many discussions she had with her father, Kay admitted that while she did not always understand what he was explaining or talking about, she said, "I just listened to him…I respected him for his position and where he got himself in life."

6.1.3   *Significant others in the family*

For many participants their extended families (including siblings) were a source of inspiration that they felt had nurtured their determination and resilience in later years.

Having a female as an extended family member such as a grandmother or aunty provided the participants with an example of what they saw as a "strong" female role model while they were growing up. It was common for the participants to describe their grandmother or aunty as a person who was determined and self-reliant who refused to let barriers or the status-quo stop them from achieving. For example, Angela (community level) told a story about the determination of her grandmother and how that had influenced her own leadership. She described her grandmother as a "very independent lady" who was brought up with her family out on a rural property. While her husband (Angela's grandfather) was away at war, the chimney on their family property needed replacing. Due to the men being away at the war, there was a shortage of labour available to build a new chimney. Instead of throwing her hands up in despair, Angela's grandmother built a chimney on her own. Angela's story about her grandmother provided her with an example of a woman displaying determination, self-reliance, and a "never say no" attitude: "My grandmother was a great believer in the principle that she would rather 'wear out than rust out'…that's a guiding principle of mine. My grandmother has had a big impact on me" (Angela, community level).

Stacy (elite level) shared a similar story about her grandmother's strength of character and her strong sense of resilience. Stacy acknowledged that having a role model in her life such as her grandmother provided her with an example of a woman being independent and having the confidence to stand up for her own beliefs. As Stacy explained:

> I have grown up with a very strong female in my life like my Granny who is still alive, she's 92 and she's lived on her own for the last 30 years and still chops wood. She has always spoken her mind. Physically she is very strong, and she has always looked after herself. I think having a very good role model in the home from an early age was a contributing factor because it provided me with a great example of how a woman could be successful independently. (Stacy, elite level)

In Jessica's (elite level) example, she identified her aunty as a person who had a significant impact on the development of her leadership during her childhood and adolescent years. Similar to Angela's and Stacy's experience, Jessica described her aunty as a person with a "strong" character who was actively involved in sport leadership roles. Jessica explained that her aunty was a prominent person in developing her own involvement in sport. Her

aunty initially introduced Jessica to sport and played a key role in encouraging her to strive to achieve her full potential as a sportsperson and as an administrator. Her aunty led by example by being heavily involved in sport herself, she represented sport at state level, she held a manager's role, and umpired in her sport right up until she died in her 80s. Jessica highlighted the influence her aunty had on her leadership: "She was really a strong role model for me, she had a big impact on me, she was a strong woman and a good leader, and people followed her."

The participants who spoke about their siblings made reference to their brother/s as an influencing factor on their leadership during their younger years. The participants recognised that a combination of both their family environment, and brothers, had taught them how to be competitive and stand up for themselves at an early age. For example, Tammy (elite level) attributed her fierce competitiveness in her own sport as largely due to the family environment in which she grew up. Tammy was brought up in a large family of 10 siblings, eight brothers and two sisters and felt that living in a house predominantly full of brothers helped shape and condition her competitiveness and determination in her approach towards her leadership in adulthood. In Robyn's (elite level) example, she highlighted that in order for her to be accepted by her brothers and earn their respect for her sporting ability; she had to demonstrate a physical and mental strength and toughness. Robyn explained that if she wanted to play with her brothers she had to prove herself to them and could not show any signs of weaknesses: "If I wanted to play with the boys I had to show them I was strong, that I was tough…For me, that was probably one of the key influences on my sport at an early age."

From a different perspective, Sally (community level) was the eldest child of seven children and felt that her "hectic" family environment had contributed greatly to her learning the value of teamwork, tolerance, and patience. Sally also identified her brother as having a "big" influence on her approach to leadership by teaching her how to gain respect by being disciplined but fair. Sally recalled how she would often observe her brother coaching an Under 17's male team in junior football competition. She described her brother as being assertive with the boys by being "very direct and straight to the point" and yet he had total respect from his playing group: "The boys always respected him, they had discipline, they [the team] were a very good 'clean' side. If someone stuffed up they

were dragged off the field but he was always very fair and consistent with the boys" (Sally, community level).

6.2 Early sport experiences

Most participants identified their sport experiences at an early age as having provided them with an environment in which to learn how to set goals and work towards achieving them through commitment, dedication, and hard work. For example, Heather (community level) had attributed her early sporting background with helping her to learn how to use goal setting: "When you are an athlete and you're training and striving to be better at something, you will naturally look at where you have to improve. You seek the feedback and set goals for yourself." In regard to sporting experiences teaching the participants persistence and determination, Angela (community level) reflected upon one of her early "team" sporting experiences at her primary school. Angela explained that she was a member of the primary school's softball team and described her first year on the team as being, "hopeless…I couldn't throw, I couldn't catch, and I couldn't bat." Despite her lack of perceived ability, she acknowledged how her male coach persisted with her and was "very encouraging and supportive." Angela said that she worked hard and this, along with the encouragement from her coach, had improved her playing ability and confidence. In the second year the team went on to win the premiership and Angela was awarded with a trophy for the most determined. Angela felt that this early experience of persistence, along with being recognised formally for her determination, had inspired and motivated her to achieve during her adolescence and into adulthood.

It was common amongst the participants, particularly at the elite level, that achieving success through their sporting ability at an early age formed an important factor that taught them how commitment and determination were needed for success. Tammy (elite level) spoke about her "strong" desire and drive to become the very best she possibly could through her sport and felt that this taught her that to be successful she needed to show commitment and determination through hard work: "I have always been heavily involved in sport and trained before school, during school, and after school. I based myself on winning and that winning was the most important thing…so I trained even harder and I won."

In another example of drive and determination to succeed at a young age, Robyn (elite level) identified her strong desire to be recognised by her peers for her sporting ability as a key driver to motivate her to become the very best that she could possible become in her sport. Robyn recalled how in her early sporting experiences she had to prove her sporting prowess, not only to herself, but also to her peers: "I had to have good playing ability and show the rest of the group that I was up to standard and didn't just want to play my sport to be an umpire, I wanted to be the best." Robyn also acknowledged that her early sporting experiences had taught her a sense of determination and resilience in regard to the development of her leadership. Robyn explained that through her sport she had learned how to deal with challenging situations and setbacks by responding in an ethical manner through hard work and ability: "Playing the game taught me very much that if you get tagged, knocked down, the best way to respond is through your actual playing ability with integrity. It also taught me confidence as well."

6.3 Influences of *s*chool experiences

School experience emerged as a common and important influence on the development of the participants' leadership. The majority of participants across both community and elite levels indicated that they were involved in a leadership role in some capacity at the secondary school level, such as a school or house sports captain. Most participants nominated their achievements in sport at an early age and their ability to have good rapport with other students as key reasons they were given the opportunity to take on leadership roles at school. For example, Sandra (community level) perceived that one of the reasons she was appointed as a year 12 school leader and captain of her house was that she "always had a good relationship with a whole range of people and always had a diverse range of friends."

In another example, Robyn (elite level) recalled how she had been representing her sport at a national level since her early teens. Not only did she continue to represent Australia in her sport while she was completing year 12, she also held down the dual role of school and sports captain for her school. Robyn identified two main reasons why she thought she was appointed in these roles. The first was due to her success in her sport, and the second reason was due to her ability to be inclusive with others:

The school staff just saw that I was in every sport that I possibly could be and I was okay at it. They saw that I had a good rapport with my fellow students too, I was inclusive and as a result of that they appointed me as the Year 12 school captain. I'm a strong believer, that no matter what level of ability a person has, I think it's very important to include everyone. At school I hated to see people feel left out. I would rather have had a person on my team who had 100% commitment before someone who may have had loads of talent but a poor attitude…I really admired people getting out and having a go. (Robyn, elite level)

The majority of participants also identified the opportunity to develop leadership skills at an early age as being a critical factor in preparing them for school leadership roles in their late teens. They highlighted leadership roles such as being captain of their junior sports team, helped develop their confidence to take on added responsibilities and ownership for their team. For example, Heather (community level) held a perception that because she had always been a good organiser, she felt comfortable with putting herself "out there" and taking on various roles of responsibilities. Heather attributed her school experiences with fostering a desire and confidence to step beyond her comfort zone and not be frightened to take on new experiences. Heather explained that throughout her schooling she held positions of responsibility through her sporting involvement: "I was always a school representative, the house captain, and the captain of athletics." She attributed her confidence in her ability with adding to her enjoyment of taking on new roles: "I always loved that responsibility…'Give it to me, I want to do it.' I would be disappointed if I wasn't selected for those sorts of things."

In addition to this, some of the participants identified that their early leadership experiences provided them with an environment through which to learn how to motivate and inspire their fellow team mates. For example, Amanda (elite level) recognised the need to take on the responsibility of looking after her team mates in her role as captain of her school team in order to gain their confidence and trust to follow her leadership: "I was captain of my sports team at school so I started being involved in looking after other people and bringing people along" (Amanda, elite level).

Just under half of the participants across both community and elite levels indicated that they attended an all-girls school during their adolescence. For most of these participants, they commonly held the view that their school experience had provided them with an inclusive environment that fostered a self-belief and confidence to achieve. The participants spoke about how they felt it presented them with opportunities to take on leadership roles at a young age where they were able to develop leadership skills such as public speaking, and learning to take on responsibilities. They also identified that their school experience provided them with an environment relatively free of boundaries that might have inhibited their desire to try new experiences for fear of being judged. This included the participants being encouraged to have a go at different experiences without retribution or restrictions. As Alicia (elite level) highlighted: "I went to an all-girls' school. There was nothing that we were ever told that we couldn't do. I grew up thinking there were no boundaries if I wanted to do something."

Along with being challenged to set high standards to achieve, it was common for the participants to speak about how they felt their school experience gave them the freedom to nurture their aspirations and build on their level of competence and confidence to move out of their comfort zone and take on new and challenging experiences. This included nurturing a level of confidence in the participants to have a voice and stand up for their beliefs or rights. As Amanda (elite level) explained:

> I went to an exclusive all-girls' high school. They were very competitive and proud of their success as females in the academic world. The school was often listed in the top five schools in the State for HSC results and that was something that was drummed into us…that we had to work hard at our studies, and that we were going to be future leaders. We were encouraged to voice our opinions. It was the culture of the school to encourage free expression and individuality. The school fostered individual development. It allowed for different personality types to come out. It has definitely influenced me as a person. So I guess it has influenced the way I lead…it certainly has taught me, that if I have something to say I should say it, and if I have something to contribute I should get involved. (Amanda, elite level)

6.3.1   *School teachers' influence*

For the majority of participants, the influence of school teachers appeared to have played an important role in encouraging the participants at an early age to start to think of their leadership potential. For example, Sally (community level) fondly spoke about the influence her school teacher had on her leadership: "The most significant person for me was my grade six male teacher. On my report he wrote that I was a 'natural leader', to me that was a huge incentive." In Sally's case, being identified by her teacher as a leader was all that was needed for her to change her mindset and to start to believe that she had potential to become a leader. Sally went on to be selected as a captain for the grade's team in the school's soccer tournament.

A number of the participants also identified their Physical Education (PE) teacher as being instrumental in shaping their thinking and influencing belief in their ability. The participants commonly highlighted that their PE teacher recognised their potential in sport at an early age where no other person had. The participants perceived their PE teacher nurtured their self-belief in their ability, and then followed it up with giving them encouragement to continually challenge themselves. As Claire (elite level) reminisced about when she was in year 10, at the time all she wanted to be was an electrical engineer; her PE teacher then approached her and talked about her considering focussing on sport as the teacher felt she had real potential. After their discussion, Claire changed her direction of focus; "I did end up choosing sport instead of engineering. Just my teacher's recognition and belief in me drove me to do more and gave me the confidence to do the extra things" (Claire, elite level).

In another example, Tammy (elite level) also identified her PE teachers as having a profound influence on her leadership, to the point of her striving to gain their recognition by achieving through her sport and academic ability. Tammy highlighted that her PE teachers, "stood out as strong influences on me. Because I was strong in sport and I enjoyed it so much, I pretty much idolised and admired my PE teachers." Tammy explained that her admiration for her PE teachers drove her determination to achieve both in her sporting and academic endeavours: "I wanted to do well to gain their [PE teachers] acknowledgment. They encouraged me to strive for more and for better, be it a better mark in my school work or a better result on the sporting field."

Similar to Tammy, Stacy (elite level) admired the qualities of her primary school PE teacher and used her as a role model and later as a mentor. Stacy identified that the influence of her PE teacher was instrumental in her going on to be a qualified PE teacher in her adulthood. Stacy elaborated that her primary school PE teacher "was a great teacher. She was a very competent athlete. She was funny, smart, always energetic, and just had a great rapport with kids." Stacy further highlighted that her PE teacher was "very exciting, motivating, and I guess I saw all of the things in her that I wanted to be like." Stacy's primary school PE teacher had made such an impression on her that she kept in touch with her during her adolescence. At the end of every school year, starting at Year 10, Stacy would spend time at her former primary school as a volunteer with their PE program. During her time at the primary school, Stacy spent quality time with her former primary school PE teacher who was generous with sharing her knowledge about teaching with Stacy: "She [Stacy's primary school PE teacher] would basically talk to me the whole time, 'This is why I am doing this, this is how I would teach this'. My PE teacher was the main reason that I thought 'yes this is really my pathway'."

6.4 Experiences of hardship and adversity in childhood

When participants were asked to discuss significant events they felt had contributed to their leadership in childhood some of them spoke about experiences of hardship and adversity while they were growing up. Experiences of sustained illness, family hardships, and the death of a parent all appeared to have fostered a sense of resilience and a capacity for those participants to be independent and fend for themselves at an early age. They felt their experience of adversity in childhood had "strongly" contributed to their leadership by developing their ability and confidence to adjust to a changing situation, and importantly, had provided them internal strength to deal with challenges during times of difficulty.

For example, Tracey (elite level) spoke about the impact of contracting polio in her childhood and her perception of how this had shaped her leadership. Tracey recollected how, due to her illness, she had spent a lot of her time during her childhood on her own as she was unable to attend school. She attributed her "forced" isolation in her early years with her development as "independently minded." As Tracey entered adolescence, she was then sent to a boarding school as her mother could no longer look after her special needs while looking after their country property. At the time, Tracey spoke about how she felt

abandoned by her family, being left to fend on her own. However she did admit that while she felt isolated, her experience had further added to her independence by teaching her to stand up for herself and not rely on others to do things for her. Tracey also spoke about how her illness had taught her sensitivity to, and awareness of the challenges faced with people who have a disability. Tracey explained that she has used her childhood experience to help others with a disability by advocating and delivering disability education within her sport in her current leadership role.

In Sandra's (community level) example, due to her family's financial hardship, she learned at an early age the value of independence and to taking responsibility to achieve her own goals. Sandra explained that from the time she was 14 she always had a part-time job to help the family out financially, either working at the "local supermarket, at the local bakery, or just picking spuds." Sandra said that it was not until she was in her later years of secondary schooling that she had her heart set on going on to teachers college to gain her qualifications to become a school teacher. The only way Sandra was going to achieve her goal of pursuing a teaching career was that she was going to have to acquire a scholarship as her parents did not have the funds to support her through teachers college. Sandra explained; "I worked hard at my studies and at the same time worked part-time to save up as much money as I could." All the hard work paid off for Sandra as she was awarded a scholarship and at the age of 17 left home to go onto study at the teachers college. Sandra reflected on her experience as a teenager growing up in a family that was constantly struggling financially not as a negative but rather as a positive: "I think that whole experience really taught me to stand on my own two feet and take responsibility for my own destiny."

In Donna's (elite level) case, in tragic circumstances her mother passed away while she was a young child. She described how the death of her mother at an early age forced her to become independent and take responsibility for looking after herself. Coupled with losing her mother at the age of seven, Donna's support network at home had become limited, with her father having to work fulltime to support his young family. Donna explained how her unfortunate circumstances taught her how to be highly self-reliant: "I really think as a child growing up, I was expected to take care of myself…if I wanted to get involved in something, it was up to me to make it happen." Donna recalled that living in a small country town made it easy for her to take initiative in regards to getting involved

in sport without relying on her father to support her: "If I wanted to join the local tennis club, I just had to ride my bike down to the club and walk in and pair myself up with a team. I didn't have to depend on Dad at all to drive me anywhere." Donna attributed her "tragic" circumstances as helping her to learn how to become more confident and self-reliant at such a young age: "I think that really helped me to grow my confidence to be able to pursue my own goals and become independent." Donna then went on to explain how she felt her challenging childhood had contributed to her leadership into adulthood:

> In a work situation, if I want something done, I know that it's basically up to me to drive that, I have no-one else to do that for me. I think that you have to take control over your own life in order to achieve what you want…my childhood has definitely helped me to understand that. (Donna, elite level)

6.5 Chapter Discussion

This chapter identified a range of social factors that influenced and shaped the participants' beliefs about leadership and their attitudes toward it at a very early age. It was found that the participants' early experiences influenced: their values and belief systems; the development of their awareness and self-belief in their ability; the value of relationship building; and, the development of participants' strength of character associated with resilience. The ways in which these were shaped suggested the importance of social interaction and relationships for their development as leaders in adulthood. Most of these influences seem to have operated at a non-conscious level over time, but the participants were guided toward identifying these factors in interviews. From a social constructivist perspective the learning experiences outlined formed parts of an ongoing process of knowledge construction and the development of attitudes and dispositions through which they constructed their own understandings of their leadership practices and values.

The contexts of the family, school, and positive sport experiences during their formative years (child and adolescence) exerted the strongest influence on the participants' development of inclinations and dispositions toward leadership by fostering the range of attributes needed by leaders. This supports Cubillo and Brown's (2003) identification of a combination of: (1) school; (2) sport involvement; and (3) family support as being of central importance in shaping young girls' thinking and enabling them to aspire to higher

role achievement and aligns with the importance of feeling competent and valued for confidence in the ability to be a good leader that is evident from chapter eight. The participants' recognition of their own ability and its contribution toward their development is particularly important for an authentic leadership approach, with the heightened levels of leader self-awareness identified in this chapter a fundamental component of authentic leadership (Garner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Personal histories and critical events including family influences, education, and early life experiences serve as catalysts to facilitate personal growth and development toward leader self-awareness and self-belief (Gardner et al., 2005). The participants' relationship with their parents and particularly their father, along with encouraging words and actions from their teachers, positively influenced their thinking and shaped their ambition and self-belief to achieve.

The early influences of the family on participants appear to have profoundly shaped their core values and approaches to their practice of leadership as discussed in chapter five. These results suggest the positive modelling effect of both parents' leader behaviour on shaping the participants' leadership practice. Their exposure to their parents' leadership practice at an early age introduced them to the value of active community involvement grounded in a "strong" work ethic built on trust and respect, motivated by wanting to make a difference based on helping others. These same leader-behaviours and values were strongly reflected through the participants' own perceived leadership practices in adulthood. In support of previous research (Fine, 2009; Kelloway & Barling, 2000; Murphy & Johnson, 2011; Popper & Mayseless, 2003; Sinclair, 1998; Stead & Elliott, 2009), the influence of parents' values and moral standards practised through their leadership behaviour acted as an antecedent in creating participants' interest in leadership at a young age and formed the foundation of their own leadership practice into adulthood. Parents influence their children's thoughts on leadership through their role modelling of leadership behaviour and exposure to leadership experiences early in their children's life (Murphy & Johnson, 2011), and this appeared to have a profound effect on their children's work-related beliefs and aspirations (Kelloway & Barling, 2003, Pooper & Mayseless, 2003). These same leader behaviours and values were strongly reflected through the participants' own perceived leadership practices into adulthood.

Madsen (2007) identified the important role teachers' play in developing young female students' leadership capabilities by acknowledging their intellectual and social competence

in recognising their abilities and contributions, and this emerged as a very important requirement for the development of the participants into leaders. Furthermore, the participants' accounts of their early leadership experiences through school and sport provided them with an environment relatively free of inhibiting boundaries to try new experiences. This highlights the importance of being insulated from the limits of gender stereotyping in developing females' confidence and self-belief in their ability to lead at a young age (Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Sinclair, 1998).

For this study, the dynamics of relationships with other people from multiple sources emerged as significant in the participants' accounts of their leadership development during their formative years. This supports the work of Stead and Elliott's (2009) relational view of women's practice of leadership, where women draw upon multiple sources of past experiences and relationships with others from their childhood and family life. The participants emphasised that their relationships with their mother, aunty, and grandmother provided them with the opportunity to draw on unique female experiences in their leadership. The relationship with their father acted as a basis of inspiration to achieve and provided them with a "trusted" source to seek advice and to discuss issues with. This exposed the participants to valuable skills such as managing conflict and decision-making at an early age. Their relationship with their male siblings nurtured the participants' competitiveness, determination, and resilience in later years. Their school experiences provided some of the participants with the opportunity to form relationships with other students and teachers that fostered socialisation outside of the family boundaries and helped them learn to become socially competent during their childhood and adolescence (Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Madsen, 2007).

The final important theme to emerge from the participants' recollection of significant events or people on their leadership during their childhood was the development of their strength of character and resilience. Here we see some tensions between what can be seen as traditionally "feminine" characteristics of female leaders such as a preference for dialogue, discussion, listening and being inclusive, and the perceived need to be strong, firm, being prepared to make the tough calls at the expense of harmonious relationships, and leading by example. These are characteristics typically developed through the rigours of highly competitive sport and learned from their fathers as another theme emerging from the study to this point. This was particularly emphasised by those who provided accounts

of hardship experienced during childhood that they said fostered a sense of resilience and a capacity to be independent at a young age. It was also seen to nurture an "internal" strength and self-belief to deal with difficult, challenging situations in adulthood. This finding supports previous research where the experience of dealing with difficult situations during childhood was influential in learning how to adjust behaviour and become self-reliant and confident enough to tackle challenging situations in adulthood (Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Madsen, 2007; Sinclair, 1998).

7. Influences on Leadership Development in Adulthood

This chapter examines the factors influencing the participants' leadership development as adults. It does not include the influences of the WISL program on the participants' leadership development as this will be addressed separately in chapter 8. This chapter begins by examining the importance of exposure to leadership opportunities as part of the learning process for participants. The section on *Mentors* provides an interesting insight in terms of gender and the influence of middle aged male mentors on the participants' leadership development. The next section on *Women's networks* focuses on the importance of formal and informal female networks in relation to a support mechanism in a "safe" environment to discuss challenging issues for the participants. The section on *Recognition, respect, and positive feedback* highlights the role of participants being recognised and respected by others for their leadership capabilities and its positive development influence on their current leadership roles in terms of increasing their confidence and self-belief. The section on *Experiences of professional development/education* recognises the importance of completing professional development or formal education as essential to allow participants to expand on their existing knowledge and skill base to perform at their leadership roles. The final two sections of the chapter focus on the positive influence of role models and the level of support provided by the participants' partners as two important factors in the development of their leadership.

7.1 Learning through experience

Most of the participants felt that gaining leadership experience in adulthood was paramount to their overall successful development of their leadership. They identified the importance of being given opportunities to lead in building their confidence and in their development into successful leaders. They recognised how experiences in challenging roles further contributed to their confidence levels and self-belief in their ability to lead and in their development as leaders. For example, Heather (community level) recognised that by stepping beyond her comfort zone and trying new challenging experiences, she had become more confident in her leadership by improving her skills: "…once you have experienced it, you're stronger the next time when you're faced with the same issue…every time it improves. The confidence in my skills that I have gained has also improved my confidence to lead."

It was common for participants, particularly at the elite level, to reflect upon their leadership experiences to learn about themselves and to identify how they could further improve on their practices. This was more evident when they felt that they had failed or had a negative experience in their role as a leader. For example, Tara (elite level) experienced the highs and lows of being appointed the first female to coach at an international level in a male dominated sport. After five years of managing and overcoming the many challenges of coaching within a masculine culture, her training program was "ceremoniously dumped" by her male athletes, and as a consequence she stepped down from her international coaching role very disillusioned with the sport. Tara's negative experience forced her to reflect on her coaching style in a bid to learn what went wrong and look at alternative practices: "I saw everything as bogged down with negatives, but now I can actually see that you can create good things out of what looks impossible." After much reflection and researching alternative coaching practices, Tara totally changed her coaching style from being "authoritarian and dominating" to being more inclusive and empowering her athletes. With her new style of coaching in hand, Tara went on to assemble a group of athletes and within a short period of time her athletes experienced success competing at national level.

Most participants also felt that gaining experience in leadership roles provided them with a "real" learning environment to put the theory into practice. From Stacy's (elite level) perspective, she recognised the value of practical "hands-on" experience as an important complement to formal modes of education: "You can go to workshops and sit down and go through Powerpoint presentations, but it is the reality of practical experience through trial and error that has really taught me." In Karen's (community level) case, she spoke about the benefits of gaining experience in various leadership roles that had provided her with a new level of perceived maturity in her approach towards her leadership. As Karen explained: "I think experience has made me more mature in the way that I deal with different issues…I don't fly off the handle as fast as I use to and I remain a lot calmer."
The majority of participants also acknowledged that while gaining valuable leadership experience was important to their overall leadership development, it was also imperative to attain knowledge and develop their own skills before they had the confidence and self-belief to be considered for a higher level of leadership role. For example, Kay (elite level) spoke about her hesitation to take on an executive director's position on a national sporting organisation's board as she did not consider she had been at the organisation long enough

to understand the culture and history of the organisation. In conjunction with growing her knowledge of the organisation, Kay also held a perception that she needed to gain more experience in her current leadership role in order to gain credibility and support from the members. As Kay explained:

> I have only been on the board for 12 months. It has a lot of history that I'm not familiar with. If I'm going to be president of the organisation then I need to have an understanding of the organisation's history. That's important to me, and I need a little bit more support and confidence to do that position. I just feel as if I need support from the members and I need support from the executive. I don't believe it's time for me to lead, I think I need to do more with my current role and get the corporate governance in place, and when I finish that, then maybe I will consider putting my hand up for the president's position. (Kay, elite level)

The participants typically identified that having self-confidence in their ability to lead was essential to their leadership development. Even though at times they struggled to identify themselves as a leader, they did acknowledge that it was important to have a self-awareness in their own abilities, including being aware of their strengths and weaknesses in order to lead more confidently and assertively. For example, Donna (elite level) spoke about her confidence in her ability as a leader, and elaborated on her thoughts regarding self-awareness: "I think it's about having self-awareness about what you're good at and having self-awareness about what is right and wrong, and being strong and disciplined, and focusing on what is best for you in the long run."

Although most of the participants recognised the value of leadership experience, they also indicated their willingness to build their knowledge through self-learning techniques as an alternative to formal education. For example, Helen (elite level) reflected that, "Yes new knowledge is always good…I read a fair amount and I try and keep up with what the latest trends are." In addition to completing formal courses, Kay (elite level) supplemented her knowledge with reading books: "I have just read a lot of stuff that has come through and I learn that way as well." In another example, Tara (elite level) spoke about when she had been confronted with challenging situations in her leadership, she confessed that she referred to books to find alternative solutions. As she explained: "Because we all have interests and motivations behind what we do, it has been so challenging lately that I have started buying books on how I can change my thinking."

7.2 Mentors

The value of developing informal mentor relationships was highlighted by over half of the participants across both community and elite levels, as an important contributor towards their leadership development in adulthood. Of interest, in the majority of cases, the participants' mentors were men over the age of 55 and had been a person that the participants had worked with previously and had kept in contact over time. In most cases, the participants expressed how they had developed a good relationship with their male mentor early on in their careers. These participants said that they had developed a trustful and respectful relationship with their mentors to the point of feeling comfortable with confiding in them without feeling threatened or being judged. For example, Heather (community level) elaborated on her relationship with her male mentor who was in his mid-50s and was a person Heather had kept in contact with since they had last worked together five years ago. She said that they "try and get together every two months and have a three hour chat about how I'm going with work." Heather highlighted the value of her relationship with her mentor and what it meant to her development of her leadership: "We have a great rapport with each other; I can always talk to him and know that he will not judge me with whatever decisions I make. It's nice to have that external person to talk things over with."

Heather also emphasised how her mentor not only provided her with an opportunity to reflect on issues, but how he also provided her with encouragement and guidance on career planning. She explained how she had very few opportunities to "sit down and reflect about things. He's [Heather's mentor] been very helpful with my career development. He's been a great sounding board. He alerts me to different advertisements for jobs and encourages me to apply for them." Heather also acknowledged that at times she doubted her ability to lead and had attributed her relationship with her mentor as an important element to reassuring and building her confidence. Heather elaborated that: "I doubt myself a lot, so having that relationship with my mentor helped with the discussing ideas and questioning why I don't feel comfortable or confident with some things. I think that has been important."

In regard to the role of the participant's mentor, it appeared that the mentor helped to define the participant's eligibility for leadership by recognising their leadership skill and demonstrating confidence in their ability to step up into higher level leadership roles. For example, Donna (elite level) recalled how she met regularly with her mentor over coffee

or for lunch to discuss her progress with a focus on building her self-confidence. Donna felt that it was imperative that she needed to recognise and have a self-belief in her own ability before she felt confident to take the next step. As Donna explained: "For someone to reach their full potential as an effective leader, they really have to have a strong belief within themselves personally and my mentor has helped me to do this."

In addition, most of the participants also emphasised how their mentor had been ready to engage in dialogue with them and act as "sounding board" to discuss various issues with before taking them back to their workplace or volunteer position. As Amanda (elite level) explained: "I have a close male friend who has mentored me since I arrived to live in the city. He's a person with a highly strategic mind and a person I often bounce ideas off." In Alicia's (elite level) example, she spoke about how she met with her mentor over coffee before work every two months. During their meetings, along with discussing various issues that Alicia was dealing with at the time, her mentor (a man in his mid to late 50s) also attempted to challenge Alicia's thinking as part of her development. Alicia explained:

> He [Alicia's mentor] fires a heap of questions at me. He's always asking me, 'Why have you done this?' or 'Have you thought about this?' He's just a really nice person, he challenges me. We enjoy each other's company and I feel comfortable in telling him things without it going anywhere else, and I know that he can relate to a lot of my problems and has a great understanding of what I'm going through as he has experience. (Alicia, elite level)

Receiving feedback from their mentor was perceived by the majority of participants as a valuable learning tool in regards to their leadership development. Most of the participants spoke about their willingness to listen and take on board the feedback provided by their mentor to improve their performance as a leader. For example, Jessica (elite level) spoke about receiving feedback from her mentor regarding performance as a coach at national level. Jessica explained that even though her mentor indicated that they had quite a bit to discuss regarding her coaching performance from the previous week, he also reassured her that, "it wasn't necessarily criticism about my coaching but rather to just talk through some ideas." Jessica appreciated her mentor's honest and constructive feedback and did not feel at all intimidated by their relationship but rather saw it as an opportunity to embrace his criticism to improve her own coaching performance.

In some instances, instead of the participants restricting themselves to just one mentor, they indicated that they would use a variety of sources to seek out general advice depending on their specific needs at the time. For example, Jenny (community level) pointed out that she used a number of people to gain feedback on certain issues as a way of clarifying her way of thinking before putting it into action. Jenny explained how she had, "a few people as sounding boards" to clarify or reinforce her own line of thinking. Jenny explained that she often sought out different people to discuss various issues to make sure that "what I'm saying or what I'm intending to do was on the right track." She explained that her purpose for having a number of mentors was to seek a variety of opinions as a strategy to increase her confidence in making decisions: "I'm just getting it [Jenny's ideas] out there rather than just thinking it in my head and wondering whether I'm doing the right thing." This is yet another example of the importance of social interaction for all the participants' careers and styles of leadership.

7.3 Women's networks

Most of the participants acknowledged that they used some form of networking (formal or informal) as a support group to develop their own leadership. In a majority of cases, due to the participant's perceived isolation in their leadership roles, they identified that they needed to have the opportunity to share and discuss their experiences with other like-minded people in similar circumstances: "Networking and sharing your experiences and knowing that other people are faced with exactly the same things and you're not the only one" (Robyn, elite level). The participants recognised the value of networking and the sharing of experiences as a tool to learn and develop their own leadership. As Stacy (elite level) explained:

> Definitely having opportunities to sit around and casually talk about how they coped with a situation and sharing that experience by saying, 'I was confronted with this particular aggression or this bias or this inappropriate behaviour and this is how I dealt with it' has been a great a help in learning how to deal with different situations. (Stacy, elite level)

In Karen's (community level) example, she used both her professional colleagues and her network of family and friends to "bounce" ideas off them to gain their opinion on what steps she should take to develop her career. In selecting the "right" people to speak with,

Karen emphasised that she only spoke to people that she "trusted and appreciated" and people who she admired and who had proven they were genuine and sincere in helping her.

A number of the participants indicated that they had a network of female friends away from their sporting organisation from whom they regularly sought advice. For example, Claire (elite level) relied on a group of female friends that she had known for over 20 years noting that she would regularly meet and discuss ideas with them and often sought their advice. She explained that it was important for her to have trust in her friends, to the point that she felt comfortable enough to discuss challenging issues without feeling threatened. Claire also expressed that it was important for them to have an understanding of the industry and associated challenges facing women working within it: "Some of them [Claire's female network] I have met through work, so when I talk about work they understand that side of things, and others I have met through sport, so they know that side of things which is important."

In a similar example, when faced with an extremely challenging situation that required legal advice, Stacy (elite level) sought advice from her close group of female friends to gain their opinion on her issue because she trusted them. Stacy also explained that she often consulted with her friends to keep her positive when she felt vulnerable or lacked confidence in her role. Stacy explained that she valued her "close" friends' views and position on issues and was comfortable in seeking their advice on how she should deal with them. In this particular situation, Stacy expressed that she had used this opportunity to discuss her own thoughts on how she should approach the issue. Stacy added, by seeking advice from her network of female friends, this provided her with an avenue to reinforce her own thinking on the issue and helped to increase her confidence to take appropriate action: "They helped me to remain positive by saying to me, 'Yes, look you are okay and you can keep doing this'" (Stacy, elite level).

In two particular cases, due to the lack of networking opportunities available to Alicia (elite level) and Heather (community level), they were instrumental in setting up their own women's network as a support group for themselves and other women. In Alicia's case, she originally started having lunches with three or four other women as a support group for each other as she felt "quite isolated" in her role as senior manager in a male dominated sport. Alicia explained that the group of four women quickly grew to 20 women and has

continued to grow each year. The group of women get together for lunch three or four times a year to catch up with each other. Alicia explained, although there was no structured format for the lunches, she felt they were a great benefit to her and other women by having the opportunity to share experiences and ideas. Alicia highlighted one of the other benefits of meeting together also helped her to put things into perspective: "When you hear of some of the things the other women are going through, it makes me realise that I haven't had such a bad day after all. It's just so good to be there to support each other." In Heather's example, she was instrumental in forming a women's networking group in her workplace by initiating a staff survey. The feedback from the survey was so overwhelming that she had full support from her senior executive managers to form the networking group. Heather explained that her decision to set up a women's network group was driven by her motivation to help her and other women feel better in the organisation and to have "the opportunity to chat about issues that were happening and how they should handle them."

7.4 Recognition, respect, and positive feedback

Being recognised and respected by others and the confidence this gave the participants was nominated by most of them as being an important, positive developmental influence on their current leadership roles. They identified how this recognition increased their self-confidence in their leadership ability and motivated them. For example, Robyn (elite level) spoke about the impact her Chief Executive Officer (in Robyn's professional employment) had on her leadership role in sport. She highlighted the importance of having an extremely supportive CEO with her professional employment and his promotion of her voluntary role in sport to others gave her added confidence and self-belief in her own ability: "He [Robyn's boss] is just so proud that I am President of my sporting organisation and every time he meets clients he always adds that in. It just gives me confidence in what I do."

From a different perspective, Sally (community level) reflected on how recognition and acknowledgement of her skills by her colleagues helped her to become more aware of her strengths and abilities as leader. Sally identified how this had given her increased self-belief in her abilities as a leader and said it had increased her confidence to take on a higher, and more demanding, leadership role within her organisation. The influence of receiving positive feedback from other female committee members on her performance as a committee member made a significant contribution toward her confidence and self-esteem

in the workplace: "The other women on the committee gave me fantastic feedback and their acknowledgment of my skills that I had never actually considered before, gave me a lot of confidence." After the first year on the committee, Sally said that one of the female committee members sent her a card telling her that she saw her as a "natural team leader", suggesting that this made a contribution toward her having the confidence and self-belief in her ability required to take on the role as president of the organisation soon after receiving the card. Not only did receiving feedback give confidence but also provided her with a platform to learn a lot about herself as a person and a leader and was seen by her as being valuable in helping her to recognise her own strengths. She felt this had been a critical factor contributing to her preparedness to take on the president's role.

The social dynamics of the workplace and the social interaction in particular played a part in the participants recognising their abilities, improving their self-confidence that, in turn motivated them to set aspirational goals and achieve them. Most of the participants also felt that being recognised for their leadership performance reinforced their belief in their ability to succeed in their roles and saw this as a form of encouragement to keep things that you do, it encourages me to do more. As well it has given me the confidence to do things that I normally wouldn't have the confidence to do."

7.5 Experiences of professional development/education

There was a general consensus among most of the participants interviewed that the benefits associated with completing professional development or formal education helped to develop their skill level to perform their tasks in their leadership role. For example, Alicia (elite level) spoke about her thoughts of the impact of completing a number of short courses on her leadership: "It has actually given me an insight into some of the personalities that I was working with and it has made me understand them better and also to understand myself better." From Stacy's (elite level) perspective, completing a new director's course was: "…magnificent and really beneficial and very helpful from a professional point of view." Stacy went on to explain how she thought the course had improved her leadership skills:

> I'm now managing staff and it's being able to learn the differences in going
> from being a peer, to then managing those peers and how you deal with
> conflict, knowing people are different in their behaviour and attitudes
> towards certain things, and recognising that they have a different working

system. It's being able to embrace all the different personalities rather than just be confined to those that relate mostly to yourself. (Stacy, elite level)

The majority of participants at the community level, held the perception that by continually keeping themselves up-to-date with new knowledge, they increased their confidence to lead more effectively. As Karen (community level) explained her perspective on the impact of completing professional development on her leadership: "I have gained more confidence in what I do which has helped me to be a better leader…I have become more reassured and confident." In Mary's (community level) situation, she acknowledged that completing tertiary education (undergraduate and Master degree) had grown her confidence and had reinforced that she did know what she was talking about and provided her with a "lot better perspective of things."

Of interest, in addition to increasing their confidence, two of the participants from the community level also acknowledged that completing a formal course of education had increased their level of motivation and eagerness for more knowledge. Vicki (community level) explained when she first started coaching; she had a thirst for knowledge: "Initially, I just wanted to learn more and question my own coaches." As her knowledge grew, Vicki recognised how she needed to gain further qualifications in order to be considered for higher coaching roles: "I just keep educating myself, moving up and getting more knowledge and all that kind of stuff and looking for opportunities." In Jenny's (community level) case, she spoke about how she would "tune out" while she was completing her Higher School Certificate in her last year of secondary school because she did not find the subjects at all interesting. Now that she is undertaking tertiary education as a mature-age student, she acknowledged that it has given her a new level of motivation to learn more. As Jenny explained:

> Now that I'm going to Uni, I'm really interested in this field and it's an area
> that I'm continually wanting to know more and more about it, like delve
> into things and I might end up doing another subject because I am just
> researching continuously…I find it very motivating. (Jenny, community
> level)

Furthermore, the majority of participants operating at the community level expressed that the new knowledge gained from the completion of short courses had broadened their

knowledge to engage in dialogue on a number of issues with other people in order to influence change. For example, from Heather's (community level) perspective, she considered it was important for her to be educated on current trends and practices when required to negotiate on issues impacting on the organisation or staff she was representing. Heather conceded that being knowledgeable assisted her to be more influential in creating change when going into a meeting. As she explained: "You have to be one hundred percent prepared to go in and know what you are talking about, be confident about it, and then back it up when questioned."

From a strategic point of view, the majority of participants operating at the elite level acknowledged their rationale for undertaking formal modes of education was to ensure that they put themselves in the best possible position to be considered for appointment in higher level leadership roles when the opportunity presented itself. For example, Amanda (elite level) spoke about her frustration at being overlooked for coaching positions due to her perception that "Guys were asked to coach because they were mates of the person involved in selecting." In response to her frustration, Amanda explained her reasoning for persevering with gaining higher qualifications despite being overlooked for various coaching positions:

> I wanted to make sure I had the qualifications, I anticipated barriers and I thought well if I have got the highest qualifications that I can get what's on offer in terms of when they run courses, they[selectors] can't query that. I've just tried to pre-empt things in that regard…it was more or less a strategy thing that I was doing. (Amanda, elite level)

Two of the participants operating at the elite level identified how they needed to obtain more qualifications as a way of gaining credibility and respect within their organisation as another indicator of their desire to prove themselves within a male dominated workplace and field. For example, in Claire's (elite level) quest to change practices within her organisation she held a perception that before her staff would listen to her ideas and adopt her proposed changes, she had to attain a higher level of coaching qualifications than most of her male colleagues/peers had obtained. Similar to Claire, Jessica (elite level) acknowledged that, "to a certain extent" she needed to gain further qualification to earn the respect of others and grow her credibility in her leadership role. However, Jessica preferred to think that attaining new knowledge on a regular basis was more about assisting

her to perform her role better. She explained why: "By being prepared and having the knowledge, the more you are asked to do, the more you are able to handle all sorts of situations."

7.6 Role models

Some of the participants spoke about the positive influence of role models in their adulthood (other than their parents or extended family members) on the development of their own leadership. They said that they had actively chosen role models, usually selecting people in positions higher than themselves and then observing their style of leadership as a learning tool to model their own leadership on. For example, Claire (elite level) highlighted the importance of observing what she regarded as "extremely capable managers and leaders" in her workplace. By observing their actions and behaviours, Claire explained the influence her role models had on her own practice of leadership; "I have enjoyed watching the way they lead a meeting, the way they have been able to focus on the core issues, and their method of getting everybody back on track. They're the ones I try to emulate."

In Stacy's (elite level) example, despite the challenges of having so few women in leadership roles, she spoke about the importance of having female role models to learn from as a "real key" to developing her own leadership. She provided an insight into the type of qualities she looked for when selecting a woman to model her own actions and behaviour on. For Stacy, they needed to have, "a vibrancy and presence about them, and have the ability to hold an audience. I select females who I respect and are very intelligent and know their information, are strategic thinkers, and are really good operators."

Some of the participants' observations of other people involved them critically analysing others' actions as part of their own learning process, as Sally (community level) explained: "When I first started out, I used other coaches as my role models. I would ask myself, 'What did they just do and how did they do that?'." Robyn (elite level), for example, highlighted how she often critically observed other's actions and behaviours, and then she would put herself into their situation to consider how she would react or respond: "I actually look at how other people lead and I tend to pick the things I like or don't like about them and then I ask myself, 'how I would do things differently if I was in their situation?'."

7.7 Partner's influence

A number of the participants who were in a relationship acknowledged the support provided by their partner as an important factor in the development of their leadership. This generally tended to be in terms of their help in providing time for the participants and in respecting their commitment and the time it took. Commonly, the participants spoke about their partner's willingness to support their sporting careers without placing restrictions on them and allowing them to fulfil their commitments. As Vicki (community level) highlighted: "Well I'm lucky that I have got a husband that is very supportive. He has always allowed me my freedom…not that a man should hold you back, but I have always been allowed to do what I want to do."

The majority of participants in a relationship also indicated the level of support provided by their partners extended to providing assistance in the day-to-day home duties. For example, Helen (elite level) explained when talking about the role her partner played in allowing her to develop her leadership: "There are only so many hours in the day, so in terms of providing support in cooking, cleaning and doing all that sort of stuff my husband has been terrific in that area." Helen valued her partner's "unconditional" support and his preparedness to support her in any way he could to help her achieve her goal to coach at an elite level: "He's [Helen's husband] very supportive of allowing me to do the things I need to do for my sport. If I have to travel to gain a qualification or go away with the team, he has always been supportive of it whole-heartedly."

For those participants who had family commitments, they expressed that it was critical for them to gain the full support and backing from both their partner and children. For example, Jessica (elite level) spoke about the importance of having her family's (husband and two daughters) full support before committing to take on a national level sport leadership role. Jessica explained that it was important to her that her family were happy and prepared to make the necessary sacrifices in order for her to pursue her leadership role: "I had to ask my family whether they were prepared to let me do it [national sport leadership role], because it would mean a big commitment over a two-year period and it would impact upon them big time." Jessica reflected on the level of apprehension she felt during that time with asking her husband for his support, she explained: "My husband has never stood in my way, but I know it has been hard on him." Despite feeling a degree of guilt with putting herself before her husband and family, Jessica emphasised that it was imperative for her to

have the full support of her children before she would accept the commitment to take on the leadership role: "My daughters were also right behind me, they said, 'Mum you do it', if they had said 'no', I probably wouldn't have gone ahead with it because it wouldn't have been fair on everyone."

7.8 Chapter discussion

From a social constructivist perspective, conceiving the development of leaders as a process of learning highlights the social influence on it and the pivotal importance of social interaction that is shaped by the specific context or community. The importance of social interaction and language and of socio-cultural context in "learning" to be an effective leader and in the development of particular approaches to leadership formed a prominent theme throughout this chapter. It highlights how the participants' leadership learning and development were closely bound to their relationships with others and their social environment (Stead & Elliott, 2009). As a process of learning, whether in a formal and informal sense, it was influenced by social interaction with others to serve as a key catalyst for heightening levels of the participants' leader self-awareness (Gardner et al., 2005). This increased the participants' confidence to make meaning of their leadership and construct their own leader identity by understanding their leadership practice and values.

Being exposed to, and gaining experience in, leadership roles provided the participants with a "real" learning environment to put their theory of leadership into practice. It also provided them with an opportunity to learn by engaging within a particular context embedded within everyday social practice. This is an important factor when taking into consideration the masculine dominated culture practised in sport that privileges and celebrates masculinity while marginalising femininity (Anderson, 2009; Burgess, Edwards, & Skinner, 2003; Connell, 2005; Light, 2007). The range of social and cultural factors operating to limit women's opportunities in a masculine-dominated field operate at a range of levels beyond women being seen by others as an "unnatural" inhabitant of the leadership role (Light, 2007). It is important for women to learn about ways they can work within such a culture in order to be accepted as leaders by others (Stead & Elliott, 2009).

The opportunity to experience leadership in challenging situations combined with the opportunity to self-reflect on their experience contributed to participants' leader self-

awareness and heightened self-belief in their ability to lead. This resonates with Popper's (2005) conceptual framework on leadership development. Popper argued that leaders' development was a continuous process involving experiential learning that led to more complex thinking and greater understanding of the leader's judgement of others, further developing their self-confidence and self-efficacy. Popper's conceptual leadership development framework also included vicarious learning based on observation of others' behaviour as an important learning process as it expanded the opportunities for learning from a broad range of behaviours. This was also the case for the participants of this study, where they identified that the observation of others in leadership roles was perceived as an important learning process.

Informal mentor relationships were highlighted by participants as an important contributing factor in their leadership development in adulthood. For this study, it was common for participants to have a male mentor over the age of 55 where the relationship was built on mutual trust and respect developed over time. The social nature of the participants' relationship with their mentor provided them with opportunities to reflect and discuss their leadership experiences; in return, their mentor provided them with guidance, encouragement, and reassurance in the participants' leadership practice. This helped to define not only the participants' eligibility for leadership but also helped them to understand their self-awareness and confidence to practice leadership in a male dominated culture. Sinclair (1998) also found the support of older male managers as mentors for women in their formative stages of their careers as a consistent theme in her study of women leaders in the corporate setting. Similar to the findings of this study, the men provided women with advice and encouragement. Sinclair also found that women needed the catalyst of men's encouragement and recognition of their ability before they felt eligible and worthy to define themselves as a leader.

Stead and Elliot (2009) found the development of social networks and alliances played on important role for women in leadership positions. Networks played a vital role in helping women to deal with feelings of isolation. This included the isolation of being the only female in their position and of working in a field where they felt undervalued and/or ignored. Due to the absence of women's networks in the workplace, many of the women relied on personal networks including family and friends as "critical friends" they could turn to for support. This was also the case for the participants of this study where formal

and informal (social) networks were identified as being important to the participants' leadership development. They used their networks as support groups to share and discuss experiences, and to seek guidance on challenging situations. The social nature of the interaction with other people provided the participants with the opportunity to reflect on and analyse their own leadership experiences and practices in what they considered a "safe" environment, eliminating their fear of retribution for exposing their weaknesses. Once again, the process of self-awareness and self-reflection that includes clarity and certainty of self-knowledge are consistent with authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) and are antecedents to authentic leadership development (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

The final key theme to emerge as influential for participants' leadership development in adulthood was the importance of undertaking formal development interventions such as professional development or education. Being exposed to new knowledge in a formal sense was perceived by participants as critical to develop their skill level base to perform. In particular, at the community level, new knowledge increased participants' confidence to lead effectively, while at the elite level it increased participants' credibility and respect to be considered for higher level leadership roles. In contrast to these findings, Kempster (2006) found formal development intervention had relatively low levels of influence on developing leaders. However, it should be noted that Kempster's study was based on interviewing men. This may suggest that women may learn differently or have a more pressing need to gain new knowledge. This could be attributed to a perceived lack of confidence in their ability or a need to gain credibility and respect by others to become eligible to lead. Conversely, Day's (2001) leadership development model focused upon building the "human capital" capacity of an individual's knowledge and skills associated with formal leadership roles as a crucial investment in building the intrapersonal competence of an individual to lead.

8. Responses to the WISL program

This chapter examines the participants' experiences of, and responses to, the Women in Sport Leadership (WISL) program delivered by the Victorian Government. By bringing together a cohort of recognised women leaders in the sport sector, the WISL program provided an excellent opportunity to inquire into the participants' approaches to leadership and how they were developed via their responses to the WISL program. Specifically, I wanted to look into how the program made the participants' feel and what it meant to them in regard to their own development as leaders over time. The participants' responses to and reflections upon the WISL program provide valuable insights into their practice, values, and beliefs about sport leadership and the challenges that they have faced and continue to face in developing as sport leaders.

8.1 The WISL program

In 2002, the Victorian Government, sponsored through the department of Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV), launched a new program as part of their commitment to increasing the number of women in leadership and decision-making positions in the sport and recreation industry in Victoria. In March 2003, nine of the 23 participants interviewed for this study received funding through SRV's 2003 Women in Sport Leadership (WISL) program to further enhance their leadership roles within the sport and recreation community. The participants nominated for the grant under one of the two categories of (i) sports coaching and official development or (ii) sport management development. They received a grant of up to $3,000 to self-nominate professional development which generally focused on professional development in the two areas of (i) knowledge of strategies on how to deal with people and/or situations effectively, or (ii) knowledge and skills related to specific fields/areas of the individual participant's sport. The type of professional development undertaken by the 2003 participants included educational courses in management with a focus on interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and corporate governance, participation in coaching and officiating accreditation courses, attendance at sports related conferences, and/or participation in overseas study tours.

In 2004, SRV revised the format of the WISL program to include more networking opportunities for women by incorporating an educational component into the program, at

the same time maintaining women's opportunity to choose their own specific professional development. Changes to the format of the 2004 and 2005 program included the reduction of available funding for self-nominated professional development from $3,000 to $1,500 and the introduction of a two-day residential workshop into the program.

Similar to the 2003 participants, the 2004 and 2005 participants who had applied for the sport coach and official development category used the self-nominated professional development funds ($1,500) to finance: coaching or officiating accreditation courses ranging from level 1 to level 3; to attend coaching conferences; and/or attend coaching experiences interstate or overseas. The 2004 and 2005 participants, who applied under the sport management development category, used the $1,500 to fund professional development courses to improve certain aspects to their leadership roles.

The introduction of the two-day residential workshop into the WISL program in 2004 (*n=10 participants*) and 2005 (*n=4 participants*) was designed to provide opportunities for women to share, present, discuss, and analyse challenges impacting on their leadership. As an outcome of the workshop, the women were encouraged to commit to further develop their leadership practices. The workshop attempted to create an environment that demanded a degree of trust among the women relating their experiences and being open to questioning from other workshop participants and facilitators. Opportunities for the women to network with other attendees throughout the two days were factored into the format of the workshop. The workshop also covered a range of leadership and development topics including: leadership styles, conflict resolution, managing diversity, and goal setting and career planning.

The following two sections examine the influence that the participants' felt their involvement in the WISL program had on their leadership development. The first section focuses on the period immediately following completion of the program, with the second section focusing on how they saw its influence on their leadership development 18 months after completing the program.

8.2 Immediate responses to the WISL program

The following section examines the participants' immediate responses to their involvement in the WISL program and how they felt it had impacted on their development as a leader at the time of completing the program. The section begins with the participants' emotional responses to being accepted into the program and examines what that meant to them in regard to their leadership. It then examines the participants' experiences of the professional development and workshop components of the WISL program.

8.2.1 *Overall responses: The importance of affective and emotional responses*

The majority of participants interviewed felt their participation in the WISL program had acted as a catalyst for developing their skills to improve their leadership: "Well the program definitely gave me an opportunity at the time to gain the skills that I needed to pursue my leadership role and where I wanted to go" (Donna, elite level). Tara (elite level) recognised the importance of the need to continually develop her skills and knowledge to evolve in her role as a leader. She felt that the program had allowed her to do that: "As a leader you are always evolving into a person and adding skills and experience into your repertoire, the program allowed me to be able to do things that I really wouldn't have been able to do otherwise."

The majority of participants also made reference to the importance of the WISL program providing financial support to complete their chosen professional development that otherwise they would not have completed. When they were asked whether they would have still completed their professional development if they had not received the grant, most of them said they wouldn't have. Angela (community level) said that she "…couldn't afford to…simple as that!" and Amanda (elite level) explained how, "It was something that I had always wanted to do but I couldn't afford it, so it made it accessible which was really good. To me, these grants are things that help pipe dreams come true." In Donna's case, having to raise $2000 to complete a course that she had identified as being important to the development of her leadership had become a barrier in her mind to furthering her leadership and receiving the WISL grant provided her with the opportunity to complete her course:

> Yes, the grant definitely allowed me to take that opportunity when I needed
> it. I don't know whether I would have done it because the course did cost

more money than what I had at the time, so just having the opportunity to
get a grant to finance my professional development was fantastic. (Donna,
elite level)

A sense of self-worth and confidence to lead

All the participants in the study expressed a sense of gratitude for the grant, the program, and the professional development component of it, but there seemed to be stronger feelings about being in the program than just gratitude for the funding. There were stronger, more emotional responses that seemed to contribute toward boosting their self-worth, self-esteem, and confidence in both a professional and personal sense. For many of the participants in this study, being accepted into the WISL program was important, not only as a means of acquiring knowledge about leadership, but also as recognition of their efforts, struggles, and success as female leaders. Indeed, analysis of the interview data suggested that the contributions made by the participants' emotional and affective responses were profoundly important. It also suggested that this interacted with their new knowledge and skills to generate feelings of having improved as leaders.

Being accepted into the WISL program motivated the participants by making them feel more valued and more worthy. For example, Helen (elite level) spoke about how the grant was a "driving force" behind her commitment to see it through despite the adversity she had been experiencing at the time saying that, "actually having applied for the grant and setting up a goal and a project was a great impetus to actually make me do it." She had to deal with a number of challenges in getting her proposed project off the ground that she normally would have given up on: "I probably would have thrown up my hands and said 'I can't stand this anymore, I don't need this'." However, she felt more confident and that her ability had been recognised, motivating her to persist because, "…having had the grant actually made me stick with it and keep going."

Vicki (community level) explained how the WISL program had encouraged her to take responsibility and see through her commitment to complete the requirements of the program and how this had changed her thinking about, and attitude towards, her role as a leader:

The program enabled me to actually lift myself up and made me think, 'Yep
I am going to stand up and be counted now.' I think it just enabled me to

really say, 'This is what I want and this is where I am going.' The program has given me more confidence to go forward. (Vicki, community level)

Acceptance into the WISL program made most of the participants feel more positive about their leadership, with many saying that they saw it as being recognition of their ability. It gave them an improved sense of self-worth, and provided them with opportunities that they would not have otherwise received. Being recognised by their organisation gave them a sense of being valued: "Being part of the program gave me the acknowledgment and recognition that I was doing something that was valuable and making a contribution to my sport as a female leader in a sport that is male dominated" (Tara, elite level). The majority of participants across both community and elite levels also felt that being recognised as a leader by the State Government had increased their credibility within their own organisation: "I think they have realised that I can do it and they realise that I know what I am doing" (Kay, elite level) and "The Board felt that it was a good recognition of what I had been contributing and I felt that they respected me more now" (Jenny, community level).

A sense of relief and liberation

The participants' positive responses to being admitted into the program suggested a sense of relief about being recognised and valued after long careers characterised by struggle as women in a male-dominated field and some anxiety about their progress. For example, Stacy and Jessica experienced great joy when informed that their application to attend the WISL program had been successful. Stacy (elite level) said that, "I felt 'that's terrific', yes I was very proud to receive the award and I guess it was that recognition that I am successful in what I am doing"; with Jessica (elite level) saying that it "has certainly helped me realise that, I got into the program because I am probably worthy of being able to do something within my sport."

Participants operating at the elite level felt strongly that being accepted into the program acted as an indicator of recognition of their ability as a leader that many felt had been lacking in their careers. They said that this inspired them to push themselves even further in their leadership roles as a form of reward for long and demanding careers in sport leadership. For example, Amanda (elite level) recalled how the WISL program had provided her with "that little spark" to keep pushing herself: "Just getting that award and

recognition has kicked me off in a good way in terms of just motivating me to keep on doing what I'm currently doing and more if I can."

8.2.2 Experiences of professional development

As part of the WISL program, all of the participants were required to complete some form of professional development that related to the development of their leadership capacity. This component of the WISL program was identified by the majority of participants as being important for the development of their leadership. They felt that it provided them with the opportunity to gain valuable professional development to meet their needs specific to their own sport and circumstances, as Donna (elite level) elaborated: "The self-nominated professional development component of the program really gave me an opportunity to think well I can really set my own agenda here."

Most of the participants across both community and elite levels acknowledged that their self-nominated professional development had increased their confidence by reinforcing their level of knowledge. Kay (elite level) noted, when discussing the benefits of completing her self-nominated course, she indicated that it functioned to "cement my thinking really, to confirm that I am on the right track, and just to confirm that." For Kay and others it provided assurance that they were on the right track. In addition to reinforcing their current knowledge, the majority of participants suggested that their confidence had grown due to the new knowledge gained from completing their self-nominated professional development. For example, Karen (community level) highlighted the associated benefits gained from completing her funded course: "…from what I have learnt and then putting it into practice, I would definitely say that I have gained more confidence to be able to run the meetings and to be able to deal with different people."

Improved ability and confidence

Participants working at both elite and community levels outlined how they felt the professional development program had helped them improve their leadership skills and ability but the way in which it had boosted their self-confidence was a very strong theme across all of the participants. Four of the five participants operating at the community level and based at a regional association felt that new knowledge gained through their self-nominated professional development had enabled them to look at things from a different

perspective. For example, Sandra's attendance at an international conference had inspired her to, "start looking at things from a global perspective not just a local level." As she explained: "There are some great examples around the world and sometimes we need to look way outside our own backyard for some of the solutions to things that we are battling with at the moment." This reflected a broad sense of awakening and realisation of being part of a field well beyond their immediate work environments and their day-to-day frustrations. In Mary's case, completing her course helped her to think of things from a different angle and think about where she could make a difference: "It [the course] has given me a lot more ideas and perhaps a bit more structure to my thought processes and how to work through things and it has given me that theory aspect behind the practical side of things."

New knowledge

In most cases, participants who were in a coaching or officiating leadership role felt it was necessary to gain further qualifications or experiences to be able to either continue in their role or to be considered for higher level coaching or officiating roles. The new knowledge gained through the courses and experiences had increased their confidence in their ability to coach and it had provided them with alternative coaching techniques and strategies that improved their coaching. Most of the participants identified improvements in skills such as time management and organisational skills. Typically they felt that this was extremely important because they felt they were "time poor." They had also become more aware of the importance of communication and interpersonal skills when working with athletes and other coaches and described how this had improved their ability to deal with and resolve conflict more effectively.

The knowledge gained from attending the professional development courses for participants in a sport administration leadership role was seen by the participants as having increased their ability to perform more effectively in their leadership role. They felt the knowledge they had gained from attending the courses had increased their awareness of alternative practices and strategies to improve various aspects of their leadership. For example, Kay (elite level), who completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course to improve her knowledge on governance, felt that as a result of undertaking the course she was now leading more successfully. She explained that the knowledge gained through the course had given her the confidence and skill to, "take people strategically to

the next level, I am now able to ask better questions of my Board members to say 'think about this in a broader context." Again, the theme of an expanding awareness and sense of social connectedness formed a strong theme. Connectedness, or relatedness (Renshaw, Oldham, & Bawden, 2012), gives participation in social practices such as sport or work meaning and relevance and this seemed to be the case here.

8.2.3   *The WISL workshop: Learning through social interaction*

Most participants felt that the two-day residential workshop component of the 2004 and 2005 leadership program had boosted their confidence in becoming a better leader, as Karen explained:

> I think that coming out after the workshop that I felt more confident in my ability as a leader in that I suppose getting feedback at the session and interacting with the other people, I realised that if I have got some leadership skills, obviously I need to improve on them but it gave me a bit more confidence to go out there and take on positions or, put myself out there and not be worried about what people are thinking of me. (Karen, community level)

They also suggested how important the opportunity to participate in dialogue with other women working in leadership positions was for learning and getting a better "feel" or practical sense of their profession.

Learning and inspiration through social interaction

The confidence and learning developed through participating in the workshop seemed to arise from the opportunity for face-to-face social interaction and the sharing of ideas with like-minded women. Most of the participants who attended the two-day residential workshop noted that the social interaction and sharing of experiences inspired them. The interaction at the two-day residential workshop provided a "snapshot" of each of the participant's leadership roles and challenges they were experiencing. The extended opportunity to interact with other female leaders exposed the participants to new ideas and ways of doing things that they invariably said inspired them to try new ideas and to set more ambitious goals. As Sally (community level) explained: "I found the workshop extremely valuable, particularly the interaction with other women…it just opened my eyes that there's more out there." Sally said that this "gave me level of confidence and direction

to go for…it surprised me how much scope career wise sport offers…it has just broadened my horizons."

Many of participants who attended the two-day residential workshop found being around other women and listening to their experiences more than informative, with some describing it as being liberating. Through these experiences they realised that they were not on their own but were, instead, connected to many other women in the field. In particular, they reported feeling very happy to find that other women were facing similar issues and challenges working in a male dominated environment. As Jenny (Community level) elaborated: "I felt it was also good to have the women from different backgrounds to feel like you're not on your own, someone else is doing something similar or they have had similar sorts of thing." In Helen's (elite level) case, she said that it was "refreshing" to know that she was not alone and that other women had, "the same complaints and the same issues with their management and they have the same problems with people in their sport." When asked what impact she thought this had had on the development of her leadership, she said that:

> Well I think it makes you a bit more positive like 'OK everyone else has got similar issues, so if I just keep chipping away at some of them'…it makes you not lose heart, it helps you with the idea that maybe you can do this and maybe you can move forward as a sport. (Helen, elite level)

In respect to the educational sessions held during the two-day residential workshop on various aspects of leadership, the majority of participants who attended the workshop acknowledged how the sessions either re-affirmed or provided them with new knowledge on how to approach their leadership. As Sally (community level) explained: "It's [workshop sessions] given me some strategies basically. When I'm now approaching something in my leadership with the coaching and within committees and that type of thing, it's given me strategies of how to look at it." In another example, Alicia (elite level) found the sessions "really worthwhile, they were stimulating and just having the opportunity to just think about new ideas and thoughts that we discussed." Furthermore, Alicia acknowledged that a key benefit of the sessions to her leadership was that they "…reaffirmed a lot of the way that I tackle things and think about things." She then went on to explain: "Often you're sort of just a little unsure or unconfident about how you might

tackle situations but the discussions through the day showed me that I'm on the right track with a lot of things that I do."

Getting feedback on their leadership style was highly valued by the majority of participants operating at the community level as another means of affirming their approaches. For example, Mary (community level) spoke about one particular session focusing on a group team building exercise to solve a problem in which feedback was given by an observer on the different leadership styles displayed by the women throughout the exercise. Mary pointed out that it was the first time she had received feedback about her leadership style and she found the feedback extremely beneficial. As Mary explained:

> There have been times when I have thought, 'What style of leader are you?' and have thought about ways that I might like to change. By actually getting direct feedback on myself personally was really beneficial as it gave me a better understanding of myself as a leader. (Mary, community level)

Career planning and goal setting

The final session of the workshop was dedicated to career planning and goal setting and was identified by most participants as being very beneficial for their leadership development. Most of the participants were already aware of the goal setting process and some had regularly used it with their athletes and staff that they had managed but when it came to themselves they appeared to take an ad hoc approach to formally documenting their own career plans and goal setting. However, more than half the participants indicated that they already had a "rough" idea in their head what they wanted to achieve; "I suppose I've planned before but just in my head or in a dot-point fashion" (Sarah, elite level). As was the case with many of the participants, Sarah benefited from taking time out during the workshop to reflect on her current situation, and then identify areas of priority in her personal life and professional career as a "reflective practitioner" (Schön, 1983). This provided her with an opportunity to develop a balanced and realistic plan: "It helped me to see my path a bit clearer, how I can deal with things and helped me deal with things along the way in terms of making a plan."

Most of the participants said that they benefited from learning about effective goal setting to develop a career plan and that this motivated them by helping them feel they were "on track" after leaving the workshop. As Donna (elite level) explained:

> The career planning session gave me motivation to continue to set goals for myself and always assess those goals and always have a focus in my life to get the best out of myself personally and professionally. I guess that session helped me to understand how important it is to have your own professional and personal goals. (Donna, elite level)

The chance to get together with like-minded female leaders in sport, the stimulation of interaction, being exposed to new ideas and reflection upon their own styles of leadership promoted something of a "high" for the participants in the study and probably contributed to the positive assessments of the WISL program. Eighteen months later a second round of interviews was conducted to allow both for a more objective assessment and one that involved reflection upon how they felt it had actually affected their practice.

8.3 Career change and the long-term influence of the WISL program

This section tracks the development of the participants' careers, reflections, and views on the influence that the WISL program had on their practices as sport leaders over the 18-month period following their participation in the program. It begins by outlining the situations that the participants found themselves in 18 months after the program and identifies factors that shaped these developments. It then examines the participants' views on the contributions the WISL program made toward their development as sport leaders.

8.3.1 The participants' careers and the factors influencing them

Eighteen months after the 23 participants had completed the WISL program, only four (29%) of the 14 participants at the elite level had progressed to higher level leadership roles as compared to five (55%) of the nine participants at the community level. What was more startling was that seven (50%) of the participants at the elite level as compared with only two (22%) participants from the community level, had stepped down from their pre-grant leadership role due to their personal circumstances related to different stages of life phases. While it is difficult to analyse the long-term impact of the leadership development intervention (WISL program) on these participants due to them stepping down from their leadership role within 18 months of completing the WISL program, it does provide insight into the challenges women face in regards to their leadership development. In doing so it

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reminds us of the powerful influence of socio-cultural context upon the development of women's careers as sport leaders and how they cannot usefully be separated. However, in saying this, the WISL program had influenced the participants' thinking in regards to setting realistic goals and taking a long-term view in respect to planning their careers despite stepping down from their leadership roles.

The different stages of life phases the participants spoke about included: having their first child, dealing with the needs of young children to late adolescence, and looking after the needs of elderly parents. Across these different phases, some of the participants spoke about their preparedness to step down from their leadership role temporarily in order to meet the needs of their family. They appeared to be content with their decision to have a break as they were not prepared to compromise or put themselves first before the needs of their family.

In most cases these participants were realistic about, and accepting of, the impact on their leadership in altering their leadership aspirations and choosing to take a strategic approach to ensure that when their situation had changed they were able to re-establish their leadership role without too much disruption. During their hiatus from their leadership role, most of these participants took the opportunity to develop different aspects of their leadership. For example, in most cases they did not entirely walk away from being involved in their sport but took on lower level leadership roles with less responsibility and demands on their time to suit their changed circumstances. The benefits identified by the participants for taking this approach were, first that it allowed them time to put in place adjustments to their goals and plans in order to accommodate their changed lifestyle. Second, they were able to revitalise their passion and energy levels that had been worn down from the demanding pressure they were under in their previous leadership roles, and third, they were able to keep themselves in touch with the industry.

For example, Mary (community level) made the decision, "to have a bit of a break and take a step backwards" from her role as president because she wanted to spend more time supporting her daughter who was starting her first year at the club. Mary explained that her eight year old daughter had shown a keen interest in the sport and she "just wanted to have that break to spend more time with her" in her first year in the sport. When asked whether she thought taking a break had hindered her development as a leader, Mary responded, "I

think it has definitely helped me. It has not only renewed my energy, it has given me a better perspective on things and has given me time out to get my life in balance."

In Jessica's (elite level) case, while she had made a decision to step back from her national coaching commitments for family reasons, she never lost sight of her goal to become a coach at international level. Instead, Jessica became strategic in what she could realistically be involved in while she supported her daughter's sporting achievements. Jessica felt that the WISL program had definitely changed her mind set and thinking in regards to putting plans into place to develop aspects of coaching while on her break from national coaching commitments. Jessica explained that, "from a family point of view I pulled back and had a year with a bit of consolidation. I basically decided that I would be much better as a parent watching her play for the side."

In the first year of Jessica's "time-off" to support her daughter in her sport, she became involved in developing coaches within her local club. She ran coaching clinics at schools on a voluntary basis and worked with other coaches to help develop their skills to run clinics. In her second year, Jessica took on the role as head coach of the U/21's state team. This had been the first time she had been involved with coaching with this age group at state level. Her decision to take this role on was greatly influenced by the level of commitment required which she stated was far less than coaching at a national level. She also recognised that the experience may enhance her chances further of being selected for an international coaching position in the future. As Jessica explained, coaching the U/21s was a better option for her at the time because, "it had an earlier finish. It also gave me that next level of experience to put on the resume come September when I intend putting my hand up for the next level of international coaching."

In Heather's (community level) example, she spoke about the impact on her leadership role with the birth of her first child. One area that Heather identified that she needed to change significantly was her ability to prioritise with managing her time. As she elaborated, before the birth of her first child she would "have stayed at work until I had finished something, it wouldn't have mattered if I had worked 12 days in a row or I worked on the weekend." Initially she felt confronted with the prospect of having to be more organised with prioritising her time with having to collect her baby from childcare. She admitted that by having to prioritise her time that she could not please everyone, however, she felt that

it had made her a better person, as she explained: "Just being there for everyone and working long hours doesn't necessarily benefit everyone because if you are tired and overworked and stressed it's not a good thing for you personally."

In managing her time more efficiently, Heather acknowledged that being involved in the WISL program had helped her to recognise that she needed to employ a more effective style of management. Heather explained that she now had to make decisions about prioritising her time and learning to say "no" to taking on additional tasks. She also felt that she had become more effective with her communication with staff and had learnt to delegate tasks better. She explained that in the past she "tended to be the manager that would be hands-on but now I can't do that I have to go back to the person and follow up and make them do it." Heather acknowledged that she felt that her "management team at work has actually benefited from me being busier because they're actually empowered to do more things and not let it go because it was too difficult."

At the other end of the family spectrum, Claire (elite level) spoke about her challenges with having to take time out from her leadership role to care for her elderly parent. Claire found herself in a dilemma in having to choose between her professional employment in a senior management role or her voluntary sport leadership role due to her mother's needs. As she explained:

> Due to my increasing commitments at home, my mother is aging rapidly and becoming a bit more of a burden so for the time being I just have to manage it from home…I can't cut down any more hours at work without giving up my job, so my volunteer work has to give way, because something has to give way or I will. (Claire, elite level)

While Claire acknowledged that she was reluctant to give up her sport leadership role, she indicated she was accepting of her decision: "I have gone past being angry, it wasn't so much anger it was frustration. I think you get used to juggling so many things that when you drop the odd ball you realise that you aren't quite as successful." Before stepping down, Claire made sure the program she had invested so much of her time and effort in developing would continue: "Now that I'm pulling back from what I am doing with the program, I'm spending my time making sure that there are suitable people coming up to take over the position."

8.3.2   *Long-term influence of the WISL program on leadership development*

Follow-up interviews conducted with the participants 18 months after they had completed their involvement in the WISL program inquired into the influence of the WISL program on the development of their leadership since completing the program. The majority of participants across both community and elite levels felt that the WISL program had contributed positively to the development of their leadership over this period. Analysis of the interview data suggested themes that were very similar to their immediate responses, with most feeling that the WISL program had significantly improved their knowledge of leadership and had provided them with more self-belief and confidence.

When the participants spoke about how their increased knowledge had improved their capacity to lead over time, for most of them, this was in reference to their ability to become more strategic in their approach to their leadership. As Robyn (elite level) explained: "What it allowed me to do was succession planning within my own organisation and also strategic planning about community ideas and getting some feedback from the clubs. I'm a bit more relaxed." In some instances, the participants said that they felt they had developed a broader perspective in dealing with issues and had become more objective in their approach: "I'm probably a bit more able to stand aside or outside conflict, in some cases of conflict by seeing the bigger picture and what people's motives might be and moving in a particular direction" (Angela, community level).

For most of the participants, a combination of increased knowledge and the opportunity to put it into practice through their leadership role was perceived as being a key long-term benefit of the WISL program. The participants also felt that the new knowledge initially gained through the program, increased their self-confidence to lead: "I'm definitely a lot more confident, I have more belief in what I'm trying to say…even if it might lead to some form of confrontation or conflict" (Heather, community level). However, it was also evident that for many of the participants it took some time after completing the program for them to realise that they had the knowledge and skills to lead and to believe in themselves. For example, Stacy (elite level) confessed that she felt, "it has only been in the last year and half after completing the program that I've realised that my knowledge and skills are good." She highlighted that through the knowledge she gained through the program, she finally felt she had "a good understanding overall" and self-belief in her ability to manage an organisation effectively: "I run a better organisation. I can chair

meetings more successfully with better time frames and with clearer outcomes and so I just thought 'bugger it, you have got nothing to lose', and just back yourself" (Stacy, elite level).

8.4 Chapter discussion

The participants' responses and reflections across both community and elite levels suggested that the majority of participants felt their involvement in the WISL program had improved and "value added" to the development of their leadership in some way. The majority of participants credited the WISL program with providing them with the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills to become a more effective leader and had improved their ability and confidence to perform in their role at a higher level. Their involvement in the WISL program gave participants credibility and recognition within their organisations that resulted in them feeling valued, appreciated, and worthy of being a leader. Their acceptance into the WISL program also created a self-awareness of the participants' own role as a leader and a sense of being part of something bigger and being connected to many like-minded women in similar roles. Participation in the two-day residential workshop in particular provided an opportunity to engage in dialogue with, and thus learn from, other like-minded women faced with similar challenges.

The responses to the workshop suggested a strong and positive affective experience that was also at times deeply emotional. This suggests a sense of realisation that the participants were not isolated but were instead connected and part of something bigger than their immediate work place. More explicitly, the participants said that the program provided valuable learning due to: (1) exposure to new knowledge and skills; (2) sharing and learning from other participants; and (3) being recognised as a leader by others and feeling confident as leaders. Some participants perceived that this had directly resulted in them gaining higher leadership opportunities after completing the WISL program.

The majority of participants in this study felt that their involvement in the program had a positive influence on their overall leadership development. This supports Reichard and Avolio's (2005) review of 200 leadership intervention programs, concluding that the leadership intervention programs had worked to some degree by having a positive and moderate impact on outcomes of developing leaders. However, the self-reported influence that the WISL program had on the participants seemed to be the way in which it boosted

their confidence, self-belief, and self-awareness of their ability to lead, which is a major challenge facing many female leaders (Sinclair, 1998; Stead & Elliott, 2009). They saw it as a catalyst for increasing their knowledge and leading to a higher level of confidence. Just being offered a place in the WISL program had profound impact upon many participants' confidence and sense of self-worth as a leader that was confirmed and boosted by their participation in it and their development for an 18-month period following it. They felt valued, appreciated, and worthy of being a leader. They felt it gave them credibility resulting in a positive experience of being rewarded and acknowledged and this appeared to have changed their mindset to think they could lead.

Building women's confidence in their ability to lead is a critical factor for their success as sports leaders. For example, Wensing (2000) found that a lack of self-confidence in women in sport organisations in Australia and New Zealand constituted an internal barrier that prevented them from being promoted into leadership roles. It appears the self-nominated professional development component of the WISL program most strongly developed confidence and promoted a sense of self-worth for many participants by encouraging their ownership and by empowering them to be proactive in their development. Beyond their sense of self-worth and feelings of confidence, many participants gained confidence from having formal qualifications. West et al. (2001) also found that gaining coaching qualifications provided tangible evidence for female coaches of their ability and competence to coach.

The participants' reflections and responses to the WISL program suggest both the social nature of learning to lead and the importance of affective experience. Invariably, they saw their leadership ability and confidence as a leader as being enhanced by social interaction in the workshop and in informal discussions and sharing experiences and views with other women at the workshop. This is supported by other research such as that of Stead and Elliott (2009) who argued that the learning of leadership is socially situated. Through the sharing of experiences and interacting with other women faced with similar challenges in this study, the participants were able to learn about ways of leading that lend support to Stead and Elliot's contention about the social and situated nature of learning and leadership. As social constructivism suggests, language is central to learning (Bruner, 1996), with dialogue forming the central means through which the participants felt they learned.

The two-day residential workshop was found to have a profound impact on the participants' understanding and awareness of leadership in relation to their own practices. For many participants, sharing experiences and interacting with other like-minded women became a turning point in the process of them becoming more aware of their leadership strengths and weaknesses, and how to deal with challenging and difficult situations. It also provided the opportunity to analyse their leadership practices and to identify positive ways of influencing and moving forward with setting and committing to taking actions to improve their leadership practices beyond the workshop setting. Allowing the participants the opportunity to present their experiences and account of their leadership in the presence of others provided the participants with an opportunity to reflect on their view of leadership. More importantly, it provided the participants with an understanding and awareness of their own leadership practice. This contributed to raising the participants' self-awareness of their leadership and gave them a sense of identity as a leader. This in turn strengthened their self-confidence to prepare them to negotiate their practice of leadership in a male-dominated field such as sport that values a masculine culture and marginalises women (Anderson, 2009; Connell et al., 2009; Light, 2007). Creating self-awareness is typically considered to be a major element of the development of authentic leaders whereby heightened levels of self-awareness provide clarity and a sense of self with respect to a leader's core values, identity, emotions, motives, and goals (Gardner et al., 2005). This helps to create a positive self-concept of a leader's own values and convictions which in turn provides a meaningful system enabling action and justification (Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

In addition, the stories of the participants who stepped down from their leadership roles within 18 months of completing the WISL program provided insight into the challenges associated with family conflict in regard to women's leadership development facing women (Cinamon & Rich, 2005; Dixon and Bruening, 2007; Pfister & Radtke, 2006). Maintaining balance between family obligations and work demands became too difficult for the participants to cope with (Dixon et al., 2006; Dixon & Bruening, 2007). What was particularly interesting with the findings for this study—something that previous research on family conflict has not uncovered—was the positive thinking and attitude of the participants in regard to putting long-term plans in place to continue the development of their leadership with the intention of resuming their leadership role in the future. These findings have found that their participation in the WISL program had influenced the

participants' mind set and attitude towards taking a long-term approach to their leadership development.

9. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this final chapter is to draw together and consider the main findings presented and discussed in the previous four chapters. Conclusions and suggested answers to the central research question about the nature of leadership approaches the participants felt that they practiced, and how they learned to practise in these ways are presented. Following this, suggestions for the implications the findings of this study have for theory and practices in women's leadership, and the contribution the study makes to the field of women's leadership in sport are presented. In concluding, further research on women's leadership practice and development in sport are offered.

9.1 Context of the study

One of the features of qualitative research methodology in the field of leadership is its sensitivity to socio-cultural context and the ways in which it can situate and explain findings within particular contexts (Bryman, Stephens, & á Campo, 1996). This was evident in this study. While all of the participants in the study learned to be leaders within the same state, in the same country, the attention paid to the specifics of the individual contexts within which they learned to lead proved very useful in identifying different approaches and values that were explained through the contexts in which they grew up.

As previously noted, the adoption of continual political and educational strategies aimed at redressing gender inequity in sport in Australia for the past 30 years have failed to close the gender gap at more senior levels of leadership. Women have remained under-represented in decision-making and leadership roles in sport in Australia (Australian Sport Commission, 2011; Burton, 2014). While factors limiting women's success in engaging in leadership roles have been well documented (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007; Edwards, Skinner, & O'Keeffe, 2000; Hovden, 2000b; Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore, 2000; Pfister & Radtke, 2006, 2009; Shaw, 2006; Wensing, 2000), there has been little interest shown in women's "lived" experiences in theorising leadership, learning leadership, and leadership development (Stead & Elliott, 2009, 2012). To address this gap in the literature,

this study took a more humanistic approach that accounted for, and considered the nature of experience and the influence of context. It sought to provide more personal, nuanced, and socially situated understandings of how women practiced and learned to lead in sport.

The following two sections discuss the findings to the central research question in two parts. The way in which the participants' approach their leadership practice is presented first to provide context and understanding to the second part of the question that addresses how the participants learned to lead this way.

9.2 Participants' approach to sport leadership practice

This study identified how the participants' leadership practice featured distinctive feminine characteristics that focused on social interaction and relationship building underpinned by a strong sense of moral and ethical values. Key approaches to sport leadership practiced by all participants featured collaborative decision-making, taking a team-oriented approach, using open dialogue, valuing relationships and caring about others, and exhibiting positive modelling. The participants' emphases on collaboration, consensus, caring, and on interpersonal relationships were all consistent with what has been identified in the research literature as feminine approaches to leadership (Fine, 2009; Greenberg & Sweeney, 2005; Rosener, 1990). This finding also supported other studies of leadership practice in the corporate sector that, perhaps unsurprisingly, have found women adopted feminine characteristics that favoured more transformational and participative styles of leadership associated with being interpersonal, and task-oriented (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagle et al., 2003; Rosener, 1990; Van Engen & Willemsen, 2004).

9.2.1 *The interplay of feminine and masculine approaches to leadership practice*

While we would expect women to adopt feminine approaches to leadership (Fine, 2009; Greenberg & Sweeney, 2005; Rosener, 1990), this study found that the participants' approaches to their leadership practice were characterised by interaction between what seemed to be traditionally feminine characteristics and what can be seen as traditionally more masculine approaches (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Most significantly, the adoptions of

more masculine features of leadership were pronounced in the participants working at elite level than at community level. What seems to have been significant here, is how the context in which the more elite level participants were working in, required them at times to take a utilitarian approach because of the more competitive nature of their work and the dominance of a masculine model in sport where men are typically viewed as "natural inhabitants" of the organisational domain (Anderson, 2009; Connell, 2005; Light, 2007). The utilitarian approach taken by the participants was not always a consciously considered rational decision by them, but instead was an approach that may have been developed over long periods of time in the role, and well before beginning careers in sport leadership. Recent research into how sport coaches developed their beliefs about good coaching has highlighted how early experiences embody values and beliefs, and this seemed to be the case with the participants in this study (see, Light, Evans, Harvey, & Hassanin, 2015). As French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu suggested, such embodied knowledge and dispositions are particularly powerful because they are implicit and not subject to the scrutiny of the conscious mind (Bourdieu, 1990).

The current study found that while the participants at the elite level articulated similar "core" feminine values and beliefs to those at the community level; they drew on what could be seen as being more masculine values and practices of sport leadership to "get things done". The participants working at elite level said that they were prepared to make pragmatic decisions for the good of the organisation, despite the impact that this might have had on maintaining collaborative and harmonious relationships in the workplace. At this level, the participants were prepared to make difficult "unpopular" decisions in the face of criticism and the likelihood of upsetting staff in exercising their power to achieve the best outcomes for the organisation which could be seen to be a more masculine feature of their approach (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). The more pragmatic and distanced preparedness to override these considerations to be more "strategic" for the good of the organisation could also be seen to reflect more masculine, managerial, business values. Perhaps participants working at the elite level had appropriated some masculine values and practices and incorporated them into their existing (feminine) practices. This strategic adaptation by the participants at the elite level did not, however, appear to be consciously considered or a product of rational processing, but instead was more of a change in beliefs

and dispositions occurring at a non-conscious and embodied level over time. None of the participants in the study identified it as a consciously considered decision.

The examination of the participants' leadership experiences suggested that their styles of, and dispositions toward leadership were well developed over time before they had embarked on a career in sport leadership. The development of these differences in practice between the two groups seemed to originate from some specific differences in early experiences of growing up rather than from experiences during their careers in leadership. For example, when pressed on what factors of their lives that might have influenced their leadership practice, in particular, the participants at the elite level consistently commented on more personal experiences as children and young women growing up that involved interaction, such as the influence of their fathers and of playing highly competitive sport. These early experiences occurred within the contexts of the family, schools, and sport, with the participants' approaches to leadership more likely shaped by them well before beginning their sport leadership careers rather than during them. That is to say, that they had this mix of feminine and masculine beliefs and dispositions well before entering leadership positions and that it made a significant contribution toward beginning a career in sport leadership. The participants' dispositions were developed over time prior to entering the field of sport leadership. It is also likely that these dispositions and values actually predisposed them to moving into being successful in leadership careers.

9.2.2 *The social nature of the participants' approaches to leadership practice*

The participants' approach to their leadership in sport also highlighted the socially constructed nature of their leadership practice (Day, 2001; Fletcher; 2004; Stead & Elliot, 2009). A combination of valuing social interaction, relationship building, and ethical values were found to be key features underpinning the participants' practices of leadership. Similar to Fine's (2009) study, this study found that the participants' emphasis on collaboration and consultative approach to decision-making, the valuing of team building, and encouragement of open communication as a two-way process were all achieved through the participants creating an inclusive environment through building trusting relationships with others. This suggested that the participants valued a shared and

distributed notion of leadership by their willingness to be inclusive and collaborative, their sharing of power through a team-oriented approach, and through their commitment to the development of others. This resonates with Raelin's (2003) concept of leadership practice as models of distributed and shared leadership. Rather than an individual focus on leadership, Raelin viewed leadership as a dynamic investment in people at different times that emphasised collaboration rather than a sense of control.

Similar to Stead and Elliott's (2009) study, the findings of this study have illustrated that the participants' practice of leadership was a socially constructed process that involved a collaborative and relational process drawing from, and interacting with the participants' social context. This can be viewed as a social capital approach that was primarily concerned with the participants' relationships with other people that required social awareness and social skills such as networking, collaborative working, and negotiating (Day, 2001; Hartley & Hinksman, 2003; Stead & Elliott, 2009). The participants' social capital approach to their leadership suggested that it was shared among a team and was dependent upon dynamic interactions or exchange of influence among peers rather than an individual approach to leadership This supports Pearce and Conger's (2003) and Raelin's (2003) concept of leadership practice that is based on a relational concept rather than the leader as an individual and disconnected from their social context.

9.2.3   *Model of authentic leadership*

From a theoretical leadership perspective, the social nature of the way in which the participants approached their leadership can be explained through the model of authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). For a person to be considered an authentic leader, they need to demonstrate four related dimensions: self-awareness; balanced processing; relational transparency; and internalised moral perspective (Walumbwa et al., 2008). The current study found that the participants held a heightened self-awareness of their core values and beliefs about what they considered were characteristics of "good" leadership that were also reflected through their dispositions and practice within their own leadership. It was also found that the participants' social interaction with others was a key catalyst for heightened levels of their leader self-

awareness. For example, the participants gained an insight into the multifaceted nature of their self as a leader, including an appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses through their interaction and exposure to others. In particular, this was evident through the participants' personal and informal networks, and male mentors. This was found to have given the participants confidence to make sense of their leadership and construct their own leader identity.

In terms of balanced processing, the participants actively modelled through their perceived actions and behaviours high levels of balanced processing (Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). For example, balanced processing was achieved through the participants engaging in transparent decision-making by objectively analysing all relevant information before making a decision. This approach taken by the participants has illustrated decision-making processes and actions consonant with their internalised values. This suggested that the participants based their decisions on objective, unbiased processing without getting distracted by "ego-defence motives such as self-enhancement and self-protection" (Gardner et al., 2005, p.356). Furthermore, the participants' preparedness to present their authentic self by expressing honesty, openness, and willingness to share information with others demonstrated relational transparency. The participants' transparency to openly share information and exchange of knowledge encouraged unconditional trust with others. Relational transparency is considered a critical facet of authentic leadership in developing interpersonal cooperation and teamwork with others (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

In relation to internalised moral perspective (Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008), the participants' strong sense of core values, such as their demonstration of integrity and high ethical standards, acted as an internalised form of self-regulation in regards to the participants' actions and behaviours. According to Gardner et al., (2005), self-regulation required a leader to have self-control of internal standards that involved a balanced, unbiased process applied in making decisions, and behaving authentically in accordance with the leader's values. For this study, self-regulation was evident through the participants' approach to decision-making, and commitment to modelling positive behaviours through their actions.

9.3 How the participants' learned to be leaders in sport

Using a social constructivist framework, this study highlighted the complex and social nature of processes through which the participants' learned to be leaders. From a social constructivist perspective, learning is seen as a process of interpretation and making meaning that is social, involves verbal interaction, and is shaped by prior experience and dispositions (see Fosnot, 1996). This means that learning to lead does not arise from discrete lessons such as in formal leadership education, but instead emerges from social interaction over time and across a range of settings and socio-cultural contexts, and this was evident with the participants in this study. As this study has clearly highlighted, learning to lead for the participants began from an early age and was influenced by a range of significant people such as family and relatives. This learning was then moulded and modified through ensuing experiences within particular settings. The inquiry into how the social settings and experiences influenced leadership development recognises the role of larger factors such as gender relations, but provides a close-focus on the individual, relationships, and lived experience to bring life to the data. Recognising these factors, provided an understanding of the meanings the participants gave to their experiences associated with their leadership practice, and how they developed as leaders shaped by their histories of experiences, in particular, cultural and social contexts as a process of learning.

9.3.1 Experience, context, and the social nature of learning as an ongoing process

The findings of this study identified the interplay of the relational, situated, and social nature of learning leadership in the context of sport for the participants. An examination of the accounts of the participants' experiences of the ways they learned leadership found leadership development was embedded in a social process of learning over a lifelong journey. In particular, this study has highlighted an appreciation of the significance of relationships and social interaction in the development of the participants' leadership practice that was reflected in the importance they invariably placed on these aspects of leadership (Day, 2001; Gardner et al., 2005; Stead & Elliott, 2009). The relational nature of the participants' learning of leadership was fundamentally connected to, and drawn from

their interactions and interplay within their day-to-day social practices and life experiences from their early childhood through to their adulthood. It revealed that a range of past and present experiences and social factors influenced and shaped the participants' values and beliefs about their leadership practice. These include: setting the foundation for their core values; the development of their self-awareness and self-belief in their ability to lead; the development of their social skills and social awareness to create collaborative relationships and team building; and the development of their strength of character associated with resilience.

Both values and context emerged as powerful influences on how the participants defined, interpreted, and enacted their leadership in sport. It became evident that the participants acted out their leadership in accordance with their deep personal values and convictions of integrity and high ethical standards to build credibility, and to gain the respect and trust of others. The methodology used for this study allowed for identifying how this was rooted in early childhood experience. This study found that the foundation of the participants' core values were shaped during their childhood through their exposure to, and socialisation of authentic behaviour displayed by their parents and extended family members. As such, the way the participants' parents behaved and interacted with the participants during their childhood, appeared to influence their values and standings on integrity, fairness, empathy, and service orientation. This finding is consistent with potency of parenting as influencing work-related beliefs and aspirations (Kelloway & Barling, 2000), and in shaping the leader identity and self-regulatory capabilities in adulthood (Murphy & Johnson, 2011).

The development of social skills (building bonds, team orientation, and conflict management) and social awareness (empathy, service orientation, and political awareness) are considered essential for building relationships and developing social capital in leadership development (Day, 2001; Day & O'Connor, 2003). Experiential and situated learning during the participants' formative years and in their adulthood was found to be important in developing their social skills and social awareness. The participants' opportunities to experience leadership during their childhood (parents' active community engagement, leadership roles in school, and sport experiences) provided them with a supportive environment relatively free of inhibiting boundaries to develop their social

skills and awareness by interacting with others through these leadership experiences (Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Madsen, 2007). In adulthood, the finding suggested the participants' exposure to leadership experiences in a masculine dominated context such as sport embedded within everyday social practice, developed their political awareness to negotiate the gendered processes present in sport. It also provided them with valuable experience in developing their social skills, such as building authentic relationships with others to gain their trust, team building, and dealing with challenging and conflicting situations.

9.3.2   Feminine and masculine influences on learning leadership

The previous section on the nature of the participants' leadership practice identified the interplay between what was seen to be feminine and masculine ways of leading with the participants practicing leadership at the elite level were far more inclined to adopt what were described as masculine features of leadership in sport. Clearly gender relations exert a powerful influence on women's practice in a male dominated field (Claringbould & Knoppers, 2007, 2012; Shaw & Frisby, 2006; Stead & Elliott, 2009). As Bourdieu (2002) argued, masculine domination is so anchored in social practices and in our unconscious that we typically do not recognise it, and this is likely to be particularly marked in sport as a practice long dominated by men and male values.

While Stead and Elliott (2009) argued that gender has a significant and fundamental impact on women leaders, it has not been the main focus of this study to examine gender and power in relation to the participants' experiences of leadership practice and how they have learned to become leaders over time. Instead, this study has focused more on the nature of practice in the field and how this masculine domination has manifested in subtle and not easily identifiable ways. However, it is very clear that the influence of gender was a powerful factor shaping the contexts in which the participants grew up in and learned to lead.

The ways in which the participants in this study learned informally to negotiate social practices and processes that conformed to a masculine norm began early in their lives and

continued into their adulthood. To put this in context, the participants have been participating in a masculine dominated culture of sport from a young age and have continued their involvement in sport in a leadership role into adulthood. The often-subtle ways in which this gendered context shaped the development of the participants' leadership did not always involve explicit discrimination or having to overcome clear barriers. There is always a danger in clearly delineating feminine and masculine practices or leadership styles (Stead & Elliott, 2009), just as there is danger in accepting hegemonic forms of masculinity or femininity. As Connell (2005) warned us, there is not one way to be a man or woman with her using the terms "masculinities" and "femininities" instead. I am thus wary of referring to "feminine" and "masculine" styles of leadership or features of leadership but there are generally accepted feminine and masculine styles in the literature (Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller, 2003; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Rosener, 1990). From this perspective, the identified features of the leadership styles of the participants working at elite level could be considered to be typically masculine and which they had strategically integrated into their approaches. The participants did not however, see them as being masculine, but instead, as common sense. The inquiry into learning to lead identified the ways in which the participants seemed to have learned this approach was related to their early years and families (Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Popper, 2005).

The current study illustrated the participants' relationship to other women during their childhood and adolescent years as powerful influences on shaping the participants' feminine inclinations and dispositions toward leadership. In most cases, the participants emphasised their relationships with their mother, aunt, and grandmother provided them with the opportunity to draw on unique female experiences in their leadership. The men and boys in the lives of the participants, such as their father, brothers, and male mentors were all identified in this study as also having profound influences on shaping the participants' approaches to leadership. The participants' relationship with their father appeared to influence and shape their self-motivation and self-regularity (Day, 2001; Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). For example, most participants' cited their father as a basis of inspiration to for them to achieve, and was a "trusted" source to seek advice and to discuss issues with. This exposed the participants to valuable skills such as

managing conflict and decision-making at an early age. During the participants' childhood, the relationship with their male siblings nurtured the participants' competitiveness, determination, and resilience in later years. Furthermore, this study illustrated the role of the participants' male mentors in developing their social skills and social awareness. The male mentors' guidance and advice given to the participants on how to deal with difficult situations, not only developed their political awareness on how to negotiate within a masculine culture, it also added to the development of the participants' balanced processing (Day, 2001; Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) and career planning.

9.3.3   *Informal and formal learning*

Light et al. (2015) emphasised the powerful influence of informal learning for sport coaches and how it can overwhelm formal education programs. In this study, informal learning also appeared to be more significant than formal learning. The importance of building informal networks of collaborative relationships with others in the process of developing the participants' self-awareness, including clarity and certainty of their self in regards to their leadership practice also emerged as a finding that was consistent throughout the study. This study found that the participants had multi-layered networks consisting of overlapping personal and professional networks. In the absence of formal networks, the participants' family and friends were found to act as "critical friends" to the participants who had their general best interest at heart and provided the participants with differing levels of professional importance at different times (Stead & Elliott, 2009; Sinclair, 1998). Furthermore, the social nature of the interaction with other people within the participants' informal networks were found to provide them with the opportunity to reflect on, and analyse their own leadership experiences and practices in what they considered a "safe" environment eliminating their fear of retribution for exposing their weaknesses to others. The social process of informal networks appeared to have provided the participants with an opportunity to develop their self-knowledge and self-concept clarity about their own values and convictions. This in turn, provided participants with a "meaning system" that they then justified their actions on (Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

This study has identified the significance of the informal social nature of the development of leadership through the participants' "lived experiences" but has also recognised the importance of some formal learning. While not as dominant as informal learning, formal development interventions such as education, professional development, and the WISL program played an important role in the development of the participants' learning of leadership in adulthood. The undertaking of education or professional development exposed the participants to new knowledge that was perceived by them as critical in developing their skill base and confidence to perform in their leadership roles. The incorporation of formal development interventions that focused on building the capacity of the participants' knowledge and skills increased their intrapersonal competence to lead. This supports Day's (2001) leadership development model that identifies the importance of building the "human capital" capacity of an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with formal leadership roles.

In regard to the WISL program, this study found this form of intervention appeared to be highly influential in developing the participants' confidence and sense of self-worth as a leader. This encouraged the participants to take ownership and empowerment to be proactive in the own leadership development. In particular, the WISL two-day residential workshop was found to heighten the participants' self-awareness of their leader identity, including recognising and acknowledging their areas of strengths and weaknesses. This set the foundation for developing future career planning and the setting of goals to work towards. This was instrumental in promoting self-improvement for the participants to continue their leadership development once the WISL program had been completed. The participants' self-awareness of leader development was enhanced by social interaction through the sharing of stories and experiences about their leadership during the workshop. This highlighted how the social and cultural context of the participants' lives and experiences of leadership intersected with their learning of leadership and suggested that it was difficult to separate professional formal learning from "real" life experiences This resonates with the work of Day & O'Connor (2003), Elliott and Stead (2008), and Luthans and Avolio (2003).

9.4 Conclusion

The current study highlighted how the learning of women's approaches to sport leadership was socially constructed and deeply situated in particular socio-cultural contexts. It featured distinctive feminine characteristics that focused on social interaction and relationship building underpinned by a strong sense of moral and ethical values but also identified how women working at the elite level had appropriated more masculine features of leadership. The model of authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008) offers a useful way of conceptualising how these women approached their practice of leadership and aligns many of the findings of this study with other research in the field. In relation to how these women learned to lead this way, this study highlighted how leadership development for these women was a social process of learning over a lifelong journey that was influenced by individual, personal experience situated within larger socio-cultural contexts. In doing so, this study has illustrated the interplay of the relational, situated, and social nature of learning leadership for women in the context of sport to recognise and account for the complexity of how the women learned to lead and the importance of a range of socio-cultural contexts for this learning.

9.5 Implications for theory

The following section considers the implications of the findings of this study for theory. Specifically, it considers three aspects: 1) the implication for social constructivist epistemology being applied to researching women's leadership; 2) the implication for theorising leadership practice for women; and, 3) how these findings have contributed to the body of knowledge on leadership development theory.

This study applied a social constructivist perspective to explore and uncover the socially constructed nature of the participants' reality, and how their social experiences created and gave meaning to their practice of leadership and how they learned to lead that way. By using a social constructivist framework, this study highlights the complex and social nature of processes through which the participants practiced and learned to be leaders. A social constructivist perspective is based on the assumption that knowledge is both constructed through, and sustained by, social processes that are viewed as a setting for learning (Burr,

2003; Fosnot, 1996; Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). A social constructivist lens provided a framework to make meaning of the participants' accounts of their leadership experience from a holistic view of learning and cognition that included implicit learning and knowledge enacted out in the daily lives of these women (Light, 2008a). The social constructivist framework applied to researching women's leadership was an effective and appropriate theoretical approach to use for the examination of the socially constructed nature of leadership practice and leadership development. This supports a shift from empirical research that has predominately focused on an individualistic understanding of leadership (Stead & Elliott, 2009) towards leadership research that sheds light on the social processes which shape leadership in the specific contexts around women's leadership in sport.

The knowledge gained through this study has provided further insight into the theory of leadership practice, specifically in relation to the style of leadership adopted by women in the sport environment. By analysing women leaders' accounts of their experiences, it has drawn attention to the social nature and relational aspects of leadership practice and how it can be influenced by context and specific situations. Viewing leadership as a socially constructed process has illustrated how leadership practice is embedded in, and reproduced through social interaction, practices, and institutionalised organisational cultures (Day, 2001; Fletcher, 2004; Stead & Elliott, 2009, 2012). Furthermore, the social nature of the way in which the women involved in this study approached their leadership, was able to be explained through the model of authentic leadership theory (Gardner, et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Conceiving leadership practice for these women in a sport context as authentic leadership, recognised the importance of leadership being achieved through self-awareness, self-regulation, authentic actions, and relationships characterised by transparency, openness, and trust (Gardner et al., 2005). Authentic leadership theory has provided a useful framework for the explanation of how these women from a sport context, approached their leadership practice. This has helped clarify a more nuanced understanding of why leadership was practiced, performed, organised, and conceptualised in certain ways by these women.

The implications for leadership development theory highlighted by this study, is the importance of experiential and situated learning that occurs during the formative years through to adulthood in terms of developing social skills and social awareness. By examining a group of women's accounts of their experiences of learning how to become leaders, this study has contributed to the relatively small body of literature concerned with the examination of leadership learning for women (Stead & Elliott, 2009, 2012). Illustrated by the situated and social nature of learning leadership for the women in this study, it has suggested that the development of leadership can be seen as a continual social process of learning over a lifetime. This study has also drawn attention to the different sets of relationships that women draw on, to develop their leadership practice from a young age through to their adulthood. This has highlighted the multidimensional role of relational dynamics in the construction and development of leadership for women in sport context.

9.6 Implications for practice

The current study has brought to light the complexity and multifaceted nature of leadership practice and development for this group of women. It has illustrated, that for these women their practice of leadership involved a collaborative and relational process drawing from, and interacting with their socio-cultural and political contexts, and that their leadership development was embedded in a social process of informal and formal situated learning over a lifelong journey. These findings have implications for the way in which women's sport leadership practice is viewed and encourages a rethinking on how leadership is developed for women in sport in Australia. The following section suggests the implications these findings have for affirmative action and policies addressing the development of women's leadership in sport in Australia.

The stories collected from the women in this study on how they developed their style of leadership over time, suggested that rather than their leadership being developed through processes of adapting to the constraints of masculine dominance during their careers in sport, their leadership was grounded in early experiences of childhood, well before moving into their sport leadership roles. This study has also provided insight into the role parents, family, and school teachers' play in developing leadership capacity in young girls. This

encourages consideration of the importance of early experiences in, and around sport for opening up opportunities for women to access and succeed in sport leadership. This then suggests the need for policies to create greater awareness and education for parents, family, and school teachers towards developing and building self-awareness in girls about leadership capabilities through encouragement and exposure to early sport and leadership experiences.

The current study has also drawn attention to the importance of formal development interventions in terms of developing intrapersonal and human capital. While it was found that formal learning was not as dominant as the informal learning that occurred throughout these women's lives, it did however, suggest that the incorporation of formal development interventions that focused on building the capacity of these women's knowledge and skills, increased their self-awareness and intrapersonal competence to lead (Day, 2001). Based on the findings of this study, it suggested that the process of developing human capital and social capital began early in the lives of these women and continued into their adulthood at different times at both an unconscious and conscious level.

Underpinned by the view that leadership learning is a social and situated practice (Day, 2001; Fletcher; 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Stead & Elliot, 2009), the findings of this study have drawn attention to the need for aspiring and current women in sport leadership to be aware of the social dimension of leadership practice. Women leaders need to be adept at managing interpersonal dynamics involving a collaborative and relational process drawing from, and interacting with their social context. This encourages a shift from a common focus of leadership development intervention strategies taking an individualistic approach, to incorporating the development of leadership with a focus on a social capital approach to understand the learning of leadership.

While the value of investing in formal interventions focused on a human capital approach such as building the knowledge and skills of individual leaders should not be ignored, this study has illustrated the importance of the need for intervention strategies to address the social and situated nature of leadership for women. This requires policies to pay attention to the development of social skills and awareness of the socio-cultural and political

contexts in which women practice their leadership in sport. It also requires a focus on developing the relational aspect of women's leadership aimed at developing their skills to: access networks and mentors; negotiate collaborative relationships; and an opportunity to gain insight into the ways in which relations between gender, power, and leadership unfold in their specific context.

9.7 Recommendation for future research

The knowledge gained from conducting this study contributed to the developing body of critical literature on leadership studies involving women but there is still so much more to learn and understand about the social nature of women's leadership practice and how they learn leadership to inform future affirmative action policies and leadership development interventions for women in sport. The following section provides several recommendations for further research based on the findings of this study.

The current study has highlighted how early experiences within the contexts of the family, school, and sport, all contributed to, and shaped a mix of feminine and masculine beliefs and dispositions well before the women involved in this study entered the field of sport leadership. It was likely that these dispositions and values actually predisposed the participants toward moving into being successful in leadership careers. The notion of context here requires further exploration that focuses more deliberately on how contextual elements such as gendered processes and power shapes women's beliefs and dispositions in regards to their leadership practice during their formative and adolescence years.

One of the limitations of this study, as discussed in chapter 4, was that this study only focused on individual women and their recall of their accounts of their leadership practice and their learning experiences. It did not examine the various other key informants involved in the women's leadership practices to gain another perspective of, or confirmation of the participants' interpretation of their perceived leadership practice. While the findings of this study supported the notion of viewing leadership as a socially constructed, embedded, and reproduced through social practices (Stead & Elliott, 2009), there is a need to examine the various other key informants' perceptions and expectations

of women's leadership practice and how they learn leadership to provide a more holistic view of leadership practice and development. In particular, there is a need to understand the relationships between women leaders and their social environment. This requires further analysis to understand how the relationship between socio-cultural and political contexts in which leadership practice and leadership development transpires in terms of the interplay between discourse, gender, power, and the organisation where women's leadership occurs.

Furthermore, this study has highlighted the differences in practice and beliefs between participants working at the community and elite levels, and the experiences that it seemed to arise from. This suggested the need to consider the nature of experience, and the specific social and cultural contexts within which it occurs as factors shaping women's access to, and success in sport leadership. It may also suggest that the influence of a patriarchal culture is at work well before entering the field of sport leadership (Anderson, 2009; Burgess, Edwards, & Skinner, 2003; Coakley et al., 2009; Connell, 2005; Humberstone, 2002; Light & Kirk, 2000; Whisenant, 2008; Whitson, 2002). This is another area that warrants further examination of how a patriarchal culture such as sport influences how women learn leadership at a young age, and in their adult years.

While the findings of this study suggested that the formal development intervention had positive impact on the development of leadership for the women involved in this study, there is still a need for a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of leadership development intervention strategies. In particular, there is a need for a further examination on the social nature of learning through alternate leadership development interventions. This study highlighted the significance of women sharing their accounts of their leadership experiences through the WISL two-day residential workshop. The findings illustrated the effective use of reflective processes for these women in clarifying and confirming their leader identity, and contributing to the development of their social skills and awareness to build authentic relationships. Based on this finding, there is much potential to further explore the use of reflective practices in alternate intervention strategies that focuses on the dynamics of social interactions and relationships for women embedded in their everyday practices and experiences.

9.8 Final reflections on researching women's leadership

In undertaking this study, I have been in a privileged position to appreciate how the participants in this study have developed their styles of, and approaches to leadership in sport as an ongoing process of learning. Now that this study has come to a conclusion, as a researcher it has raised more questions about women's leadership for me than it has answered. The knowledge gained from the study has provided a way of recognising and accounting for women's development of sport leadership as being complex, and tied into other developments in their lives and as being a very social process. It is my intention to continue to make sense of leadership from the position that values the social, relational, and situated nature of leadership practice and development. The value of this knowledge is that, I hope one day that it will help shape the way in which affirmative action policies and intervention strategies are used by to encourage more women to take up leadership roles in sport in Australia.

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Appendix 1 – Language statement and consent form

UNIVERSITY OF BALLARAT
PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND INFORMED CONSENT

1.   PROJECT TITLE
Women in sport leadership roles: Can women's sport leadership grants make a difference?

2.   RESEARCHERS
Assoc Prof. Leonie Otago
Assoc Prof. Peter Swan
Ms Suzanne Brown

**3.   PLAIN LANGUAGE
        STATEMENT**
The University of Ballarat, School of Human Movement and Sport Sciences has received funding from the Victorian State Government through Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) to conduct this research project. This study will explore the experiences of women in leadership roles in sport who have received funding through SRV's "Women in Sport Leadership" grant scheme in 2003, 2004, and 2005. As a recipient of this grant you are invited to participate in this study.

The purpose of this study is to understand: how women in sport conceptualise leadership; identify the style of leadership women adopt in their sporting role; understand the leadership development process for women in sport, and to explore how SRV's grant impacts on women's leadership development.

The data collection process for this study will involve conducting a maximum of three interviews over a two year period with you. The format for all of the interviews will be semi-structured (refer to the attached question guides to view the lead in questions to be asked). All of the interviews will be conducted by Sue Brown and will be recorded on a dictaphone. The recorded interviews will be transcribed and sent to you to provide you with the opportunity to make additional comments, and/or to make any omissions of the content of the interview. You will be free to decline to answer any questions you find intrusive or embarrassing, although it is not expected that the subject matter of the interviews will have such an effect. There will be an opportunity to debrief at the end of interview and you will be given the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any point. Counseling support will be available if necessary, through Jan Schlunke at the Ballarat Psychological Practice (ph: 5332 1621).

If you agree to be part of this research project, a one-on-one interview will be conducted with yourself and Sue Brown after the conclusion of the grant scheme period. The duration of the interview will not take more than 90 minutes and will be conducted at a time and venue of your choice. Approximately one year after this interview has taken place; a one-on-one phone interview will be conducted to follow up the progress of your leadership development. The duration of the interview will not take more than 30 minutes and will be conducted at a time of your choice. For the 2004 and 2005 grant recipients only, an initial one-on-one phone interview will be conducted before the conclusion of the grant scheme period. The duration of the interview will not take more than 30 minutes and will be conducted at a time of your choice. In addition to being interviewed, the content of your application for the "Women in Sport Leadership" grant scheme will also be analysed.

All data collected for this study will be kept strictly in confidence and pseudonyms will be used. It is anticipated that the data will be reported at conferences or published in academic journals.
In conjunction with completing this research project for SRV, the data collected will also be used to complete a thesis for Sue Brown's degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It is hoped the outcome of this research project will provide a meaningful contribution to knowledge associated with building the capacity of women as leaders and decision-makers in sport. It will also aim to contribute to the development of Sport and Recreation Victoria's Women in Sport Leadership Grant Scheme to maximise the best possible outcomes for the scheme.

Any questions regarding this project can be directed to the Principal Researcher Associate Professor Leonie Otago at the School of Human Movement and Sport Sciences on telephone number 5327 9680.

Should you (i.e. the participant) have any concerns about the conduct of this research project, please contact the Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Graduates Studies Office, University of Ballarat, PO Box 663, Mt Helen, VIC 3353. Telephone: (03) 5327 9765.

UNIVERSITY OF BALLARAT
INFORMED CONSENT

4. **Code number (if any) allocated to the participant** . . . .

5. **Consent (fill out below)**

I. . . . . of . . . .

. . . .
hereby consent to participate as a subject in the above research study.

The research program in which I am being asked to participate has been explained fully to me, verbally and in writing, and any matters on which I have sought information have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that: all information I provide (including questionnaires) will be treated with the strictest confidence and data will be stored separately from any listing that includes my name and address

- aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals

- I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study in which event my participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained from it will not be used.

- once information has been aggregated it is unable to be identified, and from this point it is not possible to withdraw consent to participate

SIGNATURE: . . . . **DATE**: . . . .

Appendix 2 – Proposed format of interview questions sent to participants

Lead-in Questions for Interviews 1 and 2

INTERVIEW 1. *(one-on-one, face-to-face interview conducted with all participants after the completion of their grant scheme period. Duration of interview will be approximately 90 minutes)*

1. Concept/Notion of Leadership for Women in Sport:
In your own words, describe what you think leadership is?
Describe your image is of a female leader in sport
What do you think constitutes effective leadership for women in sport?
Do you think women have a different style of leadership to men?
What are the strategies used by women to develop and promote their leadership?
Why do you think so few women hold leadership positions in sport?

2. Current Experiences of Leadership
Describe your own style of leadership
What are the key success factors that inspired/motivated you to become a leader in sport?

What are some of the barriers that you may have encountered that have inhibited your leadership development?
What factors have attracted/retained you to pursue your sport leadership position?

3. Early Experiences of Leadership
In order to understand what has shaped your notion of leadership, I would like to explore with you about significant influences (these may include barriers/challenges/facilitators) that you think have contributed to your leadership. I would like to hear about your recollection and reconstructions of the following to explore those significant influences to your own leadership development:
• childhood
• school years
• adolescence
• family environment
• early sport leadership experiences

4. Leadership development
Do you have any future aspirations and goals in regards to your leadership?
If so, how do you think you will achieve this?
Do you use any formal planning process for the development of your leadership?
Do receive any level of support from your family and friends to pursue your leadership career?

5. SRV's Women in Sport Grant Scheme
Has the grant allowed you to achieve your initial aims/objectives?
What has the grant meant to you?
How has the grant helped you in your leadership development?
What do think will be long-term benefits for yourself and your organisation?
Would you have still have participated in these activities if you hadn't received the grant?

INTERVIEW 2. *(one-on-one telephone interview conducted approximately one year after the above interview. Duration of interview will be approximately 30 minutes.)*

Since our last interview, how has your leadership development progressed?
Have your experienced any positive aspects that have contributed to your leadership development?

Have your experienced any barriers in the last 12 months that has inhibited your leadership development?

Can you describe your style of leadership

Now that 12 months has gone by, how do you feel the SRV Women in Sport Grant contributed to your leadership development?

Appendix 3 – Interview guide used by researcher for first interview

INTERVIEW 1. GUIDE

SECTION 1 - Concept/Notion of Leadership for Women in Sport
Aim:
To understand what it means to lead for women in a sport and what constitutes effective leadership for women in the sporting environment

Lead in Questions:
Describe your image of leadership – images of general leadership
Describe your image of women as leaders in sport
What constitutes effective leadership for women in sport – do you think women have a different style of leadership to men – explore why/why not?
What are the strategies used by women to influence their leadership?
Why do you think so few women hold leadership positions in sport?

SECTION 2 – Early Experiences of Leadership
Aim:
By examining the early experiences of leadership for women, will provide a further understanding of what has shaped the construction of leadership for women and provide a glance into women's early leadership development pathway/process

Lead in Questions:
In order to understand what has shaped your notion of leadership, I would like to explore with you about significant influences (these may include barriers/challenges/facilitators) that you think have contributed to your leadership. I would like hear about your recollection and reconstructions of your:
• childhood
• school years
• adolescence
• family environment
• early sport leadership experiences

Explore role of mother, father, siblings, role models/mentors (male/female)

SECTION 3 – Current Experiences of Leadership
Aim:
Through the current experiences of grant recipients, this section aims to understand:
• What are the leadership styles, traits, behaviours, and values of women in sport leadership positions?
• What are the key success factors that inspire/motivate women to become leaders in sport?
• Have you encountered any experiences that may have inhibited you to be appointed in your current leadership role?
• What factors attract and retain women in sport leadership position?
• What are the strategies used by women to influence their leadership?

Lead in Questions:
Do you see yourself as a leader – explore why/why not?
How do you lead – recount stories of your experiences?
What are the key success factors that have inspired/motivated you to become a leader in sport?
What are some of the barriers that you may have encountered that have inhibited your leadership development?
What factors have attracted/retained you to pursue your sport leadership position?
What are the strategies used by yourself to influence your leadership?
Where do you see yourself going - your future aspirations and goals?
How do you think you will achieve this?
Do you use any formal planning process for the development of your leadership? Explore why/why not?
What level of support do your receive from your family and friends to pursue your leadership career?

SECTION 4. – WISL Grant
Aim:
To determine whether the 2003 Women's in Sport Leadership Grant Scheme has contributed to the grant recipient's overall leadership development.

Lead in Questions:
Why did you apply for the grant?
How did you feel when you received notification that you were successful?
Has the grant allowed you to achieve your initial aims/objectives?
What has the grant meant to you?
How has the grant helped you in your leadership development?
What do think will be long-term benefits for yourself and your organisation?
Would you have still have participated in these activities if you hadn't received the grant?

Appendix 4 – Characteristics of responsive interviewing

Characteristics of the Responsive Interviewing Model

1. Interviewing is about obtaining interviewees' interpretations of their experiences and their understanding of the world in which they live and work.

2. The personality, style, and beliefs of the interviewer matter. Interviewing is an exchange, not a one-way street; the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is meaningful, even if temporary. Because the interviewer contributes actively to the conversation, he or she must be aware of his or her own opinions, experiences, cultural definitions, and even prejudices.

3. Because responsive interviews depend on a personal relationship between interviewer and interviewee and because that relationship may result in the exchange of private information or information dangerous to the interviewee, the interviewer incurs serious ethical obligations to protect the interviewee. Moreover, the interviewer is imposing on the time, energy, emotion, and creativity of the interviewee and therefore owes loyalty and protection in return.

4. Interviewers should not impose their views on interviewees. They should ask broad enough questions to avoid limiting what interviewees can answer, listen to what interviewees tell them, and modify their questions to explore what they are hearing, not what they thought before they began the interview.

5. Responsive interviewing design is flexible and adaptive. Because the interviewer must listen intently and follow up insights and new points during the interview, the interviewer must be able to change course based on what he or she learns. Interviewers may need to change whom they plan to talk to or where they plan to conduct an interview as they find out more about their research questions.

(Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.36)

Appendix 5 – Interview guide used by researcher for second interview

INTERVIEW 2 QUESTION GUIDE – second interview (final follow up)

Purpose of interview:
To gain evidence of change of behaviour/attitude of women's leadership as a result of intervention (women's leadership grant program).

Key Questions:
1. Can you tell me about what you have been doing in regards to your leadership roles since I last spoke with you?

2. Have you undertaken any further training, and/or participated in any leadership opportunities? Was this offered by your sport or were they initiated by yourself?

3. Do you feel your participation in the women's leadership grant has contributed to the development of your leadership? If so, in what way?

4. Do you feel it has changed your attitude towards leadership? If so, in what way?

5. Do you feel your involvement in the women's leadership grant has contributed to your change in attitude?

6. Do you feel through your leadership role, you have been instrumental in creating any change within your sport? If so, can you describe how this has happened?

Appendix 6 – Example of initial coding of an individual participant's transcripts

Interview 2

Revised version

Interviewer: Sue Brown
Interviewee: ▬▬▬▬   Code: 03/2004
Date of interview: 21/9/2005.
Location:
Duration of Interview: 50 mins.

Concept of leadership.

I: OK ▬▬ first of all I would like you just generally tell me what you think leadership is?

S: I think it's, I don't like the word role model, but being a good role model for others to follow and to set a good example, to be decisive in decision-making, to be fair and open and also I think in making those decisions to listen to all points of view before doing it, and then being decisive and making the hard decision.

* concept of leadership.
⊙ lead by example.
○ consultative → decision
+ making difficult decisions.

I: When you say decisive, can you explain that a little bit more what you mean by that?

Sue's leadership.
Decision Making.
unpopular + difficult decisions.

S: I guess in making important decisions that's what you go with and you don't change your mind or you don't modify it even if there is some resistance to it. If you've made the right decision then you should stay with it. For example we had a situation where we had to, it was best for the Organisation, to make one of our staff redundant, she was causing a lot of problems and she wasn't up to the position that we now wanted it to become. Everybody (inaudible) from my President, the AIS(?), staff, all sorts of people, all backed what had to be done, and that enabled me to do it, but none of them wanted to be part of it or for this person to know they knew about it. I had to go through this whole horrible process on my own, but it had to be done and it is fantastic now it is done.

Support.

I: How did you deal with that situation?

S: I just thought that if we mess around nothing will happen and we will just continue on as we are, so OK I accepted it, I knew that I was the one that she disliked, but everyone agreed the redundancy was done fairly and appropriately. The guy appointed is a fantastic person, we have got a different Organisation, with much different staff, they're happy, they're working and enjoying the job, I did what had to be done and I did it and I protected everybody around. I guess that has made me a lot stronger knowing now that I can do this and I'm still alive. It wasn't easy and I didn't sleep very well (inaudible).

I: Can you give me an example of someone, I guess, could you describe best of what you think leadership is? It can be anyone doesn't have to be in sport.

Role models: learn from others.

S: I guess I have tried to follow some of the good things that I have had from previous bosses of mine, they've had faults, but I have picked up the good things in what they do. As far as people, I will have to think about that one.

* Learn from others models positives been.
* Doesn't have one role model.

I: Just again in broad terms, how would you describe how women lead in sport, just in very very broad terms?

S: There are not too many of us.

I: No there's not.

S: (Chuckle) I'm just thinking of the women I know and again many have strong personalities.

I: What do you mean by strong?

S: Not forceful, that's not the right word, but very strong in their opinion are often forthright and some of them too are almost a little bit scary, sometimes I wish I was like them, I think they intimidate some of the people that they deal with.

I: Why do you think you should be like them?

recognises a weakness?

S: Well sometimes I think maybe I am a bit nice or a bit easy to get along with, but I guess I always manage to get what I want so I probably don't have to fight the battles that some of them do, like as a guy I just wish I wish I could march in there and so and so and say that, but I don't.

I: Why?

S: It's just not in my manner.

I: Why do you think there's so few women in leadership positions, clearly there's very few on board and very few in coaching?

Barriers opportunities

S: I don't know, I think there is plenty of them out there, its just they're not getting the jobs and whether it is the people making the appointments. I think I was the first or second female, they may have had one female many years ago but I'm certainly the first female for a very long time that softball have appointed. At the moment our Board is roughly half and half, but again the interview panel are men. I don't know, I really don't know, and I suppose because they're not getting in these positions then it is hard for them to move on to other positions as well. I go to so many meetings and often I am the only female there, that doesn't worry me, I quite enjoy it, but you just look around and there's all these grey and black suits. I mean there's plenty of young women coming through these sports management courses, so hopefully in time they will make their way through.

I: We might just move on a little bit about your early experiences of leadership, going right back to your childhood, I would really like to explore with you the significant others or things that you think have helped shape your way?

leadership opportunities at school

S: It's really opportunities at school that I was given, like junior school house captain and prefect in senior school responsibilities. I think my family and my father in particular, they were always very supportive of everything we did, I think too I went to a Girls School, I would have preferred not to, but I did, but in going to that school there was nothing that we were ever told that we couldn't do. So I finished school and it was only at University that boys made comments about my playing play water polo, that sort of thing, I just grew up with my family and school thinking there were no boundaries.

I: Can you think of during school if there was anyone in particular who was a great influence on you?

* All girls school.
* supportive father.

Appendix 7 – Example of an individual participant's NVivo Document Coding Report

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Project: WISL Interviews 2003-2005   User: Administrator   Date: 3/04/2008 - 1:41:24 PM

DOCUMENT CODING REPORT

Document:	**05-2005 Interview 2 NVIVO**
Created:	19/05/2006 - 5:04:20 PM
Modified:	28/03/2008 - 11:12:34 AM
Description:	

Interviewee Code: 05/2005

Node 1 of 199   (1 3) /Significant events & others/Mother's Influence
          Passage 1 of 2 Section 1, Para 162, 674 chars.

162: would say my childhood would be very different to what my children are experiencing … my significant other in my childhood was my mother, she was always a leader, but probably not somebody who acknowledged themself or thought of themself in those earlier years. She founded the Association up here and has been President on and off for many years, she was President of the Parents Club, she was President of the School Council, she was President of all sorts of things and I suppose she was always in the background but as a child I actually feel that I lacked a lot of confidence. I think the children these days are a lot more confident than I ever saw myself as a child.
_____
          Passage 2 of 2 Section 1, Paras 168 to 174, 1290 chars.

168: How do you think your mother influenced you in your leadership?
169:
170: R: I think because she wasn't a overt person who handed on her leadership to me and she just gained hers through experience more than anything, she didn't have any formal education as such, but she was an achiever in the sense that she would always finish everything she started … where she could see something that needed to be done she would strive to achieve it, she was always a doer, she was always a worker as well, when I said she led by example, she was always out there doing.
171:
172: I: So do you feel that has influenced you to be that way?
173:
174: R: It definitely influenced me, but now I am saying that she should have probably been more embracive of people and delegated a bit more and that is where I am at the moment … and look we have had these discussions because she (my mother) is still Vice President at 80 years of age and I'm the President and she will say 'we used to do this' and I am very aware of changed management and trying to change cultures which I know takes such a long time, and I will say 'but when you did it, nobody worked, you had the whole day' … we have these discussions trying to convince each other why things are so different now and why we are having the trouble getting the people to do it.

Appendix 8 – Example of an individual participant's memo framework

	Researcher's Analysis	Interview Extract
Notion of Leadership	03-2004 believes a leader should: • lead by example for others to follow • be fair and transparent • take a consultative approach to decision-making • being prepared to make difficult, unpopular decisions in the best interest of the organisation • being decisive decision maker 03-2004's notion of leadership is similar to the way she describes her own style of leadership.	*"Being a good role model for others to follow and to set a good example, to be decisive in decision-making, to be fair and open and also I think in making those decisions to listen to all points of view before doing it, and then being decisive and making the hard decision"* (032004/2 section 1 para 11). *"In making important decisions that that's what you go with and you don't change your mind or you don't modify it even if there is some resistance to it. If you've made the right decision then you should stay with it"* (032004/2 section 1 para 15).
Leadership style	**Leads by example:** Expects a high standard of work ethic from her staff. 03-2004 sets the standard through her own actions. 03-2004's leadership reflects her core values by leading by example. She engenders trust and respects from her followers serving as a role model for intimidation and identification by setting personal examples.	*"I like to lead by example; I make sure that I'm first in every day and last to leave, and hope … and its starting to happen, so rather than arriving at a minute to 9. I don't expect the group to do excess hours, but I would like to see them before a minute to 9 and not running out the door at a minute to 5"* (032004/2 section 1 para 155).
	Core values: 03-2004 exemplifies honesty and integrity through her leadership.	*"Being fair and listening to people, honesty, being approachable"* (032004/2 section 1 para 79).
	Organisational skills: In order to balance her work, family, and personal life, 03-2004 acknowledges that she has to be organised and efficient (time management skills) with her workload to be able to gain that balance. She is quite prepared to go against the status quo behaviour of her male colleagues in order to gain that balance.	*"I think I am super organised so I can do a good days work and after working the day I have done a better day's work than most of them who spend so much time in a day talking and going for jogs and having showers and having lunch"* (032004/2 section 1 para 191). *"They (males) feel it is important to stay late but I just wanted to get my work done because I knew I had done a good day's work, but there was that culture that you should be there for long hours. I am very well organised and I get my work done"* (032004/2 section 1 para 206).
	Confidence: 03-2004 gains confidence in her ability to lead through positive experience. She uses successful outcomes as a mechanism to gauge whether her actions/approach were appropriate, this in turn gives her confidence.	*"I think when you have those little successes like 'that worked' and sometimes you wonder if you are making a right judgement or are you doing the right thing by the sport, but when you find out that you have then you are in a better position to back yourself next time"* (032004/2 section 1 para 119).
	Challenge: 03-2004 embraces challenges as a form of stimulation and motivation to perform her leadership role. She views this as an important element to her leadership.	*"I can't do a job, the same thing year after year, I have to make it different and I guess when I feel I am doing the same I move on for a new challenge"* (032004/2 section 1 para 99).
	Decision-making: 03-2004 demonstrates strength of character in regards to decision-making, she is prepared to proceed with making difficult decisions in the best interest of the organisation, even if that has meant her taking the brunt of fallout from unpopular decisions.	*"In making important decisions that's what you go with and you don't change your mind or you don't modify it even if there is some resistance to it. If you've made the right decision then you should stay with it. For example we had a*

	03-2004 is prepared to take on difficult decisions if she believes it is going to create positive and needed change within the organisation. 03-2004 demonstrates ethically responsible behaviour by being fair and respecting others. Through experiencing difficult decision-making situations, 03-2004 believes she has grown in confidence and has out her in good stead to deal with difficult situations more effectively and less stressfully in the future. She believes that it is important to take a decisive approach once a decision has been made and not be swayed or pressured to change or step down from unpopular decisions; she regards this as strong leadership. At the same time, she takes a common sense approach to her decision-making and is prepared to override set rules in the best of interest individual circumstances. She believes decisions should be made on a "case-by-case" basis with each situation reviewed individually taking into consideration of differing circumstances. In making decisions, 03-2004 believes it is important to take a consultative approach in gathering information and seeking other's views.	*situation where we had to, it was best for the Organisation, to make one of our staff redundant, she was causing a lot of problems and she wasn't up to the position that we now wanted it to become. Everybody from my President, the AIS, staff, all sorts of people, all backed what had to be done, and that enabled me to do it, but none of them wanted to be part of it or for this person to know they knew about it. I had to go through this whole horrible process on my own, but it had to be done and it is fantastic now it is done"* (032004/2 section 1 para 15). *"I just thought that if we mess around nothing will happen and we will just continue on as we are, so OK I accepted it. I knew that I was the one that they disliked, but everyone agreed the redundancy was done fairly and appropriately. I did what had to be done and I did it and I protected everybody around. I guess that has made me a lot stronger knowing now that I can do this and I'm still alive. It wasn't easy and I didn't sleep very well"* (032004/2 section 1 para 19). *"Again it's being decisive and I hear things around the States that people want strong leadership and I am not sure that they have had it in the past"* (032004/2 section 1 para 155). *"I very much like to see common sense and to be flexible and if some rule is stopping someone from playing, well let's change the rule that they can play, that's what we are here for, we are not here to control people. So I think common sense"* (032004/2 section 1 para 159). *Making sure that I have got all the information and considered all the implications, considered lots of different points of view I am always big on that. I like to get everyone's opinions and I like to consult widely, which is also something we are good at doing here, we have had so many thanks for consulting … I don't know but I just get the feeling that we are strengthening our State league with building that State league, supporting coaches who are confronted with players and all that is going into the mix to come up with a good outcome* (032004/3 section 0 para 86).

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Appendix 9 – Final list of NVivo categories and codes

FINAL LIST OF NVivo Coding Nodes

WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN LEADERSHIP

Women's approach to Leadership
1. Team orientated
2. Lead by example
3. Provide direction (linked with "change agent")
4. Task orientated
5. Consultative decision-making
6. Open communication
7. Interpersonal skills
8. Organisational skills
9. Assertive and taking control
10. Conflict resolution
11. Delegation

Intrapersonal
12. Confidence
13. Challenge
14. Resilient
15. Persistence
16. Reliable
17. Acceptance and approval
18. Passionate and enthusiastic
19. Responsibility
20. Risk taker
21. Accepting mistakes
22. Sense of humour
23. Commitment to others
24. Determination
25. Credibility

Interpersonal
26. Empowering others
27. Developing others
28. Recognising others
29. Relationship development
30. Inclusiveness
31. Community minded
32. Change agent

Values Driven
33. Honesty and fairness
34. Integrity
35. Gender Equity
36. Compassion and empathy

WOMEN'S CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP

General leadership
1. Provide direction
2. Visionary
3. Communication skill
4. Knowledgeable
5. Role model
6. Team orientated
7. Decision-making

Intrapersonal
8. Personal standards
9. Dependable, reliable and consistent
10. Passionate and enthusiastic

Interpersonal
11. Inclusive
12. Empathy
13. Motivation

Women as leaders
14. Action orientated
15. Communication
16. Aggressive approach
17. Assertive

Intrapersonal
18. Confidence
19. Self-doubt
20. Self-promoting
21. Internalise issues
22. Role modelling

Interpersonal
23. Supportive
24. Respect for others

INFORMAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Significant others/events in Childhood/Adolescence

Family
1. Father's influence
2. Mother's influence
3. Parents influence
4. Grandmother's influence
5. Aunt's influence
6. Sibling's influence
7. Adverse childhood experiences

School
8. Single sex school experience
9. School leadership opportunities
10. School teacher influence

Sport
11. Early sport experiences
12. Coach's influence

Significant others/events in Adulthood
13. Male mentor
14. Female role models

15. Peer support
16. Informal networks
17. Formal networks
18. Leadership opportunities
19. Learning from others
Barriers inhibiting leadership development
20. Family conflict
21. Financial cost
22. Time commitment
23. Lack of female mentors/role models
24. Lack of confidence
25. Masculine culture
26. Lack of leadership opportunities
27. Lack of support
Leadership development facilitators
28. Leadership opportunities
29. Mentors
30. Receiving feedback
31. Networking opportunities
32. Recognition by others
33. Professional development
34. Supportive partner and family

FORMAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Professional development/education
1. Increasing knowledge and skills

Leadership development intervention – WISL program

Short-term impact
2. Knowledge and skill development
3. Leadership recognition
4. Goal setting
5. Provided direction
6. Increased confidence (Increased leadership awareness)
7. Other leadership opportunities (personal outcomes)
8. Meeting like-minded individuals
9. Impact on sport organisation
10. Passing on new knowledge to others
SRV Workshop impact
11. Motivation
12. Sharing of experiences
13. Networking opportunities
14. Increased confidence
15. Increased new knowledge

Long-term impact
16. Future aspirations
17. Knowledge and skill development
18. Increased confidence
19. Leadership style
20. Change agent
21. Leadership achievements

Appendix 10 – Example of pattern matching for cross-case analysis

209: Dasha   Probably only on the academic side of it, as far as he was concerned, if I didn't have an education I wasn't worth leading and he struggled because he came from a place where the communists had taken over in Europe and he studied 3 or 4 years of medicine there and when he came here they didn't recognise that, so he had to go back and do the Higher School Certificate and re-qualify to train in the medical practice … other than that he didn't have much interest in sport, I think he's pretty much self-absorbed in medicine and that's where his whole life was centered around.

[handwritten margin note: Father set standard education]

| Document 12 of 52 | **09-2004 Interview 2 NVIVO** | *National.* |
| Passage 1 of 1 | Section 0, Para 72, 632 chars. | |

72: Well my Mum was really a Mum, she wasn't sporty, she was far more a caring nurturing sort of woman and my Dad was out of my life for a lot of my teenage years, but he is back in my life as an adult, so I can really say that my Dad really had much to do with my leadership, he was a strong man, he was very funny, he is compassionate and a great guy, but he is not a real sportsman or a leader as such. I think your parents they've added in who you are as a person, so whatever that is adds to who you are as a leader I guess. They certainly weren't the sort of parents who you would look to, they weren't leaders of people as such.

Node: /Significant events & others/Mother's Influence

| Document 1 of 52 | **01-2004 Interview 2 NVIVO** | *— local.* |
| Passage 1 of 1 | Section 0, Paras 143 to 151, 1143 chars. | |

*[handwritten margin notes: caring + sacrifice *; encouraged sport involvement modelled]*

143: Mum was just really good, she is a very humble person and she just thought for her kids all the time and she was there encouraging me with sport with our school and then we were all able to do sport, she just encouraged me all the way through with my sport. Just the benefits of being in a team and good at sport she got us going, it is just a natural thing that we have grown up with. No Mum is just a general sort of person and all that type of thing so she didn't really do a lot.
144:
145: I: Would you say your mother was a role model?
146:
147: S: Yes.
148:
149: I: In what way?
150:

[handwritten margin notes: role model compassion]

151: S: She is a wonderful in her communication, like some people have a passion she has had passions in her life (inaudible) and was just huge and if there was someone in the community who had major trauma she had the compassion to support with communication (inaudible) all the young ones trust her, she's not a 64 year old woman sitting at home, and she gets a kick out of that. She doesn't ask for anything and you wouldn't say she is a leader leader but she is a quiet leader, she is always there, she's reliable and knows what's right and wrong which is another thing in her favour.

223: She's wonderful as well, she's good because I would walk around in patchy pants every day and she didn't get on my back, that is interesting in itself because first impressions do make a big difference, they did more for women in being recognised and I have really had to force myself to listen to professional type image, I can't wear that uniform any more I have to wear what is expected of managers and treat it like one, so just played a role in that. I can still remember her yelling at me when I was 10 years old over having a horse or something, 'if you are not going to start leading all the way, don't do it, you can't do things half-hearted, you either do it or you don't' and that has stuck in my head, like being 100% committed to something. Other people, like I said before, my employers have always put a huge responsibility on me. The women in the sport leadership grant, that kind of test was really fantastic.

[handwritten margin notes: "encouraged to be herself", "Challenged. Commitment."]

162: would say my childhood would be very different to what my children are experiencing … my significant other in my childhood was my mother, she was always a leader, but probably not somebody who acknowledged themself or thought of themselves in those earlier years. She founded the Association up here and has been President on and off for many years, she was President of the Parents Club, she was President of the School Council, she was President of all sorts of things and I suppose she was always in the background but as a child I actually feel that I lacked a lot of confidence. I think the children these days are a lot more confident than I ever saw myself as a child.

[handwritten margin notes: "role model - Active involvement"]

168: How do you think your mother influenced you in your leadership?
169:
170: R:I think because she wasn't a overt person who handed on her leadership to me and she just gained hers through experience more than anything, she didn't have any formal education as such, but she was an achiever in the sense that she would always finish everything she started … where she could see something that needed to be done she would strive to achieve it, she was always a doer, she was always a worker as well, when I said she led by example, she was always out there doing.
171:
172: I: So do you feel that has influenced you to be that way?
173:
174: R:It definitely influenced me, but now I am saying that she should have probably been more embracive of people and delegated a bit more and that is where I am at the moment … and look we have had these discussions because she (my mother) is still Vice President at 80 years of age and I'm the President and she will say 'we used to do this' and I am very aware of changed management and trying to change cultures which I know takes such a long time, and I will say 'but when you did it, nobody worked, you had the whole day' … we have these discussions trying to convince each other why things are so different now and why we are having the trouble getting the people to do it.

[handwritten margin notes: "Role model. led by. Example."]

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Appendix 11 – Example of stage two of pattern matching for cross-case analysis

When writing up – think about how these contribute to the development of leader. ⊛ HOW ?

⊛ WHAT DOES IT DEVELOP. ?

Significant Other in childhood – Elements:
Influential Individuals

Mother's influence:

1. Role model – led by example

Demonstrated active involvement in the community: – *Moral commitment.*
my significant other in my childhood was my mother, she was always a leader, but probably not somebody who acknowledged themself or thought of themself in those earlier years. She founded the Association up here and has been President on and off for many years, she was President of the Parents Club, she was President of the School Council, she was President of all sorts of things and I suppose she was always in the background (Mary 2 section 1 para 162)

Commitment
- give back.
- values.
- compassionate
- help out.

she lives sport the whole time ... she used to run the Junior Tennis Program in Bendigo ... the junior tennis competition and also was a member of the community to run the junior netball in Bendigo. So she guided us along and we were always up with things that happen and helping to make things happen in the things that she was running. So she always instilled good values in us ... yes we were always pretty honest kids, didn't get up to too much mischief ... had some disciplines. (Karen 2 section 0 para 122)

I'm trying to think what qualities I have that she has ... to be friendly to people and always willing to give a hand ... willing to put in that extra time to help somebody out. I think that's the biggest thing is that we didn't mind volunteering our time, so the time we did have we were fairly organised so our organisation gave us the key role, which was just the helping out role. (Karen 2 section 0 para 126)

Showed drive and motivation:
she was an achiever in the sense that she would always finish everything she started ... where she could see something that needed to be done she would strive to achieve it, she was always a doer, she was always a worker as well, when I said she led by example, she was always out there doing. (Mary 2 section 1 para 170) ⊛

but in community activities my Mum is the driver or the background operator, because she gets everything prepared. There's a steak, salad and hamburger stall every market for every month in the Murrabit (?) market and it raises the local community complex $2000 or $3000 every market. My Dad has all these tasks to take, get the bread out of the freezer, go and pick up the meat, go an put up the tent, so he does a lot of the physical stuff, but she actually controls it all. Let me revise that, my Mum doesn't like limelight, she likes to be in the background but she's the driver behind it all. (Stacy 2 section 1 para 84)

Learnt from mother's lack of self-confidence:
She doesn't like public speaking but she is very good at it. Just lacks that, lacks that bit of self-confidence that I saw and thought 'no I am going to have it, I will step up to the next level'. I have said to her on numerous occasions 'you are fantastic, you drive things', and she will say 'no I don't' and I will say 'yes you do'. There are times she will say 'yes, OK I do'. So she has been absolutely critical, and just the whole, seeing my parents volunteer, like I have just seen it happen from when I was 4 or 5 and it is for me a part of your life, it is what you do within your community. (Stacy 2 section1 para 88)

Showed commitment against adversity:

How personal histories of people may influence their conceptions of leadership – early developmental influences on Women leaders   (Significant events + challenges.)

Side margin notes (left):

influenced career aspiration / leadership style.

Early experiences. – + family influences.

(1). Early experiences + family influences.

(2). influential individuals beyond immediate family member

during childhood

Trigger Events + life experiences.

Early experiences ← School / sport / family / other.

Side margin notes (right):

How has the women's early experiences instilled confidence + leadership task / attributes / skills.

Appendix 13 – Human Research Ethics Committee Final Project Report

	# Final Project Report Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)

ALL QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED.
Please type your responses into the boxes provided. Boxes will expand to fit your response.

1)   Project Details:

Project No:	A05-080
Project Name:	Women in sport leadership roles: Can women's sport leadership grants make a difference?

2)   Principal Researcher Details:

Full Name:	Leonie Otago
School/Section:	Human Movement & Sport Sciences
Phone:	5327 9680
Fax:	5327 9478
Email:	l.otago@ballarat.edu.au

3) Project Status:

Please indicate the current status of the project:	
☒ Completed (Data collection completed) **Completion date:** 30/06/2007	☐ Abandoned **Please give reason:**

4)   Special Conditions:

If this project was approved subject to conditions, were these met?	
☒ Yes	☐ No *** NB: If 'no', please provide an explanation below:**

5) Changes to project:

Were any amendments made to the originally approved project?	
☒ No	☐ Yes *** NB: Please provide details:**

6) Storage of Data:

Please indicate where the data collected during the course of this project is stored:
Sue Brown's Office – P930

7) Research Participants:

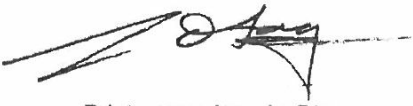| Were there any events that had an adverse effect on the research participants?	
☒ No	☐ Yes *** NB: Please provide details:**

8) Summary of Results:

Please provide a summary of the results of the project, with particular reference to matters of ethical importance:
It was found that the women's style of leadership characterised the four dimensions of Bass' (1990) Transformational Leadership model. The women viewed the concept of leadership as a way of influencing change by taking a consultative approach to decision-making. They used open, informed and meaningful communication with their followers, and their actions reflected their core values of fairness, respect and integrity. At the club and regional levels, the women tended to be more action-orientated and lacked confidence to delegate tasks. Women in leadership positions of more responsibility (state and national levels) demonstrated more sophisticated capabilities to lead. They were more strategic and political in their approach; were more confident to delegate; they were prepared to make difficult and unpopular decisions in the best interest of the organisation; and cultivated a collaborative working environment.

9) Feedback:

The HREC welcomes any feedback on: • **difficulties experienced with carrying out the research project; or** • **appropriate suggestions which might lead to improvements in ethical clearance and monitoring of research.**

Signature/s:

		Date:	6/03/08
Principal Researcher:	Print name: Leonie Otago		
Other/Student Researchers:	Print name: Sue Brown	Date:	6/03/08
	Print name:	Date:	

Please return to Executive Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Mt. Helen campus, as soon as possible.