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Leading organizational change: a phenomenological study of the nonlinear strategies used by female leaders in global companies

Rachel Faoutas Shafran

Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE NONLINEAR STRATEGIES USED BY FEMALE LEADERS IN GLOBAL COMPANIES

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by

Rachel Faoutas Shafran

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Kent Rhodes, EdD—Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation written by

Rachel Faoutas Shafran

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Doctoral Committee:

Kent Rhodes, EdD, Chairperson

Julie Chesley, PhD, Dissertation Committee Member

Kay Davis, EdD, Dissertation Committee Member

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Paul and Olivia Hillman, who have always believed in me more than I believed in myself. You inspired me to fall in love with learning and the pursuit of knowledge. Thank you for helping me to take this remarkable step and for giving me the courage to continue in the face of my own challenges. And thank you for your love that has upheld me throughout this journey. This is also dedicated to my daughter, Alia Shafran, who encouraged and motivated me every day to complete this research.

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Lastly, I would like to thank the wonderful women leaders that dedicated their time to participate in my study. Without their candid and honest responses, this research study would not have been accomplished. Your passion, insights, and experiences deeply inspired me. I am truly indebted to each of you for allowing me to tell your stories.

VITA

Rachel Faoutas Shafran

Education

MA, Human Resource Management, Rutgers University, School of Management and Labor Relations

BA, Middle Eastern Studies, Brandeis University

Masters Certification in Leadership Coaching, Georgetown University

Professional Experience

Leadership Consultant, Global Leadership & Learning, Intel

Change Management Consultant, Nike

International HR Manager, AT&T

Human Resources Manager, Lucent Technology

Organization Effectiveness Consultant, Avon

Publications and Presentations

Presentations

“Women Leadership Networks,” Texas A&M University, Women’s Faculty Forum, Doha, Qatar (2015)

“Leading Organizational Culture Transformations through the Art of Storytelling,” International Center for Global Leadership Proceedings in Placencia, Belize (2014)

“Anchors of Change,” Organizational Change Panel, Columbia University Business School (2012)

“The Art of Storytelling and Leading Change,” Association for Change Management Professionals (2012)

Publications

“Moving Beyond Competency-Based Models for HR Leadership Development & Improved Gender Representation in HR Executive Roles,” Global HR Management Symposium (2013)

Summary of Experience

Business transformation coach and consultant with over eighteen years of global experience in organizational change and strategy, executive coaching, and leadership development

Cross-functional expertise working with top global companies including Intel, Nike, AT&T, Johnson & Johnson, Lucent, and Avon

Major industries: Technology, Consumer Product, Telecommunications, and Pharmaceutical Companies

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of female leaders and their role in using nonlinear models of change to influence organizational change. This study was designed to determine how approaches to change leadership deployed by female leaders contribute new information and principles to the field of organizational change. A phenomenological research method was the best approach to capture the insights, perspectives, and experiences of female leaders. This study examined the nonlinear change approaches of fourteen senior female leaders in large corporations. While female leaders are increasing in the executive suite, research around their role in change leadership remains limited. This qualitative, phenomenological study examined how fourteen female leaders used different strategies and approaches to lead organizational change. Their experiences, documented through the interview data, encompassed their personal philosophies and approaches in influencing change initiatives. The data gathered was analyzed to develop themes that scholars and female leaders could analyze and apply in the field of change management. The female leaders in this study shared five key strategies that they used to lead change: (a) Relatedness Strategies, (b) Inclusion Strategies, (c) Experiential Learning Methods, (d) Radar-emotion Detection Strategies, and (e) Authenticity and Trust Strategies. These strategies indicated a nonlinear approach to leading change that focused on intervention strategies that could be applied at any stage in the change journey. Four main conclusions can be derived from this study: (a) Effective change strategies need to be intervention driven; (b) The change leader functions best as an interceptor and connector within the organization; (c) Strategies to change require approaches that create inclusion and trust; and (d) Strategies to change should involve experiential learning designs. This study shed light on new methods and approaches for leading complex organizational change from a female perspective in corporations. Moreover, this research was relevant given the demographic changes in society and the strategic role that female leaders play today in corporations and will in the future.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Successful leadership demonstrates an ability to effectively navigate and manage change. Business practitioners and academics have asserted that leadership is key in maintaining organization success (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Collins, 2001; Waldman, Ramírez, House, & Puranam, 2001). Collins (2001) identified leadership as the important component in helping companies achieve more effectiveness. Waldman et al.'s (2001) study linked leader charisma to organizational performance.

Connected leadership is an emerging view of leadership as an inclusive and collective networked activity occurring throughout an organization. According to a Center for Creative Leadership 2007 research study, "84% of respondents believed that the definition of effective one conclusion: Leadership is changing and approaches focusing on flexibility, collaboration, crossing boundaries, and collective leadership are expected to become a high priority (Martin, 2007, p. 5).

Emmanuel Gobillot, author of *The Connected Leader*, argues that "many of the old leadership recipes are outdated and do not take into account changes in the work environment and informal social networks within the organization" (p. 7). Taking a new approach to leadership theory, he argues that "modern leaders engage with employees and improve performance by building on trust, giving meaning to workplace relationships, and by creating dialogue within the organization" (Gobillot, 2007, p. 9).

Successful leadership demonstrates an ability to effectively lead organizational change. Successful leaders must be flexible, adapt to new conditions, be open to different alternatives, and be willing to take more significant risks (Kotter, 1990; O'Toole, 1996). Business leaders are looking for new approaches to leading organizational change as the demographics in organizations continue to shift.

As the role of leadership shifts, the global business environment is growing rapidly and continual change has become important for many companies to compete with their competitors. Global companies are constantly striving to shift their strategies with a changing market (Ackoff, 2006; Burnes, 2004; Hailey & Balogun, 2002; Kotter, 1996; Mintzberg, 1979; Moran & Brightman, 2001).

The researcher who is conducting this study has worked at a variety of large, global companies including Intel, Nike, AT&T, Johnson & Johnson, and Avon. In the role as a change management/strategy consultant, the researcher witnessed how different leaders developed strategies around leading organizational change around the world. The researcher observed that female leaders often exhibited behaviors that reflected a nonlinear approach to change—using systems thinking to lead change, building webs of inclusion and change networks that fostered buy-in, and demonstrating strong interpersonal communication skills like listening and empathy to influence key stakeholders. Lastly, the researcher noted that female leaders naturally were in tune with the emotional needs of employees experiencing significant changes in the workforce. These firsthand observations stimulated the researcher's interest in exploring the female approach to change further and learning about the insights of other female leaders around their experiences with organizational change.

Organizational Change

Despite the wide variety of methodologies and approaches that have been developed to lead organizational transformations, there is still a significant failure rate for most organizations leading change. The literature around change management indicates a success rate of 30% of major change initiatives (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Grover, 1999). Recent research indicates that this change success rate is not significantly improving (Jacobs, van Witteloostuijn, & Christe-Zeyse, 2013; Jansson, 2013; Michel, By, & Burnes, 2013; Rouse, 2011).

Many leaders have learned a method of approaching change that simply doesn't work when the changes get too big and the environment moves too fast. (Kotter International, 2011). Despite the fact that companies have put significant funding into tools and training when leading change, most studies still find a 6070% failure rate for organizational change projects—a statistic that has stayed constant since the 1970s (Askenaz, 2013). These failure rates indicate a sustained need for investigating and finding what factors increase the probability of successful organizational change (By, 2005; Rafferty, Jimmieson, & Armenakis, 2013).

Leaders often struggle with managing the business and addressing the needs of people during change. Typically, it is the people side of the change that loses out (Bunker & Wakefield, 2006). According to Rebecca Newton, “We need to focus as much on *how* we drive change as what change we drive” (Newton, 2016, p. 1). Research at the London School of Economics suggests that resistance to change stems often from a negative experience of change leadership, rather than resistance to the change itself.

Organizational change is often referred to as organizational development and organizational transformation (Cummings & Worley, 2005; Newhouse & Chapman, 1996). Organizational change is the movement of an organization from the existing state to a desired future state with the goal of increasing organizational effectiveness (Cummings & Worley, 2005; George & Jones, 2002).

Researchers highlight major differences in the type of changes that companies experience in our current business climate versus in the past (Cummings & Worley, 2005; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Kelly & Amburgey, 1991; Miller & Friessen, 1984; Mohrmann, Mohrmann, Ledford, Cummings, & Lawler, 1989; Nadler, Shaw, & Walton & Associates, 1995; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994). These change are: (a) the simultaneous nature of the changes, (b) the speed at which the different types of change occur, (c) the complexity of changes, (d) the immediate communication and impact of the changes throughout the world, and (e) the need for individuals as well as leaders of organizations and nations to step up and immediately make decisions and address problems.

Researchers distinguish between different types of change: (a) convergent, (b) radical, (c) revolutionary, and (d) evolutionary (Cummings & Worley, 2005; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Kelly & Amburgey, 1991; Miller & Friessen, 1984; Mohrmann et al., 1995; Romanelli & Tushman, 1994). Radical organizational change involves tearing loose from an existing “orientation” (Johnson, 2002; Miller, 1982; Miller & Friesen, 1982, 1984) while convergent change is “fine tuning the existing orientation” (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996, p.1024). This research study will focus on the role of female leaders and their strategies around addressing these type of changes given the current pace and complexity within global organizations.

Most studies (Bullock and Batten, 1985; Hamel, 2000; Judson, 1991; Kotter, 1995; Lewin, 1951; Lippet, Watson, & Wesley, 1958; Luecke, 2003) have looked at linear models of leading change when exploring strategies to drive organizational changes. Change strategies are often based on a linear process consisting of individual sequential steps (Styhre, 2002). Recent research has focused on the idea of complexity theory that treats organizations as complex adaptive systems. The structure is complex, and there is a dynamic network of interactions and relationships. Organizations are adaptive. They exhibit principles of self-organization, coevolution, interdependence, complexity, and chaos (Diment, Yu, & Garrety, 2009; Kelly, 2012). Current change approaches need to be reexamined given the type of radical changes underway in organizations and the broader view of organizational systems.

A recent 2013 Towers Watson Change and Communication ROI Survey found that employers say 55% of their change management initiatives meet their initial objectives. However, only one out of four respondents (25%) say they can sustain gains from their change management initiatives over the long term (Change and Communication ROI Study Report, 2013). Leaders are cited as one of the key catalysts for successful change. The ability of leaders to influence the existing culture by engaging in dialogue and effective communication with their teams is crucial to driving large scale organizational changes.

Gender Leadership

Over the last 50 years, the demographics of the U.S. workforce have changed. Only 22% of women had jobs in 1960 compared to 66% in 2011, and women now comprise 51% of professional, management, and related positions (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011; Riley, 2012). This has led some to call this shift the “economic empowerment of women” (*The Economist*, 2009). However, as of 2011 only 14% of women held executive officer positions, which indicates that women are still struggling to reach upper management (Catalyst, 2011).

A survey of female executives found that 72% cited stereotypes about women's roles and responsibilities as a significant barrier to advancement to senior level positions, showing that gender role stereotypes regarding leadership may still be influencing selection and promotional decisions in organizations (Wellington, Kropf, & Gerkovich, 2003). Yet, females are outpacing males in obtaining college degrees, with females accounting for 57% of undergraduate enrollment in 2010 compared to 47% of males. Also, more females than males have enrolled in post baccalaureate programs every year since 1988, suggesting that there will be more educated women than men entering the workforce in the future (NCES, 2012). These changes in gender demographics have important implications for organizational change as companies struggle to deal with rapid change with a view to stay competitive in today's marketplace.

The McKinsey 2010 Global Survey found that 72% of executives agree that there is a direct connection between gender diversity and business success, but only 28% say it is a top-ten priority for senior leadership. While many well-known companies have established women-focused initiatives, they have not yet attained the goal of moving more women into key decision-making and leadership roles—the roles that have the most impact on business success.

With the increasing globalization of the marketplace, there is more involvement of women in leadership positions and a change in the kinds of leadership competencies required for organizational and personal success (Prime, Carter, & Welbourne, 2009). Haney (2010) attributed the significant increase in the number of female leaders to the educational attainment and work experience of females in the twenty-first century. Despite all these shifts, gender differences in the management hierarchy still exist, and many females at the senior levels of management are impacted by high levels of scrutiny, exclusion, and bias (Broadbridge & Kerfoot, 2010).

Although workforce demographics continue to change as more females attain leadership positions, job-gender competencies are perceived differently for female and male leaders (Hansen, 2009; Berry & Franks, 2010). According to Robertson, Brummel, & Salvaggio (2011), male leaders viewed management competencies as masculine and considered these masculine competencies to be vital to leadership success. In contrast, female leaders viewed managerial competencies as both masculine and feminine and considered both competencies as important to successful work performance (Robertson et al., 2011). As a result, relative to men, females continue to grapple with the societal expectations regarding what makes a good leader and are at a huge disadvantage in acquiring top leadership positions (Broadbridge & Kerfoot, 2010; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). The broad shifts in economic patterns provides an opportunity for female leaders to continue to fight against gender barriers and focus on building the inherent competencies needed to achieve their goals successfully (Sharma & Givens-Skeaton, 2012).

Due to the disparity of equal gender representation in upper level management, most studies that have been conducted on organizational change have focused on male leaders. Until recently, there has not been a sufficient number of women in leadership positions in Fortune 500 companies to perform an extensive study on their experiences leading change. Most of the current literature is focused on the role of male leaders using linear change models that include sequential steps. The main focus of this research will be to fill the gap in the change literature and leadership studies by examining the role of gender leadership and how this impacts the strategies and approaches around organizational change.

Problem Statement

There is currently a gap in the research that has been conducted in the change management field. There are very few phenomenological studies that explore the strategies that female leaders use to influence organizational change. While there is extensive research on the leadership traits of female leaders, very little research has focused specifically on how these distinct leadership approaches influence their ability to lead organizational changes through nonlinear change models.

During the last 10 years, research has demonstrated that the numbers of top-level executive women in the corporate and political arenas has not increased as predicted (Collins, 2009; Frankel, 2004; Kornblut, 2009). The major reasons for this have been attributed to gender bias; however, the concepts of self, leadership styles, and the corporate culture are also contributing factors (Caprino, 2013). Several other factors include clashes between work, life and family, extreme work demands, marginalizing of women, and differences between men and women that are not fully understood or valued (Caprino, 2013). Given this disparity, there is an increased interest in understanding the emerging role of women leaders in the change management literature. The core issue associated with the underrepresentation of women in the change management literature is that it requires a cultural/management shift to truly appreciate the value that women bring to this changing business environment (Cormier, 2007).

Most linear change management models focus on the strategies, techniques, and learning mechanisms necessary to drive large-scale transformations (Lewin, 1951; Kotter, 2012). While there is substantial literature on the key ingredients for transforming organizations, there has been considerably less research in understanding the parts of organizational culture that are part of the corporate narrative—history, norms, symbols, rituals, and values and how these can be used to shape transformations through systems thinking. Management scholars have recognized the role of narrative in culture (Martin, Feldman, Hatch, & Sitkin, 1983; Parada & Viladas, 2010) and strategic management (Dunford & Jones, 2000; McConkie & Boss, 1986; Sonenshein, 2010). As women emerge as senior leaders within a global workforce, much more clarity is needed on how organizational cultures can be shifted through nonlinear approaches including systems thinking and storytelling.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study has been to explore the lived experiences of female leaders and their role in using nonlinear models of change to influence organizational transformations. This study focused on the phenomenon of leading change from a nonlinear perspective. A phenomenological research method was the best approach to capture the insights, perspectives and experiences of female leaders and to uncover overall themes that challenge the existing change management theories and models. This study examined the change strategies of fourteen senior female leaders in global corporations.

Research Questions

The central research question was: In what ways do female leaders leverage nonlinear change strategies to influence organizational change?

Sub-questions:

- What strategies, if any, do female leaders employ, in driving organizational changes in global companies?
- How do female leaders view their role in driving organizational change?
- How do female leaders describe the actions they take to enroll their employees in a change initiative?
- How do female leaders describe their role in creating momentum and a sense of energy around the need to change in their organizations?
- How do participants describe what others could learn from studying the role that female leaders play in leading change?

This qualitative, phenomenological study examined the lived experiences of 14 female leaders and their use of nonlinear methods to lead corporate change initiatives. A phenomenological research method fit this study because it focused on the common experiences of female leaders in leading change and provided a structural description of their experiences. The phenomenological inquiry uncovered meaning from the lived experiences of these senior female leaders. Their experiences, as documented through the interview data, encompassed their personal philosophies and approaches in influencing change initiatives. The significance of this study was to understand and highlight the nonlinear change methods and strategies used by senior females.

Significance of Study

The study is significant because it explored the methods and approaches of female leaders in driving change. The results of the data analysis added to the existing body of literature on women in leadership roles and in the change management field. Many studies have been done on women in predominantly male organizations (Bass, 1998; Blair-Loy, 2001; Cooper & Kleiner, 1993; Gardiner & Tiggemann, 1999). This research focused specifically on the role of women leaders in driving change. This study was important for two key reasons: First, this study shed light on new methods and approaches for leading complex organizational change from a female perspective. Second, the results of this study will help global companies reinforce and recognize the specific contributions of women leaders in accelerating change.

Definition of Terms

Leadership: The successful influence by the leader that results in the attainment of goals by the influenced followers (Bass, 1990a).

Transformational Leadership: "Empowering followers and motivating them to perform beyond their expectations and inspiring peers and followers to work on transcendental planes and collective goals instead of focusing solely on immediate personal interests" (Bass, 1985, p. 17).

Organizational Change: The movement of an organization from the existing plateau toward a desired future state in order to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Cummings & Worley, 2005; George & Jones, 2002).

Change Management: Transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations to a desired future state (Kotter, 2011).

Change Leadership: Providing direction, guidance, and support to the people who are implementing the change and who are impacted by the change.

Linear Change: A process of change with known cycles or step-by-step progression in the organizational systems where a response to a step must be elicited before another step is taken.

Nonlinear Change: Described as change with disturbance and variability in the actions of the organizational system. Instead of being orderly and stable, the organizational system shows "periods of turbulence and instability, with dramatic changes or growth spurts" (Hayes, A., Laurenceau, J., Felman, G., Strauss, J., & Cardaciotto, L., 2007, p. 18).

Systems Thinking: A process of understanding how things, regarded as systems, influence one another within a whole. In organizations, systems consist of people, structures, and processes that work together to make an organization "healthy" or "unhealthy."

Organization of the Study

This dissertation research is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the background of the study, problem statement, study purpose, central research questions, significance of study, and definition of key terms. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature around leadership frameworks and theories, organizational change philosophies and perspectives, and organizational change metaphors and methods. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used for this dissertation research study. It includes the research design and rationale for this phenomenological study, the selection of women participants, and data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 delineates the study's findings and common themes. Chapter 5 summarizes the limitations and broader implications for change practitioners and business leaders in the field. It highlights future research recommendations and final conclusions.

Limitations and Delimitations

"Limitations are factors that may affect a study, but are not under the control of the researcher" (Mauch & Park, 2003). In contrast, "a delimitation is controlled by the researcher" (p. 10).

Creswell (2003) asserted that "defining limitations of a study establishes the boundaries, exceptions, reservations, and qualifications inherent in every study" (p. 110). Since the researcher was the main instrument for collecting data and conducting analysis, researcher bias may have been a limitation for this qualitative phenomenological study. Another limitation was that the researcher only interviewed female leaders in corporate companies. Therefore, the researcher could not generalize findings to all female leaders across multiple sectors.

Gaining access to the organizations, sites, and female participants in the study and building trust and credibility at the field site were all important challenges in this study. The researcher's own "stance" within organizations may have kept the researcher from acknowledging all dimensions of the experiences. Female participants may have been fearful that their information and experiences would be exposed to people outside of their immediate organization and this may have made them unwilling to share certain insights and approaches.

Creswell (2003) described "delimitations as parameters that narrow the scope of a study" (p. 147). The researcher only selected female leaders who were: (a) classified as director-level or above in the management hierarchy, (b) employed in corporations with 10,000 or more employees, and (c) located in the United States. Purposeful sampling was used to select females in director-level or above positions to participate in this study.

Assumptions

In a phenomenological study, the researcher actively interacts with the participants. In this study, the researcher used herself as an instrument by "examining documents, observing behavior, and interviewing participants" (Creswell, 2009, p. 45). The researcher acknowledged the bias that was brought to the study based on the researcher's experience working in the field of change management. The researcher engaged in conversations regarding this subject with females in change management roles and was interested in exploring the phenomena of leading change further with a range of female leaders in the industry. This researcher bias included assumptions and beliefs about how female leaders navigate change and how these approaches would benefit the field of change management. The research question was significant to the primary researcher who had worked in several companies in a change-leading role.

This study assumed that female leader participants would respond truthfully to all the interview questions and would be able to articulate their strategies, approaches, and their overall role in leading change initiatives within their respective companies. It also assumed that participants would be comfortable sharing their strategies, insights, and feelings in a confidential interview setting. Additionally, the researcher assumed that the participants would respond in a way that was open and candid.

Methodology

This study used a qualitative phenomenological approach. Qualitative research, according to Creswell (2007), “begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 37). A qualitative approach toward research provided a deeper understanding of the phenomena of leading organizational change because it has been described as “the richest of studies, often illuminating in radically new ways phenomena as complex as leadership” (Conger, 1998, p. 107).

A phenomenological research approach seemed appropriate for this study because the purpose of this study was to better understand the experiences among female leaders who experienced similar phenomena around leading change (Creswell, 2007; Moustakas, 1994). All of the participants in this study shared experiences, as all of the participants had experienced the phenomena of leading organizational changes in similar contexts. Phenomenology, according to Patton (2002), investigates “how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness” (p. 104).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The demands of an increasingly global and complex business arena have highlighted the need for a new kind of leader. In 2006, for the second consecutive year, CEOs from around the world have identified the need for steady, sustainable growth as their number one challenge along with the quality and supply of leaders in their organization pipeline (Mitchell, 2010). Today's business world calls for leaders who not only know the business, but who also possess a global mind-set and understand the complexities and politics of the world in which they are now expected to manage. This new type of transformative leader is "intelligent, inspired, inspirational and the collaborator and relationship builder" (Cormier, 2007, p. 21) CEOs are realizing that these types of leaders are in short supply, so they must rethink their human resource strategy for assuring a pool of leaders in the years to come (Cormier, 2007).

Senge (1990a) illustrates three foundational characteristics of leaders in the modern-day organization: (a) architect, (b) teacher, and (c) steward. These three qualities assist in clarifying mission, vision, and values; identifying strategies, structure, and policies; generating efficient learning processes; and facilitating subordinates to develop their mental model continuously and systematically. Many leaders address only the technical dimensions of change but fail to consider what it takes at each stage for leaders to actually carry out that change (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997a; Rowe & Mason, 1987; Rowe & Boulgarides, 1992). Kotter (1990) argued that leadership produces change and movement by establishing direction, aligning people, motivating, and inspiring. He emphasized that direction can be established by creating a vision, clarifying the big picture, and setting organizational strategies. According to Kotter, people alignment could occur when leaders actively communicate goals, generate commitment, and build strong teams. He believed leaders could motivate their employees by inspiring and energizing them, empowering them, and satisfying their unmet needs (Kotter, 1990).

According to Noer (1997), the leader, as a human, is the most important tool for organizational change. The spirit, insight, wisdom, compassion and values of a leader are all important factors in leading change and transforming organizations. It is the behaviors of the leader that make change initiatives more effective (Higgs & Rowland, 2005).

This literature review focused on the leadership theories and frameworks that influenced the ability of women leaders to drive change in global organizations. It also provided a review of the current landscape around gender differences in leadership styles and summarized the history and evolution of organizational change theories and their application in today's business environment. Lastly, it furnished an overview of the recent research around complexity theory and the role of nonlinear thinking in the development of change models.

Change Leadership Frameworks and Theories

Many theoretical frameworks around the concept of leadership have emerged over the last century. These frameworks have prompted multiple debates to whether leadership is the same as the practice of management and whether the concept should be defined as traits or skills (Northouse, 2007). The purpose of this section will be to provide an overview of the different leadership frameworks and theories that explore and define a leader's role in the organizational change process.

Transformational leadership. Transformational leadership theories were the foundation for understanding how female leaders built strong networks and influenced their followers. Burns initially described transformative leadership as the process of pursuing collective goals through the mutual mobilization of motives on the part of the leader and the followers to bring about intended change (Burns, 2010). Bennis and Nanus asserted that transformational leadership occurs when leaders and followers raise one another to a higher level of motivation (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). Kouzes and Posner defined transformational leadership in terms of the ability of the leader to influence the values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, by working with them to accomplish the mission of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Bass, Avolio, & Goodheim (1987) asserted that "the transformational leader motivates followers to work for transcendental or collective goals for higher levels of performance" (p. 134). Ideas around leadership that included necessary traits (Stogdill, 1975), skills (Argyris, 1970; Katz, 1955), style (Blake & Mouton, 1967; Likert, 1958), and situational effectiveness (Fiedler, 1969; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) provided a framework around the development of transformational leadership as a theory as part of organizational change.

Newcomb (2005) reported that transformational leaders challenge the status quo and drive change in an organization. He indicates that there are specific requirements for successful leaders: (a) leaders must have the ability to assess the environment on a continuous basis, (b) leaders must know what their visions are and be able to gain support for them, and (c) leaders must have the ability to execute the plan in order to achieve the vision that they have established. According to Carless (1998), there are common themes seen in transformational leaders. These leaders can clearly articulate a vision, use nontraditional thinking, encourage individual feedback, promote a trusting environment, and promote cooperation among the team.

Bass's transformational leadership framework (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994) asserts that leaders try to develop their followers and transform their goals to match more closely those of the organization during organizational change. Transformational leaders strive to help employees reach their highest potential. This type of leader's behavior may play a role in helping to facilitate the acceptance of change by employees (Bommer, Rich, & Rubin, 2005; Nemanich & Keller, 2007). The transformational leader can help their followers reframe their perception of change, viewing change as a new opportunity rather than a threat (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

Visionary leadership. While transformational leadership centers on the leader's ability to motivate followers around transcendent goals, visionary leadership focuses on the ability of a leader to articulate a clear vision. Bennis (1994) asserted that visionary leadership is critical for organizational change. According to Bennis, "The first basic ingredient of leadership is a guiding vision. The leader has a clear idea of what he wants to do . . . and the strength to persist in the face of setbacks, even failures" (Bennis, 1994, p. 39). Howard Gardner's (1996) influential research findings suggested that leaders who had a compelling story or key message directly impacted the way others thought, felt, and acted. The four factors Gardner lists as essential for effective change leadership are “a tie to a community or audience, a rhythm of life that includes isolation and immersion, a relationship between the stories leaders tell and the traits they embody, and arrival at power through the choice of the people rather than through brute force” (Gardner, 1996, p. 88).

Adaptive leadership. Mobilizing an organization to adapt its behaviors for the purpose of thriving in new business environments is critical. Heifetz & Laurie (1997a) assert that adaptive leadership is needed to enable complex organizational change instead of visionary leadership. This involves challenging individuals and bringing them out of their comfort zones. During the organizational change, adaptive leaders provide direction, protection, orientation, conflict control, and the shaping of norms while managing the change process (Conger, Spreitzer, & Lawler, 1999; Heifetz & Laurie, 2001).

Adaptive leaders must understand the important change management process while also being proactive in change implementation by focusing on developing an adaptive work environment (Asoh, 2004; Locke & Tarantino, 2006; Powell, 1987; Williamson, 1991). Heifetz & Laurie (2001) state that an adaptive leader “must strike a delicate balance between having people feel the need to change and having them feel overwhelmed by change” (p. 134). An adaptive leader fully understands that organizational change must be managed with different approaches, managed as a whole, and determined by mixed methods of analysis (Cao, Clarke, & Lehaney, 2004; Cao & McHugh, 2005).

Authentic leadership. The Gallop Leadership Institute sponsored a leadership summit centered on the nature of authentic leadership and new research in this area. Researchers expanded on the work of Bass (1990) and Bass & Steidlmeier (1999) regarding the definition and implications of authentic transformational leadership. In order to form a theory of authentic leadership, researchers built their ideas based on several fields, including positive organizational scholarship, leadership studies, and ethics (Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Walumbwa, 2005a).

The definition of authentic leadership varies among researchers. In fact, there are multiple definitions based on different viewpoints and perspectives (Chan, 2005). This section will provide an overview of three viewpoints: intrapersonal, developmental, and interpersonal.

From the intrapersonal point of view, authentic leadership centers on leader's self-knowledge, self-regulation, and self-concept. Shamir & Eilam (2005) argue that "authentic leaders lead from conviction, and are originals, not copies" (p. 57). In addition, they suggest that "authentic leadership focuses heavily on the life story of the leader and the meaning the leader attributes to his or her life experiences" (p. 59).

Authentic leadership can also be discussed from a developmental perspective based on the work of Avolio and his associates (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). From this lens, authentic leadership can be learned as opposed to being inherit or fixed trait.

Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber (2009) suggest that authentic leadership is composed of four distinct but related components: "self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balance processing and relational transparency" (p. 81). Self-awareness includes reflecting on your own core values, identity, and motives. It includes being aware of and trusting your own feelings (Kernis, 2003). When leaders know themselves and have a clear sense of who they are and what they stand for, they have a strong anchor for their decisions and actions (Gardner et al., 2005).

Internalized moral perspective refers to a "self-regulatory process in which individuals use their internal moral standards and values to guide their behavior rather than allow outside pressures to control them" (Avolio et al., p. 15). Balanced processing is also a self-regulatory behavior. It refers to an individual's ability to analyze information objectively and explore other people's opinions before making a decision. Balanced requesting involves considering different points of views before taking action (Avolio et al., 2009).

Relational transparency refers to being “open and honest in presenting one’s true self to others and sharing their core feelings, motives, and inclinations with others in an appropriate manner” (Kernis, 2003, p. 58).

Confidence, hope, optimism, and resilience are the key attributes that have the greatest impact on authentic leadership based on research in the fields of organizational behavior and positive psychology (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Based on research, leaders who have high confidence are more likely to be motivated to succeed, to demonstrate persistence when challenges arise, and to welcome obstacles or threats (Bandura, 1997; Luthans & Avolio, 2003). “Hope is a positive motivational state based on willpower and goal planning” (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 67). Leaders with hope are positive about their abilities and the goals they can accomplish. “They approach life with a sense of abundance rather than scarcity” (Covey, 1990, p. 56). Resilience is often described as the capacity to recover from and adjust to adverse situations. “Resilient people are able to bounce back from difficult or challenging situations and feel strengthened and more resourceful as a result of them” (Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003, p. 27).

The last way of defining authentic leadership is as an interpersonal process. This perspective reinforces the idea that authentic leadership is relational, created by leaders and followers together (Eagly, 2005). Authenticity is created as result of the interaction between a leader and a follower.

Researchers have found positive relationships between authentic leadership and outcomes such as trust in leadership (Hunt, Gardner, & Fischer, 2008), follower job performance moderated by follower positive psychological capital (Wang et al., 2012a), leader and follower well-being (Gardner et al., 2005a), satisfaction with supervisor (Walumbwa et al., 2008), organizational citizenship behaviors (Cottrill, Lopez, & Hoffman, 2014), and organizational commitment (Jensen & Luthans, 2006; Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun, & Frey, 2012).

According to some researchers, applying a gender-neutral perspective to authentic leadership ignores the sex-related differences in leadership (e.g., Eagly & Johnson, 1990;

Eagly & Carli, 2003; Ely & Rhode, 2010; Sharpe, 2000). Authentic leadership can be a huge for female leaders because masculine leadership behaviors such as assertiveness and competitiveness remain the norm (Schein, 1979, 1997). As a result, female leaders are often perceived as going against the norms of leadership or those of femininity (Catalyst, 2007, p. 1). Kernis (2003) suggested that the true self is not developed through conforming to social norms or pressures. However, female leaders need to stay within "a narrow band of acceptable behavior —to combine seemingly contradictory behaviors" (Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1992, p. 54). Female leaders are often caught in the paradox: being authentic and not being accepted or being accepted (or trying to be) and not being authentic (Bryans & Mavin, 2003; Ely, 1995; Ohlott, 2004; Ruderman & Ohlott, 2004).

Authentic leadership describes leadership that is transparent, morally grounded and responsive to people's needs and values. The current literature on authentic leadership however often neglects to address how authentic leadership applies to female leaders and the particular concerns of female leaders trying to be authentic in their leadership styles.

Connected leadership. Connected leaders create powerful connections. Lipman-Blumen (2002) described connective leaders as building connections between people, ideas and institutions. Lipman-Blumen highlights six key strategies that connected leaders use:

- Ethical political savvy: A combination of political know-how with strong ethics, plus the adroit and transparent use of others and themselves to achieve goals;
- Authenticity and accountability: Authenticity is achieved by dedicating yourself to the purpose of the group. Accountability is achieved by being willing to have every choice scrutinized;
- A politics of commonalities: Searching for commonalities and common ground and building communities;

- Thinking long-term, acting short-term: Coaching and encouraging successors, and building for a long-term future despite the current demands of the day to day;
- Leadership through expectation: Scrupulously avoiding micro-managing. Setting high expectations and trusting people;
- A quest for meaning: Calling supporters to change the world for the better (Lipman-Blumen, 2002).

Dispersed leadership. Senge et al. (1999) asserted that change leadership does not always arise from the upper layers of an organization. Change leadership often emerges from within an organization. Senge offers some unique perspectives around leading change that are different from Bennis and Kotter who focus on top-level vision:

- Little significant change can occur if it is driven from the top;
- CEO programs rolled out from the top are a great way to foster cynicism and distract everyone from the real efforts to change;
- Top management buy-in is a poor substitute for genuine commitment and learning capabilities at all levels in an organization (Senge et al., 1999).

In order to tackle complex change, Senge claims that it is important to develop communities of interdependent leaders across the organization. Senge identifies these type of leaders as: local line leaders, executive leaders, and network leaders (Senge et al., 1999). His approach appreciates the value of all these leaders and discusses the importance of connectivity between different areas of the organization when change is implemented (Senge et al., 1999). Building upon these ideas, Mary Beth O'Neill (2000) outlined four leadership roles important for change initiatives: (a) sponsor, (b) implementer, (c) advocate, and (d) agent (O'Neill, 2000).

Primal leadership. Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, in *Primal Leadership*, describe six styles of leading that have different effects on the emotions of the target followers (Goleman et al., 2004). These six leadership styles include: (a) The Visionary

Leader; (b) The Coaching Leader; (c) The Affiliative Leader; (d) The Democratic Leader; (e) The Pacesetting Leader; and (f) The Commanding Leader (Goleman et al., 2004). Goleman's research on emotional intelligence (Goleman et al., 2004) has also helped many organizations. He established a group of emotional competencies for leaders and grouped them into four categories:

- Self-awareness;
- Self-management;
- Social awareness;
- Social skills (Goleman et al., 2004).

Goleman's research demonstrates that if a leader does not have self-awareness, then the probability of being competent in other areas is greatly reduced (Goleman et al., 2004).

Neuro leadership. The field of neuroscience is contributing new insights into an emerging field of leadership studies that is based on the brain. Neuroscience is the study of how the nervous system develops, its structure, and what it does. The field of neuroscience used to be defined as a sub-discipline of biology, however; it has become a more interdisciplinary science that works closely with other fields such as mathematics, linguistics, engineering, computer science, chemistry, philosophy, and medicine in understanding the inner workings of the brain (Nordqvist, 2012).

David Rock, founder and CEO of the NeuroLeadership Group and author of *Your Brain at Work* coined the term neuroleadership (Rock, 2009). Neuroleadership focuses on applying neuroscience to leadership development, management training, change management education and consulting, and coaching.

There are many applications of neuroscience on leadership behaviors. A recent study found that there is a physical connection in the brain associated with trust, an emotion that is increasingly cited as a critical leadership trait to exhibit. A 2008 study identified a chemical in the brain called oxytocin that when released, makes a person more receptive to feel trust toward a stranger (Meacham, 2013). The brain may determine trustworthiness within milliseconds of meeting a person. That initial determination is continually updated when more information is received or processed, as the brain takes in a person's appearance, gestures, voice tone, and the content of what is said. What this means for leaders is that it is possible to build trust among employees even if it has been lacking in the past (Schaufenbuel, 2014). Below is a summary of the main researchers and industry experts in this field outlined in *Neuroleadership*, one of the comprehensive books on the topic (Ghadiri, Habermacher, & Peters, 2011):

- Ned Herrman. He developed his Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument which has become a popular tool for measuring personality types in corporations.
- Gerald Huther. He is a respected neurobiologist and has published numerous popular books and articles on the brain with applications for leadership and business.
- Christian E. Elger. Director of the Department for Epistemology at the University Hospital in Bonn, is a scientist who has focused intensively on the brain in corporate environments. He has also written on NeuroFinance and NeuroCommunication.
- David Rock. David Rock coined the term neuroleadership with Jeffrey Schwartz of UCLA in 2006. He has written extensively on the brain in the workplace and founded the Neuroleadership Institute which pulls together a wide array of scientists.
- Srinivan Pillay. He has a background in psychology (Harvard Medical School) and neuroscience and has developed a detailed approach focused around leadership and coaching into the details of how the brain functions.
- Argang Ghadiri, Andreas Habermacher, & Theo Peters. They authored the book *A Journey through the Brain* for business leaders that is a detailed summary of the background, history, and major thinkers in the field of neuroleadership

For the purposes of this research study, the literature review around Neuroleadership will focus on the research, theories and models of David Rock and Elger. David Rock's SCARF model (Rock, 2008) builds on the understanding that the brain is focused on increasing or sustaining reward and avoiding negative experiences. From this focus on reward and avoidance, he outlined different drivers and behaviors in the workplace. They are divided into five categories:

- Status. David Rock does not just mean the hierarchical status but rather how in interpersonal relationships and individuals reward center will be activated. When employees are given praise or criticism this will influence their status. The feeling of threat is individually processed very differently between different people—a small "tip" given, for some, for example, can already be seen as a threat and stimulate a defensive reaction. That status is only possible through hierarchical promotion in organizations is a general misconception. David Rock states that, alternatively, positive feedback is a much more positive way to generate wider status effects. This stimulates the brain and its reward centers, creating a positive environment for the brain.
- Certainty. The brain is continually scanning the environment to make predictions about the future and to predict outcomes from the patterns it recognizes. In familiar situations the brain uses less resources than in unfamiliar situations. This means that in unfamiliar situations the brain will be strained; it will be uncomfortable. In familiar situations where the outcomes are predictable the reward system will be activated and a feeling of security will be generated. This is why Rock recommends clear communication in periods of change and breaking down of large processes into smaller processes that can be clearly seen and understood.
- Autonomy. With autonomy employees have the ability to freely influence and design their workplace. Lack of autonomy can be processed as a threat

situation and hence will promote stress and its negative implications in the brain. Employees should be given as much autonomy as it is possible to give. This can involve various elements such as managers interfering as little as possible and giving as much free room as possible including, as much as feasible, the free choice of working hours and design in the workplace. Interestingly just being promised more autonomy will activate the reward system in the brain.

- Relatedness. The social wiring in our brains means that we in daily life, and in business, form social groups and build relationships. These groups build mutual trust and form a barrier against the unknown. These feelings and the interpersonal bonding promote the production of oxytocin, the trust and bonding hormone, which increases the positive feeling of trust and stabilizes these relationships. Therefore trust and bonding should be actively promoted in business by ensuring that employees can work in small project teams and allow the building of relationships.
- Fairness. Unfairness stimulates a strong emotional reaction in the brain, an automatic defense mechanism. This emotional reaction can for example, be shut down, with punishment of the source of the unfairness. This activates the reward center in the brain and counteracts the negative impact of unfairness. This feeling of unfairness can unintentionally be promoted in corporations through unclear and intransparent communication (Rock, 2008).

Similar to David Rock, Elger also focuses on reward systems. Elger in his book *Neuroleadership* (Elger, 2009) goes into the brain and numerous scientific studies and defines four basic systems in the brain: the reward system, the emotional system, the memory system and the decision system. Based on scientific studies Elger shows how these work together and how they can be applied in business context. He created seven fundamental principles of neuroleadership:

- The reward system. Activating the reward system of employees is of central importance. The reward system generates feelings of comfort, happiness and satisfaction and even if it is permanently stimulated does not lead to habituation. Factors that influence this are, for example, working atmosphere, harmonious relationships with coworkers and management, type and form of tasks and the design of the workplace.
- Fairness and feedback. The brain, as a social organ, strives for fairness and will actively try to keep this balance. If the brain, and the person, feels unfairness then the person will actively try to balance this out and seek justice (altruistic punishment). Positive feedback will activate the brain's reward system and minimize the need for altruistic punishment and a more positive working environment.
- Influence through information. The brain is continually making evaluations from any situation it encounters and from this also makes prediction. This means the brain is constantly looking for information that can help it to make predictions that can be processed positively or negatively. This means that in corporations the impact of important decisions needs to be well thought through, and how decisions are communicated is relevant to their impact; transparency needs to be guaranteed.
- Each brain is unique. Each brain has its own structure that is formed from a series of interconnected networks that have been laid down from personal experiences that are different from person to person. These give rise to an endless multitude of perspectives and ways of processing individual information. It is therefore essential that leaders understand how their employees operate and think. This requires good people skills, understanding of how humans operate, and plenty of common sense and a good gut feeling.

- Facts are tied to emotions. All information is processed and related unconsciously to various emotional stimuli. Emotions are the base of human beings and therefore information is only processed in relation to these emotions. This information is then compared and balanced and saved depending on various emotions—this is an unconscious process. Retrieving this information is therefore to varying degrees an emotional experience and will generate various behaviors based on these emotions. This means that leaders need to focus on the emotional aspects of leadership to be able to positively influence their employees.
- Experience defines our behavior. Experiences give rise to varying emotions and behaviors and thus if we can draw on positive experiences and ways of behaving then we will be able to deal with our tasks better and more efficiently. This will also create a better environment and better control of stress. This will also ensure that positive experiences are a part of the workplace and will enable employees to lay down networks tying into the positive experiences and the respective behaviors.
- Situational dynamics. The brain prefers situational behaviors based on emotional stimuli rather than planned behaviors. This means that in given situations people will behave differently according to the emotional dynamics. This means in leadership situational dynamics should be dealt with intuitively and allowed to develop and spontaneously bubble up but uncontrolled dynamics need to be avoided through good planning and strong emotional understanding of the emotional power and potential dynamics of certain situations (Elger, 2009).

The leadership theories and models around Nueroleadership as described by Rock (2008) and Elger (2009) provide another lens to view leadership behaviors in an organizational environment.

Culture and leadership. Many studies suggest that different leadership behaviors are interpreted and viewed differently depending on their cultural environment. This is a result of variations in people's ideas of the ideal leader (Jung & Avolio, 1999; Jogulu & Wood, 2008; Yamaguchi, 1999; Yokochi, 1989). Variations exist because the meaning and importance given to the concept of leadership appears to vary across cultures (Dorfman, 2004; Jung & Avolio, 1999; Wood & Jogulu, 2006).

When discussing the dimensions of culture, one of the most referenced research is from Hofstede (1980). Based on an analysis of questionnaires obtained from more than 100,000 respondents in more than 50 countries, Hofstede identified five major dimensions on which cultures differ: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, collectivism, masculinity-femininity, and long-term/short-term orientation.

The studies by House, Hanges, Javidan, Dortman, and Gupta (2004) published in *Culture, Leadership and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies*, provide a strong foundation of findings around culture and leadership. These studies established a classification of cultural dimensions that is more extensive compared to the Hofstede classification system.

The GLOBE research program initiated in 1991 was designed to increase the understanding of cross-cultural interactions and the impact of culture on leadership effectiveness. As part of the study of culture and leadership, GLOBE researchers developed their own classification of cultural dimensions based on the work of others (Hofstede, 1980; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; McClelland, 1961; Triandis, 1995). These researchers identified nine cultural dimensions: uncertainty avoidance, power distance, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, assertiveness, future orientation, performance orientation, and human orientation.

The overall goal of the GLOBE project was to determine how people from different cultures viewed leadership and to determine the ways in which cultural characteristics were related to culturally endorsed leadership behaviors. The framework was developed in part based on the work of Lord & Maher (1991) on implicit leadership theory. According to implicit leadership theory, “individuals have implicit beliefs and convictions about the attributes and beliefs that distinguish leaders” (p. 57). From the perspective of this theory, leadership is in the eye of the beholder (Dorfman, Hanges, & Brodbeck, 2004).

GLOBE researchers identified six global leadership behaviors; charismatic/value based, team oriented, participative, human-oriented, autonomous, and self-protective. These behaviors describe how various cultures view leadership (House et al., 2004). Researchers leverage these leadership behaviors to examine how various culture groups viewed leadership.

- Charismatic/value-based leadership. This describes the ability to inspire, motivate and expect high performance from other individuals based on a set of strong core values. This type of leadership framework involves being “visionary, inspirational, self-sacrificing, trustworthy, decisive, and performance oriented” (Northouse, 2007, p. 24).
- Team-oriented leadership. This emphasizes team building and a common purpose among team members. This kind of leadership includes being collaborative, integrative, diplomatic, non-malevolent and administratively competent.
- Participative Leadership. This reflects the degree to which leaders involve others in making and implementing decisions. It includes being participative and non-autocratic.
- Humane-oriented leadership. This emphasizes being supportive, considerate, compassionate, and generous. This type of leadership includes modesty and sensitivity to others.
- Autonomous leadership. This refers to independent and individualistic leadership, which includes being autonomous and unique.
- Self-protective leadership: This reflects behaviors that ensure the safety and security of the leader and the group. It includes leadership that is self-centered, status conscious, conflict inducing, face saving, and procedural.

Lord, De Vader, & Alliger (1986) asserted that leadership styles are consistent within a culture and may vary considerably across cultures. Based on an individual's cultural background, they may make assumptions about his or her leader in relation to the leader's leadership prototype (Shaw, 1990). Therefore, different leadership styles would be expected to exist naturally in societies that have differing cultural profiles (Hofstede, 1980). In some cultures, an individual might need to take strong decisive action to be seen as a leader, whereas in other cultures, consultation and a democratic approach may be a prerequisite (Den Hartog, House, Hanges, & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1999).

An empirical study (Dorfman & Howell, 1997) demonstrated that directive leadership style had a positive impact on employee outcomes in Taiwan and Mexico among five countries: South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Mexico and the United States. Triandis (1994) suggested that there are different optimal leadership styles for different national cultures. For example, in individualist countries, many people believe that having freedom and feeling challenged at work is most important, while in collectivist cultures, people have a preference for security, obedience, duty, and group harmony (Triandis, 1994). Javidan & Carl (2004) argued that culture is a critical variable in defining leadership effectiveness since what may work in one culture may not work in another.

The study of leadership and culture sheds light on the influence of culture on leadership behaviors and the complexity of the leadership experience. The nature of the interdependent relationship between leadership styles and cultural underpinnings cannot be ignored or underestimated. The theories reviewed in this section are grounded in an assumption that cultural values, beliefs, and expectations influence leadership styles through a complex set of behavioral processes involving culture-specific roles and accountabilities.

In contrast to this perspective, researchers also argue that leadership styles are universal and beyond cultural boundaries because of the generally-accepted management practices, accounting fundamentals, similarities in educational training, and industry-specific logic. In fact, Javidan & Carl (2005) argued that leadership styles are a common set of attributes because of human nature and the need for self-actualization and achievement (Maslow, 1954; McClelland, 1961).

These research theories around culture and leadership provide an important foundation for understanding the leadership strategies of female leaders and how culture impacts their approaches around leading organizational change in global companies.

Gender leadership. The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of gender differences in leadership style and to provide a summary of the research that has been conducted on this topic in the literature of psychology, sociology, management, and political science. This section also explores the role that nonlinear thinking plays in the way women approach organizational changes.

Leadership styles based on characteristics such as power, influence, control, aggressiveness, and being task-oriented have historically been attributed to men (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). In contrast, female leaders are often depicted as relational leaders (Regan & Brooks, 1998), or communal leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). The characteristics associated with a relational type of leadership include: caring about people, seeking to create and maintain relationships, empowering others, and transforming individuals and society (Eagly & Johannesen, Schmidt, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Klenke, 1996; Wilson, 2004). Female leaders are described as developing a caring, nurturing environment that fosters relationships (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt; Fine, 2009; Heim & Murphy, 2001; Klenke, 1996).

Research studies have assessed the styles of male and female leaders and found that there are differences in leadership styles; however, these differences take the form of highly overlapping distributions of women and men that result in small differences (Eagly, 2013). One of the differences is that female leaders are seen to adopt a more democratic and participative style than their male counterparts (Merchant, 2012).

Helgensen (1990) describes the innovative organizational structures and strategies of a number of successful women leaders. She describes the organizations shaped by these women as being more like “webs of inclusion” than hierarchies of exclusion, and stresses the advantages found in this type of organization for information sharing, since there are more points of connection in a web than in a hierarchy, where the communication flow is usually vertical.

Research has demonstrated that women lead differently than their male counterparts. Studies revealing that women lead differently found that women manage based on relationships (Babcock & Laschever, 2004), take an affective approach to management (Belonax, Newell, & Plank, 2006), and demonstrate different negotiation behaviors (Babcock & Laschever, 2004), linguistic styles, and socialization (Oakley, 2000) than their male peers. Research conducted on gender-based approaches to negotiations have suggested that women approach negotiations with an objective of reaching consensus, while men focus more on winning negotiations (Babcock & Laschever, 2004; Belonax et al., 2006; Canet-Giner & Saorín-Iborra, 2007). Babcock & Laschever (2004) further demonstrated that this approach to negotiations coupled with less aggressive linguistic styles and socialization, result in women faring less favorably than men when negotiating promotions, salaries, and contracts. The research validates that women lead differently and are confronted with significant barriers to global leadership roles. This study will explore whether women need to exhibit different skills and behaviors than men when leading organizational transformations to be effective.

Numerous articles have been written about the leadership styles of females and males. Some researchers assert there are distinct differences between how males and females lead, while others claim that “it is the situation that determines the best leadership style, regardless of the sex of the leader” (Fine, 2009, p. 69). There are others who suggest that both men and women lead similarly depending on their positions or situations. Women‘s leadership styles are seen as more transformational—more caring, nurturing, focusing on the betterment of those being led as well as the larger context (i.e., the organization, community, or country; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Fine, 2009). Masculine leadership styles tend to be characterized as more transactional (information, power, or service in exchange for cooperation or participation) or autocratic and hierarchical (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Masculine styles are considered the more traditional style and historically, many organizations were established using this top-down approach, including higher education.

The study conducted by Hagberg Consulting Group also found female managers to be ranked higher in 42 out of 52 traits and skills measured, including teamwork, stability, and motivation (Kinicki & Williams, 2009). Females tend to connect more with their group members by demonstrating actions such as smiling frequently, keeping eye contact, and being more diplomatic with their words (Forsyth, 2010).

Another study conducted by the Management Research Group (2013) that included 17,491 questionnaires discovered that out of common leadership competency areas, women were rated higher by their superiors in areas such as credibility with management, future potential, insight, sensitivity, and working with diverse people. According to the study, men were rated higher in business aptitude, financial understanding, and strategic planning—all areas seen to be important for corporate advancement in companies. No gender differences were discovered in leadership competencies like team performance, effective thinking, and willingness to listen, and no significant differences were found in overall leadership effectiveness (Management Research Group, 2013).

More studies on the gendered differentiation of leadership focused on differences in quality and style of leadership between men and women, specifically a masculine and feminine style of leadership (Austin, 2009). Burns & Martin's (2010) research indicated that "males are perceived to be more competent than females when considering work-related issues" (p. 10). However, Daft (2005) focused on the androgynous leader and suggested that every leader draws on both feminine and masculine sets of characteristics for effectiveness. With regard to gender and leadership style, Boatwright & Forrest (2000) identified the glass ceiling as a reason for differences in style between the genders in leadership positions. They suggested the barrier or glass ceiling kept women from attaining higher leadership positions, which contributed to differences between gender and leadership style. This was supported by Thompson (2000) who concluded that if traditional perspectives of leadership center on masculine-oriented concepts of authoritarian and task-oriented behavior, then, these same perspectives might have contributed to a glass ceiling, essentially prohibiting relationship-oriented or female leadership behaviors from being recognized as viable leadership behaviors. Differences can be summarized as males engaging in task-oriented, autocratic, or transactional styles of leadership, whereas female leadership styles have been classified as caring, democratic, or transformational (Smulyan, 2000).

Gender stereotypes often play a role in defining leadership behaviors (Dodge, Gilroy, & Fenzel, 1995; Heilman, 2001). Men are often stereotyped with agentic attributes such as confidence, assertiveness, independence, rationality, and decisiveness. In contrast, women are stereotyped with communal attributes such as concern for others, sensitivity, warmth, and helpfulness (Deaux & Kite, 1993; Heilman, 2001).

Eagly & Johnson (1990) conducted a quantitative study that compared women and men who occupy the same leadership role based on three leadership styles: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. Eagly and Johnson concluded that women scored higher than men on transformational leadership, while men scored higher than women on laissez-faire leadership. Other research has examined differences in gender and decision-making. An example is Young & McLeod's (2001) research, which found women tend to become principals to be educational leaders while men's decision to lead tends to rest on salary. Additionally, Kruger (2008) researched differences in gender, leadership, and student achievement. Kruger (2008) found that women were stronger educational leaders than male leaders in the study. In more recent research, Kruger (2008) found "women's vision was more geared toward educational matters than the male vision and women tended to be more involved operationally and strategically than their male colleagues" (p. 50). Overall, these studies support gender as a factor that impacts style, decision-making, and student achievement.

Contrary to these theories that support differences in leadership style between male and female leaders, other literature contends that there are no differences in leadership styles between genders. Leadership styles are highly situational. Contingency theories argue that neither of the genders are better in employing a leadership style but the effectiveness is conditional to various internal and external environments of the group. Contingency theories therefore recognize that there is no best style for leadership, but rather "leader effectiveness depends, or is contingent on, the interaction of leader behavior and the situation (Riggio, 2008). Gender stereotyping is identified as one reason of why gender is often perceived to be one of the major determinants of leadership style. Valentine & Godkin (2000) highlight the substantial body of literature that suggests that women face socially prompted stereotypes about masculinity and femininity that undermine their credibility as leaders. Kanter (1977) argues that apparent sex differences in behavior are not a product of gender differences but rather because of differing structural positions; because women are often in positions of less power, they behave in ways that reflect that lack of power.

The debate on gender leadership has a long history. Advocates for differences between male and female leadership include several writers who have drawn on personal experience in organizations as well as informal surveys and interviews of managers (Eagly & Karau, 2002). These writers claim that the leadership styles of men and women are different, primarily in women's being less hierarchical and more cooperative, collaborative, and oriented toward enhancing others' self-worth (Book, 2000; Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990). In contrast, social scientists have typically either stated that female and male organizational leaders do not differ or minimized the importance of those differences (e.g., Powell, 1990). Careful analysis of the relevant research indicates more complex findings than acknowledged by the advocates of either difference or those of similarity (Eagly & Johannsen-Schmidt, 2001).

Many of these studies on gender differences in leadership style rely on leader-only self-report data, which many leadership scholars describe as unreliable at best. (Hamori-Ota, 2007). These sex differences are only trends and may not be seen across all groups and situations. Further research is required to understand the unique leadership strategies deployed by women when leading organizational change. This research will add to the field of change management and leadership studies by uncovering new methods and approaches to leading change.

Summary. There are many leadership frameworks that lay the foundation for understanding how leaders approach change in organizations. A subset of the overall leadership theories was selected for this research based on their relevance to organizational change. These frameworks were the foundation for guiding the research in this phenomenological study and were used to inform the interview questions developed to understand the lived experiences of women leaders in using nonlinear methods around organizational change.

Organizational Change Philosophies and Perspectives

Despite the thousands of articles written about leading change over the past ten years, most of the perspectives are based on common models and bodies of study; however, researchers have approached the problem of understanding organizational change from an array of different perspectives. Organizational change can be described in terms of organizational metaphors and models of change. This section will examine both the philosophies around change and the linear and nonlinear organizational change theories and methods that have influenced the field. The process of how organizations change draws on many disciplines from psychology and behavioral science to engineering and systems thinking.

The philosophy of change is a structured set of assumptions, premises, and beliefs about the how change works in companies. Philosophies of change help determine the ideas and beliefs that are being made about companies and the pathways that change takes within and around them (Graetz & Smith, 2010).

Biological philosophy. Biology has been viewed as a metaphor for organizational change (Witt, 2004). Evolution can be defined as the small changes experienced by a particular species or a population of organizations. Hannan & Freeman (1977) popularized this application of biology that focuses on incremental changes within industries. Population ecologists (McKelvey & Aldrich, 1983) began to take a biological perspective of organizational behavior. They asserted that organizational change is a result of a "natural selection where industries slowly evolve to meet the constraints of their environmental context" (p. 7). Change from a biological perspective is viewed as a natural phenomenon that is very dynamic (Graetz & Smith, 2010).

Rational philosophy. The rational philosophy discusses the connection between an organization's composition and organizational environment (Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). This rational philosophy asserts that organizations are adaptive and operate with purpose/intention (Kezar, 2000; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). The process for change is rational and linear (Carnall, 1995; Carr, Hard, & Trahant (1996)). Theorists (Child, 1972; Smith & Berg, 1987) assert that leaders and managers have tremendous power over their organizations. Management experts such as Kotter (1995), Huber & Glick (1995), and Kanter, Stein, & Jick (1992) all argue that successful change is under the control of the managers or leaders.

Institutional philosophy. The institutional philosophy argues that organizations are sensitive to the external environments in which they are placed. According to this philosophical standpoint, organizations are forced into change by pressures from within their organizational environment. Smart business strategies cannot outmaneuver the standards established by an organizational context (Graetz & Smith, 2010). It is important to study how similarities are driven by external forces that force companies into set patterns (Meyer & Rowan, 2006).

Resource philosophy. The resource perspective is centered on the strategic capabilities of the organization as opposed to the context within the broader environment. Based on this philosophy, the management of resources is linked to an organization's success during change. From this standpoint, "organizational change begins by identifying needed resources, which can be traced back to sources of availability and evaluated in terms of criticality and scarcity" (Graetz & Smith, 2010, p. 14). Thus, the most important resources to obtain are either distinct in themselves or are unique when combined with other assets (Connor, 2002).

Contingent perspective. The contingency philosophy is grounded on the idea that organizational performance is a result of the fit between two or more important elements, such as an organization's environment and the use of strategy, structure, systems, technology, or organizational culture (Pfeffer, 1982). The contingency philosophy explains organizational change from a behavioral viewpoint where "managers should make decisions that account for specific circumstances, focusing on those which are the most directly relevant, and intervening with the most appropriate actions. Thus, the best actions and behaviors are usually situational and geared toward specific circumstances" (Graetz & Smith, 2010, p. 28). Supporters of contingency philosophy assert that in the long run, leaders in highly competitive markets are coerced to adjust their actions and their organization's structure so that they are in alignment with efficiency demands (Alder, 1992; McLoughlin & Clark, 1988).

Psychological perspective. The psychological philosophy is rooted on the belief that the most important aspect of change is through the personal and individual experience (Lewin, 1947). The psychological philosophy centers on the experiences that individuals have within organizations and is focused on the human side of change (Iacovini, 1993; Stuart, 1995). The psychological philosophy asserts that people are the most critical component in organizational change. The process of organizational change is primarily focused on how people deal with the traumatic psychological transitions that come with change (Bridges, 1980, 1992; Kubler-Ross, 1973).

Political philosophy. The political philosophy asserts that change is created by the clashing of opposing political forces. The philosophy depicts change as a result of clashing belief systems based on the scholarly work of Marx and Hegel (Morgan, 1986). This conflict approach means that "change processes inevitably revolve around activities such as bargaining, consciousness-raising, persuasion, influence and power, and social movements" (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 36).

The political philosophy centers attention on the way things get done through political activity. Conflict lies at the heart of the political philosophy because groups have competing ideals/agendas and each group seeks to obtain more power. This philosophy would recommend that change leaders focus on creating strong political support with organizational coalitions and controlling the resources that confer power such as leadership roles and funding support (Graetz & Smith, 2010).

Cultural philosophy. The cultural philosophy emerged from the field of anthropology where the concept was first applied to an organizational setting by Pettigrew (1979). In line with this philosophy, change is normal because it is a response to changes in the human environment (Morgan, 1986). Schein (1979, 1984, 1993, 1997) argued that culture is an unconscious phenomenon. It is the source of the most basic human ideas and beliefs shared by organizational team members. While the psychological philosophy is focused on the individual experiences of change, the cultural perspective is mainly concerned with the collective experiences of change and the shared values that guide them (Graetz & Smith, 2010). The cultural philosophy assumes that the change process will be long-term, slow and small-scale (Schein, 1985).

Systems philosophy. The systems philosophy emerged from ‘systems thinking’ and general system theory developed originally from viewing organizations as “complex machines, later as open systems, and most recently as entities capable of self-organization” (Gharajedaghi, 1999, p. 52). The systems philosophy recognizes the importance of holistic examination rather than only looking at the components of organizations. Thus, organizations should be seen as the sum of their parts rather than as a collection of individual units. In agreement with systems theorists, the most important thing is to first recognize that any forced change has many impacts and sometimes multiplied effects across an organization.

Summary. Graetz & Smith (2010) suggest that these nine philosophies and perspectives of change shed light on the complementary and competing forces that female leaders face in managing the complexity of change. As Cameron & Quinn (1988) argued over 20 years ago, “traditional models and theories of organization assume consistency and symmetry, yet studies suggest that disconfirmation, contradiction, and nonlinearity are inherent in all organizations” (p. 38). Traditional frameworks represent change as a programmatic, linear process with a clear beginning, middle and end; however, this often ignores the complexities and dynamic nature of organizations.

Organization Change Metaphors and Methods

Metaphors are often used in organizations to illustrate change issues, communicate vast amounts of information, convey meaning, and assist with the interpretation of complex organizational practices and problems (Putnam, Phillips, & Chapman, 1996). "Embodied metaphors function as "windows" to organizational, divisional, or task identities linked together in terms of meaningful narratives" (Heracleous & Jacobs, 2008, p. 71). According to Cunliffe, "metaphors also function as potent dialogical practices, creating vivid pictures and immediate reactions which create possibilities for shared significance" (Cunliffe, 2002, p. 137).

Gareth Morgan identified eight organizational metaphors that influence the assumptions around how organizational change occurs: (a) machines, (b) organisms, (c) brains, (d) cultures, (e) political systems, (f) psychic prisons, (g) flux, and (h) transformation (Morgan, 1986). As a backdrop to this research study, this section focused on four of the metaphors that significantly influence the ideas and assumptions around change theories.

As stated by Morgan, "When we think of organizations as machines, we begin to see them as rational enterprises designed and structured to achieve predetermined ends" (Morgan, 1986). Cameron & Green (2004) assert that this metaphor informs the following suppositions about organizational change:

- The organization can be changed to an agreed end state by those in positions of authority;
- There will be resistance, and this needs to be managed;
- Change can be executed well if it is well planned and well controlled (Cameron & Green, 2004).

The political metaphor emphasizes the strategic role that power battles, competing intentions and conflicts have in change (Morgan, 1986). This metaphor has the following implications:

The change will not work unless it's supported by a powerful person;

- The wider the support for this change the better;
- It is important to understand the political map and who will be winners and losers after this change;
- Positive strategies include creating new coalitions and renegotiating issues (Cameron & Green, 2004).

The metaphor of organizational life sees the organization as a living, adaptive system. According to Morgan, "different environments favor different species of organizations based on different methods of organizing. . . . Congruence with environment is the key to success" (Morgan, 1986, p. 35). This metaphor results in a different set of assumptions around organizational changes:

- Changes are made only in response to changes in the external environment (rather than using an internal focus);
- Individuals and groups need to be psychologically aware of the need for change to adapt;
- The response to a change in the environment can be designed and worked towards;
- Participation and psychological support are necessary strategies for success (Cameron & Green, 2004).

The flux and transformation metaphor enables us to view organizations as a part of the natural flow of the entire eco-system with the capability to self-organize, transform, and renew (Cameron & Green, 2004). This leads to the following assumptions:

- Change cannot be managed. It emerges;
- Managers are not outside the systems they manage. They are part of the whole environment;
- Tensions and conflicts are an important feature of emerging change;

- Managers act as enablers. They enable people to exchange views and focus on significant differences (Cameron & Green, 2004).

The relevance of a metaphorical approach to organizational life and change has been critically discussed. (Grant & Oswick, 1996) have pointed out positive and negative aspects of metaphors. On the one hand, metaphors have an emancipating potential, i.e., in helping people to see things anew, reinterpret the known, and facilitate learning. Metaphors can also foster new experiences and experimenting, and thus can serve as a valuable investigative tool. They can "constitute and capture the nature of organizational life in different ways and create new ways of viewing organizations, which overcome the weaknesses and blind spots of traditional metaphors" (Morgan, 1980, pp. 611–612).

On the other hand, metaphors also have various limitations (e.g., Morgan, 1996). Because their meaning is not completely bound by symbolic conventions and as they do not have a determined mission (Fernandez, 1986), the metaphorical linking between domains of experience could both generate and restrict understanding.

Linear change methods. Now that the context around organizational metaphors has been examined, this section of this chapter will focus on the linear organizational change processes theories and methods developed by leading researchers in the field.

Most of the theories explaining how change occurs follow one of three perspectives: (a) Developmental or Incremental, (b) Transitional, and (c) Transformational. Developmental or incremental change builds on a foundation to achieve something better. Transitional change is a form of incremental change—a move from one state or condition to another. Transformational change implies the transfiguration from one state of being to a fundamentally different state of being. It often emerges out of chaos or revolution from the edges of an organization rather than from within (Cyr & Meier, 1993). In developmental change, leaders are often called trainers, coaches, and developers. In transitional change, leaders are referred to as planners, guides, and explorers. In transformational change, metaphors are about a shift in the state of being of an organization. At such times, leaders are referred to as liberators, visionaries, and/or creators. (Marshak, 1993).

Sastry's (1997) study of organizational change indicated that "understanding organizational change should be a primary concern for managers and scholars" (p. 237). To facilitate change, leaders need not only learn to conceptualize, communicate, and influence or persuade, but they also need to learn to become "co-narrators, joint authors, and co-improvisers" (Shaw, 2002, p. 173). "Leadership and organizations are human social constructions that emanate from the rich connections and interdependencies of organizations and their members" (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p. 2).

Many models of organizational change exist to provide leaders with a linear plan for moving through change (Proehl, 2001). The change literature often includes linear models of change whereby one step of activities is succeeded by another into a series of changes (Collins, 1998). Most linear change management models focus on the strategies, techniques, and learning mechanisms necessary to drive organizational transformations (Bullock & Batten, 1985; Hamel, 2000; Judson, 1991; Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992; Kotter, 1995; Lewin, 1951; Lippet et al., 1958; Luecke, 2003).

Al-Haddad & Kotnour (2015) propose a taxonomy to categorize the literature around change based on four main areas: change type, change enablers, change methods, and change outcomes. In this paper, we focused on the change methods as the foundation for this research. The change methods can be broken down into two key areas: systematic change methods and change methods (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015). These methods help leaders align the change efforts with business strategies and organizational missions. (Grover, 1999). Worren, Ruddle, & Moore (1999) argued that the foundation of change management includes "principles and tools from sociology, information and technology and strategic change theories" (p. 180). Many researchers have developed linear change management methods. Some of these are identified below.

Lewin method (1947). Kurt Lewin developed his theories regarding change based on the idea of the organism metaphor. Lewin (1947) defined change as sequential: an unfreezing or unlocking of the present state, a change in the present state through some movement or action, and finally a refreezing or deliberate steps to make the new behavior resistant to further change.

Lippet, Watson, & Wesley (1958). Lippet, Watson, & Wesley proposed the linear planning method in 1958. This method describes a "cyclical process that requires improving the change process by examining the organizational situation/context after stabilizing the change" (Kolb & Frohman, 1970, p. 38; Lippet et al., 1958). This method consists of "seven consequential steps that includes diagnosing the organizational situation, planning for the change actions that need to be taken, executing the change, and lastly stabilizing and measure the impact of the change" (Lippet et al., 1958, p. 29).

Bullock & Batten (1985). Bullock and Batten's phases of planned change draw upon the disciplines of project management. Exploration entails confirming the need for the change and obtaining the necessary resources to implement the change. An examination is completed and specific activities are outlined in a change roadmap. The final integration phase is stated once the change plan has been fully executed. Bullock and Batten assert that change can be managed and executed in line with a specific plan.

Beckhard & Harris (1987). Beckhard and Harris developed their change model to define the process of change and explore the components necessary for change to happen. If any one factor is not in place, then the result of the change will be insignificant and resistance will not be overcome. If people don't understand the strategic vision or if the overall plan is confusing, then the chances of change being successful is significantly decreased (Beckhard & Harris, 1987).

Luecke (1990). In 1990, Luecke proposed a new change method. Luecke (2003) emphasized the importance of accepting the urgency for change. According to him, "seeing change as an opportunity and not as a threat is very important. It allows the change to succeed and penetrate deeply within the organizational culture" (p. 57). His method emphasizes strong leadership in championing the change and motivating employees. Luecke's method begins with "joint identification of existing problems and their solutions, developing a shared vision, identifying leadership, implementing change, and finally monitoring and adjusting strategies for any problem in the change process" (p. 62).

Judson (1991). Judson proposed a method for implementing change that consisted of five phases: (a) analyzing the organization, (b) planning for change, (c) communicating it to people; (d) reinforcing, (e) institutionalizing it (Judson, 1991).

Kanter (1992). Kanter et al. developed a comprehensive method to implement change consisting of many phases: "analyzing the organizational situation, creating a plan and vision, implementing change with the support of a strong leader, and finally communicating and institutionalizing the change" (p. 46). Jick, Kanter, and Stein take into consideration many internal and external factors that affect the change process. They discuss the role of "change agents"—individuals who are accountable for the creation and execution of the change (Ford, Laurie, & D'Amelio, 2008).

Kotter (1995). Kotter went even further and defined eight basic steps for leading organizational change. He strongly emphasized the role of communication in helping employees through the change journey (Kotter, 1995). His method consists of eight key steps. It starts with "establishing a sense of change, building a trusted team, having a vision and a strategy, communicating the vision, implementing the change and planning short-term wins, consolidating gains, and constantly institutionalizing the change" (p. 130).

Hamel (2000). Hamel outlined eight steps for successful change that begins with establishing a "strong plan, writing policies, creating a support team, implementing change, and finally integrating and institutionalizing the change in the organization" (p. 24). Hamel stressed that "change has to be a continual cycle of imagining, designing, experimenting, assessing, and scaling for innovative ideas" (p. 28).

Proehl (2001). Other recent models highlight various aspects of influencing change in a linear way. Proehl provides keys to successful organizational change including mission, outcomes, organizational values, holistic approach, top management support, empowerment, customer focus, collaboration with other agencies, information technology, and leadership (Proehl, 2001). Colin Price and Emily Lawson suggested that influencing change is based on compelling stories, role modeling, reinforcement systems, and the skills required for the change. (Lawson & Price, 2003). Burke asserted that organizational change models provide a “navigational chart” (p. 239) and thus measuring change over time enables managers to determine if they are “on course” (Burke, 2002).

Lewin’s original theory and other linear approaches (Bullock & Batten, 1985; Hamel, 2000; Judson, 1991; Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992; Kotter, 1995; Lewin, 1951; Lippet et al., 1958; Luecke, 2003) have been criticized for their ideas that organizations face stable conditions and can be managed by defined change plans. As a result of such a critique, a new approach to organizational change was developed that is coined the “emergent approach.”

An emergent approach to organizational change sees change as so rapid and unpredictable that it cannot be managed from the top down. Instead, it is argued, change should be viewed as a process of learning, where the organization responds to the internal and external environmental changes. Todnem (2005) suggested that this approach is more focused on “change readiness and facilitating for change” than for providing specific preplanned steps for each change project. This alternative nonlinear approach will be discussed further in the next section.

Nonlinear Change Methods

Many theorists have argued that change is a continuous complex process and cannot be reduced to how-tos or similarly linear prescriptions.

Systems thinking. Many of these change theories are rooted in the concept of systems thinking. Systems thinkers stem from a wide range of disciplines—biology, management, physiology, anthropology, chemistry, public policy, sociology, and environmental studies among others. Some are early innovators in systems ideas; some have been solely practitioners who advanced and popularized systems ideas; others are well-known writers who drew heavily upon systems thinking theories, although it was not their primary discipline.

Systems thinking is the process of understanding how things, regarded as systems, influence one another within a whole. In organizations, systems consist of people, structures, and processes that work together to make an organization “healthy” or “unhealthy.” Ludwig von Bertalanffy advanced the concept in the 1940s, and Ross Ashby further developed it. Peter Senge and members of the Society for Organizational Learning at MIT defined systems thinking as the capstone for true organizational learning (Senge, 1990a).

Contemporary ideas around systems theory were developed from within diverse areas, exemplified by the work of researchers in the following areas: biology, Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1934), sociology, Talcott Parsons (1951) linguistics, Béla H. Bánáthy (1997), ecological systems, Howard T. Odum (1983) and Fritjof Capra (1997), organizational theory and management with individuals such as Peter Senge (1990a), Margaret Wheatley (2006), interdisciplinary study with areas like Human Resource Development from the work of Richard A. Swanson (2001), and education with insights from those such as Debora Hammond (2003).

Many theorists have acknowledged that organizations have complex social systems; separating the parts from the whole decreases the overall effectiveness of organizations (Schein, 1980). This perspective differs from the conventional models that focus on individuals, structures, departments and units, apart from the whole. Systems thinking recognizes the interdependence between groups of individuals, structures, and processes that enable an organization to function. Laszlo (1972) asserted that the new systems view of organized complexity went “one step beyond the Newtonian view of organized simplicity” (pp. 14–15) that reduced the parts from the whole, or understood the whole without relation to the parts (Laszlo, 1972). Bela H. Banathy (1997) reinforced this perspective by asserting that “the systems view is a world-view that is based on the discipline of system inquiry. Central to systems inquiry is the concept of system. In the most general sense, system means a configuration of parts connected and joined together by a web of relationships” (Banathy, 1997, p. 22).

Senge's (1990b) systems view described organizations as organisms building upon the theories of Bertalanffy (1934). He used the human body as an analogy, illustrating that it is not only necessary to understand how the distinct parts of the human body connect but also how their processes create balance so the system functions successfully. Senge asserted that ignoring processes within organizations leads to failure during times of change (1990). Anderson and Johnson stated, "Many of the most vexing problems confronting managers and corporations today are caused by a web of interconnected, circular relationships" (Anderson & Johnson, 1997, p. 17).

Senge (1990a) called systems thinking a conceptual framework that cohesively unites shared vision, mental models, personal mastery, and team learning. In essence, systems thinking makes learning organizations possible. Learning organizations are vital for navigating and adapting to today's complex environments. System thinking has important implications for how leaders drive organizational change and understand the web of interconnections within large organizations.

In her book *Organization Theory: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives,* Mary Jo Hatch (2013) provided an introduction to general systems theory that is useful in thinking about organizations. She asserted that the use of lower level models was problematic when applied to higher level systems. Based on her research, the language of basic machines creates blind spots when used as a metaphor for humans or intricate social systems; human systems are significantly more complex and dynamic.

Margaret Wheatley provided a new perspective around systems thinking and change by looking at the concept of emergence—the process in which larger entities and patterns arise through interactions among smaller or simpler entities. Margaret Wheatley asserted that in nature the "change never happens as a result of top-down, preconceived strategic plans, or from the mandate of any single individual or boss. Change begins as local actions spring up simultaneously in many different areas. If these changes remain disconnected, nothing happens beyond each locale" (Wheatley & Frieze, 2008, p. 1). She argued that broad-based change happens through networks of relationships and connections (Wheatley, 2006).

Punctuated organizational change. Another popular theory called punctuated organizational change is based on systems thinking. The punctuated equilibrium model (PEM) is an influential model of organizational change that asserts that fundamental organizational change would occur through brief, discontinuous, and simultaneous changes in all domains of organizational activity and not through incremental and asynchronous changes. This theory assumes the longer an organization exists the less its ability to change. It is based on causal loops involving four state variables; organizational inertia, strategic orientation, performance, and pressure for change. These variables were studied using computer modeling rather than lived experiences. Results indicated that managing change successfully required careful and appropriately timed responses by organizational managers and leaders at key points along the causal loops (Sastry, 1997).

Brown & Eisenhardt (1997) challenged the theory of punctuated change, which assumes "long periods of small, incremental change interrupted by brief periods of discontinuous, radical change" (p. 1). Through a grounded theory approach, they theorized that successful companies change continuously. Within such companies "change is not the rare, episodic phenomenon described in the punctuated equilibrium model but, rather, it is endemic to the way these organizations compete" (p. 1).

Scott & Marshall (2005) argued that "when environments change, organizational adaptation can be in the form of incremental steps or adjustments aimed at reducing inefficiency. These types of organizational change are often characterized by guided direction and aspiration towards long term goals. Managing small-scale adaptation involves steering meaning rather than motive" (p. 378). "While continuous change is focused on "steering," radical change is centered on creating structural adaptation based on strategic company objectives. Radical or transformational change demands a paradigm shift that often challenges the basic identity of employees and companies" (Scott & Marshall, 2005, p. 379). This research explored the lived experiences of women leaders influencing these type of organizational paradigm shifts.

Dynamical systems. Nonlinear dynamical systems theory has brought to light important principles of pattern formation and change across scientific disciplines and across systems as diverse as cells, neurons, and even political systems (Thelen, 1995). A dynamical system is "a set of elements that interact and continually evolve over time" (Vallacher, Read, & Nowak, 2002, p. 53). Researchers often conduct experiments to study change. The baseline homeostasis and stability of a system is measured. When the system is disturbed, it can be observed in transition. During transition, the factors that facilitate and prevent change become apparent (Kelso, 1997; van Geert, 1998).

These type studies in dynamical systems research have revealed that an important predictor of transition is a type of discontinuity called *critical fluctuations* (Bak & Chen, 1991; Kelso, 1997; Schiepek, Eckert, & Weihrauch, 2003; van der Maas & Molenaar, 1992). When challenges to the current steady state of a system are too great to assimilate, change often is not gradual and linear but rather is characterized by disturbance and increased variability in system behavior before reorganization. During this period of fluctuation, the system is destabilized but also open to new information and to the exploration of potentially more adaptive associations and configurations. There is then an oscillation between old patterns that are less viable and new patterns that are emerging, until the system settles into a new dynamically stable state (attractor) and variability decreases (Kelso, 1997; Thelen & Smith, 1994).

Thomas Gladwell in his book, *The Tipping Point*, describes similar processes of "disturbance, critical threshold, and sudden discontinuous change" (Gladwell, 2000, p. 28). Change can be discontinuous and increased variability can be an indicator of transition (Hayes et al., 2007).

Complexity theory. Complexity theory is a label for a variety of theories and ideas that originated from scientific research in biology, mathematics, chemistry, and physics (Cillier, 1998; Marion 1999; Rescher, 1996). In complexity theory, the future is unknowable and as such the ability to learn is critical to ongoing organization effectiveness, navigating the paradox of the desire for stability with that of the need to flex, adapt, and change. Too much stability will stagnant the organization and prevent proactive adaptive change; too little and the organization becomes impossible to manage.

Contrary to the linear models of change, complexity theory challenges the single direction of organizational change theories and suggests that changes are produced based on a plethora of interconnected causes and effects whose relationships are too complicated to understand within a linear framework (Holland, 1998; Maturana & Varela, 1980; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984).

Other theorists have also challenged the view that organizations should follow a linear change model (Black 2000; Morgan 1996; Stacey 2003; Wheatley 1992). They observed organizations as nonlinear systems surrounded by dynamic forms of change. The unpredictability of change meant that organizational leadership could not manage change, but rather support their organization on its change journey, releasing individuals to adapt as the organization moves towards the “edge of chaos,” providing the environment for self-management. Complexity theory therefore promotes the idea of organizations as complex adaptive systems that need to respond to the external and internal environment by remaining on the edge of chaos while at the same time self-organizing and continuously reinventing the organization. Organizational change according to this type of theory is never viewed as solely a one-dimensional series of succeeding activities; it is always seen as taking place amidst the turmoil of transient states and interconnected flows of activities (Stahyre, 2002). One of the key contributions of the complexity theory is the departure from linear models of thinking (Anderson, 1999; Morel & Ramanujam, 1999). Tsoukas (1998) reinforced this new approach. Chaos theory highlights the “impossibility to long-term prediction for nonlinear systems since the task of prediction would require knowledge of initial conditions of impossibly high accuracy” (Tsoukas, 1998, p. 229).

The acknowledgement of nonlinearity of complex organizational systems enables new views and perspectives around organizational change. Complexity theory puts into question the linearity and single direction of organizational change models and approaches.

Summary

This section provided a brief review of the organizational change literature based on linear and nonlinear approaches. Most of the historical literature asserted that the process of change can be broken down into a number of different sequential steps (Lewin 1945; Kotter 2012). These linear change management models focused on the strategies, techniques, and learning mechanisms necessary to drive large-scale transformations. Recent research, however, has focused on nonlinear change theories that treat organizations as complex adaptive systems. Change is a continuous complex process and cannot be reduced to how-tos or similarly linear prescriptions.

Dynamical Systems Theory argues that “when challenges to the current steady state of a system are too great to assimilate, change often is not gradual and linear but rather is characterized by disturbance and increased variability in system behavior before reorganization” (Hayes et al., p. 1; see also Bak & Chen, 1991; Kelso, 1997; Schiepek et al., 2003; van der Maas & Molenaar, 1992). Complexity theory purports that changes are produced on the basis of a multiplicity of interconnected causes and effects whose relationships are too complicated to conceive of from an analytical framework that assumes linearity (Holland, 1998; Maturana & Varela, 1980; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984).

These nonlinear approaches provide a foundation to understand how female leaders are developing new strategies based on nonlinear theories when responding to rapid and complex change within organizations.

Chapter 3: Methods

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived experiences of female leaders who use nonlinear models of change to influence organizational change. Specifically, the study looked at what leadership strategies and approaches that female leaders used when leading change in complex, large companies. Using an approach based on Van Manen's (1990, 2002) phenomenological examples of human science, this study focused on describing the perceptions and lived experiences through narrative anecdotes of female leader's experiences with organizational change.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the method and the design of the research. It reviews the population of the study participants and the process used to collect, organize, analyze, and check for accuracy (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2005, 2007, 2009). This chapter also reviews the human subject considerations and the issue of validity and reliability in regard to the research.

Creswell (2007) explained that "drafting a central research question often takes considerable work because of its breadth and the tendency of some to form specific questions based on traditional training. Qualitative researchers should state the broadest question they could possible pose about the research problem" (p. 139). Moustakas (1994) emphasized the importance of open-ended questions in a phenomenological study. Open-ended questions enable individuals to comment using their own words (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

This study examined the strategies and approaches used by female leaders when leading organizational change in global companies. The following central research question guided this study: In what ways do female leaders leverage nonlinear change strategies to influence organizational change?

This main research question was addressed by exploring five general sub-questions. These sub-questions were created to uncover insights, strategies, and challenges experienced by the female leaders in this study. They were designed to collect as much data as possible from the female leaders regarding their experiences around leading change in large, complex companies. The sub-questions were:

- What unique strategies, if any, do female leaders employ, in driving organizational changes in global companies?
- How do female leaders view their role in driving organizational change?
- How do female leaders describe the actions they take to enroll their employees in a change initiative?
- How do female leaders describe their role in creating momentum and a sense of energy around the need to change in their organizations?
- How do participants describe what others could learn from studying the role that female leaders play in leading change?

Themes and findings discovered through these questions were used to inform the findings of this study.

Research Design and Rationale

This qualitative study used phenomenological inquiry through in-depth interviews to understand the lived experiences of fourteen female leaders working in global companies. Sokolowski (2000) defined phenomenology as the study of human experience. Van Kaam put phenomenological research into operation by exploring the experiences of feelings (Moustakas, 1994). Bernard & Ryan (2010) stated that a phenomenological study involves six steps:

- Identifying a thing or a phenomenon whose essence you want to understand;
- Identifying your biases and as much as possible putting them aside;
- Collecting narratives about the phenomenon from people who are experiencing it by asking them good, open-ended questions and then probing to let them run with it;
- Using your intuition to identify the essentials of the phenomenon;
- Laying out those essentials in writing, using exemplary quotes from the narratives; and
- Repeating steps four and five until there is no more to learn about the lived experiences of the participants you are studying (Bernard & Ryan, p. 259).

The researcher followed these six steps by taking the necessary actions:

- identifying the phenomenon of leading change
- clearing outlining potential bias on the part of the researcher
- collecting quotes, narratives and insights from females involved in leading change
- using intuition to identify the essentials and themes around leading change
- explaining themes in writing by using quotes and stories from the female leaders
- repeating steps four and five to learn as much as possible regarding the lived experiences of the female participants.

The researcher conducted the study using unstructured interviewing techniques; asking-open-ended questions of the participants about their unique experiences. These phenomenological methods allowed “analysis of patterns for layers of meaning through open-ended questions” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 6).

An emergent design was used for this study, allowing some flexibility in the questioning and data collection. The key was to learn about the phenomenon of using nonlinear methods when leading organizational change and use best practices to gather this information. The researcher positioned herself in the study by including relevant background and work experience that would inform the interpretation of the data and what the researcher would have to gain by conducting the specific study.

The strategies and approaches of female leaders in director-level or above positions used in leading change in global companies encouraged further reflection, description, and clarification. These strategies and approaches provided opportunities for the participants and readers of this study to comprehend the meaning of these lived experiences in light of the data (Creswell, 2007; Pollio, Henley, & Thompson, 1997). Given these factors, the phenomenological design was the best choice for this specific study to capture the insights and approaches of female leaders when leading change.

The phenomenological approach was used to understand the subjective aspects of female leadership behaviors from their frame of reference. “Researchers in the phenomenological mode attempt to understand the meaning of events and interactions to ordinary people in particular situations” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 23). This study captured the unique themes and experiences described by the participants as they shared their approaches to leading organizational transformations.

Participants and Site

The participants in this qualitative study were selected by purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2005; Seidman, 2006). “Purposeful sampling is the process of selecting participants with a specific purpose in mind” (Neuman, 2003, p. 8). Researchers use purposeful sampling to select specific individuals to understand a phenomenon (Creswell, 2005). Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). Bernard (2002), and Spradley (1979). Its results are affected by the availability and willingness of participants, and their ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner.

By using purposeful sampling to choose the participants, the researcher was able to select fourteen female leaders based on convenience and specific criteria. “Criterion sampling involves selecting cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance” (Patton, 2002, p. 238). The researcher selected only female participants for the sampling frame that met the following criteria: (a) were classified as director-level or above in the management hierarchy (b) were employed in corporations with 10,000 or more employees (c) were employed at current company for one year or more and (d) were at company headquarters located in the United States. The researcher leveraged her own network based on her professional work experience within large global organizations and her extensive industry connections to identify females that met the criteria.

Due to the specific nature of the study, the researcher asked the initial leaders sampled to identify other female leaders that would meet the criteria and were willing to volunteer their time to participate in the study. This process continued until sufficient female leaders were identified that met the desired sample size. More female leaders expressed interest in participation than anticipated at the beginning of the study. The researcher had to limit the number of participants in this specific study due to time constraints.

The sample size was small because qualitative studies tend to be small (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003) provides two reasons for this. The first is because the aim of qualitative research is not to generalize; it is not necessary to find a sample size that is statistically significant. Second, an incident only needs to appear once to be analyzed, so including more people does not necessarily add to the evidence. Merriam (1998) suggests that the crucial factor is not the number of respondents, but the potential of each person to contribute to the development of insight and understanding of the phenomenon. Based on this, this study was limited to fourteen female leaders who provided in-depth insights regarding the phenomenon of leading change.

Participants for this study were from large corporations. The researcher chose to focus on female leaders in corporations for two reasons. The first is that her own corporate experience with many Fortune 100 companies, as well as her consulting experience, had been in very large and complex organizations. She would understand the environment these women function in beyond just a superficial level and could ask probing questions. Second, the decision to include participants from corporations with 10,000 or more employees allowed comparisons of similar work environments. This was important to the researcher because based on her experience, large, complex changes require different types of strategies and approaches.

The requirement to be at the company for at least one year was included to address issues about the participant's understanding of their organization's culture and strategy. This length of time allowed the participants to familiarize themselves with the organization's culture and address questions pertaining to their strategies for leading change. The research sites for this study included several corporations located in Portland, Oregon. Using multiple organizations allowed the researcher to interview female participants in leadership positions across a wider geographical boundary to further explore the phenomena around leading change. Interviews were conducted off-site, in secure conference rooms or via skype to minimize any risks associated with interviewing on the company premises or in open environments.

The female leaders fit the requirements outlined by Moustakas (1994) for participation in the study. First of all, the participants were members of the target sample (female leaders in large companies). Second, the participants were willing to freely take part in the interview and understood that the interview would be recorded using a digital recorder and that data from the interview would be published at a later stage (Moustakas, 1994).

As an internal organizational change consultant for many years, the researcher had considerable experience with interviewing and felt confident in her ability to quickly create a rapport with the female participants, securing an atmosphere of safety and trust. In addition, the researcher's experience with leading change in the context of corporate life was a valuable asset, consistent with basic tenets of feminist research (Reinharz, 1992).

From this feminist perspective, the researcher felt that it was appropriate to share something about herself with participants resulting in interviews that more closely resembled conversations. Bringing an authentic and relational style to the interview process produced the quality of data needed for the analysis and was consistent with a feminist perspective where the interviewer is encouraged to show her human side (Fontana & Frey, 1994; Reinharz, 1992).

Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative researchers typically rely on four methods for gathering information: (a) participating in the setting, (b) observing directly, (c) interviewing in depth, and (d) analyzing documents and material culture (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). For the purpose of this study, the researcher interviewed fourteen participants in order to develop emerging themes around leading change.

The researcher selected the method of interviewing as the main means of data collection. “The method of in-depth, phenomenological interviewing applied to a sample of participants who all experience similar structural and social conditions gives enormous power to the stories of a relatively few participants” (Seidman, 1998, p. 48). By focusing on interviewing to collect data, the researcher gave each female participant the opportunity to reconstruct their experiences based on their own sense of what was important and relevant.

In-depth interviews that involved a series of open-ended questions (see Appendix B) were used to elucidate the participants’ views and to identify shared experiences, patterns, and emerging themes (Law et al, 1998). Interviews in the hermeneutic phenomenology paradigm were used as a means for exploring and gathering narratives (or stories) of lived experiences and as a vehicle to develop a conversational relationship with the participants (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007). Gestural observation took place simultaneously with the interview to check the data obtained against participants’ subjective reporting of what they believe and do.

The researcher looked for non-verbal communication responses and signals including facial expressions and voice tones. Bodily movements and expressions are forms of non-verbal communications that provide 60–70 percent of meanings from non-verbal behaviors (Ekman, 2007). Document examination was done by reviewing the biographical information of every participant prior and/or during the interview process. Examining participants’ biographical information enabled the researcher to obtain current details regarding participants’ professional careers and work experiences. The data analysis for this study included following nine steps in conjunction with the modified van Kaam method of analysis by Moustakas (1994).

Each of the female participants selected through purposeful sampling received a letter that included the purpose of the study, procedures, confidentiality, risks, and benefits. Any risk to the participants was minimal; they would disclose personal information only if they chose to do so and, as consenting adults, were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time and have their data destroyed.

Data was collected from the female leaders who had experienced the phenomenon of using nonlinear methods when leading change. In qualitative studies, researchers use a less structured or even non-directive interview to explore a much broader range of variables and the thoughts and feelings of the subjects (Northey, Tepperman, & Russell, 2002).

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. “By transcribing at this level, interpretive categories emerge, ambiguities in language are heard . . . and the oral record—the way the story is told—provides clues about meaning” (Riessman, 1993, p. 58). The researcher used a digital recorder that helped the researcher focus on the interview questions without the distraction of taking detailed notes (Sanders, 1982). The researcher collected background information about each female leader prior to the interview. This secondary form of data collection included analysis of documents such as company websites, biographical information, and reports (Patton, 2002).

Field notes were also used to provide the researcher with additional information regarding the participants. These notes documented non-verbal reactions of participants, descriptions of the participants, and the locations in which the interviews were conducted.

The instrument that the data was collected through (the interview protocol) was validated using a panel of experts. Faculty members and industry experts were given the research questions and interview protocol. They were asked if they believe that the questions on the interview protocol were related to the primary research question. In qualitative studies, researchers use a less structured or even non-directive interview to explore a much broader range of variables and the thoughts and feelings of the subjects (Northey et al., 2002). This study followed this approach by using open-ended questions to explore the phenomena of leading change.

To further establish clarity, a pilot study was conducted in the Portland, Oregon, area. Three female leaders in the corporate sector were invited to participate in the pilot study. The participants made recommendations to add to the clarity and understandability of the interview questions based on their participation. Recommendations given by the participants were then adopted.

Data Analysis

This study included tools outlined as critical for research: online resources, demographic information, critical thinking and analysis, language, and interview protocol (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The primary instruments were the researcher and the digital recorder. The in-depth interviews were recorded to allow for the required data analysis.

The challenging aspects of conducting qualitative analysis described by Miles and Huberman incorporate a labor-intensive process with rich thick layers of data, possible biases of researcher or participants, and processing and coding the data. The researcher in this study used a manual coding process to analyze the research data and used peer reviewers to validate the codes and themes. The interviews for each of the fourteen female leaders in this study lasted between 90-120 minutes. The in-depth interviews began by establishing rapport with participants following the process outlined by Salkind (2003) so the female leaders would be willing to provide candid responses to the research questions.

Data analysis. Bogdan & Biklen (1982) defined qualitative analysis as “working with the data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others” (p. 145). Therefore, the data analysis for this study was conducted using a multi-phased approach (Creswell, 2013; Esterberg, 2002; Merriam, 2002). First, content analysis was completed by organizing and preparing the data (Creswell, 2009). The data was analyzed after each audiotape was transcribed using a transcription service. The transcripts were divided into meaningful themes (Merriam, 2002).

After completing the transcription process, the researcher consolidated the participants’ responses to each interview question. Open coding was conducted on line-by-line bases of the entire transcripts (Esterberg, 2002). The researcher identified the potential themes that described the phenomena observed during the open coding process. Even though the analysis was a lengthy process, it provided the researcher with a heightened sense of awareness surrounding the participants' lived experiences around leading change. The themes that emerged from the participants' stories were pieced together to form a comprehensive picture of the collective experience and strategies of the female leaders in this study.

During the coding phase, the researcher built a conceptual model. The next stage of analysis involved "translating the conceptual model into a story line that could be read by others" (Patton, 2002, p. 26). According to Strauss & Corbin (1990), "ideally, the research report will be a rich, tightly woven account that closely approximates the reality it represents" (p. 57). The aforementioned method of data analysis is also described by Sanders's (1982) four levels of phenomenological analysis:

- description of the phenomena as revealed in the recorded interviews;
- identification of themes that emerge from the descriptions;
- subjective reflections of the emergent themes; and
- explication of essences present in these themes and subjective reflections

The themes were shared with five participants for member checking, debriefing, and feedback to ensure the reliability of the research (Creswell, 2009).

"The participant's task was to tell the story; the researcher's task was to induce the perspective from which it was told" (Josselson, Lieblich, & McAdams, 2003, p. 30). The researcher used the descriptions and perspectives to understand the big picture and create a story to describe the phenomenon of leading change.

Human Subject Considerations

The study was in adherence with all of the requirements established by the Protection of Human Research Subjects and Standards in regard to the interview procedures, non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements, and the data collection process. Prior to the interviews, all female participants were informed regarding their voluntary participation via an electronic copy of a consent form. Each female participant in the study was asked to read and review a letter of informed consent that included the permission to record the interviews (see Appendix B).

Demographic field notes were collected. This included current job position, industry sector, and educational background. Research participants were informed that participation was voluntary and that the participants could withdraw from the study at any point and for any reason with no penalty (see Appendix A—Informed Consent Form).

The primary researcher informed the participants that the transcribed data would be locked in a secure, file cabinet for three years. After this period, the data would be destroyed. The locked file cabinet would be kept in the researcher's home office. The participants' individual responses were included; however, "individual names, organizations' names, or any individuals mentioned during the interview were not included" (Stephens, 2007, p. 7). The information connecting participant names to individual responses was kept in a separate location. The names of participants were replaced with an identification codes to further increase the required confidentiality.

Prior to conducting the study, approval from the Institutional Review Board was requested and granted. A copy of the approval letter is included in the Appendix.

Validity and Dependability

Creswell (2007) recommends eight validation strategies that qualitative researchers should employ to document the accuracy of their studies. These validation strategies include:

- prolonged engagement and persistent observations in the field;
- the use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to corroborate evidence;
- peer review or debriefing;
- refining work hypothesis as inquiry advances;
- clarifying researcher bias from the outset of the study;
- member checking;
- utilizing rich, thick descriptions to allow readers to make decisions regarding transferability; and
- external audits. (Creswell, 2007, p. 251)

Creswell (2007) recommends that researchers engage in at least two of these validation strategies in any given study. To ensure validity, the researcher focused on three validation strategies in this study. First, the researcher conducted a peer review with two other researchers in the School of Education and Psychology program at Pepperdine to validate the coding process. Secondly, the researcher discussed potential bias at the beginning of the study. Thirdly, the researcher ensured validity by using rich descriptions to describe in detail the participants under the study.

Dependability is “the degree to which results are consistent with data and emphasizes the importance of the researcher to account for the ever-evolving context within which the research takes place” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 7). The researcher’s role in the study was not to generate replicability, rather it was to describe the environment through those who experience it. Member checks enhanced the level of dependability of this qualitative study (Merriam, 1998).

Summary

Chapter 3 included an overview of the qualitative research methodology and the reasoning behind using a phenomenological research method for the study. The chapter covered the primary research method, participant selection, and the data collection and analysis processes. It also reviewed human subject considerations and the issue of validity and reliability.

The goal of this study was to provide a description of the phenomenon around leading change so that scholars and practitioners may better understand female leader’s experiences and perceptions in driving organizational change through nonlinear methods. Transcriptions were reviewed and revealed to let the themes emerge, regardless of whether or not they matched a nonlinear approach to organizational change.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe the lived experiences of female leaders and their role in using nonlinear models of change to influence organizational change and to capture the insights, descriptions, perceptions, and interpretations around their role in leading change. The researcher fulfilled this purpose by analyzing the interview data to identify patterns, themes, attitudes, insights, and perspectives of the participants. Phenomenology, as a method of inquiry, captured this information-rich description of the lived experiences and significant events.

Findings

Through this qualitative phenomenological study the researcher explored and chronicled the lived experiences of how fourteen female leaders used nonlinear methods to lead corporate change initiatives. These participants were classified as director-level or above in their management hierarchies, were employed in companies with 10,000 or more employees, and were located in the United States. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of each of the participants.

Table 1.

Demographic Overview of Participants

Participants	Highest Degree Earned	Current Leadership Position	Functional Area	Company Industry
Participant 1	PhD	Technology Strategist	Technology Manufacturing Group	Tech
Participant 2	BS	Director Service Solution Consulting	Solution Consulting	Tech
Participant 3	AA	Portfolio Director	Information Technology	Consumer Products
Participant 4	PhD	Systems Director	Information Technology	Healthcare

(continued)

Participants	Highest Degree Earned	Current Leadership Position	Functional Area	Company Industry
Participant 5	MA	Workplace Transformation Leader	Human Resources	Healthcare
Participant 6	MS	HR Leader	Human Resources	Tech
Participant 7	MBA	Vice President and General Manager	Data Center Group	Tech
Participant 8	BS	Director of Global Learning	Human Resources	Tech
Participant 9	BS	Software Marketing Manager	Software Services	Tech
Participant 10	MA	Business Transformation Consultant	Human Resources	Tech
Participant 11	PhD, JD	Organizational Change Leader	Information Technology	Consumer Products
Participant 12	BA	Global Planning Transition Manager	Global Planning and Supply Chain Organization	Consumer Products
Participant 13	BS	Global Process Manager	Global Fulfillment	Consumer Products
Participant 14	PhD	Business and Technology Leader	Information Technology	Consumer Products
Participants represented three major industries: Healthcare, Technology and Consumer Products. Functional areas included HR, IT, Technology, Change Management, Supply Chain, Fulfillment, Manufacturing and Consulting Services. The educational background of the participants ranged from undergraduate degrees (AA, BA, BS) to Doctorate studies (PhD). Two of the female leaders were born outside of the United States and spoke English as a second language.				

Thematic Analysis Findings

Over 305 codes were identified in the interview transcripts that were grouped into 16 categories that formed the basis of the five themes identified in this study. Sixty-two codes were found that linked to relatedness strategies used by the female leaders. Seventy-one codes were identified that demonstrated usage of inclusion strategies. Forty-two codes represented experiential learning strategies. Lastly, fifty codes were identified that showed association to authenticity and trust strategies.

Several codes appeared multiple times across the transcripts. For example, the word “empathy” was used 15 times by 12 different female leaders. Over 13 different female leaders in the study used the word “conversation” to describe how they built relationships with those impacted by the change. Overall, the word “conversation” was used 17 times in the transcripts. Another frequent term used was “knowing your audience.” Ten female leaders used this word to describe how they approached influencing change. This code appeared 20 times in the interview transcripts. “Building connections” was another phrase used frequently to describe their strategies. This phrase appeared over 18 times and was used by 13 female leaders. After completing coding analysis, 16 major codes emerged that were examined to form the five high-level themes of this study.

The following central research question guided this study: In what ways do female leaders leverage nonlinear change strategies to influence change. Five sub-questions were used to gain insights and perspectives from the female leaders regarding their strategies around leading change. Five interview questions were developed based on these research questions which uncovered over 305 codes that formed the foundation of the five themes used to describe the type of nonlinear strategies used by the female leaders in the study. The sub-questions were:

- What strategies, if any, do female leaders employ, in driving organizational changes in global companies?
- How do female leaders view their role in driving organizational change?
- How do female leaders describe the actions they take to enroll their employees in a change initiative?
- How do female leaders describe their role in creating momentum and a sense of energy around the need to change in their organizations?
- How do participants describe what others could learn from studying the role that female leaders play in leading change?

The findings of this study indicated that female leaders leveraged nonlinear strategies when leading change within their organizations. The five main themes addressed the sub-questions around how female leaders describe their actions in enrolling employees and creating momentum and a sense of energy around the change. The themes also captured the insights that the female leaders shared around what others could learn from studying the role that female leaders play in leading change.

Major Themes

Based on the in-depth interviews and the nine–step coding process, five key themes emerged from the data that illuminated how the female leaders in this study viewed their role and strategies around leading change. Table 2. Coding Chart below outlines the five themes and a high-level summary of the some of the major codes used to establish the theme categories.

Table 2

Coding Chart

Coding		Themes	Global Theme
Conversations	Showing Empathy	Relatedness Strategies	Nonlinear Change Strategies
Knowing Your Audience	Building Connection		
Change Networks	Creating Ownership	Inclusion Strategies	
Cross-cultural Sensitivity	Collaborative Forums		
Science/Tech Fairs	Pilots	Experiential Learning Strategies	
Simulations	Experiments		
Observing Non-verbal	Emotional Intelligence	Radar Emotion Detection	
Reading the Energy in the Room	Receptive to Undercurrent		
Being Authentic	Bonds of Trust	Authenticity and Trust Strategies	
Transparency	Life Story		

The table below shows the frequency patterns of the change strategies that were deployed by the female participants in this study.

Table 3

Frequency of Theme Categories

Participants	Relational Strategies	Inclusion Strategies	Experiential Learning Strategies	Radar Emotion Detection Strategies	Authenticity and Trust Strategies
Participant 1	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 2	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 3	x	x			x

(continued)

Participants	Relational Strategies	Inclusion Strategies	Experiential Learning Strategies	Radar Emotion Detection Strategies	Authenticity and Trust Strategies
Participant 4	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 5	x	x	x		x
Participant 6	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 7	x	x			x
Participant 8	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 9	x	x		x	x
Participant 10	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 11	x			x	x
Participant 12	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 13	x	x	x	x	x
Participant 14	x	x	x	x	x

Theme 1: Relatedness strategies. All of the female participants in this study indicated that they demonstrated relatedness strategies when leading organizational change. These strategies included building connections through one-on-one conversations, understanding the needs of those impacted by the change, showing empathy, and reducing threat responses created by the change.

Relatedness refers to the need to feel safe with other people and to feel that we are part of the group. This need also includes the brain's constant assessment of people as either "friends" or "foes." Strangers, or anyone who looks or sounds different from those that we perceive as our clan (e.g. different race or culture), could trigger a threat because our brains perceive them as not being part of the group with whom we feel safe" (Rock, 2009).

David Rock (2009) who has spent many years exploring the field of neuroscience and how it impacts management and leadership development, discussed the important of relatedness in his SCARF model in an article entitled, "Managing with the Brain in Mind":

> In the brain the ability to feel trust and empathy about others is shaped by whether they are perceived to be part of the same social group . . . When a new person is perceived as different, the information travels along neural pathways that are associated with uncomfortable feelings (different from the neural pathways triggered by people who are perceived as similar to oneself.) . . . Once people begin to make a stronger social connection, their brains begin to secrete a hormone called oxytocin in one another's presence.

During organizational change, it is important to behave in ways that will create points of similarity, strengthen social connections, and increase a sense of relatedness between people. From a neuroscience perspective, this process generates oxytocin, a powerful hormone. It allows our brains to classify the other person as "friend" rather than "foe," and generates feelings of trust and empathy. The female leaders in this study viewed themselves as building strong connections and increasing the sense of relatedness with their teams. They shared many examples of how they built connections between people, ideas and institutions as described by Lipman-Blumen (2000) in the literature review. They viewed their role as a "connector" and spent time engaging in personal conversations with those impacted by the change. They also demonstrated behaviors of transformational leadership by helping people reframe their perception of the change, viewing change as a new opportunity rather than a threat (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

Participant 1, technology strategist in a large technology company, used a relatedness strategy by opening the floor for discussion. She commented:

> I don't want treat each other as junior, senior, longer hair, shorter hair, black, white, woman, man. I want everyone to be heard. I want everyone to feel extremely comfortable about what they're saying. Because I feel like the real change comes from open conversation and when people feel like themselves. So people think there is room for me to be heard and the

> more we hear, the better we can solve the problem. I make the one-on-ones a priority to listen to and really believe in the adage that “it takes a village.” So it is very high touch and partnering and saying “Here is what I think. What are your thoughts, what are you buying, what’s your feedback, what do you think?”

Participant 2, director of services solution consulting in a technology consulting company, built strong relationships with key stakeholders. She said:

> It’s the conversations. It’s the intimacy that you create. It’s, you know, being real. It’s not being afraid to show emotion. It’s not being afraid to relate. I think those are all key differences in my mind. I think it is in the different ways women tend to approach things. They tend to be more relational. I feel that if you want the change to last and you want people to believe in it, you have to make it real, you have to make it tangible. And therefore, you have to be invested in each individual and be able to touch as many of those individuals as possible.

Participant 8, director of global learning in large technology company observed that women could be a little bit more emotional with themselves and their teams when leading change. “I can go down to the cafeteria and see people that I’ve worked with for a long time. And just say, “how you doing?” If I listen intently enough, they’ll just open up to me.

Participant 9, software marketing manager in a large technology company, had a willingness to communicate and always tried to listen to what people were trying to do. She said:

> I don’t like the barrel over others kind of mentality that happens in big companies. I think that you need to find a common connection, a place where people understand the reality. Influencing change requires a lot of communicating and sharing context. It’s about being willing to just talk to people, talk to people as individuals, talk to people in small groups, and

> don't save it all for a meeting and shove it down someone's throat. It's about the conversation.

Participant 13, a global process manager in consumer product industry, discussed the importance of listening:

> What I found is that people want to be heard and listened to when going through a change. When someone comes in and tries to prove them wrong, there is always resistance. You need to listen. Be humble. Find out who does the real work and help support the change. It might sound simplistic but I always listen, observe them, and help recognize what the problem is . . . once you gain trust, they start coming to you and sharing their ideas.

Participant 13 further commented: "As females, we tend to control our egos more easily. I have seen meetings that have gone sideways because of two bumping heads. Female leaders often try to find a midpoint. I think this is why a lot of women are in roles leading change."

Participant 14, a business and technology leader in a global consumer products company, used relatedness strategies to build strong teams. Her personal philosophy was always focus on the relationship first. She believed that two people can really work together when they find at least one common ground. She commented:

> For me, relationships with people come first and then comes the delivery and results. You must have some sort of connection or relatedness with the people that you're working with so that when you came across issues and problems you already have that open, transparent working relationship.

Participant 12, a supply chain transition manager in a large consumer products company, described her experiences engaging in one-one-discussions with key stakeholders:

> I would often ask, why would you do that? And he would explain why and then I would ask why again, and then why again until we really got down

to the core of the problem. I had the patience to do that with people . . . sitting down and talking to them and listening to them because many people leading change don't have that skill and they just brush people aside and they don't spend the time needed to listen to their concerns. They think it is a waste of time.

Participant 12 continued by saying, "I would spend the time because during those one-on-one interactions, I made connections and built relationships. When I listen to people and let them talk, they trusted me more and so they were able to express how they really felt and then we could deal with the core problem."

Participant 5, a workplace transformation leader in the healthcare industry, was responsible for leading a major change in a trucking company to put cameras and computers in their fleet of trucks across North America. The truckers felt threatened and were extremely mad. In her words, "I had to remain calm and give them confidential forums to speak their mind. One of the strengths that served me well was my ability to empathize with the truckers. I frequently rode with them in their trucks and listened to their concerns. I demonstrated that I respected their profession and this built a lot of goodwill." The participant's ability to truly empathize with these truckers allowed her to create solid relationships that were built on trust.

Participant 14, a business and technology leader in a consumer product company, built on this by saying, "No work gets done unless you acknowledge the other person as a person. I've seen the opposite where people just kind of walk on people."

In summary, the female leaders in this study described many examples in which they build connections by taking the time to listen, building relationships and empathizing with the people experiencing the changes.

Theme 2: Inclusion strategies. The female leaders in this study viewed their role in creating inclusion by building change networks, creating pathways for ownership for those impacted by the change and using cross-cultural understanding to bring in diverse perspectives and viewpoints around the change.

Many of the female leaders in this study shared insights and experiences around creating change networks or influencer coalitions as a big component of their change strategy. Participant 10, a Business Transformation Consultant, led a major culture transformation for a platform engineering group in a large technology company composed of over 24,000 people with one-quarter of them engineers. She created a change network that was later called an “influencer coalition” because in her words, “change agent network was not appropriate for smartest engineers on the planet.” Many of them had double PhDs and were extremely intelligent. She wasn’t sure if the change network approach would work; however, she managed to create a group of about 320 change agents in engineering to volunteer with the transformation. She met with them every two weeks, shared information, and sought out their feedback and insights.

Participant 12, a global planning transition manager, discussed her experiences leading SAP retail implementation for a large consumer products company. She identified a group of subject matter experts as a change agent network and coached and trained them how to lead each of their business groups. She explained:

> They didn’t quite have the skills at first and so I spent a lot of time with them in smaller group coaching them along the way on what they should say and giving them tips. Some of them struggled more than others, and so I spent more time with these individuals. They were really freaking out about getting up in front of people and discussing the change so I paired them up so they each had a buddy.

Participant 11, an organizational change leader in a global consumer products company, shared her experience around inclusion:

> Most of the changes that I have led started with inclusion by getting buy-in from the leadership to make sure that we could include them in the process and with the people impacted by the change. What I found is that regardless of what the change is, how large or small it is, and how many

> people are actually are impacted by it. . . . if you include people in the process and let them have a voice, whether it goes their way or not, the buy in the adoption happens much faster. It's much more successful, and it is without a lot of stress.

Participant 10, a business transformation consultant in the technology sector, provided a good example around how her cultural sensitivity enabled her to successfully lead a large project to set up a dot.com website with a Japanese project team:

> My technical team would meet with the leaders in Japan every week. It took them forever to understand the change. I recommended that they send them the information beforehand so they could have a real conversation with them. In Japan they have to read information first because of the language barrier, talk amongst themselves, and then they are ready to engage in broader dialog. Once I convinced the leadership team to start sending the information beforehand, we started gaining ground again. When we lead a large change effort that is US-centric, we often don't think about the cultural nuances we need to pay attention to. My experience living in Japan and understanding the culture fairly well helped me read the situation and find ways to resolve the communication issues.

Participant 14, a change and technology leader in a consumer product company, described her experiences bringing together a team of stakeholders and project managers to address concerns regarding the change. She said, "All of the stakeholders had concerns and each concern was completely different from the other. I invited them all in a room together and between the four of them they addressed each other questions." She was proud of the fact that she initiated the forum and created an inclusive setting for them to address major concerns.

Theme 3: Experiential learning strategies. Many of the female leader participants in this study used experiential learning strategies (change pilots, experiments & science fairs) to influence change. The experiential learning model was developed by David Kolb model (1984) and outlines two related approaches toward grasping experience: *Concrete Experience* (pilots and simulations, hands-on activities/games, and small real-time changes) and *Abstract Conceptualization* (new ideas, updates, innovations, and customer input), as well as two related approaches toward transforming experience: *Reflective Observation* (surveys, feedback mechanisms, journals, and training evaluations) and *Active Experimentation* (test/play with software functionality, training modules, science fairs, and road shows) (Kolb, 1984). According to Kolb's model, the ideal learning process engages all four of these modes in response to situational demands; they form a learning cycle from experience to observation to conceptualization to experimentation and back to experience. The female participants in this study used all four of these modes as part of their experiential learning strategies in leading change.

The female leaders used a variety of experiential methods that ranged from providing concrete experiences for those impacted by the change (i.e. pilots, simulations and hands-on activities) to active experimentation through demos, science fairs and training sessions. Based on their descriptions, they created a learning cycle from experience to observation to conceptualization to experimentation and back to experience.

Participant 14, a business & technology leader in the consumer product industry, used experiential learning strategies when rolling out large IT system implementations in a large consumer product company. With her background as an experimental science researcher, she believed in learning by doing. This was reinforced by her conversations with her eleven-year-old son. Ever since he was five years old, he would always say, "Let me see it, mommy! Let me do it." She bought an iPad for her son and said, "Let me teach you how to use it." He said, "Let me see it!" She didn't have to say a single word. He picked it up and start experimenting with the device and quickly learned through trial and error. Through these interactions, she viewed herself playing a strong role in leading change through experiential learning and felt that this approach was extremely important for the next generation of employees faced with significant changes to systems and processes.

Participant 5, a workplace transformation leader in the healthcare industry, was responsible for leading a major change that involved reengineering 300 work processes in a one-million-square-foot hospital that involved new technology. The biggest shift was to get the staff, physicians, and nurses to fill out their charts on computers inside of the patient rooms instead of the hallways, which had been done for years. Now the computers in the room would literally be a few feet away from the patients. The female participant interviewed created navigation sessions that allowed the doctors and nurses to test out the equipment and express their fears such as “I’m not confident with my typing skills.” The navigation sessions were more like mini science fairs that provided a chance for the doctors and nurses to touch the new technology equipment, familiarize themselves with the functionality, and gain confidence in their ability to navigate these new tools in a comfortable, safe setting.

Theme 4: Radar-Emotion detection strategies. Radar is an object-detection system that uses radio waves to determine the range, angle, or velocity of objects. A radar transmits radio waves or microwaves that reflect from any object in their path. A receive radar, which is typically the same system as the transmit radar, receives and processes these reflected waves to determine properties of the objects (Hall, 1991). In the same way, the female participants in this study indicated that they used a form of their own radar to detect emotions in the workforce environment by observing non-verbal behaviors, mood shifts, and emotional clues that signaled distrust, disengagement, or opposition.

The Emotion Detection Radar figure outlines the specific signals and codes that the female leaders described when leading change initiatives within their organizations. Three major codes were identified: (a) ability to observe non-verbal communication, (b) receptive to undercurrents in the organization, and (c) the capability of reading the energy in the room. They also used codes that described different forms of emotional intelligence used when scanning the environment for emotional clues.

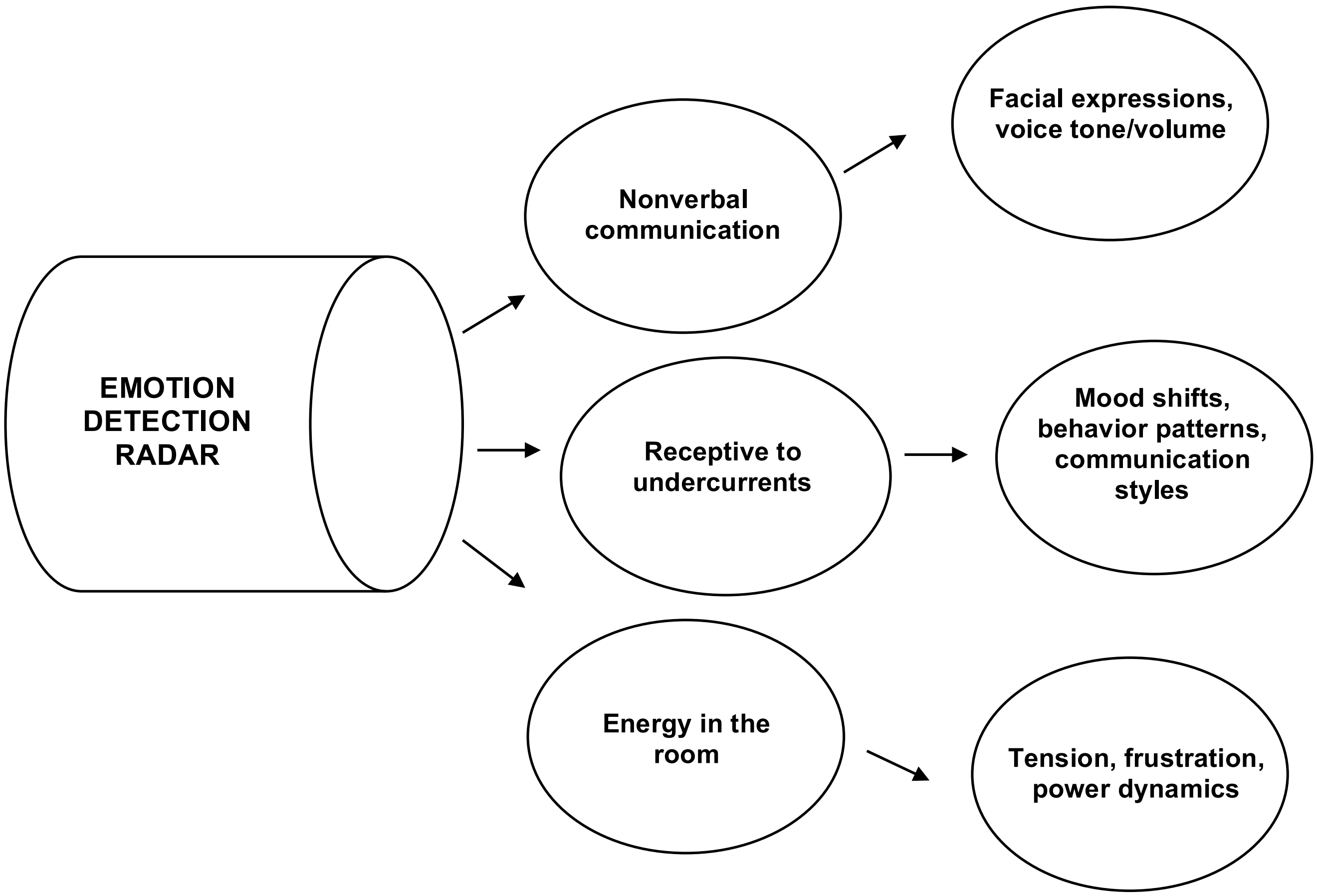

Figure 1. Emotion detection radar

This Emotion Detection Radar lists the types of strategies that the female leaders used to capture the "pulse" of the organization.

Participant 2, a director of service solution consulting in a large IT consulting company, shared her thoughts around why women are effective in leading change. She said:

> Female leaders know a lot about what's going on around them. They watch people's body language. They are cognizant when somebody looks like they're uncomfortable, angry. They hear things. Even though somebody may say something, it isn't always what they say, it's how they say it; Moms have eyes in the back of their head. They sense things going on. Even though you may not have the data points, your gut tells

> you something is not right. I'm not sure that the men that I have worked with are as in tune to that; I think women tend to be a little bit more receptive to some of the undercurrents that aren't necessarily directly out there. I think women tend to be more in tune with the feelings that come from the solar plexus—the energy in the room, the vibe, the non-verbal communication, the feelings.

Participant 14, a business & technology leader in the consumer product industry, observed that female leaders recognize dissonance more quickly than men when leading changes. She elaborated:

> I think some of my background in negotiation and mediation had a huge impact in my ability to listen to what they're saying. And really derive, what are they really trying to tell me? What do they want? Right? Sometimes people just want to vent. Sometimes they really want something, but they're not willing to tell you exactly what it is. But if you can listen to whatever they're saying, many times you can figure that out. I think that negotiation and mediation experience was very helpful.

Participant 9, a software marketing manager in a technology company, felt like she had a heightened sense of awareness in general. She said, "I think it's just that we are emotional; we are reading some emotional context because we care about how people feel and care what people think about us too, so we are always looking for clues."

Participant 11, an organizational change leader in the consumer product industry, attributed her skills and background in negotiation and mediation as big factors in influencing her ability to listen to what people were saying during a major change initiative. "I try to derive what they are really trying to tell me . . . what do they really want . . . sometimes people just want to vent. . . . they really want something, but they're not willing to tell you exactly what it is. But if you can listen to what they are really saying, many times you figure it out." In addition to skills in mediation, she felt like her legal background provided an advantaging in viewing things in multiple color shades and identifying non-verbal clues.

Participant 11 added to this idea by saying, “I think we are a little more in tune in a lot of instances compared to male leaders that I have observed and encountered during times of change. Even though there has been a great deal of change in our society, women are still known as the caregivers. We tend to look at our teams and organizations as family. We have no children and this is our family.”

Participant 12, a global planning transition manager in the consumer products industry, shared these words:

> I do think it goes back to being a mother. I think when you think about the role of the mother and the father, the father is like, okay, buck up. No crying. Just do what you need to do, do your chores and the mom is more motherly and asks, “why don’t you want to do your chores? Are you okay?” I was a tough mom because I was a single mom most of the time so I made my kids strong. I provided whatever they needed and helped them where I could. I do the same thing in the business. I act as a change leader. I’m always looking around the room and watching for body language. I’m observing people who are participating in the conversation and noticing who is on their laptop and who is on their phones. You can pick out the people that aren’t engaged and the people that are listening and care about what you’re saying and how you are going to help the organization move forward.

In summary, female leaders view themselves as having strong emotion detection systems when leading change. These innate or learned mechanisms allow them to tap into the undercurrents in the organization by observing non-verbal clues and signs of dissonance in the organizational environment.

Theme 5: Authenticity and trust strategies. Authentic leadership focuses closely on the leader and the leader's self-knowledge, self-regulation, and self-concept (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Authentic leaders exhibit genuine leadership by leading from conviction. In addition, authentic leadership is based on the life story of the leader and the subsequent meaning the leader attaches to these important experiences (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). The female participants in this study exhibited authentic leadership by leading from conviction and placing significant emphasis on their personal stories. They were "open and honest in presenting one's true self to others and sharing their core feelings, motives, and inclinations with others in an appropriate manner" (Kernis, 2003, p. 58).

Participant 1, a technology strategist, in a large technology company said that based on her experience, she believed authenticity is important in leading change. She explained:

> In order to be accepted we, as female leaders, often cover our identity. For me, to behave like a man or somebody who I am not is terrible. It's very degrading. At the end of the day, it's a loss. It's not just a loss for me personally; it's a loss for the company. The more ideas you have, the better the company is. I think it's very important that people are authentic, people being who they are and feeling comfortable enough not to cover up their identities.

She viewed trust as critical. "People who work for me need to feel my authenticity and trust me and not think that I'm there to do it for me but for them. They need to believe that you are there for something greater than yourself. You need to be there for their growth as well because as we know a leader is only as good as their people."

Participant 9, a software marketing manager in a large technology company, used authenticity as part of her leadership approach around change. She would like to see more women being able to just be themselves and comfortable with their own style and have that be an acceptable way to operate. She viewed women's unique leadership style and perspective important when leading change. She said, "It's been kind of a small box so I'm really intrigued with women who do this on their own terms when it would just be easier to assimilate and adopt a traditional male model."

Participant 10, a business transformation consultant in a large consumer product company, commented that many women have adopted a male model of leadership because that is what they know. According to her, when female leaders do this, they lose what they uniquely bring to the table. She said, "Corporations need women to be authentic and bring their incredible gifts to the table; there needs to be greater tolerance for gender differences."

Participant 11, an organizational change leader in a consumer products company, shared that female leaders including herself often come to their role with a great sense of passion. "What women bring is really personal to them. It is really about who I am as a person. When I walk in that door, it is about me. It is not necessarily about the title—the CEO or the CIO or whatever position it is . . . it is about my personal sense of accomplishment and how my 'whole self' is at work."

Participant 6, vice president in the data center group in the tech industry, commented: "For me, it's really about speaking from my authentic self and explaining why I think a change is important."

Participant 13, global process manager in consumer products industry, said, "I heard this from my teams, 'You are authentic.' This is a first step for me in building trust."

Overall, female leaders in this study viewed themselves as showing up as authentic while leading change. They demonstrated transparency, openness, and passion when interacting with teams. They believed that further changes need to happen in the workforce to allow female leaders to stop covering their identities and recognize the value of their perspectives and strengths when leading change.

Summary

The female leaders in this study described their role in leading change based on their strengths in using relatedness and inclusion strategies to build connections and reduce threat to those impacted by the change. They also shared their experiences applying radar-emotion detection monitors to pick up signals in the environment and creating experiential learning opportunities for those responding to organizational changes. And finally, they discussed their role in showing up as an authentic leader who builds trust through transparency.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter provides a discussion of the knowledge gained from interviews with fourteen female leaders regarding their lived experiences around leading change. This investigation explored the experiences, insights, perceptions, and descriptions of female leaders who led major changes within their companies. The previous chapters detailed the research, the relevant literature used to validate the findings, and the methodology used to conduct the study. This chapter focuses on the conclusions and recommendations for future research.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study has been to explore the lived experiences of female leaders and their role in using nonlinear models of change to influence organizational transformations. This study focused on the phenomenon of leading change from a nonlinear perspective. A phenomenological research method was the best approach to capture the insights, perspectives and experiences of female leaders and to uncover overall themes that challenge the existing change management theories and models. This study examined the change strategies of fourteen senior female leaders in global corporations.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study answered the original research question, "*In what ways do female leaders leverage nonlinear change strategies to influence organizational change*? Five core themes emerged from the interview data that form the basis for understanding the phenomenon of leading change from the female leaders' perspective in this study:

- Relatedness strategies
- Inclusion strategies
- Experiential learning methods
- Radar-emotion detection strategies
- Authenticity and trust strategies.

These five strategies were utilized regardless of the type, size, or complexity of the organizational change that the female leaders encountered. They were applied to organizational, system, and process-oriented changes in large corporations. The female leaders in this study described their role in leading change based on their strengths in using relatedness strategies and inclusion strategies to build connections and reduce threat to those impacted by the change. They also provided descriptions of how they applied radar-emotion detection monitors to pick up signals in the environment. They created experiential learning opportunities to help employees feel and experience the change firsthand. And lastly, they discussed their role in showing up as authentic leaders who built trust through transparency and strong relationships.

Conclusions

The female leaders in this study deployed change strategies that suggested a nonlinear approach to leading organizational change. Four main conclusions can be derived from this study: (a) Effective change strategies need to be intervention driven, (b) The change leader functions best as an interceptor and connector within the organization, (c) Strategies to change require approaches that create inclusion and trust, (d) Strategies to change should involve experiential learning designs.

Effective change strategies need to be intervention driven due to the dynamic nature of organizational systems. The five strategies to leading change that emerged from the interview data were described as intervention strategies that could be applied at any stage in the change journey rather than a linear formula with sequential steps. The female leaders acting as change leaders who became “interceptors” by intercepting blocks in the organizational system undergoing change by developing strategies to increase the balance and interconnectedness between the components in the organizational system. Rather than using linear strategies, they used different intervention strategies such as relatedness and inclusion approaches at different times to impact the organizational system.

Kotter outlined an eight-step model for leading change that is based on a linear change methodology. Kotter (1996) promoted his method as holistic, noting that organizations could use his method to avoid failures in implementing change. He later expanded on his model in his book, *The Heart of Change* (Kotter, 2012) that focused on a more creative approach centered on the feelings that encourage action. Kotter and Dan Cohen, a partner at Deloitte Consulting, demonstrated how his eight-step approach worked at over 100 organizations. Kotter's method consisted of eight key steps as Figure 2 shows.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Establish a Sense of Change	**Build a Trusted Team**	**Have a Vision and Strategy**	**Communicate the Vision**	**Implement the Change**	**Plan Short-term Wins**	**Consolidate Gains**	**Constantly Institutionalize the Change**

Figure 2. Kotter's linear change events

Kotter (1996) promoted his method as holistic, noting that organizations could use his method. This linear change model as described above assumes that change can be outlined and managed with a set plan; however, change is messy and it involves different strategies at different times. The female leaders described their role in leading change as dynamic and continuous based on the simultaneous nature of the organizational changes. They used different strategies as interventions to influence the organizational system.

In contrast to the linear model in figure 2, the female leaders in this study often followed a nonlinear organizational system. They described their role as being "receptors," using sensory skills to respond to stimulus in the organizational environment. They were also interceptors by intercepting blocks in the organizational system undergoing change by developing strategies to increase the balance and interconnectedness between the components in the organizational system. Rather than using linear strategies, they used different intervention strategies at different times to impact the organizational system. They built strong networks of relationships that influenced change. As stated by Margaret Wheatley, these critical networks and connections are what make change possible: "The world doesn't change one person at a time. It changes when networks of relationships form among people who share a common cause and vision of what's possible. This is good news for those of us intent on creating a positive future. Rather than worry about critical mass, our work is to foster critical connections" (Wheatley, 2008).

Their radar emotion detection systems allowed them to identify signals in the environment and culture that indicated stress and turbulence. Figure 3 below shows how the female leaders in this study described these strategies and how they impacted the organizational systems within their companies.

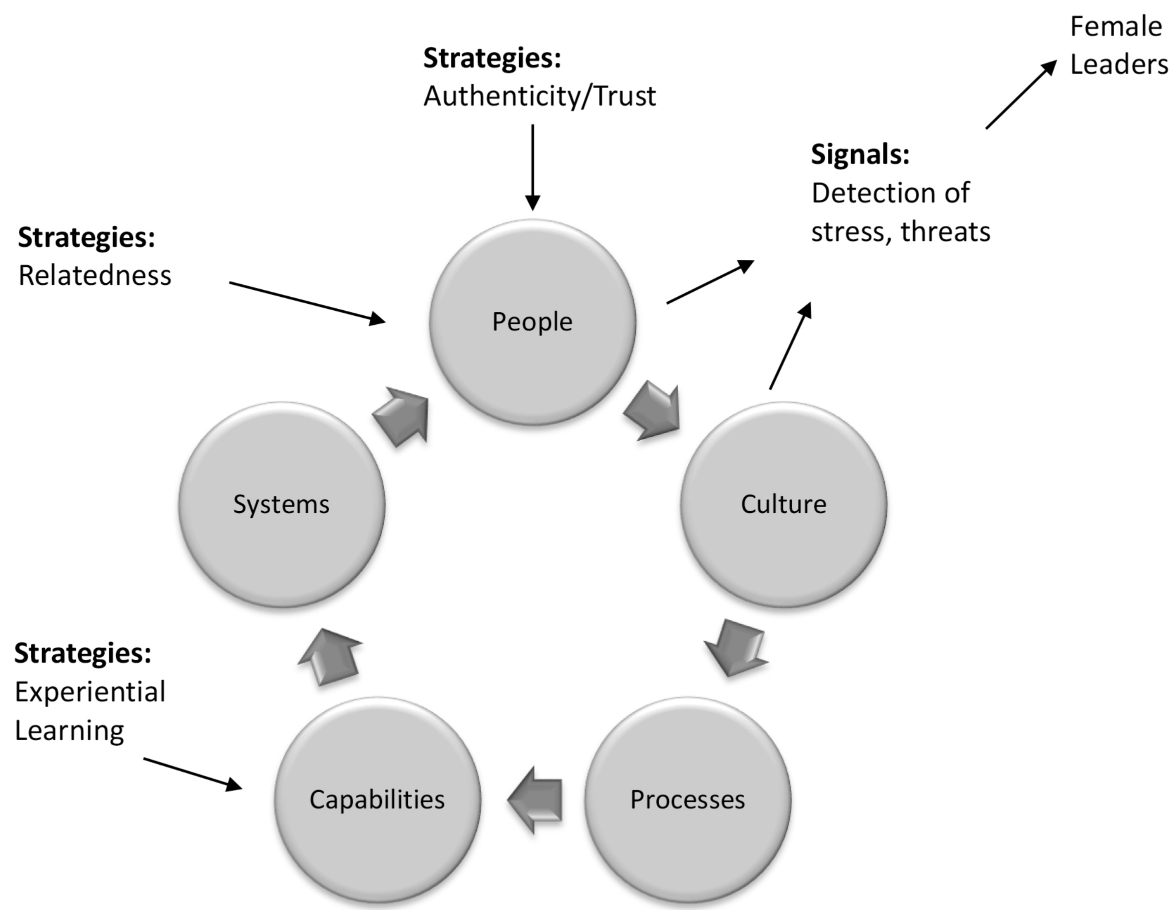

Figure 3. Nonlinear change in organizational system

When the female leaders detected imbalance or threats in the system, they described these as “signals” and responded with specific actions and strategies to address these threats. Overall, the female leaders indicated that they often leveraged these type of nonlinear strategies to influence the attitudes, behaviors, and opinions of people. These strategies as described by them reduced tensions in the organizational system and improved their ability to lead change.

In addition to change strategies being intervention-driven, the third conclusion of this study was that strategies to change require approaches that create inclusion and trust. The female leaders in this study indicated that they built change networks, created pathways for ownership for those impacted by the change, and used cross-cultural understanding to bring in diverse perspectives and viewpoints around the change. Given the diverse demographics of many global companies, this ability to create inclusion and trust is important in leading change.

Lastly, strategies to change should involve experiential learning designs. The female leaders used a variety of experiential methods that ranged from providing concrete experiences for those impacted by the change (i.e. pilots, simulations and hands-on activities) to active experimentation through demos, science fairs and training sessions. Based on their descriptions, they created a learning cycle from experience to observation to conceptualization to experimentation and back to experience. By enabling this learning cycle, they helped those impacted by the change to experience and understand the change.

Significance

The significance of these conclusions is important for the literature on leadership and change management. The findings and conclusions in this study shed light on the importance of strategies to address nonlinear change as opposed to linear change that has consumed most of the academic and industry research over the past twenty years. Linear change methods include consequential steps that involve exploring and examining the organizational environment, planning for structured activities, implementing the change initiative, and finally measuring and sustaining the change. As noted in the literature review, linear change models have focused on the strategies, techniques, and learning mechanisms necessary to drive organizational transformations (Lewin et al. 1951; Bullock & Batten, 1985; Hamel, 2000; Judson, 1991; Kotter, 1995, Lippet et al., 1958; Luecke, 2003).

Contributions to Literature

Much of the research around leading change had focused on the strategies of male leaders and the experiences and insights gained from their role in the change process. Although research in these areas produced valuable information that influenced the design of change management models and theories, little research focused on the experiences of female leaders who were involved in leading large organizational change and their strategies and insights.

The researcher used in-depth interviews that allowed female leaders to tell their stories around driving change. The use of open-ended questions gave ample opportunity for the female leader's voices to be heard. The results helped fill the current gap in the literature concerning change strategies by telling the story of female leaders.

Many leaders have learned a method of approaching change that simply does not work when the changes get too complex and the environment moves too quickly. Change strategies are often based on a linear understanding of change in which the process is composed of a series of sequential steps; yet most organizational systems are complex, and there is a dynamic network of interactions and relationships.

Current change approaches need to be reexamined given the type of radical changes underway in organizations, the broader view of organizational systems, and the emergence of more female leaders in roles with the accountability for leading change in their organizations. New change methods need to be developed that take into consideration the strengths, strategies, and experiences that female leaders bring to the table when leading change. Figure 4 provides an example of an alternative approach to leading change based on the findings that were uncovered in this study. It depicts a nonlinear change model that represents the insights and perspectives of female leaders who participating in this study qualitative study.

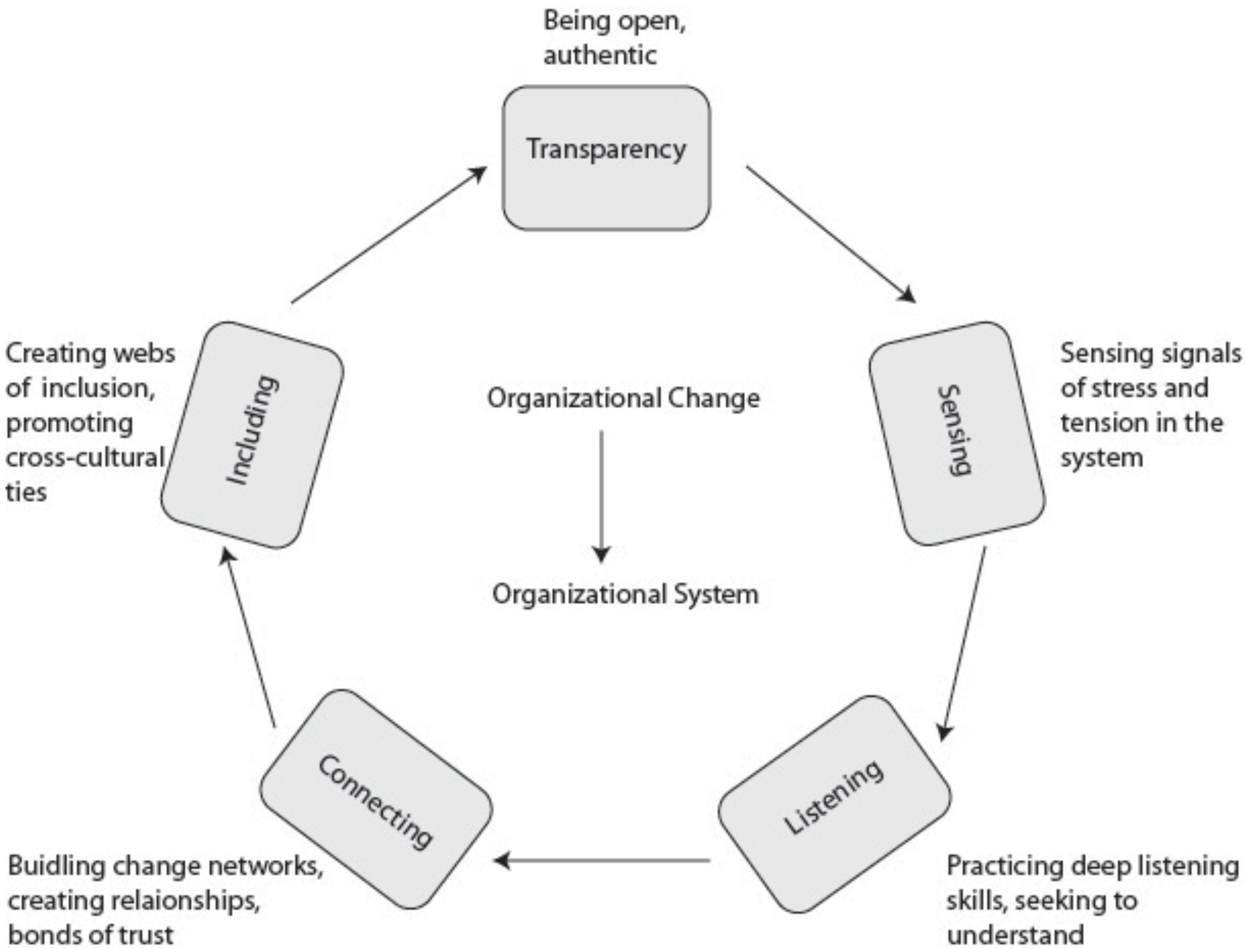

Figure 4. Organizational change model based on study

This figure depicts a change model that is based on the strategies shared by the female leaders in this study. It is based on a nonlinear approach to leading change in an organizational system. Current change management literature many want to consider new models such as figure 4 that provide a simple framework for helping organizational social systems respond to and adapt to changes that impact the system. This type of model takes into consideration the themes, responses and insights shared through the interview process in this study.

Organizations have been observed as nonlinear systems surrounded by dynamic forms of change (Black, 2000; Morgan, 1997; Stacey, 2003; & Wheatley 1992). The dynamic nature of change means that organizational leadership cannot always manage change; instead they must find new ways to support their organization on its change journey. Viewing organizations as nonlinear systems requires also a reconceptualization of the role of leaders and decision makers (Burns, 2010).

Leaders should no longer be considered . . . solely as initiators and implementers of preplanned organizational change; nor should they be seen . . . solely as reactive agents to emergent change forces. Rather they should develop the ability to connect the two to create synergy (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009).

Leaders then would need to become facilitators and supporters of change rather than simple controllers or enforcers of planned change initiatives (Goshal, 2005; Schulist, 2000). The strengths and strategies that female leaders described in this study around relatedness, inclusion, and authenticity position them as powerful facilitators during times of unpredictable change. Their experiences add additional perspectives to the field of change management.

The female leaders in this study viewed themselves as being transformational leaders as defined by Kouzes & Posner (1993) and used their abilities to influence the values, attitudes, and behaviors by inspiring and listening to their teams. Further research that explores how female leaders view themselves in the context of transformational leadership would greatly benefit leadership studies.

The female leaders also described themselves as “connected leaders” (Gobillot, 2007). They used their collaborative skills and empathy skills to build strong relationships and connections. They viewed social interaction and building interpersonal relationships as something that was embedded in their nature and upbringing and created “dialogue within the organization” (Gobillot, 2007, p. 9). To truly connect with others, Gobillot writes, a leader must become a “trusted channel” (p. 10). This means the leader becomes a conduit of information that facilitates others’ effectiveness. Instead of making declarations, the leader makes a contribution and recognizes the impact of their approach on others by demonstrating sensitivity to others’ feelings (Gobillot, 2007). Further research around how female leaders understand themselves as connected leaders as described in Gobillot's work would also contribute new insights in the field of leadership studies.

The female leaders interviewed shared relatedness and inclusion strategies that allowed them to build "webs of interconnected relationships" (Banathy, 1997, p. 22). Anderson and Johnson stated, "Many of the most vexing problems confronting managers and corporations today are caused by a web of interconnected, circular relationships" (Anderson & Johnson, 1997, p. 17). The change literature would benefit from understanding how female leaders use inclusion strategies as part of leading systematic change to build a "web of relationships" (Banathy, 1997, p. 22). This is important given the interdependence among groups of individuals, structures, and processes that enable an organization to function (Lazlo, 1972). Research about how female leaders go about creating and building these webs of networks would be very timely given the surge of research around organizational systems. Diversity and inclusion studies would also benefit from understanding how females build and cultivate these interconnected relationships.

The female leaders in this study indicated that they also used emotional detection radar to pick up signals in the organizational system that appeared to break down trust and communication. Having a systems view of the organization and detecting signals of imbalance in the organizational environment allowed the female leaders to have a richer, deeper understanding of the implications and impacts of organizational change. The change literature around systems thinking could benefit by observing and exploring how female leaders approach change from a systems perspective and detect signals in the organizational environment. The type of radar described by the females in this study is important to study in order to understand how female leaders influence change in organizational systems. By combining the "radar" concept with research around neuroleadership, new insights may emerge as to how and why female leaders describe themselves as having these capabilities. Brain-based theories that examine these strategies could open new avenues around how leadership practices are defined and implemented during times of change.

Implications for Female Leaders

This study has many implications for female leaders working in large companies. Female leaders can gain significant insights by (a) sharing their strategies and methods with each other and with the industry, (b) participating in further research that builds on the concept of women managing through relationships, and (c) recognizing their own strengths and skills by elevating their voice in the conversation around change.

Female leaders can benefit themselves and others by documenting their approaches, by sharing these strategies, methods, and ideas with each other, and by ultimately presenting them in industry forums. More forums, networks, and associations that bring female leaders together to share their stories, insights, and experiences around leading change would enhance discussions about organizational change. For example, companies or academic institutions could sponsor conferences that focus specifically on the role of female leaders and their contribution to change studies. Female leaders can benefit from documenting their approaches across multiples sectors including corporate, government, and non-profit organizations.

This phenomenological study could build upon the current studies that reveal that women tend to manage based on relationships (Babcock & Laschever, 2004). By examining these "relationship-driven" approaches or relatedness strategies, female leaders could gain further insight into how to use these methods to lead change most effectively. With the rise of neuroleadership studies, further analysis could be done around how female leaders view themselves as using relatedness strategies based on brain-based theories and models.

Overall, female leaders would benefit from recognizing their own strengths and skills, innate or learned, that have significant impacts when leading change. These strengths could be elevated by increasing the visible support from senior leaders. Senior leaders could support additional opportunities to promote discussion around leveraging the ideas, perceptions and strategies of female leaders in organizational change.

Implications for Corporations

This study is important for corporations for three key reasons: First, this study will shed light on new methods and approaches for leading complex organizational change from a gender perspective in corporations. Second, the findings of this study will help large corporations reward, reinforce, and recognize the specific contributions of female leaders in accelerating change. Third, the findings will surface new factors and strategies for increasing the probability of successful organizational change. Lastly, the findings suggest that corporations may want to invest additional funding and resources in leadership training programs that focus on leading nonlinear change and tap into the change strategies shared through these research findings with female participants.

This study has shed light on new methods and approaches for leading organizational change in corporations from a female's perspective. Providing women with high-visibility corporate responsibilities and influential positions will only support the strategic objectives of companies undergoing transformational change. If the trend of women leaving the workforce continues because of systematic discrimination and pay disparity, important skills like empathy, relationship-building, and inclusion will suffer during major change initiatives. Increasing the number of female leaders in senior-level positions that drive change will likely help organizations navigate the complexity of changes that many industries face.

The findings of this study will help corporations recognize the specific contributions of female leaders in accelerating change. Linear change models that were developed based on research with male leaders and with stable changes are usually over-simplifications. They are useful only within limited types of changes. These models can lead to poor planning and insufficient results especially when hyper-connected organizations are dealing with complex changes with many interdependent components.

When corporations are faced with complex changes with many interdependent components, small decisions or detections in the system can have significant effects. The female leaders in this study described their ability to make small impactful shifts by building strong relationships and creating bonds of trust. During periods of turbulence and instability with hyper-connected corporations, these type of actions can positively change the whole organizational system. Corporations have a great opportunity to recognize and reward these type of small impactful shifts as described by the female leaders in this study.

Lastly, the findings and conclusions in this study suggest that corporations may want to invest additional funding and resources in leadership training programs that focus on leading nonlinear change strategies. These leadership training programs could involve modules around change theory, leadership frameworks, and change strategies uncovered in this study.

Figure 3 in the appendix shows an outline of what a leading-change workshop could look like that includes the data analyzed in this study. These types of leading-change workshops would take into account the nonlinear changes that many corporations face today and the new insights and strategies shared by female leaders in this study. Most change workshops and course syllabi observed by the researcher are based on traditional linear theories of change. By incorporating these type of trainings in the curriculum of leadership programs and business school programs, the knowledge around change management will be broadened to include more nonlinear perspectives and elevate the voice of female leaders as described in this study.

Limitations of the Research

The limitation of the research exists in four areas: (a) the population of the study, (b) the subjectivity of the data, (c) the inter-rater reliability, and (d) researcher induced bias. First of the all, the study population was focused on female leaders and did not consider the views and perspectives of male leaders. The findings provided a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon around leading change from a female perspective and were pertinent to female leaders who want to learn from the experiences of other female leaders with this phenomenon.

Second, in many qualitative studies the subjectivity of the data leads to difficulties in establishing the reliability and validity of approaches and information. Creswell (2007) recommends that researchers engage in at least two of these validation strategies in any given study. To ensure validity, the researcher focused on three validation strategies in this study.

First, the researcher conducted a peer review with two other researchers in the School of Education and Psychology program at Pepperdine to validate the coding process. Secondly, the researcher asked three study participants to review the summary themes. Thirdly, the researcher ensured validity by using rich descriptions to describe in detail the participants under the study.

The researcher acknowledges that one limitation of the study was that there was not a thorough process for inter-rater reliability whereby data was independently coded and the coding was compared for agreements. Lastly, it is hard to prevent occurrences of researcher bias in the study. The face-to-face interviews as a data collection method may have increased the risk of participant bias and prevented disclosure of personal information. The researcher acknowledged these limitations in the study.

Future Research

This qualitative study focused on the experiences of female leaders and their role in using nonlinear models of change to influence organizational change. Future research around the role of female leaders using nonlinear change methods could involve the following actions:

- Conducting quantitative studies that survey a large population of female leaders;
- In-depth qualitative analysis across multi-levels or across multiple organizational sectors;
- Exploring how authentic leadership applies to female leaders who have accountability for leading change;
- Examining how the findings of this research study can be understood in the context of the current neuroscience research on brain-based leadership theories.

Conducting quantitative studies that survey large populations of female leaders and collect numerical data regarding their techniques and strategies around leading change could be very beneficial for the field of change management. This could be combined with more in-depth qualitative analysis that entails further interviewing and observation of female leaders across multi-levels within organizations.

The relatively small population in this study and the fact that all of the female participants were drawn from the corporate sector limits any claim that these results would be replicated in other organizational settings. Future research could examine this same research question in the context of the public and nonprofit sectors to determine if similar themes arise from the experiences and insights of female leaders in those settings. Future research could also focus on a larger population to examine whether similar themes arise.

The current literature on authentic leadership does not fully address how authentic leadership influences female leaders and the particular issues of female leaders trying to be authentic in their leadership styles when leading change. Further qualitative research could explore how authentic leadership applies to female leaders with accountability for leading change and how they describe their actions that signal authenticity.

With the rise of neuroscience research, further analysis could be conducted to understand how some of the change strategies shared in this study, like emotion detection systems and the relatedness strategies, play out in the context of brain-based leadership theories. More studies could explore how female leaders reduce threat when leading change and the impact this has on the brain.

Researchers have discovered that the threat response is often triggered in social situations, and it tends to be more intense and longer-lasting than the reward response (Rock, 2009). Organizational change often triggers threat responses. Further research could focus on the threat response in the context of the organizational system and explore what other strategies beyond those outlined in this study help reduce this threat state. Understanding the threat response and the strategies to reduce it could help leaders who are trying to implement large-scale change. More specifically, research could examine how female leaders minimize the threat response along five key areas: status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, and fairness.

In addition, further studies could explore how female leaders use mindfulness in leading organizational change by reducing different types of threats and demonstrating greater self-awareness. Research could examine how female leaders bring attention to the internal and external experiences in the moment. Further studies could examine how female leaders focus on being present with others and the environment during major organizational changes. These insights would benefit the field of leadership studies, change management, and mindfulness research.

Conclusion

This study was designed to help close the gap in the research in the change management field. As discussed, there are very few phenomenological studies that explore the strategies that female leaders use to influence organizational change in large companies. While there is extensive research on female leaders, very little research has focused specifically on the strategies and approaches of female leaders and their ability to lead organizational changes through nonlinear change models. This study provided descriptions, insights, and strategies around the role of female leaders in driving organizational change that should contribute to the field of change management.

Organizations, researchers, and change practitioners may use the findings of this study to increase the awareness around specific strategies and approaches for leading change deployed by female leaders. New forums and networks could emerge that provide knowledge sharing opportunities around new practices and techniques that focus on leading change from a systems perspective that elevates the voice, stories, and experiences of female leaders.

More studies that combine different fields including neuroscience, gender leadership, and organizational change could uncover new understanding and insights around the strategies that female leaders deploy during organizational change. The findings of this study may stimulate further dialog around the need for more in-depth studies focused specifically on female leaders and their role in creating strategies to lead organizational change.

This study was relevant given the demographic changes in society and the continued strategic role that women play in corporations now and in the future. Moreover, the insights and themes uncovered in this study are important given the simultaneous nature of changes, the speed and complexity of change, and the immediate communication and impact of changes throughout the world.

Female leaders have a tremendous opportunity to recognize and capitalize on their unique strengths and strategies for leading change. As the role of leadership shifts, companies to stay competitive have an incentive to understand how female leaders effectively manage and navigate change. For many companies faced with intense competition, there remains an urgent interest in investigating and finding what factors and strategies increase the probability of successful organizational change.

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APPENDIX A

Research Questions for Leading Organizational Change: A Phenomenological Study of Female Leaders in Global Companies

Research Questions

The central research question that has guided this study is: *In what ways do female leaders leverage nonlinear change strategies to influence organizational change?*

Sub-questions:

- What unique strategies, if any, do female leaders employ, in driving organizational changes in global companies?
- How do female leaders view their role in driving organizational change?
- How do female leaders describe the actions they take to enroll their employees in a change initiative?
- How do female leaders describe their role in creating momentum and a sense of energy around the need to change in their organizations?
- How do participants describe what others could learn from studying the role that female leaders play in leading change?

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

(School of Education and Psychology)

INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF FEMALE LEADERS IN GLOBAL COMPANIES

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Rachel Shafran and Kent Rhodes, EdD, at Pepperdine University, because you are are: (a) classified as director-level or above in the management hierarchy, (b) employed in a company with 30,000 or more employees, and (c) located in the United States. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for you records.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore your experiences and your role in using nonlinear models of change to influence organizational transformations. This study is designed to determine how approaches to organizational change deployed by female leaders like you contribute new learnings in the field of organizational change. A phenomenological research method is most appropriate for this study to capture your experiences from your perspective and to develop themes that bring new insights around some of the current structural or normative assumptions around organizational change theories.

Study Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to share your insight and experiences through a 90 minute, taped interview to gain access to your descriptions, characterizations, perceptions, and interpretations of the role of female leaders in leading organizational change in large companies.

The researcher will use a non-directive interview approach with open-ended questions to explore your thoughts and feelings around leading change. The following open-ended questions will guide the interview process.

- What strategies have you employed in driving organizational changes in the large companies that you have worked for?
- What actions have you taken to enroll your employees in a change initiative?
- How would you describe your role in creating momentum and a sense of energy around the need to change in the organizations that you have worked?
- What has been your experience leading change in the midst of opposition or resistance?
- What could other people learn from studying the role that female leaders play in leading change?

All interviews will be recorded using a digital recording device and transcribed to allow for data analysis.

Potential Risks and Discomforts

The potential and foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study include the following:

Your own particular “stance” within the organization may keep you from acknowledging all dimensions of your experiences. You may also be fearful that your information and experiences will be exposed to people outside of your immediate organization and this may make you unwilling to accept the researcher’s study.

In order to mitigate these risks, the researcher will take precautions to protect your privacy and to maintain the confidentiality of your data. Interviews will be conducted off-site or outside of work space locations. Information presented in the dissertation will refer to you using pseudonyms such that you and the companies you represent will not be discernable. The data will be stored on a password protected computer in the principal investigator's residence.

Potential Benefits to Participants and/or to Society

There are several anticipated benefits for you and the society as whole which include:

Participant Benefits. One benefit of participation will be that you will receive information on the current study following successful dissertation defense. This may help you as a leader share current research findings around leading change with your own organization for the benefit of attaining organizational goals.

There will be no direct compensation, inducement, or reward for participation in this current research study.

Society Benefits. The results of this study will add to the existing body of literature around women leading change and their contributions in the change management field. The study will help companies reinforce and recognize the specific contributions of women leaders in accelerating change.

Confidentiality

I will keep your records for this study confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if I am required to do so by law, I may be required to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if you tell me about instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The data will be stored on a password protected computer in the principal investigator's place of residence. The data will be stored for a minimum of three years. The researcher alone will be able to access the study data. During each phase of the study, precautions will be undertaken to protect your privacy and to maintain the confidentiality of data. Your interview transcript will be made available to you to validate the accuracy of the transcript during the course of the study. Information presented in the dissertation will refer to you using pseudonyms such that you and the companies you represent will not be discernable. Then, all study documentation will be destroyed by shredding documents, files and transcriptions at the end of the three-year storage period.

Participation and Withdrawal

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

Alternatives to Full Participation

Your alternative is to not participate in this study

Emergency Care and Compensation for Injury

If you are injured as a direct result of research procedures you will receive medical treatment; however, you or your insurance will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury

Investigator's Contact Information

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries that I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact Rachel Shafran (rachrayray2013@gmail.com) or Kent Rhodes (kent.rhodes@pepperdine.edu) if I have any other questions or concerns about this research.

Rights of Research Participant—IRB Contact Information

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University, 6100 Center Drive Suite 500, Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310–568–5753 or gpsirb@pepperdine.edu.

APPENDIX C

Scripted First Contact

Good afternoon (name of potential participant).

My name is (researcher name) and I am a doctoral student at Pepperdine University in the School of Education and Psychology. I am working on a doctoral degree in Organizational Leadership.

I am conducting a research study entitled*: Leading Organizational Change: A Phenomenological Study of Female Leaders in Global Companies*. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of female leaders and their role in using nonlinear models of change to influence organizational change.

Your participation will involve sharing your insight and experiences through a 90 minute, taped interview to gain access to your descriptions, characterizations, perceptions, and interpretations of the role of female leaders in leading organizational change in global companies. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Are you interested in participating in this study? If yes, thank you very much. The next step will be to email you the informed consent documentation and background information about the research study. Thank you very much for your time.

APPENDIX D

Interview Protocol

Interview protocol used for study – five interview questions

- What strategies have you employed in driving organizational changes in the large companies that you have worked for?
- What actions have you taken to enroll your employees in a change initiative?
- How would you describe your role in creating momentum and a sense of energy around the need to change in the organizations that you have worked?
- What has been your experience leading change in the midst of opposition or resistance?
- What could other people learn from studying the role that female leaders play in leading change?

APPENDIX E

Leading Change Workshop Example

Leadership/Management Training
Leading Change Workshop

Includes 3 modules (1/2 day workshop)
focused on change theory,
leadership capabilities and,
change strategies

Modules	Key Topics
Leading Change Overview	Non-linear Change, Systems Theory
Leadership Framework	Authenticity, Trust
Change Strategies	Relatedness Strategies Inclusion Strategies Radar-Emotion Detection Strategies

Figure 5. Leading change workshop

APPENDIX F

Pepperdine IRB Approval Letter

Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: February 04, 2016

Protocol Investigator Name: Rachel Shafran

Protocol #: 15-10-107

Project Title: LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF FEMALE LEADERS IN GLOBAL COMPANIES

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Rachel Shafran:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the

IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at community.pepperdine.edu/irb.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chairperson

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives

PEPPERDINE

Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
Malibu, CA 90263
TEL: 310-506-4000

Mr. Brett Leach, Regulatory Affairs