AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN GENDER COMMUNICATION AND EFFECTIVE
LEADERSHIP

by
MANAL ALI JOUMAH

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master's of Arts
to the Department of Education
of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
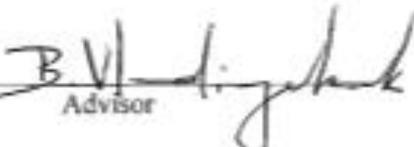at the American University of Beirut

Beirut, Lebanon
January 2017

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER COMMUNICATION AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP
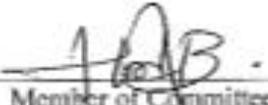
by
MANAL ALI JOUMAH

Approved by:

_____

Dr. Barend Vlaardingerbroek, Associate Professor   Advisor
Department of Education

_____

Dr. Rima Karami-Akkary, Associate Professor   Member of Committee
Department of Education

_____

Dr. Hoda Baytiyeh, Associate Professor   Member of Committee
Department of Education

Date of thesis/dissertation defense: [January 25, 2017]

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THESIS, DISSERTATION, PROJECT RELEASE FORM

Student Name: ___Joumah_____Manal_____Ali_____
                        Last   First   Middle

⊘ Master's Thesis   ◯ Master's Project   ◯ Doctoral Dissertation

☑ I authorize the American University of Beirut to: (a) reproduce hard or electronic copies of my thesis, dissertation, or project; (b) include such copies in the archives and digital repositories of the University; and (c) make freely available such copies to third parties for research or educational purposes.

☐ I authorize the American University of Beirut, to: (a) reproduce hard or electronic copies of it; (b) include such copies in the archives and digital repositories of the University; and (c) make freely available such copies to third parties for research or educational purposes

after : **One** — year from the date of submission of **my thesis, dissertation, or project.**
           Two ---- years from the date of submission of **my thesis, dissertation, or project.**
           Three ---- years from the date of submission of **my thesis, dissertation, or project.**

Manal Joumah   _February 7th, 2017_

Signature   Date

This form is signed when submitting the thesis, dissertation, or project to the University Libraries

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank Allah for all the blessings and endowments and especially for granting me the power and perseverance to pursue my master's studies and earn my degree.

Special thanks are for my thesis advisor, Dr. Barend Vlaardingerbroek for his patience, guidance, and encouragement throughout the thesis journey.

My gratitude is addressed to my academic advisor and mentor, Dr. Rima Karami-Akkary for sharing her expertise and immense knowledge as well as enlightening me with her constructive feedback and insightful comments.

My appreciation is addressed to Dr. Hoda Baytiyeh for her continuous support and motivation besides her precious advice.

My profound gratitude is expressed to my supportive spouse and to my lovely daughters for believing in me and for walking me through the long thesis road with all its ups and downs. I would not have made it without their continual motivation.

My sincere thankfulness is dedicated to my beloved mother and siblings who always pushed me forward with their kindness.

Last, I cannot overlook my journey companion, my friend Ms. Hadeel Dbaibo for her assistance, motivation, and positive vibes. She was a true friend.

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Manal Ali Joumah   for   Master of Arts
Major: Educational Administration and Policy Studies

Title: Teachers' Perceptions of the Relationship between Gender Communication and Effective Leadership

        This research study explored the concept of effective leadership and the role effective communication contributes to it from the perceptions of Lebanese private school teachers of the two genders. The purpose of this study was two-fold: (a) to explore the beliefs of educational practitioners on effectiveness, mainly private school teachers regarding effective communication across their organizations, (b) to investigate any gender differences in perception between female and male teachers regarding effective leadership and effective communication along with same and opposite gender communication interactions. The study employed a qualitative research design that used the grounded theory method of analysis and interpretation. Data were collected through focus group interviews with teachers representing private sector. Data collected were analyzed and coded using constant comparison all through the data collection process. The researcher organized the data through data reduction to find commonalities and generate categories, themes, and patterns. The research findings revealed a high degree of alignment between the theoretical profile of effective communicators and the grounded profile. The results of the study showed that gender differences existed between the female and male principals' communication styles which had impact on leadership effectiveness. An interesting finding was recorded as more teachers favored male principals since they considered female principals in general to be more carried by their emotions. Participants identified factors they believed were enhancing or hindering to effective communication and associated some with gender. This research study has implications for practice for leaders, teachers, and students as it shed light on the leadership role, practices, and beliefs that were considered more efficient in enhancing effective organizational communication taking into account gender differences.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Keefe, Kelley, and Miller (1985) said, "Schools, like people, have personalities. We know that schools affect people in different ways. In some schools, the faculty and students work together in a spirit of harmony. Other schools are fragmented into hostile cliques without productive commongoals" (p.70).

To Mignery, Rubin, and Gordon (1995), communication facilitates positive relationships and goal accomplishment. Hoy and Miskel (2008) defined communication as the process of sharing messages, ideas, thoughts, expertise, and feelings in a commonly understandable way. To Schuttler (2010) leaders' main task is to build through effective communication a healthy school climate that includes all members, improves their sense of belonging, and enhances achievement. Knestling (2008) described the bad influence of ineffective school leadership and communication on students, teachers, and the school community.

Many researchers consider communication as one of the top priorities of a leader which occupies around eighty percent of his time (Papa & Graham, 1991). Hoy and Miskel (2008) state that "educational administrators simply must understand communication because it underlies or permeates the instructional, interpersonal, organizational, and administrative processes and structures of schools" (p. 380). Communication cannot be overlooked nor dealt with as separate or exclusive of leading, deciding, and motivation.

The international literature describes effective leaders as those who can build effective communication networks across organizations. Leaders through two-way

dialogue, openness, continuous feedback, and effective leadership can communicate school vision and build organizational culture that brings all staff on board thus reducing ineffective communication, silence, fear, and isolation (Walker, 2008). Van Houtte (2006) regarded these leaders as successful in building trust and increasing job satisfaction and loyalty. However, the literature does not show agreement among researchers regarding a definition of leadership and which leadership attributes or practices and beliefs which guarantee effective organizational communication (Lambert, 1998).

According to Hoy and Miskel (2008) "communication in sum is a relational process during which sources transmit messages using symbols, signs, and contextual cues to express meaning, to have receivers construct similar understandings, and to influence behaviour" (p. 381). Reilly and Di Angelo (1990) considered that communication is not merely a transfer of information rather it revolves around deeper construction of meaning that represents organizational culture.

As to forms of communication, Hoy and Miskel (2008) define form as the way a message is composed which ranges from formal to non-formal, lengthy to brief, systematic to unsystematic, and dispersed to clustery. According to the same authors, formal communication refers to the communication across bureaucratic lines of authority which is direct, brief, and certifiable to serve the organization while informal communication refers to the grapevine that is present in all educational settings which reflects school culture and quality of school exercises.

Barett (2002) believed that effective communication should be interactive, informative, and supportive for all staff. Therefore, effective leaders should have a

reservoir of communication strategies that aid at exchanging ideas across the organization in different contexts and with different receivers. Furthermore, the school context is considered to be crucial as it affects flow of messages and interpretation as well. School leaders who are capable of establishing learning organizations characterized by low bureaucratization, warm climate, openness, and high level of trust among school community members are seen as successful in promoting effective communication (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

 Scholars have discussed gender communication differences which affect leadership style since leadership revolves around interaction and communication with others. Gray (as cited in Ahmad, 2010) listed many aspects of gender communication variations such as "working styles and competency evaluation, problems in communication with the opposite gender, asking questions, communication directness and indirectness, trouble talk, conversational topics in communication, and talk time" (p.25-26). Other researchers mentioned leadership style, evaluation, and effectiveness (Eagly & Johnson as cited in Ahmad, 2014).

Although cultural differences exist between the West, Far East, and Arab society there are nonetheless some cross-cultural similarities regarding gender communication. Claes (as cited in Merchant, 2012) spoke of "culture trap" which he attributed to the fact that women come to the workplace with prior assumptions and expectations about their role due to their gender which affects their communication and leadership styles (p.29). In the Middle East there are some gender stereotypes that consider females as less capable and cognitively less active. Due to their upbringing and cultural constraints,

women in general are considered inferior to men and are place data "disadvantage in the workplace" (Merchant, 2012, p. 2).

Problem Statement and Rationale

Throughout my experience as an educator, I have faced communication problems with principals, staff, teachers, and parents. I also came across educators in different institutions who pointed it as the reason that has rendered many of them either silent or isolated. According to the available literature, organizational communication is the key to the success of any organization. Johns (1997) stated that effective communication and effective leadership are interdependent, yet he mentioned that still there is no consensus regarding leadership skills that enhance effective communication nor the role of effective communication in enhancing the effectiveness of leaders.

Effective organizational communication has been the focus of many studies for it is related directly to teachers' effectiveness and thereby indirectly to students' achievement. In the international literature many studies have explored the influence of educational leadership beliefs and practices on effective organizational communication and some studies even tackled the impact of gender communication especially in the western contexts (Ahmad, 2014; Arar & Oplatka, 2012; Brashers, 2001; Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014; Germann, 1994; Johns, 1997; Merchant, 2012; Valentine & Godkin, 2000).

Primarily, I was able to locate two interesting Western research studies by Germann (1994) and Johns (1997) that focused on the relationship between leadership effectiveness and communication competencies. Germann's (1994) study focused on the

perception of subordinates only and built on the assumption that there exists "a systematic relationship between subordinates' perception of both their leaders' communication effectiveness and leadership effectiveness" (p.16-17). Germann (1994) also discussed the issue of gender communication and leadership. While Johns' (1997) study investigated the perceptions of public school principals regarding "communication competencies necessary for effective educational leadership" (p. IX). My research explored a similar research problem in the Lebanesecontext with more emphasis on gender differences.

Unfortunately, local studies that discuss this issue are very scarce. A search of databases available at Jafet Library (American University of Beirut) specifically in Shamaa-a database specialized in educational studies conducted in the Arab region revealed a great number of regional studies that discussed leadership some of which were conducted in Lebanon. Nevertheless, none of the studies conducted in Lebanon dealt with leadership with an emphasis on effective communication from the perspective of teachers in private schools. Besides, the aforementioned studies addressed effective communication as an attribute of effective leadership but did not explore the interrelationship between leadership effectiveness and communication in terms of the leadership beliefs and practices that enhance effective communication or conversely the beliefs on the communication practices that enhance effective leadership. In addition, these studies did not explore explicitly any gender differences regarding teachers' beliefs of female and male principals and the variation in their communication as they interact with same sex and opposite sex. Thus, I aimed at conducting this study in our Lebanese context from a leadership perspective with an emphasis on communication taking into

account teacher participants of different gender to fill the gap in the existing literature. O'Reilly and Pondy (1979) attestead that the existing empirical research did not discuss fully and deeply the issue of communication in work organizations, hence the topic needs further research and investigation.

Moreover, the literature does not show agreement among researchers regarding a definition of leadership in terms of which leadership attributes or practices and beliefs that guarantee effective organizational communication (Lambert, 1998). However, the literature points at the role gender plays in communication. Ahmad (2010) reported the results of research carried in Japan investigating the communicative strategies used by the two genders which showed that while both females and males are communicative, females tend to be more aggressive than males. Schaef (as cited in Ahmad, 2014) believed that women communicate more about issues of personal matters while men tend to discuss general issues that is, "abstract communication" (p.188). Another study conducted in the Netherlands showed that female students in mixed-gender groups asked more questions while males thought more critically and were more balanced in their responses. Merchant (2012) attributed the "stereotypical gender roles" assigned in organizations to variations in "communication styles and influence tactics" between males and females which lead to differences in leadership styles (p.17). But some studies do not align with Gray's perceptions of gender communication. Kim and Bresnahan (1996) not only believed that there is no such thing as gender-specific communication but also stated that there are more similarities than differences in the communication strategies followed by the two genders. Kramarae and Pearson (as cited in Kim & Bresnahan, 1996) declared that it is all due to cultural gender stereotypes rather than real

6

gender communication differences. Other scholars believed that all those assumptions about gender communication are not based on empirical research (Thorne, Kramarae, & Henley, as cited in Kim & Bresnahan, 1996). In conclusion, the topic is still controversial therefore it was worthy of further investigation.

This research investigated the nature of effective leadership beliefs and practices with a focus on communication that are followed by different Lebanese principals of both gender from the perspective of teachers.

This exploratory research study main target was identifying leadership determinants (beliefs and actions) that promote effective communication from the perspective of private school teachers and how communication enhances leadership effectiveness. It also examined how these perceived determinants vary with gender from the perceptions of the major practitioners involved that is, teachers. Next, it aimed at comparing research findings to theory (Western) to see to what degree existent theory and practice align paying attention to cultural differences between the West and Middle East.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was two-fold. First, the research explored the beliefs of educational practitioners, mainly private school teachers regarding effective communication conducted by leaders across their organizations. Second, the research investigated gender differences in perception between female and male teachers regarding effective communication as a key component of effective leadership along with same and opposite gender communication interactions. Through capturing the

7

perspectives of teachers of both genders, the researcher had the chance to benefit from

the lived experience of participants regarding their beliefs on leadership practices that

enhance organizational communication and investigate any existing gender differences.

To achieve its purpose, this research study answered the following research questions:

1) What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female

   Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective

   leadership?

2) What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on

   leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?

3) What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to

   leaders' effective communication?

Significance of the Study

Primarily, this research study has implications for practice for leaders, teachers,

and consequently for students. This study sheds light on the leadership role, practices,

and beliefs that are considered more efficient in enhancing effective organizational

communication taking into account gender differences. Henceforth, the results of this

study have constituted a research base for professional development and leadership

training programs of principals.

Moreover, this study has theoretical implication by establishing a leadership

profile of effective communication in the context of leadership in the Lebanese

organisational context with its politicized nature. Observing the way leaders

communicate, would pave the road for researchers to endorse changes in practice that

could result in better communication and fortified leadership. It can be used to help leaders identify challenges principals may face while communicating school vision, building common culture, exchanging daily messages and ideas, or introducing change especially when dealing with staff of different gender hence avoiding any gender stereotypes.

Finally, the research findings highlighted other areas or contexts that need to be further explored in the future like effective communication and leadership in the public sector in Lebanon or at the macro level and taking into consideration the school community perception.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leaders are one of the key players that have responsibility for the success or failure of any organization (Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, & Al- Omari, 2008), and the core role of leadership is effective communication (Germann, 1994). Ayesh, Mahmood, and Shah (2013) reported that some researchers defined leadership as "a dynamic process in which leader-follower relationships develop through interpersonal communication skills" (p. 543). Building on this belief, in this section I aimed at exploring literature to find effective leadership perspectives that are linked to enhancing effective communication and how these perspectives vary across gender. In addition, I explored studies in international contexts that discuss gender communication. The literature provided not only a background but also a framework for the study. To achieve the goal of defining the perceptions on the effect of gender on leadership and communication effectiveness, I included in the literature review empirical research studies conducted in various countries in America, Europe, Australia, Pakistan, and Turkey in addition to local studies to support my position statement and base my framework on solid theoretical foundations.

Organizational Communication

Arlestig (2007), Barett (2002), De Ridder (2004), Fairhurst and Connaughton (2014), Husain (2013), Kowalski (2000), and Yildiz (2013) described organizational communication as the means by which individuals know their organization, build internal

ties, believe in the organization values, and establish a sense of belonging along with collaborative functioning.

Witherspoon (as cited in Arlestig, 2007) stated:

> Leadership exists only through communication. Leaders are increasingly important creators of culture, decision makers, and change agents. These roles require the use of communication to develop shared meanings, search and use information effectively, and create and communicate visions to enhance an organization's future and guide it through eras of change (p. 262).

Bolman and Deal (as cited in Arlestig, 2007) discussed four distinct ways communication can be used by a leader:

> Structural communication is used to transmit facts and information; human resource communication is focused on the exchange of information, feelings, and individual needs; political communication is used to influence and manipulate; and symbolic communication is used for storytelling (p.264).

It is very clear that communication does not occur in vacuum but in certain contexts or media which according to Wood (2013) "influence events and the meanings we attribute" (p. 20). To Arlestig (2007) and Wood (2013) many factors interplay to affect communication like culture, context, events, time, and individuals themselves which cannot be overlooked as they shape the meanings constructed for words uttered or gestures made. Cultures differ tremendously in the way they process words where in some cultures there is no appreciation for shared meanings rather the emphasis is on the content like in the United States of America (USA) in contrary to Asia (Wood, 2013). Gizir (2007) reported that the 1980s witnessed a growth in valuing organizational culture as an essential element in understanding organizations and communication since Gizir (2007) considers that organizational culture and organizational communication are interdependent. Therefore, I investigated in the coming sections different forms of communication, effective communication, gender communication, and the relationship

11

between leadership and communication and its evolution through time taking into consideration cultural effects.

Forms of Communication

Communication can be unilateral, linear, or one-way which is more goal-oriented and less personal (Wood, 2013). It is "initiated by a speaker and terminated by a listener" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p.379).Yet, many scholars criticized unilateral communication for regarding receivers as passive which doesn't guarantee adequate interpretation of messages (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Wood, 2013). Nevertheless, the transactional model of communication denied any unilateral flow of messages as they believe that communicators are continuously exchanging verbal and non-verbal messages without taking turns (Wood, 2013).

Another form is two-way communication which is reciprocal and interactive. Two-way communication employs continuous exchanges in the form of debate, inquiry, instruction, and conversation. Through continuous, mutual, and cooperative conversation, communication is improved and confusion is lessened (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). As to inquiry, it improves critical thinking and sharing skills by involving more than one party in an answer seeking process. Debate is another form of communication that involves expression of opinion and taking a certain position where there is no win-win situation. At last, communicating through instruction lies at the core work of leaders and educators. Wood (2013) spoke of "I-You" and "I-Thou" interactions where the first can be very intimate when individuals form congenial relationships while communicating with their

12

co-workers while the latter is very rare as it involves appreciating others, admitting their potentials, and accepting them as they are.

Feedback is another important form of communication as it reflects success of communication besides perfecting exactness of messages (Gray & Ward, 1974). Hoy and Miskel (2008) define feedback as the response from a person who has received a message. Feedback is considered as one of the key roles of leadership since it keeps message receivers posted about the correctness of messages sent and about their performance. Feedback enables listeners to make better decisions. It can be either verbal or non-verbal and negative or positive. Gray and Ward (1974) demonstrated for verbal feedback "by asking for certain understandings, by asking for interpretations, viewpoints, and opinions, the principal can evaluate how much of past and present messages are reaching their source" (p.6). Non-verbal feedback like facial gestures, nods, or any body language cues make most of individual responses, reflect culture, and indicate the listener's concern(Zimmerman & West, 1975). When feedback is informative and aligns with organizational direction, it is positive. However, when feedback is corrective of divergence then it is negative (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Hoy and Miskel (2008) conclude that "communication competence can be enhanced by improving individual sending, listening, and feedback skills" (p.379). Gray and Ward (1974) define listening as "a process of in-gathering, of pulling in elements of our environment to make them understood and usable" (p.9). Zimmerman and West (1975) stress the importance of listening in initiating active conversations and delivering messages properly "active hearship is a fundamental prerequisite for the production of a particular class of utterances" (p. 109) which reflects interest in the speaker's talk and empathy, provides

13

support, and builds trust (Gray & Ward, 1974; Slater, 2005). When leaders are open to staff and listen to their worries, complaints, and ideas only then staff feel appreciated and valued which results in improved performance (Slater, 2005).

All in all, communication is inevitable, unrecoverable, and meaningful. I believe that through two-way communication, leaders are not only speaking and giving commands but also listening, evaluating, interacting with their staff, and getting to know their staff which facilitates achievement of organizational goals along with staff basic needs of survival, safety, belonging, valuing one self, and realizing potentials. People are always communicating and building relationships even if they were mute and wordless since their silence bears certain indications (Wood, 2013).

Effective Communication

As a researcher, I believe that effective communication entails that school leaders should know their school contexts to be able to communicate their vision to their school community and collaborate effectively towards fulfilling their school mission. To be successful in communicating a vision that appeals to the school community interests, leaders should employ different forms of communication: verbal to non-verbal, direct to non-direct, and written to spoken along with having good speaking, sending, listening, and feedback skills.

Hoy and Miskel (2008) attest that despite the fact that effective communication is time consuming and expensive, yet it remains essential for the productivity of an organization and leadership effectiveness (Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014), and it can be acquired (Wood, 2013). James and Cinelli (2003) believed that "communication proves

effective only when both parties openly and honestly share information, and accurately grasp a message's meaning" (p. 41). Therefore, leaders should have certain communication skills that enable them to role model effective communication and build a culture of effective communicators at schools. Plus, Arlestig (2007) theorizes that "effective successful leaders must have a realistic view of communication and its direct and indirect effects" (p.265). Wood (2013) elaborates by saying that effective communicators should have knowledge of the people, situation, and context to choose the appropriate style. Researchers like Arlestig (2007), Hallinger (2003), as well as Hilliard and Newsome (2013) agree that for a leader to be an effective communicator he or she should be able to set in collaboration with the school partners a common vision then communicate that vision along with the school mission to the school community using clear language (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Hallinger (2003) besides Hilliard and Newsome (2013) set forth that an efficient communicator is able of communicating knowledge content in a warm and supportive learning environment in addition to building strong ties between teachers and the school community. It is very important for an effective communicator to communicate school, teachers', and students' needs to the school community and school board, as well (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

Moreover, researchers explored some objectives of effective communication. The primary objective is to have a common identity and a sense of belonging. Another goal is to build a community spirit along with high commitment to the organization.These objectives are achieved through effective leadership as Magoon and Linkous (1979) emphasized the critical role effective leaders play in raising the staff morale and consequently their sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization.

Furthermore, to be interactive and effective, communication should be free of external confusion and sources of noise whether physical, psychological, or semantic (Wood, 2013). This task can be achieved through improving communication competence that is, improving sending, listening, and feedback skills. Hoy and Miskel (2008) elaborate that senders should use clear, easy, and proper language to facilitate message interpretation process by receivers who should be good listeners, attentive, interactive, and positive. Hoy and Miskel (2008) add that the message content should be valuable to the listener, timely, and new. For feedback and reflection to be fruitful, effective listening and speaking skills should be employed (paraphrasing, questioning, and describing) (Gray & Ward, 1974). Communication should also be responsive to all sorts of symbols whether verbal or non-verbal that receivers interpret, summarize, and judge. The criteria for determining communication effectiveness as defined by (Germann,1994) included "dimensions of dogmatism, communication style, clarity, influence, valuing others, feedback, conflict management, group communication, overall communication effectiveness, communication adequacy, information sharing, supervisory communication and upward communication"(p.16) .

Johns's (1997) study results highlighted the importance of "routine information exchange, relationship building, and listening" along with "giving feedback, soliciting feedback, and public relations" (p. XI). Gomez and Ballard (2013) identified two communication activities that ensure organizational affectivity "information allocation" and "collective reflexivity" whereby staff are well-informed about the felt needs of their organization as well as the "threats" and "opportunities" that enlighten the staff and guide them to evaluate their work and be reflective (p. 217).

Finally, Wood (2013) discusses an aspect of effective communication which is ethical communication. A communicator should know his perspectives, respect himself and reflect that by addressing people as humans rather than objects along with revisiting his communication style and evaluating it.

Gender and Communication

It was not until the appearance of feminism that scholars started addressing gender issues in every aspect including communication (Foss & Foss, 1983). Hancock and Rubin (2014) noted that "gendered language refers to words and syntax used differently by males and females" (p.46). Many researchers argued that differences in communication across genders are existent which affect the organizational functioning and interaction between the organization community members (Ahmad, 2014; Baker, 1991a; De Lange, 1995; Hancock & Rubin, 2014; James & Cinelli, 2003; Merchant, 2012; Smith & Thompson, 2002; Tebeaux, 1990). Jackson (2012) confirmed the claim that the effect of gender on communication existed but attributed the variations in speech and communication to different contexts. Some researchers perceived the effect of gender communication on "three major areas within social work education: the training of social work practitioners, communication among faculty members, and faculty-student communication in and out of the classroom" (De Lange, 1995, p. 75).

Earlier, scholars have attributed the variations in the way females and males communicated to different factors: "biological", psychological, "role-expectations of masculine and feminine behavior", and "societal development" (De Lange, 1995, p. 76).

Advocates of cross-cultural communication ascribed the differences in gender communication to the way girls and boys were raised up primarily in the family and what attitude is supported that meets the parents' expectations then to the roles assigned in the society to different genders (Ahmad, 2014; James & Cinelli, 2003; Merchant, 2012; Smith & Thompson, 2002; Stern & Karraker, 1989). According to Maltz and Borker (as cited in De Lange, 1995), kids prefer to befriend other kids who belong to the same sex-dyad. Girls form close, temporary friendships with girls that they always fear to lose whereas boys have more friends than girls and practice a game of control and superiority. Irrespective of cultural backgrounds and contexts, boys appeared to share three characteristics "storytelling, arguing, and verbal posturing" (Maltz & Borker as cited in De Lange, 1995, p.76). These friendly talks initiated in childhood shape the communication patterns later on that take place with folks from the opposite sex-dyad or in other terms the gender identity and self-image date back to childhood and are rooted in the stereotyped cultural assumptions of femininity and masculinity (Baker, 1991b; Brinia, 2011; De Lange, 1995; Smeltzer & Werbel, 1986; Smith & Thompson, 2002; Stern & Karraker, 1989; West & Zimmerman, 1987; Zimmerman &West, 1975).

On the other hand, Kim and Bresnahan (1996) likewise some feminists deny the existence of differences in gender communication by stating that females and males are more similar than different in their communication styles. Truss et al.'s (2012) empirical data collected in The United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland showed that although there are no significant differences in the way women and men process and communicate information, yet due to gender stereotyping and cultural influence women are

18

underestimated. Ahmad (2010) considered that the differences in communication if present cannot be traced back to gender.

As mentioned earlier, communication has many forms which are essential to the efficiency of the interaction. Scholars like (De Lange, 1995; Smeltzer & Werbel, 1986; Zimmerman & West, 1975) believed that women and men communicate differently whereby females tend to focus on particular and specific aspects of the conversation especially non-verbal cues and gestures, engage in more question-response interaction, and are less open, more understanding, and more restrained in contrary to men who speak more, ask less, use less non-verbal language, express less emotions, and exercise more power in their speech. Baker (1990a) along with Hancock and Rubin (2014) add that females are more emotional when they speak and lack certainty and confidence which is reflected in their usage of "dependent clauses, fillers, tag questions, intensive adverbs, negations, hedges, personal pronouns, self-references, and justifiers" (p.46). De Lange (1995) concludes that males' assertive communication style is more appropriate to positions of authority and management since males fit more (Miller & McReynolds, as cited in Foss & Foss, 1983) and are more systematic in contrary to females who were described as less organized (Beck, as cited in Hancock & Rubin, 2014). Baker (1991a) perceives females as using "affiliative/depowering strategies" and males as using "instrumental" strategies that enable males to accomplish desired job thus granting them a position of power, authority, and superiority (p.37). Females are more interested in forming affectionate relationships and sympathizing with others which helps in promoting communication while males are more goal-oriented and directed towards competition (Kim & Bresnahan, 1996).

As to written responses, the investigation on a homogeneous population carried by Smeltzer and Werbel (1986) about written communication indicated that there were no significant differences between both genders regarding "demanding vs. requesting tone, personal vs. impersonal tone, or 'me' orientation vs. 'you' orientation" nor in the "active vs. passive style in their communication" (p. 47). On the contrary, Tebeaux (1990) studied written responses and found that males with minimum work experience were downright and definite in their answers unlike females with minimum work experience who were diplomatic, informal, and reflected ignorance of the desired powerful message tone rather they seemed very friendly in their requests. As to both genders, students who had experience were able to comprehend the message and write strong, convincing demands. Another study by Bosley (1992) investigated the effect of gender on visual communication and came up with interesting results showing no significant differences in the way males and females constructed visuals but in the shapes they constructed where males preferred "angular illustrations" while females "curved visuals" (p.226).

Besides, (Lizzio, Wilson, Gilchrist, & Gallois, 2003) believed that the gender of the supervisor affects the nature of feedback given to employees. Their study results revealed that female feedback style (cooperative, friendly, affectionate, less threatening, and two-way communication) proved to be more effective than males' (Lizzio et al., 2003). According to Lizzio et al. (2003), the female feedback process can be summed up in four gradual steps: inquiry about the perception of employee or staff member, validation of his/her position, targeting the subject in discussion, finally inquiring again about the staff opinion. Lizzio et al. (2003) conclude that there exist differences between both genders in their feedback strategy in the "type, number, and ordering of its

elements" (p. 372) where men unlike women tend to directly address the topic and give feedback without involving subordinates or showing interest in their perceptions. Despite these differences, both gender strategies were proven effective in initiating positive feedback but in different degrees: females' strongly effective while males' moderately effective (Lizzio et al., 2003).

As to administrative positions, Baker (1991b) and De Lange (1995) as well as Zimmerman and West (1975) state that they were mostly dominated by males thus females felt inferior and had no voice heard in that male culture.

Moreover, De Lange (1995) while reporting the results of a study conducted by Eakins and Eakins in 1976 comments that the effect of gender on communication profligates to staff meetings and interactions during which women spoke less and listened more and men not only spoke more but also interrupted women more often which was further asserteassured by (Baker, 1990a; Hancock & Rubin, 2014; Markel et al. as cited in Foss & Foss, 1983; Zimmerman & West, 1975). Smeltzer and Werbel (1986) believe that whether in administrative positions or not, females found it hard to address males or talk to them rather they preferred female talks because males were dominant in those contexts. Another study results by Edelsky (as cited in De Lange, 1995) supported the claim that women have no say in hierarchical mixed-gender meetings rather they tend to be submissive to males while they are more represented in less formal meetings. Nevertheless, Zimmerman and West (1975) study results indicated that women spoke more with same-sex dyads and males interrupted less other males during conversations.

Although cultural differences exist between the West, Far East, and the Arab society there are nonetheless some cross-cultural similarities regarding gender

communication. Claes (as cited in Merchant, 2012) spoke of "culture trap" (p.29) which he attributed to the fact that women come to the workplace with prior assumptions and expectations about their role due to their gender which affects their communication and leadership styles. In the Middle East there are certain gender stereotypes that consider females as less capable and cognitively less active. Due to their upbringing and cultural constraints, women in general are considered inferior to men and are place data "disadvantage in the workplace" (Merchant, 2012, p. 2). According to a research conducted in the United Arab Emirates by Ahmad (2014), females are comparatively shy, indirect, sensitive to feedback, polite but may suddenly turn unfriendly when customs and habits are jeopardized. Ahmad (2014) added that Emirati females do not express their opinion in mixed-group communication rather they prefer to chat with other females in contrast to males who are more direct, less sensitive, and speak openly using even sometimes harsh language. A striking finding was that Emirati females converse more freely with males from other nationalities than with Emirati males at the workplace and if they did they would avoid direct eye-contact while Emirati males focus more on body language used by the speaker. The study also showed that Emirati females are better listeners than males. Due to cultural issues, Emirati males are perceived as more trustworthy than females, and they have a powerful dominating character that enables them to convince others. Finally, Ahmad (2014) sums up by concluding that males and females in the West and Emirates are similar in the way they settle down disputes and show their feelings.

To sum up, literature shows that gender communication differences are existent therefore I explored my context, the Lebanese context, which is remarkable for its diversified nature to find out the Lebanese position in this continuum.

Leadership

Hackman and Johnson (1991) defined leadership as a phenomena rooted in communication and said,"Leadership is human (symbolic) communication which modifies the attitudes and behaviors of others in order to meet group goals and needs" (p. 11).

Coronel, Moreno, and Carrasco (2010) attested that leadership is crucial to schools as it governs the roles and responsibilities of principals. Owens and Valesky (2011) explained that leadership practices influence the success of any organization, organizational climate, and behavior as they influence the school community interaction. As to leadership beliefs and practices, literature discusses many leadership beliefs and practices that range from traditional, instructional, transformational, and visionary to distributive. It is remarkable that understanding leadership practices and effective communication cannot be achieved without understanding cultural contexts. Recent research conducted in the field has viewed visionary, transformational, and distributive leadership as being more effective and authoritarian as being less effective (Goddard, Neumerski, Goddard, Salloum, & Berebitsky, 2010; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Each leadership theory portrayed a different communication role of the leader. There are some similarities nonetheless differences are existent.

Historical overview. Brinia (2011) considered that primarily interest in leadership started with *The Great Man Theory* which held the assumption that leadership was innate and not acquired as a result leaders were all aristocrats or the powerful. This theory ignored gender issues. *The Trait Theory* then appeared which considered that leaders inherited leadership traits. Later on, *The Behavioral Theory* denied the assumption of *The Trait Theory* that leadership was inherited and consequently cannot be taught and emphasized that leaders function better in a democratic setting (Lewin et al., as cited in Brinia, 2010). Still, the leadership perspectives to be discussed below are the most common and popular as themes and styles of management.

Bureaucratic leadership. Education then was highly centralized and top-down management prevailed where few decisions involved the school community (Caldwell, 1998; Owens & Valesky, 2011; Pawlas & OLiva, 2008). An authoritative principal usually imposed his vision on the school community (Ghamrawi, 2013; Pawlas & OLiva, 2008) and favored more impersonal interpersonal relationships (Owens & Valesky, 2011). *The Bureaucracy Theory* stressed close supervision, vertical and one-way communication, and sole decision making (Owens & Valesky, 2011). Bureaucracy advocates employ more non-verbal written communication as they consider it more reliable in transmitting messages upward the hierarchical lines (Owens & Valesky, 2011).

Instructional leadership. Early 1980s with the publishing of Nation at Risk, there was a shift towards human relations and collegial instructional leadership (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2010; Owens & Valesky, 2011). Hallinger (2003, 2009) clarified that it is the principal's core role to determine the school mission in

collaboration with others then make sure it is communicated properly to the school community.

To Hallinger (2009) and Sergiovanni (2007) instructional supervision revolves mainly around improving students' achievement hence all the instructional supervisors' activities are tailored towards achieving that goal. Owens and Valesky (2011) identify domains for the work of instructional leaders that included establishing commitment to the school mission through a common vision, building open internal and external relations with school community, and being visible.

Moreover, Glickman et al. (2010) list very important interpersonal communication skills for effective supervision which include listening actively to staff, clarifying through asking questions, encouraging speakers to present their ideas, reflecting on the message conveyed by the speaker, presenting opinion, helping in solving problems and negotiating different solutions, directing to better choices, standardizing a plan of action, and finally reinforcing and discussing possible consequences. Instructional leadership perceives a coordination, instructional, and control role for the principal that is, top-down management (Heck et al., 1990).

Transformational leadership. The transformational leader is visible around the school acting as a role model and demonstrating values that influence his/her staff and build trust. It is said that charisma is the product of communication. Transformational leaders articulate the school vision through stories, rituals, and sentimental language (Barton, 2008). Barton (2008) believed that "for transformational leaders, symbolic communication is like an iceberg where only a small part is identified leaving a small part as identifiable, leaving the rest for assumption- receiving" (p. 25).

Transformational leadership employs bottom-up participation in the school processes that leads to second-order change or capacity building (Day et al., 2001; Hallinger, 2003).Transformational leaders make sense of incidents that occur at their organizations, communicate messages, and give feedback to make sure messages sent are interpreted correctly (Barton, 2008).

Distributed leadership. Recently, distributed leadership became a booming issue. Spillane, Hunt, and Healey (2009) defined distributed leadership as "the product of conjoint activity that emerges from multi-member organizational subgroups acting in concert"(p. NA). Spillane and Healey (2010) added that distributed leadership involves everybody even those not in formal leadership positions since there are many players involved like curriculum designers, mentors, and subject-matter coordinators. Leadership in practice revolves around building relationships and interacting with people around. Thereupon, the principal as a coach leading through mutual trust, cooperation, and team spirit engages his staff in vision making through ongoing communication thus practicing democratic/participative leadership (Ghamrawi, 2013). Shared decision making is regarded as a communication process whereby the leader sets the agenda in collaboration with his/her staff, ascribes roles to each participant, and later on evaluates the process through feedback (Harb, 2014; Moos & Kofod, 2009).

Effective Leadership and Communication

Caldwell (1998) believes that educational leaders specifically principals have much more to give than just either performing managerial tasks or restricting their role to teaching and learning and preserving the status-quo (Spendlove, 2007). Al- Ghamedi

(2010) and Ghamrawi (2013) asserted that principals can perform school work according to rules and regulations as managers however as influential leaders they can make sure the work is done properly. Principals should possess distinctive qualities or attributes that enable them to inspire and be true leaders (Al- Ghamedi, 2010).The term attributes refers to a cluster of qualities and characteristics, personal, and professional, technical, and work-related knowledge and skills (Busher, 2006). Leaders play an essential role in enhancing effective organizational communication. Yunas, Iqbal, and Ahmed (2013) thought of leaders and specifically principals as initiators and assessors of collegial relationships that are based on collaboration, understanding, and effective communication. Principals should lead with a heart, get involved with their staff, offer constructive feedback, and nurture their growth and professional development (Yunas et al., 2013). Day et al.(2001) along with Magoon and Linkous (1979) and Slater (2005) defined some traits that distinguish effective leaders such as ensuring a healthy and collaborative school climate, communicating effectively and openly, as well as showing interest in staff and supporting them professionally and emotionally thus allowing them to grow.

Hackman and Johnson (1991) theorize:

> Leadership shares all the features of human communication. First leaders use symbols to create reality. Leaders use language, stories and rituals to create distinctive group cultures. Second, leaders communicate about the past, present, and future. They engage in evaluation, analysis and goal setting. Effective leaders create a desirable vision for followers outlining what the group should be like in the future. Third, leaders make conscious use of symbols to reach their goals (p. 7).

In a five years longitudinal case study carried by (Kofod & Moos, 2009) at a Danish school as well as in another study conducted by (Harb, 2014) that investigated

27

public and private schools in Lebanon, many school principals perceived their role as that of team building where leadership was decentralized, duties were shared, and ongoing communication was basics. Earlier, Caldwell (1998) reports survey results of schools in Virginia, Australia which witnessed a major shift in the role of the principal from the classical, autocratic figure of the 1970s to the less centralized more open decision maker who empowered staff and involved even parents in decision making. The new attitude was reflected in improved learning outcomes and curriculum benefits although many principals expressed their annoyance of the work load and dissatisfaction with the slow effects of low bureaucratization on teachers' performance, alas none wished to go back to the former situation (Caldwell, 1998).

Another important attribute of effective leaders and communicators is to be team leaders capable of enhancing social cohesion in their organizations and to act as role models who inspire and direct their team members (Busher, 2006; Slater, 2005; Spendlove, 2007). Moreover, they should be good negotiators and trustworthy. School principals who have effective interpersonal communication skills are able of building liaisons with teachers, students, and school community especially parents (Brinia, 2011; Harb, 2014).Principals, who are well-aware of their staff interests and beliefs, develop positive emotions among staff through communication and strong relationships that are based on trust and advocacy.

Hsieh and Shen (2010) spoke of symbolic leadership that constructed an artistic image for leaders who can communicate a common vision that unites the organizational community. According to Al-Omari (2007) along with Schulte, Slate, and Onwuegbuzie (2010), an effective leader should be able to determine which communication pattern or

28

leadership attitude to use depending on situation and readiness of staff that is, having the ability and willingness to perform a certain task. Many researchers discussed dialogue and cooperation as new approaches to holistic learning. Blasé and Blasé (2000) clarified that the leaders' choices greatly influence his/her practices, beliefs, and the school community.

Recently, Fairhaust and Connaughton (2014) review of theories revealed that "leadership communication is alive with the potential for reflexivity, moral accountability, and change" or in other terms communication is interpreted in terms of meaning and co-framing of realities in certain cultural contexts (p. 20). Fairhaust and Connaughton (2014) discuss a new trend in the study of leadership and communication, "leadership aesthetics", which accounts for the leader's personality or charisma enabling a leader to build and communicate a shared vision and an organization culture or identity and sense of belonging (p. 12). Since according to Fairhaust and Connaughton (2014), leadership is more meaning-centered than transmission which helps operationalize organizational values through effective communication and making sense of linguistics whether verbal or non-verbal.

Day (2000) also highlighted certain effectiveleadership practices and attributes that improve organizational communication which include coaching and mentoring, openness, honesty, the need to consult others, the ability to listen, negotiate and persuade, the ability to think broadly and strategically, and to engage others that is, to develop social capital and networking relationships.

Leadership and Gender

Valentine and Godkin's (2000) study results indicated that the gender of the leader determined the leadership style and greatly influenced the staff identification with their job. Merchant (2012) proceeds that because males and females use different communication styles, they end up as different leaders where males are portrayed as powerful and females as affectionate. This classification limited the number of females in top management and restricted their role mainly to caregivers (Abu-Tineh, 2012). Fernandez, Carlson, Stepina, and Nicholson's (1997) research study that re-examined Hofestede's (1980) classification of countries with respect to "work-related values" revealed changes in the data collected earlier by Hofstede. China, Russia, Chile, and Japan appeared to be masculine countries where senior positions are dominated by males while France, the United States, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, and Germany ranked as feminine countries which reflected the culture in each of aforementioned countries (Fernandez et al, 1997). According to the statistics conducted in (2003) by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in the United Kingdom, male teachers dominated secondary school and females dominated primary school, and this situation applied to both the Western and Asian countries. Brinia (2011) concludes that males are more present in "senior positions" like "head teachers" rather than as "classroom teachers" due to many reasons like poor payment, low socioeconomic status, and absence of promotion (Smith, as cited in Brinia, 2011, p. 168). Abu-Tineh (2012) confirmed these claims by stating that in Jordan females can act as principals and teachers but are denied the opportunity of becoming superintendents due to gender stereotypes that are deeply engraved in culture which classify females as "one-dimensional, viewed as either mothers

who are nurturing or feminists who are career-oriented" (p.80). Irrespective of the statistics that show the Jordanian government is spending 5% of its GPD on education and the level of literacy has been elevated among both genders, Abu-Tineh (2012) argues that gender stereotypes are still emphasized by books that specify different roles for each gender. Arar and Oplatka's (2013) study emphasized same results about schools in Palestine. Baker (1991a) adds that despite the fact that few females reach high management positions, still a female is a "token of her gender" since females represent the minority in any organization which classifies them as "affiliative and powerless" (p. 168). Coronel et al. (2010) also report that Spanish women in leadership have really suffered to reach their positions, and they are still under-represented due to cultural barriers that value the role of females in their families and view males as administrators. Even though, males and females undergo same preparation for principalship in Spain, yet males are more elected as principals due to cultural, "political, and socio-economic threads" (Coronel et al., 2010, p. 144). Celikten's (2005) study of female principals in Turkey revealed similar results. Females are also under-represented in principalship, (4%) according to the statistics conducted by the Minister of National Education Statistics in (2003), and their presence is limited to single girl schools. Moreover, females do not receive any preparation nor training to hold that position, and most importantly females are subject to cultural gender stereotypes that still view females as inferior (Celikten, 2005).

Gender stereotypes govern the roles ascribed to females since female leaders are regarded as affectionate, empathetic, and doubtful which inhibit their abilities to take decisions and to act as strong leaders (Abu-Tineh, 2012; Arar & Oplatka, 2013; Valentine

31

& Godkin, 2000) rather they are considered powerless (Abu-Tineh, 2012; Arar & Oplatka, 2013; Baker, 1991a). The results of the research conducted by Brinia (2011) revealed that male leaders viewed themselves as handling a multi-task role that requires being proactive, decisive, role-model, open to the school community as to ensure "healthy relationships" (p.176) and a climate of collaboration, common vision and shared goals along with being good communicators and negotiators.

Valentine and Godkin (2000) emphasize the significant role gender plays in staff "socialization" when having male leaders influences the job "variety, autonomy, and significance" in contrast to having female leaders who facilitate forming "close friendships" (p. 121).Valentine and Godkin (2000) add that having male supervisors helps in becoming more autonomous and independent which encourages taking initiatives and withstanding hard situations. However, Valentine and Godkin (2000) proceed by saying that in situations that employ a lot of feedback like introducing an innovation, female leaders are better communicators as they give more feedback in a friendly manner. Miller (as cited in Valentine & Godkin, 2000) had a different point of view as he believed that new employees usually tend to get professional knowledge from their leaders and form congenial and friendly relationships with co-workers. Valentine and Godkin (2000) sum up their study findings by defining the determinants that govern relationships between females and males which are a factor of gender, too. Staff members regardless of their gender prefer female leaders for emotional support, feedback, and appraisal although Abu-Tineh (2012) and Baker (1990a) report that subordinates prefer an instrumental, strong leader irrespective of the gender issue while colleagues go for the affiliative.

Other researchers like Arar and Oplatka (2013) as well as Coronel et al. (2010) relate leadership to context and claim that females adopt a more empathetic style that is a reflection of the prevailing culture which regards females as providers of happiness. Concerning influence generated by both genders, research showed mixed results. Merchant (2012) as well as Arar and Oplatka (2013) believe that males and females are very distinct in the tactics and strategies they follow to affect others which labels females as inferior to males and less qualified to be in high positions. Males employ more "personal appeal, consultation, assertiveness, and inspirational appeal" while females affect and reach females more than males because they share same communication style (Merchant, 2012, p. 24). Arar and Oplatka (2013) besides Merchant add that generally speaking, males are more serious, hard, and sometimes dictatorial and tend to hide their feelings while females are more soft and diplomatic. On the contrary, other researchers denied any differences in the strategies used by different genders and related any differences to situations and contexts.

Harris (1994) found that women leaders tended to be more open to change, less hierarchical, and employers of informal networking and nurturing attitude. Likewise, (Caldwell,1998) reports results of Ford's survey of schools in Melbourne about the new role of principals which showed gender differences wherefore women considered participation as vital to school ethos, shared vision, and team building more than men did. Thus, research shows opposing views when it comes to gender differences, limited empirical research, and recommendations for further studies.

Perceptions of Effective Leadership and Communication

Kim and Bresnahan (1996) argue that one cannot comprehend communication attitude of both genders without getting to know their perspectives and beliefs of effective communication. Therefore, I researched some studies that investigated the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding effective leadership and communication across gender.

Price (2012) along with Yunas et al. (2013) describe principals as the foremost elements who contribute to the organizational success and promote a trusting climate. Through effective principal-teacher interactions, a collaborative learning community is established and teachers feel a sense of belonging and loyalty (Price, 2012). Germann (1994) argues that "leadership perception was defined in terms of the dimensions of support, work-group maintenance, goal facilitation, work facilitation, representation, and technical competence" (p. 121).

Coronel et al.'s (2010) interview of female principals revealed that principals preferred to communicate less formally with parents and socialize more often using variety of methods. In addition, these principals felt that a principal cannot build a healthy school climate without communicating the school vision to the small school community (students, teachers, staff) and the larger community outside. The principals strongly believed they should be easy to reach and visible along with building teams and empowering their staff. Yet, the principals believed that female principals communicated differently than males with the larger community using more caring, sensitive, and affectionate style. Alas, females reached the principalship position at a later age than

males which entailed they did not hope for any growth or professional development on the job.

In two different studies by Karami-Akkary (2013) and Hsieh and Shen (2010), the interviewed principals regardless of their gender highlighted the importance of possessing strong communication, management, and decision- making skills since leaders are in continuous interaction with the school community. The principals in these studies attested the importance of managing budgets wisely to launch school improvement programs as well as possessing instructional supervision skills that help promote teachers' growth and professional development. Some principals agreed with teachers that leaders should be humorous. The respondents also felt they should demonstrate care, loyalty, honesty, consistency, resiliency, appreciation, and integrity to their followers by acting as role-models (Hsieh & Shen, 2010).

Interviewing some female principals in Turkey, Celikten (2005) comes up with a portrayal of female principals who according to the respondents should possess highly effective communication skills in the first place then be tender with mother-like female traits. Listening as a communication skill was much emphasized by these principals. The respondents complained about the gender labeling of roles that hinder their promotion to principalship in higher education. Despite their feminine characteristics (concern and diplomacy), the female principals admitted they had to act like males to keep in control and preserve "the norm; that is, the way men lead" (Celikten, 2005) as they lacked support on the job (p. 215). In addition, the principals believed that Turkish females had their doubts regarding how capable they are to be leaders which was a reflection of the family role in raising girls as dependent and helpless.

Teachers' Perceptions of Effective Leadership and Communication

Fairhurst and Connaughton (2014) report a strong correlation between leaders' effective communication and subordinates' perception of effective leadership. Blasé and Blasé (2000) clarify that teachers appreciated principals who exercised good communication skills like listening actively and positively to the teachers' concerns, reflecting and giving feedback, encouraging, and sharing personal experience. A teacher expressed her gratitude for the principal's good listening skills, creative thinking, and understanding that made teachers feel empowered, satisfied, and autonomous. Other teachers emphasized collaborative work, teaming, mentoring, and coaching as positive skills exercised by their principal that positively influenced their classroom instruction and interaction with students. Almost all the teachers appreciated the principal's accessibility, friendship, and sense of humor. Harb's (2014) study results showed no difference in the perceptions of teachers regarding effective leaders across gender.

Turkish teachers interviewed by Celikten (2005) had contradictory opinions regarding female principalship. Some teachers of both genders praised their female principals for being supportive, knowledgeable, great mentors, effective communicators, visible, role-models, and able to build a healthy school climate. On the other hand, only few female teachers criticized female principals for being lofty and self-assertive, stern, and biased. These female teachers added that male teachers can adapt with female principals in contrary to female teachers who defy the female principals since they are at a better position than they are.

The teachers interviewed by Hsieh and Shen (2010) in Michigan and Harb (2014) in Lebanon expressed that leaders should possess good communication skills which

enable them to be good negotiators and problem solvers along with understanding teachers' needs and being available to listen to their demands or concerns. Furthermore, these teachers perceived effective principals as those who are humane, empathetic, good listeners, optimistic, appreciative, decisive, and sincere.

Arar and Oplatka's (2013) research study revealed that Palestinian teachers preferred male principals since they reflected strength and power of position, but some teachers criticized male principals who overuse power and tend to be authoritarian and non-collaborative. These teachers preferred a principal who listens carefully and supports his staff.

Al-Ghamedi's (2010) survey of teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership perspectives in Al- Madina, Saudi Arabia showed that principals were viewed as more democratic than authoritarian or laissez-faire. Teachers found their principals to be collaborative, understanding, supportive, appreciative, empowering, friendly, problem-solvers, fair, and aware of their role responsibilities that they divided and shared with team members.

Researcher's Platform

There is a wide spread agreement that communication and leadership are inseparable and closely interrelated. I agree with (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Hackman & Johnson, 1991; Hilliard & Newsome, 2013) that communication is a top priority of a leader as literature has revealed an agreement over the important role leaders play in enhancing effective organizational communication. Germann (1994) concludes that "there appears to be a general agreement that leadership and human communication are

linked, and that good leadership increases with good communication" (p.12).Darling-Hammond (1997) asserts that effective leadership plus effective communication and collaboration are central to achieve the mission of successful schools, and they are what grant schools success along with having specific goals, high aspirations, differentiated curricula that match students' needs, and ongoing professional growth. Almost all research studies reviewed showed that gender stereotypes are still existent, and they seem to mask leadership and communication perspectives governing the educational organizations.

Furthermore, I believe likewise (Harris, 1994; Ghamrawi, 2013; Turner, 2000) that there is no one leadership fashion that fits all situations since effective leadership is a long-term involvement of organizational community.

Consequently, leadership should be grounded on mutual trust between leaders and school community (Hallinger, 2003; Owens, 1998). Leadership is not solely restricted to the school principal rather to the situational theory leadership is represented in a functional relationship between leaders, followers, and situational variables which entails that communication should be effective. I believe that leaders cannot fulfill their mission solely without communicating effectively with their school community members through creating awareness, generating trust, minimizing gender stereotypes, and role modeling effective communication verbally and non-verbally, as well as formally and informally.

A Profile for Effective Leaders and Communicators

After extensive review of different theories and perspectives, I was able to build a leadership-communication profile for effective leaders and communicators based on the

theories and leadership models discussed earlier mainly instructional, transformational, and distributive irrespective of the gender factor. As a researcher, I believe that the most qualified person can do the job. Hoy and Miskel, (2008) conclude:

> Communication plays such a central role in schools that the key issue is not whether administrators, teachers, and students engage in communication but whether they communicate effectively. People must exchange information in schools, but to develop shared meanings requires communication competence at both the individual and organizational levels (p. 410).

An effective leader and communicator regardless of his/her gender should:

- Be well-informed about the school context, community, culture, rituals, and values so as to be able to take the staff into account while communicating the school vision (Wood, 2013) which unites the organization according to (Hsieh & Shen, 2010) and builds a common identity.

- Represent a source of knowledge and support that staff whether teachers or instructional supervisors would consult for advice in their daily work. The principal or leader should have knowledge of pedagogy or instructional knowledge and communicate that knowledge to teachers which facilitates exchange of information and builds trust.

- Employ good speaking skills that ensure proper delivery of messages. The whole issue of communication revolves around sending and receiving thus, leaders should be careful with stories they tell and their choice of words so as to be received and comprehended by staff as meant and intended. Barton (2008) highlights the importance of leaders' imagination while telling stories to create images that aid in proper message delivery. Moreover, leaders would be more

39

successful if they chose topics and stories that are valuable to the listeners and would touch their feelings.

- Use effective, positive, concrete, brief, and simple sending skills that range from verbal to non-verbal and written to face-to-face encounters, structured memos, telephone calls, and electronic messages which help elicit the respondents' mental images and feelings (Barton, 2008; Husain, 2013; Hoy & Miskel, 2008). The inclusion of rituals and cultural symbolism which reflect the school community aspirations and identity helps in message sending (Barton, 2008). Repetition is also essential as a sending skill which helps clarify any ambiguities (Hoy & Miskel, 2008).

- Use active listening skills which reflect appreciation of the speaker and interest in the message delivered.

- Employ effective feedback whether verbal and non-verbal. Hoy and Miskel (2008) asserted the importance of feedback for the effectiveness of the sending process, the clarity of a message, the correct decipherment and interpretation of a message, and the "gaining of a shared meaning for the message" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 388). A leader should be open to any sort of feedback whether negative or positive and regard that feedback as constructive rather than evaluative. The sooner leaders seek feedback, the better are messages being interpreted and misunderstandings are clarified.

- Use open door policy with internal and external school community. The leader should be visible around, accessible, and aware of his organization needs. In this way, leaders can build ties with their staff, support them, listen to their worries,

appeal to their interests, gain their trust, communicate their school vision, and get

informed about stories that are not transmitted through formal lines but rather are

whispered in the corners and corridors or in grapevines.

- Collaborate with the school community through building collegial relationships

  (Yunas et al., 2013) that are tailored towards fulfilling the school mission

  (Karami-Akkary, 2013).

- Empower staff and give them a say in the decision making process through

  listening to their suggestions and discussing decisions.

- Employ ethical communication which is represented in valuing the speaker,

  listening carefully, showing appreciation, and considering seriously what

  messages speakers are trying to send (Wood, 2013).

- Negotiate during conflicts with all parties involved and solve disputes fairly and

  diplomatically. Employ good conflict-management skills: listening, note-taking,

  and giving feedback.

- Communicate positive vibes through motivating staff using both intrinsic and

  extrinsic rewards, sharing their events, listening to their stories with interest,

  showing appreciation, embracing and supporting novice, encouraging innovation,

  and celebrating their success.

Chapter Summary

Many researchers have addressed leadership communication as it is regarded as

basics for the success of any organization (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). Barett (2002), Gracia-

Morales, Matias-Reche, and Verdu-Jover (2011), Husain (2013), and Yildiz (2013) added

that effective internal communication and interactions between staff within the organization are vital to the success of any organization as they motivate staff and help achieve a sense of belonging and commitment.

The main target of organizational communication is to reach a shared understanding of the organizational goals that is, consensus over the school vision and mission statement. Different leadership models addressed communication from different perspectives yet all highlighted its significance. I have reviewed studies conducted in different countries regionally and internationally that discussed leadership and communication as well as gender communication. These research studies show the school principal as a leader and the most important figure in enhancing effective communication and directing the communication process. International studies also reveal that gender stereotypes that label females as distinct communicators than males and to many as less competent leaders still existed(Baker, 1991b; Brinia, 2011; De Lange, 1995; Smeltzer & Werbel, 1986; Smith & Thompson, 2002; Stern & Karraker, 1989; West & Zimmerman, 1987; Zimmerman &West, 1975).Yet, the Lebanese studies that discuss the topic of effective leadership communication and gender communication are hardly present, so this study aimed at filling a gap in the literature. The coming section discussed the research methodology employed.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The current study primarily aimed at exploring the beliefs of key educational practitioners, mainly Lebanese private school teachers regarding effective communication across their organizations. Second, the research investigated gender differences in perceptions between female and male teachers regarding effective leadership and effective communication along with same and opposite gender communication interactions. Afterward, I compared the research findings to some Western leadership models mainly: instructional, transformational, and distributed leadership looking for any correlation or alignment. To achieve that goal, I adopted the qualitative descriptive design which is discussed in this chapter along with data collection procedures, sources, study site and participants, methodology employed, and tools used that best help explore the research questions detailed below.

Research Questions

To achieve its purpose, this research study attempted at answering the following research questions:

1) What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?

2) What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?

3) What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?

Research Design

Marshall and Rossman (1995) believed that the choice of the research design is essential to meet the "doability" and convince the reader of the soundness of the methodology employed and the researcher's capability of carrying the research further. This research is exploratory in nature which serves the purpose of finding the perceptions of the participants involved regarding the effective beliefs and practices of school principals that enhance effective communication. It is a qualitative descriptive research design that adopts the multiple or collective case study method and seeks investigating the meaning, structure, and essence of a certain phenomenon for a group of people (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2014; Silverman, 2010). A qualitative research study is interpretive in nature viewing the meanings of objects in the constructs human beings draw for them in contrary to the quantitative research design that sees intrinsic meanings for objects (Gall et al., 2014). Marshall and Rossman (1995) state that qualitative research methods are effective in comprehending "a complex social phenomenon" (p.3) since in a qualitative research, social reality is a result of social interaction, and knowledge is socially constituted. Thus, by appealing to the perceptions of the different participants involved, I was able get better insight into better leadership practices and beliefs that promote effective communication and how these perspectives differ between the genders alongside understanding intra-subjective meanings and commonalities that exist in the current study contexts.

Research Methodology

Silverman (2010) defined methodology as "the choices we make about cases to study, methods of data gathering, forms of data analysis etc. in planning and executing a research study" (p. 110). The research methodology was based on the grounded theory (GT) which was originated by Glaser and Strauss (1965) with their publication *Awareness of Dying*. GT is nowadays the most employed qualitative research method (Charmaz & Bryant, 2007). Charmaz (as cited in Charmaz & Bryant, 2007) believed that the GT "comprises a systematic, inductive, and comparative approach for conducting inquiry for the purpose of constructing theory" (p.1). Constructivist GT is based on interaction between the researcher and participants (Charmaz & Bryant, 2007). Glaser (1992) asserted that GT implies "full conceptual description" (p.3). GT procedure involves according to (Gall et al., 2014) "recording the data… breaking the text into segments…defining specific categories to reflect each important conceptual or structural element that appears in the text, and coding each segment for all the categories that apply to that segment" (p. 281). Iterative analysis kept going on and on to avoid contradictions through additional revision, constant comparison, and refinement for categories and to asserted that data were categorized properly which according to (Charmaz & Bryant, 2007) is very essential as it provides " more focused data" followed by "more theoretical analysis" (p.1).

The purpose of GT is to discover theory grounded in the data inductively not through testing theory by data (Hood, 2007). To Glaser (2010), GT is empowering to the researcher as it "frees the researcher to be his/her own theorist" and "tells us what is

going on, tells us how to account for the participants' main concerns, and reveals access variables that allow for incremental change" (p.6).

Participants

The study was carried out in ten private schools in Lebanon which constituted the study population. The reason the researcher had chosen private schools was that it is argued that Lebanon is a "privatized educational system" (Chapman & Miric, 2009, p. 331) since out of approximately million students enrolled at schools in Lebanon around 70% pursue private school education (497,530 students in private and 159,462 students in private free schools while only 285,399 students pursue public education) as reported by Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) in the years 2010 and 2013. As for the Greater Beirut Area, the target of this research investigation, 77.3 % of the students enrolled in schools pursue private schooling (75.4 % in private and 1.9 % in private free schools while 22.7% attend public schooling) according to the statistics conducted by the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) in the year 2007. Accordingly, the sample for the case study represented ten private schools in greater Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, where the majority of educational organizations are situated with principals, teachers, and students of the two genders and of distinct backgrounds thus making them fairly representative of the private schools in Lebanon. In addition, most of the private schools have either religious and/or political affiliation as the religious communities are granted the freedom by law (Decree No.7, 1990) to establish schools. A small number of private schools are non-sectarian (Haydamous, Gharib, Al Sayyed Kassim, & Al-Doueihy,

2012). Yet, I did not target the variable of being religious or secular in the selection process of schools in addition to the school level.

Private schools in Lebanon are categorized into two types: private non-free vs. private free (mid private). Private schools are also categorized according to size. I had randomly selected small, medium, and large sized school which represent better sources of data and richer information. Small-sized are K-12 schools that that offer educational services and an educational program for less than 300 students. Medium-sized schools are K-12 schools that that offer educational services and an educational program for 300-800 students. Large sized schools are K-12 schools that offer educational services and an educational program for more than 800 students. Silverman (2010) explains that the study site should be one that is feasible in order to have access to representable data. The current study sample consisted of three large schools, five medium schools, and two small schools.

The sample selection was purposeful as the study targeted teachers who are full timers or tenured and who have at least four years of experience seeking their perceptions in order to serve the target of the study and to provide adequate data that assisted in interpreting the phenomenon of effective leadership and communication investigated. Hood (2007) stated that purposeful or theoretical sampling is employed in qualitative research since according to Silverman (2010) purposeful sampling facilitates the focus on certain aspects researchers are targeting in the study. Besides, when a researcher employs purposeful sampling he/she has to pay careful attention to the population being studied and the sample selected that should be representative of the population. Silverman (2010)

illustrates that "by opting to focus on particular individuals, events, or processes, you are electing particular theoretical frameworks" (p. 145).

I contacted fifteen private schools in the Greater Beirut area and successfully got access to ten schools as planned with an average of eight teachers as participants. Table 3.1 below presents the participating schools' demographic data.

Table 3.1

Participating Schools' Demographic Data

School	School Code	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	School Size	Gender of the Principal(s)
School 1	A	265	32	Small	Male
School 2	B	411	60	Medium	Female
School 3	C	194	22	Small	Male/Female
School 4	D	1300	165	Large	Male
School 5	E	380	55	Medium	Female
School 6	F	537	69	Medium	Male
School 7	G	350	48	Medium	Female
School 8	H	1330	120	Large	Male/Female
School 9	I	553	63	Medium	Female
School10	J	810	86	Large	Male

In two schools there are two principals, one male and one female

The participants consisted of at least 7 in-service female and male teachers in each school. I attempted through the choice of ten schools at maximizing the diversity in staff and family they serve. Thus, the broad range of schools facilitated clustering of data

48

through constant comparison across schools. Teachers interviewed were not novice but at least had completed four academic years of work in the private sector. The participants were either full timers or tenured to serve the purpose of the study so as to have more commitment to the organization and to be more familiar with the leadership perspective and effective communication in the organization. Adding, more experienced participants can give a better insight into the leaders' beliefs and actions along with reflecting their own and the organization culture.

All in all, the study sample constituted of 89 participants. Stern (2007) asserted that "the sample for the grounded theory has to be representative" (p. 117) since Glaser (as cited in Stern, 2007) considered that large amount of data is hard to interpret and analyze. Stern (2007) adds that "20-30 interviews and /or hours of observation adequate to reach saturation of the categories" (p. 117) or as Hood (2007) clarifies saturation is reached when the participants stop adding new essential information.

Data Collection Tools

I interviewed teachers in the form of focus group interviews. Silverman (2010) describes interviews as means that draw forth the perceptions as well as the actions of the respondents provided that the researcher asks doable questions (Silverman, 2010). The strength of interviews lies in the feasibility of direct communication and collaboration with research participants, fast and large amount of data that can be reviewed, clarified, and verified, identification of non-verbal cues and cultural nuances, and plausibly studying informants in their natural setting that allows the discovery of the subjective

aspects of their personalities which according to Marshal and Rossman (1995) facilitates data "analysis, validity checks, and triangulation" (p.100).

Focus group interviews were first used in marketing research, and they aim at encouraging discussion of different opinions through asking focused questions as Marshal and Rossman (1995) assert that "people's attitudes and beliefs do not form in vacuum" rather they are influenced by others (p. 84). Focus group interviews allow access to a large sum of varied information in a short time and to review the data through follow up or in other words as (Marshall & Rossman, 1995) comment "the familiar trade-off between breadth and depth" (p. 81). In this research study, groups of at least 7 teachers in each school were interviewed independently so that they shared different opinions in answer to my focused questions that were administered in a permissive environment allowing for openness and self-disclosure. Krueger (1998) recommended that the researcher conducts several interviews with different groups so to have better insight into different perceptions (see appendix A for teachers' interview protocol questions). During the interviews, as a researcher I assumed two roles: Primarily, as an outside observer (etic perspective) I kept my own perception and reflected on the perceptions of participants involved then communicated their perspectives to outsiders (Gall et al., 2014). However, as an insider (emic perspective) I interviewed participants, listened to multiple realities and interpretations, took extensive field notes of participants' verbal and non-verbal responses, and revisited participants' stories.

Focus group interviews allowed me as a researcher to approach participants in their natural setting feeling at ease and unrestrained which facilitated my job as a researcher as I tried to explore the real perceptions of participants and their unconscious

ideas, verbal, and non-verbal reactions as well as revealing any cultural nuances. Focus group interviews as described by Krueger (1998) are fast, less costly, and more reliable than one-on-one interviews or experimental settings as they provoke discussions that may end in unexpected outcomes.

I planned to add follow-up focus group interviews with teacher participants for member checking purpose after analyzing data collected and generating themes (see appendix B for member checking interview protocol questions).

Data Collection Procedures

To carry out any research study, I had to get consent from schools' practitioners selected to be participants in the study. After consent had been granted by schools' principals, the participants were informed about the interview and the purpose of the study through face-to-face meetings then dates were fixed for the intended interviews. I conducted the interviews during school time. During a normal school working day, I had better chances of observing the lived experience of participants then reflecting and discovering commonalities as well as differences.

Prior to each interview, I further clarified the purpose of the study, method, as well as its significance to the interviewees as emphasized by Silverman (2010). I listened carefully to the answers given and gave enough time for participants to answer. It's a mere coincidence that the study focus was effective communication, thus it was exercised by me as the researcher in the first place. For messages to be conveyed properly, I was an active listener who listened carefully then participated by asking probing questions and sharing my point of view as asserted by (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). I took notes of all

participants' answers during interviews then data collected was coded, analyzed, and finally interpreted and reflected upon. When I was done with the interviews, I showed gratitude for the participants for taking the interviews.

Member Checking

Gall et al. (2014) defines member checking as "the process of having field participants review research procedures and statements in the research report for accuracy and completeness" (p. 289). I reviewed the data collected during interviews with the participants to guarantee the absence of any misinterpretation of the participants' answers and more accurate and authentic findings as some scholars recommend (Gall et al., 2014; Shenton, 2004). Towards the end of the data collection process, I further planned at sharing the research reports with the teacher participants to add the emic perspective of the participants to the etic perspective. Shenton (2004) highlighted that it is necessary to ensure more credibility of research findings and emerging themes that the researcher shares the "particular patterns observed by the researcher" with "appropriate participants" (p.68).

Shenton (2004) recommends that researchers seek peer or colleague scrutiny of their research studies which sheds light on areas that are blind to the researcher being observed from a detached party. I accordingly shared the research findings and grounded themes with a peer and experts and used the feedback to refine my findings and support my argument.

Conformability

Shenton (2004) defines conformability as "the qualitative investigator's comparable concern to objectivity" (p.72). Thus, conformability refers to the researcher's objectivity and avoidance of any bias during the investigation. To achieve conformability, I employed thick description of the study design, my memos, and daily reflections or reflective commentary along with findings or emerging grounded themes and any limitations.

Transferability

Transferability is defined in terms of the applicability of one research findings to other contexts (Shenton, 2004). I sought to achieve transferability of my research through description of the context (history and physical setting). Usually participants speak with a unified voice in a certain setting, nevertheless Gall et al. (2014) argue that researchers have to beware of "multivocality" and "non-verbal cues" or "tacit knowledge" that inform about hidden rituals and beliefs (p. 289). In this way, those who seek to generalize the results will check if their contexts match the ones being examined. Shenton (2004) adds that when the researcher provides adequate demographic data about study site, participants and their number, methodology, interview sessions' duration and number , the overall study time period in addition to the review of similar study findings to capture the full image of the problem being investigated, transferability is facilitated.

Dependability

Shenton (2004) correlates dependability with reliability that is, "if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained" (p.71). Dependability is achieved through the researcher's reflection on any changes in the setting and their effect on the research study approach (Shenton, 2004). In this study, I kept track of any changes regarding participants since the participants joined the study willingly, and they were free to quit at any moment.

Data Analysis Procedures

Marshall and Rossman (1995) define data analysis as "the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data" whereby researchers build the grounded theory that is based on finding correlations between categories of empirical data collected (p. 111). I analyzed data collected from interviews to discover similarities in perceptions along with differences which to Strauss (as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 1995) is very crucial to classify data collected according to commonalities discovered into meaningful categories.

As a researcher, I read and reread through the data acquired from interviews to find commonalities, selected what was important, and reduced data by getting rid of unnecessary information. Then, I generated categories, themes, and patterns which Hood (2007) defines as the basic concepts of the analysis process. I employed constant comparison to generate themes which according to Dey (2007) is essential in avoiding over interpretation. At this stage, Marshall and Rossman (1995) believe that the

researcher will be able to deduce the categories grounded in the data collected and analyzed from the participants' responses. Once themes or units were identified, I classified them into distinct categories which Silverman (2010) described as an action of interrelating. Then I arranged the emerging themes into categories in a table form to facilitate the comparison with the literature reviewed earlier.

At this point, I coded the data since Charmaz (as cited in Stern, 2007) believed that coding is important as it defines how categories are related and Dey (2007) considers coding as the basic analytic procedure of GT. I was very careful while coding themes as Atkinson (1992) pointed out since they supply "a powerful conceptual grid" (p. 459) that helps in "organizing the data analysis" (Silverman, 2010, p. 238) but may prevent researchers from coming across unseen categories. Finally, before writing the report, I compared the responses of participants to each other by analyzing and summarizing the data collected in different focus-group interviews.

My choice of GT interpretive approach was mainly to assign meaning to events and data gathered and to build a certain profile for an effective Lebanese principal with effective communication skills.

Summary

In this research study, I adopted the GT research paradigm and used interviews as tools for investigation and data collection. I primarily interviewed teachers in focus-group interviews. I took thick notes of the participant answers that I later analyzed and transcribed. I had to conduct some interviews in Arabic which entitled that the research questions and answers of the participants were translated into Arabic. After analysis was

completed, answers were coded, and themes were generated, I shared the results with experts and got their feedback. I took notes of their input, revised my themes, wrote my report, and discussed results and findings with reference to literature reviewed earlier.

Limitations

In this current study, having most of the participants as females deprived me as a researcher from getting better insight into males' perspective. The number of male participants was disproportionate to the number of female participants. Henceforth, the male participants' sample was not representative which is a reflection of the fact that males occupy administrative positions and if present in educational positions they would be available in secondary schools.

Most of the interviews were conducted in Arabic and then translated by me as the researcher into English to be presented as data material for discussion in this research. The translated data was not checked and approved by the participants as planned which presented a critical issue. I was unable to engage in member checking because the participants did not respond which made the research miss an essential criterion that affected the element of response validity. This deprived the research study of the emic perception of the participants which would have enriched the study if combined with the etic perception of the researcher (Gall et al., 2014).

Recruiting a single research method does not help transferability. Therefore, employing mixed research methodology through using diversified instruments like semi-structured interviews and surveys helps in achieving reliability and validity and employing triangulation. Triangulation or crystallization would help reduce bias and

clarify any ambiguities. Triangulation helps get a holistic view and reinforce points

reached in one method in comparison to other methods (Gall et al., 2014).

Timeline

I started collecting data when school was in session to be able to conduct

interviews with teachers. As to teachers, I chose interview dates when teachers were not

under pressure of exams or being involved in activities and workshops.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study that investigated and compared the perceptions of teachers of the two genders in ten Lebanese private schools on the phenomenon of effective leadership and communication. The study had two purposes. The first purpose was to explore the beliefs of key educational practitioners that is, teachers of the two genders, regarding effective communication of the principal/s across their organizations. The second purpose was to compare the perceptions of teachers of different gender regarding effective leadership and communication.

The data collected aimed at answering the following research questions:

1- What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?

2- What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?

3- What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, the researcher presented and compared the answers of participants of both genders regarding their perceptions of a leader who is an effective communicator. In the second section, the researcher presented an overview of the perspectives of teachers regarding the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness. In the third section, the researcher presented the

factors that enhance or hinder leadership and effective communication and their relationship to gender from the perspectives of teachers of both genders.

The number and gender of participants in each school varied due to two factors: availability and convenience. The researcher targeted teachers of the two genders, yet the female participants by far exceeded the male participants. Table 4.1 shows the demographics of teachers and participants in each school according to gender.

Table 4.1

Demographics of Teachers and Participants According to Gender

School	Teachers		Participants	
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
A	9	23	3	9
B	14	46	3	7
C	2	20	1	8
D	30	135	2	7
E	13	44	1	6
F	8	61	1	9
G	7	41	-	8
H	20	100	2	6
I	11	52	2	7
J	19	67	1	6

Characteristics of Effective Leaders and Communicators

The participant teachers of both genders have reflected their perceptions on effective principals and communicators. There was a 100% consensus among the eighty-nine participants that there exists a relationship between effective communication and effective leadership. The researcher has collected data from participants through focus group interviews. Afterwards, using the qualitative interpretative approach, the researcher was able to generate five major themes and twenty-five subthemes. Table 4.2 illustrates

the characteristics of effective principals as leaders and communicators as perceived by teachers of the two genders along with the frequencies of participants' responses.

Table 4.2

Characteristics of effective leaders and communicators with frequencies of responses

Characteristic	Male (%) (n=16)	Female (%) (n=73)	Total (%) (n=89)
Positive Traits	**33**	**77**	**72**
Having emotional intelligence	93	89	89
Role modeling	69	67	68
Promoting a family-environment	54	70	68
Acting Transparently	92	60	65
A Broad Repertoire of Communication	**84**	**61**	**71**
Being accessible	61	89	84
Building effective relationships with the school community	69	81	84
Pursuing an open door policy	61	84	81
Establishing strong public relations	69	60	64
Belonging to the school community	54	63	64
Attending meetings	54	47	48
Active Communication Skills	**77**	**51**	**55**
Carrying on two-way communication	84	71	73
Listening actively	92	67	71
Following up	77	64	66
Communicating a unified school vision	77	64	66
Empowering staff	84	62	65
Delivering clear and meaningful messages	84	58	62
Observing and analyzing carefully	69	48	54
Evaluating and reflecting	69	47	53
Involving teachers through asking questions	46	47	47
Informed about Professional Matters	**100**	**41**	**50**
Embracing innovation	77	45	50
Advocating life-long learning	77	45	50
Cognitively Competent	**84**	**45**	**51**
Demonstrating powerful conflict resolution skills	92	54	53
Acting smart and reasonable	92	42	50

Building on the participants' responses, the researcher described effective communicators as principals and leaders who (a) exhibit positive traits; (b) have a broad repertoire of communication; (c) model active communication skills; (d) are informed about professional matters; (e) and are cognitively competent. Among the characteristics that were most frequently mentioned under these dimensions, emotional intelligence ranked first with 89% of the participants agreeing that a principal who is characterized by emotional intelligence is an effective communicator and leader. While 84 % of the participants considered a principal who is capable of building effective relationships with the school community placing this characteristic as second in rank among these that make a principal an effective communicator. Having a broad repertoire of communication ranked third among the characteristics of effective communicators with 78 % of the participants mentioning it.

Positive Traits

Seventy-two percent of the participants and that consisted of 33% males and 77% females believed that the principal's positive traits are very important characteristics of effective communication process at schools. To some of these teachers, positive traits promote effective communication irrespective of the gender factor. Moreover, these participants strongly held the assumption that effective communicators are typically characterized by being modest, sincere, and positive along with being civilized and polite in their temperament.

Furthermore, the participants affirmed that an effective communicator and leader is also an effective principal who can face challenges and take risks through boosting

61

team spirit, embracing, supporting teachers, and building trust by acting as part of a big family. In addition, these participants pictured an effective communicator and leader as being goal-oriented, down-to-earth, and a source of motivation and inspiration. Besides, these participants emphasized that to be an effective communicator and leader, a principal should be polite and mild tempered. A teacher in school F pointed out "an effective principal keeps giving positive vibes and constructive criticism for work sake." Another teacher and coordinator in school A clarified "I see the principal an effective leader and communicator when he is not stern but rather lenient and funny. He keeps smiling to comfort his teachers while being at the same time organized, with set goals, and decisive."

Likewise, a teacher in school J perceived an effective principal as funny and humane and explained her viewpoint:

> I think an effective communicator communicates his smiles often to make teachers fit in, adjust, belong, and feel safe. He leads by love rather than by fear hence, building relationships with his teachers based on care and trust. Most importantly, he regards teachers as humans who need support, motivation, and acknowledgment.

Having emotional intelligence. Eighty-nine percent of the participants and that consisted of 93% males and 89% females labeled a principal who possesses emotional intelligence to be an effective communicator and leader. These participants highly accredited this principal who is humane, respectful, decent, considerate, patient, loving, and humble to be effective as he/she is trustworthy. A teacher in school B illustrated saying that "an effective communicator is decent and enjoys emotional intelligence." Two teachers in school C commented "an effective principal understands teachers and

does not insult nor criticize or offend in front of others." Feeling proud of her principal's

modesty, another teacher in school C shared an anecdote and narrated:

> Our principal is very close to all. She tries her best to welcome students and teachers. Not only that, she checks their faces and makes sure everyone is satisfied and smiling. She is down-to-earth and humble to the extent that one day she knelt down and tied the shoelace of a little student.

Role modeling. Sixty-eight percent of the participants and that consisted of 69%

males and 67% females agreed that an effective principal and leader should be a role-

model in his behaviour whether in his sayings or deeds. These participants stressed the

importance of the principal substantiating behaviors that coincide with the beliefs he/she

treasures or in other words "walk the talk". Most importantly, these participants opined

that an effective principal is the one who tailors communication towards fulfilling the

school vision and sets the tone for a collaborative learning community.

Promoting family environment. Sixty-eight percent of the participants and that

consisted of 54% males and 70% females found it essential that to be effective leaders

and communicators, principals promote a family atmosphere at their schools. These

participants remarked that the principal as an effective leader can communicate loyalty,

sense of belonging, bonding, and commitment to the organization by being approachable,

considerate, patient, humble, supportive, nourishing, comforting, and collaborative.

Moreover, these participants indicated that an effective principal and leader should be

loving and ready to work as part of a big family since one hand means one team. A

teacher in school A demonstrated and said, "The principal should build a familial

relationship with teachers based on respect." A teacher in school B further clarified that

"effective principals develop a parental relationship with teachers whereby they share

their laughter, happiness, sadness, and sorrow. It is okay and healthy for a principal to joke and laugh with her staff."

A teacher in school D explained "we come from different walks of life, an effective principal facilitates our adjustment and belonging as one family members."

In addition, two teachers in school F expressed similar opinions "unity, family environment, and bonding with teachers as individuals boost team spirit and keep team solid and effective."

Acting transparently. An effective communicator and leader was described by 65% of the participants and that consisted of 92% males and 67% females as being fair, honest, transparent, and neither judgmental nor stereotyped. In addition, these participants confirmed that an effective leader and communicator should be flexible but decisive that is, able to balance between firmness and looseness while practicing authority and taking decisions.

A teacher and supervisor in school I recited an anecdote, too:

> I recall once the principal's best friend and teacher reacted roughly to a student's misconduct. The principal was so fair and transparent, so she took the required measures against the teacher with no favoritism regardless of their personal relationship. The teacher did not accept to be blamed which jeopardized their relationship for a while. She stands at equal distance from all parties.

A Broad Repertoire of Communication

Seventy-one percent of the participants and that consisted of 84% males and 61% females considered a principal who is accessible, builds effective relationships with the school community, pursues an open door policy, establishes strong public relations, belongs to the school community, and attends meetings to be a skilled communicator and

leader. Two teachers in school A drew a profile of how they perceived a principal who is

an effective communicator and said:

> An effective communicator and leader is the principal who is down-to-
> earth, patient, open to innovation and development, keeps doors open to
> build a channel of communication with students and outside
> community. Being as such, the principal can handle students' problems,
> establish positive relationships with students, and guide them
> academically and ethically.

Being accessible. Eighty-four percent of the teachers interviewed and that

consisted of 61% males and 89% females agreed that for a principal to be an effective

leader and communicator, he/she should be easy to access. These participants stated that

an effective principal is available, visible, and present around the school. These

participants added that they trusted a principal who is a familiar figure and no longer a

distant symbol of fear. These participants believed that the effective principal and leader

should also make use of school events as opportunities to mingle with the school

community, get to know them better, and build interpersonal relationships with teachers,

students, and parents as well. A male coordinator and teacher in school A attested:

> An effective principal is the one who is present everywhere around the
> school with head of departments, teachers, and students. He should pay
> frequent class visits to understand teachers' needs and daily encounters
> in addition to supporting teachers in maintaining discipline along with
> comforting them.

Another teacher in school B expressed a similar point of view "an effective

principal should not be living isolated in his own cocoon…He should be visible and a

known figure to all school community: students, teachers, and parents".

In addition, a teacher in school F praised her principal's visibility and said, "She is always around in the mornings and afternoons checking students' faces, smiles, and expressions. She is down-to-earth and very humble."

A colleague in school F highly esteemed her principal's accessibility too and said, "Our principal is always around. She rarely misses the morning assembly, and she is there greeting teachers and students on their dismissal hour."

Building effective relationships with the school community. Eighty-four percent of the participants and that consisted of 69% males and 81% females asserted that effective communicators and leaders should collaborate with the school community at all levels. According to these participants, the effective principal should be in direct contact with students, teachers, and parents. Plus, to these participants an effective communicator and leader should be sociable that is, ready to share his/her team members their occasions and special moments. Teachers in school A praised their principal's interactive attitude saying:

> Our principal has launched a social media site to interact and communicate with the school community and keep them updated...The principal should always be in direct interaction and communication with his teachers inquiring about successes as well as failures to be able to assess the weaknesses and strengths in his organization.

Furthermore, a teacher in school C remarked "an effective principal communicates team-work awareness. An individual cannot succeed solely. We need the support of the people around… It is not 'I' and 'You' but 'We." Another teacher in school H expressed her gratitude saying "communicating with the principal is no longer a dream." Teachers in school I also attested that to be an effective communicator and

leader "the principal should frequently meet all school members whether teachers, students, or parents and communicate with them positively."

In contrast to the perspectives presented earlier, two teachers in school E believed that a principal should not be much in direct contact with his/her staff to avoid being taken advantage of. These teachers claimed that in many successful organizations staff do not communicate directly with the principal. This helps maintain professional relationships. They concluded that principals should delegate authority.

Pursuing an open-door policy. Eighty-one percent of the teachers interviewed and that consisted of 61% males and 84% females believed that an effective communicator and leader is a principal whose doors are open to all school community members with no set appointments. He/she even approaches teachers in their classrooms, lounges, walk-through, or on the stairs showing them that he/she values their time, asks questions, and listens attentively to their responses. These participants considered that most effective communication is face-to-face communication or direct interaction with no borders as it strengthens trust and builds a culture of confidence and loyalty among staff. Almost all the teachers in school F that is, 80% of the participants, agreed that to be an effective communicator and leader, a principal should pursue an open door policy with teachers, students, and other school community members. A teacher in school B also commented "my principal is approachable at any time with no set appointment, accessible, and always around which makes her an effective communicator." Another teacher in school F proposed "when principals pay class visits, it helps open a communication channel between principals, teachers, and students along with establishing order and discipline as well."

Establishing strong public relations. Sixty-four percent of the participants and that consisted of 69% males and 60% females highlighted the importance of communicating with the external community. According to these participants, the effective leader should contact other schools' principals, share expertise, benefit from their knowledge, and reflect back. A teacher in school H noted that "principals should not limit their communication circle. On the contrary, effective principals should be open to all community members and the surrounding… They should also communicate with peers from other schools to benefit from their expertise."

Belonging to the school community. Sixty-four percent of the participants and that consisted of 54% males and 63% females believed that for a principal to lead and communicate effectively with teachers and other school members he/she should be a member of that school. Not only that, these participants preferred a principal who has been a teacher in that school prior to his/her appointment since in that case the principal would understand better and listen effectively to teachers' needs and concerns. A teacher in school H asserted that "especially if the principal was educated and a teacher at the same school, it would help him/her understand teachers' needs, aspirations, and daily encounters."

A teacher in school A shared a similar belief and stated:

> There is a big difference between principals who are appointed in their posts knowing nothing about schools and the academic process and others who come from an educational background and are quite familiar with almost every detail about learning and learners.

Three teachers in schools F, H, and I expressed a similar perception of an effective communicator and leader "an experienced, charismatic teacher who did not

come out of the blue makes an effective principal since he/she would be more familiar with teachers' responsibilities and work load." Another teacher in school J strongly believed that:

> To be an effective communicator and leader, a principal not only should be well-informed about school details but also should be an academic who belongs to the organization and more preferably a teacher in the same school who understands teachers' needs well.

Attending meetings. Forty-three percent of the participants and that consisted of 54% males and 47% females found it informative and interactive for a leader to frequently attend teachers' and parents' meetings. These participants stated that during these meetings, a leader would be exposed to different perspectives, listen to different voices, share ideas, and understand teachers' and parents' needs and concerns, as well.

On the other hand, a teacher in school B stressed the importance of leader's interactions during meetings by saying "the principal as a leader should meet with the staff on weekly basis and attend teachers' meetings with heads of departments to be updated with any upcoming issues or arising needs." Reflected another teacher in school B "the effective leader attends weekly department meetings, communicates with teachers, and follows-up for feedback to evaluate, amend, and improve." Two teachers in school D further explained "during meetings, the leader does not address a person in particular in front of everyone but rather talks in general and tries not to be offensive…personal issues destroy objectivity."

Active Communication Skills

Fifty-five percent of the participants and that consisted of 77% males and 51% females considered that an effective principal is the leader who models active

communication skills. They noted that an effective leader is the one who practices verbal and non-verbal communication with the purpose of easing the path for deeper understanding of teachers' needs and concerns. These participants believed that an effective leader should carry two-way communication, be an active listener, follow up, communicate a unified vision, empower his/her staff, deliver clear messages, observe and analyze carefully, evaluate and reflect, and involve teachers through asking questions.

Carrying on two-way communication. Seventy-three percent of the participants and that consisted of 84% males and 71% females believed that two-way communication is the means that facilitates effective communication. These participants considered that effective communication is a reciprocal relationship where mutual interactions take place. Teachers in schools A and H regarded an effective leader as the one who sends messages that are very clear with no ambiguity, listens more, and talks less. More importantly, they asserted that he/she should not be biased but rather listen to different perspectives since two-way communication is more effective. A teacher in school C highly valued her principals' communication and leadership skills and said:

> We have weekly staff meetings attended by the principal. The principal gets informed about students and builds interpersonal relationships with teachers and other staff members that reduce tension between teachers and resolve misunderstandings. All are encouraged to speak openly expressing opinions without offending or insulting.

Listening actively. Seventy-one percent of the participants and that consisted of 92% males and 67% females asserted that an effective principal is an effective communicator and leader who coordinates and listens to teachers' remarks making everyone feel he/she is the most important one on his/her plate. The effective principal is an active listener who listens positively to different perspectives while challenging

70

his/her team to consider other perspectives, too. These participants attested that through active listening, a leader is more effective as he/she understands teachers' needs more and paves the road for collaboration among teachers. A teacher in school C related her principal's effective communication attitude saying:

> He plays it both ways but he is more of a listener than a speaker. There is greater value in being a positive listener than being a boss. The principal listens to teachers' complaints and demands to reach higher standards.

Likewise, a teacher in school H stated, "I have more courage to speak up because she is willing to listen and react to my message. I strongly believe this helps the principal understand messages better and build trust between the principal and her staff."

A teacher in school F further uttered "principal who listens to you reaches your level, understands your needs, and lifts you up. We all work as one hand in a loving environment."

Following up. Sixty-six percent of the participants and that consisted of 77% males and 64% females believed that an effective communicator and leader should always give and seek feedback from teachers on all issues that are school-related, follow up, and provide constructive criticism and thereby be positive in his/her approach towards school staff. These participants believed that it is critical that the leader gives constructive and honest feedback, acknowledges teachers' progress, celebrates their successes, appreciates their efforts, and understands their concerns if he or she to be characterized as effective. Many teachers in school A praised their principal's follow up strategy of specific details, problems, and innovations. They said that communication is about evaluation and follow up.

Communicating a unified school vision. Sixty-six percent of the participants

and that consisted of 77% males and 64% females believed that an effective leader is the

one who tailors communication towards fulfilling the school vision. A teacher in school

G affirmed and said, "I see effective communication when there is alignment in vision

between teachers and the principal." A teacher in school F further explicated "an

effective principal presents a detailed profile of school expectations to his/her teachers."

Summing it all up, a teacher in school J briefed "in one word, effective communicators

are true leaders who are visionary, strategic, and supportive."

Empowering staff. Sixty-five percent of the participants and that consisted of

84% males and 62% females considered an effective leader and communicator when

he/she empowers teachers and delegates some authority. These participants also believed

that to be effective, a leader shares with teachers information as the basis of making

decisions and building strategic plans that seek the school interest and students' welfare.

A teacher in school A expressed her viewpoint, too and said, "I believe that the effective

principal should share information with teachers and parents as well allowing them to be

part of problem solving issues and decisions regarding students."

A teacher in school B said and two others nodded:

> We all shared in planning and writing the school mission statement.
> The principal showed great interest in our suggestions for renovating
> the school facilities like the labs and auditorium. We do really feel we
> belong to the school. Simply, the school is ours! We run to school
> sometimes away from our life problems. Our school has become our
> safe haven.

Another teacher in school B commented "I think effective communication is

practiced when the principal shares ideas with her staff, listens to others, takes others'

points of view, and makes decisions based on consensus."

In agreement, two teachers in school C shared similar perceptions. They believed that the effective leader and communicator sets goals and tries to accomplish these goals by involving everyone. They added that goals cannot be achieved without effective communication and delegation.

Delivering clear and meaningful messages. Sixty-two percent of the interviewees and that consisted of 84% males and 58% females agreed that an effective leader who is an effective communicator is the one who delivers simple, clear messages which are of value to the listeners. Moreover, these participants raised the issues of the message content, tone, and style which should be motivating and far from any stereotyping, favoritism, or negative criticism. These participants further noted that effective communicators should show respect in delivering any message whether daily routine instruction, formal public speeches, or teams' discussions. A teacher in school D described effective leaders as ones who have understanding that communication is a process and said:

> Communication is a process that involves positive thinking and getting the message from different perspectives. The principal should send clear messages and understand the content of the messages delivered along with the feeling or need the sender is trying to express. The principal's interpretation of the message has to be free of any stereotyping or judgment.

Besides, teachers in school F commented that to be effective "the principal should be a positive communicator especially with parents. The choice of the message content, style, and delivery medium helps tighten school-parents' relationship and cooperation."

Observing and analyzing carefully. Fifty-four percent of the participants and that consisted of 69% males and 48% females found leaders who can notice, read, and interpret verbal and non-verbal messages to be effective principals and communicators.

Three teachers in schools F, I, and J agreed that an effective leader and communicator should be a good reader and analyst of the messages delivered. Another teacher in school F added "she should also be a good observer. That is, the principal should pay attention to facial expressions and body language of the speaker which facilitates message delivery and interpretation."

Expressing her satisfaction about her principal's effective communication skills, a teacher in school H said, "I like it when I speak to the principal that she keeps an eye-contact with me and focuses on the words that I say. I can tell she appreciates what I am saying."

Evaluating and reflecting. Fifty-three percent of the participants and that consisted of 69% males and 47% females found it very essential that an effective leader reflects on his/her performance and undergoes self-assessment to improve his/her performance while communicating these reflections as a mean to encourage and inspire teachers to pursue the same path. A coordinator in school A applauded her principal's reflective attitude as he frequently communicates his assessment of his school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities as well as threats. A teacher in school C added that "we have weekly reflection meetings with the principal to assess our instruction and evaluate our performance." A teacher in school J also noted that "an effective principal …should follow up simple details, and learn from weaknesses which are considered as points of strength."

Involving teachers through asking questions. Forty-seven percent of the participants and that consisted of 46% males and 47% females pointed out that an effective communicator and leader is the one who asks challenging questions, inquires

about suggestions and new ideas in addition to reflections. Simultaneously, an effective communicator and leader acts as an eye-opener by exposing team members to different perspectives through group discussions thus facilitating dialogue. A coordinator in school A clarified that "our principal asks about new ideas, suggestions, and concerns at the beginning and end of each school year."

Informed about Professional Matters

Fifty percent of the participants and that consisted of 100% males and 41% females indicated that for a principal to be an effective leader and communicator, he/she needs to be educated, resourceful, and knowledgeable about learning, learners, and the school itself. Being educated and informed about school issues whether academic, behavioural, or structural along with understanding the school community and culture were considered by these participants as essential in building a channel of effective communication across the school.

A coordinator in school A shared his perception as follows "an informed principal is a better communicator since he is well aware of what is going around him. He can come up with better solutions to problems in agreement with his staff."

A teacher in school F concluded and said, "To communicate effectively with teachers and parents, the principal should have knowledge of curricula and everyday issues. When she attends meetings on regular basis, she would be informed."

Embracing innovation. Fifty percent of the participants and that consisted of 77% males and 45% females considered a principal to be an effective leader and communicator when he/she does not resist change and innovation on the contrary the

75

principal is willing himself/herself to bring new talents aboard his/her team, accept, and implement new ideas. A teacher in school A explained "to be an effective leader and communicator, the principal should be educated and open to innovation and should communicate development to his school community." Two teachers in school C related the example of principals planning for in- service training for teachers and teaching them new communication techniques to effective leadership and communication. A teacher in school H clarified and said, "I believe that an effective leader is visionary… and open to innovation and growth thus embracing talents and developing teachers."

Advocating life-long learning. Fifty percent of the participants and that consisted of 77% males and 45% females viewed principals who are life-long learners and encourage professional development and growth of teachers to be effective leaders and better communicators. Teachers in school A said, "We had in-service training workshops about dealing with students with learning difficulties and guiding their parents." Admiring his principal's enthusiasm about professional development, another teacher in school A said, "Our principal has that quench for knowledge. He either attends workshops with/without teachers and reflects back to teachers in both cases or organizes and leads workshops for teachers at school. Thus, our principal promotes teachers' professional growth and development."

Likewise a teacher in school J argued:

> Up-to-date, educated, continuous learners are effective communicators those who seek growth and development and pave the road for their teachers and other staff to learn. Principals motivate and encourage teachers to develop, follow-back their growth, and give feedback along with appreciation.

Cognitively Competent

Fifty-one percent of the participants and that consisted of 84% males and 45% females believed that leaders who are cognitively competent are better communicators. According to the participants, effective communicators are smart and reasonable and demonstrate powerful conflict resolution skills.

Demonstrating powerful conflict resolution skills. Fifty-two of the participants and that consisted of 92% males and 54% females admired an effective leader and communicator who is resourceful enough to settle down disputes among staff members. Teachers in school G agreed that, "effective communicators are diplomatic in solving disputes.

A teacher in school J cleared and said, "Standing at equal distance from all parties helps principals solve problems." Another teacher in school H aforesaid, "principals' professionalism is a must in solving disputes… along with avoiding personal interests." Some teachers in school G complained about unfair principals whose utmost goal is to satisfy students and parents at the expense of teachers.

Acting smart and reasonable. Exactly 50% of the participants and that consisted of 92% males and 42% females agreed that the effective leader and communicator should be smart, visionary, goal-oriented, and alert. According to these participants, being intelligent helps the leader to be more informed and proactive. A teacher in school G described an effective principal saying, "A smart communicator does not take hasty irresponsible decisions." Expressing her opinion, a teacher in school C said, "I think an effective communicator and leader should be smart enough to withdraw from playing the boss role to pursue a mentor or a guide role."

After presenting the themes that emerged from comparing the participants' responses which summed up the characteristics of effective principals as leaders and communicators as perceived by male and female teachers, I discussed the relationship between gender and communication.

Effect of Leader's Gender on Communication

The participants' responses varied to the second question: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator? 80% of the participants admitted that differences occur between females' and males' communication styles which affect their leadership effectiveness. The remaining 19% of the participants did not acknowledge any gender differences that affect communication effectiveness of principals rather they attributed the differences to positive personalities of principals.

Table 4.3 below sums up the frequencies of participants' responses and perspectives for effective communicators based on gender.

Table 4.3

Participants' Perceptions of Effective Communicators based on gender

School	No Gender Differences		Existence of Gender Differences	
	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)
A	0	11	100	89
B	0	14	100	86
C	0	75	100	25
D	0	0	100	100
E	0	0	100	100
F	0	44	100	56
G	0	25	0	75
H	50	16	50	84
I	0	28	100	78
J	0	50	100	50
Total Frequency	5	26	95	74

M stands for male participants and F stands for female participants

Most of the participants, that is, 95% of the male participants and 74% of the female participants, believed that gender differences do occur in the way female and male principals communicate, and they attributed these differences to cultural factors and human nature. These participants perceived most females to be raised as inferior and followers hence some females tend to be bossy once ascribed and promoted to a leadership position. Additionally, these participants considered that most females are overemotional and many are jealous in nature which prevent them from communicating objectively and fairly especially across the same gender in contrary to males who are mostly more objective and professional in their speech.

However, 5% of the male participants and 26% of the female participants believed that effective communication mostly depends on the principal's personality

traits, positive attitude, and leadership qualities irrespective of gender thus denying any gender differences in that respect. Two teachers in school A expressed similar opinions, they stated that "the issue here is a principal who is an active listener, positive thinker, considerate, decisive, alert, and fair." Another teacher in school B elaborated "it is all related to the personality of the principal irrespective of the gender factor. Being alert and smart with emotional intelligence are what help drift the sails and move the ship in the right direction." Additionally, a teacher in school I asserted:

> There is no such thing called gender issue as long as the principal has effective communication means which facilitate building positive relationships with teachers based on respect and loyalty. Closed-door policy does not help.

Among the participants who acknowledged gender differences in the communication affectivity of principals, 67% of the participants labeled male principals as more effective communicators while only 13% of the participants labeled female principals as more effective communicators. Table 4.4 below sums up the results and shows the variations across schools.

Table 4.4

Variations of Males' and Females' Perceptions for Effective Communicators

based on gender

School	Male Principals as more Effective Communicators	Female Principals as more Effective Communicators
A (9F/3M)	7F/3M	1F
B (7F/3M)	6F/2M	1F
C (8F/1M)	5F/1M	1F
D (7F/2M)	4F/2M	3F
E (6F/1M)	5F/1M	1F
F (9F/1M)	5F/1M	-
G (8F)	5F	1F
H (6F/2M)	4F/1M	1F
I (7F/2M)	4F/1M	1F/1M
J (6F/1M)	2F/1M	1F
Total 89	47F/13M	11F/1M
(Frequency)	(67%)	(13%)

M stands for male participants and F stands for female participants.

According to the participants' responses, 67% of the participants believed that male principals communicate more effectively than female principals. A female teacher in school B explained that "females are more emotional and cannot be decisive. However, males are more dynamic, take action, and have more free time than females to attend to social occasions."

Moreover, a female teacher in school F said, "Leadership is man's talent. Men are more capable, think better and communicate more effectively while females are affectionate and emotions surmount their relations along with jealousy."

Distinct from other opinions, 13% of the participants attributed effective leadership and communication to female principals.

Three female teachers in school D stated:

> Female leaders are capable of seeing the whole picture. They are multi-tasked, perceptive, and can relate more because they read between the lines… Female leaders are better communicators because they have raised kids. They have motherhood affection.

A female teacher in school D added that "female leaders are more affectionate and can sympathize more." Another female teacher in school G agreed and said, "Female principals are better leaders and communicators since they are more lenient than male principals. Some male principals can be very harsh, insult, or cause harm." A male teacher in school I also expressed his support of female principals' affectionate nature, predisposes them to become better communicators he said, "Female principals are better communicators as they are affectionate and show their emotions. Emotions are important."

Furthermore, a female teacher in school J affirmed that "females know females better and can sympathize with them, appreciate their efforts, and understand their needs."

At last, 3% of the participants claimed that some of the effective leader and communication attributes are present in female leaders while others are present in male leaders.

Factors That Enhance or Hinder Leadership and Effective Communication

Participant teachers discussed what they believed are factors that enhance or hinder effective communication in response to the third research question: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication? The participants identified nine factors which enhance

communication: (1) emotional intelligence; (2) two-way communication; (3) leniency

with decisiveness; (4) active listening; (5) family-type relationship; (6) charisma; (7)

professionalism; (8) expressiveness; (9) and transparency. In addition, the participants

identified nine distinct factors which they perceived as hindering to effective

communication: (1) emotional involvement; (2) jealousy; (3) stereotyping; (4) bossiness

and superiority; (5) competition; (6) gossiping; (7) moodiness; (8) discrimination and

favoritism; (9) and personal issues. Table 4.5 below sums up the factors that participants

perceived as enhancing or hindering to effective communication with frequencies of

responses.

Table 4.5

Factors that enhance or hinder effective communication based on participants'

perceptions with frequencies of responses

Factors that Enhance Communication	Percentage	Factors that Hinder Communication	Percentage
Emotional Intelligence	89%	Emotional Involvement	67%
Two-way communication	73%	Bossiness/Superiority	53%
Active Listening	71%	Gossiping	45%
Leniency with Decisiveness	70%	Stereotyping	44%
Family-Type Relationship	68%	Personal Issues	41%
Charisma	68%	Moodiness	39%
Professionalism	67%	Jealousy	37%
Transparency	65%	Discrimination/Favoritism	36%
Expressiveness	47%	Competition	35%

Factors that Enhance Effective Communication

Eighty percent of the participants considered that 78% of the factors that enhance communication depend on the gender of the principal while 22% of the factors are not associated with gender or in other words, they are more dependent on other factors like the principal's personality and positive traits. Table 4.6 below presents factors enhancing effective communication and their association with gender.

Table 4.6

Factors enhancing effective communication and their association with gender

based on the participants' perceptions

Factors	No Association	Association with Males	Association with Females
Family- Type Relationship	68%	-	-
Emotional Intelligence	-	80%	-
Leniency with Decisiveness	-	71%	-
Charisma	-	68%	-
Professionalism	-	67%	-
Active Listening	-	62%	-
Two-Way Communication	-	56%	-
		-	
Transparency	-	56%	-
Expressiveness	-	-	57%

Table 4.5 showed that out of the 10 factors that were mentioned as enhancing effective communication, one was not related to gender and one to females while all the rest were related to males.

84

The factor enhancing effective communication that is not associated with gender. According to the participants, building family-type relationships is enhancing to effective communication, and it is not a factor associated with gender.

Family-type relationship. Sixty-eight of the participants discussed the importance of promoting a family-type relationship. These participants believed that effective leaders and communicators exhibit concern and affection similar to those exhibited towards family members. A female teacher in school B uttered "my principal was a friend and a sister who shared my fears and concerns along with problems... we used to think together of solutions." Teachers in school H explicated further "with love and kindness, principals can make teachers respond happily and buy into the school goals."

Moreover, teachers in school F said, "Effective communicators walk with us not behind nor in front… as one family and one team." Another female teacher in school F shared her experience and clarified "I had an amazing experience with my principal. He was like a real dad to me." Likewise, some female teachers in school G commented "we had a male principal who always repeated that we did not work for him on the contrary we worked together in harmony as one team."

Factors enhancing effective communication that are associated with gender. The participants identified several gender related factors that they considered enhancing to effective communication: expressiveness; emotional intelligence; leniency with decisiveness; charisma, professionalism; active listening; two-way communication; and transparency. All factors were associated with male principals and leaders except for expressiveness that was associated with female principals and leaders.

Expressiveness. Fifty-seven percent of the participants pointed out that female principals are more expressive when communicating with teachers while male principals preferred direct, brief responses. These participants preferred principals who are eloquent in their speech thus clarifying more and explaining. Three female teachers in school D considered female principals' communication style to be more effective and explained "female principals elaborate, receive, and express whereas males keep something for themselves."

Emotional intelligence. Eighty-nine percent of the participants believed that a principal who enjoys emotional intelligence is the most effective communicator. Eighty percent of these participants considered male principals to be more emotionally intelligent since they show more understanding for teachers' needs, sympathize, and support more. Female teachers in school G praised their male principal who appreciates teachers and values their efforts. Teachers in schools C and I (mostly females) agreed by stating that "effective communicators deal with teachers as humans not employees… our principal keeps smiling and laughs with us." Two female teachers and one male teacher in school J said, "Usually male principals are more concerned and sympathetic."

Leniency with decisiveness. Seventy-one percent of the participants rated male principals as effective communicators because they are more lenient but decisive when dealing with teachers especially of the opposite sex. These participants affirmed that male principals generally respect teachers more while communicating and listen actively to their messages.

Female teachers in school G believed that male principals tend to be more in control when irritated which helps them approach female teachers and build trust with

86

them. Similarly, female teachers in school F attested that "male principals have strong personalities yet they are considerate as they are more objective and do not involve personal interests in their work."

Charisma. Sixty-eight percent of the participants rated charisma as a factor that enhances effective communication and attributed charisma to male principals. Male and female teachers in school F and J praised male principals who are charismatic, diplomatic in their speech, self-confident, and trust-worthy.

Other female teachers in school J featured an effective communicator and said, "Male principals are more experienced when it comes to dealing with female teachers who are the greatest in number since male principals have more wisdom and are farsighted."

*Professionalism***.** Eighty-eight percent of the participants considered principals who are professional in their work to be effective communicators as they do not allow personal interests to affect their relationship with teachers or parents. Professionalism allows principals to be more organized, systematic, and focused on school issues and students' welfare. Sixty-seven percent of the participants found male principals to exhibit more professionalism and transparent relationships with their teachers. There was a sort of agreement among teachers in schools B, D, E, F, H, and I that female principals fall short of objectivity as they expressed a similar opinion "female principals cannot forget about their personal problems. They tend to reflect home issues back on their work." Teachers in school G further added that "females cannot deal with arising problems fairly."

Active listening. Seventy-one percent of the participants attested that active listening is integral in effective communication. Sixty-two percent of the participants found male principals to be better listeners and considered female principals to tend to listen to their own voices, only. Male and female teachers in school A admired their male principal's active listening skills and illustrated "he listens to all parties and to different sources, comprehends then reacts actively." Similarly, male and female teachers in school F praised male leadership and communication by declaring that "males are supportive, genuine, and always listening." Teachers in school J also agreed and enunciated "males listen and understand before taking decisions while females just give orders without any consideration."

Two-way communication. Seventy-three percent of the participants declared that through two-way communication, principals can be more objective and less biased. Sixty-two percent of the participants believed that male principals allow for more two-way interactions. Female teachers in school C expressed a similar opinion "he prefers communicating directly and involving everyone to add their points of view."

Transparency. Standing at equal distance from all teachers, students, and parents promotes effective communication according to 65% of the participants. Fifty-six percent of the participants affirmed that male principals are more transparent in their approach toward their school community members. While female teachers in schools B, D, F, and G complained about female principals' lack of fairness by saying that "some female principals take the side of parents. Teachers are to be blamed and are not given any chance to clarify nor to defend their position. It is a trust issue to us."

Factors Hindering Effective Communication

Thirty-three percent of the participants identified three factors that hinder

effective communication and are not associated with gender while 66% of the

participants identified six factors associated with gender. Table 4.6 below presents factors

hindering effective communication and their association with gender.

Table 4.6

Factors hindering effective communication and their association with gender based on

the participants' perceptions

Factors	No Association	Association with Males	Association with Females
Stereotyping	64%	-	-
Bossiness/Superiority	64%	-	-
Discrimination/Favoritism	53%	-	-
Emotional Involvement	-	-	67%
Jealousy	-	-	65%
Competition	-	-	64%
Gossiping	-	-	45%
Moodiness	-	-	42%
Personal Issues	-	-	40%

Table 4.6 showed that three factors were considered by participants as hindering to
effective communication but were not associated with gender while the rest six factors
were associated with female principals.

Factors hindering effective communication that are not associated with

gender. The participants identified three factors that they considered hindering to

effective communication but are not related to gender: bossiness and superiority;

stereotyping; and discrimination and favouritism.

Bossiness and superiority. Sixty-four percent of the participants believed that

both female and male principals can be bossy but this quality was ascribed more to

females. Forty-one percent of the participants described many female principals as bossy

and autocratic. Female teachers in school C stated that "some women can be very ugly when they consider work as a place to show their other face so they become very aggressive and violent. They do employ a high tone." Moreover, female teachers in school J added "female leaders are more concerned about their position and their figure so they tend to be bossy." Female teachers in school G also commented that "some female principals have that hunger for power because they suffer from inferiority issues that are deeply engraved in culture."

Stereotyping. Sixty-four percent of the participants believed that there are certain cultural stereotypes regarding female leadership. Female teachers in school G said, "Leadership is restricted to males." Other participants accused some male principals of treating female teachers different than males because they felt they were less competent. Female teachers in schools D and G grumbled "some male principals are chauvinist. We worked with some principals who did not allow us to share in critical decisions." In addition, some female teachers in school D complained about some female principals' attitude towards female teachers who regarded them inferior to their colleagues of the opposite gender.

Discrimination and favouritism. Fifty-three percent of the participants believed that discrimination was common between female and male principals. Twenty-two percent of the participants accused male principals of exercising discrimination. Teachers in school D growled that "some male principals discriminate between beautiful teachers and the less beautiful ones." In their turn, female principals were accused by 30% of the participants of being unfair. Teachers in school D complained "some female principals do

not reward on basis of effort, productivity, and loyalty rather on basis of personal relationships."

Factors hindering effective communication that are associated with gender. The participants identified six factors that they considered hindering to effective communication and associated all with female leaders and principals. These factors were: emotional involvement; jealousy; competition; gossiping; moodiness; and personal issues.

Emotional involvement. Sixty-eight percent of the participants believed that an effective communicator should sympathize with teachers without letting emotions surmount decisions or affect actions. There was a sort of consensus among 67% of the participants that female principals are carried by their emotions. Male and female teachers in school J affirmed that "female principals are carried by emotions thus lacking decisiveness." Other male and female teachers in school I aforesaid, "Driven by their emotions, female principals at many times take hasty decisions that they never regret or even admit they are mistaken."

Jealousy. Sixty-five percent of the participants considered that female principals in general suffer from jealousy. They attested that female principals are more sensitive towards other females and consider them competitors or threat therefore they tend to be more stern and bossy while communicating with female teachers. Three female teachers in school C and teachers in school F expressed similar opinions "female principals have jealousy issues with other females." Other male and female teachers in school I described the unhealthy school atmosphere when female principals assume their responsibilities and

91

demystified "tension governs female principals' and female teachers' interactions due to the jealousy and competitive nature of many females."

Competition. Female leaders were labeled by 64% of the participants as competitive. Some male and female teachers in school J commented "female principals do not know that it is a mutual success. Teachers' success is also the principal's success." Many male and female teachers in schools C, E, and G said, "Female principals employ a lot of incitement and rivalry rather than giving incentives and appraisal."

Gossiping. Forty-five percent of the participants accused female principals of relying on gossiping. Female teachers in school C said, "Female principals use rude, obscene words about teachers and students along with gossiping." Female teachers in school I added that "working with male principals is more comfortable as they are objective, serious, and considerate…Female principals talk too much and rely on gossiping."

Another female teacher in school G clarified "when a problem happens at school with a teacher, words are twisted and gossiping spreads everywhere thus enhancing a distrustful, unfriendly atmosphere." Four female participants in school E accused female principals of backstabbing and illustrated "she asks for our opinions during meetings and misuses them against us."

Moodiness. Forty-two percent of the participants found female principals to be affected by their moods while communicating with others. Male and female teachers in school A commented "female principals are usually moody, undesirable, have no set goals and intolerable when dealing with female teachers." Female teachers in school J shared similar opinions and explicated "female principals' relationships are governed by

their moods… They exhibit different inconsistent personalities and imbalanced attitude depending on circumstances."

Personal issues. Female principals were accused by 40% of the participants as being incapable of acting objectively and professionally without involving personal issues. Male and female teachers in school H said, "Female principals do not separate academics from personal relationships… They work on basis of personal acquaintances."

Chapter Summary

In chapter four, I identified five major themes and twenty-five subthemes which I generated from reading through the teacher participants' responses and comparing perceptions about the characteristics of effective leaders and communicators in the Lebanese private school context. I presented the participants' perceptions on the effect of the principal's gender on communication affectivity. Finally, I exhibited factors which the participants identified as enhancing or hindering to effective communication and their association with gender.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In chapter five, I discussed the grounded profile characteristics of effective leaders and communicators in the Lebanese private school context. Second, I discussed the perspectives of teachers regarding the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness and how the findings relate to literature previewed earlier. Third, I discussed the factors that enhance or hinder leadership and effective communication and their relationship to gender from the perspectives of teachers of both genders then compared the results to the literature reviewed in chapter two. Fourth, I drew conclusions and discussed implications of the study.

Discussion of the Characteristics of Effective Leaders and Communicators

Many scholars have rated effective communication as a topmost priority of leaders (Papa & Graham, 1991; Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Fairhurst & Connaughton, 2014). The participant teachers in this study were asked about their perceptions of school principals whom they regarded as effective communicators. Five characteristics were highlighted and labeled as integral for affectivity: exhibiting positive traits; having broad repertoire of communication; modeling active communication skills; being informed about professional matters; and being cognitively competent. In the coming section, the researcher discussed these characteristics as grounded in the Lebanese context with reference to international and regional studies.

Positive Traits

According to the participants' responses, exhibiting positive attitude ranked second as the most influential attribute of effective communicators. The participants attested that principals who are emotionally intelligent are the most influential communicators. The participants also attributed to effective communicators being transparent and being role models together with boosting positive energy and promoting a family environment. These findings bear similarities with Fairhaust and Connaughton's (2014, p. 12) research review "leadership aesthetics" and Wood's (2013) ethical communication. These concepts account for the leader's personality or charisma whereby a communicator is humane, empathetic, good listener, optimistic, appreciative, decisive, sincere, enjoys self-respect, and regards others as humans (Hsieh & Shen, 2010). Therefore, a leader being as such is capable of communicating a shared vision and promoting an organization culture, identity, and sense of belonging. Hallinger (2003) and Hilliard and Newsome (2013) contended that leaders can communicate more efficiently in a friendly compassionate learning environment.

The participants cherished leaders who act as role models and lead with a heart, as did (Yunas et al., 2013) thus inspiring staff and promoting team spirit and social cohesion in their organizations. In the study conducted by Hsieh & Shen (2010) in Michigan, the principal participants affirmed that they should be role models who represent care, loyalty, honesty, consistency, resiliency, appreciation, and integrity to their followers. Motivating teachers was considered by the participants also an integral positive trait of effective leaders and communicators. Day et al.'s (2001) study in England and Wales, Magoon and Linkous's (1979) study in USA, Slater's (2005) study in Canada; Yunas et

al's.(2013) study in Pakistan discuss the importance of leaders embracing teachers, motivating them intrinsically and extrinsically, and nurturing their growth.

According to the participants in this study, funny principals with a sense of humour are more positive, effective communicators. This grounded emerging attribute resonates with the findings of two distinct studies by Blasé and Blasé (2000) in America and Hsieh and Shen (2010) in Michigan, whereby such principals were classified as effective communicators since they are capable of motivating staff through boosting positive energy.

A Broad Repertoire of Communication

The participants intensely asserted the importance of leaders possessing a distinguished and broad repertoire of communication which enables principals to approach their school community members and build hospitable learning communities and productive educational climates. The participants' responses indicated that an effective communicator is a principal enjoying accessibility, pursuing an open door policy, building effective relationships with the school community, establishing strong public relations, belonging to the school community, and attending meetings.

Although the findings of this research study reflect the Lebanese context, the grounded characteristics regarding effective communication expedient have their commonalities in international and regional literature. In the study by Zachariah (2013) that investigated the perceptions of head teachers, teachers, and senior government officers regarding the desired qualities of instructional supervisors in Kenya, effective communication ranked first, developing interpersonal relationships ranked second, and

96

bringing people together ranked third. Wood (2013) asserted that effective communicators should have knowledge of the people, situation, and context to choose the appropriate style which is achieved according to Al-Ghamedi's (2010) study in KSA, Brinia's (2011) study in Greece , Hallinger's (2003) research review, Hilliard and Newsome's (2013) study in USA, Magoon and Linkous's (1979) study in USA, Owens and Valesky (2011), Price's (2012) study in USA, Slater's (2005) study in Canada, along with Yunas et al's. (2013) when effective principals pursue an open door communication policy and build bridges with their school community especially teachers as this closeness helps in promoting collaborative, healthy, and supporting learning communities plus a sense of belonging and loyalty.

The findings revealed how the respondents valued the principal's visibility, something which Coronel et al.'s (2010) Spanish female principals' respondents highly recommended as a coefficient of effectivity. A similar opinion was expressed by the teachers interviewed by Al-Jammal and Ghamrawi (2013) in Lebanon who appreciated the principal's accessibility. Owens and Valesky (2011) featured the visibility of instructional supervisors as a crucial domain of supervision.

Johns' (1997) study results in USA are somewhat similar to the findings in this research where relationship building ranked first as the top most priority of effective communicators, and public relations ranked five. That is, building open internal and external relations with the school community. Darling-Hammond (1997) along with Owens and Valesky (2011) attested that effective communicators' main task is to act as a bridge that communicates school, teachers', and students' needs to the school community. Busher (2006), Coronel et al. (2010), Germann (1994), Price (2012), Slater

97

(2005), and Spendlove (2007) stressed that it is only through collaboration with the school community and teamwork, trust is built, a unified vision is communicated, and school mission is accomplished.

As opposed to the perspectives aforementioned, few respondents in this research study expressed a different point of view that revealed a discrepancy in the participants' perspectives. Few teachers did not favor principals being in too much direct contact with teachers and building close, friendly relationships; rather, they preferred that they keep a distance to preserve professionalism and to avoid power struggle. They claimed that principals can delegate authority and get informed about school issues indirectly through delegates such as head of departments and subject-matter coordinators. This aspect can be traced back to cultural issues regarding the nature of relationships in the Lebanese society and neighboring countries where personal issues and acquaintances intersect with professionalism and objectivity (Amin, 2007; Al Omian as cited in Nasrallah, 2014).Al-Jammal and Ghamrawi (2013) recommended that principals delegate authority to avoid time wasted in communication as a result of pursuing an open door policy. Al-Jammal and Ghamrawi (2013) further set certain conditions for delegation as to be supervised and controlled by the principal whereby both parties agree on what authority is to be delegated, feedback, and expectations.

The participants believed that an effective principal should be well-aware of the things going around the school without getting involved directly or dealing with every single issue. The participants favored a principal who belonged to the school that is, he/she should be an academic and even some of them insisted that the principal should be promoted from the teachers' body to the principal position to better deal with teachers.

This dimension can be attributed to the Lebanese culture where some principals inherit their positions thus lacking any academic knowledge or expertise, or others tend to be businessmen who tackle school issues like any other business firm thereupon neglecting the humane and moral aspects of teaching and learning. In some other cases, politics governs and there is no consideration for professionalism due to the politicized nature or socio-political context of the Lebanese private school system (Akkary & Greenfield, 1998).

Moreover, the participants considered that the principals' presence during staff meetings is healthy and necessary to understand teachers' needs, meet their concerns, and collaborate for students' welfare. During meetings, principals engage in conversations with teachers, share ideas, and listen actively. Effective principals and leaders can communicate knowledge, values, and goals along with building effective relationship with teachers and spreading positive vibes. This finding bears similarities with Price's (2012) who declared that principal-teacher interactions lead to a collaborative learning community and a sense of belonging and loyalty.

Conversely, (Al-Jammal & Ghamrawi, 2013) considered that principals waste so much time attending meetings that are not meaningful. Not only that, Tracy (as cited in Al-Jammal & Ghamrawi, 2013, p. 56) declared that "meetings are the third major time waster in the world of work."

Active Communication Skills

According to the participants' responses, modeling active communication skills ranked second among the attributes of effective communicators. The participants in this

study considered principals who model active communication skills as effective leaders and communicators. To the participants, effective communicators are capable of delivering clear and meaningful messages, practicing active listening, observing and analyzing carefully, involving teachers through asking questions, carrying on two-way communication, following-up, communicating the school vision, empowering staff, and evaluating and reflecting. Their claim bears similarities with international literature. Germann (1994) declared that the criteria for determining communication effectiveness included investing in all sorts of communication.

Two-way communication as a dimension of effectivity was accorded to by the participants as a milestone of effective communication which entails that leaders are both senders and recipients. The participants portrayed effective leaders as skilled speakers, attentive observers, proficient readers, ace analysts, and active listeners. A similar perspective was affirmed by international researchers such as Barett (2002), Blasé and Blasé (2000), Celikten (2005), Day (2000), Glickman et al. (2010) adding Hoy and Miskel (2008), James and Cinelli (2003), Van Houtte (2006), Walker (2008), and Wood (2013) along with regional researchers like Al Karyouti (as cited in Nasrallah, 2014), and Harem (as cited in Nasrallah, 2014).).

Hoy and Miskel (2008) clarify the significance of employing clear, easy, and proper language when sending messages that are meaningful, appealing, and opportune to the listeners to facilitate message interpretation process by receivers since leadership is more meaning-centered than transmission (Fairhaust & Connaughton, 2014; Reilly & Di Angelo, 1990).

Gray and Ward (1974), Mashhour (as cited in Nasrallah, 2014) besides Slater (2005), Wood (2013) plus Zimmerman and West (1975) valued positive, active, and interactive listening which tightens the bonds between speakers and listeners as it reflects appreciation, involvement, and concern. Johns' (1997) study results indicated that active listening ranked as second top priority of effective communicators.

Observing and analyzing carefully were rated by the participants as major roles of effective communicators. When compared with international literature, similarities were recorded among researchers including Fairhaust and Connaughton (2014), Germann (1994), in addition to Zimmerman and West (1975) as well among Arab researchers such as Al Saud (as cited in Nasrallah, 2014) who emphasized the significance of non-verbal communication whereby speakers are attentive to all sorts of feedback like facial gestures, nods, or any body language cues that reflect culture and indicate the listener's interest which help to understand receivers' interpretation of messages delivered. Wood (2013) believed that many message receivers communicate silently without utterance. Moreover, engaging teachers through asking them about their standpoints, perspectives, and vantages and listening actively to their feedback helps leaders understand their teachers and ensure messages are interpreted correctly was valued by the participants. In their turn, international researchers like Barton (2008), Blasé and Blasé (2000), Glickman et al. (2010), Gray and Ward (1974), Johns (1997), Walker (2008) as well as Yunas et al. (2013) in addition to regional researchers like Amin (2007) stressed the issue of seeking feedback from message receivers that is, asking for understandings which is part of following-up and reflecting on messages delivered.

Furthermore, participants rated principals who are visionary as effective communicators. Owens and Valesky (2011) declared that through communicating a unified vision, principals bring staff on board and let them buy into the school mission. Ghamrawi (2013), likewise Hsieh and Shen (2010) spoke of symbolic leadership that mirrored an effective leader as visionary who communicates a unified vision. Although the research findings revealed that the participants accounted for setting direction and communicating a unified vision which are enriched by having knowledge of the school various aspects, yet the participants did not give it much weight as they gave for emotional intelligence and ethical communication. In addition, only participants in two schools mentioned alignment of vision between teachers and principals without discussing who set that vision. According to Karami-Akkary (2013), very few private school principals in Lebanon assume a role in setting direction for a unified vision as they are more occupied by keeping the status quo from one side or satisfying the school owners and/or political parties to whom the school is affiliated and implementing their vision not the schools'.

Day et al. (2001), Magoon and Linkous (1979) besides Slater (2005) spoke of embracing and empowering staff thus nurturing and supporting their professional growth as indicators of effective communication. The participants also highly regarded principals who are supportive, empowering, share decisions, and delegate authority as effective communicators. In three distinct studies and in different countries, Caldwell (1998) in Australia, Ghamrawi, (2013) in Lebanon as well as Moos and Kofod (2009) in Denmark discuss how leaders share decision making, delegate authority, engage everyone on board, and collaborate with their staff as a demonstration of effective communication.

Moreover, Al-Jammal and Ghamrawi (2013), Moos and Kofod (2009), withal Wood (2013) describe effective communicators as the ones who revisit their communication style and evaluate it. The same issue was emphasized by the participants who valued reflective and self-assessing principals whose actions encourage teachers to pursue same path. Furthermore, Blasé and Blasé (2000) further ascribe encouraging and sharing personal experience to effective communicators along with reflecting and giving feedback. In bureaucratic organizations as is the case in most schools in Lebanon (Karami-Akkary, 2013), top-down management prevails, with an inspectorate approach, and decision making is restricted to the leader (Owens & Valesky, 2011). Consequently, there is little or no vacancy for effective, constructive feedback and mutual interaction between principals and teachers in organizations where autocratic leadership, firm control, vertical and unilateral communication surmount, and most importantly principals who lack training and are in many cases unaware of their job responsibilities as change agents (Karami-Akkary, 2013). Thereupon, many teachers prefer to perform in isolation away from any congenial or collegial relationships as they lack any sense of belonging. There is an important element missing, building instructional capacity that is, investing in the person as a main target where teachers are supported and appreciated (Sergiovanni, 2007).

Informed about Professional Matters

Furthermore, the participants featured an effective communicator as a life-long learning advocate who pursues continuous learning, is open to innovation, and encourages his/her teachers to seek professional growth and development. Similar perceptions were accorded to by Al-Ghamedi (2010),Day (2000), Day et al. (2001),

Germann (1994), Hallinger (2000), Hallinger (2010), Magoon and Linkous (1979), Slater (2005), and Yunas et al. (2013) who discussed the role of effective leaders in supporting their staff emotionally and professionally henceforth setting the floor ready for them to grow and develop.

Cognitively Competent

The respondents reflect principals who are smart, demonstrate strong persuasive skills, and have the expertise and deft to handle power struggle and resolve conflicts as effective leaders and communicators. These findings concur with Al-Omari's (2007) in Jordan along with Schulte, Slate, and Onwuegbuzie's (2010) in the Southwest, who stated that an effective leader should be smart enough to choose the communication model or leadership stance that fits the school community. International researchers like Brinia (2011), Day (2000), Glickman et al. (2010), and (Hsieh & Shen, 2010) along with local researchers like Karami-Akkary(2013) and (Harb, 2014) discussed the importance of effective principals possessing problem-solving, negotiation, and strategic decision making skills.

In addition, the participants argued that effective communicators and leaders are skilled principals who got the talents needed to negotiate fairly with different parties when hardships arise recruiting various communication skills (Brinia , 2011; Day, 2000; Glickman et al.'s, 2010; Hsieh & Shen, 2010; Karami-Akkary, 2013). Yet, some participants complained of principals' favoritism and unfairness. Participants traced unfairness back to gender stereotyping or attempts at satisfying parents when principals revert to one-sided solutions to end up disputes.

Effect of Gender on Leadership and Communication

After discussing traits of effective leaders and communicators as perceived by Lebanese practitioners, the researcher turned to gender communication. This current study was probed to reveal the effect of principals' gender on effective communication as perceived by teachers of the two genders. The participants' responses revealed that 80% of the participants believed that male and female principals pursue different communication strategies that influence their leadership effectiveness greatly. Blasé and Blasé (2000) besides Fairhurst and Connaughton (2014) mentioned the reciprocal relationship between leaders' effective communication and staff perception of leadership effectivity. Coronel et al. (2010) and Merchant (2012) reported that males and females use different communication styles eventually they are different kinds of leaders where males are portrayed as powerful and females as affectionate. The participants' perceptions parallel many international researchers' perspectives who admitted the existence of gender-based communication idiosyncrasies (Ahmad, 2014; Baker, 1991a; De Lange, 1995; Hancock & Rubin, 2014; James & Cinelli, 2003; Merchant, 2012; Smith & Thompson, 2002; Tebeaux, 1990). Others like Jackson (2012) registered differences in communication across gender with respect to different contexts in her study of gender in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and India.

The literature provides reasons for this discrepancy in communication across gender which range from innate to psychological and cultural (De Lange, 1995), a view which is shared by Hancock and Rubin (2014). Some international scholars' study findings and research review including Ahmad's (2014) in United Arab Emirates, Baker's (1991b) in USA, Brinia's (2011) in Greece, De Lange's, (1995) in USA, James and Cinelli's (2003)

in USA, Kim and Bresnahan's (1996) cross-cultural study in Korea, Japan, Hawaii, and USA, Merchant's (2012) in USA, Smeltzer and Werbel's (1986) in USA, Smith and Thompson's (2002) in USA, Stern and Karraker's (1989) in USA, and Zimmerman's (1987) in USA, and Zimmerman &West's (1975) in USA revealed that gender communication is attributed to culture since females and males are raised differently in terms of their role expectations hence they perceive themselves and their roles differently. In the current study, participants acknowledged the existence of gender differences in the way female and male principals communicate, and they attributed these differences to cultural factors and human nature.

It is noteworthy to discuss another finding in this current research study where most of the female participants rated male principals as more effective communicators than female principals in contrary to the new trend that favors female leadership (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt,& Van Engen, 2003).The participants believed that male principals make better communicators as they are more dynamic, decisive, humorous, more capable, and can socialize better since they do not reside under much pressure like female principals who are bound by their social conditions. On the contrary, the participants described female principals as being driven by their emotions, jealous, and indecisive. This belief was affirmed by some Turkish teachers (Celikten, 2005). International scholars like De Lange (1995), Kim and Bresnahan (1996), together with Miller and McReynolds (as cited in Foss & Foss, 1983) valued males' assertiveness, systematic communication style, and being goal-oriented which they believed made males better leaders.

These views were reflected by most of Arar and Oplatka's (2013) Palestinian participant teachers. Baker's (1990a) research review in USA, Kim and Bresnahan's (1996) cross-cultural study in Korea, Japan, Hawaii, and USA as well as Hancock and Rubin's (2014) study in USA revealed that females are more emotional, less confident, and uncertain which is the reason behind females employing "affiliative/depowering strategies"(Baker, 1991a, p.37). Celikten (2005) reported that female principals act in a 'manly' way because they were raised as subordinates thus they want to prove themselves in a masculine manner taking into account that females were allowed into principalship just recently, and they are considered as outlanders to the educational leadership world (Baker, 1991b; Coronel et al., 2010; De Lange, 1995; Eagly et al., 2003; Merchant, 2012; Zimmerman &West, 1975; Polk, 2005). Polk (2005) attributed the bossy attitude of some female principals to the fact that principal preparation programs were all designed for males since they were dominant in the principalship domain. Grissom, Nicholson-Coty, and Keiser's (2012) study findings in USA indicated that male teachers are dissatisfied in female-led schools and suffer from high percentage of turn-over.

The findings of this current research study contradict Mouchantaf's (2005) study results where Lebanese teacher participants in one school favored female principalship more than male principalship. These participants were led by a female transformational principal who demonstrated traits of effective leaders and communicators. As to this current research study, only 13% of the participants attributed effective leadership and communication to female principals whom they described them as understanding, lenient, perceptive, and enjoying motherly affection.

Conversely, the Lebanese teachers in one school led by a male principal considered that they were subject to inspection and centralized decision making (Mouchantaf, 2005). Mouchantaf (2005) attributed the male principal's leadership attitude to Lebanese cultural beliefs as well as to gender roles that hold the assumption that males are in control thus they should hide their feelings and express briefly to help preserve the status quo and achieve dominance. There is evidence from international literature reported by Caldwell, (1998) in Australia, Celikten (2005) in Turkey, and Harris (1994) in Canada that supports these beliefs concerning females pursuing transformational leadership and males pursuing autocratic, sole decision making and one way communication. As a researcher and practitioner, I think that the issue of effective leadership and communication depends on the personality of the principal and his/her professionalism rather than on gender. In my career, I dealt with principals of the two genders some exhibited professionalism and objectivity while others practised favoritism and discrimination.

Factors That Enhance or Hinder Leadership and Effective Communication

While discussing gender communication, the participants discussed factors they believed can be enhancing or hindering to effective communication. Some of these factors were associated with gender, but others were not. Eight factors were classified as enhancing to effective communication and were associated with gender: expressiveness; leniency with decisiveness; emotional intelligence; professionalism; active listening; two-way communication; charisma; and transparency. However, six factors were identified as

gender related and hindering to effective communication, as well: affection; jealousy; competition; gossiping; moodiness; and personal issues.

Factors that Enhance Effective Communication

The participants discussed gender related factors that they considered as enhancing to effective communication. One factor was associated with females which is expressiveness and the other factors were associated with males: leniency with decisiveness; emotional intelligence; professionalism and transparency; two-way communication and active listening; and charisma.

Expressiveness. Participants valued female principals' eloquent speech and detailed explanation. The international literature appreciates females' friendly, affectionate, and interactive feedback style that employs inquiry, clarification, and involving others and find it more effective than males' straightforward, brief feedback (Lizzio et al., 2003). Valentine and Godkin (2000) found that females' friendly feedback style paves the road for introducing innovation thus lessening resistance which was further confirmed by Harris (1994). The findings of this research study show disparity in the participants' beliefs where at one point the participants accused female principals of being jealous of other female teachers and regarded them as a threat while at the same time appreciating their openness.

Leniency with decisiveness. According to the participants, male principals exhibit leniency with decisiveness that is, they are more determined, resolute, and purposeful but clement and equaled. The literature shows correspondence with the participants' beliefs. De Lange (1995) and Beck (as cited in Hancock & Rubin, 2014)

attested that males are more assertive and systematic in their speech which make them better candidates for leadership unlike females who lack certitude and self-assurance (Ahmad, 2014; Baker, 1990a; Baker 1991a; Hancock and Rubin, 2014). On the other hand, (Mouchantaf's, 2005) research study showed that the male principal was firm and authoritarian which can be traced to cultural effect where leaders are supposed to stay in control.

Emotional intelligence. According to the participants, male principals are highly accredited for being humane, respectful, trustworthy, decent, considerate, patient, loving, and humble as compared to female principals who were described as being moody, jealous, competitive, and gossipers. Being as such, I think emotional intelligent leaders are regarded as effective communicators as they are more likely to be approached by teachers who feel safe, appreciated, accepted, and respected. Mouchantaf (2005) revealed that male principals favor confidentiality as means to build trust compared to female principals who are less discreet and more expressive. Eagly et al. (2003) believed that male leaders are more likely to celebrate success and exhibit patience when conflicts arise and leave room for staff to come up with solutions before interfering whereas female leaders are more likely to reward staff and exhibit more transformational leadership attributes. Conversely, Merchant (2012) stated that females were polite, sociable, intimate, and friendly in their communication while she viewed men as dominant and competitive.

Professionalism and transparency. Based on the participants' responses, male principals are more professional consequently they end up as more effective communicators as they are transparent and do not allow personal interests to affect their

110

relationship with teachers or parents. The participants described male principals as being fair, honest, transparent, and neither judgmental nor stereotyped. Transparency is an attribute that participants almost disqualified female principals from enjoying it claiming that females cannot let go of home issues and focus on their work. The literature shows similarity with the participants' views as Brinia (2011) along with Valentine and Godkin (2000) asserted that male leaders are classified as proactive, visionary, decisive, role-models, open to the school community, and promoters of a climate of collaboration, shared goals, and effective communication. Merchant (2012) described male leaders as strategic and focused on goals while female leaders as targeting building relationships. Palestinian teachers interviewed by Arar and Oplatka (2013) preferred male principals since they reflected strength and power of position.

Conversely, Celikten's (2005) Turkish participants besides Mouchantaf's (2005) Lebanese participants praised female principal's support, interactive communication, and empowerment and criticized male principal's unavailability, being hard to reach, and sole decision making which are far from professionalism (Mouchantaf, 2005). Other researchers believed that professionalism is gender-free and the whole issue depends on the positive attitude of the leader irrespective of gender (Kim & Bresnahan, 1996; Truss et al., 2012), a belief that was emphasized by some participants in this current study which indicated that the issue is still controversial which entails that it requires more research.

Two-way communication and active listening. The participants found male principals to be better listeners as most female principals tend to employ unilateral or one-way communication and listen to their own voices. Male principals were praised for

111

listening to all parties, understanding before responding, and sending clear, meaningful messages.

Contrary to the preceding beliefs, Mouchantaf (2005) reported that female principals employ active listening, comprehend messages delivered then give valuable feedback unlike male principals who were described as authoritarian, brief in responses, and unapproachable because they favored indirect communication patterns. Mouchantaf (2005) interpreted the restricted attitude of male principals towards teachers in terms of the Lebanese cultural beliefs that hold the assumption about keeping distance to preserve authority. Similarly, some participants in this current study had a compatible point of view claiming it is necessary for preserving authority and control. Merchant (2012) criticized both males and females for their attitude during conflicts where males tend to offer solutions while females tend to discuss issues and search for affection.

Charisma. The participants labeled male principals as charismatic, dynamic, diplomatic in their speech, self-confident, role models, and trustworthy. These findings are congruent with perspectives expressed by Western researchers like Brinia (2011) who revealed that male leaders were described as collaborative, visionary, proactive, decisive, role models, and accessible. These beliefs contradict Merchant's (2012) report and Mouchantaf's (2005) study findings which figured male educational leaders as autocratic, bossy, and independent preferring to be disclose to preserve the status quo. Eagly et al.'s, (2003) research findings indicated that female leaders were rated as more charismatic than male leaders.

The participants further mentioned another factor that enhances effective communication which is family-type relationship but did not associate it with gender.

112

According to the participants, this trait can be demonstrated by principals of both genders. Literature assigns the motherly figure to female leaders along with expectations of tenderness and softness but assigns the goal-oriented role to male leaders (Eagly et al., 2003; Merchant, 2012).

Factors that Hinder Effective Communication

  The participants discussed factors they claimed were hindering to effective communication and associated them with female principals: affection; jealousy; competition; gossiping; moodiness; and personal issues.

   Emotional involvement. The participants in the current study believed that emotions are important and necessary nonetheless they should not prevail over wherefore preventing principals from acting professionally and fairly. The participants claimed that female principals are carried by their emotions that affect their effectivity as principals. These claims were supported by international as well as regional researchers who classified females as affectionate, empathetic, and doubtful which inhibit their abilities to take decisions and to act as strong leaders (Abu-Tineh, 2012; Arar & Oplatka, 2013; Valentine & Godkin, 2000) rather they are considered powerless (Abu-Tineh, 2012; Arar & Oplatka, 2013; Baker, 1991a). Having said that, a contradictory belief shows that females' interest in forming an overly emotionally intense affectionate relationships and sympathizing with others is not a burden but rather aids in promoting effective communication (Kim & Bresnahan, 1996) and building interactive, caring relationships with staff (Mouchantaf, 2005). According to Arar and Oplatka (2013) as well as Coronel et al. (2010) females' emotional attitude is a reflection of a cultural image of females as

caregivers and providers of happiness. A similar belief was expressed by a few participants in this current research study.

Jealousy and competition. The participants considered that female principals in general suffer from jealousy as they are wary towards other females and consider them competitors or threat therefore they tend to be more stern and bossy while communicating with female teachers. Celikten (2005) reported that a few female teachers criticized female principals for being lofty, self-assertive, and stern. They added that female principals out of jealousy attack female teachers since they regard them as rivals and competitors. In contrary to the opinion presented earlier, Merchant (2012) concluded that female leaders are closer to female staff because they pursue similar communication patterns, and they tend to avoid male staff because their communication styles differ.

Gossiping and moodiness. The participants accused female principals of relying on gossiping and backstabbing. The participants claimed that often female principals twist words and spread gossip thus engendering a distrustful, unfriendly atmosphere. Female principals were accused of exhibiting different moods which jeopardized their trust and threatened their decision making abilities. Brock (2008) argued that females in general become saboteurs and distrustful out of feeling of jealousy, competition, and insecurity so they tend to employ gossiping and backstabbing.

In contrary, Merchant (2012) argued that female leaders are looked upon as supportive, role-models, and collaborative which contradicts the current study research findings.

Personal issues. The participants pointed out that female principals are acting far from objectivity as they tend to involve personal issues, relationships, and acquaintances

in their work. Schaef (as cited in Ahmad, 2014) believed that women communicate more about issues of personal matters while men tend to discuss general issues. Valentine and Godkin (2000) stated that female leaders opt for congenial relationships. A few female teachers as reported by Celikten (2005) criticized female principals for being biased. In contrast, Mouchantaf (2005) asserted that female principals recruit relationships to empower others and to foster human interactions.

Participants identified other factors that hinder effective communication but did not associate with gender. Bossiness and superiority, discrimination, as well as stereotyping were considered by the participants as hindering factors to effective communication but were not associated with gender. Likewise, the literature shows mixed results regarding these factors. According to Eagly et al. (2003) and Merchant (2012) female leaders are subject to gender stereotypes being examined in their organizations under a masculine focal lens which entails that once they try to prove themselves as competent leaders they would be scrutinized for being very bossy, aggressive, and autocratic. Although Merchant (2012) associated these negative hindering factors with male leaders and yet the researcher did not favor one communication style over the other as each style can be effective depending on the context.

Conclusion

The findings of this research study brought to light the reality of the Lebanese schools with respect to principals' gender and effective communication. Although the participants of both genders in this study came from different academic backgrounds and

115

school contexts, yet their perspectives seemed to align in many major areas and differ in others. The underpinning belief that acts as a lynchpin between the different participants is the vital role principals should play as change agents through effective communication. Furthermore, this research study has highlighted certain blind spots that need to be exposed in the leadership and gender communication Lebanese arena. Female teachers' perception of female principals and their preference for male principals' effective communication were interesting and reflected aspects of the Lebanese schools and culture.

Another feature of this current research study was that the proportional representation of female and male principals in the study sample which contradicts with literature where females were considered underrepresented in principalship positions (Baker, 1991b; Coronel et al., 2010; De Lange, 1995; Zimmerman &West, 1975; Polk, 2005).

Henceforward, the results of this study constituted a research base for professional development and leadership training programs of principals in Lebanon especially female principals. Moreover, this study had theoretical implication considering the leadership grounded profile that delineated a frame for leadership characteristics that enhance effective communication which almost coincided with the theoretical profile of effective leaders and communicators founded upon review of literature and leadership models.

The research results spotted a challenge that female principals mainly face with teachers of the same gender. It is vigorous that female principals reconsider their leadership and communication styles to build better professional relationships with teachers.

Adding, literature identified certain stereotypes attributed to males and females which affect their communication effectiveness. Some of these stereotypes bear similarities with the participants' beliefs about gender communication. In correspondence, females were attributed by expressiveness, emotional involvement, and personal workshop kinship while males were affiliated by self-confidence, ambition, logic, determination, straightforwardness, and impassiveness. Nonetheless, literature ascribed certain traits to females (Merchant, 2012) which were not acknowledged for female principals by the participants but rather attributed to male principals such as appreciation, amiableness, compassion, and transparency. Likewise, some attributes that literature ascribed to male leaders such as aggressiveness, bossiness, toughness, and rudeness (Merchant, 2012) were ascribed to female principals by the participants. As literature says that gender stereotypes exercised by male leaders have negative implications on working females, the participants declared that these gender stereotypes were exercised by female principals across the same gender.

A striking finding about this current study was that the participants favored male leadership and communication which is incongruous with the new approach that favors female leadership (Eagly et al., 2003).

Despite these gender differences and stereotypes, the participants suggested certain traits that were grounded into a profile for effective principals and communicators irrespective of their gender. Dimmock and Walker (2000) along with Hallinger (2003) believed that leaders do not have to follow one leadership model instead they can merge between many leadership models to fit both the school context and its cultural orientation. Plus, the participants conformed that they aspired for principals who were

117

appreciative, understanding, active listeners, empowering, supportive, and positive thinkers irrespective of their gender which was also attested by Slater (2005).

Recommendations

The current research study revealed mixed and parallel results concerning gender communication which entails that the topic is still controversial and is worth further research due to its importance. The research findings indicated the existence of gender stereotypes different kind though which are still instilled in the Lebanese society. The researcher called for professional growth and training programs for principals along with further research and discussion of the topic and results obtained with all the people involved in the academic field whether legislatures, administrators, parents, and of course teachers. The researcher also highlighted other areas to be targeted and made certain recommendations:

Professional Growth and Training Programs

- Design educational administration programs that are targeted towards promoting female principalship since females are underrepresented in leadership positions and if present lack the necessary preparation and training.

- Organize professional growth and development workshops for principals in general and female principals in particular (Hallinger, 2003).

Future Research

- Explore other areas across Lebanon and comprise both public and private schools to have a bigger representative sample.

118

- Conduct research studies that recruit a more balanced and proportional sample of the two genders in order to have better and more precise insight into the views of practitioners of both genders.

- Include teachers and instructional supervisors along with principals of both genders in the study sample so as to benefit from their expertise being the main academic practitioners which adds more value and enrichment to the emic perspective (Stern, 2007). Parents' and students' perspectives can be accounted for since they constitute the school community.

- Replicate the same study on a national level to have more representative results that can be transferable although this current research sample was representative for the scope of this research study. The new research takes into consideration at what scale principals can be rated along the continuum of effective leadership and communication characteristics.

APPENDIX A

TEACHERS' INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The researcher will conduct focus group interviews with teachers of the two genders in all the schools to get insight into their perceptions of effective leadership and communication. The interviews will take around 60-75 minutes or more as the researcher does want to limit the participants by time to feel at ease while responding. The researcher starts by introducing herself and the topic of effective leadership and communication across gender. The researcher acting as the leader of the focus group interviews starts with an opening question to set the tone:

1- Define effective communication in the context of effective leadership? Give examples.

   Probe: Can you elaborate more about that.

2- Think over all the past years you have worked as a teacher when have you considered the principal to have been an effective communicator? Give details taking into consideration the effect of the principal's gender on communication.

3-Describe an effective leader and communicator in the Lebanese context.

 4-How do you think effective leadership affects and leads to effective communication? Elaborate.

 5-Keeping in mind the Lebanese context, what are the factors that hinder or enhance leaders' effective communication and are related to gender?

APPENDIX B

MEMBER CHECKING FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

PROTOCOL

After reading through the researcher's and observer's notes and comparing different and same answers expressed by teacher participants regarding the phenomenon of principal effective leadership and communication, this is what I interpreted and concluded. These results represent codes and themes generated after analyzing the interviews. Your feedback is of much value to my study as it helps clear any ambiguities, clarify results, and build a profile of an effective leader and communicator. As you answer, please take into consideration the Lebanese organizational context with its politicized nature. The interviews will take around 60-75 minutes or more as the researcher does want to limit the participants by time to feel at ease while responding.

1- Read the themes and categories generated for interviewing teachers in focus group interviews and tell if you agree or not. Please, give your rationale.

   a- Do you think these categories reflect your views on the questions that were raised?

   b- Comment on the categories and themes generated from the data on the points view of teachers.

   c- How do you explain the similarities and differences in the perceptions of teachers?

Concluding Questions:

2- Do you have anything to add? Do you have any recommendations on the issue?

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT SCHOOLS' DEMOGRAPHICS

School Type	Code	Demographics of Participating Schools
Private Non-Free	A	School A is a small K-12 school that was established in 1980 in the Greater Beirut Area. It is a mixed-gender school that is led by a male principal. It is attended by 265 students. The staff includes 32 teachers of both genders and 12 administrators. It accommodates for 17 English and 3 French sections. The school mission is to serve the society through graduating a new educated, well-balanced, and moderate generation.
Private Non-Free	B	School B is a medium k-12 school that was established in 1916 in the Greater Beirut Area. It is attended by 411 students of mixed gender and serves both Lebanese and IB programs. It is led by a female principal. Its staff consists of 60 teachers and 13 administrators of both genders. It includes 22 English sections, only. Its mission is to invest in young students and nurture their emotional intelligence abilities to become faithful citizens.
Private Non-Free	C	School C is a small K-12 school that was established in 2013 in the Greater Area of Beirut. It is a mixed gender school that is attended by 194 students and recruits 22 teachers of both genders. School C is led by two principals: a male and a female. It serves the Lebanese program. The school mission is to promote life-long learning through a challenging learning environment that develops caring inquirers.
Private Non-Free	D	School D is a large K-12 school that was established in 1961 in the Greater Area of Beirut. The school is attended by 1300 students of both genders. The school staff includes 165 teachers and 28 administrators of both genders. The school is led by a male principal. The school includes 47 English sections and serves both the Lebanese and American programs. The school mission is to instill in students

		the skills and virtues to become loyal citizens.
Private Non-Free	E	School E is a medium K-12 school that was established in 1996 in the Greater Area of Beirut. The school is attended by 380 students of both genders. The school staff recruits 55 teachers of both genders. School E is led by a female principal. It includes 19 English sections. The school serves the Lebanese, High School, and the Special Needs programs.
		The school mission is to prepare the students for a new age by providing a safe, supportive, and challenging environment that promotes the qualities of an active learner.
Private Non-Free	F	School F is a medium K-12 school that was established in 1995 in the Greater Area of Beirut. It is a mixed-gender school that is attended 537 students. The school staff recruits 69 teachers of both genders. The school includes 23 English and 18 French sections. School F serves the Lebanese and IB programs.
		School F mission is to develop self-confident young citizens with active minds who have a sense of understanding and compassion for others.
Private Non-Free	G	School G is a K-12 school that was established in the Greater Beirut Area. It is a mixed-gender school that is attended by 350 students and recruits among its staff 48 teachers of both genders. It includes 23 English sections and serves the Lebanese and American programs. The school mission is to provide an educational environment that stimulates the intellectual and ethical growth of students in a supportive climate.
Private Non-Free	H	School H is a large K-12 school that was established in 1991 in the Greater Beirut Area. It is a mixed gender school that is attended by 1330 students. The school serves the Lebanese and American programs and accommodates for 50 English sections, only. Its staff includes 120 teachers and 21 administrators and is led by two principals: a male and a female.
Private Non-Free	I	School I is a medium K-12 school that was

		established in1995 in the Greater Area of Beirut. The school includes 16 French sections. School I is a mixed-gender school that is attended by 553 students. The school staff consists of 63 teachers and 20 administrators of both genders and is led by a male principal. School I serves the Lebanese program.
		The school mission is to provide distinguished care for the coming generations through ethics and academia.
Private Non-Free	J	School J is a large K-9 school that was established in 1998 in the Greater Area of Beirut. School J is attended by 810 students of both genders. The school staff includes 86 teachers of both genders and is led by a male principal. The school includes 20 English and 12 French sections. School J serves the Lebanese program. The school mission is to enlighten students and guide their paths through teaching values, morals, and academics.

APPENDIX D

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "A" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School A
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership??	Two teachers believed that an effective communicator is the principal who is down-to-earth, patient, open to innovation and development, keeps doors open to build a channel of communication with students and outside community. Being as such, the principal can handle students' problems, establish positive relationships with students, and guide them academically and ethically.
	Another teacher stated that an effective principal adjusts to all situations, is updated about all ongoing events, and is informed about the needs of teachers and what each subject matter entails.
	Three teachers valued principals' belief in life-long learning and continuous development of self and staff.
	All teachers in school A praised their principal's follow-up strategy of specific details, problems, and innovations. They said, "Communication is about evaluation and follow-up."
	A teacher in school A said, "The principal should build a parental relationship with teachers based on respect."

Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	Two teachers denied any gender differences and believed that it is all related to the principals' personality. Four teachers said that male principals sympathize more with female teachers. One female teacher preferred female principalship and said, "Female leaders are capable of seeing the whole picture. They are multi-tasked, perceptive, and can relate more because they read between the lines… Females are better communicators because they have raised kids. They have motherhood affection."
Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?	Teachers in school A admired their principal's active listening skills and illustrated "he listens to all parties and to different sources, comprehends then reacts actively." Five other teachers declared that an effective communicator is active, flexible, proactive, visionary, and empowering. Three teachers added, "He lets us share in decision making, planning, evaluation, and assessment. He does not take any decision before discussing it together." Two teachers praised their principal's professionalism and charisma and said, "He is funny, positive, fair, and comforts teachers."

126

APPENDIX E

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "B" PARTICIPANTS'RESPONSES TO

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School B
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	A teacher in school B uttered that "my principal was a friend and a sister who shared my fears and concerns along with problems... we used to think together of solutions." Three teachers stated, "An effective communicator should be humble, enjoying emotional intelligence, quick, alert, resourceful, and smart with curtesy." All participants agreed and said, "An effective principal is approachable, accessible, open to all new innovations, and visionary." Three teachers said, "An effective principal promotes a nourishing and supportive environment. Teachers should feel comfortable and empowered."
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	A female teacher asserted that gender stereotypes do exist and illustrated "a female principal was released off her responsibilities because of her gender." A male teacher said, "Female leaders allow for interference from parents which exerts pressure on teachers." A teacher refused the issue of gender communication and said, "Communication effectiveness depends on the principal's personality."
Q3: What are the gender related factors	Teachers said, "Female principals

that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?	cannot forget about their personal problems. They tend to reflect home issues back on their work."
	Teachers in school B believed and said, "Male principals are more objective, listen to all parties involved, give chances, and take time before taking decisions."
	Another teacher declared that "an effective communicator seeks the school interest not hers."

APPENDIX F

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "C" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School C
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	Two teachers in school B agreed and said, "The principal should know every single detail, communicate, and negotiate." Reflected another teacher in school B "the effective principal attends weekly department meetings, communicates with teachers, and follows-up for feedback to evaluate, amend, and improve." A teacher in school B insisted and another teacher in the same school nodded in agreement: A principal who knows the school well and is ready to build strategic plans in collaboration with teachers and other staff is a successful communicator. The principal recognizes teachers' role as pivotal and thereupon takes their opinions before taking major decisions.
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	Two teachers denied any gender differences saying that "it is more about personality and attitude more than gender." Two male and female teachers said, "Male principals take firm decisions while female principals are more on emotions which turned them indecisive." A teacher said, "Males are friendly and lenient but not very loose." Three teachers added that "males are more active listeners and they are short in

messages but their messages are more focused and meaningful than females'."

Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?

A female teacher said, "Female principals are bossy and abuse teachers' weakness."

Three female teachers said, "Female principals' relationship with female teachers is undesirable and intolerable. Female principals are moody and have no set goals."

Two other female teacher commented and said, "Female principals use rude, obscene words about teachers along with gossiping."

Teachers advocating male principalship elaborated that "female principals are more emotional and use a high tone whereas male principals are considerate, funny, respectful, visionary, transparent, supportive, and friendly."

A female teacher said, "Female principals elaborate more, are more expressive, and do not keep anything for themselves. They also exhibit motherly affection. Henceforth, working with females is more comfortable."

APPENDIX G

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "D" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School D
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	A teacher in school D described communication as a process and said: Communication is a process that involves positive thinking and getting the message from different perspectives. The principal should send clear messages and understand the content of the messages delivered along with the feeling or need the sender is trying to express. The principal's interpretation of the message has to be free of any stereotyping or judgment. Another teacher in school D modeled for effective communication and declared "the principal meets you halfway and says lets fix together and improve… we discuss issues together, learn together, appreciate each other's different ideas, and make mistakes together. Together sums it all up." A teacher in school D explained that "we come from different walks of life, an effective principal facilitates our adjustment and belonging as one family members."
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	All participants agreed that gender differences exist. A teacher said, "Leadership is male restricted." Four teachers explained that "male principals are funny, down-to-earth, more understanding, active listeners, treat

Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?	female teachers better, and are role-models."
	Three female teachers favored female principalship "female principals are better communicators, express more, appreciate more, understand females and sympathize with them, and are more sociable."
	Three teachers in school D said, "Female principals cannot forget about their personal problems. They tend to reflect home issues back on their work."
	Some teachers said, "Some female principals take the side of parents. Teachers are to be blamed and are not given any chance to clarify nor to defend their position. It is a trust issue to us."
	Male teachers said, "Female principals can be very ugly, violent, and aggressive when they consider the workplace to show their other faces or what they cannot do at home."

APPENDIX H

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "E" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School E
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	Teachers explained that "an effective principal appreciates teachers, empowers, is present around, and listens actively,"
	Another teacher said, "The principal should be friendly, positive, trustworthy, and communicates leadership qualities."
	Three other teachers added that "an effective communicator is a role-model, humble, fair, gives good incentives, emotional support, and appreciation but also firm and decisive."
	Two teachers insisted and said, "Effective communicators should be patient, promoters of professional growth and development, and decisive but lenient."
	Expressing her satisfaction about her principal's effective communication skills, a teacher in school H said, "I like it when I speak to the principal that she keeps an eye-contact with me and focuses on the words that I say. I can tell she appreciates what I am saying."
	Teachers regarded an effective principal as the one who sends messages that are very clear with no ambiguity, listens more, and talks less. More importantly, they asserted that he/she should not be biased but rather listen to different perspectives since two-way communication is more effective.
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect	All participant teachers admitted the existence of gender differences.

of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?

Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?

A teacher expressed her perspective saying, "females are driven by their emotions. Carried away by personal problems."

Four teachers said, "Female principals employ a lot of incitement and rivalry rather than giving incentives and appraisal."

A coordinator in school E expounded and said, "Consensus is better achieved when both parties that is, principal and teachers speak together and listen actively."

A female teacher said, "Female principals are moody, not consistent, and take hasty decisions."

Teachers in school E explained that "female principals fall short of objectivity. Female principals cannot forget about their personal problems."

Another teacher stressed that "female principals are jealous of female teachers and employ competition and rivalry in their interactions."

Four participants in school E accused female principals of backstabbing and illustrated "she asks for our opinions during meetings and misuses them against us."

APPENDIX I

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "F" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School F
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	Teachers agreed and said, "An effective communicator should be educated, updated, informed about school and academics, and goal-oriented." Three teachers said, "An effective communicator is humble, patient, humane, positive communicator, available around the school, and active listener." Two other teachers added "an effective communicator pursues an open door policy, approaches teachers and students, listens to their concerns, and sends clear, meaningful messages." Other participants said, "Effective principals speak and listen, share opinions, clarify vision, and delegate authorities."
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	All participants admitted the existence of gender communication. A teacher in school F asserted that "leadership is man's talent. Men are more capable, think better and communicate more effectively while females are affectionate and emotions surmount their relations along with jealousy."
Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?	Teachers in school F said, "Effective communicators walk with us not behind nor in front… as one family and one team." Another teacher in school F shared her experience and clarified "I had an amazing experience with my principal. He

was like a real dad to me."

Teachers in school F attested that "male principals have strong personalities yet they are considerate as they are more objective and do not involve personal interests in their work."

Two teachers confirmed and said, "Female principals cannot let go of their emotions and consequently cannot deal with problems. They are rather more hostile with female teachers than friendly."

Other participants said, "Female teachers suffer from favoritism and lack transparency."

APPENDIX J

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "G" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School G
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	Teacher participants explained and said, "Effective communicators talk on the same level with no superiority nor disdain, keep an eye contact, and come down to our level." Three teachers expressed that "an effective communicator is modest, encouraging, appreciative, humble, fosters team work and horizontal communication." Four teachers asserted that "better communicators belong to the school. Being a teacher helps principals understand teachers' needs better and sympathize with them." Two teachers added "effective principals teach teachers. They are role models to be followed. They work with you and lead you with love not out of fear. They are positive communicators, fair, and approachable."
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	Two female teachers denied any gender communication "there is no difference. The issue is a principal who knows his/her work." Another female teacher said, "Male principals exercise discrimination." She added "female principals are better

leaders and communicators since they are more lenient than male principals. Some males can be very harsh, insult, or cause harm."

The other female participants favored male principals' effective communication and said, "Males are better communicators. They are more confident."

Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?

A female teacher complained about female principal's attitude "female principals are jealous of female teachers and involves personal matters in her work."

Teachers in school G believed that male principals tend to be more in control when irritated which helps them approach female teachers and build trust with them.

Teachers in school G praised their male principal who appreciates teachers and values their efforts.

A teacher in school G said, "I believe that mixed communication across gender is more flexible."

Teachers complained about female principals' lack of fairness by saying, "Some female principals take the side of parents. Teachers are to be blamed and are not given any chance to clarify nor to defend their position. It is a trust issue to us."

Teachers in school G said, "Female principals employ a lot of incitement and rivalry rather than giving incentives and appraisal."

APPENDIX K

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "H" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School H
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	Teachers in school H explicated and said, "With love and kindness, principals can make teachers respond happily and buy into the school goals." Teachers in school H stated, "An effective communicator should communicate love, patience, tolerance, and sense of belonging." Two teachers added "an effective principal is funny, well-informed, visionary, experienced, shares all teachers, listens to all parties, and gives constructive feedback." Another teacher said, "An effective principal and communicator is a teacher who was promoted to a principal, knows his/her teachers well, listens actively to teachers' concerns, and understands their needs." Three teachers further commented "effective communicators are educated, continuous learners who seek professional growth of teachers, follow-up, nurture novice, and communicate clear message."
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	A teacher in school H expressed her support of female principals' affectionate nature "female principals are better communicators as they are affectionate and show their emotions. Emotions are important." Two teachers denied any gender differences and said, "Effective communication depends on the principal's positive personality irrespective of gender." Five participants favored male principals and explained "male principals

| Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication? | are patient, sympathetic, caring, and professional."

Teachers in school H said, "Female principals do not separate academics from personal relationships… They work on basis of personal acquaintances."

Participants accused female principals that they fall short of objectivity "female principals cannot forget about their personal problems. They tend to reflect home issues back on their work."

Another teacher said, "Male principals are more objective and serious but considerate while female principals are moody and involve personal relations."

Three teachers clarified that "the relation between female principals and female teachers is characterized by jealousy and rivalry." |

APPENDIX L

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "I" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES TO

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School I
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	Two teachers in school I said, "A teacher-principal understands what teachers suffer from, needs, and concerns…The principal supports teachers, promotes their growth, and equips them with necessary resources." Another teacher added that "an effective communicator keeps in touch with the staff, delegates authorities, pursues two-way communication, and listens actively," Three teachers said, "An effective communicator is accessible, approachable, professional, fair, and smart." Another teacher expressed her perspective "an effective communicator benefits from other schools' expertise, updates with all innovations, informed about school and academic." A teacher asserted and said, "Effective principals are charismatic and role-models. They communicate morals and professionalism."
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	A teacher did not accept any gender communication and said, "effective principals have distinguished personalities regardless of any gender issue." A teacher in school I asserted "there is no such thing called gender issue as long as the principal has effective communication means which facilitate building positive relationships with teachers based on

	respect and loyalty. Closed-door policy does not help."
	Five teachers favored male principalship and said, "A male principal understands females better, listen more, and takes time before deciding."
	Two other teachers advocated female principalship and clarified that "female principals are more flexible whereas male principals are harsh and do insult sometimes."
Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?	Three teachers commented "a male principal is transparent, separates between personal relations and work, and does not involve emotions."
	Two teachers said, "A male principal is an active listener, informed, smart, and impartial."
	Another teacher commented that "male principals are good readers, analysts, open to innovation, and organized."
	Two teachers added "female principals are not organized, cannot separate work from personal issues, and are impartial."
	Some teachers said, "Effective communicators deal with teachers as humans not employees… our principal keeps smiling and laughs with us."
	Most teachers criticized female principals for being impartial "female principals cannot forget about their personal problems. They tend to reflect home issues back on their work."
	Teachers in school I clarified "male principals make effective communicators and leaders because they understand females more and know their strengths, weaknesses, and interests."

APPENDIX M

SAMPLES OF SCHOOL "J" PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES TO

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Questions	School J
Q1: What are the similarities and differences between the perceptions of male and female Lebanese school teachers regarding effective communication in relation to effective leadership?	Teachers in school J elaborated about effective communicators and said, "Effective principals are charismatic, smart, alert, flexible, pursue school's interest and students' welfare, and foster teams." Participant teachers added that "effective communicators are ambitious and their utmost goal is to develop their schools and teachers through developing self." Teachers described effective communicators by saying, "Effective principals are visible, visionary, talented and embrace talents, transparent, good negotiators, and active listeners and senders." Other teachers asserted that "effective principals and communicators are humble, close, humane, considerate, and employers of two-way communication and constructive feedback." Teachers said, "Effective principals should belong to the school. They should be teachers from the same school not outsiders who are ignorant of the school culture or the academic process."
Q2: What are the perspectives of Lebanese school teachers about the effect of gender on leadership effectiveness when it comes to being an effective communicator?	A teacher in school J affirmed and said, "Females know females better and can sympathize with them, appreciate their efforts, and understand their needs." Other teachers denied any gender

	communication and said, "Effective communication depends on the principal's positive attitude and interactive personality."
	Three teachers favored males as more effective communicators and explained "opposite gender works better. Male principals are decisive, firm, and considerate."
Q3: What are the gender related factors that teachers perceive as hindering or enhancing to leaders' effective communication?	Teachers in school J said, "Males listen and understand before taking decisions while females just give orders without any consideration."
	Teachers in school J added "female leaders are more concerned about their position and their figure so they tend to be bossy."
	Teachers in school J explicated "female principals' relationships are governed by their moods… They exhibit different inconsistent personalities and imbalanced attitude depending on circumstances."

REFERENCES

Abu-Tineh, A. M., Khasawneh, S. A., & Al-Omari, A. A. (2008). Kouzes and Posner's transformational leadership model in practice: The case of the Jordanian schools. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 29* (8), 648-660. doi: 10.1108//01437730810916613

Abu-Tineh, A. M. (2012). Leadership effectiveness in Jordanian educational institutions: A comparison of Jordanian female and male leaders. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 41*(1), 79-94. doi: 10.1177/1741143212462703

Ahmad, K. Z. (2010). Mars, Venus and Gray: Gender communication. *International Business Research, 3*(2), 24-33. doi: 10.5539/ibr.v3n2p24

Ahmad, K. Z. (2014). Gender differences and work-related communication in the UAE: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Business and Management, 9*(3), 185-195. doi: 10.5539/ijbm.v9n3p185

Al-Jammal, K., & Ghamrawi, N. (2013). Leadership versus management: Between self-concept and actual practices of Lebanese school principals. *International Journal of Educational Research and Technology. 4(3),* 56-72.

Al- Omari, A. (2007). Leadership adaptability and learning styles. *Journal of Educational & Psychological Sciences, 8*(1), 31-49.

Arar, K., & Oplatka, I. (2013). Gender debates and teachers' constructions of masculinity vs. femininity of school principals: The case of Muslim teachers in Israel. *School Leadership & Management: Formerly School Organisation, 33*(1), 97-112. doi: 10.1080/13632434.2012.723620

Arlestig, H. (2007). Principals' communication inside schools: A contribution to school improvement? *The Educational Forum, 71*(3), 262-273.

Atkinson, P. (1992). The ethnography of a medical setting: reading, writing, and rhetoric. *Qualitative Health Research, 2*(4), 451-474. doi: 10.1177/104973239200200406

Ayesh, M., Mahmood, T., & Shah, A. R. (2013). Perceptions of good and bad leaders by teachers in Pakistan. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 4*(2), 543-550. doi: 10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n2p543

Baker, M. A. (1991a). Gender and verbal communication in professional settings. A review of research. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *5*(1), 36-63. doi: 10.1177/0893318991005001003

Baker, M. A. (1991b). Reciprocal accommodation: A model for reducing gender bias in managerial communication. *The Journal of Business Communication, 28*(2), 113-130. doi: 10.1177/002194369102800203

Barett, D.J. (2002). Change communication: Using strategic employee communication to facilitate major change. *Corporate Communication: An International Journal*, *7*(4), 219-231. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/13563280210449804

Barth, R. (1986). On sheep and goats and school reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *68*(4), 293–296.Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20403338

Barton, C (2008).*A survey and analysis of creative communication in educational leadership* (Doctoral dissertation, North Arizona University). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses**.** (UMI NUMBER: 3343278).

Blasé, J., & Blasé, J. (2000). Effective instructional leadership: Teachers' perspectives on how principals promote teaching and learning in schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 38*(2), 130-141. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09578230010320082

Brashers, D. E. (2001). Communication and uncertainty management. *Journal of Communication, 51*(3), 477-497. doi: 10.1111/J.1460-2466.2001.tb02892.x

Brinia, V. (2010). Male educational leadership in Greek primary schools. A theoretical framework based on experiences of male school leaders. *International Journal of Educational Management, 25*(2), 164-185. doi: 10.1108/09513541111107588

Brock, B. L. (2008). When sisterly support changes to sabotage. *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership, 6*(3), 211- 226. ISSN: 1541-6224. http://online.creighton.edu/edd/doctorate-leadership/faculty

Busher, H. (2006). *Understanding educational leadership.* Open University Main Head & McGraw-Hill New York.

Bosley, D. S. (1992). Gender and visual communication: toward a feminist theory of design. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication, 35*(4), 222-229. doi: 10.1109/47.180283

Bryant, A., & Charmaz, K. (2007). *The sage handbook of grounded theory.* Sage Publications.

Caldwell, B.J. (1998). Strategic leadership, resource management and effective school reform. *Journal of Educational Administration, 36*(5), 445-461. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09578239810238447

Celikten, M. (2005). A perspective on women principals in Turkey. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 8*(3), 201-221. doi: 10.1080/13603120500041835.

147

Chapman, D.W., & Miric, S. (2009). Educational quality in the Middle East.

     International Review of Education, 55, 311-344. doi: 10.1007/s11159-009-9132-5

Coronel, J. M., Moreno, E., & Carrasco, M. J. (2010). Beyond obstacles and problems:

     women principals in Spain leading change in their schools. *International Journal of*

     Leadership in Education: Theory and Practice, 13(2), 141-162. doi:

     10.1080/1360312090314442

Darling-Hammond, L. (1997). *The right to learn: A blueprint for creating schools that*

     work. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Day, C., Harris, A., & Hadfield, M. (2001). Challenging the orthodoxy of effective

     school leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 4*(1), 39–56.

Day, D.V. (2000), Leadership development: A review in context. *The Leadership*

     Quarterly, 11(4), 581-683.doi: 10.1016/S1048-9843(00)00061-8

De Lange, J. (1995). Gender and communication in social work education: A cross-

     cultural perspective. *Journal of Social Work Education, 31*(1), 75-81.

De Ridder, J. (2004). Organizational communication and supportive employees. *Human*

     Resource Management Journal, 4(4)*,* 1-10. doi:10.1111/j.1748-

     8583.2004.tb00124.x

Dey, I. (2007). Grounding categories. In A. Bryant& K. Charmaz, (Eds.). *The sage*

     handbook of grounded theory (pp. 167-190). Sage Publications.

Eagly, H. A., Johannesen-Schmidt, C. M., & Van Engen, L. M. (2003). Transformational,

     transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles: A meta-analysis comparing

     women and men. *The American Psychological Association, Inc., 129*(4), 569-

     591.doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.129.4.569

Fairhurst, G. T., & Connaughton, S. L. (2014). Leadership: A communicative

    perspective. *Leadership, 10* (1), 7-35. doi: 10.1177/1742715013509369

Fernandez, D. R., Carlson, D. S., Stwina, L., & Nicholson, J. D. (1997). Hofstede's

    country classification 25 years later. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 137*(1), 43-

    54. doi: 10.1080/00224549709595412

Foss, K.A., & Foss, S. K. (1983). The status of research on women and communication.

    Communication Quarterly, 31(3). 195-204. doi: 10.1080/01463378309369504

Friedman, M., & Watkins, R.M. (1992). *Developing the knowledge base for supervisor*

    induction and professional growth: Validating the model. San Diego, California,

    CA: Paper presented at the annual convention of the National Council of States.

    ERIC Document (Reproduction No. Ed 353233)

Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W.R. (2014). *Applying educational Research* (6th ed.).

    United States of America: Pearson.

Garcia-Morales, V.J., Matias-Reche, F., &Verdu-Jover, A. J. (2011). Influence of internal

    communication on technological proactivity, organizational learning, and

    organizational innovation in the pharmaceutical sector. *Journal of Communication,*

    61, 150-177. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.2010.01530.x

Germann, C. G. (1994). *Subordinate perception of leadership communication and*

    Effectiveness (Doctoral dissertation, University of Denver). Retrieved from UMI

    300 N. Zeeb Rd. Ann Arbor, MI 48106. (Order No. 9419258)

Ghamrawi, N. (2011). Trust me: Your school can be better-a message from teachers to

    principals. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 39*(3), 333-348.

    doi: 10.1177/1741143210393997

Ghamrawi, N. (2013). The relationship between the leadership styles of Lebanese public school principals and their attitudes towards ICT versus the level of ICT use by their teachers. *Open Journal of Leadership, 2*(1), 11-20. doi: 10.4235/ojl.2013.21002

Gizir, S. (2007). A review on organizational culture and organizational communication in universities. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice,* (50), 247-268.

Glaser, B. G. (1992). *Emergence vs. forcing: Basis of grounded theory analysis.* Mill Valley, California, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. (1998). *Doing grounded theory.* Mill Valley, California, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.G. (2010). The future of the grounded theory. *The Grounded Theory Review, 9*(2), 1-14.

Glickman, C.D., Gordon, S.P., & Ross-Gordon, J.M. (2010). *Supervision and leadership: A developmental approach* (8thed.). Pearson Publishers.

Goddard, Y.L., Neumerski, C.M., Goddard, R. D., Salloum, S.J., & Berebitsky, D. (2010). A multilevel exploratory study of the relationship between teachers' perceptions of principals' instructional support and group norms for instruction in elementary schools. *The Elementary School Journal, 111*(2), 336-357.

Gomez, L. F., & Ballard, D. I. (2013). Communication for the long term: information allocation and collective reflexivity as dynamic capabilities. *Journal of Business Communication, 50*(2), 208-220. doi: 10.1177002194361247992

Gray, J. W., & Ward, A. L. (1974). Improving communications between student and principal. *NASSP Bulletin, 58*(3), 3-12. doi: 10.1177/01926365

Grissom, A., Nicholson-Crotty, J. & Keiser, L. (2012). "Does my boss's gender matter? Explaining job satisfaction and employee turnover in the public sector". *Journal of Public Research and Theory, 122(4),* 649-673.

Hackman, M.A., & Johnson, C.E. (1991). *Leadership: A communication perspective. Prospect Heights.* Illinoi, IL: Waveland Press.

Hallinger, P. (2003).Leading educational change: reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 33*(3), 329-351.doi: 10.1080/0305764052000122005

Hallinger, P. (2009). *A review of two decades of research on the principalship using the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

Hancock, A. B., & Rubin, B. A. (2014). Influence of communication partner's gender on language. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 34*(1), 46-64. doi: 10.1177/0261927X14533197

Harb, S., J. (2014). *Identification and alignment of Lebanese teachers' and principals' perspectives of effective school leadership.* (Masters' thesis, American University of Beirut).

Harris, C.E. (1994). Discovering educational leadership in connections: Dr. Elizabeth Murray of Tatamagouche. *Canadian Journal of Education, 19*(4), 368-385.

Heck, R. H., & Hallinger, P. (2009). Assessing the contribution of distributed leadership to school improvement and growth in math achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 46*(3), 659-689.doi: 10.3102/0002831209340042

Hilliard, H. M., & Newsome, E. Jr. (2013). Effective communication and creating

    professional learning communities is a valuable practice for superintendents.

    Contemporary Issues in Education Research, 6(4), 353-366.

Hood, J. C. (2007). Orthodoxy vs. power: The defining traits of grounded theory. In A.

    Bryant &, K. Charmaz (Eds.). *The sage handbook of grounded theory* (pp. 151-

    164)*.* Sage Publications.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C.G. (2008). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and*

    .   *practice (8th ed).* New York, NY: McGraw- Hill.

Hsieh, C., L., & Shen, J. (2010). Teachers', principals' and superintendents' conceptions

    of leadership. *School Leadership & Management: formerly school organisation,*

    18(1), 107-121. doi: 10.1080/13632439869808

Husain, Z. (2013). Effective communication brings successful organizational change.

    The Business & Management Review, 3(2), 44-50.

Jackson, C. (2012). Speech, gender, and power: beyond testimony. *Development and*

    change, 43(5), 999-1023. doi: 10.1111/J.1467-7660.2012.01791.x

Jackson, D. (2000). The school improvement journey: Perspectives on leadership. *School*

    Leadership & Management, 20(1), 61–78. doi: 10.1080/13632430068888

James, T., & Cinelli, B. (2003). Exploring gender-based communication styles.

Johns, C. (1997). *Communication competence necessary for effective educational*

    leadership as perceived by public school principals (Doctoral dissertation,

    University of Houston). Retrieved from UMI Microfilm (UMI No. 9725686)

Karami-Akkary, R. K. (2013). The role and role context of the Lebanese school principal:

    toward a culturally grounded understanding of the principalship. *Educational*

Management Administration & Leadership, 42(5), 718-742. doi: 10.1177/1741143213510503

Keefe, J. W., Kelley, E. A., & Miller, S. K. (1985). School climate: clear definitions and a model for a larger setting. *NASSP Bulletin*, *69*(484), 70-77.

Kim, M. S., & Bresnahan, M. (1996). Cognitive basis of gender communication: A cross-cultural investigation of perceived constraints in requesting. *Communication3Quarterly, 44*(1), 53-69. doi: 10.1080/01463379609370000

Knestling, K. (2008). Students at risk for school dropout: Supporting their persistence. *Preventing School Failure, 52*(4), 3-10. doi: 10.3200/PSFL52.4.3-10

Kowalski, T. J. (2000). Cultural change paradigms and administrator communication. *Contemporary Education, 71*(2), 5-10.

Krueger, S. (1985). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research.* Newbury Park, California, CA: Sage.

Lambert, L. (1998). *Building leadership capacities in schools.* Alexandria, Virgnia, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2000). The effects of transformation leadership on student engagement with school. *Journal of Educational Administration, 38*(2), 112–129. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/095782300105320064

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2005). A review of transformational school leadership research 1996–2005.*Leadership and Policy in Schools, 4,*177–199. doi: 10.1080/15700760500244769

Lizzio, A., Wilson, K. L., Gilchrist, J., & Gallois, C., (2003). The role of gender in the

   construction and evaluation of feedback effectiveness. *Management*

   Communication Quarterly, 16 (3), 341-379. doi: 10.1177/0893318902238895

Magoon, R. A., & Linkous, S. W. (1979). The principal and effective staff morale.

   NASSP Bulletin, 63(20), 19-28. doi: 10.1177/019263657906342704

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G., B. (1995). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). SAGE

   Publications, Inc.

Mattar, D. (2012). Instructional leadership in Lebanese public schools. *Educational*

   Management Administration & Leadership, 40(4), 509-531.

Merchant, K. (2012). How men and women differ: gender differences in communication

   styles, influence tactics, and leadership styles. *Claremont McKenna College Senior*

   Theses. 1-64. Retrieved from http://scholarship.claremont.edu/cmc_theses/513

Mignrey, J.T., Rubin, R.B., & Gorden, W.I. (1995). Organizational entry: An

   investigation of newcomer behavior and uncertainty. *Communication Research,*

   22(1), 54-85. doi: 10.1177/009365095022001003

Moos, L. & Kofod, K.K. (2009). Sustained successful school leadership in Denmark.

   Journal of Educational Administration, 47(6), 709-718. doi:

   10.1108/09578230910993096

Mouchantaf, S. M., (2005). *Exploring differences in leadership styles between men and*

   women school principals. (Master's thesis, Lebanese American University in

   Beirut).

O'Reilly, C. A., & Pondy, L. R. (1979). Organizational behavior In *Organizational*

   behavior, S. Kerr Ed. Columbus, Ohio, OH: Grid Publishing Co.

Owens, R.G., & Valesky, T.G. (2011). *Organizational behavior in education: Leadership & school reform* (10thed.). Pearson Publishers.

Papa, M. J., & Graham, E.E. (1991). The impact of diagnosing skill deficiencies and assessment-based communication training on managerial performance. *Communication Education, 40*(4), 368-384. doi: 10.1080/03634529109378861

Pawlas, G. E., & Oliva, P. (2008). *Supervision for today's schools* (8th ed.). New Jersey, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Polk, E. M. (2005). *Gender and generational differences in the self-ratings of leadership practices by elementary school administrators within four Florida counties.* (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Florida).

Price, H. E. (2012). Principal-teacher interactions: how affective relationships shape principal and teacher attitudes. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 48*(1), 39-85. doi: 10.1177/0013161X11417126

Reilly, B. J., & DiAngelo, J. A. (1990). Communication: A Cultural system of meaning and value. *Human Relations, 43*(2), 129-140. doi: 10.1177/001872679004300203

Shannon, T. (1994). Salmon's laws for managing schools. *The Education Digest, 60(2),* 20-23.

Schulte, D. P., Slate, J. R., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2010). Characteristics of effective school principals: A mixed-research study. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 56*(2), 172-195. Retrieved from http://ajer.synergiesprairies.ca/ajer/index.php/ajer/article/view/809

Schuttler, R. (2010). *Laws of communication: The intersection where leadership meets Employee performance*. Hoboken, New Jersey, NJ: John Wiley & Son.

Sergiovanni, T., & Starrat, R.J. (2007*). Supervision: A redefinition* (8[th]ed.). Boston: MacGraw Hill.

Shenton, A., K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information, 22*(2), 63-75. Eric Publications.

Silverman, D. (2010). *Doing qualitative research* (3[rd]ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Slater, L. (2005). Leadership for collaboration: An affective process. *International Journal of Leadership in Education: Theory and Practice, 8*(4), 321–333.doi: 10.1080/13603120500088745

Smeltzer, L. R., & Welber, J. D. (1986). Gender differences in managerial communication: fact or folk-linguistics? *Journal of Business Communication, 23*(2), 41-50. doi: 10.1177/002194368602300205

Smith, E. O., & Thompson, I. (2002). Feminist theory in tactical communication: making knowledge claims visible. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 16* (4), 441-477. doi: 10.1177/105065102256526

Spendlove, M. (2007). Competencies for effective leadership in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management, 21*(5), 407-417.doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09513540710760183

Spillane, J. P., Hunt, B., & Healey, K. (2009).Managing and leading elementary schools: Attending to the formal and informal organization. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 37*(1), 5-28.

Spillane, J. P., & Healey, K (2010). Conceptualizing school leadership and management from a distributed perspective. *The Elementary School Journal, 111*(2), 253-281. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/656300

Stern, P. N. (2007). On solid ground: Essential properties for growing grounded theory. In A. Bryant & K. Charmaz (Eds.). *The sage handbook of grounded theory* (pp. 114-126). Sage Publications.

Stern, M., &Karraker, K. H. (1989). Sex stereotyping of infants: A review of gender labeling studies. *Sex Roles, 20*(9/10), 501-522. doi: 10.1007/BF00288198

Tebeaux, E. (1990). Toward an understanding of gender differences in written business communications: a suggested perspective for future research. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 4*(1), 25-43. doi: 10.1177/105065199000400102

Truss, C., Conway, E., d'Amato, A., Kelly, G., Monks, C., Hannon, E., Flood, P. C., (2012). Knowledge work: gender-blind or gender-biased? *Work, employment and society, 26*(5), 735-754. doi: 10.1177/0950017012451657

Turner, W.B. (2000). *The learning love: A journey toward steward leadership.* Smyth and Helwys Publishing, Macon, Georgia, GA.

Valentine, S., & Godkin, L. (2000). Supervisor gender, leadership style, and perceived job design. *Women in Management Review, 15*(3), 117-129. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09649420010325744

Van Houtte, M. (2006). Tracking and teacher satisfaction: Role of study culture and trust. *Journal of Educational Research, 99*(4), 247-254. doi: 10.3200/JOER.99.4.247-256

Walker, R. (2008). Mitigating the fear of retaliation: Helping employees feel comfortable reporting suspected misconduct. *Journal of Healthcare, 10*(2), 19- 73.

West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender and Society, 1*(2), 125-151. doi: 10.1177/0891243287001002002

Wood, J. T. (2013). *Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters* (7thed.).

   Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Yildiz, K. (2013). Analysis of the relation of teachers' organizational identification and

   organizational communication. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 13*(1),

   264-272. Retrieved from www.edam.com.tr/estp

Yunas, M., Iqbal, M., & Ahmed, I. (2013). Determinants of principal-staff relationship.

   Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, 4(10), 620-628.

   Retrieved from: ijcrb.webs.

Zechariah, W. O. (2013). Skills and attributes of instructional supervisors: Experience

   from Kenya. *Educational Research and Reviews, 8 (24),* 2270-2280. doi:

   10.5897/ERR12.057

Zimmerman, D. H., & West, C. (1975). Sex, roles, interruptions and silences in

   conversation. *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance*. Retrieved

   from:web.stanford.edu/~eckert/PDF/zimmermanwest1975.pdf

Arabic References

أبواسنينه،ع. (2013) درجة توافر الكفاءات الفنية لدى مديري مدارس الملك عبد الله الثاني للتميز والمراكز الريادية

   من وجهة نظر معلميها في الأردن. *دراسات العلوم التربوية, 2*(40), 598– 618.

الغامدي، ع. (2010). نمط القيادة التربوية لدى مديري المدارس في المدينة المنورة كما يتصوره المعلمون. *مجلة*

   العلوم التربوية,11(4), 107–135.

امين، ب. (2007). *الإدارة العلمية والطرق الحديثة لتطويرها* . عمان: دارالتقدم العلمي

158

نصر الله، س.(2014). *درجة امتلاك مديري المدارس في المرحلة المتوسطة لمهارات الاتصا ل الاداري وعلاقته*

بدرجة فاعلية الاجتماعات المدرسية من وجهة نظر المعلمين في دولة الكويت. (رسالة ماجستير, جامعة

الشرق الأوسط للدراسات العليا).

هيدموس, ج., غريب, ح., السيد قاسم, م., الدويهي, م. (2012). *الدليل: النصوص الخاصة بأساتذة التعليم*

الثانوي الرسمي. دار الفارابي. بيروت: لبنان.

الموقع الالكتروني التعليمي في لبنان .(2007). *اسم الوثيقه التي استخدمت*. استُردت من www.cas.gov.lb