SENSE OR SENSIBILITY?
Emotional labor from the perspective of female leaders
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Abstract

Emotional labor is the unpaid and often unnoticed emotion work that foremost women carry out, not only in the homelife, but at the workplace as well. Emotional labor is highly associated with femininity according to previous research and often involves being attentive to others, creating a good ambience, and to be warm and caring. From previous studies it is implied that emotional labor creates stress as women often have to manage other people’s emotions as well as their own, and that there is an expectancy on women to do so. What is implied from those circumstances in relation to worklife is that the opportunities for women to climb the work ladder decreases, as women perform emotional labor in addition to, or instead of, their regular work tasks. There is no previous research to be found on what type of impact emotional labor has on women in leader position, or on female leaders in the private sector in Sweden.

The main purpose of the thesis is to find how emotional labor impacts female leaders in their leadership role and to find how widespread emotional labor is amongst companies in the Swedish private sector. We aim to shed light on the often unnoticed, or invisible, emotion work foremost women perform in their workplaces, which leads to the research question: What impact does emotional labor have on women in leadership role?

The theoretical framework is mainly based on previous research on emotional labor and leadership theories. Carefully chosen theories on expectations in male and female leadership is added to broaden the background. Further, facts on gender equality is provided as support.

The chosen research method for the thesis is qualitative with an exploratory research design and an inductive approach. In line with the chosen method, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 participants from a purposive, homogeneous sampling. The interviews were further transcribed, analyzed and presented through a thematic analysis.

The key findings implies that emotional labor is highly present amongst women in leadership positions. The findings implies that emotional labor is expected from women to perform, although not outspoken. Further, the findings imply that there is different expectations on leadership and leadership style from the employees, the board and the leaders themselves. With an expectancy from employees to lead with an emotional leadership, an expectancy from the board to lead to make results and a confusion in their own leadership, it will lead to stress in the leaders too.

The conclusion of the thesis is: Women are affected by emotional labor in their leadership role as they feel an obligation to perform it, while still not doing it too much since that would, according to expectations from society, present them as poor leaders. If they, on the other hand, do not perform any emotional labor at all, they are not considered to be team players.
Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we wish to thank each other for this great partnership, and the great “Fikagruppen” who has been there for us in thick and thin.

Secondly, we wish to thank our never doubting super star supervisor Medhanie Gaim, for all valuable guidance and support. Your thoughtful advices and comments throughout the process has made us aspire to create something great.

Further, we would like to extent a thank you to our respondents for taking time out of your day to contribute to our thesis, and of course for the insights. You are an inspiration.

Thank you!

Rebecka Aveling & Louise Brygt

May 16th 2019

Umeå
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1 Introduction

This chapter starts by providing a descriptive background that function as support when conducting the following study. We discuss emotions and its involvement at the workplace as well as describe emotional labor and its development over the years. Following, the research gap is established and the research question with its purpose is defined.

1.1 Problem background

Emotions can be difficult to define as they are highly subjective and differs from person to person. However, emotions are a big part of our private lives and, nowadays, even a big part of our work lives. Emotions and feelings could be defined as a sense, like seeing or hearing and it communicates information when a bodily sensation connects to something we can see or imagine (Hochschild, 1983, p. 17). Trying to get in touch with our emotions or trying to feel certain emotions is a part of creating and managing them.

As emotions are becoming a bigger part of workplaces (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000, p. 123), more studies are being made on the subject, including the positive and negative impacts it can have (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Gardner et al., 2009; Humphrey et al., 2015). Emotions and behavior have a tendency to go hand in hand since emotions often are reflected in one’s behavior, and vice versa (Reis & Collins, 2004, p. 234). This opens up for further discussions when considering the increasing presence emotions have at a workplace (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000, p. 123). Which in turn lead the way for the main part of this thesis: emotional labor.

Emotional labor was stated as a concept in 1983 by the researcher Arlie Russell Hochschild. The concept introduced had the definition of “the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value.” (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7). An example of what emotional labor is in a context is the smile that a flight attendant puts on her or his face as a part of their job and not as a genuine emotion. Emotional labor is performed by both men and women in private and in public, as well as at the workplace. However, emotions are displayed somewhat differently by men and women and they even tend to be of different importance depending on gender. Hochschild (1983, p. 163) notes that women in general have a lower societal status, less power and authority, and less independent access to money. Combined, these aspects sets the female out in a subordinate position where she has to live up to certain expectations of emotional labor. For example, women are taught to suppress anger and act nice, and men are taught to suppress insecurity and act brave (Hochschild, 1983, p. 163). Moreover, women manage their expressions more than men do, and in fact women manage their emotion more than men do too (Hochschild, 1983, p. 164).

Daniels (1987) have in her well-known essay “Invisible Work” argued for the concept “work” to be in need of expanding as a concept, this to include the invisible work that is performed every day and for that invisible work to be valued. Invisible work is the unpaid work that foremost females carry out. Daniels (1987) focuses on shedding light on the high amount of invisible work women carry out in the home, in particular as a homemaker. Due to the lack of validation of the work performed, women have a difficult time recognizing their own effort (Daniels, 1987, p. 408). Certain activities as comforting, interaction and encouragement are seen as typical feminine and as female tendencies.
Since these activities are being associated with femininity, work that is close to these activities are considered typically female. Therefore, these activities are not seen as skilled or learned but as the expression of general femininity (Daniels, 1987, p. 408). Attending carefully for others, maintaining personal relations, creating a comfortable ambiance, being sympathetic, warm and cheerful are Hochschild’s (1983) emotional labor aspects that Daniel’s connect to invisible work (1987, p. 409).

Later, the meaning behind emotional labor has evolved and changed with time and landed in a definition closer to women’s unnoticed and unpaid labor in the workplace to keep one’s colleagues happy and content, rather than just keeping a smile on their face towards customers or the invisible work carried out at home. The definition has broadened to take in the acts of invisible work women put in to keep those around them comfortable. In Rebecca Erickson’s research from 1993, she defined “emotion work” as activities such as increasing someone’s emotional well-being and providing emotional support. Furthermore, Erickson describes interpersonal emotion management in later research as activities that requires skill and time and will reflect warmth and caring (2005, p. 338).

In an interview with Forbes, Hartley (Wilding, 2018) describes emotional labor at work as “If you’re the person who is always expected to put together the office happy hour or organize parties, or you find your time being eaten away by people “bouncing ideas off of you” or asking for advice (without reciprocation) [...]”. Which connects to the definition that Daniels and Erickson proposes. However, Hartley’s definition is updated and applied for the work environment and not home life in particular.

“Acting nice” and caring for other people are typical aspects of emotional labor, and are, as mentioned, seen as female attributes. Not living up to the expectations of shouldering emotional labor is often negatively labeled in women (Wilding, 2018). Thus, women can end up taking on the heavier workload that emotional labor is because it is expected of them or even because it is labeled under “being a team player” (Wilding, 2018). The bottom line is that emotional labor has different importance in men and women and tend to be more strongly represented in women. Hence, the thesis focus on the influence of emotional labor on women in their leadership role.

Much of the previous research (e.g. Hochschild, 1983; Daniels, 1987) has focused on the emotional labor that women perform in the private life, i.e. the homelife. The research offers many insights on the width and depth of emotional labor and its effect on women in that aspect. The research with a perspective on emotional labor in connection to work life is at this point in time not as rich as the research of emotional labor connected to homelife. Furthermore, much research was conducted decades ago and is not as applicable today as it was then due to for example changes in gender equality and the female labor force. During the last 50 years, the female labor force has grown significantly, for example in Sweden it has increased from right below 60% to 80% in 2018 (Schemer, 2019). Overall, during this period the female employment rate has steadily grown in countries like the United States, Canada, Germany, France, Sweden, Japan, etc. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019). Hence, indicating that the labor force has unquestionably changed over the past 50 years. Due to the changes in the labor force, naturally, there ought to be changes in the work environment and foremost for females. Moreover, the main part of the theories takes place in the American society (e.g. Burch et al., 2013; Humphrey et al., 2015: Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Grandey, 2017), which is culturally different from Sweden. Thus, a cultural gap is present in the current research. Additionally, there is no current research
to be found in Sweden that studies emotional labor in other settings than in health care or similar workplaces. Accordingly, due to changes in employment and work environment, one can imagine that the theories and research on work environment need to be updated and/or developed to be suitable and accurate for the current situations, further resulting in emotional labor being studied from another perspective. Additionally, Sweden would benefit from having emotional labor being further researched in national settings.

Before getting any deeper into the research, there are some concepts and terms that need to be clarified. Firstly, the gender definition we are using in this thesis is the binary sex definition of “female”. Furthermore, the following pronouns are used: female, she, her, woman and women to describe the binary sex definition of female. We intend to interview leaders that identify as women. Using the definition and category “women” gives us the possibility to analyze power structures and the differences between men and women in the labor force. Thereby, we can analyze how women, or in particular women who are leaders, are impacted in their leadership role by emotional labor. We hope that people that do not define with our definition of the pronoun female still can find this thesis, and its findings, interesting and/or helpful. Secondly, when the authors are referring to a manager or a leader, we mean “an individual who is in charge of a certain group of tasks or a certain subset of a company. A manager often has a staff of people who report to him or her.” (Business Dictionary, 2019).

This is a qualitative study that was conducted with semi-structured interviews where the interviewees are women in leading roles that work in auditing, accounting, banks, insurance and IT. These industries are less caring in the sense that their main tasks do not include any human services (nursing, schools, etc.), which mean fewer emotions are involved in their work. However, there is an awareness of the fact that the respondents may not have emotional job tasks, but there are still emotions connected to their leadership role. Differentiating between what is part of your leadership role and what is emotional labor is easier to distinguish than one might think. In your leadership role, you are obligated to make your employees enjoy their workplace, as well as make sure the processes are running smoothly and goals are being met. Emotional labor on the other hand is when you feel like your time is being occupied with helping other people (Wilding, 2018), or when you feel the need to take on a certain behavior in order to fit the expectations of your workplace (Beck, 2018), and thereby increase the wellbeing at your workplace. In short, emotional labor is the tasks and behaviors you engage in that not is expected by your company, but you feel obligated to do due to the environment at your company.

Semi-structured interviews are used in the study to capture the humane and emotional aspect that comes with the constructed research question (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 46). The thesis has taken a position in comparing existing theories with the findings from the interviews performed. In the comparison, we wish to seek insight into whether the existing theories are in fact applicable in today’s society in Sweden and match real life experience of emotional labor.

1.2 Research gap

Emotional labor has been carefully researched since Hochschild (1983) released her findings. There are however gaps in the previous research which we intend to fill, these are discussed below.
Numerous studies on different occupations have been made with the support of Hochschild’s (1983) definition of emotional labor, “when one adjusts one’s feelings to provide the best experiences for customers or/and colleagues”, and with focus on surface and deep acting (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Humphrey et al, 2015; Gardner et al, 2009). The occupations that have been studied are more of a caring nature, for example, nurses taking care of patients or waiters serving customers food, which results in a lack of studies on professions where emotions are relatively detached from the employees’ tasks, such as accountants and bankers. Additionally, these previous studies have, like Hochschild’s study, involved workers whose jobs misses the leadership aspect that we intend to include.

In line with the newer, more undetermined definition, a definition we believe is necessary, there are some previous observations (e.g. Wilding, 2018; Fessler, 2018). However, these are mostly articles and interviews and not academic studies, leaving us with a gap for findings we hope will provide some support or ideas for further scientific studies. Missing from the newer version of emotional labor is also information on the area related to people's working life. Articles mention how females tend to take on more emotional labor in their private relationships (e.g. Wilding, 2018; Wilkinson, 2018) but we believe the combination of emotional labor and women needs to be further studied in a business environment and in women’s working role.

A further gap is the geographical one that comes as a result of emotional labor being looked into in the United States (e.g. Burch et al., 2013; Humphrey et al., 2015; Daniels, 1987; Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Grandey, 2017), but not being as explored or studied in Sweden. Due to the cultural differences between the countries, a Swedish study on Swedish businesses is required to have more reliable and applicable results that are useful in the Swedish labor force.

1.3 Research purpose and research question

The main purpose of this study is to gain more knowledge about emotional labor that is performed by women in their leadership role. This to provide recommendations in terms of policy-making for organizations that wish to make their workplace more gender equal when it comes to the performance of emotional labor.

This is due to our understanding that women have a tendency to take on extra responsibility for tasks that are not a part of their job, as well as women are more prone to care for and look after others (Guy & Newman, 2004). Spending time on tasks that are not part of one’s job will for obvious reasons interfere with the ability to evolve in one’s working role. Since women are the ones that tend to take on these tasks, their development within their company will be hindered and slower - an already present problem between men and women in the labor force and something we believe need to be eliminated.

We hope for this study to provide a result that will help us support organizations in the private sector to keep their company equal in terms of gender. By doing so we wish for the organization that believes emotional labor is necessary to support it being performed by all genders, and that everyone receives the same appreciation for the same job.

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1 We are aware that gender is a sensitive area to discuss and that there is a fluidity when it comes to gender identities, this is considered throughout the thesis.
1.3.1 Researchers motivation

Every other week we are exposed to news, articles or statistics that show how women still are the subordinate gender in the labor force, it was for example recently reported that women in Sweden on average work 54 minutes for free every day of their work week (Sveriges Kvinnolobby, 2019). This due to the inequality in wages in the labor market. With emotional labor being more common amongst women, this adds even more to the differences between the genders when it comes to time and effort at work. This is just some aspects of the inequality and differences in treatment of the genders that still exist in the Swedish workforce. We have been studying emotional labor to inform the surroundings of the concept since we believe it is part of the inequality that exists. Practically, we hope to see that the awareness of emotional labor will result in women feeling less obligated to perform it, while men perhaps being more prone to. In theory, this could result in a decreased gap between the genders.

In Sweden today, 67 percent of the women and 71 percent of the men are working away from home (Statistiska Centralbyrån [SCB] 1, 2018), which shows how female and male participation in the labor force is equally as natural. Despite this we are on a daily basis exposed to news about injustices in organizations, many of them being related to gender differences. Additionally, statistics show how women represent the majority of the ‘softer’, more caring jobs, such as health care, whereas men represent the jobs that involve more physical labor (SCB 2, 2016), this is defined as job segregation, when men and women tend to work in different occupations depending on gender (Guy & Newman, 2004, p. 291). Put together this indicate that there are traditional behaviors related to gender that are still applicable today and this is possible to connect with Daniels (1987) theory on certain activities being associated with femininity; connection and engagement is often part of the ‘softer’ jobs, and possibly why the majority of, for example, nurses are female. A further reason for our motivation to study emotional labor and women in leading roles is because women tend to manage emotions to a greater extent than men (Hochschild, 1983, p. 164) and due to men often being more likely to vent their emotions to women, while as it not being as accepted for women to vent to men (Martin, 1999, p. 124). As noted, the statistics show an equal labor force, but the research states other aspects, not being as equal, and as women that are about the enter the Swedish labor market, we want to explore what we have ahead of us and which factors that may affect us in our work roles. We have found emotional labor to be one of these factors and it is therefore in our interest to find how much, and in what way, it possibly can impact our future. The focus is on women in their leadership role because we see a possibility that we ourselves in the future will have a working role that requires us to take on responsibility and lead, when in charge of a task or a group.

With the findings and the result of the thesis, we wish to contribute to policy-making in the labor force regarding emotional labor. With the policy-making, we hope to shed light on how emotional labor impact women in their leadership role and to create awareness on how emotional labor keeps women from their regular work tasks. Furthermore, the policy-making will help inform how emotional labor can hinder women from developing in their work roles and with promotions.

1.3.2 Researchers preconception

Our preconceived notions on the subject of the thesis are that emotional labor is widespread amongst the interviewees and that emotional labor impact the women when in their leadership role. Another preconception is that Hochschild’s theory (1983) will not
be as current and applicable in this setting, as it was at the time when it was conceived. This due to the previously mentioned cultural and geographical differences both in regards to location and time. Lastly, we expect to find that current theories need to be applied more on public life, as for one’s work environment.

1.3.3 Research question

Through a sufficient amount of studies, females are found to be the ones most affected by emotional labor (e.g. Guy & Newman, 2004; Martin, 1994; Carpenter, 2017; OECD, 2014). We want to study how this is shown when women take on a leading role, their outlook on the subject but also what impact it has on them, and whether it is conscious or unconscious behavior. From these perspectives, the following research question is formed:

What impact does emotional labor have on women in their leadership role?

If shown that women in leading positions are impacted by emotional labor to the extent that it hinders them from performing their actual, assigned, tasks we believe organizations would be interested in this study. If women tend to work overtime due to having performed emotional labor it benefits both the companies, the women and the additional staff to be aware of the concept.

1.4 Delimitations

To be able to conduct a reliable and concrete study, there are some delimitations to the study and subject. These are listed below.

Firstly, due to the term emotional labor having a variety of definitions this study is using the definition that is clearly described above. Additionally, the usage of emotional labor also includes invisible labor, unpaid work, office housework, and caring work, terms that appear as synonyms in previous studies.

Secondly, the study examines how emotional labor impact women in their leadership role, it does not involve men in leadership since emotional labor according to research is more closely related to and more common amongst women (Guy & Newman, 2004; Carpenter, 2017; OECD, 2014). When saying women in their leadership role we refer to women that have some kind of leadership responsibility, we have not focused on only top or middle positions. However, all respondents are responsible for at least ten employees. Thirdly, all interviewees are from companies within the private sector. This is due to the public sector including various workplaces, such as hospitals, hospices, and schools, which already involve a great deal of emotional work (Steinberg & Figart, 1999). We believe that if we were to look into these kind of organizations and companies instead we would have a hard time distinguishing if it is emotional labor in regards to our definition or if it is genuine concern that often is part of those jobs. By using interviewees from companies where work assignments are more of a calculating and analyzing nature and less caring, it is easier to relate our findings in the interviews to our research question. Also, the chosen sectors - finance, insurance, IT, accounting and auditing - are all sectors where the difference between female and male leaders are not too extreme. The IT and telecom sector having 29 percent female managers (IT & Telekomföretagen, 2017) and the finance and insurance companies having 40 percent (SCB 3, 2016). This is unlike the industries we chose not to include, where the reason is based on the extreme differences in employed men versus women, some examples are nurses (92 percent female, 8 percent male),
preschool teachers (96 percent female, 4 percent male), truck drivers (6 percent female, 94 percent male) and electricians (1 percent female, 99 percent male) (SCB 2, 2016). The more extreme industries are avoided because we believe the results would not represent the Swedish labor market today in a credible way. As said, IT having 29 percent female managers and finance and insurance having 40 percent female managers is more similar to Sweden as a whole that reportedly has 37.5 percent female leaders (SCB 4, 2016).

A further delimitation that is necessary to recognize due to the last couple of years of discussions related to the #metoo movement is sexual harassment. We are aware of the ongoing issue with sexual harassment in the labor force, and we are aware that the outcome of such events could have an impact on emotional labor for women in their leadership. However, due to space and time limitations, we do not find it possible to include this factor in our study. We simply believe we lack the knowledge that is required to do a credible and reliable study in this area. With that said, we find it important to recognize sexual harassment and therefore leave it as a suggestion for future research.

The study took place in Umeå Kommun and all interviews were conducted there. This creates the geographical delimitation for this study which was selected for it being the most suitable solution in regards to the time at hand.
2 Scientific method

The chapter on scientific method provides the reader with the approach of the study, to assist the understanding of the thesis and to present the reader with the view of the authors. Further, the truth criterias are described to increase the credibility of the thesis and its results. Lastly, in order to achieve high credibility our literature search and source criticism is presented at the end of the chapter.

2.1 Research philosophy

When conducting a study it is important to understand and establish your view on reality, seeing this will act as the framework for your study and guide how it will be conducted (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 43). Positivism and interpretivism are the main paradigms were the first states that reality is objective and does not change depending on how we behave, while as interpretivism view reality as something that is changeable due to different events and behaviors (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 43). Since this study is researching what impact emotional labor has on women in their leadership it take on an approach more like interpretivism, which emphasizes and recognizes the behavioral impact. We aim to study female leaders and their experiences, opinions, and feelings and, according to Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 9, cited in Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 134), the best way to do so is by using interpretivist interviews. Further, when the research area involves feminist and/or gender studies, interpretivism is the more fitting paradigm to refer to (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 70).

We believe it is not possible to exclude the person and his/her thoughts since that would mean emotions and experiences too would be excluded, factors that are required for our research. Being that, and the reasons mentioned above, we take on an interpretivist approach. This is to be further discussed below within the two assumptions ontology and epistemology.

2.1.1 Ontology

Ontology is about the nature of social entities and the main question in the ontological perspective is if reality is an objective unit that is the same for everyone or if reality is constructed by actions and perceptions (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 130). Ontology can therefore be divided into two perspectives; objectivism and subjectivism (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 131). Objectivism is, as the name implies, an objective point of view on reality which is independent from social actors and phenomenons (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 131). Meaning that all social actions are independent of the actors. This type of perspective on reality is commonly used in a positivist stance (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 49). Subjectivism is on the other hand concerned with reality being socially constructed by the actors (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 132). Since it is being socially constructed by the actors, situations are constantly changing and in order to understand it and the reality behind it, it is of essence to study the details of it (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 132). Reality is an interpretation by every person and is therefore socially constructed and highly subjective (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 47). Subjectivism is closely related to interpretivism (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 49), which means that the researchers present a specific version of the socially constructed reality in their findings (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 53). Since a subjectivist perspective is closely related to an interpretivist stance, this thesis take a subjectivist perspective on reality. Furthermore, there lies much difficulty in taking
an objective point of view when conducting interviews and analyzing them, which also speaks for a subjective perspective of reality in this thesis.

2.1.2 Epistemology

What is accepted as valid knowledge is known as epistemology and what is valid can differ from only an observable phenomenon to a more arbitrary, subjective sense of valid knowledge (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 47). One important question to take into consideration is whether the construct of reality and what is valid knowledge should and can be viewed from the same principles in social science as in natural science (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 47). From a positivist perspective, valid knowledge is measurable, objective (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 47) and quantifiable observations which can be statistically analyzed (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 135). Thus, valid knowledge should be viewed from a scientific perspective where hypotheses can be tested and be verified with your senses (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 47). This type of stance is often adopted by research in natural science (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 134). The alternative to a positivist stance is interpretivism, which mirrors the subjective meaning behind social actions of people (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 49). Furthermore, in the interpretivist stance it is of essence to understand the differences between people and their social actions (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 137). Furthermore, reality loses its complexity if it is narrowed down to generalisations as in a positivist stance (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 137), and it leaves no room to interpret how reality is created by humans (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 49). An interpretivist perspective is commonly used in social science which theories and methods often interprets peoples actions (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 49). From the interpretivist point of view that this thesis takes stand-in, the epistemological assumption is to understand and get insight in the reality that the findings have to offer. By interviewing female leaders about emotional labor the aim is to gain a perspective of their social reality. We, as researcher, have therefore not taken an objective standpoint and aim for observable measurements of knowledge but rather to see the social construction of reality as valid knowledge. This is a suitable stance since the thesis is in the area of social science with theories and methods that aim to analyze human behavior and thoughts.

2.2 Research approach

Reasoning of the logic of the relation between theory and research can take two different approaches; deductive and inductive (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 42). Commonly research takes a stand in either a clear theoretical position to test or by exploring and analyzing a data collection and thereby develop a theory (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 48). From a deductive approach the relation between theory and research is seen as a process where the starting point is a theory from which hypotheses can be developed that later will undergo empirical analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 42-43). When the analysis is made, the hypotheses will either be confirmed or rejected (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 43) and the theory will be verified or falsified (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 144). Deduction aims to explain relations between concepts and variables and go from the general to the specific (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 144-145). To be able to move from the general to the particular it is important to collect data that is appropriate and specific to the theory (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 7). The samples are often of quantitative nature and larger to its size (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 145). Due to the specification of data collection and choosing the correct information a strict structure is of high importance when taking on a deductive approach (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 145).
On the other side of the spectrums is the inductive approach which aims to go from the specific to the general and generalizing the particular, thus being the reverse of deduction (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 7). By analyzing a data collection to explore a phenomenon or identify patterns and themes, a framework can be created and a theory generated (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 144). Thus, making it possible to analyze the results backwards and connecting it to previous research in order to build a new theory. Induction creates an opportunity to understand the social interpretation behind particular variables and permits alternative explanations, which deduction does not (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 146). Having less strictly structured reasoning with induction may reveal alternative explanations that would have been overseen in a deductive approach (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 146). Furthermore, a smaller sample can be used with an inductive approach since it is more suitable for qualitative data (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 146). It is notable that both approaches have its advantages and disadvantages to take in consideration. The advantages of deduction are for example, as previously mentioned, the objective stance of the research that the researcher has to take with strict, and often quantitative data (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 43). However, a disadvantage can be that the data may not be entirely coherent with the hypotheses (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 43) and that deduction does not suggest alternative explanations, but is rather finalizing in its definitions of its hypotheses (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 146). Induction, on the other hand, has the advantage of exploring options and the context behind variables and the disadvantage of being general and commonly using smaller samples (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 144). It is also important to take the stance of abduction into consideration as it, at first sight, may look like the most suitable for this thesis. Abduction is a combination of the deductive and inductive approach, allowing the researcher to move between the two stances in order to generalize between the specific and the general (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 147). The aim of the abductive approach is to explore the phenomenon and identify patterns and themes to modify an existing theory or to create a framework, not to create a new theory (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 144). In line with the abductive approach, we are aiming to contribute to policy making, and not to create a new theory. However, we are not moving between the inductive and deductive stance nor using the deductive approach for this thesis. Thus, the inductive approach is the most suitable.

This thesis builds on interviews and previous theories and has the aim to contribute to future policy-making by making sense of the data collected in comparison to previous theories. By starting out with analyzing the data collection in order to build a framework, the research approach for this thesis in the inductive approach. Furthermore, the thesis takes a stance in analyzing the specifics in the interviews in order to generalize, which is in line with an inductive approach.

### 2.3 Research design and methodological choice

The research design aims to describe the plan of how the research question will be answered through the choice of data collection, how the data will be analyzed, ethical issues and the potential obstacles that will be encountered throughout the research (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 159).

However, the first decision to take regarding the research design is whether it is going to follow a quantitative or qualitative design (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 160). A quantitative research design is, as previously noted, associated with a positivist stance, a highly structured data collection and follows a deductive approach. According to Saunders et al.
the characteristics of a quantitative research design is to examine the relationship between variables, using statistical techniques and the strategies are commonly associated with survey research or experimental research. The most important factors of quantitative research are, according to Bryman and Bell (2017, p. 179) measurement as a tool to be able to detect small differences, causality between variables, generalizability from one setting to another and replication of the research. The aim of this thesis is however not to find causality, use surveys or to be able to keep an objective perspective. Therefore, it is not a suitable design for this thesis in particular.

Although quantitative research certainly has its advantages, this thesis is taking an interpretivist stance with an inductive approach, which according to Saunders et al. (2012, p. 163) and Bryman and Bell (2017, p. 372) commonly uses a qualitative research design. The characteristics of a qualitative design are to understand the meaning behind phenomenons and the relationship between them in order to create a conceptual framework (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 163). According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 52), the most important aspect of qualitative data is that it is rich and provides levels of meaning. The aim of this thesis is to understand the phenomena of emotional labor from the perspective of female leaders and to understand the meaning behind it. A qualitative research design is, therefore, the most suitable design in order to see the phenomena through the participant’s eyes.

The nature of the research design can be of four different kinds; exploratory, explanatory, descriptive or a combination of them (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 160). The nature of an exploratory study is to understand an underlying problem and gain insight on a topic, which usually is conducted through literature review and interviews (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 171). Due to the characteristics of this thesis matching the characteristics of the exploratory nature, it is a suitable research design. The nature of an explanatory or descriptive research design is to investigate the relation of variables, respectively gaining an understanding of specific situations or persons (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 171-172). Due to the nature of these designs, they are not suitable for this thesis since it neither investigates the relation of variables nor aims to gain specific profiles of situations or persons.

2.4 Truth criteria

There are different criterias to evaluate qualitative research, one of these are trustworthiness (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 400). The trustworthiness of a study is measured by its credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1994, cited in Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 400), and this will be discussed further below.

2.4.1 Credibility

In an interpretivist approach with qualitative data, the validity is assumed to be high (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 50). Validity is however a quantitative measurement (Bryman & Bell, 2017, p. 380), and in this study credibility, being the qualitative equivalent of internal validity, is used. With credibility you measure how close to reality the presentation of a result is, and it is to help you present trustworthy findings (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 401). To ensure that the empirical findings are found and presented in a credible way, the final result are shared with the respondents in order to receive helpful insights whether we have understood their view on different aspects. By doing so we can
make sure we present the voice of our respondents in a correct and ethical way, showing an understanding of their social world.

2.4.2 Transferability

A qualitative study is difficult to generalize (Bryman & Bell (2017, p. 393). Transferability is instead used to measure what, in quantitative studies, is referred to as external validity (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 400), and this measures how the results of the study can be transferred to additional contexts outside the environment where the study actually is conducted (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 402). This study include interviews with respondents from four different industries and, due to time limitations, the population is somewhat small. We therefore see a possibility that the result might not be able to apply to all different industries, nor is it transferable on all women that have leading roles. Bryman and Bell (2015, p. 402) argue that qualitative studies often is focused on depth, different from quantitative studies that often present broader results. This is also the case for this study, where focus has been on exploring a certain context, and it will thereby, for natural reasons, be less possible to transfer to additional settings.

2.4.3 Dependability

The equivalence to the quantitative measurement reliability is the qualitative criteria dependability, as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1994). The idea of dependability is for the researchers to be transparent with the research process and to keep record of all phases to establish trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1994, cited in Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 403). Thus, keeping records of for example: interview transcripts, field notes and data analysis decisions. This in order to make sure that procedures has been followed and to what extent theoretical conclusions can be confirmed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1994, cited in Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 403). The approach on dependability has throughout the thesis been to be transparent in the research process and to clearly show the different phases of the research. In line with what Lincoln and Guba describes as dependability, for example: the process behind the methodological choices, the data analysis process, a summary of the interview transcripts are shown in the thesis. Furthermore, all transcripts from the interviews are saved and can be accessed upon request. In all, we have carefully taken dependability in consideration throughout the process. Therefore, the criteria of dependability can be seen as met.

2.4.4 Confirmability

As Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1994, cited in Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 403) describes it, maintaining some objectivity and not allowing theories to affect the findings or conducting of the research is an important matter for all researchers. This is also known as confirmability and shows that the authors has acted in good faith and tried to keep personal values from affecting the findings. Furthermore, Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1994, cited in Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 403) points out that keeping an objective stance is nearly impossible in business research but that confirmability should be aimed for. Confirmability has been considered throughout the thesis, even though it is difficult to maintain a distance and objectiveness to the research. The aim was from the start, and has been, to not let personal values affect the research or findings. Therefore, our preconceptions are presented in chapter 1.3.2. Furthermore, we have made sure to make clear and state our assumptions separately from theory and findings. The theoretical and practical method choices has also been clearly presented. Which enables the possibilities to critically view the choices made and in order to create transparency. However, it is
particularly difficult to separate a personal perspective from the findings in the analysis. Due to this being a qualitative study, where it is difficult to keep a distance from what is being researched, it can therefore be difficult to establish confirmability. Although, the aim has been to be transparent and establish confirmability, we cannot rule the possibility that our values may be reflected in some areas.

2.5 Literature search

To find appropriate literature for our study we have used several different databases, of which the main ones are DiVa, Google Scholar, and Umea University Library database. Our initial step was to find how much information there is on emotional labor, both as a term but also how it has been studied in different contexts. Since emotional labor recently has been discussed in a different, and more including, light than before (e.g. Carpenter, 2018; Wilding, 2018), we have also taken some guidance from interviews and news articles as well as the research we found at the different databases. By getting a grip on the width of previous research it made it possible to formulate our research question. As we moved along, we added the female perspective on emotional labor in our search, whereafter we also included leadership and managing. Swedish keywords were also used to see how extensive studies there have been made in Sweden, a choice that further helped us with the geographic delimitation.

In the table below there is a list of English and Swedish keywords that were used when searching literature.

*Table 1. Keywords used when searching for literature.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>emotional labor</td>
<td>emotionellt arbete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional work</td>
<td>kvinnligt ledarskap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invisible work</td>
<td>kvinnor som ledare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotions at work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deep acting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surface acting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leadership + women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are different categories of literature sources, three of them being primary, secondary and tertiary literature (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 82). Company reports, government publications, and emails are some examples of primary sources. In this thesis we find most of our theories and information in books, journal, and newspapers, all of them being examples of secondary literature sources. Tertiary literature sources are however also used since they are the databases and other tools that help us find the secondary literature.

2.6 Source criticism

Relevant and reliable sources with high quality are important when writing a thesis. To ensure these requirements are met, there are several aspects taken into consideration when finding sources for this thesis. These will be discussed below.

This thesis is written from an inductive perspective, which requires the literature to be of a kind where it will be possible to relate it to the findings from one’s data (Saunders et al, 2012, p. 74). The literature is simultaneous to function as a way to explore previous studies (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 73). For the literature to meet both criterias in this thesis we aimed at using peer-reviewed academic articles and studies when possible, since they are the most useful ones (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 84), as well as sources that are well known and credible. Books are beneficial sources for an overview (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 85) and we have therefore used books when finding information on the theoretical parts.

The main part of the references are primary references, there have however been cases where the original source was not able to find, resulting in a small number of secondary references. The choice of using as many primary references as possible is due to it resulting in the highest reliability. Since this study includes both the old definition, made known by Hochschild in 1983 and the newer definition, specified by Hartley (Wilding, 2018), it covers a wide range of literature from a long time span. This is important due to us wanting to acknowledge the changes that have occurred since Hochschild’s study (1983), and by covering a wide time span we had relevant sources to contribute to our findings.

One problem for us is, as mentioned, the less studied new definition of emotional labor. This has resulted in us referring to some news articles and interviews of less academic nature. There is a possibility for articles in newspapers to be bias (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 85), we are therefore cautious when using them.

2.7 Ethical and societal considerations

When conducting a study, ethical and societal aspects need to be recognized. This is especially important since we are doing a qualitative study where human participation is included (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 208).

Sweden is often found to be among the world leading countries when studies are made on gender equality and life standard, for example, the most recent World Happiness Rapport from 2018 found Sweden to be the best country to live in for women (Helliwell et al., 2019). In the same study, Sweden scored 9.6 out of 10 on gender equality. With that in mind, equality is still a sensitive subject and discussions often arise, especially when it includes gender. This is a social aspect that needs to be taken under consideration and we have to consider the possibility that our interviewees have opinions in the matter.
that may be reflected in their answers. To mention some of these outcomes is the possibility that some interviewees does not believe that Sweden is unequal at all when it comes to differences between genders, or someone might believe that Sweden is the most unequal country there is. Further, there might be different opinions regarding what gender equality actually is, and this can create discussions with the interviewee that needs to be carefully managed. Another area related to gender that often raises discussions and where interviewees may have opinions that will influence their answers is how males and females are differentiated. For example, some of the respondents might believe there are no traits or behaviors directly linked to one’s gender, whereas others might think that our gender is what shapes us. Both in our writing and when conducting the interviews we need to be careful how we address males and females since we do not want to influence our interviewees in their answers, nor do we want to offend anyone.

Throughout a study, there are different ethical aspects to consider at different stages of the process (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 236). Considering this is a qualitative study, the majority of ethical considerations that need to be recognized is related to the interviews and how they are conducted. Due to it being an important component when designing the material for the interviews, that area are thoroughly described in the chapter regarding the research method below. Some general ethical issues that we, however, need to consider throughout the thesis are, for example, the integrity of the participants, objectivity when performing the interviews, responsibility when analyzing and reporting as well as data management compliance (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 236). Additionally, the authors of the thesis have been transparent in all raised discussions, questions, and challenges, seeing this is important to show sincerity in the study (Tracy, 2010, p. 840).

![Figure 1. Concluding figure of the research approach.](image-url)
3 Theoretical framework

In this chapter, the appropriate theoretical areas are explained to improve the understanding of the research area. Leadership and emotional labor with appropriate theory are described to create a foundation for the following study. Thereafter a literature review is provided.

3.1 Leadership

Over the last centuries, leadership has been researched from a variety of different perspectives, with the definition of leadership going through a transformational process (Reicher et al., 2005, p. 550). The area was initially studied with the belief that the required traits you need as a leader is something you are given at birth, and not characteristics that is possible to learn, simply put: you are either born a leader or you never will be (Carlyle, 1840, cited in Reicher et al., 2005, p. 550). As a second step of the research, leadership was viewed as both influenced by personal and situational factors, some traits you need to have and some are depending on the situation you are in (Gibb, 1958, p. 102-103). This resulted in the contingency approach that still is a common approach used by professors and in academic literature (Reicher et al., 2005, p. 550). Thirdly, the approach on leadership took a more charismatic turn where emotions became more important, and where after charismatic leadership became a popular area to research (e.g. Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Shamir et al., 1993; Conger et al., 2000; Avolio & Yammarino, 2013).

As the definition of leadership transformed, so did the view on how leaders obtain their ‘leadership characteristics’ and the importance of the relationship and possible differences between leaders and followers started to become recognized (Haslam, 2001). With the leadership categorization theory, Lord & Maher (1991) discusses how becoming a leader is more of a process where you will not be considered a leader until you are perceived as a leader by your so-called ‘followers’. Similarly, DeRue & Ashford (2010) also look into the relationship between leaders and their followers and suggest that leaders claim a leadership role which the followers in their hand must grant for it to be certain.

Like Reicher et al. (2005, p. 550) says, leadership has gone through a transformational process. Additionally, there has been an intense increase of research and academic literature over the last couple of years, which has lead to an escalating amount of leadership theories (Dinh et al., 2014, p. 36). In their study, Dinh et al., (2014) found 752 published scientific articles between the years 2000 and 2012 which all were original studies and had leadership stated as the primary focus. A good foundation is beneficial when conducting a study but due to the time and space limitation, it was not possible for us to read through all material out there and we have therefore only highlighted some of the parts we find most relevant and summarize them linked to our research area.

3.1.1 Social identity theory

With leadership that is more influenced by the environment, the leader acts in comes the social identity theory, most known by Tajfel (1972). He defined social identity as “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership” (1972, p. 69). This addresses how the followers (the others in a group)
affect one’s identity, one’s place in the group and thereby one’s leadership, simply put, the process of social identification is reflected in how you lead (Hogg, 2001, p. 188).

Turner (1982, p. 16-17) find positive self esteem to be an important part of humans well being and he also suggests it to be a driving factor for the social identity theory since self esteem motivates social identification. Considering social identity theory is based on the idea that the group indirect chooses one’s position (Tajfel, 1972, p. 69), this indicates that the group thereby also has a position where they can influence one’s self esteem. Again, the relationship between leaders and followers is emphasized.

3.1.2 Changeable management

We mentioned above how the view on how you become a leader has changed over the years, but there is an additional area that also has been debated in previous research. This is the discussion whether you at some point become a leader, through education and experiences, or if you always are becoming a leader, a process that is fluid all through one’s working life (e.g. Hill, 1992; Watson, 2006; Quinn et al 2003, Andersson, 2010). Both sides of the discussion have arguments that imply that management function a certain way. Being a manager implies that there is a conceived notion how managers should be, for example, what traits they should possess (Watson, 2006, p. 38), and it also means that an organization is unchangeable (Chia, 2007). Becoming a manager, on the other hand, proposes that a manager constantly changes one’s managerial identity due to organizational changes in structure and processes (Watson, 2001, p. 10). Andersson and Wickelgren (2009, p. 169) consequently suggest that the managerial process of becoming a manager is linked to other processes, such as the construction of one’s identity.

3.1.3 Charismatic and transformational leadership

The most studied leadership theories during the last decades are transformational leadership and charismatic leadership (Dinh et al., 2014, p. 40). These leadership styles emphasize values and emotions to a greater extent than ‘traditional’ leadership styles usually do and they put more emphasis on jobs and tasks being meaningful (Yukl, 1999, p. 285-286). As leadership theories they are somewhat similar and the literature tends to merge them together, there are however some aspects that differentiate them and some aspects that are studied for one of them and thereby not applicable on both. Firstly, transformational leadership is based on the four I’s, which stands for individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealized influence (Avolio et al., 1991, p. 9). This part is somewhat related to the charismatic leadership due to charismatic leaders tend to be “holders of an idealized vision” (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, p. 642). Secondly, an organization that has a transformational culture that is compatible with the four I’s will reflect a feeling of family and sense of purpose (Bass & Avolio, 1993, p. 116). Thirdly, charismatic leadership focuses more on the leader and his/her attributes. For starters, charisma in itself is an attribute found in charismatic leaders, but it is also something that needs to be found in the exchange between leaders and their followers’ needs, beliefs and values (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, p. 639).

The leadership styles have however received some criticism. The processes of them both have been seen as ambiguous (Yukl, 1999, p. 287) and words like manipulative and deceptive have been used to describe charismatic and transformational leaders (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999, p. 186). Further, the transformational leadership has been found to be lacking an explanation of how leaders influence groups, group processes, and organizational processes since it focuses more on how leaders influence the individual
(Yukl, 1999, p. 287-288). This is also true for the charismatic leadership which Yukl (1999, p. 295) mean give too little attention to the group processes. Moreover, the efficiency for the two similar leaderships has not been able to be proved, which results in doubts regarding their credibility (Yukl, 1999, p. 291, 298).

Transformational leadership can further be related to women in their leadership, where it occurs more often than with male leaders (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 788). Female leaders have, when generalized, been seen as more cooperative and collaborative, more oriented to look after others and less hierarchical (Chapman, 1975, p. 646; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 791), which is in line with the transformational leadership and its four I’s (individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealised influence (Avolio et al., 1991, p. 9).

3.1.4 Leadership summary

As we have seen, with the newer view on leadership comes the importance of the relationship between leader and followers (Haslam, 2001; Lord & Maher, 1991; DeRue & Ashford, 2010). The social identity theory emphasizes this by implying that the followers indirect creates the leadership identity for the leader. Related to the creation of one’s identity is also the belief that you are constantly becoming a leader and that an organization is changeable (Anderson & Wickelgren, 2009, p. 169). A possible conclusion to draw is that when in a group, you will adjust your traits to the point where the group will ‘allow’ you to take on a social identity that is appropriate for you as well as representative for the group and satisfying for your self esteem.

The social identity theory is identified in regards to groups where there are no established hierarchical differences, which creates the opportunity to form different social identities (Tajfel, 1972, p. 70). However, this thesis study women as leaders that have some kind of responsibility for a group of people, they do thereby have an actual job position that is set to be above their group, meaning they are on a different level in the hierarchy, though there may be marginal differences. Despite this, we chose to mention this theory due to the relationship between leaders and followers being highlighted. Additionally, the relationship influences one’s social identity, which in turn is part of the changeable management and that is a highly important factor to be aware of when being involved in the managing of an organization.

As mentioned above, charisma has become a bigger part of leadership (e.g. Conger et al., 2000; Acolo & Yammarino, 2013). House and Aditya (1997, p. 446) means that this is due to researchers including social context to a higher extent than earlier. Similar to the view that you constantly are becoming a manager, this suggests that organizations are environments that are exposed to changes. However, in the discussion of being or becoming a manager, some argue that there are certain characteristics that are required to be a leader (Watson, 2006) while as some believe it is more based on situations (Anderson & Wickelgren, 2009). We have not taken a stand in this question because we do not believe it is relevant for our research question, the females we intend to interview are leaders or managers by definition and therefore it is not a priority to look into how they became leaders. The discussion regarding this is only brought up because we want to emphasize that it is important to understand that each organization is different, and can change due to processes, structures, and culture.

The purpose of this thesis is to find what impact emotional labor has on women in their leadership role. Leadership is thereby an important part of the study but the focus is not
on how the women became leaders, for example, what traits they may or may not have. For that reason being, the social identity theory and the discussion about changeable management are not completely compatible with the research question but more a way to show the importance of the followers at an organization and how they have the ability to affect the leader. On the other hand, transformational, and possibly also charismatic, leadership have helped in our understanding of women as leaders and its possible links to emotional labor.

3.2 Emotional labor

Emotional labor can be described in several forms and with several definitions. According to Fisher and Ashkanasy (2000, p. 126), the different definitions creates an ambiguity related to how the behavior should be measured and defined. Due to the differences we have described the different definitions of emotional labor before presenting the definition we have used for the thesis. This in order to give a thorough background of the subject and to present various alternatives.

3.2.1 Hochschild's definition

A frequently used definition of emotional labor is Arlie Russell Hochschild’s definition, which stems from the book “The Managed Heart” which was published in 1983. Hochschild’s (1983, p. 7) definition of emotional labor is “The labor requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others [...]”. Furthermore, emotional labor in this sense is managing feelings and the way you display yourself in exchange for something of value, meaning that feelings become a type of labor (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7). The study was conducted in the late 70’s, early 80’s on flight attendants and the emotional labor they carry out. The work that the flight attendants perform every day is simply not the physical and mental, but also the emotional (Hochschild, 1983, p. 6). The smiles they put on their faces are not just there by nature, but as a part of their work. The display should be that their work is effortless and of enjoyment in order to create a pleasant flight for travelers (Hochschild, 1983, p. 8). Thus, making emotions into something to be managed correctly for a wage. However, emotional labor is not only restricted to the work that a flight attendant or similar do, but it can also appear and meet the requirements in other types of jobs as for example, a secretary, a salesman or a minister. Therefore, the conventional distinctions between jobs do not set boundaries for where emotional labor exists (Hochschild, 1983, p. 11). Even though emotional labor can be present in all genders and within many jobs, it has special relevance for women as it exists to a greater extent in “typical” female jobs, and in women's private life (Hochschild, 1983, p. 11). According to Hochschild (1983, p. 11), women manage their emotions and feelings to a higher degree than men do and are more accomplished to do so. Due to this implication, of emotional labor being more present in women than men, it legitimizes the focus on women in this thesis. Furthermore, feelings can be seen as something that we manage, create and get in touch with, rather than something that is just stored inside of us (Hochschild, 1983, p. 17-18). Thus, bringing emotions and work closer together.

Displaying emotions and acting at them comes in different forms; surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting is about disguising the true emotion with the display of another (Hochschild, 1983, p. 33), it is about acting as you had a feeling with a bodily display (Hochschild, 1983, p. 37). Deep acting is about suppressing the true emotion so deeply it alters the feeling and the pretended emotion almost becomes real (Hochschild, 1983, p.
An example of the difference between surface acting and deep acting is that surface acting can be a smile painted on and in deep acting the pretended emotion seems sincere, since the true emotion have been pushed away. Meaning that both of these aspects can be forms of managing emotions in emotional labor. Surface acting, deep acting, and genuine emotional labor are three ways of performing emotional labor and have become an important part of the conducted studies that were to follow after Hochschild findings (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Humphrey et al., 2015). The use of surface acting and deep acting have further been extensively studied in occupations such as service delivery (Grandey, 2017), among service agents (Ashforth & Tomuik, 2000) and among nurses (Lu et al., 2019). These occupations involve, much like for the flight attendants, plenty of human contact and studies suggest that situations will occur where the workers will have to use surface or deep acting to some extent (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993, p. 89). Furthermore, Hochschild (1983, p. 57) means that there are certain feeling rules regarding how we should feel during particular situations and that there may be a pinch between how we really feel and how we are expected to feel. By knowing the feeling rules you can act and react as you think that others will expect you to (Hochschild, 1983, p. 58). Thus, contributing to managing your own feelings in regard to the situation, for example acting happy while serving a demanding customer when working as a servant.

Even though Hochschild’s definition and research on emotional labor has contributed a great deal to future research and is shedding light on the partly invisible work that foremost females carry out, it is not possible to ignore the fact that the research is getting dated. Besides from it getting dated in regard of time, a lot has changed in the labor force and in gender equality since the theory were conducted. Hochschild’s study was conducted in the late 70’s, early 80’s and the results were as mentioned published in 1983. From the time when the research was conducted till today, the female labor force in the United States has had a percentage increase of 64 % (United States Department of Labor, 2016), thus, the work environment has changed a lot. Due to the changes, Hochschild’s theory on emotional labor is conducted for a different time and is therefore becoming less irrelevant in modern work life.

### 3.2.2 Daniels’ definition

In the essay “Invisible Work” Arlene Kaplan Daniels (1987) writes about the unpaid and often unvalued work that foremost females carry out in the home. The focus of the article is to shed light on the work performed in the home and redefine the definition of “work” to be more inclusive and cover a broader spectrum of activities (Daniels, 1987, p. 403). Lack of recognition and validation for “typically feminine” work influence women’s view of their effort (Daniels, 1987, p. 408). The closer work activities are to nurturing and comforting, the closer the connection to femininity and typically female attributes (Daniels, 1987, p. 408). Activities related to these attributes are often not seen as learned or skilled, but as an expression of a female characteristic and she therefore suggest that invisible work is highly connected to women. Thus, labeling much work that women do as less worth. In connection to Hochschild’s (1983) definition of emotional labor, Daniels (1987, p. 409) lists for example: attending carefully to others, planning, concern for others, sympathy, warmth and creating a comfortable ambience as emotion work. Although Daniels focus is foremost on the invisible work performed in the private sphere and mainly focus on homemakers, it is notable that many of the aspects can be applied to the public life as well. Furthermore, Daniels (1987, p. 409) argues that emotion work is expected of women in addition to their regular tasks. It is also, according to Daniels (1987, p. 410) expected from women to leave supportive remarks to peers and to help men...
express their emotions. Doing invisible work in the private sphere sets out little to no opportunity to get validation and appreciation (Daniels, 1987, p. 405-406), as females do most of the invisible work it creates inequality in the amount of valued work performed. There is a value in having a personal touch and creating a nice ambience in the work and it should therefore be validated and not overwritten as a female characteristic. In conclusion Daniels (1987, p. 412-413) argues that the definition of work needs to be reconceptualized to include the work that is unpaid and to appreciate the significance of it. In the perspective of this thesis shedding light on the unpaid or even unvalued work the emotional work implies in the workplace. Furthermore, it is suitable that Daniels’ focus is on the female aspect of emotional labor since this thesis will focus on women as leaders. However, taking in consideration that this was written in the 80’s and in the US, all aspects on how emotion work and invisible work is displayed may not be applicable in Sweden today. The aspect of time, cultural and society has to be taken in consideration when evaluating the suitability of the theories for this thesis.

3.2.3 Erickson’s definition

Rebecca Erickson (1993, 2005) has, just as Daniels, taken on the perspective of the private life in regard of emotion work or emotional labor, and foremost the marital relationship. Erickson’s (1993, p. 888) definition of emotional labor is mainly based on Hochschild’s (1983) definition on emotion work and refers to “[...] the management of one’s feelings to create an observable facial and bodily display”. She find emotion work to be the concern of others well-being and providing emotional support (1993, p. 888), as well as managing the emotional climate in a relationship (2005, p. 338). Being an emotional caretaker and providing emotional support is viewed as something that women are rather than something they do (Erickson, 1993, p. 890). Thus, implying that certain activities and characteristics are closely connected to being a women and not seen as personality trait. Erickson (1993, p. 890) continues to build on Daniels’ (1987) perspective on invisible work and emotion work, pointing out that women tend to believe that emotion work should occur spontaneously but that it is not always the case. Hence, indicating that emotion work is a natural feminine characteristic may not be accurate, or at least not as prominent as previously believed. The results from the research conducted in 1993 implies that women’s well-being in a marital relationship is highly affected by the emotion work performed, both by herself and by her husband (Erickson, 1993, p. 896). Furthermore, the results suggest that the more emotion work performed in a relationship, the better is the well-being (Erickson, 1993, p. 896). Thus, indicating that the emotion work has to be performed by both parts.

Erickson’s research from 2005 follows the previous one from 1993, with the concept of emotion work referring to providing emotional support, managing the climate in a relationship and to enhance others emotional well-being. Erickson (2005, p. 339) argues that the highest order of emotion work is to, day after day, listen carefully, encourage, show appreciation and express empathy continuously. Viewing emotion work as it is described in this sentence, is not only applicable in a marital setting, but in any relationship (even the public one) that requires the same amount of labor. Furthermore, Erickson (2005, p. 340) implies that women may carry out more emotional labor because it enables them to be consistent with feminine gender identity and that most emotion work is actually performed by women (Erickson, 2005, p. 344). Moreover, housework that traditionally is performed by women tends to be given positive attributes when the individual label themselves as more feminine (Erickson, 2005, p. 341). Thus, if the individual view themselves as feminine, emotion work and housework can be seen in a
positive sense. However, if the individual does not view themselves in those terms, it can be forced and be seen as labor and not a natural part of their personality. It is noted in the results that for women that view themselves in more masculine terms, the emotional support provided for her spouse tended to be more a part of her family work role (Erickson, 2005, p. 348). Additionally, women felt held accountable for emotional work in a way that men did not and as an additional conclusion; emotional labor was more closely linked to gender, than to the division of housework (p. 348). In relation to this thesis, it can be expected to see both perspectives on emotion work from the data collection. The insights Erickson’s research contributes with for the thesis are the different perspectives on male and female tendencies to perform emotion work and the differences in whether it feels natural or not to perform emotion work. What is notable, however, is that Erickson’s research has its focus on marital life and, for that reason, not be entirely applicable in public life.

3.2.4 New definition

Over the last few years a new and broader definition, than for example Hochschild (1983), Daniels (1987) and Erickson (1993, 2005) offer on emotional labor, has emerged. The discussion about emotional labor has re-emerged and therefore a variety of adjusted definitions are becoming more common. The emerged, broader term involves the previously mentioned surface acting, deep acting and genuine emotional labor in combination with the new aspects, mentioned by Beck (2018), of planning a Christmas party and to RSVP on the family’s behalf to a friend’s wedding. The new, re-defined definition of emotional labor has been acknowledged by Hochschild in an interview with Julie Beck (2018) for The Atlantic. However, something that Hochschild points out in the interview is that the new definition may be including too much, making emotional labor blurry and overapplied, which not is the intention (Beck, 2018). An example of what Hochschild considers as emotional labor in a workplace setting is the anticipation and experience of anxiety that comes from trying to be assertive, play nice and forming yourself to fit the expectations of your workplace (Beck, 2018). A notable aspect is that Hochschild original definition took place in the work environment, but the definition has left that sphere and moved into the home (Beck, 2018). Thus, meaning that the focus on the workplace environment in this thesis is in line with the original definition of emotional labor.

According to Gemma Hartley in an interview with Melody Wilding for Forbes (2018) emotional labor is defined as keeping everyone around you comfortable and happy, managing emotions and the mental burden of carrying this out. Hartley (Wilding, 2018) argues that there is an expectation of women to make the workplace pleasant by managing their peers’ emotions and cushioning their own responses. By not only having to manage your own emotions, but also your colleagues, and performing emotional labor to create a good ambiance in the office the risk is that you are cutting time from your own work tasks. Thus, creating a pleasant workplace can keep women from getting ahead and climbing the work ladder (Wilding, 2018). Hartley (Wilding, 2018) mean that women are assumed to be better at activities closely related to emotional labor and therefore is inclined to perform them, which in turn detracts women from their career goals. Thus, even if there is no outspoken expectation for women to perform emotional labor in the workplace, it can be an underlying expectation based on the individual’s gender. This thesis focuses on women and their role as leaders in the workplace. Therefore, Hartley’s definition will provide a suitable perspective on emotional labor for women in the workplace.
3.2.5 Chosen definition

When comparing the United States during the 1970s and 1980s with Sweden today, many differences can be found. In 1970 about 43 percent of the women in the United States between the ages of 16 and 64 had jobs outside of their homes (Status of Women in the United States, 2015). On the other side, in Sweden today, more than 60 percent of the women are working outside of their homes (The Global Economy, 2017). Worth recognizing, and part of the reason for the differences, is the unique Swedish parental leave that was introduced in 1974 (Nordisk information för kunskap och kön, 2018). With that came the possibility for both mothers and fathers to stay at home with their children to a greater extent than American parents have the ability to (SVT, 2017). It goes without saying that Sweden today and the United States when Hochschild (1983) conducted her study differentiate on too many levels not to be acknowledged.

Emotional labor has, as mentioned throughout the thesis, broadened and come to involve more aspects of life. For example, a more caring nature, anticipating the needs of others, providing emotional support, detecting mood changes, altering yourself to meet the emotional expectations of others. In this thesis, the definition of the term emotional labor is referring to the latter and more inclusive definition which includes, not only surface acting, deep acting and genuine emotional labor, but also behaviors that are more recently recognized: listening, caring, planning, organizing and looking after others. In a working environment, this includes gestures like preparing the coffee in the morning, collecting money for a birthday gift and remembering to ask your coworker how their doctors appointment went - it is tasks that an employee take upon themselves to do, without someone explicitly asking for it, or it being part of their initial work description.

3.3 Gender Equality

Gender inequality index (GII) provides a measurement for inequality and is a part of the human development reports from the United Nations. The GII shows “... the loss in potential human development due to disparity between female and male achievements in three dimensions, reproductive health, empowerment and economic status.” (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] A, 2019). The scale for the GII is between 0. and 1. with a higher number indicating higher inequality and loss in human development (UNDP A, 2019). There are similarities between Human Development Index (HDI) and GII, but GII includes other dimensions than the HDI, as for example: reproductive health and labor market participation in relation to gender inequalities (UNDP B, 2019). According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP B, 2019) the Gender inequality index (GII) for Sweden was as low as 0.044 in 2017. This compared to the highest available index value being 1.0, and the highest measured gender inequality in 2017 being Yemen with an index of 0.813. Thus, indicating that gender inequality in Sweden being at a very low level. The United States had an index of 0.189 in 2017 (UNDP B, 2019), indicating that the difference in gender inequality between the US and Sweden, are not major but notable. The point of showing this in the thesis is to demonstrate that gender equality in Sweden and the US is not on the same level. Therefore, research from the US on emotional labor and its effect on women may not be entirely applicable to a country like Sweden due to the overall differences in gender equality. Since much of the research conducted on the topic is done in the US, it will naturally be reflected by the societal environment at the time.
3.4 Expectations on male vs female leadership

Virginia E. Schein came up with the phrase “think manager- think male” in 1973 in conjunction with the publishing of “The relationship between sex role stereotypes and requisite management characteristics”. The research for the article was conducted amongst 300 male middle managers in the US (Schein, 1973, p. 96). What can be noted from the results is that the characteristics more commonly ascribed to men than women, was also the characteristics a successful middle manager was perceived to possess (Schein, 1973, p. 99). Those characteristics being for example: self-reliant, emotionally stable, objective, direct and well informed (Schein, 1973, p. 98). Furthermore, Schein (1973, p. 99) argues in the result that “To the extent that a woman’s self-image incorporates the female sex role stereotype, this relationship would also seem to influence a woman’s job behavior”. The characteristics mainly described for women in the study were understanding, intuitive and helpful (Schein, 1973, p. 100). Schein (1973, p. 99) also points out that the feminine characteristics are inconsistent with typical leadership characteristics and that women, therefore, tend to avoid the leadership role due to their femininity. Thus, making particular masculine features and characteristics highly related to a leadership role. However, it is important to point out that stereotypical female behavior is not a clear disadvantage but can act as an advantage in a leadership role (Schein, 1973, p. 100). The main idea is just to show that there are certain traits connected to males and females which can set unintended expectations on behavior.

In 1975 Schein published new research on the subject with the purpose of determining the relationship between sex role stereotypes and requisite management characteristics in female middle managers. This research was too, conducted in the US with a sample of 167 female middle managers (Schein, 1975, p. 340). The results between the male and female study were then compared (Schein, 1975, p. 343). From the sample of women in the study, the results showed that successful middle managers were perceived to possess typically male characteristics, rather than typically female characteristics (Schein, 1975, p. 343). Thus, implying that females too perceive male characteristics to be related to successful management. Furthermore, when comparing the male and female samples, women, in general, found the female characteristics in managers to be more alike the male characteristics, than what the male sample did (Schein, 1975, p. 344).

In conclusion, male characteristics are seen to be closer related to describe a manager, than female characteristics. What is notable, however, is that the research is conducted in the 1970s, which means that the aspect of time and the change during that time period needs to be taken into consideration. With time comes societal changes such as changes in wages, female workforce, etc, which naturally alters the conditions for leadership as well.

However, the concept of “think manager- think male” was further investigated on a global level. The article “Think manager- think male: a global phenomenon?” was published in 1996 by Schein et al. The previous results from the US, Great Britain, and Germany were compared to the new research conducted in China and Japan to investigate if the concept was global or not (Schein et al., 1996, p. 33). The results indicate that successful leadership was closely related to male characteristics in China and Japan as well (Schein et al., 1996, p. 39). The degree of ascribing successful leadership to male characteristics was particularly strong with the male participants (Schein et al., 1996, p. 39). Thus, confirming that male characteristics are seen to be closer related to successful management, at least in the countries that were examined.
Beverly Alimo-Metcalfe (2010) found in her comparison of studies on leadership that female managers tend to use transformational leadership to a greater extent than male managers. Transformational leadership focusing on emotions and creating an including feeling at the workplace (Yukl, 1999, p. 285-286). Furthermore, male and female managers tend to have different perceptions of which attributes and characteristics that are related to leadership skills (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 641). The attributes females perceived as important in managers work style where, for example, to participate, to be people-oriented and to work through people (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 642). Being forceful, flamboyant, confident and to have a high profile were the attributes that men assigned to be important in work style for managers (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 642). Looking at these attributes alone in this case, it becomes clear that men and women have relatively different perceptions on which attributes are important in managers. In line with transformational leadership, female managers tend to motivate their group by transforming their own self-interest into the group’s goals and they tend to participate and encourage sharing (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 644). Men, on the other hand, tend to use transactional leadership with punishments and rewards in exchange for performance (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 644). In contrast, females tend to believe that good performance is increased when the individual feels good about themselves and their work (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 644). Hence, there evidently appears to be some differences in male and female leadership, both in attributes and characteristics.

Alimo-Metcalfe (2010, p. 646) stresses that this comparison does not have the purpose of reinforcing gender stereotypes but to challenge the perception of classical leadership characteristics that often are ascribed to men. Understanding the differences in male and female leadership contributes to understanding one's outlook on leadership and the preconceptions one may have.
4 Research method

In this chapter, our choice of study method is presented. We carefully describe our preparations; how we contacted our respondents and how we prepared the interview guide. Thereafter, we take you through the interview process, followed by interview limitations, ethical aspects, and lastly, we describe how we analyzed our data.

4.1 Research design choice

In line with our qualitative research design, the data collection is done through qualitative interviews. One important aspect of collecting qualitative data is to research the background to the sample, more known as contextualizing (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 130). Since qualitative data needs to be understood in relation to a context, it is highly important to understand the context the data is collected in. The context to understand in relation to the sample in this thesis is the location, some background of the interviewees, what type of industry they work in and social influences. These aspects are taken into consideration when collecting and analyzing the data in order to contextualize said data.

According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 133), interviews are used as a way to understand and gain knowledge on what the interviewees feel, do or think. This is further explained by Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 2, cited in Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133) as understanding what people have in common regarding opinions, attitudes, and feelings. Taking this into consideration we find interviews to be the most suitable method for data collecting in this thesis since we aim to understand the thoughts and feelings behind emotional labor and women as leaders. Due to the sensitivity that the subject of emotional labor and women in leadership roles may have, we found it to be best to conduct the interviews in person in a closed-off space. According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 134) interviewing face-to-face has the advantages of the convenience of choosing the place of the interview and that it comes useful to be there in person when asking difficult or sensitive questions. By meeting with the interviewees face to face in closed off space, it is easier to make the interviewees feel trust and safety in the process. The downside of choosing to conduct the interviews in person, face-to-face, is that it often becomes time-consuming due to the need of having to get to the place where the interview will be held (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 134). This is not something we have found to hinder us as all our interviews took place in Umeå.

There are three common ways to conduct interviews; closed questions, open questions or semi-structured questions (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133). Closed questions only require “yes” or “no” answers and could therefore be quicker and simpler, but does not leave room for flexibility or further development of the answers (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133; Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 259-260). Open questions on the other hand have long, developed answers but takes a lot of time and the questions are often not prepared in advance (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133). Semi-structured interviews has a mix of both. Some questions are prepared in advance, there is room for development of the answers and there is an overall flexibility of the interviews (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 133-134). However, Bryman and Bell (2015, p. 220) points out the fact that structured interviews tend to reduce sources of error. But as previously mentioned, it does not leave room for flexibility. Therefore, the most suitable path to take for this thesis is semi-structured interviews since it offers flexibility in the order questions are asked, there is room for the
interviewees to develop their answers further, but it does not take as much time as an open question interview. Thus, the interviewees can freely answer questions on for example emotional labor, leadership, leadership in their position, gender equality in the workplace and differences between them and their colleagues. By having a flexibility in the questions, the questions can be altered to fit the situation and the answers given by the interviewee. However, there is always aspects to be aware of when doing interviews that can cause potential problems. One potential problem is if the interviewee is a person with multiple roles, where you must determine which role the answer comes from (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 138). Furthermore, it is important to note that the interviewee may provide the answers he or she thinks will be the appropriate answer to the question, and not what he really feels or thinks (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 138). Naturally this is an aspect that we have to keep in mind when conducting the interviews and encourage the interviewees to answer what they believe to be true, and not what they think we want to hear. Since we are only interviewing female leaders we need to keep in mind the potential problem of gender bias, as that is a potential problem (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 138). Rosenthal (1966, cited in Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 138) found that female and male researchers treated female and male participants differently. For example, female researchers smiled more than male researchers, but male researchers behaved more warmly towards female participants. Due to us being female and only having female participants, it is difficult to determine whether the results in the data collection would depend upon which gender the researchers have and which gender the participants have. However, we have taken gender bias into consideration both in the interviews as well as in the analysis.

4.2 Interview preparation

4.2.1 Population and sample

As an initial step when preparing for interviews you have to decide your population and sample (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 258). The population for this study was set to be women in leading positions in audit/accounting, IT, finance or insurance companies. Further, sampling is a helpful tool to use when you have a time limit that hinders you from studying the entire population (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 260). Due to the lack of sampling frame, it is not be possible to use probability sampling, the sampling technique that mostly is associated with surveys (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 262), which leads us to non-probability sampling. Since this is a qualitative study written from a interpretivist view, meaning it is not statistically analyzed, the sampling does not need to be random (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 131), which is in line with non-probability sampling (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 281). Non-probability sampling is often influenced by some subjective judgement (Saunders et al., 2012 p. 281), which also is common among qualitative studies and their findings (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 163). Saunders et al. (2012) mention four different sampling methods used in non-probability sampling. The most appropriate one mostly depend on the technique, the likelihood of sample being representative and what type of research, in this study we have a homogeneous group with in-depth focus where the likelihood of the sample being representative is low, which means we should use purposive, homogeneous, sampling (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 287-288). When using purposive sampling you select the participants that you believe is most appropriate for your study, and will be the most helpful when answering your research question (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 287). Homogeneous sampling is suitable for this thesis since we are studying women in leading positions, a similar group of people on a similar level in an organization’s hierarchy (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 288).
Following, the sample size was to be decided. We conducted semi structured interviews and there are some disagreement regarding how many semi-structured interviews it is required to provide reasonable credibility (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 283), with literature suggesting anything between 5 to 50 participants (Dworkin, 2012, p. 1319). However, since this thesis was conducted during one semester it is suggested to aim for a sample of twelve participants (Baker & Edwards, 2012, p. 10). Guest et al. (2006, p. 74-75) supports the suggestion of twelve participants being acceptable when the study is semi-structured, include a somewhat narrow objective and the participations are more or less homogeneous, which is the case for this study. We aimed to conduct as many interviews as possible but at the end of the day we ended up with twelve interviews which was our minimum.

4.2.2 Gain access to interviewees

When deciding on what kind of sampling to use and the sample size, we moved on to contact and gain access to potential interviewees. With hybrid access, you use a combination of traditional access and Internet-mediated access (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 210). This is how we gained access to our interviewees. Internet-mediated access, involving for example email and the Web (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 210), was used for the initial search since we found the women we were looking for by searching company websites, reading LinkedIn profiles and, if necessary, emailing someone at their office in order to find out if they had anyone that was suitable to interview for our study. Traditional access, which include for example telephone calls (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 210), was occasionally also used to find appropriate participants.

As mentioned, we chose to study female leaders in audit, accounting, finance, IT and insurance. We listed companies covering these areas in Umeå, whereafter we sent emails or called to find if they had any women in leading roles in their organizations. 32 different companies were contacted in the search and the responses, or lack thereof, from the ones who were unable to participate were as seen in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No female leaders</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No female leaders</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No female leaders</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not able to participate</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not able to participate</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>Audit / accounting</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Five of the companies informed that they do not have any female leaders within their organization, twelve out of the 32 companies did not respond to neither telephone calls nor mails and the remaining three companies did not have the time or the opportunity to participate. The twelve companies that were left all had women in leading positions and showed interest in participating in the study. They therefore received an email with information regarding the study, asking if they would like to be part of it. The email were conducted to inform the possible participants about the study and how their involvement would be handled, this can be found in appendix 1.

As it turned out, women in all twelve companies that initially showed interest in participating ended up being interviewed. As seen in table 3 you can tell the amount of companies that were contacted in each of the four industries, as well as the number of participants we ended up with.

Table 3. Final outcome of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Requested</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit/accounting</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simultaneously as emails were sent and responses were waited for the conducting of the interview guide began, which is the next area of subject.

**4.2.3 Interview guide**

To be able to design an interview guide and to know what questions you want and need to ask your interviewee you must have a good knowledge in your subject (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p. 135). Therefore, before we started creating the interview guide, we thoroughly read through all material we could find on emotional labor. This so that we as researchers could have good background knowledge on the subject and understand what we were looking for in the interviews. Moreover, by having a solid background knowledge on the subject, we are able to explain emotional labor to the interviewees in a way that decreases the risk of misinterpretation. Except from gaining knowledge on the subject of emotional labor, we thoroughly went through studies on leadership and leadership theories. This in order to understand more on the subject before the interviews with female leaders, but also to know what we should listen and ask for during the interviews. According to Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 135) you have to ask questions that allows the interviewees to elaborate their answers, in order to get out the maximum amount of information from the interviews. Therefore, the questions should be well prepared and be suitable for the topic. Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 135) for example list open questions as a good way to explore and gather broad information and closed
questions as a good way to get facts. When assembling the questions we have mixed open questions, closed questions, probe questions and summary questions. Thus, trying to cover facts, broad information, validate what the interviewee means and to get a deeper understanding of the answers.

As mentioned, we read through the material we could find on emotional labor not only to gain a good understanding for the subject ourselves and ask the “correct” questions, but also to provide the interviewees with a definition. By asking around before writing the interview guide, we realized that emotional labor was not a commonly known subject. Therefore, we decided that a definition with multiple perspectives on emotional labor would be provided to the interviewees in the beginning of the interview. This to make sure that the interviewees get a basic picture of the subject and to see if they could relate to it. Furthermore, we wish for the interviewees to have the same definition of emotional labor as we have. On the aspect of leadership and leadership theory, we wish to understand the subject and ask the interviewees questions on leadership in order to gain knowledge on what leadership looks like for them. Moreover, we wish to understand what type of leadership role and style they apply in their everyday work. Thus, being able to link leadership style and emotional labor.

The interview guide (see appendix 2) has been formed after the theoretical framework in this thesis, with the same type of themes, and the goal is to be able to answer the research question. The main themes for the interview guide are background with heritage and environment, leadership, gender equality and emotional labor. The main themes end in more focused questions that are both open and closed. For example, the interviewee’s view on leadership, gender equality in the workplace, experience on emotional labor and so forth. According to Bryman and Bell (2015, p. 491) it is of essence to vary the questioning as well as the phenomenons during the questioning to give the interviewees a chance to answer as fully as they can for all topics. Therefore, we aim to alter the questioning and use multiple phenomenons in form of our different themes.

Before getting started with the interview, ethical aspects as recording and confidentiality was informed to the participants (appendix 3), which is discussed further under “Ethical considerations”. Then we as researchers tried to create some form of relationship with the participant in order to create support, which Bryman and Bell (2015, p. 219) see as an important aspect to make the interviewee feel comfortable in the situation. The interview guide is formed to start with background questions and to put the interviewee at ease, which Collis and Hussey (2014, p. 136) mention as an important aspect before moving on to deeper questions and eventually more sensitive questions. Therefore, the interview start off with some questions about the interviewee’s background, job description, title and age. Then moving on to leadership, leadership in the workplace, differences between colleagues etc. Where after the last questions were more sensitive, questions regarding for example feelings towards gender differences and emotional labor.

4.3 Interview process

The interviews for this thesis were all conducted with women in leading positions, face-to-face in Umeå. The aim that we had for the length of the interviews was around 45 minutes. After conducting the interviews, the length of them varies between 32 minutes and 55 minutes. Overall, we are satisfied with the length and foremost, the content of the interviews. The difference in length can be related to the differences in the answers given by the interviewees. Some of them were very short and concise in all of their answers,
while some interviewees went off topic at some points. Thus, making the interviews vary significantly in length. All of the interviews were conducted in closed off areas at the interviewees’ offices and they were all conducted without disturbance or interruptions. Furthermore, all interviews were conducted under a short period of time, with 12 interviews over one and a half week. Meaning that we as researchers had the same prior knowledge on the subject throughout all of the interviews. Thereby, the preconceptions due to knowledge remain the same throughout the process.

Moreover, the same interview guide (appendix 2) was used throughout the interviews to make sure that we would cover the same predetermined questions and themes for all interviews and through that get a comprehensive data collection. Since we conducted semi-structured interviews there will naturally be some differences in the probe and summary questions due to the fact that these types of questions has to be altered to the occasion. One highly important part of an interview is listening attentively to what the interviewee is saying, or not saying (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 491). Further, it is not only important to listen to what is being said, but also to be attentive to the tone things are being said in and the body language of the interviewee (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p. 491). This is something that we have aimed to do throughout the interviews in order to gain as much as possible from them. To make sure that we do not miss anything being said in the interviews we audio recorded all of them. Just as Bryman and Bell (2015, p. 494) points out, it is common to audiorecord qualitative interviews to catch what the interviewees say and also how they say it. Thus, by being able to listen afterwards to how certain things are being expressed, we can draw attention and detect nuances.

4.4 Interview limitations

When performing the interviews there were some limitations that needed to be recognized due to them might having an impact on the outcome of the study. For this study this is firstly the fact that all interviews have been audio recorded, compared to if they instead had been video recorded, body language and gestures may be missed or forgotten by the interviewer when the analysis take place. During the interviews, notes including gestures and body language were made, but it still does not cover as much as video recordings would. Further, there is always the issue regarding misinterpretation. It is important to have questions that minimizes the likelihood for misinterpretations, however, due to us as researchers not knowing anything more about the respondents besides their name and position in the company we are not aware of potential political, cultural or religious opinions that may influence how they interpret the question. This would therefore result in their answers not being as reliable as desired. However, beneficial in that regard, is the fact that Sweden is considered one of the least religious countries in the world (Utrikespolitiska Institutionen, 2018) which decreases the probability of religion having a considerable impact on their responses. Another aspect that might have an impact on the respondents’ responses is the always occurring issue whether they answer truthfully, based on the actual reality, or if their answers is more a reflection on how they wish it were, or how they strive for it to be. It is not possible to completely avoid any of these limitations but they are recognized, and during the interviews, as well as during the analysis, we have been aware of the potential factors that may affect the respondents’ answers.
4.5 Ethical considerations

As mentioned earlier, when conducting a qualitative study with interviews, there are numerous ethical areas that need to be considered (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 208). The participants need to be well informed about the purpose of the study and how their partaking will be handled, most importantly, there needs to be informed consent (Wiles, 2013, p. 26). How anonymity and confidentiality will be managed is also important to mediate to the participants, along with the notion that they at any time can withdraw or cancel their participation (Wiles, 2013, p. 25). Since the audio in the interviews is recorded, the interviewees need to be informed about that as well as they are obligated to be able to partake in the finished results. To make sure the interviewees received the necessary information for them to feel secure, they were provided with an information letter on site before the interview started. This information letter can be found in appendix 3.

After the interviewee has signed, and thereby accepted their participation in the study, there are some ethical aspects to consider as the interview starts (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 237). These involve language usage, how much information to give and often information (such as research purpose or question) should be repeated (Wiles, 2013, p. 27). When conducting an interview, your choice of language should be adjusted depending on the person you are interviewing, while at the same time remain neutral and responsive (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 224). These are all aspects that were considered when performing the interviews.

4.6 Analysis process

When analyzing qualitative data, Rowley (2012, p. 268) says there are two areas one should put extra focus on, the first being classifying, coding and interpreting the data and the other being the presentation of the data. To be able to present a result where the data has been thoroughly and correctly analyzed according to Rowley’s findings some steps need to be taken, and these are presented below.

One way of analyzing qualitative data is with the thematic analysis approach. The main point with this approach is to find central themes and subthemes in the data, which in this case is the interviews, that later can be compiled for the purpose of the result (Bryman & Bell, 2014, p. 599). This approach is the most suitable one for this study since the researchers focuses on meaning - what the interviewees said, not how they said it (Rowley, 2012, p. 268) and using this approach have helped find patterns that were needed to answer the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79).

The conducted interviews were, as mentioned, all audio-recorded. Rowley (2012, p. 267) suggest that as soon as possible after an interview, the interviewer should listen to the recording and familiarize with relevant answers. She mean this provides new and nuanced perspectives that will help the researcher understand what areas to further develop and include in the study. The next step for the data analyze was to transcribe the recordings, this is a very time consuming activity (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 550) but by doing it it was possible to gather what the interviewees said, how they said it and how they acted. Saunders et al. (2012, p. 550) suggest this procedure will provide a better understanding of the interviews and support more reliable findings. After the interviews was transcribed, they were coded. Coding the data made it possible to compare the interviews and find similarities that guided us when answering the research question (Rowley, 2012, p. 689) as well as it helped concretize the material and made it easier to overlook (Bryman &
Bell, 2014, p. 586). Further, since the authors divided the interviews between them and thereby transcribed and coded some each, they discussed potential themes together to avoid subjectivity as much as possible. This was also done to discuss varying interpretations of the data and thereafter agree on suitable themes. As mentioned earlier, when the interview guide were conducted main themes were decided: background with upbringing and environment, leadership, gender equality and emotional labor. When the authors discussed the interviews and what they had found 20 additional themes based on discovered patterns in the interviews were decided (appendix 4 - First hand theme), they were later compressed into more narrow, detailed themes (appendix 4 - Second theme). Thereafter, the second themes were reviewed once again together with the transcribed interviews to see if they truly were relevant to include. This lead to the final themes (appendix 4) which are thoroughly described in the empirical findings. The final themes were determined to capture as much of the data as possible, including all important aspects from the interviews with the participants. Figure 2 present the final themes to offer a transparent and clear foundation for the future analysis.

By using the above mentioned method for the themes both predetermined and emerging themes were used, which according to Rowley (2012) is suitable for a thematic analysis approach. Determining themes for a qualitative analysis is a question of relevance, not quantity. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 82) says “[…] the ‘keyness’ of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures / but rather on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question”. Therefore, throughout the process of establishing themes the presence of the themes has been varied in between 1 to 12 interviews. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 82) find the authors judgement to be needed when determining the themes since that is how their relevance will be established.
The subjectivity that adds is, as known, common for a qualitative study and taken into consideration throughout the study.

When performing a study, it is utterly important to be aware of one’s possible subjectivity in different areas and the fact that it likely will influence how you interpret the data (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 245). To prevent misinterpretation the authors have, throughout the analysis of the interviews, sought objective views on different subjects from impartial people in their surroundings. By doing so, the authors could make sure that their opinions were as objective as possible, at the same time as it was possible to see that the subject itself and the influencing factors made sense for an outsider that not were as involved in the research.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87), a thematic analysis have six steps, shown in figure 3 below. The right side of the table present how these steps have been interpreted and conducted in this particular study.

**Braun & Clarke’s steps**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Become familiar with the data</th>
<th>Listen and transcribe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generate initial ideas</td>
<td>Discuss ideas amongst authors, find keywords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for themes</td>
<td>Analyze ideas, find appropriate themes for research question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review themes</td>
<td>Read through the transcriptions, make sure themes are applicable and form a pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define and name themes</td>
<td>Pinpoint themes and define them properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce report</td>
<td>Discuss selected themes based on the findings, provide a conclusion that answers your research question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 3. Thematic analysis process.*
5 Empirical findings

In this chapter the empirical findings from the conducted interviews are presented. First, all interviewees are presented in a way to enhance understanding while keeping them anonymous. Later, themes that occurred during the interviews are discussed based on the respondents and their answers.

Twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted in this study, all of the participants are listed in table 4 below with title, age and what industry their company is active within. The table is to function as a tool to provide transparency and simplify the understanding of our findings without jeopardizing the participants’ anonymity.

Table 4. Participating respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code for respondent</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Auditing Manager</td>
<td>Accounting/ Auditing</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Department Manager</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Consultant Manager</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Office Manager</td>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Auditing Manager</td>
<td>Accounting/ Auditing</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Office Manager</td>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Consultant Manager</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Department Manager</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Acting Office Manager</td>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Group Manager</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Senior Department Manager</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To further support the reader in their understanding of our findings figure 4 presents the themes and a brief comment regarding the themes and their content.
5.1 Contextual Background

As presented, the interviewees are all active leaders and possess a leadership position in their work role. The first question of the interview was: “Why did you want to participate in this study?” This question was asked in order to understand the interest the participant may or may not have had in the subject of the study. The majority of the respondents expressed an interest in leadership as a subject and the theory of emotional labor. A majority of the respondents also expressed that they had reflected over leadership and emotional labor since receiving the information about the subject of the thesis and agreeing to partake in the study. The rest of the respondents answered that they agreed to participate due to company policy and because they wish to be on friendly terms with Umeå University. These respondents did not express a genuine interest in leadership or emotional labor, as the others did. Lastly, respondent H answered that she wished to participate because she felt like she did not fit the typical image of what emotional labor might be and that she was interested to hear what we had to say about the subject. Furthermore, interviewee H also expressed scepticism towards emotional labor as a theory. Following the question about why they wished to participate, the respondents
were also asked if they could talk a little bit about their background in order to put them at ease and to provide us with some background. Answering this question, close to all participants expressed something about their background that have had an impact on their leadership role or their outlook on emotional labor today. For example, respondent I expressed that her role as an older sister reflected in her caring behavior and respondent L expressed that her being an only child with parents who were self-employed affected her way of doing things in relation to leadership and emotional labor. Respondent L expresses how being around boys and men mainly has had an impact on her career when working in a male dominated industry:

“[...] my childhood has been in this way that I have been the only girl pretty much all the time, I mean in a small village, I happened to be the only girl, so I have that type of journey straight through, I am very used to the context, acting in that type of context. Which may have made me a little bit blind too, that I don’t see things, I realize. Because I have reflected over the subject [emotional labor] per se.”

Respondent J on the other hand answered that due to her father being a manager during her whole childhood, they discussed leadership much in their household which has affected her outlook on leadership today. In the same way respondent G reflected on her parents having their own company and her mother’s way of leading impacted how she herself tend to lead nowadays. It is worth noting that many of the respondents reflected over how their background have had an impact on their leadership and their perspective on emotional labor, as it in turn will influence how they view the questions asked on the subjects during the interview.

When asked about the industry the respondents work in, all respondents (4) working in IT answered that their industry is highly male dominated and to work in a male dominated industry you have to have thick skin as a woman. The rest of the respondents (8) answered that their industry is fairly equal in total, even though they work in various industries. However, all of the eight respondents also express that the majority of the higher positions are all held by men and that women generally work in the lower positions. Respondent A reflects over the fact that they hire more women, but still having more men in leading positions:

“[...] we work a lot with equality because, and you can actually say this, that this industry [auditing/accounting] is extremely unequal. We hire more girls than guys but in the leading positions we have more men, so we lose the girls somewhere on the way, so this is a major question for us, and it is something we have been working on for years.”

Hiring more women than men, but still having more men in leading positions is a difficult problem respondent J, who works in banking, respondent K, who works in insurance, and respondent A who works in auditing and accounting, also express. They also reflect on why it seems to be that way. Respondent K discusses the fact that the job means odd working hours and provision based salary and that this contributes to an uncertainty regarding salary and how much time that can be spent with the family and that this does not seem to be an issue for the men in the company. Respondent A believes that one reason why young women leave their positions in auditing is due to the lack of possibilities to combine work and family life:
“[...] what we can tell from the younger ones who leave, well women, is that they really can’t see how they are supposed to be able to combine family life with work, and they see that as the biggest challenge. And maybe because of that, you choose to leave.”

Respondent J expresses that the women seem to stay on the lower positions, not having enough courage to apply for leading positions. Whereas men do not seem to lack courage and do apply for more senior positions. This is something that respondent I reflects over too: that the insurance industry as a whole is somewhat equal, but that there seems to be positions in the company that mainly men hold or positions that mainly women hold. Thus, having male and female dominated positions within the company.

Many of the respondents said that they have experienced nuances between generations when in their working role. Respondent A thinks that the younger generation have a different attitude towards equality, similarly to respondent I who believe the younger generation are more aware and respondent F who believes the amount of emotional labor one takes upon themselves is linked to which decade they are born, being born during the 1980s resulting in taking on more extra responsibility than the ones that are born in the 1960s.

The interviewees that are working in IT and accounting/auditing all have consultation, to some degree, as part of their job. Three of those respondents (A, C, F) explicitly say they occasionally experience being treated differently by older male customers because they are women. Respondent I says she has given up on the older men when it comes to equality and respondent H mentions how some of her older male managing colleagues are “old-fashioned males”, which she defines as less able to compromise.

5.2 The Importance of Personality in Leadership

One aspect that all interviewees keep coming back to is personality, regardless of them being asked about emotional labor, leadership or their position in the company. One respondent says:

“[…] I think it is about everyone having different personality types, and that a certain personality type is overrepresented among women. That is how it feels anyway, and that might result in the generalization of the genders.”

She further means that this personality type tend to take on more emotional labor. Respondent J believes your personality plays a bigger part than your gender and respondent H states how she views the discussion about gender differences by emphasizing personality:

“[…] I am rather against defining what is female and what is male over all, because it is much more about personality than which gender you have.”

Respondent C means that one personality will result in one kind of leadership while another personality will result in a different kind of leadership. The remaining respondents all agree on one’s leadership style depending on one’s personality.

Along those lines there is a common understanding among the respondents that different personalities are drawn to different industries. For example the respondents within the IT industry mentioned above have problems recruiting women. According to both
respondent C and F this occurs because women generally tend to lack interest in the area. One says:

“Based on different personality types, you are drawn to different industries”

Respondent H believes her personality makes her a caring person and respondent J says she and her male colleague have different personalities which results in her interacting with their coworkers to a greater extent than he does. How much energy one puts into relationships and the atmosphere at workplaces, part of emotional labor, is closely linked to one’s personality according to all of the respondents. The majority of them mean that emotional labor is fundamentally a question about what personality you have. Respondent B, I and J says:

“But I think it’s a matter of personality. We’re different.”

“[...] it [emotional labor] is much more about personality than it is about which gender you have.”

“So it is definitely differences between women and men, how we are, but mostly, it is your personality”

Respondents D and F believe personality is the key factor for emotional labor, respondent D reflects on why she herself is part of it:

“I think it’s a habit, but mostly your personality type is involved”

In conclusion, the importance of one’s personality was emphasized by all respondents. Close to all said that the extra tasks they tend to take upon themselves is mostly because of their personality, whereas one said she does it because she find it enjoyable.

5.3 Women’s Perspective on Leadership

“There is plenty to say about leadership, I do not even know where to start.”

Respondent F’s statement encompasses the general attitude the respondents have regarding leadership: it is a broad topic influenced by a variety of factors. As mentioned before, all respondents mention personality to be a crucial factor when discussing leadership and they are united in the opinion that it affects how one leads. An additional area the majority of them are united in, is what kind of leadership style they want to practice, this being a coaching leadership style. They define coaching leadership style as not being too involved in their employees’ tasks from a detail perspective, but rather using big strokes to leave room for the employees to take on own responsibility and complete their tasks in their own way. Respondent C says:

“[...] I work more and more to use a coaching leadership, so I’m a support and doesn’t control my employees.”

and respondent B says:

“I’m not concerned in every single detail, [...] but rather, I try to coach them.”

Additionally, they say coaching leadership is when the employees can make their voices heard and have an input on decisions being made, as well as a leadership style that guides
the employees to become the best they can be, and helping them grow in their working role. Simultaneously, it is important for respondent K to support each other within an organization, and respondents C and E puts much value into availability, always being there for their employees. Respondent C means this, in general, is not as valued among her male managing colleagues who tend to be less willing to change their plans and tasks to be able to assist an employee. This is similar to respondent E who believes she is more prone, occasionally even too prone, to leave a tasks she is working on in order to help an employee. Additionally, when being asked what else they value with their own leadership, respondent C mentioned the importance of being considerate:

“I highly value that others will feel that I give them time.”

Respondents A, G and I find it important to be direct and communicative, they say:

“[…] I have very direct communication. I’m not the kind that needs to discuss with others, I am fast in making decisions”.

“So as a leader I am very straightforward, and I expect the same towards me.

“[…] but I’m very clear with my expectations on my employees, very straightforward and direct”

Respondent L says she dares to take risks and the potential consequences that might occur, at the same time as she finds the soft values important. Related to taking risks and consequences is respondent F who mentions how she, as a leader, must be able to make difficult decisions. One of the respondents (K) believe company culture and motivation impacts her leadership. The company she is working for have a distinct culture which supports having fun, being comfortable, and helping each other. These are qualities the respondent finds important when leading. To be a good leader she says:

“Oh course there will be days, or periods, where everything doesn’t run as smoothly, and problems occur, and when that happens it is super important to be able to maintain the company culture, the satisfaction and well-being.”

She believes both motivation and motivating employees are important parts of daily work. Respondents D and H does not mention anything about having, or wanting to have, a coaching leadership style, but respondent H values a leadership where she can guide the way for others and make sure everyone get their voices heard. This is similar to respondent D who also emphasized the importance of everyone having the chance to speak their mind and feeling included in the group.

What kind of leadership style one applies at work depends on different factors according to the respondents. Respondent L says:

“I think I choose what role I’m going to have depending on the situation.”

Respondent B believe the best leadership style is designed based on the organization and what kind of job position the leader has. As a department manager that is head over other managers, she believes the managers that are closer to the actual affair, and thereby often closer to the customers, take on emotional leadership to a greater extent, in contrary to her who says she does not have an emotional leadership. Similarly to respondent B, respondent G also believe leadership type depends on environmental factors:
“A lot depends on the staff, if you were to say, a lot depends on what business area you have (geographically), how many customers you have and the size of the staffing, it is different kind of leadership required.”

Respondent F also says one’s leadership must be adjusted, but she focuses more on it being suitable for her employees and their personality:

“[...] as a leader, you have to be able to balance it, you have to have an understanding for both, you must be able to customize [leadership] depending on the situation and person, you must understand that this person need structure, and this person needs freedom, and this person needs support.”

Common for all participants, and linked to how they emphasize personality, is how they all have taken a position in femininity when discussing leadership. They all say that their personality is the main reason they exercise their chosen leadership and it is not due to them being women. Respondent K being particularly determined, not being fond of making differences between genders, and respondent B herself saying that she is not a “typical female leader”. She defines a typical female leader as someone who takes on a motherly role and thereby is more caring in her leadership.

Seven out of the twelve respondents mention the importance of delegating when being a leader. Respondent G reflects on the subject:

“[...] even though I have the utmost responsibility that does not mean that I am supposed to do everything, I have to make sure everything gets done but I am not the one that are supposed to be best at everything, I have a group and they should have their specialities based on their area of work.”

She further mention how she believe all female leaders must become better at delegating, especially since she think women in general have a tendency to underestimate how much time an assignment requires and thereby work more outside office hours. Respondent C expresses that she takes on too much work and thereby end up working early mornings or late nights:

“[...] I take on a great deal of tasks that I maybe should delegate. I am very keen about others feeling that I give them time, which can result in me not having time for what I need to do myself.”

Further, when being asked why she does not delegate she says:

“I could let others take on a task but I feel like I, I know best.”

This is similar to respondents B and D who occasionally fail to delegate because they believe things will be completed in a better way if they do it themselves. On the other hand are respondents J and K who tend to delegate a fair amount, respondent K saying that a big part of her daily work is delegating and respondent J who believe she is the one that delegates most at her office. In the middle is respondent F who says she delegates all the practical things she is not able to do or does not have time to do.

Respondent C feels a responsibility for the tasks she does delegate and she keeps track to ensure they are completed. She mentions how she might be seen as controlling in her tendency to monitor assignments getting done. When talking about delegating, control is mentioned by five of the participants. Respondent D does not like when things are
unfinished, which leads her to complete tasks on her own. This is something she partly connects to a need for control, which she actively has been working against. Participant J says that she is structured in her leadership and wants to have control over situations and tasks, similarly to respondent E who want to have control and be sure that things are getting done. Additionally, in relation to a need for control and taking on extra responsibility at the workplace, respondent A says:

“I might not take on a motherly role, however, I do have an extreme need for control. So I can probably follow up on things, and make sure that people do what they are supposed to do, and so on.”

When being asked what position the respondents take in a new group with managers, five explicitly says they take command and guide the group forward, including two (B and E) mentioning how that is a trait they try to suppress. An additional four respondents imply that they too tend take on a leading role, respondent I says:

“[...] I definitely do not take the quiet reserved role […], but I tend to quite fast take tone, I want to rapidly move forward and get results.”

Respondents K and L on the other hand believe they are observant and try to read the group before getting involved in it, while respondent D says she has not really reflected on it but she think she takes on a neutral role.

Table 5. Summary of respondents view of leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Their view on leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>“[...] I have very direct communication. I’m not the kind that needs to discuss with others, I am fast in making decisions”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>“I’m not concerned in every single detail, […] but rather, I try to coach them.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>“[...] I work more and more to use a coaching leadership, so I’m a support and doesn’t control my employees.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>“I want an open minded atmosphere, and that everyone feel like they have a saying. But everyone should know that I have the last word if we have different opinions.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>“I think availability is important, I think being seen is important, and being listened to. It’s important that as an employee, you have the opportunity to influence things.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>“I think it’s important that you listen, I also think it’s important that you make demands.”, “I think the foundation in leadership is to set frames and coach, but make sure that everyone can develop without me getting involved.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>“So as a leader I am very straightforward, and I expect the same towards me.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“[...] for me it’s about leading the way, more than being a boss.”

“Being a leader is being part of making a change, and making sure the employees develop, to be there as support but also a little bit as motivator as well.”

“[...] so for me, leadership is about having a big interest for people, and wanting to make the group develop.”

“[...] I guess it [leadership] is mainly about developing every employee to their best potential”.

“[...] it [leadership] is about coaching and accomplish the goals and result we have for our organization, but I think my most important tasks, that it so coach and lead and make others grow.

5.4 Gendered leadership

“And many said, how brave you are. A man would never get that comment, I thought.”

Respondent I, when talking about her taking a leadership position.

Various differences between women and men in the work environment is something that a majority of the interviewees have expressed during the interviews. A majority of the respondents express that they experience men to be more spontaneous and/or intuitive in their work roles. When it comes to what types of roles women and men take on in the workplace, the respondents have noticed various things. Respondent C experiences that women take on softer work tasks, as staffing and personnel issues. While respondents K, J and I experience that men tend to have more of a business role than handling personnel issues. On incentives on becoming a leader, respondent J expresses that she believes that men, more than women, become leader because it is prestigious and “cool”. Respondent K expresses that she do not like to make a difference between men and women. However, she has noticed that there are some distinct roles in the insurance industry where the person in the role tend to have certain characteristics. For example, men on higher management positions tend to possess more masculine characteristics in their leadership. Furthermore respondent K states:

“I definitely think that guys claim more space and especially in an older generation. We have very young managers in our group and as a whole, I think that is an important aspect too.”

When asked if the respondents have noticed any differences between men and women in the workplace, some of the respondents have answered that male colleagues tend to take on new tasks or roles as challenges, try things out and make faster decisions. Interviewees E, A and G mean that men tend to try things and see how they turn out, instead of
overthinking decisions or tasks before they take them on. Respondent G discusses how the differences in this appears to be between men and women:

“As a girl you often want to know everything to 110 percent before you take the next step, but if I were to generalize again, guys might know something to 60 percent, but at an interview they say that, ‘no that’s not a problem’ because they know that they will learn over time or that someone else will teach them. I think we girls have to get better at taking chances [...]”

Interviewee I and J also experience that men tend to jump into things without thinking them through and then leave any eventual mess or faultiness for someone else to take care of. Respondent J expresses it as such:

“Meanwhile guys are like, this will solve itself, both in good and in bad. [...] Some of them, they just shoot from the hip. ‘Yeah well this will work out, I probably know this’ and then they click around and do things and it turns out all crazy. And then someone else has to try to fix it.”

Just as a majority of the interviewees experience these types of attributes and actions in men, a majority of the respondents also experience certain actions and attributes in women. As can be seen in the quotes from respondents G and I, according to them, women tend to be uncertain and insecure at times, or at least not as spontaneous as men. Six of the respondents answer that women tend to be more in details, double check all information and wish to be certain that they are able to manage tasks before they proceed with them.

However, three of the respondents emphasize that they do not distinguish between men and women and that they do not believe that there are any major differences between men and women. First, two out of the three work in IT, i.e. male dominated industry, and they experience that they are very much alike their male colleagues in their behavior and actions. However, one of the respondents (L) alters her answer later and says that she is also similar to her female colleagues and that she does experience that she is more attentive than the company’s male managers.

As for the question: “Have you experienced any differences regarding leadership between you and your management colleagues, men or women?” several respondents answered that there are some differences in leadership depending on whether the leader is male or female. Two of the respondents (H and L) on the other hand, answered that they did not see any real differences in leadership between men and women. Of those who answered that they did notice differences in leadership between themselves and their colleagues, respondent E and F answered that men tend to have a more authoritarian leadership and point with their whole hand, which not is the case for female leaders. Both respondent E and F experience that the female leaders on the other hand, are better at communicating and keeping track. When continuing towards equality, respondent I talks about an experience where a group of people got asked questions on equality in theory:

“[…] there I believe that we had the same perspective, it wasn’t any question where only the women said yes or no, I experienced it as us [men and women] having the same perspective on it. But in everyday life, I would say that women take on more responsibility.”
What is notable is that four of the interviewees (D, F, I, L) bring up what type of expectations are set on them because they are women in a leadership position. This is a subject that appears without a question about it being asked. Respondent I brings up an example of women being expected to take charge of planning Christmas lunches and after work activities. She also states that there is structural expectations on women in society that translates into the workplace. Furthermore, she states that due to certain expectations she has to live with comments as this:

“[...] Different expectations on women and men in the same way as, that I often, that I have to live with the comment ‘wow how fun, wow congratulations to this position, how fun that you got it and extra fun that it’s a woman!’”

Respondent D expresses her thoughts on how she may be treated different in her role as a leader, than a man would be:

“I believe that as a female leader for a female group, I am being questioned more than a male leader would be by the female group. Possibly because I don’t point with my whole hand and tell everyone ‘now we are going to do this way’. And I have chosen that, I rather take the questions and discuss them.”

Further, respondent D said that there are other expectations on women in their leadership than men:

“Yes I think you are not expected to be as competent, as clear, that you should work more with softer work tasks, because with a man I don’t think the expectation on that is very high.”

She also expresses that the issue with different expectations on women and men in their leadership does not end at the office, but has to do with equality in society at large:

“How a group values a male and a female leadership, and how you change it, that is not only on me, more than that I have to deliver and prove myself, but you can change the attitude, the level of expectation, the way you act, under a male or a female leadership. It’s about, a now we’re talking, equality in society at large, there are no quick fixes, I feel like a really important job has been started, but there is still so much to do.”

When respondent F is describing what differences there are between her and her male colleague she describes it as:

“Of course, it might be more common that they [employees] come to me with their more private matters. I do think so.”

On the subject of expectations on male and female leaders, respondent F said:

“There is no expectation that you [a man] should have a warm leadership or anything”

Furthermore, when describing females, she experience that there are some typical expectations from society on women:

“[…] like women have to prove more [than men] in some way.”
That you are good at multitasking, to be a good listener and to analyze in a different way.”

Respondent I states what she believes to be a clear difference between men and women:

“Well women I experience to generally take on a bigger responsibility no matter if it’s a work task [or something else], I think they put more on themselves. Meanwhile the men, and foremost younger men, they are little bit more like ‘I’m just here to do my stuff’ and they are a little bit more untouchable in some way. Meanwhile women takes on a bigger commitment and a bigger responsibility, I think they feel a bigger responsibility for things.”

In line with what the other respondents have expressed, respondent L experience that there are certain expectations on her because she is a female leader:

“I just got an errand where one person wants to change manager, from one of my male colleagues to me. What this person is looking for, I believe, is someone who is, yeah nicer, kinder. But I am not. In that case it is something in the eye of the beholder, that just because I am a woman they think that I am, well yeah [nicer, more caring]. I think that what he is looking for is someone who is not as demanding [as they perceive a man to be].”

Further, respondent L believes there to be a stereotypical image from society on women to be warmer, more caring than men are and not have as high demands as a man would have. She expresses the issue as such:

“I believe that, that it has to do more with a stereotypical image in those cases, in general, that I will be more understanding, more caring, nicer.”

Respondent L also expresses that this stereotypical image is deeply rooted in society and contributes to an understanding and expectation on how women can be treated. She states that there is an expectation from people that they feel as if they have the right to lay all of their problems on a woman.

“Because I am a woman, that person feels that they have the right to put much more of their emotions and problems on me. If I were, if I were I think, if I were a man and this persons boss, you would not have felt that obvious right to do so [...]”

Both respondent I and L believe younger employees, especially males according to respondent L, tend to view them as softer leaders because they are women. They expect female leaders to be more caring and concerned for their employees well-being. Respondent L believe that young males think they can behave towards female leaders, as they have been behaving towards their mothers:

“And then they come here and they get a female boss, they think they can treat me the same [as their mother]. I’m not their mom.”

and respondent I says:
“[...] especially when there is younger people there is some parenting in that role [leadership role], a little bit, upbringing sounds harsh, that is not what I mean, but in that situation you have to be much more clear with what you are expecting from them.”

Something notable in some of the respondents answers is that they are keen to point out that they do not believe there to be any differences depending on gender between them and their closest male colleague in a management position. However, they continuously point out characteristics, activities and actions in themselves and their male colleagues that contradicts what they are saying. What the respondents believe to be true in theory is contradicted when they are to describe the real actions and actually do describe differences that become gender associated.

Four (C, I, J, K) of the respondents point out that they do more of the softer job tasks, such as: answering questions regarding staff, dealing with personal issues that the staff may have and asking how everyone really feels. They also point out that their male colleagues do not tend to these types of tasks, but more of the business natured tasks. They add that this has nothing to do with gender, but that it “just happened to be that way”. Respondent J expresses the divide she and her male colleague has made:

“These things [e.g. asking how employees feel, caring for those who do not feel well, make sure to talk to everyone, delegate and redirect tasks] in particular, he doesn’t do. But we have figured out that he is not like that as a person, it would have been strange to have two bosses who does that.”

and

“But I have a completely different approach, which may be more feminine, I have not thought about it as feminine, I have just thought about it as a different style.”

“But not everyone gets it really, that we don’t have to be the same, if we were to call it care taking or what you want to call it.”

Respondent K expresses the divide as such:

“And I am probably a little bit more, maybe pensive and it takes a little bit longer for me to make a decision, and yeah, I probably take more of the emotional responsibility between the two of us [her and her male colleague in management position]. But I would not say that it only depends on him being a man and that I'm a woman, I think it is like I talked about earlier, that it’s very individual and we are very different types of people and that maybe, it could have been the other way around.”

Many of the respondents have reflected over what differences they have noticed between themselves and their female colleagues. One subject frequently brought up by the respondents is that women do not appear to be as driven to apply for management positions, or even other positions.
Table 6. Respondents reflections on women’s work development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>“Women does not seem as driven to apply to new positions”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>“So when we come to changes, it becomes more complex and a tendency for the women to stay, We [women] stay in the role we first get educated in when start working at this company. Women are often more pleased, they don’t strive forward.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>“Why are there more men who are in management position at bigger offices, because there is exclusively men who applies, women never applies. […] I think us girls has to dare more, get braver.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>“If you announce a management position, there is often more men who apply. If you have a female coworker you feel would be suitable, then you almost have to push them [into applying]. While men who may not even be that qualified just dives in and applies.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>“We have to encourage the women. If we announce a management position or a job opening at another office and they present the prerequisites in the add. And a woman reads it and just states that ‘no I can’t apply for this’, but why couldn’t they apply? And they answer ‘because the add say it’s desirable to know the corporate side’. And I try to tell them that it’s just desirable, not required. Meanwhile men, they just see ‘corporate side’ and think, how fun I want to know that, I’ll apply. There is a huge difference between the two [women and men], I have to push the women. As a leader, I need to push them.” And “And the ladies doesn’t move, they just stay put. Meanwhile the guys move around and get new jobs.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the respondents expressed some differences between themselves and other women regarding characteristics and activities in either leadership, their industry or in relation to male leaders.

Table 7. Respondents reflection on differences among women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Differences the respondents point out regarding themselves and other women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>“I am not this mom-like type, that is probably the way you can perceive female leadership, as more caretaking.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>“I think that many female managers tries to have a male leadership style, that it’s kind of expected to get through. That’s one thing, I think many women should try to be themselves instead. […] Many women can take on a role to assert themselves in some way, in male dominated structures, and I think that can be straining, I notice sometimes that they tend to get unnecessarily tough and austere.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>“Yeah but female leaders, I think they want more dialogue. More discussion, sometimes they take it so for it becomes absurd. Because they really want everyone on board and to have a say. And then, a little bit of this ‘good girl’, if they have a deadline they will turn themselves inside out in order to get it done in time. […] I don’t experience that men do this, they would rather turn it in two days late because they didn’t have time.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>“This thoughtful trait, there is a number of women who are like that. There is not that many men who are like that [having thoughtfulness as a main trait], I believe, from my experience. There are a few. So yeah, I think there is a difference.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“When you, as a woman, enters a male dominated world, you feel sorry for yourself because you are a woman. If you, well you can read a ton that will confirm that those thoughts should be true. So you use that, ‘I feel sorry for myself’.” and “I’m allergic against that type of victimizing of yourself.”

In general the respondents wish to highlight that they do not perceive there to be gender associated differences in regards to leadership. However, when reflecting over what differences they have noticed in leaders and colleagues, several aspects appears. Thus, showing the many differences to be found in male and female leaders.

5.5 Emotional Labor and Women in Leadership Roles

When questioning the interviewees about emotional labor, all respondents mention events, tasks or behaviors that they do, or have done, that are included in the chosen definition of emotional labor. There is however divided opinions among the respondents regarding if those events, tasks or behavior truly are emotional labor. Based on their answers, five respondents (A, B, H, J and K) say they do not perform emotional labor, even though they all take extra tasks upon themselves that are not part of their actual job. For example respondent H organizes business trips and act as emotional support when at work, at the same time as she believe the concept emotional labor is outdated and it is all a matter of personality, she says:

“No, it does not take extra energy, it is all about being human really.”

and

“[…] emotional work, a part of that is part of a leader’s role when it comes to working environment, it’s pure working duties.”

Respondent A has a similar view regarding work included in the definition of emotional labor:

“But I think it [emotional labor] should be included in the role for everybody, so, but of course, that is not what I have in my job description.”

Respondent K is reflecting similarly and says emotional labor, creating well-being and increasing comfort, is part of her job. She enjoy doing extra things for the employees, such as buying presents for Valentine’s Day and Easter, planning gatherings and being more caring than the company expects her to be, and she do not consider it to be time consuming or a hassle. The same goes for respondent A who believes the tasks related to emotional labor, for example being emotional support, requires close to no time, and respondent B who says emotional labor in no way impacts her, or her leadership, this while taking on tasks that she might as well delegate, but “just wants to get done”.

On the opposite side, respondents C and D are among the seven respondents that are very aware of the emotional labor they take on. Respondent C says that she takes on so much extra responsibility that her days are disturbed due to it and she therefore has to change her priorities, which results in her working early mornings or late nights at home instead, she says:

“[…] love working when no one else is working, because then I will not get disturbed and I will not have those extra things to do.”
She continues by reflecting on how time consuming emotional labor is:

“[...] no one can really describe or put words on how much time it takes, and that is also what makes it so extremely difficult, when you are to follow up, maybe change your behavior, because it is something that, especially emotional work, it is things that are processed in parallel with everything else, so it takes energy and requires stimulation and, it makes it so extremely difficult to measure.”

Even though she experience emotional labor to be time consuming she says that she would not like herself if she did not do anything at all, she thinks she would not feel like herself, and that she believe those things are important. Further she mention how she tends to create tasks that not necessarily are tasks to begin with, but she take it upon herself because she believe it enlightens the work experience and improve the spirit in the office. There is, for example, a discussion regarding what kind of tea they should have at the office and she says the women want to upgrade the selection because it would be fun, a discussion many of the employees do not care about while she puts time and effort into finding out what kind of tea would fit the most employees. Not at all part of her actual job, she says. Respondent D have similar thoughts and says she believe emotional labor is required for the company to function. When asked if she herself ever take on extra tasks, she says that she “does it all the time”, she continues by saying:

“[...] I’m trying not to. But I don’t like when things aren’t completed, I don’t like when things are missed, or are halfway finished, then, it often happens that I do it myself”

Respondent G also believes that without emotional labor and everything that goes with it, the business will suffer and it will take energy and time from the employees. She says that she rather change her priorities and take care of things in the office, water plants, buy coffee and clean the kitchen - just to increase the well being of her employees, than do her own actual tasks. She believe it makes the employees feel comfortable and thereby can make them do their best job during the best circumstances. Someone else who says that she changes her priorities is respondent E. She values availability and if an employee needs help, regardless if it is work related or something private, she will stop what she is doing in order to help him or her, which results in her working at home and during the evenings instead. When asked why, she mentions that she feel responsible to solve potential problems and to keep the employees in a good mood. Further, when asked what would happen if she were not to take on these tasks, she says that she could do that, try not to see everything that is going on, but, she continues:

“But I know that whatever is happening over there, eventually it will affect my job anyway.”

The respondent continues by talking about how she is very keen to help others and she is equally eager to do so whether it is problems with someone’s computer, or if someone needs support with family problems, or help with planning an after work.

When discussing potential reasons for taking on emotional labor with the respondents, there are widely spread opinions. Respondents A, B, C, H and K mention explicitly that the amount of emotional labor one takes upon themselves is related with one’s personality. Respondents E, J and L implies that it is based on their characteristics, and link it to personality perhaps being involved. Respondent D says that women simply tend
to take on softer tasks, which she defines as, for example, buying pastries and flowers for someone’s birthday. How the organization is structured is the most obvious affecting factor according to respondent F and respondents G and I believe it is because of the value they put on their employees feeling safe and comfortable.

Some of the respondents compare how initiatives regarding for example Easter eggs, Christmas gifts and birthdays flowers, things included in emotional labor, are divided between men and women at their workplace. Respondent A believes that women tend to take the initial initiative but that men can help, she says:

“[...] but when Easter eggs are being made, or when it is those kind of things, then it rarely is male participants in the management group who initiates it. But then, they are equally good at maybe executing it, but it maybe is not them who comes up with the idea.”

She does moreover say that the amount of emotional labor someone takes upon themselves is not based on gender nor position in the company.

Respondent H says that she reminds her male boss to remember and put things together, like Christmas bags, and respondent J says that her male managing colleague does not take on any extra work in order to enhance the well-being at the workplace, and she says this is due them being different, having different personalities. She is for example the one the employees talk to when they are feeling down, and she can thereafter pass on that information to her colleague for him to be aware of, but he does not himself seek the information. Also respondent K says her male managing colleague does not take any initiatives when it comes to behavior identified as emotional labor, but when she organizes events or fix presents he shows his appreciation and finds it to be a good idea.

Out of approximately 45 employees at C’s workplace, there are five women. She says that all five of these have a tendency to take on extra responsibility to make the workplace enjoyable. Out of the 40 men, she says that four or five of them, always the same ones, take on the same kind of additional tasks. Both respondents C and F believes that their employees tend to seek them out when in need of emotional support while foremost taking to their male managing colleagues when having more technical questions. Respondent F believe it is due to her being expected to be more caring since she is a women, she says:

“But actually, it might be more common that they [employees] turn to me [instead of male colleague] with their private issues, it is.”

When discussing emotional labor with our respondents two of them (A and D) mention how they regularly take their employees that are on sick or maternal leave out for lunch, or invite them to after work activities or parties. This to make them feel included and still part of the office even though they are not working at the time being. Respondent A says:

“Yes but, I try to call them who are home, and go out and eat lunch with them, invite them when we do things together, so you still feel included.”

All additional respondents too work actively to make everyone feel included, a behavior that is both part of their leadership as well as emotional labor. When being asked what impact they experience emotional labor to have on their leadership many of them mention time. Respondent G reflects:
“It takes time from other things, but at the same time, I realize that it has to be done. But you can’t get stuck on it, only the soft things, because if we don’t deliver and don’t do our other tasks so, it would result in us taking away our right to exist, the office is here as long as we make business.”

Several of the respondents find emotional labor influencing their time, they also find the tasks included in emotional labor to be important for the everyday business. Some say it does not require any additional time while some deny the existence of emotional labor. Similar to what respondent C says, which is mentioned earlier:

“[…J it (emotional labor) is things that are processed in parallel with everything else, so it takes energy and requires stimulation and, it makes it so extremely difficult to measure.”

Respondent E says:

“It is difficult pinpointing how much time it (emotional labor) actually take since you don’t really think about it while doing it”
6 Analysis and Discussion

In this chapter we analyze and discuss the empirical findings in relation to the theoretical framework with suitable literature and theories with the purpose of answering our research question; “What impact does emotional labor have on women in their leadership role?”. The chapter is, based on the empirical results, divided into the following themes: Contextual Background, The Importance of Personality in Leadership, Women’s Perspective on Leadership, Gendered Leadership and Emotional Labor and Women in Leadership Roles.

6.1 Contextual Background

The theme is set from what the respondents saw as important to enlighten us with and how their industry and various social factors as upbringing and interest have impacted their leadership or their perspective on this subject. We analyze how these aspects impact their answers and puts it in relation to suitable theories.

Leading with the question of “why did you want to participate in this study”, the majority of the respondents answered that they wished to participate because of their interest in the subject. While a minority answered that they wished to stay on good terms with the university and therefore, said yes. From these answers, we interpret it as with a various interest for the subject, the respondents will have reflected over the topics in various ways. With a higher interest in leadership, it is natural for the respondents to have reflected more on the topic and thereby provide deeper answers in the interviews. Taking interest, or lack of interest, into consideration when analyzing further answers from the respondents throughout the interviews, it becomes clear that with lack of interest the answers are shorter and less developed. Another distinction in the answers from the respondents who lack interest is that they stay close minded and do not open up for any further reflection. We interpret it as them not wanting to explore for example, emotional labor further, nor reflect over the subject. But rather stay firm of their first thoughts on the subjects. Thus, some answers does not provide as much for the thesis as others, which thereby can impact the dept of the findings. On the other hand, we received deep and developed answers from the majority of the respondents who had an interest in the subject. Therefore, we do not believe that the lack of interest will have a significant impact on the thesis as a whole.

Further, we asked the respondents to tell us a little bit about their background. From the answers provided to this question several of the respondents reflected on how their upbringing might have influenced their leadership role. Some of the respondents had a clear connection to their upbringing or if they have younger or older siblings, with their view on emotional labor. We interpret their own reflections regarding upbringing as somewhat perceptive as they tie their upbringing back to their leadership style and emotional labor. Thus, providing us with an additional perspective of how they view leadership and emotional labor in relation to themselves.

Since we have chosen to conduct our interviews in four well chosen industries (see section 1.4), industries in the private sector that are neither male nor female dominated, there will naturally be differences among the industries that can affect the answers from the respondents. Particularly the respondents working in the IT industry, which is male dominated, the respondents have reflected over what the male dominance do to their perspective on leadership and emotional labor. Some respondents express that they may
have been blinded to aspects regarding emotional labor or leadership style due to the influence of the industry. Bass (2008, p. 1168) argues that leaders will be more and more influenced in their leadership by the people they are leading. Thus, if there is a high male dominance in the industry, the preferred way of leading will be influenced by that male dominance. In relation to the respondents, we interpret it as the respondents in male dominated industries being influenced in their leadership and in their perspective of emotional labor due to the influence of what kind of employees they have. Taking the expectations employees tend to have on female versus male leaders (e.g. Alimo-Metcalfe 2010) into consideration, we believe that the leadership and perspective on emotional labor will be affected by both factors.

Those respondents working in a more equal industry witness that the lower positions often are occupied by women, and higher positions by men. As we believe there is an affect on leadership from the influence and expectations from employees in a male dominated industry, we believe there will be one in a more equal industry as well (see figure 5). With more female employees, we believe that there will be a more emotional leadership requested. This due to women being more prone to perform emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983; Daniels, 1987; Erickson, 1993, 2005), and the management style preferred highly by women is being inclusive and people oriented (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 642). Hence, indicating that the industries composition can affect the outcome of leadership and emotional labor.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 5. How different expectations impact ones leadership.**

Furthermore, auditing/ accounting, insurance, finance and IT are all industries that work more with numbers, statistics, consulting and concrete matters, rather than working towards people per se. Previous studies have mainly been conducted on industries that involve plenty of human contact and where surface or deep acting occurs to a greater
extent (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993, p. 89), such as among nurses (Lu et al., 2019) or service agents (Ashforth & Tomuik, 2000). In relation to the occupations the respondents have, it is difficult to tell whether they frequently use surface or deep acting, as surface acting (Hochschild, 1983, p. 33) for example is used when smiling at a troublesome customer and deep acting (Hochschild, 1983, p. 33) is for example used when a nurse has worked long hours and is really overwhelmed, but suppresses those emotions in order to keep taking care of new patients. The type of occupations the respondents have rather involves numbers and concrete matters. Surface acting may however occur from time to time, when the respondents are meeting with customers. Due to these circumstances of not occupying a caring job, they may not be as susceptible or attentive to emotional labor as they would have been in a more caring profession. However, it is worth noting that the actual profession and leadership needs to be separated. Although, the profession does not involve a high amount of human contact, or caring contact, leadership means being in contact and being caring. Therefore, the respondent does have contact with emotional labor through their leadership.

In Bass’ (2008, p. 1159) prediction of how future leadership will look like, he emphasize on individual consideration, attention to followers and declining of hierarchies. Therefore, according to Bass, emotional awareness and attentiveness to employees and colleagues will become more important. In relation to the respondents, we interpret this as the emotional part of leadership becoming more important and being attentive to the individuals instead of the group. Which therefore implies that the leadership side of the respondents job, will continue to be of a caring nature. As of now, we interpret it as the respondents aiming to use and somewhat tending to use a coaching leadership, which in Sweden is one of the most preferred leadership styles (Zander, 1997, cited in Westerlund et al., 2010, p. 76).

Due to these circumstances we therefore find it important to keep in mind what type of interest, background and industry the respondents work in when analyzing our findings, as it does seem to influence both their leadership and perspective and/or performance of emotional labor.

6.2 The Importance of Personality in Leadership

Throughout the interviews, the participants have mentioned personality. This has mostly been in a context where they describe themselves or their coworkers as leaders, for example one respondent who says she and her male managing coworker have divided the work with her doing more emotional labor, because that is more alike her personality. Personality has also been brought up when discussing emotional labor, some meaning that the amount of emotional labor one take upon themselves is based solely on one’s personality. Discussing personality and its importance can be difficult, it is a broad subject and, as seen in the interviews, opinions regarding how much it is reflected in one’s behavior varies. Close to all respondents mention personality as one of the most important factors impacting emotional labor and many express how they are not too keen on differentiating between men and women just based on their gender. However, all of them keep talking about women and men from different perspectives, saying that women tend to act one way whereas men tend to act another way. For example when asked about leadership they have the same generalized view on typical female and typical male leadership, female leaders being more caring and male leaders being more authoritarian. This simultaneously as they, especially four of the respondents, are determined to not link behavior to gender, only to one’s personality.
One of the respondents mention how she believe one personality type is overrepresented by women. The personality type she refer to is one that is caring and inclusive, characteristics that often are part of emotional labor. She mean the overrepresentation in women by one personality type is the reason why women to a larger extent tend to take on extra work. Here, she is not talking about different personalities, but that one personality type is more prone to perform emotional labor, and this personality type is more common amongst women. Even when trying not to differentiate between men and women, and just focus on personality, it still comes down to gender and one gender being more likely to behave a certain way.

It is an unfortunately established trend that between men and women, women have been seen as the weaker gender. Even though most countries are working towards a more equal society, and especially Sweden who is at the forefront, there are still areas where female characteristics are linked to being less successful, whereas stereotypical male characteristics on the other hand are being seen as more successful, for example when managing a company (Schein, 1975, p. 343). We have observed how the respondents are very careful to not link their behavior directly with them being women, more saying that women tend to do this and that, while they themselves are not. It seems like they do not want to identify with the personalities and characteristics that often are, when generalized, more common amongst women. This will be discussed further in chapter 7.5 where distancing are brought up, but a possible conclusion we can draw from this is that our respondents want to distant themselves from the general female personalities. There is a probability this is due to those personality types historically being viewed as less fortunate and less successful in leading roles, resulting in the participants not wanting to label themselves similarly.

We earlier mentioned how the definition and view on leadership has transformed over the years (Reicher et al., 2005, p. 550), transformational and charismatic leadership, that emphasizes emotions in leadership more than previous theories have done, being the most common leadership theories to study (Dinh et al., (2014, p. 40). It goes without saying that emotions are highly individual, which brings us back to personality. Due to the newer, more emotional, view on leadership the respondents reflections about one’s personality being a big part of leadership is supported by previous research, however what the studies does not support is the idea that personality is the only factor that is important and impact when leading, nor does studies support the opinion that personality excludes gender completely, which some respondents like to believe (e.g. Schein, 1973; Daniels, 1987; Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 644).

The way the respondents reflect on, and view, personalities creates an ambiguity regarding it. On the one hand, we observed that they do not want to differentiate between men and women but, on the other hand, they all mention differences between genders several times during the interviews. One reason for why they keep on emphasizing the importance of personality could possibly be due to the always occurring discussion regarding gender equality. They do not want to contribute to increasing gaps between genders by stating that there are different behaviors or characteristics linked to only one. This would however contradict how the majority of the respondents mention certain attributes they see in other women. At the same time, it is obvious that personality is part of what we do and how we behave and it is understandable that the respondents mention personality when discussing their leadership role. But again, personality is a broad subject and difficult to discuss from just one point of view. The part we find the most interesting with the respondents answers is regarding their eagerness to exclude genders more than
it is about their willingness to include personality and we believe this finding will contribute to the answer of our research question.

6.3 Women’s Perspective on Leadership

The findings in this study are based on twelve interviews, conducted with women who all have leading positions. They are all leaders with responsibility over one or several groups of people and how they perform in terms of meeting organizational goals. In table 8, the most common traits the respondents mention during the discussion regarding leadership is summarized.

Table 8. Characteristics the respondents link to leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Big strokes</th>
<th>Straightforward</th>
<th>Considerate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>Result oriented</td>
<td>Make others into stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative</td>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegating</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Encourage participation</td>
<td>Motivating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Adaptable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all participants say they intend to practice a coaching leadership, supporting their employees and not getting too involved in others assignments, in order to give their employees a chance to grow. They also link coaching leadership to personality traits they later on use when describing typical male leadership, for example the usage of big strokes, or having clear communication. However, as the interviews proceed, all respondents provide us with answers that show how they take on a transformational leadership style, regardless of them being able to notice it themselves. Transformational leadership emphasizes individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealized influence (Avolio et al., 1991, p. 9), at the same time as it puts more focus on emotions at work (Yukl, 1999, p. 285-286). It is a more caring leadership style that started to become more popular during the last couple of years (Dinh et al., 2014, p. 40). Simply put, coaching leadership and transformational leadership are quite different, and this becomes interesting due to our respondents view on their own leadership. In table 8 there is a mixture of personality traits our respondents have mentioned in relation to leadership, some of them being representative for a transformational leadership (caring, considerate, supportive, controlling), while some are more related to a coaching leadership (big strokes, result oriented, direct). Naturally, personality traits are not linked to one leadership only, and having an coaching leadership does not mean you are unable to have traits that are more common for a transformational leadership. However, what sparks our interest is the respondents view on their leadership, in comparison to how it actually appears to be.

The respondents view themselves as coaching leaders who stay out of the way and let their employees do their job themselves, without too much directive. However, in the next sentence respondents mention how they themselves complete tasks because they know
best or because they have a need to make sure it is done correctly. This behavior, that many of the respondents share, implies there is some sort of need for control, a need for control that hinders them from delegating, resulting in them taking on tasks that, by definition, not is part of their leadership role. Baruch et al. (2004) studied the need for control to see if it had any correlation to performance, but found it not to be of any significance. They did however find the need for control to be related to the need for achievement, which in turn was found to be related to performance (Baruch et al., 2004, p. 405). As found in our study, many of the respondents fail to delegate tasks that are included in emotional labor, things like buying birthday presents, bake for a meetings or plan a trip, due to their need for control, because they have the belief it will be done better with them doing it, they have a need to perform in all aspects. What they do not reflect on is that letting their need for control make them partake in emotional work results in them having less time for their actual, defined, working tasks. Their performance in regards to organizational tasks may thereby potentially decrease due to them performing well when it comes to emotional work, work they neither get paid nor appreciated for.

So far, we know that leadership types can not be defined with the help from some personality traits, and we know that the respondents are not completely aware of how their leadership actually unfolds. What we see is a difference when it comes to how the respondents believe their leadership is and how it actually is. This raises the question of whether the respondents are answering the questions regarding their leadership from a perspective of how they wish it were, how they are striving to be or how it actually is. This can be either consciously or unconsciously but it is difficult to determine based on the one face to face interview we have had with each participant. Further, we know there is a need for control, which may be due to having an ambition to perform, but which actually results in them, instead, taking on more emotional work instead.

Additionally, noted in our findings and related to social identity theory is the importance of the relationship between a leader and his or her followers. The theory implies that your followers influence what position you end up having (Tajfel, 1972, p. 69), leaving room for the assumption that your leadership should be close to, or in line with, the expectations of the followers. When asking the participants about leadership there is a similarity on how they aim to coach, motivate and support their followers. If linking this behavior to the social identity theory, it would imply that the respondents who say they focus on for example motivating their employees, in turn have employees that are in need of, of want to be, motivated. Linking this to emotional labor, which is when you have a certain behavior, or do certain things, in order to fit the expectations of your workplace (Beck, 2018), there is room to argue for the behavior of the leader, the adaptations she makes, is emotional labor when from a social identity theory perspective.

The respondents mention a variety of factors affecting one’s leadership, for example: the amount of employees and their personalities, geographic location and the amount of customers. What the factors they all have in common is their ability to change. Employees change, geographical location change if one moves to a different office and the amount of customers change due to where you yourself are located, or how the business is going. This means that one’s work environment change, and if you are to listen to Watson (2001, p. 10) that means that a leader is something you are becoming. Leadership being an ongoing process that constantly change leads to difficulty in pinpointing what it includes and how it unfolds, which potentially can be part of the reason for the ambiguous and somewhat contradictory responses we have received from our respondents. Being a leader over different groups of people will result in different kinds of leadership, this is both
mentioned by our respondents and supported by Watson (2001). Inevitably, this will result in our respondents having different leadership styles, potentially having an impact on how difficult is it to determine the direct effect of emotional labor if wanting to do so in general terms. However, with the help from our interviews, and knowing more about the respondents we believe the fundamental organizational environment of our respondents not to be too different, thereby not having a major impact on the findings.

In the beginning of this chapter, we mention how our respondents describe their leadership as coaching, further using typical male characteristics when defining a coaching leadership. Some of these characteristics are however found to be contrary to how the respondents actually seem to lead. Bartunek et al. (2000) have studied a dilemma within leadership, including empowerment, leadership behavior and paradoxical work, which offer some reflections on the area. It has been found that women who take initiatives are less likely to be rated highly as leaders, whereas a nurturing leadership, a typical female leadership, often receives better ratings (Vroom & Jago, 1995, p. 178). This creates the dilemma on how to act as a leader. On the one side there is Jago and Vroom (1995) who says women with a caring leadership is higher ranked than those who take initiative, but on the other side is the belief that male characteristics is better for a successful management (Schein, 1975, p. 343). The dilemma being: what is most appropriate - taking on the typical female leadership or turn to the typical male characteristics? The employees expecting the former, and the management the latter. We have found this dilemma ending up in the respondents saying, and potentially also believing, that they have a coaching leadership type that is associated while typical male characteristics, while they actually, at least to some extent, uses the transformational leadership type which is more common amongst women (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 788).

In summary, we see that there is paradoxical work in the respondent’s leadership. They want to give their employee’s a chance to grow, at the same as they have a need for control. This seemingly being the result of them wanting to perform their best, but actually ending up in them performing emotional labor. Further, the relation between them as leaders and their followers have also appeared to impact how much emotional work they take on. Trying to meet their follower’s anticipations while at the same not slipping too far away from their own beliefs can potentially result in them engaging in emotional labor, doing things they themselves necessarily does not seem as crucial, while their followers might. Finally, and maybe most surprisingly, is the ongoing discussion regarding what kind of leadership our respondents have, which appear to indirectly be related to gender and typical gendered characteristics. A further explanation of this is being offered in the following chapter. With these presented findings, we see that the leadership the majority of our respondents have is a great reason to why they take on emotional labor.

6.4 Gendered Leadership

Analyzing our respondent’s answers regarding differences in men and women in the workplace, we interpret and note certain distinctive differences. Some of the major differences the respondents point out are that men tend to be more spontaneous, taking on tasks as challenges and risk taking in their behavior. While they perceive women to be more cautious and to feel the need to be 110 percent certain of tasks they take on. We interpret this as there being certain expectations on men and women that allows for men to take on tasks as challenges, while women feel the need to be very certain. Some of the
respondents believes that there are societal structures which influence women to feel demanded to prove more in order to be seen as competent. Several of the respondents witness that they do experience that women have to prove more in order to be seen as competent, while men does not get questioned in their leadership as women does. What we can state is that there is an issue regarding the different expectations that are set on men and women. According to Sturm et al., (2014, p. 660) women still tend to underestimate themselves and their abilities. Quinn (2004; cited in Sturm et al., 2014, p. 660) means that the invisible barriers from culture or workplace structures can cause overly concern in female leaders to meet colleagues or other people’s expectations. This speaks for the reflection on women having to prove themselves in order to be seen as competent. We also interpret this is as the most reasonable cause for the issue.

Further expectations the respondents states are that women are expected to be caring, have a warm leadership, tend to others, be a good listener, and to be nurturing. These expectations are all connected to what can be expressed as emotional labor. According to Daniels (1987, p. 409) women are expected, in addition to their regular tasks, to perform emotion work, and to be supportive towards their peers (1987, p. 410). Schein (1973, p. 100) also describes being understanding and helpful as typical characteristics ascribed to women, which too is reflected by the type of characteristics the respondents use to describe women. Erickson (1993, p. 890) describes being emotionally supportive and caretaking as so closely related to being a woman, it is seen as a part of what a woman are and not as an activity they do. Thus, making the activities not only expected to be performed, but expected to be a part of women as they are. We also interpret it as women to be assumed to be better at these types of activities since it is closely related to what is seen as feminine attributes. Hartley (Wilding, 2018) means that due to emotional labor being more prominent in women, and women being assumed to be better at this type of activities, women will also be more inclined to do them. Thus, under building the expectations on women to be caring, warm, attentive, and nurturing. Due to expectations, it is not unlikely in our interpretation, that it will color women’s behavior and what women perceive as important to live up to. For example: some of the respondents mentions working with people and being people oriented as important parts of their leadership in contrast to male colleagues. These attributes are listed as what females perceive as important attribute in a manager in Alimo-Metcalfe’s (2010, p. 642) research on the subject. However, these attributes are only to be true by some of the respondents and may not reflect the entire response group.

Erickson (1993, p. 890) points out that many women tend to believe that emotion work occur spontaneously, but that it is not always the case. Thus, implying that emotion work may not be a natural feminine characteristic as many have believed. Some of the respondents witness that they perform many activities such as, being highly attentive to coworkers, listening to colleagues’ problems and so forth, which takes time and effort from their actual work tasks, all of the tasks being outside of their regular attentive tasks as leaders. We interpret it as the extra emotion work tend to keep the respondents from performing their actual job due to the interference emotional labor can be. Therefore, when men do not perform emotion work to the same extent, men and women will have unequal opportunities at doing their job. Women are, according to the findings, and according to the literature (e.g. Daniels, 1987; Erickson, 1993) expected to be more nurturing and to be better listeners, which is reflected in their work tasks. Thus, reflecting the expectations on women in what type of work tasks they are assigned to or take on. Men on the other hand, are seen as more forward and risk taking, which could be seen as more suitable for business natured tasks. Hochschild (1983, p. 163) argues that men are
taught to suppress insecurity and act brave, which also speaks for why men can be seen as more suitable for business natured tasks. Hence, including more emotion work into women’s day-to-day job, and leaving men to their regular job tasks. Hartley (Wilding, 2018) mean this can detract women from their career-goals and keep them from climbing the work ladder. Further, Hartley (Wilding, 2018) points out that even if there is not outspoken expectation of women performing emotional labor in the workplace, the underlying expectation due to one’s gender is still present. Which supports our interpretation of how the division could have an impact on women in the workplace.

We can state from the findings that the respondents seem to take on a more relation-oriented leadership role than their male equivalents. For several of the respondents, personnel and company values and culture is a part of their leadership description. Many of the respondents pointed out that they take on more of the softer work tasks than their male colleagues in management position. Out of these respondents some were content with the division, and others does not seem to have reflected over the division. What they have in common however, is that they do not believe that the division has anything to do with gender. When analyzing the findings, it becomes clear to us that there seems to be a relatively strong division between genders regarding what is included in their work tasks. In relation to the previous section, we can state that expectations on women are somewhat reflected in their work tasks. At least in regards to the division of taking on personnel tasks or not.

From the interviews we are able to tell that the respondents are not keen on highlighting their own femininity or feature themselves as women, but rather their personality. To us, it is understandable to not wish to be too highly associated with your gender, or to be defined as your gender. However, we interpret it as the respondents trying to scale down their femininity in order to not be seen as feminine. Several of the respondents points out traits, activities and characteristics they do not appreciate in women or female leaders. Such as discussing matters until it gets absurd, women victimizing themselves, being overly considerate about everyone being heard or included. Activities closely related to femininity or feminine activities are not seen as skilled or learned, but as an expression of general femininity according to Daniels (1987, p. 408). Therefore, we interpret the distancing as a way to avoid not being seen as skilled or learned. If feminine activities tend to be seen as lesser than male, the respondents may subconsciously avoid those types of activities. To be seen as feminine or to possess characteristics mainly found in women, can be seen as inconsistent with a successful leadership. Schein (1975, p. 343) found in her research that women too see typically male characteristics as the most consistently related to successful management. Distancing themselves from female attributes and characteristics can be a way for women to be seen as just as capable leaders as men. We therefore interpret it as the respondents aiming to match what is generally seen as consistent with successful leadership, which tends to be more male characteristics. By toning the femininity down, it can become easier to live up to the picture or expectation of what characteristics are most associated with strong leadership, such as being direct, objective and well informed (Schein 1973, p. 98).

However, we also interpret it as some of the respondents wishing to not take on too many typically male leadership characteristics. According to Alimo-Metcalfe (2010, p. 642) females perceive participation, being people oriented and that performance is improved when individuals feel good about themselves (2010, p. 644). Which are some of the attributes the respondents use to describe their own leadership as well. Thus, leading to ambivalence in what the respondents perceive as successful leadership and what type of
leadership they actually perform. Some respondents describe this as being too authoritarian or too tough, which they express that some male colleagues are, attributes that Alimo-Metcalfe (2010, p. 644) describe as more prominent among male leaders. Bartunek et al., (2000, p. 590) brings out the issue of the type of leadership that is seen as appropriate for women, such as being nurturing, and how that type of leadership often is rated highly by female subordinates. Further, Bartunek et al., (2000, p. 590) argues that nurturing leadership is not always seen as compatible with classical leadership characteristics as taking initiative and empowerment. We believe that the respondents aims to seek a balance between their own female side and what characteristics are seen as suitable for a leader. We interpret this as the respondents trying to balance expectations on leadership versus their own view on leadership and combine them in their own work. Which we in turn believe can clash and make the leadership style unclear both for the respondent but also for coworkers.

What we can tell from the findings is that the respondents talk about differences and leadership in one way, where they reject certain activities and behaviors such as discussing issues too much and not taking fast decisions, being overly considerate. However, the respondents are also somewhat guilty of these activities and behavior. Thus, being ambiguous in what they are saying and what they are actually doing. Further, we believe we see a paradox in what is asked from a leader and what the respondents actually can live up to. We interpret it as the respondents trying to live up to a “either-or” and “both” in their leadership, where they wish to live up to every expectation of leadership. Gaim and Wåhlin (2016, p. 42) argues that when trying to engage competing demands it will create tension, due to the “either-or” outlook. Which further results in suppression of one part in favor for intensification in the other. Thus, supporting the tensions and clash we believe to see in the respondents perspective and actions in leadership.

In summary, we believe there to be a clear division of men and women and their roles in the companies that the respondents belong to. We interpret the findings as there being more women that are relation oriented in their leadership and work, than men. Further, we interpret it as men being more business oriented in their leadership and work, than women. We also interpret it as there being clear differences in what expectations there are for men and women in their leadership and the issues that comes with it.

6.5 Emotional Labor and Women in Leadership Roles

Emotional labor was defined as a theme by us from the start and has been kept as a theme throughout the thesis. Under this section we wish to analyze the findings further and compare them to foremost, the theories presented in the theoretical point of reference. We wish to examine whether the previous theories are still up-to-date and current in relation to our findings and what potential differences there may be.

The respondents knowledge regarding the concept and theory of emotional labor turned out to be limited. This was somewhat expected for us as we understood from the beginning of this thesis that the concept of emotional labor was not widely known, at least not in Sweden. Therefore, as previously described, we started off every interview with a short description of emotional labor from different perspectives and what our chosen definition was. This to make sure that all of the respondents got the same understanding of emotional labor. Even though none of them were familiar with the concept in particular, almost all of the respondents could relate to the concept once described and a
clear majority of the respondents were aware of the emotional labor they perform, and could distinguish emotional labor from what was included in their leadership role.

What we can state from the findings is that to a great extent, the respondents found emotional labor disturbing and that it takes time from their regular work tasks. Some respondents express that even if emotional labor is not performed in practical activities, it is still present and an ongoing process in their mind and therefore takes up important time. Emotional labor is very much ongoing psychological processes and managing feelings (Hochschild, 1983; Daniels, 1987; Erickson, 1993, 2005), which may be overlooked for practical activities and therefore not accounted for as labor. Several of the respondents expressed that they perform emotional labor in order to increase well-being, safety, comfortability and ambience for the employees. The activities described are listed as typical emotional labor (Daniels, 1987, p. 409; Erickson, 1993, p. 888). Some of the respondents say that if they try to avoid emotional labor, or delegate some activities related to emotional labor, to others, it still ends up on their table to deal with. Daniels (1987, p. 408) argues that activities connected to emotional labor is also highly connected to women and femininity. Thus, through the close connection and expectation on women to perform emotional labor, emotional labor finds its way back even when avoided or delegated. We interpret it as emotional labor being too closely related to womanhood, for women to be able to avoid it. Some respondents state that even if emotional labor takes time, they do not wish to be without it, because it feels as part of their personality. Erickson (1993, p. 890) argues that emotion work and providing emotional support is closely connected to what women are, not only as an activity they do. It is possible in our interpretation that the respondents feel as if it is closely connected to them as persons, due to the societal close connection between emotional labor and femininity.

Many respondents mention that they take the first initiative or remind their male colleagues about tasks related to emotional labor. Hence, managing emotional labor for male management colleagues too. Hochschild (1983, p. 11) argues that females manage their emotions to a higher degree than men, and are also more accomplished to do so. Which could be the reason for why the respondents tend to take responsibility and manage emotional labor to a greater extent than their male colleagues. Erickson (2005, p. 348) means that women feel held accountable for emotion work to a greater extent than men. Which we interpret as the respondents being when they take responsibility for their male colleagues’ emotional labor as well as their own. Daniels (1987, p. 410) means that it is expected from women to help men express their emotions. Which also supports our interpretation of the respondents being expected to take charge of emotional labor. Some of the respondents argues that their male colleagues do not have an emotional personality and are therefore not taking on any emotional labor. Thus, supporting our notion, and agreeing with previous literature, on emotional labor being closely connected to a feminine personality.

There is a difference in how employees treat their leaders due to their gender. It can be seen in the way subordinates ask for help, deal with issues or who they lay their personal problems on. Several respondents express that employees are more inclined to turn to them regarding private matters, than their male management colleagues. In turn, employees are more inclined to turn to their male management colleagues regarding technical or business related issues. We interpret it as due to femininity and womanhood being closely related to caretaking, nurturing, listening and expressing empathy (Daniels, 1987; Erickson, 1993, 2005) employees are more prone to turn to their female manager regarding emotion related issues. On the other hand, we interpret it as likely that
employees are prone to turn to male managers with business related questions, due to male characteristics being closely related to successful management (Schein, 1973, 1975; Schein et al., 1996).

In relation to who employees are prone to turn to regarding different issues, some respondents express that they get stuck with softer work tasks, but naturally they still have to deliver business since it is the core of their job. Meanwhile, their male colleagues does not get “stuck” with softer work tasks, but can focus on doing business. We believe that this is due to the circumstances described above; expectations on females, performing more emotional labor, and doing emotion work both for themselves and their male management colleagues. Hartley (Wilding, 2018) means that due to these circumstances, women does not have the same opportunities at climbing the work ladder as men have, because they are being distracted by performing emotional labor. We interpret it as both emotion work and business landing on females to take care of. Thereby, placing women in a position where they do not have the same chance at doing business to the same extent as their male colleagues.

What we also see in the findings is that the leadership style the respondents use, is connected to emotional labor. Several of the respondents tend to use an emotional leadership, or a transformational leadership. Making other people feel good about their work is of high importance for several of the respondents and describes their leadership style with words as being available, making other people the star and being people oriented. A leadership style matching the transformational leadership Alimo-Metcalfe (2010) describes as prominent among women, and the type of activities female managers perceive to increase good performance (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010, p. 644). Emotional labor in the workplace is much about being people oriented and making others feel good about themselves (Hochschild, 1983; Daniels, 1987; Erickson, 1993, 2005; Wilding, 208). Thus, connecting the respondents leadership style and emotional labor. As described in section 6.3, many of the respondents have multiple expectations on what type of leadership they should perform. Thus, having to live up to multiple expectations and form themselves after those expectations. Hochschild (Beck, 2018) means that this too, is emotional labor, which indicates that the respondents are actually performing more emotional labor than they are aware of just by trying to form themselves after the expectations.

What is worth noting are the respondents who express that they do not perform emotional labor. Perhaps, these respondents do not perform emotional labor at all, or at least have not reflected over which of their activities could be related to emotional labor. Erickson (1993, p. 890) points out that emotional labor does not occur spontaneously for everyone and may not be as prominent as one could believe. We interpret it as this may being the case for these respondents and we are aware that emotional labor, or having an emotional personality is not something that every woman possess. A few of the respondents express that their type of leadership includes what can be seen as emotional labor. We interpret it as these respondents having an emotional leadership or the type of leadership as Alimo-Metcalfe (2010, p. 642) describes. We interpret the answers from a few other respondents as them distancing themselves from emotions in their leadership and are therefore (according to themselves) not performing any emotional labor. The reason for this could, in our interpretation, lie in the distancing from activities and emotions being closely related to femininity. Daniels (1987, p. 408) means that those type of activities are not seen as skilled or learned. Thereby, the respondents may detach themselves from those activities because they are not seen as skilled or learned.
As discussed in 1.3.2 Researchers Preconception, and in 3.2.1 Hochschild’s definition, Hochschild’s theory on emotional labor has not been entirely applicable for our findings. Which was somewhat expected due to it being aged and conducted in a somewhat culturally different setting than the work environment our respondents work in. As can be seen in the analysis, we have not been able to connect Hochschild’s definition on emotional labor to as great extent as the other theories. Although for example, Daniels’ definition also is aged and more focused on the home life, it has proved to be applicable for our findings. We believe the reason for this to be due to Hochschild’s definition having the perspective of approaching and treating other people. Whereas Daniels’, Erickson’s and Hartley’s definitions describes more about managing emotions and the outcomes or consequences of it.
7. Conclusions and recommendations

In this final chapter we present the conclusion of our study. The conclusion is based on the findings and analysis in the two previous chapters which help us answer our research question “what impact does emotional labor have on women in their leadership role?”. Further we present how we believe this study will contribute theoretically and practically, and lastly our limitations and suggestions for future research is presented.

7.1 Conclusion

With this thesis we wish to answer the research question: what impact does emotional labor have on women in their leadership role? Based on the analysis, which is the result of our empirical findings, we present a model (figure 6) to help support the understanding of our main conclusions.

The starting point of our conclusion is the varying expectations one have on one another, depending on your gender. This is due to a social structure that we encounter daily, both in the news and on social media, which differentiates men and women in a wide range of areas, leadership not being an exception. We see from our findings that depending on your gender, the surroundings have different expectations on your leadership. Additionally, there is a difference in the amount of expectations. As seen in the figure above, men in their leading roles have homogeneous expectations on them. This is found through previous literature (Schein, 1975, p. 343) as well as it is supported by the respondents. However, as a women in a leading role the expectations vary depending on who they are from, they are heterogeneous. Our study suggest that expectations from the
board or management include having thick skin and provide good results, whereas expectations from followers, the employees, is softer traits like being caring and supportive.

The next step in the conclusion model is women in a leading role and the type of leadership the wish to use and what type of leadership they actually use. We can state that leadership style and desirable leadership style seem to stem from what type of expectations are set on male and female leaders from the workplace and societal structures. Partly from what the literature says on the various expectations people have on men and women as leaders, and partly from the respondents reflections regarding the subject.

The respondents aim to use a coaching leadership, and they believe themselves that they are. However, the respondents rather tend to use a transformational leadership, according to the findings. Coaching leadership is therefore represented with a dotted line in the model. Coaching leadership can be seen as desirable for the respondents as a leadership style since it is relatively cohesive with the type of characteristics that are ascribed to male leaders and generally what is seen as successful management. What can be stated from the respondents answers in relation to the literature is that transformational leadership is used to a greater extent than coaching leadership, within this group. The respondents tend to be much more in detail, supportive and emotional in their leadership, than what coaching leadership can be seen as. A transformational leadership is much more in line with the employees expectations, since the employees are expecting the women to be caring. A coaching leadership on the other hand is not as caring in its nature, which does not match the expectations from the subordinates. Therefore, the respondents cannot use a coaching leadership to its full extent even if they aim for it. Additionally, the biggest interest for the board in every company is to get results and progress, which means there are other expectations from the board on its leaders than from the subordinates. From the board, the respondents are expected to perform and show good business results and to use a leadership that enhances that type of results from the employees. With heterogeneous expectations on the respondents as leaders, it will create an ambivalence for the leaders themselves in their leadership.

The point of showing the difference in what leadership the respondents aim for, or believe they use, versus what type of leadership they actually use, is because it show how much of an impact expectations can have. Additionally, we believe the knowledge of our respondents viewing their leadership differently than it actually seem to be, linked with the varying expectations, imply that this might be an unconscious behavior. The respondents might not be aware of the reason why they use a different leadership style, due to the expectations being a natural part of everyday life.

Further, the different expectations from the different groups creates a dilemma for women in their leading roles, if they are to engage in the caring, typical female leadership, expected from their employees or if they are to focus on a result oriented leadership, expected from the management. Mentioned above, our respondents answers imply that their already is an ongoing internal struggle between a coaching and a transformational leadership. Since emotional labor is linked to a transformational leadership, this further results in the question whether the respondents agree to the fact that they actually are performing emotional labor. Some of the respondents are reluctant to admit that they do and some do simply not believe it is a concept, meaning that emotional labor is things you do because it is part of your personality or because it is part of your role as a leader.
Caring leaderships, such as a transformational leadership, is more common amongst women (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 788), which is a big part to why emotional labor also is more common amongst women (Wilding, 2018). Noted from our interviews is how eager the respondents are to not label themselves as female leaders, they are leaders and here, there is a common understanding amongst them that leadership is not gendered, it is all a matter of personality. However, several times they link certain behavior or a certain personality trait to a certain gender, making it somewhat contradictory.

When it comes to our respondents and emotional labor, there is no doubt that they all engage in it to some degree, regardless of them being aware of it or not, especially since emotional labor also in an always ongoing process. They all have an emotional leadership, even though the amount of emotional focus varies between them. This is foremost due to their position in the organization, their employees and their personal goal, for example someone with a high position within the organization, CEO and such, might be result oriented and thereby focus less on emotions, while still not excluding it completely. Worth noticing is that leadership types can not be defined into some personality traits, or a few common ways to behave, due to its probability to change depending on the surroundings. Thereby, there is not an issue with leaders shifting between several kinds of leadership types, it could even been argued that is has its advantages, being able to adjust. Even though it is beneficial to be able to adjust one’s leadership for the greater good of the group and thereby for the organizational result, we believe the problem here is more in terms with why the respondents say they use one leadership type when actually using almost the opposite. Unfortunately, men and women are viewed differently, and women have always been seen as the weaker gender, with typical female characteristics not being ranked as successful when being a manager. This is the reason to why we believe our respondents distance themselves from being women when discussing their leadership, and it can also explain why they say they practice a coaching leadership, and why they mean emotional labor is done by people with a certain personality, not by women just because they identify as women.

Leadership and emotional labor emerges into the following step of the concluding model: consequences. There are a number of consequences from performing emotional labor described by the literature. The need for prioritizing and re-structuring due to performing emotional labor is one factor our respondents have emphasized as a consequence. In order to handle emotional labor the respondents need to re-prioritize their actual work tasks to make room for emotional work. Since emotional labor is not a part of regular work tasks, but are add ons, there is no planned space for emotional labor to be perform and therefore, time has to be taken from their job tasks. The respondents partly have the expectations from employees to be supportive, attentive and caring, and partly expectations from themselves to have an emotional leadership. The literature also mentions that when women does not agree to perform emotional labor, they are not seen as team players. Which in turn implies that in order to be a team player and to meet the expectations of the employees, the respondents need to prioritize some emotional labor, and their other tasks will suffer as a consequence. Thus, lowering the opportunity of climbing the work ladder when work tasks has be down prioritized.

Re-prioritizing other work tasks in favor for being emotionally available for employees becomes time consuming for the respondents. Which is an additional consequence of emotional labor. In order to deal with the time emotional labor takes, the respondents try to delegate it. As previously mentioned, delegating is an important part of the respondents
leadership and leans towards a coaching leadership style. The issues and problems that comes with delegating emotional labor are that it is often delegated to other women and that it is an ongoing cognitive process to decide who to delegate to and to provide instructions for the delegation. Therefore, performing emotional labor while delegating and putting more emotional labor on other women. Thereby reinforcing the structural problems with foremost women performing emotion work.

Emotional labor being an ongoing cognitive process is a core problem according to the literature, and is one of the major issues that we can state from the findings. However, the literature does not bring up delegating emotion work or the implications of delegating emotion work to other women. Due to lack of literature on the subject we are unable to compare our findings with previous research. Hence, leaving a gap between previous research and our findings.

Increased stress from performing emotional labor is a factor that ties the other consequences together. The stress described in our findings originates from the need to re-prioritize work tasks in order to liberate time for emotional labor, which in turn gets time consuming and draws attention from the respondents actual work tasks. Furthermore, stress is underbuilt from the ongoing cognitive process emotion work is. Managing, helping and supporting someone else’s emotions is described as straining, both from our findings and from the literature. Since emotion work to a great extent also is invisible work, there is often little or no recognition for the effort. Performing labor without recognition or appreciation works as a stressor, due to human beings basic need for attention and appreciation (Maslow, 1970, p. 45). The consequences from emotional labor and the lack of recognition of the effort ends up in stress for the respondents. Which in relation to the heterogeneous expectations the respondents are experiencing, creates frictions within women and in their leadership.

Lastly, our final step in the model is our conclusion. We see societal structures together with expectations, leadership and emotional labor as the main contributors leading up to the conclusion. As presented in the beginning of the thesis, our aim with this study has been to compare existing literature and theories about emotional labor and leadership with our findings. From that comparison we can state that emotional labor is still highly present today in Sweden, that much of the literature is still valid and up-to-date even though most of the literature has aged and that the Swedish society still has different expectations on men and women. However, it is worth noting that there are some parts that are not entirely applicable (e.g. Hochschild), which was to be expected. Nonetheless, our final conclusion is:

Women are affected by emotional labor in their leadership role as they feel an obligation to perform it, while still not doing it too much since that would, according to expectations from society, present them as poor leaders. If they, on the other hand, do not perform any emotional labor at all, they are not considered to be team players.

7.2 Theoretical contributions

Emotional labor has been explored from a variety of perspectives, Hochschild (1983), Daniels (1987), Erickson (1993, 2005) and Hartley (2018), being a few examples. Their studies have mainly been on emotional labor in the home life (Daniels, 1987; Erickson, 1993), or in professions that are more caring or nurturing (Hochschild, 1983). Hartley (2018) is the one that provides us with the newest definition of emotional labor, she is however an author and have not done any scientific studies on the area, and this is part of
the gap we intend to decrease. Recent scientific studies on emotional labor is limited, especially at work and in a context including leadership. As a theoretical contribution we hope this study will wake the interest of others to study the area further, suggestions on future research being presented in chapter 7.6.

Our theoretical contributions are to fill, or begin to fill, the gaps we identified in the beginning of this study. These are, for example, the just mentioned lack of scientific research on the newly emerged definition of emotional labor. There is also the relatively small amount of conducted studies on emotional labor in the context of professions where their work task are more detached from emotions. Additionally, organizational environments always benefit from being as functioning as possible. Emotional labor performed at the workplace will affect the organization, whether the employees or management are aware of it or not, a conclusion drawn from our findings, and supported by previous literature, that women in leading positions and their performed job are affected by it. To be aware of the phenomenon will thereby contribute to studies regarding leadership, organizational structure as well as organizational behavior.

Emotional labor is rather unknown in Sweden, which is one of the reasons why we believe previous studies from the United States during the 1980’s not is as applicable in Sweden today. This is further supported by the Gender inequality index that present Sweden as 0,044 and the United States as 0,189 on a scale from 0-1 when estimating gender equality (UNDP B, 2019), showing a considerable difference between the countries. Further to our knowledge, there are no similar studies conducted in neither Umeå nor Sweden, whereby this thesis contributes in terms of geographic research area. By having more studies conducted in Sweden we hope the concept will become more recognized here and again, more included in leadership and organizational studies.

### 7.3 Practical contributions

Recognizing and understanding the impact emotional labor can have on women can be of interest to all companies in the private sector. As practical contribution we hope to see companies and organizations inform their employees, as well as their management, about emotional labor and how it can affect both the workplace, the people working there and their assignments. All employees should be aware of emotional labor and thereby making the performance of it more gender neutral, and not only women’s responsibility.

Regardless of whom performing emotional labor, it requires time. Now, it is found that women are the ones that tend to take on emotional labor to a greater extent, naturally resulting in them spending more time on it. We found that some women har unaware of the emotional work they take on, and with this thesis we hope to inform them about the concept and how it may affect them. During our study we found emotional labor to cause women to stress and rearrange their tasks. Our wish is for women that are stressed and feel like they do not have enough time will be able to understand that emotional labor could be part of that reason, and that they can benefit from analyzing their behavior from that perspective. Less emotional labor will result in more time for other things. Which brings us to next practical contribution, namely the ability for women to advance within their leadership role. Our study implies that many women generally are satisfied with not striving further, we hope to see that those women that actually wish to advance but have been unable to due to time limitations, now will have the possibility with more time at hand. In the long run, that could contribute to an increased amount of women at the higher managing roles, positions where men dominate today.
Guidance for policy making will serve as the most concrete practical contribution, as it will summarize the contribution mentioned above. It will raise awareness and inform companies and their employees about emotional labor. What it is and how it works, how it affects the company, possible outcomes with and without it, how it affects the employees, and so on. This thesis is to help highlight a fairly unknown concept that previously mostly have been discussed in private environments, such as one’s home life, and policy making will be part of that.

7.4 Societal implications

Our primary practical contribution with this study is as mentioned the guidance we hope to provide policy makers. We know that women are impacted by emotional labor in their leadership, and our study now show that this affect their work as well. By having policy making include the impact emotional labor can have on women we like to see the gap between men and women decrease, not only when it comes to the amount of emotional labor, but also when it comes to one’s leadership. A theoretical contribution of ours are the inclusion of emotional leadership in leadership and organizational studies. We wish that this too will be included in the policy making, how one can modernize their view on leadership and organizational behavior, finding a balance and not becoming too invested. Potentially and hopefully leading to emotional labor not being an issue in the organization.

We aim for an equal society, both in terms of where you are from, what religion you have or what gender you define as. Sweden are working actively towards this, but we are not there yet and everything that can be done, should be done. By informing society about emotional labor, and the effort women in leading roles put on raising the well being at the workplace, they will hopefully receive the appreciation and recognition they deserve. Additionally, the ones that not are performing emotional labor would see that it comes with some appreciation, which could result in them taking a greater emotional responsibility at work. Further, women spend more time on emotional work, which we have found to have an impact on their time used, taking time at home, outside office hours to catch up. Informing the society and companies about this will provide more understanding and show the companies the foundation to why more work should result in more pay.

Lastly, we want to contribute to society by having this thesis show how even women themself can fall under the belief that they and their “typical” female characteristics are less useful and less successful when being a leader. This may be one of the most important findings for the women in leading roles and we hope it will raise the awareness regarding. In short, with our study we wish to support society in its journey to becoming gender equal, both by informing about emotional labor, as well as raise awareness and discussions regarding it.

7.5 Limitations

There has been certain limitations to this study. Firstly, we have had approximately four months to conduct it, which is quite restricted in terms of time. Secondly, we have no monetary assets to finance the study. If we would have had the opportunity to compensate the respondents we could potentially have had more participants accepting our request, which would have provided us with a greater credibility due to the larger population. Thirdly, as students within business administration, we do not have the most advanced knowledge within neither leadership nor how to conduct a study, which shows itself as a
limitation. Additionally throughout the thesis, we encountered some limitations in terms of resources. Umeå University Library offers a wide range of literature, and so does Google Scholar, but there were several occasions were we were unable to take part of literature, either because we could not find it or because it had a fee. Lastly, our geographical delimitation of conducting the study in Umeå, determined based on the time at hand, creates a limitations when it comes to the generalizability. If we would have conducted the study in one or several other locations, the findings would have been more reliable nationally.

7.6 Future research suggestions

When searching for literature and information to use for our study we realized there is a lack of recent research on women in their leadership role. We do not wish to highlight the potential differences between men and women in their leadership, but if it is to be done by future researches we believe women as leaders is equally as important to study. Furthermore, in our delimitations we mentioned that we have chosen to exclude sexual harassment when conducting our study. This is however an area we believe is important to study, understand and acknowledge and we thereby suggest it as future research.

An additional area that we believe could be interesting to research further is how age may or may not have an impact on the research problem. Our participants are between 24 and 61 years old and part of different generations. Due to the answers we received in the interviews we suspect there might be opinions that are linked to specific generations and to study that further could spread an interesting light on leadership studies.

For future research we would also suggest conducting a similar study about emotional labor and its impact on leadership, but including male leaders as well. This could be done from a variety of perspectives, either how men view emotional labor and if, and in that case how, it affects them, or how they view their coworkers who perform emotional labor, or if they themselves value emotional labor and find it necessary when being a leader or if they think it is a waste of time, just to name a few suggestions.
Reference list


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[Retrieved 2019-04-23].

Appendix 1 - Mail request sent to potential participants

English version

Hello (name)!

We are two students from Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics at Umeå University. We are writing a thesis in business and economics, and more specifically management and the human factor in organizations.

For our study, we are now looking for women in some kind of leader position (for example project manager, team leader, site manager or head of a department) within the audit, accounting, finance, IT or insurance industry to participate in an interview that will take approximately one hour.

Information about the study:

We want to study what impact emotional responsibility and labor have on women in their leadership role. The definition on emotional responsibility and labor vary between difference researchers, as it has changed over time. Emotional labor in this context means the extra responsibility you take on for the well being at one’s workplace. This refers to tasks and support beyond one’s actual work duties. Emotional labor at work can, for example, be to maintain a personal relationship with colleagues to promote well being, tidy up the common areas, be responsible for the Christmas party or remember to gather money for a birthday gift to a colleague.

No compensation will be given for participating in the study. Partaking is voluntary and can, at any time, be cancelled. The study will be anonymous and all material from the interviews will only be used for the purpose of this study. After all interviews have been made, they will be transcribed and the participants will be given the opportunity to take part of the finished material.

Best wishes

Rebecka Aveling & Louise Brygt
Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics
Supervisor: Medhanie Gaim
Swedish version

Hej (namn),
Vi är två studenter från Handelshögskolan på Umeå Universitet. Vi skriver en uppsats inom företagsekonomi och mer specifikt management och den mänskliga faktorn i organisationer.


För att kunna utföra studien för uppsatsen söker vi nu kvinnor inom finans- eller IT-branschen för att hålla en kortare intervju med. Vi är mycket tacksamma för alla deltagare som vill ställa upp och bidra till vår studie.


Rebecka Aveling & Louise Brygt,
Handelshögskolan Umeå Universitet
Handledare: Medhanie Gaim, Företagsekonomiska Fakulteten
Appendix 2 - Interview guide

Before the interviews began we sat down with the interviewees for a few minutes, talking about the weather and such, just to make them at ease. Then, we defined the term emotional labor and thereafter began with our introduction.

**English version**

**Short introduction**

- Which gender do you define yourself as?
- How old are you?
- Tell us about you - family, siblings, where you are from, etc.
- Why did you want to participate in this study?
- Do you have any experience of emotional labor from your childhood or upbringing?

**Organization/Leadership**

- How long have you been working at your current workplace?
- Define your role in the company and what kind of responsibility you have.
- How do you view leadership?
- How does leadership show in your position?
- Have you experienced any differences regarding leadership between you and your colleagues?
- If yes, give an example.
- If no, what do you think is the reason for that?
- Do you have any experience of leadership in a different line of business?
- If yes, do you experience any differences from your current line of business?
- When in a group of new people, which role do you take on?

**Equality**

- Do you ever reflect on gender equality?
- Have you ever experienced differences between men and women at your workplace?
- What kind of differences?
- Have you ever experienced differences between you and a male/female colleague.
- What kind of differences do you experience in leadership?
- How does is differ between men and women?
- How do you perceive the gender equality in your line of business?

**Emotional labor**

Present our chosen definition of emotional labor, make sure the interviewee understands.

- Have you ever experienced that you have taken on more tasks than it is required in your job position, to create well-being on the workplace?
- If yes, what kind of tasks have that been?
- What made you take on those tasks?
● Have you ever felt urged to take on more tasks on the workplace to “contribute to a good atmosphere”?
● In your private life, have you ever taken on tasks to contribute to a good atmosphere, or to enhance well-being?
● If yes, what do you think made you take on those tasks?
● Have emotional labor ever had an impact on your actual job tasks?
● If yes, how?
● Something about being there for friends who are going through a tough period.
● Something about empathy, consideration.
Swedish version

Kort inledning

- Vilket kön definierar du dig som?
- Hur gammal är du?
- Berätta lite om dig själv.
- Varför ville du ställa upp på den här intervjun?
- Har du någon erfarenhet av emotionellt arbete från din barndom eller din uppväxt?

Bransch/yrke/ledarskap

- Hur länge har du arbetat på din nuvarande arbetsplats?
- Definiera vad deras roll i företaget är och vad det innebär ansvarsmässigt?
- Hur ser du på ledarskap?
- Hur ser ledarskap ut i din position?
- Har du upplevt några skillnader i ledarskap mellan dig och dina kollegor?
- Om ja, ge exempel.
- Om nej, hur kommer det sig?
- Har du erfarenhet av ledarskapsarbete inom någon annan bransch?
- Om ja, upplever du några skillnader mot din nuvarande bransch?
- Om du är i en grupp, vilken roll tar du?

Jämställdhet

- Berätta om du har funderat över jämställdhet övertag?
- Hur har du upplevt skillnader mellan kvinnor och män på arbetsplatsen?
- Vad för skillnader?
- Vad för skillnader har du upplevt mellan dig och en manlig/ kvinnlig kollega?
- Vad för skillnader upplever du i ledarskap?
- Hur skiljer sig det åt mellan kvinnor och män?
- Hur uppfattar du jämlikheten i din bransch?

Emotional labor

Presentera definitionen av emotionellt arbete och ansvar utifrån den synvinkeln som vi valt att använda oss av. Se till att personen i fråga förstår emotionellt arbete.

- Har du någon gång upplevt att du tagit på dig mer saker än det som ingår i din arbetsroll för att skapa välstående eller trevand i arbetsgruppen/ på arbetsplatsen?
- Vad är det till exempel?
- Hur kom det sig att du tog på dig det?
- Har du känt dig manad att ta på dig fler saker på arbetsplatsen för att “bidra till bra stämning”?
- I ditt privatliv, har du då upplevt att du tagit på dig uppgifter för att bidra till bra stämning eller för att skapa välstående?
- Om ja, vad tror du gjorde att du tog/tar på dig det?
- Har emotionellt arbete någon påverkan på dina egentliga arbetsuppgifter?
- Om ja, hur?
- Något om att “ställa upp för vänner som inte mår bra”?
- Något om empati, värme, omtanke?
Appendix 3 - Information letter to interviewees

English version

We are two students at Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics at Umeå University that are writing this thesis with the purpose to study what impact emotional labor have on women in their leadership role. The interview will be recorded and the result will be published in Diva. In case of shown interest, we are happy to share the finished result.

Participating is voluntary and the interview can be called off at any time. If you wish to exclude any part of the interview that is fine. Personal information will be confidential and the result will not be traceable back to the interview. All interviewees will be anonymized.

If you have any questions, please contact: Rebeckalouise.umea@gmail.com

Rebecka Aveling & Louise Brygt
Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics
Umeå University

__________________________   _________________________
(Signature)                      (Printed name)
Vi är två studenter från Handelshögskolan vid Umeå Universitet som skriver denna uppsats för att studera vilken påverkan emotionellt arbete har på kvinnor i sin ledarroll. Denna intervju kommer spelas in och resultatet kommer publiceras i Diva. Vid visat intresse delar vi gärna med oss av det färdiga resultatet.

Det är frivilligt att delta och intervjun kan avbrytas när helst du önskar. Om du önskar att exkludera någon del av intervjun går det bra. Personlig information kommer behandlas konfidentiellt och resultatet kommer inte gå att spåra till intervjupersonen. Alla intervjuer kommer anonymiseras.

Om du har några frågor, kontakta Rebeckalouise.umea@gmail.com

Rebecka Aveling & Louise Brygt
Handelshögskolan
Umeå Universitet
## Appendix 4 - Summary of interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of response</th>
<th>First hand theme</th>
<th>Second theme</th>
<th>Final theme in text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● A: More women in advisory, more men on higher positions.</td>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Men/Women</td>
<td>Contextual background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● D: More women on lower positions, more men on higher.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Gendered leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● E: More aware the higher the position. Industry is more equal today than it was before.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● F: No female applicants for jobs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● G: more men on higher positions, women on lower.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● I: Same view on equality in theory but not in real life. Structures in society affects. Both women and men should have the ability to grow.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● J: Think alot about equality when recruiting. Women on lower positions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● K: Company modern and equal. Need to hire more women on higher positions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● L: More equal outside of Europe. Have to get women into IT.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● B: Some women are more like moms, caring, planning, taking care of others.</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men/women</td>
<td>Gendered leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● C: Do a lot of things that are invisible, act as a project leader both at work and at home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● D: Stays in their first role and does not strive forward. Women get burn out more often. Are expected to take more responsibility.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● F: Have to prove more. Believed to be better at multitasking, listening, analyzing. Think that some female leaders take on male characteristics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● G: Have to get better at delegating. Thinks about things for a longer time. Not as good as men on taking feedback.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● I: Take more into consideration before taking a management position. Lack of female role models in leadership?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● J: Does not see herself as a typical woman. Think that more women may possess “green” personalities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● K: feminine characteristics are not an issue or hinder in becoming a leader.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● L: Is sometimes not listened to in a group with men. Women in IT tough.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some other women take on a more traditional role.

- **H**: Highly sceptical towards the subject as a whole. Do not believe in defining male and female. Does not believe in emotional labor as a theory.

  **Scepticism**  
  **Contextual background**

- **A**: Younger generation: other attitude towards equality.  
  **Generation**  
  **Nuances between generations**  
  **Contextual background**

- **I**: Younger people are more aware about equality. Given up with older men.  
- **H**: Older men hold on to their principals.  
- **J**: Problem with young men not applying for the jobs in banking.  
- **F**: Different generations, different emotional labor. Positive with a new generation.  
- **G**: Different types of treatment from customers depending on generation and male/female. Older customers want to talk to a more senior positioned man.

  **Company culture**  
  **Women’s perspective on leadership**

- **K**: Company culture is very specific and clear. Is very important: helping each other out, having fun.

  **Motivation**  
  **Women’s perspective on leadership**

- **K**: Is a very very important part of the daily job.

- **A**: Takes command  
- **B**: Takes command  
- **C**: Structured in a new group  
- **E**: Difficult to take a smaller role in a new group. Tries to limit the role.  
- **F**: When new: withdrawn, cautious.  
- **G**: Cautious at first, then a doer.  
- **H**: Takes the space she believes she needs  
- **I**: Listens, but want to move forward.  
- **J**: Take a leading role in a new group  
- **K**: Cautious, listens, want to read the situation before claiming any space  
- **L**: Searches her position, feeling the group. Takes the space she needs.

  **Group dynamic**  
  **Taking command**  
  **Women’s perspective on leadership**

- **A**: Not only well-being in the group motivates emotional labor  
- **C**: Feels responsible for delegated tasks, wants to control them and make sure they are done.  
- **D**: Does not like when things does

  **Need for control**  
  **Need for control**  
  **Women’s perspective on leadership**
- E: Wants control, want to be sure that things get done.
- J: Structured, wants to keep track.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delegation</th>
<th>Importance of delegating</th>
<th>Women’s perspective on leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B: Can delegate, but feels like she could do things herself.</td>
<td>C: Takes on a lot that she should delegate. Feels that she “knows” best.</td>
<td>D: Does things herself to get it done, but should delegate more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F: Delegates practical things she does not have time to do herself, or know herself.</td>
<td>G: Thinks that all women should get better at delegating.</td>
<td>J: Delegates a lot of work. Big part of her job is delegating. Delegates emotional labor to other women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H: Is the one in her workplace who delegates the most amount of work. Thinks it is important.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations</th>
<th>Women expected to be more caring in their leadership</th>
<th>Gendered leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D: Women are expected to take a maternal role. Higher expectations on women. Society has high expectations and different expectations.</td>
<td>F: No expectation on male leaders to have a warm leadership. Expectation on women to be good at listening, analyzing and multitasking.</td>
<td>I: Different expectations from society on women and men. Set structures from society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L: Expectations on women to be more caring and nicer. Deeply rooted expectations on how to behave towards women. Expectation that you can leave your problems to a woman.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men/ women</th>
<th>Men more intuitive and spontaneous</th>
<th>Gendered leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: Men take on tasks without knowing if they will succeed with them.</td>
<td>C: Men less flexible, takes faster decisions, more straight forward, bigger room for own decisions, trust that things will get done. Women have softer work tasks, follow up on more work.</td>
<td>D: Groups act differently depending on whether the leader is a man or a woman. Men are less questioned. Differences between men and women in softer aspects of work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E: Women are more in detail than men, communicates more and thinks a lot before acting. Men try things out and point with their whole hand.</td>
<td>F: Women keeps more track than men, get more sensitive questions. Men point with their whole hand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G: Men better at feedback, can turn in things late, takes on tasks they are not sure they will succeed with. Women thinks more before acting, cares more about deadlines, more in detail, wants to be sure they can succeed before taking on tasks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H: Very much against defining men and women. Feels she is very much alike her male colleagues, not many female colleagues.</td>
<td>I: Females blame themselves more, straight forward, honest, takes on more responsibility in real life, more structured, double checks everything. Men do their thing and expects someone else to fix it if it goes wrong, more activities important rather than softer values etc., applies to manager positions to a greater extent.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>J: Men become bosses for the wrong reasons, thinks it’s cool, more movable, flexible, believes that things will work themselves out, see things as challenges. Women more uncertain, needs to be pushed, double checks everything, interacts more.</td>
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<tr>
<td>K: Her male colleagues counter part, he is “red” she is “green”, he takes business decisions, she is more human resources, men takes more space, higher roles.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L: Tries to not see men and women as different. Women can takes on a “feel sorry for me” role. Differences should be seen as a strength. Very much alike both male and female colleagues, but listens more than male colleagues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Equal as a whole in Umeå, not nationally.</td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Male dominated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: Mixed women and men. More men in higher management group.</td>
<td></td>
<td>More or less equal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C: Male dominated, not many women in Umeå. Never had a female manager.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D: No male applicants, locally more women than nationally. Management is male dominated, advisory more women.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Contextual background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>Women’s perspective on leadership</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Upbringing & Impact by upbringing (leadership) & Contextual background

- **A**: Raised to answer like a man. Is the younger sister. Does not think that siblings have different characteristics due to their position among their siblings. Daughters have to work harder because they are girls.
- **B**: The youngest one out of 10 siblings, affected her.
- **C**: The typical older sister, mediates, listens.
- **D**: Oldest out of five, is the project manager. The combination of which gender and sibling you are plus personality affects how much emotional labor you do.
- **F**: Typical younger sister. Higher expectations on the girls than the boys while growing up.
- **G**: Is the older sister. Mother very emotional in her role, shaped her and her sister. Caring. Parents self-employed.
- **H**: Does not believe she had the most typical upbringing. Mother housewife for a while.
- **I**: Typical older sister. Comes from the typical family of mom+dad, one sibling.
- **J**: Younger sister, does not take a typical role. Mother housewife, father manager.
- **K**: Only child.
- **L**: Only child, only girl in her age in
her village. Parents self-employed. Mother took a traditional role at home.

- A: In charge of personnel. In charge of the office, is in management group.
- B: In charge of group managers.
- C: Consultant manager.
- D: Office manager, in charge of personnel, in charge of work environment.
- E: Group manager, in charge of personnel.
- F: CEO, in charge of personnel.
- G: Office manager, in charge of personnel, in charge of work environment.
- I: Department manager. In charge of personnel.
- J: Office manager. A lot of personnel, planning.
- K: Group manager. In charge of personnel, HR, recruitment.
- L: Senior department manager. Personnel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business role</th>
<th>Table presenting interviewees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: In charge of personnel. In charge of the office, is in management group.</td>
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<td>F: CEO, in charge of personnel.</td>
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<td>G: Office manager, in charge of personnel, in charge of work environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H: In charge of personnel. Consultant manager.</td>
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<td>I: Department manager. In charge of personnel.</td>
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- A: Amount of emotional labor depends on personality.
- B: Leadership style depends on personality.
- C: Different leaders personalities leads to different leadership styles has different advantages. Different personalities are drawn to different industries. Some personalities are overrepresented in women.
- D: Takes on emotional labor due to personality and habit.
- E: Different personalities, different leadership style.
- F: Personality and upbringing may results in emotional labor.
- G: Leadership style depends on what type of person you are.
- H: Personality is what matters the most. Does not believe in differences between men and women in that aspect.
- I: Personality important and her personality affects her leadership.
- J: Personality is the more important factor than male or female. Good with different personalities.
- K: Thinks that personality is more important, not different in men and women. Leadership is individual.

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<tr>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>Importance of personality</th>
<th>The importance of personality in leadership</th>
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depends on personality.

- L: Personality affects much.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Coaching leadership style</th>
<th>Women's perspective on leadership</th>
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<td>A: Straightforward, communicating, adaptable, togetherness, work balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>B: No emotional leadership, a lot of experience, not in detail but coaching, not a typical female leader, work with goals, create togetherness</td>
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<tr>
<td>C: Checks in, adaptable, considerate, keeps track on co-workers, coaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>D: High ceiling, everyone gets to speak, leadership depends on size of the unit, how many you are responsible for and how close you are to business.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E: Very important with availability, locally staff should be able to influence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>F: Important to listen, set demands, create togetherness, make other people the star. Higher competitions gives tougher managers, leadership depends on personality, industry, culture.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G: Straightforward, clear. Leadership depends on size, personality, amount of customers. Communicating, transparent.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>H: Important to care about co-workers, want to lead the way. Transparent. Emotional labor is part of the leadership role. Listen, but be the one to make the decisions. Make sure everyone is ok.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I: Different things being a manager or being a leader. Leaders has to earn trust. co-workers chose their leader. Has to be interested in leading and people. Bigger responsibility. Blame herself when the group does not succeed. Clear with expectations and communication. Emotional labor i part of leadership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>J: Reflects a lot about leadership. Important to be able to take hard conversations. Take charge in new groups. Making decisions in a big part of leadership. Wants to make sure things work and that they keep moving forward.</td>
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<tr>
<td>K: Motivating and helping others reach their full potential. Understand people and keep an open dialog, be present. A good leadership is about helping others become their best. Important to keep company culture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>L: Coaching and making people</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C: Interested in what role you take</th>
<th>D: Interested in equality and leadership.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F: Interested in equality between men and women.</td>
<td>G: Interested in work environment and leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I: Interested in leadership and what kind of roles you take on.</td>
<td>J: Big interest in leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>K: Interested in leadership, male and female.</td>
<td>L: Big interest in leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C: Do a lot of emotional labor, creates more work. Thinking about things that are to be done. Re-prioritize, works at home or late nights or early mornings to avoid some emotional labor. Affects her.</td>
<td>D: Emotional labor takes time from other things, but needs to be done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E: Takes on too much. Works some nights instead. re-prioritize.</td>
<td>A: Women take more initiative, men help by executing. Always involve people in the office, also those on sick leave and on parental leave. Taking on emotional labor does not have to do with gender or position in the company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B: Different personalities take on emotional labor. Says she does not perform an emotional leadership, but do things outside of her tasks. Think that group managers take on more emotional labor because they are closer to the co-workers.</td>
<td>C: Highly involved. Give so much of her time it affects her negatively. Wouldn’t like herself without performing emotional labor. Hard to estimate how much time it takes since it’s done parallel to other tasks.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D: Perform emotional labor all the time. Women take on softer tasks. Do things herself so it gets done. Includes those on sick leave or parental leave. Must get better at delegating emotional labor.</td>
<td>E: Helps her boss with easter eggs, christmas gifts etc. Take on a lot of</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Interest in the subject</th>
<th>Contextual background</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal influence</td>
<td>Emotional labor takes time from real work</td>
<td>Emotional labor and women in leadership roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional labor</td>
<td>Consciously Unconsciously Ambivalence regarding emotional labor</td>
<td>Emotional labor and women in leadership roles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
extra tasks. Feels responsible for solving things and keeping people in a good mood.

- F: Makes sure it gets done, even if it means that she doesn’t do it herself. Asks how her co-workers really feel. More interested in their feelings than results.
- G: Really important to make sure everyone is ok. Make sure there is coffee etc. Makes sure that everything gets done.
- H: Attentive to everyone’s feelings. Takes care of out of office activities. Emotional labor is a part of her personality. Is a person “who is there”. Emotional labor is about humanity.
- I: Wants everyone to be ok, get to speak, like their workplace. Maternal feelings towards younger colleagues. May have created prerequisites for emotional labor being done at the workplace. Performs emotional labor, could get more done without doing it, but still wants to do it.
- J: Does not really reflect over emotional labor, but performs it. Delegates emotional labor to female colleagues. Performs more emotional labor than her male colleague.
- K: Emotional labor has to do with personality, not gender. Performs emotional labor, male colleague does not. Emotional labor is fun, not demanding. Is a part of the work role, likes to do it. Is highly affected by how other people feel, carries it with her.
- L: Reflects over how she may be blind to emotional labor due to the male dominated industry. Was more engaged in emotional labor when younger. Can carry issues with her, think about them. Young men see her as a mom. Some people see it as their right to place their issues and problems on her because she is a woman.