CHAPTER 3: INTERNATIONAL AND MIDDLE EASTERN PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN AND WORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, progress has been made in advancing gender equity worldwide (Wirth, 2001:1). Women's labour force participation has increased globally and women around the world are steadily moving into occupation areas previously reserved for men (Wirth, 2001:1). Their access to education and training continues to improve, providing them with the necessary qualifications to move into senior management positions. Supported by women's movements worldwide, governments, businesses, trade unions and civil organisations have devoted much energy, thought and effort into overcoming persistent gender inequality in the workforce. However, many of the results fall short of expectations internationally.

This chapter considers the position of women in the workforce generally and, in the education sector in particular, from both an international and a Middle Eastern perspective. It commences with issues relating to gender inequality worldwide and includes a comparison with the UAE. Next, the various strategies implemented internationally to help women overcome the glass ceiling are discussed. Lastly, the different leadership styles related to women's ways of leading within a changing educational environment are explored.

3.2 GENDER INEQUALITY

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was given the task of investigating the factors responsible for the general trend of gender inequality in the workforce worldwide. The ILO has published a collection of international research in a report entitled, *Breaking through the glass ceiling: Women in management* (Wirth, 2001). A study of this document provides a global perspective of the position of women and work. Very little Middle Eastern data is included in this ILO report because of a "severe lack of relevant

labour market data and studies" (Abdelkarim, 2001:2). The most recent Arab human development report (UNDP, 2002:1-140) also notes deficiencies in data for the Arab regions and considers Arab women's empowerment as one of the major deficits experienced in the Arab world. A summary of pertinent global trends reported in the ILO report (Wirth, 2001) is provided below:

- At a global level in 1990, 67% of all women aged 20-54 years were economically active. It is projected that by the year 2010 this figure is expected to increase to 70%;

- Periods away from the labour force to give birth and care for children are becoming shorter. In the United States, the proportion of working mothers with children under the age of three grew from 34% in 1975 to 57% in 1994 and the percentage of working mothers with children less than a year old was 53.6% in 1998;

- Women make up the majority (60-90%) of part-time workers worldwide;

- Unemployment rates for men and women show a mixed pattern internationally with pronounced regional differences. Of sixty-five countries, thirteen had lower unemployment rates for women, fourteen had unemployment rates almost equal and thirty-eight countries had higher unemployment rates for women with significant gender differences in Africa and Latin America;

- Approximately half the world's workers are in sex-stereotyped occupations where one sex predominates to such an extent (representing at least 80%) that these occupations are considered *women's* or *men's* jobs;

- Although the percentage of women entering the labour force is increasing, employed women are concentrated in a narrow range of occupation areas compared to men. For example, in 1994, 25% of all employed women in the United States were working in administrative or clerical jobs;

- Time-use studies show that women work longer hours than men in nearly every country with women consistently performing more of the unpaid domestic work;

- Since 1982 the number of bachelors degrees awarded to women has exceeded those awarded to men and, in 1986 the number of Master's degrees awarded to women began to exceed those obtained by men. By the year 2000 the total number of doctorate degrees awarded to men and women were equal;

- Based on research, effective strategies to widen the educational choices of girls and women include: elimination of sex-role stereotyping in educational curricula, awareness-raising on educational choices, promotion of gender equity in the teaching profession and on-the-job training; and

- Almost every country in the world has adopted legislation prohibiting discrimination or guaranteeing equal rights for men and women.

Bearing in mind that in the UAE the concept of a *career woman* and *working mother* is still new, a comparison of global trends with the position of UAE national women is deemed necessary. As a point of departure, and in keeping with the findings of the ILO (Wirth, 2001) and the UNDP (2002) that very little information is available on female employment in Arab countries, the comparison provided below is supported by fewer references than might otherwise be expected.

3.2.1 Changes in labour force participation

According to Wirth (2001:2), more women globally are economically active because:

- Their working lives have been characterised by more continuous labour force participation;
- They have entered many professions previously reserved for men; and
- Their earnings have become an essential part of the household income.

3.2.1.1 Continuous labour force participation

a. Role of women in the economy

Changes in societal views about the role of women in the economy have occurred over time in many countries due to increased female participation in the labour force. A survey conducted in Japan in the early 1990s (Japan Institute of Labour, 1992:34), for example, showed increasing disagreement by both men and women with the traditional belief that men should hold paying jobs while women should stay home and do the housework. In 1987, 50% of men and 38% of women thought that women should stay home but by 1990, these figures were 36% and 24% respectively (Japan Institute of Labour, 1992:34). The concept of *peer-marriages* (Harris, Lowery & Arnold, 2002:3) is also taking root in many industrialised countries in which husbands accept the need for women to work and contribute to household and child care responsibilities. Part of the drive towards more male involvement in domestic responsibilities is the necessity of women's contribution to the economy and to the household income.

Compared to most countries formal female employment is a new concept in UAE society. Therefore, the "domain of domestic care is (still) considered of equal or greater importance than paid employment for women" (Al-Qasimi, 1998 as cited by Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:146). Women may be allowed to work in certain occupations, but if her primary role as care-giver in any way conflicts with her career, it is more likely that she would be expected to give up her career. An attitude and opinion survey conducted by Sayed (2001:68) confirms this by showing that 74% of males and 65% of females believed that when a woman is not home her family suffers (Sayed, 2001:68). Therefore, both males and females were of the opinion that a woman's priority is her home and family. Differences in male and female opinions were also noted when participants were asked, "Is it acceptable for a married woman with preschool children to work?" To this question, 24% of male participants and 64% of female participants responded in the affirmative (Sayed, 2001:68). This shows that national women were more confident of their abilities to balance a home and a career compared to national men.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the importance of a woman's primary role as care-giver in UAE society may conflict with her new role as career woman. The conflict of

these roles shows the importance of, "non-market factors (which) structure (national) women's labour force participation regardless of their own capabilities," (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:146). This is perhaps why fewer national women enter the workforce or continue working after marriage and/or the birth of children.

b. Child care

Periods away from the labour force to give birth and care for children are becoming shorter in industrialised countries (Wirth, 2001:3). This is due to "lower income, limited access to qualified jobs and fewer opportunities for career development" (Wirth, 2001:8). Some women may opt for part-time employment while their children are young but this has been found to be less attractive because of limited opportunities for training and development, lower salaries, pension entitlements and career developments (Wirth, 2001:8). It was also found that more women were unemployed compared to men in most countries (Wirth, 2001:8).

Unemployment statistics for the UAE shows that in 1995, 8.3% of national women 6.0% of national men, 1.7% of expatriate women and 1.3% of expatriate men were unemployed (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:155). Therefore, national women were the largest number unemployed. Sources within the private and government sectors indicate that national women seeking employment were in the 20-30 year age group (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:155). Around half of these applicants had a high school diploma as their highest qualification while 20-30% had a first university degree (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:155). These findings compare well with the experiences of women in other countries as elucidated in the study by Wirth (2001).

As indicated previously, national women usually give up their careers entirely after marriage or after giving birth. It is rare for them to re-enter the labour market or opt for part-time employment during a career break. Some reasons for this observation include economic prosperity, the provision of government stipends when children are born, good social security and the fact that financial maintenance of the family is strictly a male domain. Women opt to drop out of the labour market despite labour law provisions,

which entitles national women to seventy days of maternity leave with optional leave for up to two years on a reduced salary to enable mothers to nurse infant children. According to a special report in the Gulf News (Abdallah, 2003:1-3) entitled, *Role of UAE women: For UAE women the sky is the limit,* national women claimed that the length of maternity leave was not enough. An interviewee stated, "it is difficult for women leave infants in the care of a maid or untrustworthy nursery. What is amazing is to find some officials still question why women resign after they have kids! With such conditions prevailing of course they resign" (Abdallah, 2003:3). The interviewee also urged that the laws be changed to give more maternity leave.

c. Female employment as a short-term investment

Gender discrimination is perpetuated through the lack of value placed on women's caring role in society (UNDP, 1999:79). Moreover, the ongoing changes in markets due to globalisation, tend to be based on a short-term perspective on investments. As managers, women are affected by the common assumption that, in the event of building families, they will bear the main burden of responsibility. Thus, there is not the same degree of investment in female employees compared to male employees and they are less likely to receive the same encouragement or career advice through mentoring as men. Often, they are not placed in visible management positions or given important projects. The latter is normally given to men who are assumed to remain as dedicated and as available even when they start a family (Wirth, 2001:21). In addition, the major challenge is the sheer slowness by which women attain senior leadership positions in organisations which suggests that discrimination is greatest where the most power is exercised.

Employers in the UAE reinforce the general belief that employing a female is a short-term investment because female staff members are known to leave, after short periods of employment, for family reasons. Therefore, employers will employ national females but may resist investing resources into their training and/or career development because of the uncertainty and instability associated with their commitment to the organisation after marriage and when they start a family. This results in national women finding employment but their training opportunities are limited and their career progression is

slow. Bu Qefel (1998:1-407) showed that socio-cultural values tend to influence the way trainees are selected to attend programs and how they are appraised within organisations. Baud and Mahgoub (2001a:168) found that, in their study, the training employed women received varied from induction training only to on-the-job training or, in some rare instances, off-the-job training. The vast majority of women felt that the training improved their performance at work, although it has not led to direct promotion in the majority of cases (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:168-169). Many women in the Baud and Mahgoub (2001a:169) study also perceived differences between themselves and their male colleagues in the extent to which they are promoted.

3.2.1.2 Gendered occupations

Another factor that contributes to gender inequality according to Wirth (2001:10) is that men and women perform different jobs with *women's jobs* being assigned lower values in terms of skills and remuneration. This occurs despite the fact that, "job evaluation methodologies have often demonstrated that many jobs occupied by women in fact require levels of skill, responsibility, task variation and complexity similar to higher paid jobs held by men" (Wirth, 2001:10). Table 3.1 shows significant changes that have taken place in a range of job categories in the United States (Wilson, 1999:9). Overall, an increase in the proportion of women in male dominated categories has gone hand in hand with a proportional decrease in female dominated categories. Interestingly, in the elementary teaching sector, few changes are observed, while in the tertiary education sector there appears to be an increase in women employees. These changes imply a "slow but steady movement towards greater occupational diversification for women" (Wirth, 2001:10).

TABLE 3.1: CHANGES IN OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION IN THE UNITED STATES 1974-1994

Occupation	% Female employees		Percentage Change
	1974	1994	1974-1994
Dominated by Women			
Cashiers	87.7	79.8	-7.9
Hairdressers	92.4	90.6	-1.8
Librarians	83.7	84.1	-0.4
Nurses	98.0	93.8	-4.2
Secretaries	99.2	98.9	-0.3
Social Workers	61.3	69.3	8.0
Elementary School Teachers	84.3	85.6	1.3
Therapists	58.3	74.3	16.0
Waiters	91.8	74.6	13.2
Dominated by Men			
Pilots	1.4	2.6	1.2
Architects	2.8	16.8	14.0
Carpenters	0.7	1.0	0.3
Computer Programmers	22.6	29.3	6.7
Dentists	1.0	13.3	12.3
Engineers	1.3	8.3	7.0
Lawyers	7.0	24.6	17.6
Physicians	9.8	22.3	12.5
Plumbers	0.3	0.7	0.4
Police detectives	3.1	15.6	12.5
Teachers (Tertiary Education)	31.3	42.5	11.2

Source: Wilson (1999:9)

According to Baud and Mahgoub (2001a:155), almost half of the working national women are concentrated in higher-grade female occupations notably in professions where they outnumber national males by almost two to one. The main professions are teaching, social science, life sciences and health. The second largest group of national women (about 18%) work in administrative posts (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:155). At present, a similar trend to 1974 (Table 3.1) is expected for the UAE with females being concentrated in a narrow range of occupations. With respect to teaching, most national women are concentrated in school teaching with fewer teaching in tertiary institutions. In contrast, national men are more concentrated in military occupations, in sales and services and as high level managers (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:155) indicating definite male and female occupation areas in the UAE.

3.2.1.3 Earnings

According to Wirth (2001:13), one outcome of occupational segregation is the significant pay differences between male and female workers even though, the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention 1951(100) has one of the highest ratification rate of any labour standard (149 as of December 2000) in the world. The principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value has also been incorporated into the legislation of many countries, nevertheless, pay differentials still continue to be the biggest form of gender inequality (Wirth, 2001:13-14). In publishing statistics for differences in pay between men and women, the statistics office for the European Commission noted that "these averages reflect structural differences in the characteristics of working women and men – mostly age, occupation and education. Fewer women than men occupy management positions, which are amongst the best paid jobs. The imbalance in the representation of men and women in certain economic sectors and occupations is one of the determining elements of the gender pay gap" (Eurostat, 1999:1).

According to the UAE labour law, discrimination between men and women in terms of salaries for the same job is strictly forbidden (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:148). However, discrepancies are known to occur in practise. According to Baud & Mahgoub (2001a:168), 37% of female participants in their study reported differences in the level of salaries between themselves and male colleagues at the same level of occupation. According to an MOEY official, women may not be provided with the same salaries and benefits as men and their access to certain benefits like housing or housing allowances may be discontinued when a woman marries. In some sectors like education, a married woman may have to accept a decrease in salary once she marries while a national male is given additional stipends[1] and benefits in addition to an increase in salary (MOEY official). This provides national men with monetary benefits that are not available for national women. Explanations provided for the discrimination in terms of benefits and pay relate to the duty of males to take care of the family financially. Gaps in pay may

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[1] The Sheikh Khalifah stipend for example is an additional sum of money given to national male teachers by the office of the crown prince of Abu Dhabi.

also be related to the speed of career advancement, in which case UAE national males have much better opportunities compared to national women.

3.2.2 Time study patterns

The gender division of time between work and family is probably the most significant gender issue of all and explains many of the differences between work patterns and job types of men and women. Time-use studies show that women work longer hours compared to men in almost every country (Wirth, 2001:16). Statistics show that it is easier for men to have a family and a career while many women have to forego marriage and children to devote themselves to careers (Wirth, 2001:18). This pattern is more pronounced in industrialised countries. For example, a survey conducted by Charlesworth (1997:7) on managers aged 35-54 years in the United Kingdom showed that 88% of male managers were married compared to 69% of female colleagues in the same age range. In addition, 21% of the female managers had children under sixteen years of age compared to 43% of the male managers (Charlesworth, 1997:7). On the other hand, surveys in developing countries indicate that most women managers seem to be married with children (Gonzalez, 1996:5 as cited by Wirth, 2001:19). A certain proportion of women managers reconcile family and a career by delaying having children until they are well established in their careers and, therefore, less likely to experience problems re-entering the labour market. They are also likely to be in a better financial position to pay for child care.

In the Baud and Mahgoub (2001a:160) study, female participants who were job seekers indicated that they stopped their studies because of marriage (33%) and when they had their first child (54%). The majority of women in this study had children suggesting a heavy domestic responsibility for the group (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:160). In addition, the study showed that employed female participants had a smaller average household size (2.6 family members) compared to women who were job seekers (7.6 family members). All the women participating in the Baud and Mahgoub (2001a) study indicated that they required the help of one or more domestic helpers.

In general, UAE households benefit from economic prosperity in that families are able to afford domestic help with household and child-rearing responsibilities. Housemaids are a common phenomenon and it is usual for more than one housemaid to be employed whether a woman works or not. Both society and the government have questioned the trend of relinquishing all responsibilities related to the upbringing of children. In an interview with the Al-Ahram Arabic Daily (18 May, 2003 as cited by Gulf News, 2003:1), H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak made it clear that she was not against the hiring of domestic workers to assist with household duties. She added, "what we are against is when the direct matters of motherhood and children's upbringing are left to domestic helpers," (Al-Ahram Arabic Daily, 2003 as cited by Gulf News: 2003:1). In addition, in the UAE, extended families live together communally, so national women have the help of other female relatives who assist with household duties and child-rearing.

3.2.3 Education levels

Undoubtedly, increasing women's levels of education and training equip them with the necessary qualifications and skills to aspire to, and be selected for, top (senior) positions (Wirth, 2001:61). The UAE education system was set up only a generation ago and is in a state of rapid change (Baud & Mahgoub, 2001a:178). The public school system is being reorganised into a modern system because it is necessary to reduce the current gaps in the knowledge and skills of public secondary school children by increasing the levels of English, computer skills and by introducing modern learning methods like critical thinking. Such skills are the basic requirements for access to any type of employment for high school graduates. At the tertiary level national women have increased access to higher education and choices with respect to the fields they wish to study as the number and types of institutions grow in the UAE. The HCT are, for example, designed for middle-level professionals while the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), Zayed University (ZU) and a host of private universities provide opportunities for undergraduate and some post-graduate studies. As fewer national women were able to study abroad

previously, and the fact that opportunities for tertiary education has only been available over the last ten years, few national women at present have a college education or university degree although their numbers are increasing as indicated in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2: EDUCATIONAL DATA ON WOMEN IN THE UAE FROM 1993-1997

Tertiary Institution	Location	1993/1994	1994/1995	1995/1996	1996/1997
UAEU	Al-Ain	722	8 968	9 994	11 725
Abroad	Abroad	357	357	370	443
Al-Ain College	Al-Ain	207	190	357	283
Nursing Institute	Abu Dhabi	420	442	511	511
Dubai Medical College	Dubai	128	160	39	61
Dubai Studying College	Dubai	677	1 035	1 308	827
HCT	Dubai	920	1 229	2 411	3 027
Ajman College	Ajman	261	310	437	623
Etisalat Engineering College	Abu Dhabi & Dubai	0	0	0	0
Science Institute	Ras Al-Khaimah	466	547	677	723
The Ofuuque College	Sharjah	45	122	222	198
Dubai Aviation college	Dubai	75	75	94	112
Al-Sharjah College	Sharjah	123	142	131	117
Dubai Pharmaceutical College	Dubai	40	64	90	86
Total		**4 441**	**13 641**	**16 641**	**18 736**

Source: extracted from Baud and Mahgoub (2001b:60)

National women encounter additional cultural problems if they wish to study further, namely, the fact that national men are known to refuse marrying highly educated national women. This is especially the case if the woman is more educated than her future spouse. According to Ameena Al-Beshr (Zabara, 2000:1), "national men who refuse to marry educated women are living in the stone-age." She added that, "a lot of men refuse to marry a woman who is more educated because they have an erroneous concept that an educated girl is arrogant" (Zabara, 2000:1). Therefore, while in industrialised countries access to higher education and training may make women more marketable for employment and in terms of their career progression, fewer UAE national women opt for studies higher than a first degree because it interferes with their marriage prospects.

3.2.4 Government intervention

Almost every country in the world has adopted legislation prohibiting discrimination or guaranteeing equal rights for men and women. The UAE is no exception, with non-discriminatory labour law provisions for both male and female employment. However, translating these laws into practise still remains a challenge as women forgo opportunities for career development, remain the highest number of those unemployed and suffer from lower pay and benefits compared to their male counterparts. The result is that gender inequality remains a recurring phenomenon even in female dominated occupation areas.

3.3 GENDER INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION

Gender inequality is known to occur in the education sector internationally and the gender variable was included in education management research in the early 1970s. The reviews conducted by Fishel and Pottker (1977), Frasher and Frasher (1979), Gross and Trask (1976) and Mesken (1974 and 1979) were based on between five to eight studies while Eagly, Karau and Johnson's (1992) review is more comprehensive, comprising fifty studies of which only five are published in journals or books. Shakeshaft (1987) on the other hand, mostly based her analysis on unpublished results. In many countries like Britain (Gold, 1996), France (Bonnet & Francoise, 1996), Spain (Montserrat, 1996), the Netherlands (Kruger, 1996) United States of America (Logan, 1998) and Australia (Roberts, 1995) this is an on-going area of research.

Published data show that worldwide there are more women than men teachers. For example, "in Britain, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands between 75% and 90% of primary school teachers are women" (Context, 1996 as cited by Gold, 1996:1). The dominance of women, particularly in the primary education sector, may be linked to the perception that the task of teaching small children shares the same skills as mothering so it is assumed that women are able to do this intuitively (Gold, 1996:1). Similar views are held by Adler, Laney and Packer (1993:22) when they state that women dominate because, "teaching children may be associated with motherhood and the caring aspects of

femininity." Bonnet and Francoise (1996:2) suggest that teaching as a career also offers women many advantages, which enable them to reconcile a career and a family life. This includes favourable working hours, security provided by being a civil servant and the possibility of part-time employment.

While women dominate at the teaching level, fewer women are found at the management level. Table 3.3 shows the percentage of women teachers and women heads in primary and secondary education in seven European countries (Van Eck & Volman, 1996:11).

TABLE 3.3: PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN TEACHERS AND WOMEN HEADS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SEVEN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Country	Primary Education (%)	
	Teachers (%)	Head Teachers (%)
Belgium	62	39
France	76	45
Greece	50	41
Italy	93	46
Netherlands	75	14
Portugal	91	90
Spain	74	41

Source: Van Eck & Volman (1996:11)

In most countries, with the exception of Portugal, the percentage of women head teachers in primary schools is considerably lower compared to the number of women that teach (Table 3.3). From this data, Gold (1996:2) comments, "it is as if women are needed for direct work with children because of their built-in mothering qualities but men are needed when adult decisions have to be made. Generally, teaching is considered women's work and is carried out by more women than men, so policy is framed, decisions are made and plans are drawn up by men for women to put into practise.

Statistics, with respect to teaching learners of different ages, also shows an interesting trend with the older learner being more likely to be taught by men (Van Eck & Volman, 1996:10). An example showing the percentage of women heads, deputy heads and

teachers working at different education levels in the Netherlands is provided in Table 3.4. It is apparent that the numbers of women teaching in the Netherlands decreases as the age of the student increases. The low numbers of women in management positions in the Netherlands is also apparent in Table 3.4 below.

TABLE 3.4: PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN HEADS, DEPUTY HEADS AND TEACHERS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

Sector	Heads*(%)	Deputy Heads (%)	Teachers (%)
Primary Education	14	48	75
Secondary Education	7	11	33
Vocational Training & Adult Education	24	43	42
Higher Professional Education	10	No data	40
University Education	4	7	18

*In higher professional education, positions with a salary scale equivalent to scale 13 and higher are classed as heads; in university education, senior university lecturers are classed as deputies and professors as heads.
Source: Ministry of Education, Uitleg (1995 as cited by Van Eck & Volman (1996:10)

In order to compare the position of female educators in the UAE, with observations internationally, relevant statistics were extracted from the MOEY (2002) and are presented in Table 3.5 and Table 3.6 below.

TABLE 3.5: DISTRIBUTION OF EXPATRIATE AND NATIONAL TEACHERS IN THE MOEY

Category	Total			Female		Male	
	Total	Expatriate	National	Expatriate	National	Expatriate	National
Kindergarten Teachers	1 327	345	982	345	982	0	0
Primary Teachers	10 115	6 270	3 845	2 866	3 575	3 404	270
Special Education	249	103	146	42	145	61	1
Preparatory	5 471	3 593	1 878	1 140	1 625	2 453	253
Secondary Teachers	5 719	3 982	1 737	1 508	1 610	2 474	127
Religious	154	141	13	0	0	141	13
Technical	231	210	21	0	0	210	21
TOTAL (Teachers)	**23 266**	**14 644**	**8 622**	**5 901**	**7 937**	**8 743**	**685**
	100%	**62.94%**	**37.06%**	**25.36%**	**34.12%**	**37.58%**	**2.94%**

Source: extracted from MOEY (2002)

Table 3.5 shows similar trends in the UAE and internationally. Females (expatriate and nationals) make up 59.48% of the teaching staff in public schools. Fewer national males enter the teaching profession and are therefore found to be lowest in number at all levels of teaching. Most of the teaching in male schools is carried out by expatriate male teachers because of gender segregation policies that allow women to teach males only at kindergarten and primary level. Expatriates (male and female), however, dominate (62.94%) the public teaching sector.

TABLE 3.6: DISTRIBUTION OF MINISTRY AND EDUCATIONAL ZONE EMPLOYEES 2001-2002

Location	Total	Female	Male
MOEY Abu Dhabi	311	123	188
MOEY Dubai	630	273	357
Educational Zones	705	286	419
Total	**1 646**	**682**	**964**
	100%	**41.43%**	**58.57%**

Data includes both UAE nationals and expatriates

Source: extracted from MOEY (2002)

Table 3.6 shows another similar trend to international observations, indicating that fewer numbers of females (national and expatriate) are employed at the Ministry of Education and Youth[2] (MOEY) and at the Educational Zones[3] where, "the decisions are made and policies are framed" (Gold, 1996:2). The functions of the Ministry and Educational Zones are explained in Section 4.3.1. It is unfortunate that separate data for nationals and expatriates was not available in order to make a better comparison.

Dr. Al-Suwaiji commented in the Gulf News (Shaghouri, 2003a:1) in this regard "we should select the work sectors we should Emiratise like education, which has a direct relation with the development of human resources." He added that, "there are 678 national male teachers working in this country at a rate of 2.9% of the total number of teachers till 2000. On the other hand, there are 7 480 national women teachers who form

[2]The Ministry of Education and Youth referred to herein as The Ministry is the central controlling body of education in the UAE.
[3] The Educational Zone is a regional office of administration serving several schools in a region. For example, Abu Dhabi Educational Zone is responsible for all schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

31.9% of the total women teachers in the UAE in 2000. This means that there are more than 15 301 job positions for nationals in the education sector that could be Emiratised" (Shaghouri, 2003a:1- statistics documented in the article were incorrect and changed with the kind permission of Gulf News).

Due to the lack of data in the UAE, the discussion below related to strategies employed to help women overcome the glass ceiling and leadership is explored almost exclusively from an international perspective. Nevertheless, it is felt this discussion will serve the purpose of elucidating many aspects of my study on UAE national women educators because their labour market patterns (as described above) show similarities to international observations.

3.4 OVERCOMING THE GLASS CEILING IN EDUCATION

It has been recognised that in many countries glass ceiling barriers exist for women in management. Women often become leaders in education when they have been managed by someone younger or less effective than themselves or else they just drift into it (Gold, 1995:5). They do not enter their occupations with a career map. Analytical frameworks like the *Management Route Model* developed by Van Eck and Vermeulen (1990 as cited by Van Eck & Volman, 1996:3-4) help to clarify the complex factors influencing the career paths of women. Knowledge of these factors could serve as an area of opportunity for governments, institutions and women themselves to remove obstacles and actively overcome the glass ceiling.

3.4.1 The management route model

According to this model, barriers confronting women occur during three phases which Van Eck and Vermeulen (1990 as cited by Van Eck & Volman, 1996:3-4) term:

- Anticipation phase;
- Acquisition phase; and

- Performance phase.

A discussion of each phase and the barriers confronting women within each phase is provided below. It is anticipated that this detailed examination will be useful in elucidating the barriers confronting women at different stages of their careers.

3.4.1.1 Anticipation phase

This is a preparatory phase where there is time to develop skills and competencies required for a management position. According to Gold (1996:5) men enter their occupations with career plans, which will eventually make them leaders while women do not consider career development at the beginning. Personal, organisational and social factors play an important part in introducing barriers in this phase. In terms of organisational factors women have been found to have fewer opportunities than men to prepare themselves for senior positions (Ortiz, 1981:4; Wheatly, 1981:95).

Traditionally, institutions have a pyramidal structure with few leaders and larger numbers of implementers or practitioners. Despite this theoretical equality in hierarchy and pay at the implementation level, differences in power and esteem are observed. These are caused and sustained by opportunities and rewards (like attending conferences and courses, running a department, representing the institution in projects), which are distributed semi-formally. According to Koolen and Ruijs (1984:4) those who allocate rewards are usually males who tend to reward other males. In addition, far more women work part-time compared to men (Wirth, 2001:8) and this offers less scope for promotion or taking on additional responsibilities. Participation in informal networks and the support of a sponsor tends to also be important in this phase because it enables employees to have a higher profile and provides support and the opportunities essential for promotion. Women have greater problems than men to access such networks and in finding a sponsor (Ortiz, 1981:17; Wheatly, 1981:165).

It is becoming usual for school leaders to take part in some management development work before taking up leadership positions (Gold, 1996:5). Management development programs help to recognise, reinforce and encourage professional skills. According to Gold (1996:6-7), many management development courses exclude women because of the way in which they are designed. For example, management courses are generally premised on there being one set of correct answers that, "men seem to instinctively know and many women struggle to guess" (Gold, 1996:7). They are designed only to transmit information and depend on lectures on inputs from famous managers or from management experts who have written about how to practise effective management. In this way, the fame and authority of speakers de-skills listeners and there often is not enough opportunity for discussion (Gold, 1996:7). In addition, these courses encourage education management as a technical operation with problems being dealt with in a mechanistic way, therefore, "feelings and conflict that do not fit the system are not acknowledged" (Gold, 1996:7). These aspects serve to exclude women or people that have not traditionally felt powerful enough to engage in, or to challenge this way of learning and teaching.

The courses offered to new women leaders need to be sensitised to include women, rather than exclude them. This would empower them to use their personality, knowledge and strengths when placed in positions of power. In addition, they would not suffer from an inferiority complex because they do not fit the male profile.

3.4.1.2 Acquisition phase

This phase involves looking for, and being appointed to, a managerial position. Qualifications, experience and job application skills are crucial, as is ambition and the readiness to apply for a job. Women lack confidence believing they do not have a chance of being appointed. This is often perpetuated by the popular norm of a masculine image of a leader, which may play an important role in the assessment of a candidate's suitability for a management post (Bilken & Brannigan, 1980:169; Hall, 1993:32; Schein, 1994:48). National policy and regulations, opportunities to work part-time, the relocation

of surplus staff, and child care facilities can also have an impact on women obtaining management positions (Van Eck & Volman, 1996:3-4).

According to research conducted by Roberts (1995:1-152) and observations made by Gold (1996:7) women feel less powerful at meetings and in committees which are areas of high visibility. Observations show, that men dominate meetings taking up between 58% and 86% of speaking time (Gold, 1996:7). Differences in speaking patterns between men and women are observed with men adopting a four-minute monologue while women tended to make short succinct comments (Gold, 1996:7). According to Roberts (1995:23) women are more likely to raise ideas and questions, which lead to informed debate and decision-making but less likely to have their contributions acknowledged. They are also inhibited by inappropriate personal and sometimes aggressive nature of committee debate whereas men are not (Roberts, 1995:23). In addition, women report to a far greater extent than men, that they feel less confident and more intimidated when addressing a meeting (Roberts, 1995:23).

Gold (1995 & 1996), also describes three common types of silences amongst women that are likely to be read as an affirmation of women's inability to lead. The first type often happens to women because they are not used to feeling part of the dominant discourse, so they respond with silence (Gold 1995:102-103). This type of silence can be based on insecurity, an apparent lack of knowledge or just a need for more time to think. The second type of silence is one of resistance (Gold 1996:9). It is used actively, as if out of choice, they are not silenced, they silence themselves (Gold 1996:9). This is the silence of those who have understood that the dominant discourse is, for example, that of autocratic management and have decided that they do not wish to engage with it in any way. Women generally do not want to manage under those circumstances, they therefore remain silent or uninvolved because they do not wish to act in the required way. The third type is one where women do not know that there is discourse other than the one in which they already function (Gold, 1995:105). These barriers may affect the position of women when opportunities for management positions do arise. It is therefore not uncommon for

women to forfeit their opportunities because of a lack of confidence and due to limited visibility in their organisations.

3.4.1.3 Performance phase

Social, personal and organisational factors together have an impact on how women carry out their management duties once they have acquired a management position. Some studies show that male and female head teachers have different managerial styles, while other studies maintain that a gender balanced workforce is ideal (Coleman, 1996:164; Kruger, 1994:126; Shakeshaft, 1987:15). Kanter (1977:105) describes metaphors like *token position* or *ascribed power*. A woman is seen as representing all women in the *token position,* and *ascribed power* refers to the widely held conviction that men are more suitable for management positions (Kanter, 1977:105). Gray (1989:42) describes the perception of men and women's suitability for management where women are regarded as better suited to management positions in primary education and men in secondary education. Networking is important in this phase. Sponsorship and mentoring from professionals they respect are important in encouraging women. For a woman the first challenge is to be accepted as a leader and the second is to move her followers into the realms of possibility rather than practicality. Having already entered the contested terrain of administration, if a women has successfully gained acceptance and credibility as a leader, she is already a visionary. She serves as a role model for other women aspirants to follow. However, for women the challenge is an ongoing struggle of retaining legitimacy as a leader.

The *Management Route Model*, like other analytical frameworks, tends to globalise concepts and ignore societal culture. Societal culture, however, acts as a filter to the spread of ideas and practises across the globe resulting in their adoption, adaptation and even rejection. Cultural differences in the perception of power and authority could also be an important factor explaining women's exclusion from leadership. Although these phases highlight the effect of personal, social and organisational factors that affect

women, legislation and governmental influence in most countries appears to be fundamental to the process of change and gender equity.

The Netherlands is an example of a country, which has recognised gender inequality and has enforced legislation and policies to overcome this problem. Not only has this country developed and implemented policies, but also they have been forerunners in empirical research on gender in the area of education management. A review of the Netherlands as a case study will assist in elucidating the nature of these policies and the challenges of implementation. It would have been more appropriate to use an example of a country with political and cultural similarities to the UAE but this was not possible due to limited research in the area of gender inequality in Arab countries (see UNDP, 2002).

3.4.2 Policy development and implementation - The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, an integration of nursery and junior schools in 1982 resulted in a dramatic drop in the number of women heads in primary education (Education Inspectorate Working Party, 1989 as cited by Van Eck & Volman, 1996:4). Several measures were implemented by the government in 1985 to remedy this situation Ruijs, Mens, Baggen & Janssen, 1986:1-112). These included, introducing management courses for women to qualify them for positions in educational management and improving working conditions for women in management positions. In addition, empirical research was conducted to uncover obstacles to promotion and to investigate the reasons why a large number of women were leaving management positions (Ruijs *et al.,* 1986:104). Using these findings, information campaigns were held to motivate and encourage female educators to apply for management positions (Ruijs *et al.,* 1986:105).

The first in-service training project entitled, *Women and Management* in the Netherlands provided courses for women in primary, secondary and tertiary education who wished to obtain management positions (Kruger, 1989:130). An estimated three thousand women attended these courses and, after a while, there were signs that participants had become more involved in the management of their schools. They were also acquiring a higher

profile within their organisations and gaining greater self-confidence. Their readiness to apply for jobs increased, they were more ambitious and confident of promotion (Kruger, 1989:130). Veldhuis, Hubens and Oudejan, (1996:32) reported that staff advertisements specifically addressed to women seemed to be effective, in attracting female applicants and Vermeulen, Vermeulen and Van Wieringen (1994:9) found that if a preferential policy was adopted by school boards, there was an increase in the chances of women being appointed. Although the results appeared positive, since policies motivated and qualified women for management positions, the actual number of women appointed was disappointing (Equal Opportunities Commission, 1991 as cited by Van Eck & Volman, 1996:5). The major reason for fewer female appointments despite policy implementation was that very few school boards had a policy of recruiting more women into management positions. In addition, fewer measures to help women like child care facilities, part-time management opportunities, more flexible working hours or any other provisions related to conditions of employment were available in practise.

Another factor, which emerged from empirical research conducted in the Netherlands in 1992, was way in which women managers perform their duties. Ruijs (1990:133) identified differences between male and female managers in primary and secondary education while Van de Grift and Kurek-Vriesiema's research (1990 as cited by Van Eck & Volman, 1996:5) on the assignment of duties on joint headships in primary schools also showed male and female differences. It was common for women to hold management posts in small schools as part of a management team, in home economics schools and in state education (Ruijs, 1990:133). Women appeared to place more emphasis on team spirit, they ran their school democratically and gave greater attention to staff management. In schools with joint heads, women were more often responsible for staff and pupil administration and men for financial administration and out-of-school activities (Van Eck & Volman, 1996:5). Kruger (1994:111) placed the differences between men and women head teachers in the context of research on effective schools. She compared the characteristics of women head teachers with those of effective head teachers. Her conclusion based on empirical research and a study of the literature was that women had different leadership styles and intrinsic qualities that made them good

heads. There was also a link between the way in which women and men performed their duties as head teachers and the educational institutions in which they worked.

The experience and research conducted in the Netherlands points to two important facts, namely:

- Policy development and implementation of strategies to overcome gender inequality requires more than training women for management positions. Resources and related policies like those favouring female recruitment must be in place to support the employment of more women into management positions.
- Empirical research in the area of educational management introduces the gender element into leadership styles, indicating stronger transformational (consultative) characteristics in women's ways of leading.

These findings are pertinent to the UAE because a more holistic approach to policy development with respect to Emiratisation and a recognition of effective leadership styles will assist in progress towards leading in a changing educational environment.

3.5 LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

3.5.1 Leadership styles

An interesting evolution has taken place over the last 20 years in the description of management and leadership styles. Mainstream literature published in the 1970s and early 1980s seemed to take no account of gender with continuums being drawn up to show how managers might move between autocratic and democratic leadership styles. Education leaders were positioned on the continuum by such influences as their values, the responses of those they managed, self-evaluation, and the ethos of their organisation. In contrast, in the middle 1980s there was a proliferation of literature based on research that analysed the differences in the ways men and women managed organisations (Eagly

& Karau, in press as cited by Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). It became apparent that because men have held leadership positions for so long that they tended to define the style to which people have become accustomed (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001:782). Gold (1996:4) reinforces this by stating that, "differences (in leadership styles) could have been taken for granted probably because women managers were such a small group that they were invisible."

It is not surprising that women are the unusual focus of discussions of the impact of gender on leadership because social perceivers generally concentrate on the non-prototypical members of categories and people direct their attention to the adequacy of women's leadership styles (Miller, Taylor & Buck, 1991:5). Research shows that women's management styles were more responsive to issues of morality, ethics and principles because they were concerned with involving those they managed in procedures and processes such as decision-making. It portrayed them as being less assertive and more consultative in their approaches to management. Unfortunately, women did not come out of this literature with particularly effective or professional reputations because their profiles made it seem as though they could not make independent decisions. Their lack of assertion worked to their disadvantage because they were seen as soft and ineffective when it came to managing large organisations. These profiles were often too rigid and seemed to encompass all women making no allowance for any notion that some men manage sensitively and some women manage in a dominating and authoritarian fashion. They also placed women in an inferior position by taking for granted that the management skills that many of them appeared to have developed would not make them apt to manage the education systems in which they worked.

Literature published in the mid 1990s seems far more realistic. Hall (1996:16) for example, mentions that the intention of her book *Dancing on the ceiling*, "is not to prove that similarities are the consequences of gender, but to show how gender has an impact on leadership behaviour in the context of education by focusing on women's experiences." She further describes managing education organisations that allow women to enter the discourses of management while clearly retaining their values in which a

picture emerges of women heads enacting strong leadership within a collaborative framework. In spite of this, women heads were firmly committed to the belief that sharing leadership still required them to take the lead when appropriate, including having a personal vision for the school. They saw themselves (and were seen) as key players, coordinating, developing and using others efforts to benefit the schools purpose (Hall, 1996:190). Research conducted by Stanford, Oates and Flores (1994:6) also showed that women operate from personal bases of influence, consequently, it could be feasibly surmised based on French and Raven's model (1960 as cited by Stanford *et al*., 1994:7) that *referent* or *expert* power bases are operative amongst women leaders. In building a heuristic model of female leadership Stanford *et al.,* (1994:7) describe a woman leader as one who initiates a high degree of employee involvement that typically results in a team-based management approach. Furthermore, she has vision, which she is able to effectively communicate to her employees (Stanford *et al*., 1994:7). This in turn serves as an extraordinary motivating force in achieving the organisation's mission. The female leader values autonomy and independence both for herself and her employees (Stanford *et al*., 1994:7).

More recent research findings show that female and male managers behave similarly in leadership roles (Oyster, 1992:527). When there are differences, women tend to have a more relationship orientated style of leadership compared to men, one that emphasises supporting and developing their employees (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Gevedon, 1992; Rosener, 1995). These results and others like them lend support to a structural perspective on leadership – that the core behaviour of people in the same organisational role will be strongly influenced by social norms for that role, while gender roles may influence discretionary behaviour in that role (Eagley & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). However, transformational leadership, a style that transcends the traditional leadership dimensions of task-behaviour and relationship-behaviour may provide a way that women and men can integrate gender role and structural role demands.

Transformational leaders characteristically nurture personal and group improvement, share inspiring organisational visions and foster commitment and motivation towards

important goals. Transformational leadership, behaving in ways that bring out the best in individuals and organisations may be a more androgynous style calling for the best in both masculine and feminine sex-type behaviour (Hackman, Furniss, Hills & Patterson, 1992:319; Book, 2000:15). This leadership style includes those relationship-orientated behaviours as well as task-orientated ones that help groups reach important goals. This style may allow women to fulfill leadership and gender role expectations simultaneously (Manning, 2002:208). Some studies have found gender influences on transformational leadership. In a meta-analysis of forty-nine studies from 1985 to 2001 Eagly *et al*., (in press as cited by Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001) found small but significant gender differences, with women superiors higher on transformational factors while male superiors were higher on transactional factors. In other studies no gender differences in transformational leadership were found (for example, Komives, 1999 as cited by Manning, 2002:208). In educational institutions, though, researchers using diverse leadership measures found that female principals were rated higher in transformational leadership than male principals by their teachers (McGrattan, 1997; McHugh, 1999).

While leadership style is an area of on-going research and contention, the challenges of a changing educational environment demand flexibility and adaptation of leadership styles. Competitive management does not generally correspond to the transformational values of female educators and "women more often than men find this lack of congruence difficult to manage" (Gold, 1996:4).

3.5.2 Challenges for leaders in an environment of change

Political and economic changes are discernible in several parts of the world. In Western countries education is taking place within the context of dwindling resources, vast political change and the embrace by some European governments of the notion that public service is a saleable commodity. According to Gerwitz, Ball and Bowe (1995:52) contemporary writing about education must be seen within the context of market economy. Industrial management styles based on efficiency and productivity do not correspond to the educational values of educators who use terms like *development*, *empowerment*, *facilitation* and *emancipation* to describe their beliefs about education, rather than *survival*, *competition* and *efficiency*, which match the language of the marketplace.

In countries where positions of educational leadership are achieved through long apprenticeships of teaching, leaders are acculturated into the values of their schools and their education systems. These leaders often find it difficult to combine the more driven requirements for leadership in the market place with their transformational ideals (Gold, 1996:4). Changes in the educational environment dictate flexibility in leadership styles to deal with the rigors of change. Research on school effectiveness shows that effective school heads at schools with high levels of achievement are pedagogical leaders (Kruger, 1996:1). However, in some places the status of heads is now determined by administrative management and external contracts (Kruger, 1996:1). As schools get larger and more autonomous they have to compete to distinguish themselves, hence the role of the leader is changing. Theorists like Fukiyama (1995 as cited by Maddock 2002:12) draw attention to the need for diverse new skills. Realities lag behind management innovation and strategic managers are extremely rare (Maddock, 2002:12). Most school heads tend to react to changing environments by crisis management, ad-hoc judgments, seeking advice from colleagues only, they lack originality and prefer habit to innovation (Kotter, 1995:59). This is unfortunate because modernisation and changes within educational institutions require school heads to be confident in networking, bridge-building and making connections (networking) (Maddock, 2002:12). In addition

they must have confidence and critical appraisal skills to query and question convention and to step into unknown relationships (Maddock, 2002:12). As their tasks become increasingly complex, new responsibilities, competencies and skills are required.

From the empirical research conducted by Kruger (1996:1-15) it was found that women struggle to exert influence and cope with change. They are accused of being too strongly orientated towards the contents of the curriculum and that they lack competitive edge. Kruger (1996:8), however points out that "...this seems to be a false point of departure because a school head's quality should be the basis of their power, if it is true that pedagogical leadership is one of the characteristics of effective schools" (Kruger, 1996:8). According to Kruger (1996:8), for women, their quality is their power. Unfortunately, women's preference for relational processes and organisational development is rarely valued or formally acknowledged within recruitment, appraisal and performance measurement (Maddock, 2002:14). Male cultures continue to reward all managers for being decisive, competitive and transactional in style, and the fact is that more men rather than women feel comfortable with this (Maddock, 2002:14).

Traditional gender role separation may have been appropriate in traditional cultures but is totally inappropriate in the modern world and especially in a changing school environment. Shifting from traditional male and female responses requires dynamic interaction with the unknown. The approach is not prescriptive but dynamic – for it is only when men and women renegotiate their relationships and values that transformation will take place and the shifting sands of culture will create significant *push* and *pull* for the modernisation process (Maddock, 2002:17). Manning (2002:213) also supports the premise that women and men in management have equal claim to transformational leadership.

3.6 CONCLUSION

A review of the literature has shown that barriers exist for women internationally even in female dominated occupation areas like education. It was found from an international

perspective, many more women teach compared to those who manage. Attempts to overcome barriers have shown that the most effective approaches implemented included government intervention, however, careful development of policies and the availability of resources are required. Policies resulting in further training and developing women are not enough, but they should include female-favoured recruitment policies, changes in working conditions and resources that facilitate female managers' responsibilities at home and at work. Research conducted on female ways of leading showed that women managers tended to adopt a more transformational leadership style compared to men. This way of leading may be inhibiting in institutions accustomed to male stereotypical leadership practises. In addition, changes in the education environment worldwide challenge present educational managers with more than school and curriculum management.

Although this chapter shows similarities between the employment patterns of UAE national women to those observed for women internationally, it is also evident that not much information is available on barriers confronting them in terms of career development and after they attain leadership positions. The aim of the present study is to determine how national women in education can be empowered and their leadership developed for Emiratisation in the UAE (Section 1.3). The next chapter considers the research design relating to the instruments and procedures employed used for sampling, gathering and analysing the data.