

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter described in detail the findings of this study after an analysis of the data gathered. The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the study, to draw conclusions and to make recommendations for present and future research based upon the findings.

6.2 SUMMARY

The aim of this study is to consider how national women in education can be empowered and their leadership developed for Emiratisation in the UAE (Section 1.3). With respect to this aim, a review of the literature is presented in chapters two and three. The following aspects were considered, namely, a review of historical and recent background information of the UAE which provides a basis by means of which an understanding of the status of women in UAE society could be ascertained (Section 2.2 & 2.3), the concept of Emiratisation and its current implementation (Section 2.4), international perspectives of gender inequality and the barriers experienced by women generally (Section 3.2) and in the education sector in particular (Section 3.3), and a review of strategies implemented to overcome gender inequalities (Section 3.4). In addition, leadership styles relating to women's ways of leading (Section 3.5.1) and the challenges of leadership in a changing educational environment (Section 3.5.2) were explored.

Cultural perspectives relating to the status of women in UAE society showed that the primary role of women is seen to be that of care-giver. The availability of educational opportunities (Section 2.3.3) for women and their entrance into the workforce introduce the roles of *career woman* and *working mother*. These are still emerging concepts in this society, therefore, a slow progression (13% in 1995 – Table 2.1) of female entry into the workforce is noted. The UAE economy is currently dependent on a predominantly expatriate workforce, therefore, a national challenge has been to Emiratisate the workforce

as a means of eliminating unemployment amongst nationals and as a post-oil economic strategy (Section 2.4). As national women form more than half of the indigenous population, efforts to attract and retain them in the work environment are considered imperative. While nationals in general prefer employment in the public sector (Table 2.3), national women are found to dominate the education sector (Table 2.4) where one would expect that opportunities potentially exist for them to assume leadership roles.

Labour market patterns internationally, particularly in developing countries, show that gender inequalities or glass ceiling barriers affect women's entry into the workforce and during their career development (Section 3.2). The presence of these barriers has also been confirmed for the education sector where it has been observed worldwide that a larger proportion of women are teachers compared to the number that manage (Section 3.3). The UAE, like other countries, is no exception. Empirical studies to overcome gender inequalities in the education sector in some countries have shown that the most effective strategies included government intervention and the empowerment of women themselves. However, in order to be effective, policy development needs to equate to more than simply training and developing women as managers. It needs to include female-favoured recruitment policies and the provision of resources (for example day-care facilities) to assist women in management positions (Section 3.4.2 with the Netherlands as a case study).

Research conducted on female ways of leading show that women tend to adopt transformational characteristics in their leadership style compared to men who adopt more transactional characteristics (Section 3.5.1). The consultative nature of transformational leadership has been found to inhibit the career progression of women and it serves to undermine their authority particularly in organisations accustomed to a stereotypical male leadership style. In addition, changes in the education environment worldwide charge educational leaders with more than school and curriculum management (Section 3.5.2). Within this new environment where education is considered a saleable commodity, men are rewarded for being "decisive, competitive and transactional in style"

(Maddock, 2002:14), while women are accused of being too strongly orientated towards the contents of the curriculum and that they lack competitive edge.

The findings emanating from the literature review provided a conceptual and theoretical context and direction for the investigation of the present study. For the purposes of this study, an exploratory qualitative research framework was chosen because it was a means by which a holistic understanding of the experiences and perspectives of UAE national female educators relating to the concepts of employment, barriers and leadership could be obtained (Section 4.2). Ethical measures for the use of human subjects were developed and approved by the Zayed University Human Subjects Committee (Section 4.4.1).

The MOEY Personnel Department provided profiles of potential participants and a theory-based selection process was used for sampling (Section 4.4.3.1). Participants were placed in homogenous groups of educational leaders, experienced teachers and novice teachers. As soon as participant consent was received, data collection using planned observations, focus group sessions, individual interviews and document analysis commenced (Section 4.4.3.2). Focus group sessions were held with homogeneous groups of female educators in which group perspectives of relevant concepts could be explored. Focus groups were found to be effective in enabling spontaneous discussion in which national female educators expressed their views, opinions and experiences. In addition semi-structured individual interviews were conducted in which participants could provide personal perspectives.

Once the data were collected and approval of the transcripts was received from participants, the process of data analysis was conducted (Section 4.5). The data analysis method consisted of an initial general overview of the data and then a more comprehensive review in which major categories, sub-categories and their manifestations were identified. A detailed discussion and description of the components of this framework are provided in chapter five but a discussion of the findings with respect to the two major categories, barriers and leadership is provided below.

6.2.1 Barriers

Consistent with the experiences of women internationally, the findings of this study showed that barriers, both in terms of entry into the education sector (Section 5.3.1) and during career progression (Section 5.3.2), were experienced by national female educators. A limited demand for education as an occupational choice (Section 5.3.1.1), time delays in employment (Section 5.3.1.2) and a resistance to employment in the private sector (Section 5.3.1.3) emerged as the most important barriers to job entry. Barriers to career progression included a conflict between the roles (Section 5.3.2.1), career breaks (Section 5.3.2.2), limited networking (Sections 5.3.2.3 & 5.3.2.4) and mentoring opportunities (Section 5.3.2.5), lack of awareness, confidence and motivation (Section 5.3.2.6), promotion criteria (Section 5.3.2.7), changes in the job requirements (Section 5.3.2.8) after promotion and the fact that national men are “*ear-marked*” for top positions (Section 5.3.2.9).

Limited enrollments by nationals in education departments at universities and teacher training institutions indicate a lack of demand for education as a career choice (Section 5.3.1.1). However, it was found that even though some participants had non-teaching degrees, they preferred to be employed as teachers, predominantly because of the culturally sensitive school environment in which the practise of gender segregation and the convenient working hours enabled them to enter the labour market with the consent of their families. Graduate teachers expected to be placed immediately after completing their studies, but some participants experienced time delays of between one to four years before placement (Table 5.1). Reasons for the delay included a mismatch between teaching competencies and the skills required by the MOEY, complicated job application procedures and a lack of budget for the employment of national teachers who were more expensive than expatriate teachers to employ (Section 5.3.1.2).

National female educators participating in this study resisted seeking employment in the private sector (Section 5.3.1.3). Lower salaries and benefits and a mixed working environment were the main reasons cited for their resistance. Novice and experienced

teachers, however, expressed interest in being job creators where they were keen on the prospect of owning their own schools and creating their own work environments. Most of these participants however, indicated that they lacked business training and finance for such a venture.

From a cultural perspective, national women's primary role as a care-giver is of greater importance than her role as a career woman. The concept of *peer-marriages* (Harris *et al.*, 2002:1-14) does not exist in the UAE. It was, therefore, not surprising that married women with children found it more difficult to balance their careers with their domestic responsibilities. They depended on the assistance of female relatives or they employed housemaids to help with their domestic responsibilities. Fewer participants used a career break strategy especially when their children were younger, but those who did, experienced losses in terms of job skills, in-service training, personal development and they experienced slower career development (Section 5.3.2.2).

Due to the cultural requirement of gender segregation, women-only networks and woman-to-woman mentoring is only possible for national female educators. Participants in this study were comfortable with female *peer-pal* (Ehrich, 1994:7) networks which consisted of women in the same position who socialised with each other. The *peer-pal* network, however, has limited effectiveness in providing career advancement compared to formal networking. Formal networking opportunities (Section 5.3.2.4) exist in the UAE but national women lacked confidence to approach these organisations as individuals. They were more comfortable with joining the formal network as a group. Two types of informal mentoring were found to occur, namely superior-subordinate mentoring and peer-mentoring. While superior-subordinate mentoring was found to be more effective in terms of career development, problems with this type of mentoring were experienced by some participants. According to Parker and Kram (1993), strategies to overcome problems encountered in woman-to-woman mentoring are possible with organisational intervention and training of mentors.

Participants in this study lacked confidence with regards to career planning and most did not start their careers with a career map (Section 5.3.2.6). A link with their definition of a leader (Section 5.4.1) as someone who is, “...*responsible for the development and upliftment of their people,*” (educational leader, fg181202) and their expectation that their superiors will decide when they are ready for promotion, (“...*waiting to be asked to apply,*” [educational leader, ii250303]), show that subordinates generally looked up to their superiors whom they trusted to take care of their career development, (“*When I am worthy, I will be asked to apply for promotion,*” [experienced teacher, ii060103]). Two important promotion criteria were identified by participants, namely, teacher evaluations (Section 5.3.2.7a) and the upgrading of skills, competencies and higher qualifications (Section 5.3.2.7b). Both of these were problematic for national female educators. Limited information about the teacher evaluation process was provided to teachers by supervisors and teachers complained about the lack of transparency and standardisation of the evaluation process. Another factor that emerged from participants was that although teacher evaluations served a key role in promotion, the evaluations lacked power when supervisors had to deal with incompetent teachers.

The MOEY provides employees with in-service training but the “...*relevance of some of the training,*” (educational leader, ii060403) was brought into question. Experienced teachers and educational leaders who were interested in obtaining postgraduate qualifications complained of the lack of opportunities for them to study part-time. This issue is being addressed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Learning with the introduction of e-learning and the development of a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership which will be offered at Zayed University.

Another barrier to career progression related to changes in job requirements (Section 5.3.2.8) after promotion. Participants indicated a preference for promotion into principal positions because they would be based at schools (gender segregated environment) and there are limited travel requirements in this position. However, any promotion required intensive on-the-job training (usually outside working hours), in addition to new responsibilities. There is no requirement for management qualifications for supervisory

positions and most of the training provided by the MOEY related to procedures rather than management skills.

While career tracking is practised for national men in the education sector, national female educators experienced fewer opportunities for career development (Section 5.3.2.9). Participants also reported that they could not compete with national men for promotion since fewer national males enter the teaching profession. Those national males who did, were initially career tracked earlier in their careers and then they were able to take advantage of study opportunities abroad. National males are also provided with attractive packages and accelerated promotion opportunities. Participants indicated that they understood why men would be promoted quickly, that is, because of their financial responsibility to their family. However, participants did not agree with this practise.

6.2.2 Leadership

Leadership was defined in this study as an embodiment of characteristics of a responsible, ethical and intelligent leader (Section 5.4.1). Terms related to authority like *tough* and *emotionally strong* were not used by participants even though studies (for example Amiri and Al-Hammadi, 2003 as cited by Ahmed, 2003:1; Sayed, 2001) showed that women were not considered good leaders because they were not *tough* or *emotionally strong* enough. Female educational leaders in this study emphasised their transformational leadership style in three areas, namely, they were positive role models (Section 5.4.2.1), they encouraged and inspired subordinates (Section 5.4.2.2) and they spent time developing, teaching and coaching subordinates (Section 5.4.2.3).

Educational leaders in this study were positive role models because they preferred to, “...*lead by example*,” (educational leader, ii190103) and they took ownership of their school, department and staff. They preferred working with their teams and found it difficult to go against their teams. At times they had to make tough decisions but they took time to deliberate over these decisions and they considered it important to explain to subordinates the reasons for the decision. They had a consultative management style

based on sharing the same vision and striving for *power for* rather than *power over* junior staff. Motivation strategies like reward and recognition to encourage and inspire their subordinates (Section 5.4.1.2) were used by educational leaders. They were maternal in their treatment of subordinates and developed close relationships with subordinates who were comfortable in sharing their problems with them. Educational leaders were concerned about quality teaching and were keen to upgrade the skills of their staff. They were observed to pre-plan training for their staff in preparation for future reforms and they displayed awareness of the expected changes in their educational environment (Section 5.4.1.3).

Educational leaders also participated in the decision-making process although they were often older and fewer in number compared to the national men at this level (Section 5.4.3). Observations showed that educational leaders were less confident and inhibited at Ministry meetings. The observations made were consistent with the findings of Roberts (1995) and Gold (1996) that women generally felt less powerful at meetings and in committees which are areas of high visibility. These observations could lead one to the conclusion that national women took an inferior role in decision-making, but further probing revealed that they did in fact impact decision-making not by indulging in power struggles but by volunteering to take on additional responsibilities and by providing quality information to support decision-making (Section 5.4.3.2). Their years of experience provided them with authority over the younger males they encountered at the Ministry.

The findings summarised above and discussed in detail in chapter five represent an initial effort to understand the barriers that affect the employment and career progression of UAE national female educators and their current leadership roles as managers and decision-makers. These findings are based on the experiences and perspectives of female educators who participated in this study within their context. Within the delimitations of this study pertinent conclusions are derived from the literature and from the findings of this study.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions for the present study are derived from two sources, that is, from an examination of the literature and from the empirical conclusions obtained from the findings.

6.3.1 Conclusions from the literature

An examination of the literature relating to glass ceiling barriers, gender inequality and leadership styles related to women's ways of leading elucidated the following conclusions.

- Glass ceiling barriers exist for women internationally in all occupation areas (Section 3.2) including the education sector (Section 3.3). These barriers whether personal, social or organisational prevent women from entering the workforce and/or progressing in their careers.
- Changes in women's labour market patterns have been observed with current trends showing that, their working lives are characterised by more continuous labour force participation (Section 3.2.1.1), they are entering professions previously reserved for men (Section 3.2.1.2) and that their earnings have become an essential part of the household income (Section 3.2.1.3).
- Time-use studies indicate that women still work longer hours compared to men (Section 3.2.2). However, some women managers are reconciling their family and their careers by delaying having children until they are well established in their careers. In addition, the concept of *peer-marriages* (Harris *et al.*, 2002:3) is taking root in many industrialised countries in which husbands share domestic responsibilities.
- Educational opportunities for women are increasing, equipping them with skills to aspire to and obtain management positions (Section 3.2.3).

- In the education sector it was found that in most countries more women teach while fewer women are in management positions (Table 3.3). With respect to teaching learners of different ages, the older learner is also more likely to be taught by men (Table 3.4).
- Investigations into strategies that can be employed to overcome the glass ceiling in education includes the development of models like *The Management Route Model* (Section 3.4.1) which helps to identify factors that cause the glass ceiling. These include personal, social and organisational factors that affect the career progression of women.
- Educating and training females for management positions are insufficient, female-favoured recruiting policies with resources like child care facilities to help female managers are required (Section 3.4.2). Implementation of legislation and policies will assist in particular married women with children who aspire to leadership positions.
- It has been confirmed by various studies (for example, Kruger, 1994; Hall, 1996; Stanford *et al.*, 1994 etcetera) that gender does have an impact on leadership behaviour with women displaying more transformational characteristics (Section 3.5.1)
- Changes in the educational environment have resulted in adopting the view that education is a saleable commodity and that it should be managed within a market context (Section 3.5.2). While it has been propagated that women lack the ability to be decisive, competitive and transactional for their new managerial roles, it is also true that “pedagogical leadership is one of the characteristics of effective schools” (Kruger, 1996:8). For women their quality is their power (Kruger, 1996:8).

6.3.2 Empirical conclusions

The empirical conclusions from the findings of this study are as follows:

- Participants in this study experienced barriers to job entry and to career progression in the UAE education sector (Sections 5.3.1 & 5.3.2);
- A strong preference for employment in the public sector (MOEY) was evident because public schools provided a culture sensitive work environment in which gender segregation and convenient work hours attracted national females (Section 5.3.1.3);
- Time delays in employment were experienced by participants for two reasons, namely, a mismatch between their area of study and areas of expertise required and due to the lack of financial planning for the employment of national teachers who are generally more expensive to employ (Section 5.3.1.2);
- Employment in the private sector as a job seeker was resisted by national female educators but the idea of managing their own school and being a job creator was welcomed by novice and experienced teachers (Section 5.3.1.3);
- Teacher evaluations (Section 5.3.2.7a) and the requirement of higher qualifications (Section 5.3.2.7b) were identified as major promotion criteria by participants. The lack of transparency, knowledge and standardisation of the evaluation process and the limited resources for upgrading qualifications by means of correspondence or full-time sponsored study were recognised as obstacles to female educators career progression;
- Other factors influencing career progression included, the conflict of roles as care-giver, career woman and working mother (Section 5.3.2.1) and, the lack of formal networking (Sections 5.2.3.3 & 5.2.3.4) and mentoring opportunities (Section 5.2.3.5). Married women with children in particular, found it difficult to balance their domestic responsibilities with their careers.
- Participants in this study indicated that they are unable to compete with national males for promotions. National males are career tracked, offered better salaries and incentives and have better promotion opportunities. In

addition, national males are able to take advantage of study opportunities abroad, while national females are unable to do so because of travel restrictions (Section 5.2.3.9).

- In terms of leadership, participants (educational leaders) in this study displayed a transformational leadership style. They were consultative, thrived on the cohesiveness of their teams, quality education and were considered role models. Power struggles and the use of male stereotypical behaviour in management and aggression were resisted (Section 5.4.2).
- National female educators felt that they made a contribution to decision-making by providing quality decisions based on their experience and their willingness to conduct research. They were often more experienced and better qualified than their male peers which provided them with authority over the younger and inexperienced male peers (Section 5.4.3).

The conclusions derived from this study provides a platform for recommendations that could be used by employers to retain, recruit and develop the careers of national female educators and as a resource to policy development by government.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions derived from the perspectives and experiences of national female educators who participated in this study.

6.4.1 Strategies to overcome barriers

The identification of barriers affecting the entry and career progression of national women in the education sector is the first step towards considering measures that must be undertaken by government, employers and women themselves to reduce gender inequality practises. The following strategies may assist in recruiting unemployed national female educators and developing their careers once they are employed within the education sector.

6.4.1.1 Policy development and government intervention

The range of options available to the UAE government can be explored by considering international experiences of linking industry and government. Four models relating to the management of national employment policies worldwide have been identified by Barrett and Dawson (1998 as cited by Gray, 2001:90), namely, voluntaristic, corporate, publicly-led and interventionist.

According to Gray (2001:90) an evaluation of these models show that the UAE is currently operating within the voluntaristic model in which employment and investment decisions of national human resources is left to employers, it is, therefore, recommended that an interventionist approach be considered by government as short to medium term measure in order to accelerate the process of Emiratisation. The adoption of such an approach with respect to this study would require the development of policies related to national female-favoured recruitment, the provision of resources, training and working conditions that introduce a female friendly and culturally sensitive work environment. Government intervention in terms of providing opportunities, training and resources will attract particularly to married female educators with children who appear to struggle most with career development due to time constraints and difficulties experienced in striking a balance between their roles as care-giver, working mother and career woman as indicated by the findings of this study (see Sections 3.4.2 & 5.3.2.1).

Another intervention strategy would include the provision of incentives to private schools that employ national female educators. This strategy could be used as a means of addressing the national unemployment problem as the public sector becomes saturated and opportunities for career development in this sector becomes limiting. The institution of a quota system as an initial means of job entry into the private sector can be enforced by government intervention in a way similar to that currently enforced in the UAE banking sector. Such measures would, however, only be successful in attracting national

female employees if contracts, terms of employment, and work environments are closely monitored by the government (Section 5.3.1.3).

6.4.1.2 Collaboration between MOEY and institutions of higher learning

The provision of mechanisms for better communication between institutions and the MOEY is recommended for two reasons.

Firstly, the flow of information in terms of the areas of expertise required and the number of expected graduates requiring placement would assist in avoiding time delays (Section 5.3.1.2) in the employment of national graduates. This communication could lead to the development of an Emiratisation plan which helps to accelerate the employment of national female educators who replace expatriate educators within a certain transitional period.

Secondly, further collaboration between the MOEY and higher institutions is imperative for addressing the need for relevant training. The availability of courses, diplomas and postgraduate degree programs required for the further educational development and training of national female educators (see Section 5.3.2.7*b*) is urgently required. Local higher education institutions and training centers should offer an array of tailor-made courses to facilitate educational reforms and upgrading of teaching skills needed as part of in-service training. At the same time postgraduate teaching and management degrees offered through correspondence or on-line would offer resources to female educators aspiring to promotion and to leadership positions.

6.4.1.3 Self-development and career pathing

The development of skills amongst national female educators relating to self-development and career pathing is recommended. This can be achieved in several ways including awareness campaigns, training courses related to career planning, formal superior-subordinate mentoring with trained mentors and appropriate networking

opportunities. Mentoring relationships between superiors and subordinates must be carefully facilitated by organisational intervention so that successful matches are made (Section 5.3.2.5). Mentors must be trained prior to engaging into relationships for the sole purpose of subordinate career development. Implementation of these would undoubtedly result in educators becoming equipped to charter the course of their careers as highly qualified, trained, experienced and directed leaders. With this in place, Emiratisation of the education sector can be accelerated.

Another factor influencing self-development, career pathing and promotion opportunities of national female educators relate to internal MOEY procedures that need improvement. It is recommended that the process of teacher evaluations (Section 5.3.2.7a) be considered and revised. In this regard, the findings and recommendations of studies already conducted on the teacher evaluation process (for example, Al-Raway, 1988; Al-Nayadi, 1989) may be considered as a platform for identifying key measures in terms of improving the existing process.

6.4.1.4 Elimination of gender discrimination practises

It is recommended that gender discrimination practises in the workplace be eliminated by means of legislation monitoring. The labour law requirement of non-gender discrimination with regards to employment, earnings and promotion should be monitored to ensure that organisations adhere to them in practise. This would not only motivate national female educators but will also serve as a means of ensuring their progress and development as they gain confidence in applying for promotions (see Section 5.3.2.9).

6.4.1.5 Encouraging entrepreneurs

The willingness of national female educators to explore the option of being job creators in the private sector (see Section 5.3.1.3) should be seen as an opportunity by government and the business community to encourage their economic participation as entrepreneurs. Assistance and training in terms of business planning, education management and

financial management may create a niche in the private sector for national female educators to own schools and provide employment for other teachers. In addition, financial schemes in collaboration with banks, the chambers of commerce and government aid to support these entrepreneurs would be required.

6.4.2 Encouraging female participation and leadership in decision-making

6.4.2.1 Transformational leadership

It is recommended that the use of transformational leadership styles by female educational leaders and the subtle strategies employed in decision-making observed in this study must not be viewed negatively by employers. The perspective that women educators are not *tough* or *not emotionally strong* to lead must be addressed especially in organisations that are accustomed to the male stereotypical style. There are many benefits related to consultative behaviour including encouraging team work, administering a harmonious working environment and providing a means for quality decisions based on experience and research (see Section 5.4.2). Observing the success of the current UAE leadership, these are probably the very characteristics that have contributed to the accelerating progress of the UAE into a thriving modern nation state.

6.4.2.2 Encouragement of active participation in meetings

It is recommended that active participation by women in meetings and committees should be encouraged. Observations of female educators in staff meetings indicate that they have the ability to contribute to and lead meetings involving their female subordinates (see Section 5.4.2.1). Providing opportunities for women to lead meetings and increasing female representation at meetings in the Ministry and in the Educational Zones are ways in which active female participation can be encouraged. Training in presentation skills and meeting dynamics could be included within the overall training of female managers.

The technological era has made possible the presence of a virtual meeting room in which contributions can be made on-line rather than face-to-face encounters. Such a provision would undoubtedly provide a route for silent voices to be heard. In addition, contributions by this means does not require direct interaction with male colleagues, therefore, the possibility of participating in these forums by national female educators who are inhibited by gender segregation requirements is negated. Training in technology and the availability of computers and appropriate networking systems would be required if this system of communication were to be considered.

6.4.2.3 Visibility of female leaders

It is also recommended that opportunities for the recognition of the achievement and contribution of experienced teachers and educational leaders be made available. Recognition should be made in public so that women become visible as leaders and role-models. A positive focus in organisations on women's ways of leading would ensure that differences in strategies used becomes part of organisational culture and that women feel confident about using their skills and talents without being intimidated by transactional expectations. In addition, the recognition received serves as an incentive that national female educators can strive towards.

The present study does not advocate that it is comprehensive enough to provide answers to all areas of the multifaceted problem of barriers and leadership. It is the first research effort considering the experience and perspectives of UAE national female educators in terms of employment, barriers and career development. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of this study should not, therefore, be considered definitive and need to take into account the delimitations of this study (Section 1.5). Some recommendations for further research beyond the delimitations are, therefore, suggested.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In analysing the present findings several areas for further research are identified. These are summarised below.

6.5.1 Strategies to overcome barriers

Barriers inhibiting national females from entering the education sector and from progressing in their careers have been identified in this study. Therefore, research into possible strategies that could be implemented to assist national female educators to overcome these barriers is recommended. Such research could include action research where considered strategies could be introduced on a small scale so that their success rate can be evaluated before full-scale implementation as policy. In addition, research into the possible pathways for interaction, communication and collaboration among government, employers and employees is needed so that implemented strategies are supported in all forums.

6.5.2 Training and development needs analysis

The lack of relevant training opportunities and facilities emerged in this study as one of the key barriers to promotion by national female educators. Therefore, further investigation into the training and development needs of national female educators in congruence with those required for career development is recommended. Such a study could assist in structuring higher education programs, courses and workshops that are relevant to career development of national female educators and to the expected educational reforms.

In addition, research into the various policy options related to employee training that is available to the government is deemed necessary both as a means to encourage employers to institute training as part of a long-term career tracking strategy and to enable national female educators to plan their careers. Such options could include remedial training for job-seekers (for example, aptitude and psychometric testing, career counseling and guidance and personal presentation), training levies and related investment incentives (for

example, levy-grants, tax rebates and tax incentives for employers), trainee vouchers or stipends for employees etcetera. Such research would indeed be required if the private sector is to be considered an alternative employment route for national female educators both as job seekers and as job creators.

6.5.3 Career development and career planning

It is evident that, “the career development process for women is different from that of men” (Linehan & Scullion, 2001:321). The findings of this study confirm that, like women elsewhere, the socialisation of national women give priority to their nurturing role and much less attention to their career role can lead to home-career conflict, lack of career planning and can result in sex stereotypical occupations. Further research into the skills required for national females to plan, develop and balance their careers with their role as care-giver is required. Elucidation of career development options should be included in such research in order to equip national female educators to make informed career choices and decisions. The findings of such research would also be beneficial to employers assisting them to identify and career track aspiring national female employees earlier on in their careers.

6.5.4 Woman-to-woman mentoring

Problems relating to superior-subordinate mentoring emerged from the findings of this study. Since the woman-to-woman mentoring option is the only possibility for national female educators, further research into this concept is recommended. Research into problem areas and the recommendation of possible strategies that could be used to facilitate formal superior-subordinate mentoring would elucidate possible pit-falls and ways in which obstacles could be alleviated. In addition, such research would facilitate the institution of a formal mentoring program by serving as a resource that could be used to train a female mentor for her role in the career development of their female subordinate.

6.5.5 Research into successful private schools in the UAE

The present study confirms the resistance of national female educators to work in the private sector as job seekers but an emergent finding is their willingness to enter this sector as managers of their own schools. Therefore, case study research on successful UAE private schools in terms of quality education, financial management, attracting high student numbers etcetera would enable national female entrepreneurs to benefit from their experience and expertise. Further research and collaboration may lead to partnerships between successful private schools and female entrepreneurs who could opt for temporary placements for the sole purpose of professional training.

6.5.6 Expansion to other occupation sectors

While the present study is limited in that it considers national female's experiences of barriers and leadership in the education sector only, an expansion of the current study to other occupation areas is recommended. This research would build on the current findings and would be a contribution to labour market studies in the UAE. In addition, a knowledge of the barriers affecting UAE national women would be invaluable to the government, employers and the Emiratisation process as a whole. Effective legislation and decision-making with respect to national employment policies and work environment resources facilitating UAE national female contribution to the UAE economy, should be implemented.

6.5.7 Expansion to other Arab countries

The current study contributed on a small scale to gaps in knowledge relating to labour market studies on women in the Arab world as expressed in the ILO (Wirth, 2001) report and the UNDP Human Development Report (2002). Similar research concerning glass ceiling barriers affecting women in other Arab countries with similarities to the UAE is recommended. This type of research may elucidate common factors affecting because of cultural and geographical similarities to the UAE. In addition, developmental processes

could be explored in countries like Oman and Kuwait where the nationalisation processes have been established over a longer period compared to the UAE. The experiences of other Middle Eastern countries would be of benefit to the UAE.

6.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Abdelkarim (2001:295) defines labour market information as the “total body of information on how people prepare for work (skill development), search for work and work (skill utilisation), under which conditions (negotiations, wage levels, work conditions) and with what results (welfare and economic growth).” Information is a vital pre-condition of decision-making. Bearing in mind, the scope of this study and its delimitations, it is hoped that the conclusions and recommendations derived from the findings will provide a bridge between research and practise. This could provide direction for the government, employers, researchers and women in considering strategies that could be implemented to assist with overcoming barriers, facilitating the entry of women into the workforce and providing them with opportunities to take on leadership roles and more active participation in the decision-making process