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스포츠 매니지먼트 석사 학위논문

Empowering Women Sports Leaders in Uzbekistan

A critical analysis of transforming the role of Women in
Sports Management

우즈베키스탄 여성스포츠지도자 역량 강화를 위한
연구 스포츠 조직 경영 상황에서 여성의 역할 변화에
대한 분석을 중심으로

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Abstract

Empowering Women Sports Leaders in Uzbekistan

**A critical analysis of transforming the role of Women in
Sports Management**

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The research on underrepresentation of women leaders in sports organization within Uzbekistan is very scarce. The last 26 years of independence of Uzbekistan remarkably changed the role of women in sport and women in general. Despite the increase of female athletes' involvement in sports, Uzbek women sports leadership remain invisible. Hence, the purpose of study was on the exploration of women's experiences currently working in the sports management. Qualitative method, i.e. eight in depth interviews among female leaders in a chosen sports organization of

Uzbekistan gave profound insight on their career success and failure actors, their leadership qualities, styles and effectiveness to lead.

This investigation found that Uzbek female sport leaders had several common experiences during their career. Specifically, they cited that family, education, mentorship and personal factors were facilitators to successful performance whereas gender perceptions and talent discrimination existing in organizations, lack of interpersonal relations and financial discrimination were barriers to negotiate these in a male dominated world. Based on the findings detailed advices and policies are suggested that will increase female sports participation. This research also lays recommendation which will enhance the transformation of women leadership roles, thus benefiting the status of sport organizations of Uzbekistan.

It is hoped that the findings from the research will be applicable and influence the national sports policy in Uzbekistan, and also help to create auspicious and family-friendly circumstances for women leaders in sports, as a result sets an example of good governance and reach requirement of the International Olympic Committee.

Keywords : Female leadership, women sports leader, women sports management, sports participation

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Background of Study

There are people perception on the behavioural characteristics of gender representatives according to which men are prescribed to be active, career motivated, fearless overcomers and leaders whereas women are considered to be more focused on family, tolerance, caring for others, etc.

Notwithstanding the society and view on it has been changing and nowadays worldwide both men and women strive towards equality in many spheres of life. The “less intellectual and weaker sex” (Cohen & Huffman, 2007) is gradually ruling existing stereotypes, attitudes, behaviours, traditions, becoming more intellectual and conquering all field of society. Over the past decades it is observed notable increase in the number (even though it is not perfect number yet) of female managers in business, political, health, education sectors. And what about sports which is mostly considered to be masculine? However, the regretting fact is that women have yet to gain “the full credibility and professional respect equal to their male counterparts”. (McCharles, 2010)

Today Olympic Games have been demonstrating the progress in gender equality in sport. Since 1900 to 2016 wide researches have been

held about strong connection between girls' participation in sports and positive outcomes for women, and the result showed an incline from 2, 2% to 45% in female competitors at the Olympic Games. Unfortunately, the raise of female sport participation has not reflected to women leadership. They are still under-represented in the levels of senior level management and constituting a small part within the sport governing bodies (Whisenant, Pedersen, & Obenour, 2002).

The under-representation of women within sports organizations has received considerable attention in the recent years (Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore, 2000; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007). "Women in Leadership" has meanwhile become an issue at all, the national and international levels. First attempt to improve the status of women and enhance the participation in sports was taken in 1994. This year with support of the British Sports Council and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was hold first international conference bringing together women and sports. Additionally, along with conference was also endorsed the Brighton Declaration which provide the principles and measures to develop and advance women involvement in sports (Brighton Declaration). Moreover, many other international strategic approaches and model programs were designed and implemented among sporting federations and nations, by that accelerating

the change towards a more gender equality in sporting culture worldwide (IWG, 2014). Particularly, there have been significant developments and implemented reforms in the area of women on boards to strengthen the representation of women at decision making levels. In 1998 the supreme authority of sports IOC impelled National Olympic Committees to increase the percentage of women in executive posts to 20% by the year 2005 (Pfister & Radtke, 2009). As consequence, some countries introduced mandatory quotas that claim a certain proportion of women to sit on leadership roles. This action led to the remarkable increase in number of female managers in sports. Nowadays 24 out of 106 IOC active members are women (IOC, 2016). However, these few women who have succeeded are not enough. Sport needs the fresh perspectives that women can bring to its conduct.

Despite improved opportunities why are women passive in taking officiating positions? Many scholars (L. Defrantz, 1988; L.Davis, 1993; Pfister, Habermann & Ottesen; Cunningham, 2008; Massengale & Lough, 2010; A Adriaanse & Claringbould, 2014; Koca & Ozturk, 2015) studied about gender perceptions on work roles and conducted several researches about women managers and strived to answer to this question. The researchers investigated challenges are faced by women leaders, attitudes

towards women managers and women's work roles, also regarding the importance of gender equality in sport field they provided valuable information.

From literature can be seen that there are a plethora of factors are responsible for the low representation of women in sports leadership. The factors, which may be categorized as being historical, social, organizational, and political factors, include: cultural beliefs and sex stereotypes (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1979), lack of institutional, gender role expectations (Sartore and Cunningham, 2007; L.Dezso, Ross and Uribe, 2015), work-family balances (Yoo, 1997; Dapeuw, Bonace and Karwas, 1991; L.Davis, 1993), lack of social network and role models and organizational structures (Avery and McCay, 2006; Massengale and Lough, 2010) that inadvertently promote men over women.

After investigating researches on the topics of women barriers it was of high importance to study the need and benefits of increase women in decision making positions in sport. Shephard in her book "Kicking Off: How Women in Sport Are Changing the Game" (2016) mentioned when women represent the minority on leadership posts the conditions of female athletes will be remaining forever as "being second class citizens" and "with few women voice in decision making" positions a career in administration

and the hiring of women as decision makers in sports becomes less probable. Therefore it is being needed more female leaders which can motivate future women managers and more role models to break existing women network limitations in sports. Women's success and their prosperous career in top level posts provide the visibility required to alter and shape the preferences and perception of sport as a male domain (Massengale & Lough, 2010; Koca & Ozturk, 2015).

The existing literature demonstrates that there are significant researches have been done on women leadership in both western and eastern countries. However, there is a distinct absence of examination and literature on sports organizations in the women's participation in leadership positions in Uzbekistan.

The issue of female leadership also is manifested in Uzbekistan where gender stereotypes and gender relations determine informal barriers that complicate the lives of women in the country. The persistent stereotypes reflect to labour market of country demonstrating individual gender models. In the most cases women are represented in "female" fields of study or job as education and health sectors with lower wages. Engineering, communication and other more profitable fields are dominated

by men. “Sport organizations provide one of the most notable examples of the persistent nature of discrimination” (Cunningham, 2012).

Uzbekistan for the last 10 years the country has been taking important actions towards diminishment of prevailing gender stereotypes and ideology, thereby directing the main focus to the development and promotion the women sport and physical culture. Women participation in sport has importantly grown for this period. Nevertheless, this growth in women’s participation in sport has not led to a corresponding increase women in the decision-making bodies within sport. Women are greatly outnumbered by men in high status, high income and high power positions (L. McCharles, 2010).

“Sport today represents not only a global movement but also a highly institutionalized cultural practice that helps to maintain male hegemony in our societies” (Koca & Ozturk, 2015). The current study seeks to extend earlier conducted research about women’s leadership roles and women managers in sport organizations tailored to sociocultural context of an eastern “uzbek” society.

1.2. The Purpose of Study

As I mentioned above very few studies have been conducted in Uzbekistan or addressed experiences of women in sports leadership from the

Uzbek women's perspectives. It is generally accepted by majority that leadership is a male dominated one, but in spite of this women still are trying to enter managerial ranks. Therefore, the thesis aims to study the background of women's career success factors and women's position in leadership. Thereby, explore the socially constructed barriers to women's access in decision-making positions of sport organizations in Uzbekistan. The factors that influence women's careers in a positive and negative ways are identified in order to get an insight of the under representation of women in leadership positions.

1.3. The Significance of Study

I would state that current research has real and actual importance of the role of women leadership, especially in Uzbekistan. The number of women sports leaders across various sports federations and organisations has been negligible, thus highlighting the need and importance of increasing women sports leaders. The study will contribute information to bridge the knowledge gap on women in sport and leadership in Uzbekistan. Through this research, the needs of the Uzbek women can be identified, highlighted, and improved. This research lays a platform that will strengthen the existence purpose of women sports leaders in Uzbekistan. The benefits

derived from this study enlarge the importance of the roles of women sports leaders across various sports organisations in Uzbekistan.

1.4. Research Questions

The following research questions for this study were identified by the literature review on the studies of women in leadership:

RQ1. What factors affect the involvement of women in managerial positions in Sport organizations in Uzbekistan?

RQ2. What are the experiences of women in current leadership positions that can generate future positive impacts in the sport organizations of Uzbekistan?

RQ3. What recommendations will impact a higher involvement of women sport managers?

RQ4. What are the benefits to sports' governing bodies in Uzbekistan in increasing female leaders in sports?

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In order to examine above mentioned research questions, this chapter will provide the relevant literature pertinent to the matter. Several researches were conducted on the studies of the lack of female leaders in sports organizations, where authors have also proposed that men take most senior positions and women being under-represented (e.g., Acosta & Carpenter, 2000; Hovden, 2000; Pfister & Radtke, 2009; Koca & Ozturk, 2015).

However, the vast majority of these researches were investigated in Western countries. And unfortunately, in Uzbekistan the researches on underrepresentation of women in leadership position in sport industry have not been examined yet. Therefore to study this subject I am addressing to findings of scholars globally to understand the background, nature and extent of problem.

The literature review divided in several parts composed of history and progress of women leadership, barriers in female sport leadership, gender discrimination, gender theories and action policies. Also, present study covers fields of leadership theories, role congruity theory, and helps to understand the importance of women in top management in sport, trends in positions in sport organizations, trends in women sport participation and women sport leadership in Uzbekistan.

Numerous studies have attempted to explain how women work with their followers of different gender, how the main barriers or features/factors influence female leaders, is there some qualities that female executives in sport have in common, how they make improvements and what they do for professional increase. Through the studied papers we will try to comprehend the experience of other countries, accordingly to identify the current situation and its impact to women leadership development in sport, and ultimately to “contribute new information to bridge the knowledge gap on women in sport and leadership” (M’Mbaha, 2012) in Uzbekistan.

2.1. The Beginning of Female Involvement

Gender hierarchy in the sports organisation was and being an international phenomenon (Pfister, Habermann, Ottesen, 2004).

Throughout history, women worldwide even being denied the opportunity to participate have made considerable contributions to the culture of sport. In the first modern Olympic Games of 1896 women were excluded from the fields of play and first took part in the Olympics in 1900, although on a very limited basis. The feminine had been admitted to Olympic athletics by then (in 1928), and have continued to participate and to fight for their right to compete, on both the fields of play and in the corridors of sport governance (L. Defrantz, 1988).

In recounting the history of women in the Olympic Movement, Fekrou Kidane wrote in “Continental Sport” (1987) that the first concerted effort to include women as members of the IOC was undertaken in 1960 “in Rome by a number of personalities, all women, from Australia, the USA and Russia. That effort was unsuccessful in 1960, but 11 years later Monique Berlioux of France officially became executive director of the IOC. She was one of the most powerful and influential figures in international sport, and certainly the most influential woman (L. Defrantz, 1988).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, women have fought for their rights and taking leadership positions. In 1990, for the first time in the history of the International Olympic Committee, a woman was elected on to the Executive Board (Flor Isava Fonseca), and later in 1997, another woman, Anita DeFrantz, became an IOC Vice-President (1997-2001) (IOC, 2016).

The first ground breaking and important document to the cause of female introduction into executive level in IOC became the “Brighton Declaration” developed in 1994, and it was fundament for all further work around the world.

The main purpose of the first sport related declaration t international level regarding gender equality was: “To develop a sporting culture that

enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport” (Brighton Declaration).

On the purpose of controlling the implementation of the Brighton principles in the Brighton conference was established the International Working Group (IWG) on women and sport (M’Mbaha, 2012).

The main focus of International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG) was on the raise of female participation in all levels of sports, particularly in decision-making and leadership roles. This group was concentrated on superior sport leadership positions in management, coaching and officiating at national and international levels.

“Women are significantly under-represented in management, coaching and officiating, particularly at the higher levels.

Without women leaders, decision makers and role models within sport, equal opportunities for women and girls will not be achieved” (IWG, 1994: 1). (A Adriaanse & Claringbould, 2014).

Over the years of activity IWG hold six international conferences on women leadership and sport. In every conference there has been assembled declarations, policies directed to involvement women sport managers, by that reach gender equality in leadership. Since 1994 the IWG has become a platform to give rights and a voice for female representatives across the globe. During one of these conferences hold in Montreal Canada in 2002 the Brighton declaration was adopted by 250 sport organizations (White & Scoretz, 2002). Later many other countries have joined to the list and

nowadays already 322 nations across the globe have endorsed the Brighton declaration¹.

All adopted declaration say about the need of “increase the number of women coaches, advisers, decision makers, officials, administrators and sports personnel at all levels with special attention given to recruitment, development and retention” (IWG, 1994). The conferences were held specifically directed their focus to the issues of redressing the imbalances women faced in their involvement and participation in sport. In relation to sport leadership, adopted legacies concentrated on enhancing the number of women in managerial roles, creating a sporting culture that enables and values women’s participation at all levels and affording women more influence through their increased presence in decision-making positions (IWG, 2014).

About Brighton declaration Hargreaves (2000) noted that it expanded the rights and opportunities for women to change sporting culture. And became one of the pivotal reference points for sports organizations to actively involve women into all areas of sports and bring positive outcomes to sports governance bodies.

¹ <http://www.iwg-gti.org/@Bin/122230/Brighton+Signatories.pdf>

2.2. Women in Sport Management: International Review

The over the past thirty years women's advancement in the sport work place, particularly in senior management has remarkably enlarged (Inglis, Danylchuk, & Pastore, 2000; Sartore & Cunningham, 2007) due to created more opportunities for female enhancement in sports. Many sport authorities adopted a number of policies on issues of gender equality and took steps towards reaching gender balance in sport.

Issues of women and sports became a crucial target of International Olympic Committee and equal entrance of male and female into sports arena was consolidated in the Olympic Charter in charge of IOC to “encourage and support the promotion of women in sport at all levels”².

To support and promote sports environment for all, in 2012 followed by Brighton declaration IOC approved “The Los Angeles Declaration”, a series of recommendations aimed at promoting gender equality in sport and using sport as a tool to improve the lives of women around the world. The Declaration focused on two main themes:

- 1) The need to bring more women into management and leadership roles

² <https://www.olympic.org/women-in-sport>

2) The need to increase collaboration and partnerships, especially with UN organisations, to promote gender equality (IOC, 2016).

Moreover, every four years, the IOC started to organise a world conference on women and sport, the primary objective of that is to define measures and plan of actions towards improvement and empowerment of women participation in sport and to scrutinize the progress made in the sport field within the Olympic Movement.

Additionally, IOC initiated to award every year an institution or organisation or a person for their remarkable contribution to the encouragement, development and reinforcement of female participation in sport or in the administrative structures of sport by the five continentally IOC “Women and Sport” trophy (IOC, 2016).

Undoubtedly, all these taken actions brought positive changes in sports, and certainly significant increase in women sport participation rate stems from precisely these policies which provide equal opportunities to be involved in sports. The following tables illustrate the improvements in the women involvement over the past decades.

Table 1. Women’s participation in the Olympic Winter Games

Year	Sports	Women’s Events*	Total events	% of women’s events	Women participants	% of women participants
1980	3	15	38	39.5	232	21.7
1984	3	16	39	41.0	274	21.5

1988	3	19	46	41.3	301	21.2
1992	4	26	57	45.6	488	27.1
1994	4	28	61	45.9	522	30
1998	6	32	68	47.1	787	36.2
2002	7	37	78	47.4	886	36.9
2006	7	40	84	47.6	960	38.2
2010	7	41	86	47.7	1.044	40.7
2014	7	49	98	50.0	~1120	40.3

Table 2. Women's participation in the Olympic Winter Games

Year	Sports	Women's Events*	Total events	% of women's events	Women participants	% of women participants
1980	12	50	203	24.6	1,115	21.5
1984	14	62	221	28.1	1,566	23
1988	17	72	237	30.4	2,194	26.1
1992	19	86	257	33.5	2,704	28.8
1996	21	97	271	35.8	3,512	34.0
2000	25	120	300	40	4,069	38.2
2004	26	125	301	41.5	4,329	40.7
2008	26	127	302	42.1	4,637	42.4
2012	26	140	302	46.4	4,676	44.2
2016	28	145	306	47.4	~4700	~45

As can be seen from demonstrated table women participation remarkably increased more than double times. It was likely to have an influence on the involvement of women into decision making roles.

Past researches demonstrate that further enhance of women in superior position yields positive changes in women sports participation (United Nations, 2007). However, drawing on the work of L. McCharles (2010) it can be deduced that the reverse corresponds else. The research

states that the increase in the participation rate of female athletes has not led to a corresponding increase of women in leadership positions within sport. This theory of takes its evidence in the present-day figures of women leaders in sports organization where a gender balance in leadership roles is not satisfactory even in supreme authority of Olympic Movement as IOC, despite it “encourages and supports the promotion of women in sport at all levels and in all structures with a view to implementing the principle of equality of men and women” (Olympic Charter, 2015).

From “Women on Boards report” (2014) can be derived that the IOC Executive Board is comprised of 15 members of whom four are women (27 per cent). Besides, out of the 115 IOC members fewer than 25 per cent are female.

Hence, similar situation can be observed in 204 NOCs recognised by IOC which is operating across five continents. The indicators of female leaders in their respective countries of Pan American Sports Organization, European Olympic Committees, and Association of the National Olympic Committees of Africa, Oceania National Olympic Committees and Olympic Council of Asia remain persistently below 30% (Women on Boards report, 2014).

Table 3. Female Representation NOC by continent

Continent	Female Representation NOC General Assemblies	Female Representation NOC Executive Boards
Africa	17 %	21 %
America	18 %	20 %
Asia	11 %	15 %
Europe	10 %	17 %
Oceania	25 %	33 %

The next table can reveal significant inequalities between men and women in the sports leadership provisions across affiliated sports governing bodies (Women on Boards report, 2014).

Table 4. Board members of sports organizations by gender

Sport Organization	% Female board members	% Male board members
International Olympic Committee	27 %	80 %
International Paralympic Committee	22 %	88 %
Association of National Olympic Committees	7 %	93 %
Commonwealth Games Federation	20 %	80 %
National Olympic Committees (128)	16 %	84 %
National Paralympic Committees (30)	28 %	72 %
International Sport Federations (34)	15 %	85 %
Paralympic Sports Federations (14)	24 %	76 %
Commonwealth Games Country Associations (54)	21 %	79 %

Indeed, the aforementioned organizations acknowledged the existing inequities and attained these numbers by setting targets there. Notably, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) explained the need for more women in sport, specifically at the higher level positions and (L. McCharles,

2010) and therefore, in the eve of the Olympic Games in Sydney, the IOC in order to achieve a more equitable gender balance in board directed its aim to reach a minimum of 20 per cent decision making female positions on board in all executive bodies and NOC (Women on Boards report, 2014). Even “self-imposed threshold of at least 20 % women as members” the superior commission has recently met (Senne, 2016).

2.3. Female Leadership: Explicit and Implicit Factors

While it is widely considered that circumstances have changed and improved in a positive way, there are still certain questions concerning whether females have been sufficiently representatives in sports leadership.

Many researchers investigated about leadership in a variety of contexts and from diverse angles. Many advances have been made, theoretically and empirically. One area of leadership gender issues in sport management leadership started to be examined by Defrantz (1988) and others during the mid-1980s, referring to the gap in the numbers of women in leadership positions in comparison to men across sport organizations. Later Bruening and Dixon (2008) examined the stereotypes of senior level athletic administrators, pointing out that the senior position was perceived as masculine (Peachey & Zhou & Damon & Burton, 2015).

Defrantz (1988) noted “the greatest need of sport, at every level, is leadership” and “the vitality of sport depends upon diversity of talent”. According to her sports undergoes being weaker due to the elimination of females “who care about sport” from the high level post of sport governance.

Women leadership considered as such powerful tool which able to transform the sport and “affect massive societal change” (Siang, 2012). Despite these facts women still continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions in sport.

There are undoubtedly a number of reasons that stagnates the promotion of women in top management. The reason for this phenomenon as explained by many scholars is the effects of various factors called “push” and “pull” (Hewlett & Luce, 2005). Push factors are described as issues that organization can control and influence to push the women from it. As an example might be taken limited opportunities, lack of role models in high rank leadership, managerial incapacity and etc. In turn, pull factors are defined as “outside factors” that can be influenced little by organization like family responsibilities and aspiration to “pursue a life-long career dream” (A.Johnson & M.Roper, 2004). In their work authors described that the main reasons of lack of women leadership is organizations’ focus on push

factors instead of pull factors. These include the legal status and position in society, situation at home or the role at work.

As a result “women are viewed as incapable of handling the responsibility of power and leadership with their sensitivity traits of compassion, understanding, and warmth” (Massengale, 2009).

Furthermore in researches it is identified that the under-representation of female sports executives in open and close discrimination and specific corporate policies and according to E. Buzuvis (2015) barriers hindering women’s entry, retention and advancement in leadership positions in sport are associated with job constraints or stereotypes related to gendered nature which is the core of removing women’s aspiration towards their careers. Due to gendered cultural norms and perceptions women are more likely to be required to engage in balance professional and family responsibilities. In accordance with Oakley (2000) women “are described as less self-confident, less analytical, less emotionally stable, less consistent, and possessing poorer leadership abilities than male managers”.

Eva Cox (1996) claims that women have “an uneasy relationship with leadership and power”. She notes “We need more leading women ... because corporations, governments, and institutions have been dominated by men with their particular view of the world”. Cox (1996) argues that

from within masculine paradigms of leadership, it creates gendered assumptions based in concepts such as master, force, authority, command, control, influence, power, strength, might, and rule that become the truths about constitutes a good worker and a good leader.

Delano and Schweitzer (1991) categorized the major obstacles in recruiting and retaining women managers into three areas: individual limitations, structural or institutional limitations, and cultural or ideological limitations. As individual limitations authors review time constraints, lack of motivation and qualification, that is to say considering that female find leadership career laborious. Therefore, by their own choice they do not enter to the ranks of senior positions.

The sport considered to be masculine field. Social paradigms have been built pursuant to job opportunities in sports management which seems to be more associated with men. Accordingly, authors distinguish another classification of barriers - structural or institutional limitations comprising of financial opportunities, discrimination, and lack of organizational support. This category, in the more general sense, outlined with the government and organization issues and job constraints towards women.

In the sport management literature, the opportunity inequities and barriers that obstruct the women involvement into managerial ranks is

explained as fundamental flawed of “organizational structures and deficiencies in individual skills” (Hoeber, 2007). Pfister and Radtke (2009), and Hoeber (2007) in their researches about women sport managers concluded that gendered expectations and emancipation permeated the culture of the sports organizations which “is based on rules, ideals, and myths that are taken for granted”. Sport organizations are supposed to provide equal rights to female and male, but indeed they put requirements and obligations in their career life equally, demand working hours equally, and regarding equal status and position in decision making bodies, uncertainty prevails. As a result of such inequity, women tend to remain a minority in the decision-making committees of sports organizations (Pfister and Radtke, 2009).

Existing convictions of the social roles and position of women in society gave impetus to divide into third category of barriers as cultural and ideological limitations (Depauw, Bonace and Karwas, 1991; Delano and Schweitzer, 1991). Based on the researches of many scholars was pointed out core problems related to cultural restrictions corresponding lack of role models, traditional family structure and devaluation of women in sports (L.Davis, 1993).

Among the most important of the challenges facing sport management authors identified the expansion of employment opportunities for women not being as frequently recognised for their contributions as their male counterparts (Winning hearts and minds, kpmg.com, 2014).

This is another explanation for women's underrepresentation in elite leadership positions which points to the undervaluation of women's effectiveness as leaders.

2.4. Early Socialization and Existing Stereotypes

Despite positive changes in women's access to superior roles, little success has been realized in terms of training and preparing next generation for leadership positions in sport. According to Yoo (1997), gender stereotyping begins early in development and results in children holding rigid rules for gender-related behaviour. He signifies that the process of leadership socialization is formed from family, school, community deliver suitable skills. During childhood, stereotyping may serve to simplify cognitive processing and allow children to make easier decisions and judgments, but adults do not require such simplification (Gender Stereotypes: Masculinity and Femininity, chapter 7, p.184).

Indeed, the stereotypes about personal features attributable to male and female are built in early years forms which affect attitudes toward

female managers (Koca & Ozturk, 2015). Therefore, childhood lessons and early exposure to leadership have a significant impact on a woman's perceptions of her ability to lead. Therefore, socialization has a great impact on a person's career choice and development.

The historical division of labor and societal expectations between women and men, who often assumed responsibilities at home and who often assumed responsibilities outside the home respectively comes from social role theory. His theory describes socially constructed rules about the concomitant sex differences and their behavior. According to this theory it is argued that gender stereotypes expectancies are transmitted to future generations, and "impinge on the social behavior of each gender and represent sexual stereotypes". In the limited sense that perceived stereotypes reflect real distinction in the current behaviors and govern social roles of women and men (Eagly, 1987).

Scholars Cunningham (2008) and Burton (2015) consider that leadership stereotypes being external to sport organizations intrinsically bear an impact on women's experiences in leadership at the organizational level to. And it may serve as a hindrance to further enhancement of female leaders.

Itzin (1995) and Felicia & Petra (2015) noted that the discrimination based on gender is entrenched in the culture of the sport governing bodies. Itzin develops the concept of a “gender culture which is an organizational culture where gender plays a role in every attitude, belief and behaviour within the organization” (Felicia & Petra, 2015).

The aforementioned notions can be found in Kanter’s (1977) study on gender differences in the organizational environment supports. In the research Kanter demonstrated that women function of their position in the organizational ranks is accorded with the lower levels of power. That is to say, lower levels of control and resource access were mainly associated with lower level positions within the organizational ladder. Thereby, the high proportion of men in superior and women in inferior positions reflected the differences in power that existed between the sexes. Further, the predominance of unequal distribution gender roles women in created and gave rise to formation of barriers for women to move to higher echelons in sports organizations (Sartore and Cunningham, 2007 (b)).

Sartore and Cunningham (2007 (a)) also applied different approach and perspective to the under-representation of women. They proposed that gender stereotypes and roles connected to sport ideologies inhibit women in sport organization, arguing that women might not perceive themselves as

capable leaders because of low levels of power and status (Massengale & Lough, 2010).

Initially, these raised reasons have laid the basis for under-representation of females and becoming it as one of the acutest problems of sports management in recent years.

2.5. Measures to Increase Women Participation in Sport Leadership:

Scholars View

From literature review related to the leadership it became clear that almost all gender leadership theories were supplemented. Everhart and Chelladuri (1998) in their investigation the barrier of gender differences in coaching tied up with the lack of female mentors. According to their findings female athletes with women coaches were more interested in the coaching field than those with male coaches (Dana Massengale, 2009). They mentioned that women have presumed lack of aspiration, confidence and suitable role models and about how traditional biases are holding women back. According to Lough (2001) leadership is now needed to mentor the young women who will be the future of women's sport. Fazoli (2004) calls the lack of women role models a deterrent for the younger generation to enter coaching.

Gender equality in sport management will benefit the position of women, also it will improve the diversity of today's sport sector which is needed to attract potential sport participants and clients and keep them as members or participants active in the organisation, ready to fulfil activities or functions (European Commission, 2014). Having more gender diversity has been argued to lead to increased knowledge, more varied skills, more extensive discussions due to different perspectives and more varied problem solving capabilities (Felicia & Petra, 2015).

The authors concluded that gendered expectations and evaluations permeated the culture of the sports organizations that participated in this study. As a result, women tend to remain a minority in the decision-making committees of sports organizations. While the focus on organizational structures and individual deficiencies as explanations for gender inequities in sports has been helpful in demonstrating that inequities continue to exist, they do not explain the deeper mechanisms by which they are sustained and reinforced (Hoeber, 2007).

An organizational culture valuing gender equity and top management support for gender equity had more positive organizational outcomes for women, and men, within an organization, including stronger organizational commitment and intentions to stay in the organization, when

compared to gender equitable policies (Burton, 2015). Salancik and Pfeffer (1978) noted that “the social context, through informational social influence processes, ought to affect beliefs about the nature of jobs and work, about what attitudes are appropriate, and indeed, about what needs people to possess” (p. 233).

Other scholars suggest different approach, according to Avery & McCay (2006) to attract women in executive levels the work should be started from changing of recruitment process, that is find more female candidates. Also authors suggest use recruitment ads directed to promotion policies equal opportunity and diverse organization.

From first glance all these suggestions seem and not enough to change organization and elude managers from making biased decisions. Notwithstanding, the reliance on bias and stereotypes can be reduced or at least decreased by means having diverse culture, intergroup communication, training and creating awareness among employees decisions of whom is influenced by bias (Felicia & Petra, 2015).

2.6. The Sociocultural Context of Uzbekistan

Sport plays an important role in the economy and culture of the Uzbekistan. Despite that it is situated as a gendered space that support

masculine model, female athletes are increasingly matching and surpassing their male colleagues in the medal counts.

To understand women sport participation and the gender leadership problem in sport in Uzbekistan, we must first understand the specifics and nature of women, their economic and cultural state, and further nature of sport power, and gender in our country.

The Republic of Uzbekistan is the country which gained independence from Soviet Union in 1991. Women play a major role in Uzbekistan, forming almost 51% of the country's population. The representatives of Uzbekistan, in general are Muslims (88%) and other religious communities.

The Basic Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan - The Constitution contains provisions to protect women's rights. Article 18 prohibits all forms of discrimination based on gender, national, religious and other grounds. In accordance with article 46, women and men have equal rights, article 117 provides the right to elect and be elected to representative bodies (Constitution of Uzbekistan).

In spite of constitutional provision of male and female equity religious foundations, centuries-old traditions and way of life in the regions involve gender inequality in relation to the female population. The specific

feature of men and women consciousness is their difference of opinions about the social status of women. Uzbek masculine prefer to see women as housewife in good material well-being or want their spouse to be employed on part-time (Inamova, 2006). Patriarchy is deeply rooted and influences people's daily lives, choices and actions, impacting negatively women in leadership positions.

As a result, the number of economically active women still is remaining lower than economically active men. In Uzbekistan, the considerable part of non-working population is women at working age from 20 to 30 years, because the average age of women marriage is about 20 years; with 75% of women marry at the age of 20 to 24 years.

Approximately 23-30% of women give birth at age between 20 - 24 years. Therefore, their role in society is passive due to the need for care young children. This a temporary distraction from employment leads to the fact that the possibility of improve their professional experience, education and qualifications have mothers much less than men. The labour market of Uzbekistan also segregated, women are mostly involved to "feminine job" like education and medicine, and other fields are remaining male dominated.

2.7. Uzbekistan Policies towards Gender Equality in Sports

However, Uzbekistan for the last 10 years is taking important actions towards diminishment of prevailing gender stereotypes and ideology and the awareness of the importance of addressing gender issues is increasing by the year.

The country was one of the first in Central Asia that ratified the Convention "On the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women". The turning point in the women lives was the decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated on March 2, 1995 "On measures to enhance the role of women in the State and society of the Republic of Uzbekistan", as consequence in the country introduced a new position - deputy prime minister responsible for social protection of the family, motherhood and childhood.

Regularly, from 1995 in the Republic there have been held conferences and round tables on gender perspectives and concerns of women. Only in the last two years were held four international conferences on women's participation in executive level and the promotion of gender equality.

According to established decrees active involvement of women to government jobs and decision making positions have started. Nowadays the

proportion of women in employment is 44.7% (Report, 2015). Half of working women are concentrated in the feminized areas such as education, health care, insurance, and culture. In the health sector employs 75% of women in the insurance industry - 44%, 61.5% of women work in education and 53% - in the sphere of culture and art (Sugarova, 2012).

Nowadays, the government's particular emphasis is given on education, health care, physical culture and sports. Notwithstanding the short period the achievements in sport and the number of won medals in different international tournaments by national athletes demonstrate that the country has established an effective system of training of professional athletes, coaches and referees. The government sport organizations' (NOC, Ministry of Culture and Sport, Federation) activities are primarily aimed in general health promotion, education of harmoniously developed young people, the further development of physical culture and sports in the country.

The ongoing reforms in Sport and Physical Culture in Uzbekistan are designed to attract people, especially young people, women and children, physical culture and sports.

Attracting girls to the sport and creating the necessary conditions for their regular exercise is one of the important directions of sport policy of Uzbekistan. The realization of the target program "Healthy mother - healthy

child" consistently implemented at the initiative of the President of the country, occupies a special place the issue involvement in sport girls. Owing to these measures of the state of Uzbekistan for years of independence has considerably decreased the incidence of women and children, three times reduced maternal and infant mortality.

During the years of independence, significantly reduced mortality women and children, three times reduced maternal and infant mortality, life expectancy for women has increased from 67 to 75 years (Akhmedova and Mirzaev, 2015).

Furthermore, the important role in increasing women sport participation is playing the Decrees of the President of the Republic "On measures to stimulate female coaches working in sports facilities in rural areas" and "On the establishment of a dedicated Republican school of Olympic reserve in gymnastics"(turkistonpress.uz).

The country carried out a targeted operation to support female and develop the talents of gifted youth. In 1999, Presidential Decree the Republic of Uzbekistan established the State Prize Zulfiya, which is awarded to gifted girls up to 25 years, students in schools, lyceums, colleges and higher educational institutions, for good behaviour, resourcefulness, erudition, initiative shown by the rare talent, as well as for outstanding

achievements in the field of literature, culture, art, science, education and sport. Every year on the eve of March 8 - International Women's Day girl-students are awarded the State Prize “Zulfiya” in the field of culture and sports. This is an important factor to further popularize the sport among girls, especially elegant sports like gymnastics and artistic, their development of being healthy, strong and sturdy.

Moreover, «Women and sport» commission was established in December 2004 under the National Olympic Committee of Uzbekistan purpose of which is strengthening the role and enhancement of women participation in the development of Olympic movement of Uzbekistan and rise of women’s sports education.

The country carried out systematic work to attract women and girls to physical culture and sports. The total number of women and girls involved in sports has reached more than 1.9 million people, of which 680.4 thousand regularly play sports and participate in competitions.

The advances of sportswomen’s of Uzbekistan can be continued for a long (Akhmedova and Mirzaev, 2015).

However, girls and boys in Uzbekistan traditionally choose "female" and "male" sport, where vividly expressed gender dimension. Women usually go to feminine sports like gymnastics, swimming, tennis.

2.8. Dynamics of Changes in Women Sport Education

The lack of representation of women in government positions and in management is an issue discussed at the government level. The analysis of the number of sports coaches, especially women coaches, demonstrated that in the country there is a shortage of specialists with higher education which is the main reason of reducing the efficiency of athletic performance. Thereby, the state policy aimed at the development of women sport was the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan by 2 June 2006, "About admission to higher educational institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2006-2007 academic years", where is emphasized the development of women's sports in the direction of "Sports activities" and indicated the selection quota (221 place) on "women's sports development" (Asatova & Isroilov, 2015).

Table 5. Dynamics of changes in the gender structure for 2005-2015, Institute of Physical culture.

	2005 year	%	2010 year	%	2015 year	%
Graduates	473	73,6	691	71,4	992	67,6
Including female	125	26,4	198	28,6	322	32,4

It is notable that by 1965 the Uzbek State Institute of Physical Culture has prepared and produced 1438 specialists with higher education in the field of physical culture and sport, when 32 of graduates (2, 22 %) were women. Every consecutive year since, the growth has continued.

The participation rate among female athletes in Uzbekistan continues to increase.

Sport is not the only area that is lacking in female leadership. The issues alluded to women coaches in sport are the same issues that women experience in many leadership positions in male-dominated professions (L. McCharles, 2010).

The existing literature examined the gendered aspects of employment and management in many sectors in Uzbekistan. The context of women in leadership in sport is compelling reason for reform in Uzbekistan. However, along with the existing achievements, in Uzbekistan there are still certain problems in achieving equality between women and men in sport leadership.

At first glance the resistance outdated patriarchal stereotypes of "female predestination", low awareness on gender equality in the society and lack of modern scientific-theoretical and practical research in the field

of status and rights of women, including on the basis of the study of the world experience are seemed as main reasons stopping the women strive to take decision making positions.

The women's striving to take leadership positions is suppressed by traditions and social experiences existing in country. The dominance is accepted as leadership and protection in Uzbekistan. Uzbek men's functions was and still continuing being leadership in family, financially providing their family members and protection women. This conception deeply penetrated to the women consciousness as the result many female don't see themselves as decision makers. Being leader which means being against "defenders". Furthermore, the dynamic revival of the traditions of early marriage led to the fact that the proportion of female sport managers, coaches and instructors has decreased.

Without women leaders, decision makers and role models and gender sensitive boards and management with women and men within sport and physical activity, equal opportunities for women and girls will not be achieved. Women's experiences, values and attitudes can enrich, enhance and develop sport and physical activity (IWG, 2014).

Nowadays Uzbekistan requires having more women sport managers. Female role models in athletic coaching and athletic administration lend a

voice to women in sport, show women in decision-making positions, and realistically portray the possibility that women are qualified to be athletic leaders and possess the ability of leading from female to female (Coakley, 2001; Lough, 2001; Massengale, 2009).

Many women spoke about the exceptional support, maturity and trust they had found in the women-to-women networks that had been formally and informally established throughout their careers (Gender report, 2014). Same-gender role modeling is important, as female athletic leaders can influence other females regarding career choice. Female athletes can more easily identify with women coaches and may gain confidence in their abilities as future sport leaders.

2.9. Theoretical Framework

Since this thesis mainly examines female managers in sports and perceptions towards them, it is of high importance to present theory about gender roles as role congruity theory, leadership socialization – social role theory, implicit and explicit barriers and attitudes, also social norms that prevail in an organization.

Social Role Theory is the primary theory behind this study. This theory denotes that individuals disbelieve in leadership skills of women and assume that leadership roles designated to male (Eagly, Makhijani & Karau, 1995). Therefore, Social Role Theory advances the concept that the different roles in society are aligned regarding gender (Social Role Theory, 2008).

The next ground for my research theoretical framework put “the role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders” (Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000, Eagly & Karau, 2002). More clearly, women are accepted and expected to be more relations-oriented with low leadership capacity, while men are associated with the agentic and assertive characteristics of leaders (Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, 2000).

According to (Eagly and Karau, 2002) role congruity theory envisions that “female leaders suffer two types of prejudice: descriptive and

prescriptive”. Descriptive bias explains that mostly female leaders tend to have less prospects and abilities in taking leadership posts in comparison to men, and in its turn prescriptive is regarded when female leaders are accepted “less favorably” with the reason that leadership is associated with men and it is for men. This theory takes its example in sports organizations of Uzbekistan where the vast majority of high-level posts have been taken by men.

Based on social role and role congruity theories of preconception toward women leaders, my research insists to examine the male dominated culture of sports organizations in Uzbekistan, factors of gender leadership biases, male perception and views in abilities of female sports managers. This comprehension may help to understand why women have a low representation in sport decision making posts in Uzbekistan.

We need a clear understanding of the stereotypes existing in social groups, organizations tailored to the local context along with the qualities associated with effective leadership in order to analyse afore mentioned theories. Hence, in the research, interview questions were mainly focused on deriving barriers, stereotypes, experience of women managers, their leadership qualities, together with male managers’ attitudes toward female

decision makers in highly gendered sport organizations of Uzbekistan. The previous studies have become a pillar for this research.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Literature review has shown that women desire to not only participate in sports, but also progress into leadership roles. To date, no previous study has sought the observations and perceptions of women leaders in Uzbekistan. This study may help explain the prejudice toward women leaders that prevents and limits women from attaining top leadership positions in sport management. In order to develop an understanding of the role of women in decision-making positions, and indeed the existence of so few women in such positions in sport organisations in Uzbekistan, I seek to identify gendered power relations in the development of key gender equity policies within Uzbekistan sport organisations. Building on the relevant literature and theoretical background of the previous chapter, present section describes research objectives and approach, interview procedures and data collection processes.

3.1. Research Approach

Due to the nature of my thesis I chose a qualitative approach. By definition, it avoids using statistical calculations (Veal, 2005). A qualitative method allows collecting sufficient data in the form of words, visual images or sounds to explore and suggest the reasons of particular phenomenon

(Neuman, 2012). As the most applicable and efficient way to examine identified research questions was found conducting interviews. And interviewing is the most commonly used method of qualitative design. Mostly qualitative interviewing is generally refers to loosely structured, in-depth or semi-structured forms.

The semi-structured interviews were assumed as adequate selection among various possible forms due to its flexibility; the questions afford a certain freedom to respondents in the sense of probing beyond the answers of prepared questions (Neuman, 2012).

3.2. Research participants

As I mentioned before qualitative research is oriented to gather meaningful information regarding few people. In the present study, female leaders from the regional and national levels of sports organizations in Uzbekistan were chosen to conduct semi-structured interviews. The specific criterion for participants in this research was

Therefore, the specific criteria were used in selection of research respondents.

A) They were women

B) They were all engaged in full time tenure track leadership position within sport organizations, national sports federations or educational institutions

Interviewees were invited to take participation in the interview through a letter by email, which include details about the study such as its purpose, interview procedures and etc. An introductory email was sent to 10 female sport executives across the Uzbekistan.

3.3. Data collection

Since the purpose of this research was to identify what factors influence the experiences of women sport leaders and how they describe those experiences the qualitative research design was found appropriate to make analyses of research data, give answers on research question and bring out to the openings or findings.

The aim of the qualitative interview study was chosen in order to explore the women's individual perspectives on leadership and to discover, among other things, how women in leading positions manage to combine their occupations, housework, family responsibilities and leisure activities.

As part of my preparations for the fieldwork and interviews was compilation of questions. The eighteen interview questions were drawn up

and formed based on previous studies to find out the answers to my research questions.

The interviews composed of eighteen questions. The questions were first developed in English, and approved by thesis supervisor. Then it was translated into Russian and Uzbek languages by the author. After translation Russian and Uzbek versions were read by other native speakers to ensure that questions while translation kept its meaning. The same questions in the same consequence were sent to all participants. In the scope of this study, interviews were conducted on e-mail basis and respondents were asked semi-structured, open-ended questions. The results were assembled by re-reading each interview responses for eighteen questions.

The responses were received only from 8 female leaders and was only able to go ahead with these women responses, since the other two had no opportunity to give answers due to lack of time.

3.4. Data analysis

The thematic analysis was chosen as the strategy for interview data examination. The ultimate goal of a thematic analysis is to organize respondents' interview data and putting them into categories (Preissle, 2008). The thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research

instrument to generate categories and match similar thematic elements across the research participants' report (Reissman, 2008).

The researcher Saldana (2009) suggested coding in order to divide data into discrete parts, and by means of repeated words to collate them for similarities and difference of issues, ideas, opinions and etc.

Already during the interviewing process, some repetitions of certain themes were expected. After the interview data has been translated from Russian and Uzbek into English and anonymized, then the developing code process started.

These categorized codes allowed to create some order and then developed into umbrella themes.

Chapter 4. Findings

This research investigated experiences of women sport leaders from different sports organizations, including sport educational institutions in Uzbekistan. The participants all held senior administrative positions of their department or division at the respective entities.

This chapter is divided into four overarching sections hinged on formulated research questions. Also the findings give a brief information on demographic and educational backgrounds of the participants interviewed.

The first category, factors of success and failure of women sport leadership, was operationalised by developing the question on what factors affect the involvement of women in managerial positions in Sport Industry in Uzbekistan?

The second section, leadership qualities and practices in sport, examines as to what were the experiences of women in current leadership positions that can generate future positive impacts in the sport industry in Uzbekistan?

The third category, female leadership development in sports, was addressed through the question, what measures will impact a higher involvement of women sport managers?

The final section, the importance of female sport leaders, was the mainstay for the research, why it is important to measure, track and raise the number of women on sports' governing bodies?

4.1. Demographic Information and Educational Backgrounds of Participations

The interviews were conducted among eight female sport leaders. All of the women were almost from the same social as well as educational backgrounds. The ages of participants ranged between 43 and 65 years old, making an average age on 50 (ST.D=7, 60). Out of 8 respondents three were single, one widowed and other four were married with children. In terms of academic experience all interviewed women were highly educated individuals and five of them had been athletes representing at regional and national levels.

All the participants had considerable experience of 5 years as leaders in sport organization. Five of them have experiences as professors and two as coaches. Seven of the respondents had past leadership experience before promotion as leaders to the position that they hold now.

The interviewees had educational degree from master's (two participants) to PhDs (six participants). Four participants were from

educational background in sports –basketball, 2 athletics and tennis, while others were from humanities, law and economy.

The managerial positions of respondents that they hold are presented below:

Respondent 1 - Vice Rector for Academic Affairs

Respondent 2 - Director of Training and Development employees

Respondent 3 - Head of the Training Division

Respondent 4 – Head of the Department

Respondent 5 - Head of the International Department

Respondent 6 - Head of the Department of Training and sports

Respondent 7 - Head of the Human Resource

Respondent 8 - Head of the Human Resource

The names of the chosen sport organizations were not mentioned in order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents.

4.2. Success and Failure Factors of Women in Sport Leadership

This study aimed to find out factors of women involvement into decision making roles in sports bodies. The responses of the interviewee suggested that there are a plethora of factors that impact the respondents' career in sport leadership, being a springboard for success. However, along

with positive influence there were negative elements creating unpleasant circumstances for female sport leaders.

According to Adler (1993) and Choi (2015) women career success or failure deeply and strongly rooted in created educational, cultural and legal systems. Conducting interviews allowed us in-depth understand female manager's prosperity and stagnation in sport governing bodies in Uzbekistan.

4.2.1. Factors of Women Successfulness in Sport Leadership

Influence of Family

In the process of reading the works of scholars I have found a bunch of researches about work-family balances (Yoo, 1997; Dapeuw, Bonace and Karwas, 1991; L.Davis, 1993) and how family impact the women's career, especially in leadership (Shakeshaft 1999; Tyack and Hansot 1982, A.Johnson & Roper, 2004). In these researches the need to live up to demands of family were primarily corresponding the underrepresentation of women in leadership. Drawn on these researches, and considering the fact that Uzbekistan, despite its modernity, is a country with patriarchal stereotypes. It was anticipated that family inevitably negatively affects women's career development, therefore an assumption is made that Uzbek

female sport leaders are at a disadvantage in terms of having opportunities due to the work-home conflict predicaments.

Unexpectedly, once the interview was conducted, it emerged that family which involves children, spouse, parents, contributes a positive character to women' aspiration towards the management in sports and serves as an impetus to advance. Almost 88% of respondents stated that they received family encouragement and support whereby they have advanced and been promoted in leadership in sports. For example, the Respondent 6 – young (36 year old) mother of three sons, PhD in Physical Education mentioned that her spouse and parents-in-law were a stimulus of her academic and work accomplishments:

“...It is my great luck that I got married to the highly-educated family valuing the education. Actually my supportive husband made me to do my Master's then PhD in the long run and to obtain current level by creating extenuating circumstances and harmony in the family. ...After I gave birth to my little son the feeling of maternal love became stronger whereupon I thought my career would stop and I would not be able to work. However, my spouse and parents-in law motivated me telling that I have to be a living model in forming my children. ...During my 11year working experience, including 5 years in leadership position, I tried to not overuse

the trust of my family members and to do not neglect them by prioritizing work over family or vice-versa.”

As reported by Miranda (2005) Women’ family or clan could become the real and strong power, relegating her to a figurehead. This statement of author is reflected in the response of the study interviewee. Respondent – 7 shared that her motivation to achieve high-rank level in male – dominant profession was owing to her parents:

“...my parents influenced my career path decision in a multitude number of ways. I was only girl in my family; hence from my young ages my parents supported my inclinations to become a leader. I owe them for where I am now, and I always work hard to make them even prouder of my achievements”.

Other participants including single women indicated about the family support in the following contexts:

“... My parental leave slowed down the pace of my career, but my success is primarily built with the constant support on my family, children”;

“I feel always supported by my family members”;

“...on the contrary my family is an incentive to overcome the obstacles that occurs at my work”.

On the other hand, as discussed above in the literature review, a lot of female leaders' career confirms that "women experienced considerable role conflicts and had more career interruptions from family demand raising children and domestic work" (Kirchmayer, 1998; Noonan, 2001; Choi, 2015). Only one participant of our research agreed with afore-mentioned by stating:

"My family negatively approaches to my leading position, which sometimes demands extra working hours, as my family expects to contribute more time in household chores. Before I took my current post I could spend a lot of time with my 2 kids who turned out to be good athletes, however my job timings doesn't allow me to do the same now, thus the apprehensions about my work from my husband and family members'.

The Right Mentor

The second chapter provides deep insights of scholars (Kotter, 1996; Chelladurai, 1998; Lough, 2001; Fazioli, 2004; Avery and McCay, 2006; Massengale and Lough, 2010; A Adriaanse & Claringbould, 2014) on the topic of mentoring. They have mentioned mentors' significant role in advancing women in their career ladders (Newman, 1993; Kirchmeyer, 1998).

The interview revealed that research respondents at managerial levels had a lot of influence of their mentors and at various stages of their career; their mentors played a critical role. Most of the participants believed to the necessity and importance of mentoring is of key importance to breed young women leaders in sport bodies.

The Respondent-7 emphasized the significance of mentors in the following statement:

“The role of the mentor is always great. Their experience means a lot. To some extent, even you are acting as they are. ... the main factor of success - the right mentor! Their effect on the course of events of career life is huge. You're young, many a times you do not know how to make decision, how to deal with people. And certainly, you must be properly motivated and directed”.

The majority of the interviewees pointed out identical experiences where the mentors influenced positively in their career path and they saw mentoring to be beneficial to encourage women to pursuit higher positions. Apart from one interviewed female manager others were mentored at various stages by men and women supervisors and they indicated that “...both men and women mentors made a positive impact to my career”. One woman who had male mentor stated:

“My supervisor was a man, from whom I have learned to efficient ways of management my sport field and adopted his management styles. In my opinion, with a woman mentor it would be more difficult for as I think as woman seeks other women as competitors”.

Some scholars investigated that mentors can also report negative experiences with mentees (Eby & McManus, 2004; Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Eby, Durley, 2008). Two out of eight women expressed that sometimes they were feeling “help and harm, both by men and by women” and said “when I was young, I always needed assistance and to be guided however as my experience grew , I realised that the male mentors were more of harm than help. I experienced a lot of unpleasant experiences, sometimes verbal taunts and so on.”

The mentors are also expected and given the privilege and responsibility of helping and guiding a protégé along their journey. Certainly, the role of mentors within the family cannot be overlooked.

“In the role of mentor were my parents – my Mom. She was my ideal, my role model. She formed and developed confidence, leadership qualities in me. When I was child she was taking me to sports clubs, making me to read different literature and continuously telling “Work on yourself!”
...My mom was very energetic person, involved in many activities. She

was coping with many tasks at one time, though never ignoring family and children. She is an inspiration and showed me to become primarily just a woman and then succeed in the society” as said by one of the respondents

Educational Level and Achievements in Sports

Another factor that accommodated the successful development of female sport managers of Uzbekistan sports organizations was education. It is a critical element in the recruitment of officials in various organizations. In the research findings of scholars (Tharenou and Conroy ,1994; Melamed, 1995) was inferred positive influence of education level to career success. They explained that competence or skills to carry out duties in high-level positions is the outcome of provided education.

The larger part of our research participants came from dynamic educational background and experiences. Some of them were an elite performers and active participants in their sport. Over and above, before taking current managerial roles in Federations, Sports institutions or clubs they were involved in administration and coaching, even who were not from sports background.

In six cases respondents mentioned that their educational background and/or sports achievements were crucial factor in their selection success and entering decision making position: “The main component of

my career promotion was my sporting achievements in athletics” – remarked one of the interviewee . All respondents were asked to describe their stages of career development. The responses showed that Uzbek women leaders constantly upgrade their knowledge in order to keep up with the development of sport organizations, whether it is obtaining degree or refresher courses. As I mentioned before six out of eight participants held PhD degrees and some of them at the same time were Professors at the sport universities. The review proved that university was an important stepping stone in the career development which provided a useful context for identifying women sports leaders.

Another participant commented that “After my career in professional sport, I decided to take up the role of an academician as a Professor. Indeed, owing to my educational level the university provided me to move into authority position”. And two other participants also wrote in their responses about their recruitment to the staff of university to work in sports.

Furthermore, it is important to note that higher education obtained from an international university offered better opportunities as well as broaden their vision with regards to international perspective in their m field, and empowered them with professional skills and knowledge.

A respondent stated that “My study trip to England in sociology at the age of 28 had totally changed my life, my views and perceptions about the role of women in society. I have learned how women are ‘positioned’ socially, politically and economically. Nowadays, I share my gained knowledge, tailored to the characteristics of the sport context to many young girls and women. Also, I constantly learn the role of women in terms of engagement in sport, exercise and diverse movement cultures”.

The above experiences of the interviewees may lead to the assumption that education level exposure is strongly connected to involvement in sports participation and administration in sport and physical education systems.

Personal Factors

The women leaders in sport organizations unanimously attributed to the number of important aspects which advanced their career - individual factors. And respondents expressed their answers in the form of the following statements:

“Personal "healthy" ambitions!

“My persistence – my success”;

Women’s own activity, motivation, ambition and attitudes were regarded as substantial factors. The motivation goal is to achieve particular

objectives by the action of those people. The researches of Wayne (1999) and Choi (2015) say that people's motivation can lead to better performance and can be achieved valued results.

One of the respondents attributed her motivation and inspiration to reach executive level with love for sports and proof to herself to gain equal respect and acceptance from counterparts:

“Since I have joined the (named) sport club many years ago the opinion of surrounded people and my relatives was most likely malevolent. I still remember how my uncle came and tried several times to convince my father to give me to the courses of piano or dancing rather into sport as I was a girl, anyways I cannot reach “men's” level, in the future as I were future housewife. I was scared too much as I loved what I were doing...Fortunately, in this regards my family was always supportive. However my uncle's experience and his words served as lesson and brought good outcomes, since as my inspiration became to prove first of all to myself and to show to others that women also not less than men.”

Another interviewee identified one of her personal attributes as competitiveness. According to her it is the main drive and condition to go up till the highest level.

“My motivation and resoluteness toward success were very strong. I never stopped before not reaching some results. The sport developed in me competitiveness. I just shifted from competitive athlete who desired to win to my work in the (named) organisation”.

4.2.2. Challenges for Women in Sport Leadership

Regardless of the women’s success and their contribution in leadership roles, it is obvious that several obstacles persist that needs to be overcome. Therefore, it is of high importance to learn from women’s experiences in order to try to tackle the problem. In order to extract the causes of lack of female sport leaders and to understand them, detailed interview questions gave an insight to the existing challenges.

100% percent of participants of the research mentioned that there are no explicit or visible barriers which deliberate disempowerment of females in leadership posts. They all consider achievement in sport management intrinsically depends on the women's self-leadership skills. If only having a good fundamental of skills is enough then why women still remain a minority and are not influential in the decision making roles. Almost all female interviewees gave an explanation that in theory the law has jotted down a lot of policies in favour of the woman, though reality seems far

different from theory. Then what is the reason of underrepresentation females within sports organization?

The interviews allowed us to derive from the responses to this question some of implicit or unconscious obstacles which female managers faced. A number of negative factors that have been categorized into four areas: perception towards women leaders in organizations, economical factors, environmental factors and work round clock are listed hereafter.

Perception towards Women Leaders in Organisation

According to the role congruity theory, explained in literature review, when holding leadership positions, women are likely to encounter more disapprobation than men. Because the theory proposes that higher the status, the senior leadership positions are likely to be the most masculine, and entering of women into managerial positions creates disparity (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

The five participants of our investigation also sometimes felt that this kind of occurrence was prevalent in their organizations, stating that they it was manifested generally in being neglected or ignored directly or indirectly in job environment by men. They are likely to become resentful towards men managers; the following quote is indicated by one of the respondent:

“There are only two ladies in our sport bodies. We often make meetings to discuss about our work and suggestion to develop our organization. However, what happens here? I am only reporting about work related to department in charge of me. When it comes to overall opinions or advices, often I am ignored. I am feeling that my male counterparts try to not pay attention towards my statements, sometimes presenting indifference to me”.

Schwanke (2015) considers that women isolation and subconsciously view towards them comes from the lack of their same gender colleagues in sport management as the organization accepts as its symbolic gestures of goodwill efforts to promote equality. Assigning women to their own space in an organisation and marginalisation of their duties were experienced by other female leaders as well.

“I feel there is a gender bias at my organization. Mostly it is demonstrated in constant negative observations towards my work in front of others. Particularly, my superior officer is unwilling to understand and sometimes to listen to me.”

It should be noted that two women interviewees in sport education management asserted that they never came across with the evidences related to the gender identity in their job. However, one participant because of her

sex even in academic career she faced a lot of challenges, expressed by following statement:

“Bias first of all revealed in my dissertation defences. After graduating my masters I couldn’t defend my PhD on time, I had to go through many trials; after my hard earned PhD couldn’t defend my post-doctoral research. There were very few women who could support me in sport academia”.

Discrimination of Gender Talent

Another interesting theme gleaned from the responses of the female interviewees was discrimination of gender talent. Particularly in sports, women that demonstrate masculine characteristics of competitiveness are labelled as anarchist.

Generally male and female counterparts’ distinguished by common descriptors “communal” versus “agentic.” Women mostly associated with communal qualities characterized by softness and helpfulness. On the other hand agentic features –assertion and control assigned to men. These prevalent expectations established a framework for widespread stereotyping in the organizations (Eagly & Sczesny). As a result of these created norms professional women also are not expected to be competent and warm at the same time (Cikara & Fiske, 2009).

Four research participants specially emphasized that other male leaders dislike the superiority of women in the implementation of tasks.

“Some men are surprised that being a woman with a family how I surpass many others. I obtained my PhD and in many respect performing at an equal level with them. There are men who have negative attitude towards my achievements who cannot accept that someone from the other gender is doing well. Superior feels inferior at times due to limited experience of subject knowledge. And in order to tackle this situation they delegate extra work or try to question my abilities due to irrelevant faults of employees under my department or in my team”.

Another experience by respondent 5 revealed the following situation:

“I had bad experience with my male boss, once some delegation from a foreign institution visited our organization to give lectures for one week. All high positioned employees gave their application. I had more experience in this field, I knew foreign languages, but our director didn't choose me and gave the opportunity to a male colleague. Later I got known that initially he did not consider my candidacy”.

According to Filla & Larimer (2011) women believe in positive stereotypes about their ability to lead and reach decisions, while male

counterparts endorse negative stereotypes regarding the women's inability to make good decisions and to be strong leaders in difficult sport society.

Overtime Work Issues with Lack of Financial Benefits

Lack of organizational financial support often hampers women from accessing into upper echelons and performing their duties. Most women successful in their leadership roles attributed that the stimulation for better performance at work is received from support of their families as was demonstrated earlier in this research, friends, and organizations (Agezo, 2010; Bruening & Dixon, 2008; Duerden & Witt, 2010; Robertson, 2010).

Organizational encouragement yields maximum effectiveness, performance, and productivity of leaders and the work environment should be created in a way that individuals could bring their whole selves and identities (Hoppe & Houston, 2004).

The interviews allowed us to identify the next difficulties of female leaders in sports organizations in Tashkent. Five out of eight participants mentioned that sometimes the organizational support around women at managerial levels is limited and unhelpful due to requirement of the extra time "culture" outside of work hours. I have included some quotes from interview respondents as evidence.

“Well, let me demonstrate to you concrete example of what actually happens in practice and why organizations prefer male leaders. Our government has created legal opportunities for women leaders to succeed in sports arenas which we didn’t have 20-30 years ago. ... In comparison even 10 years ago the situation has changed to positive way, however... Our work day is 5 days a week, from 9 a.m. till p.m. If you come to our sport body at 7 or 8, sometimes on weekends you can find some men employees or managers working. ... Sometimes, we work long hours as well in order to maintain a balance with our men co-workers, which creates imbalance in tier family life as they play roles of mother, housewife and brides in their life after work”. This is primarily one of reasons that sports organisations prefer to have male leaders

Bodey's (2007) research on women sport leaders defined resource allocation and differential treatment as obstacles to women sports.

“As you know in recent years Tashkent has become the hub for international sports events. This phase requires investment of extra hours; however, unlike men women are not paid extra payments at par with male counterparts. I think payment of extra wages should be at par with male colleagues in the organization.”.

“As Margaret Thatcher said to be on par with men, you have to work twice more than they do, so it is. Firstly, you have proven yourself, only after all the work”.

Absence of Social Network and Interpersonal Relationships

In order to function effectively and to ensure the organizational goals in sports bodies both the leader and members have to develop interpersonal relationships. Through interactions, people learn to understand each other, communicate and achieve specific goals. The relationships and networks are important components of leadership in male dominated sphere (M'Mbaha, 2012). The significant influence of interpersonal relationships and organizational networking on the career advancement of women leaders has been researched by several studies (Davidson and Cooper, 1992; Morrison, 1992; Ragins, 1998 and Ogden, 2006).

Four women sport managers have reported embarrassment with interpersonal relationships with their colleagues in the examples of the following statements: “Sometimes I feel isolated at work because I am just surrounded by men subordinates”. Additionally, they cited that male counterparts through their strongly assembled social relations through the “boy’s networks” advance their interests, while lack of social networks among women block their progress.

4.3. Leadership Qualities and Style of Uzbek Female Leaders

An enormous amount of research has been conducted in examining which characteristics, traits, skills and competences lead to effective and successful leadership. Academics consider successful leaders to be great at forming strategic visions, taking risks and being eager in continuous education (Pelonis & Gialamas, 2010). Previously conducted studies on leadership allocated women in subordinate position, where “men are perceived as having inherent leadership qualities that were lacking in women such as intelligence, confidence, dominance and masculinity that make a leader effective” (M’Mbaha, 2012).

4.3.1. Leadership Features

Self-awareness and Continuous Self-development

According to Komives (2007) leadership effectiveness starts with “self-awareness and self-understanding and grows to an understanding of others”. The responses showed that greater number of interviewees possessed the ability to assess their self-strengths and –weaknesses. Recognizing self-limitations can help the leaders perform more effectively (Frost & Walker, 2007).

“I try to improve myself every day and try to overcome my weaknesses, also to ask myself what I could've done differently to better perform”.

Another common characteristic found within interview continuous was continuous learning and self-development.

“You can sit there and say that the family interferes to your career development, but you can go and try. For instance, I sleep less, I try to read more and to work on myself continuously, preparing to eat and clean when everyone is asleep to catch the next day with chores. Time management and no laziness will lead to the goal.” – as shared by Respondent 6.

“Only at the expense of self-improvement and self-education someone can achieve success in career. Men recognize women as equal partner if she is really professional”- resounded one of the participants.

Confidence

Confidence came to the picture as essential quality for executive presence. This quality is considered as one of the ways of developing female executives which allow them to be more assertive while fulfilling their duties in the male dominated area abounded with obstacles (M'Mbaha, 2012).

“The reason that I could achieve some level in male dominated sphere like sport is my conviction. My early sport experiences played a major part in shaping and forming self-confidence”

Respondent 1 emphasised her quality what brought to leadership post is confidently seeking for opportunities:

“We all know that a lot of challenges for women in leadership. But it should not stop and be stagnant; we have to seek for some opportunities. In my opinion, a woman is subject to all and everything, as any man. Only going towards the goal, without fear and only with confidence, allowed me to reach this stage”.

4.3.2. Leadership Styles

Reflecting on their experiences, participants indicated three key features of leadership styles:

Value Relationships, Trust and Care

Most participants remarked that before discussing issues or problems with their subordinates they needed to elaborate trusting relationships. They pointed out honesty and a direct approach as necessary qualities to develop these bonds.

“Building up trust is essential in the sport environment where fair play happens. I think it is very important to try to build some kind of rapport

and relationship with your subordinates. Whenever they need my opinion regarding personal or organizational issues I give them honest answers” – expressed and respondent.

It is well known that women naturally inherited the quality of taking care for others. From the interview answers of Uzbek female leaders a strong theme emerged, appreciation, care and consideration for others’ opinion within the sport organization. The majority of women denoted the momentousness of high respect for the worth and dignity of employees and the value of caring and empathy about each other, saying that:

“Everyone in life has own problem. And work place as your second house where you create “family”. We should genuinely care about each other and to be personable, not condemning”.

Collaborative Decision-making

Five interviewees emphasised consultation, discussion and seeking consensus in decision-making with their subordinates. Some of them said that before drawing conclusions on tasks they hold meeting where everyone shares their feedback, ideas and opinions. Respondents prioritised listening others view and gathering information collectively in conformity with debating issue on behalf of their departments.

“I clearly understand that everyone in our Department has own skills and talent which others might not have. Therefore, while meeting I try to carefully listen to everyone’s opinion and to come to one decision together.”

However, female leaders specified the meaning of collaborative decision making, explaining by that “our goal is to make decisions for the good of the organisation, not to please everyone while making decisions” (Respondent 4).

Flexibility and Democracy along with Accuracy

Flexible leadership is essential for most managers as the pace of change, proceeding in organizations increases (Burke & Cooper, 2004; Dess & Picken, 2000).

Seven out of the eight participants described that flexibility is an important feature that women managers possess. Respondent 4 expressed this style of leadership in the following way:

“Female heads characterized by a more flexible democratic style of management. They are more sensitive, sociable and less aggressive, subsequent with plastic nervous system. This feature allows adaptability and focusing on interpersonal relationships in the group along with the problem”.

The majority of participants stated that they encourage open dialogue and democratic utterance of subordinates to develop comfortable and trustful environment.

At the same time women managers underlined the maintenance of a strong work ethic and when it comes to work they are very demanding.

“Usually when I get the instructions from a superior regarding our department, I systematically try to break a task down into its components and allocate between subordinates to tackle together. ... My motto is qualitative and timely performance” – stated Respondent 8.

A number of interviewees said that they require well-kept closets or work spaces stating: “I hate when in our working space is disorganized” or “I like when everywhere is neat it allows organizing your time as well” which demonstrates and proves the accuracy of women leaders.

4.4. Female Leadership Development in Sports Organizations of Uzbekistan: Respondents’ Suggestions

Each woman was asked to offer a piece of advice towards increase the rate of women pursuing a career in the Sports organizations which will aspire them a top management level. The advice offered from each woman interviewed categorized by topic and demonstrated in this part of research below.

Improvement the Level of Education in Sports

As the main suggestions given by 100% women was to increase the knowledge of sports and the sport management among potential female students in order to address their underrepresentation. The respondents believe education opportunities in sport management and leadership would contribute the high value and status of women in sport leadership in Uzbekistan.

One respondent declared that there are several avenues like exchange programs, early education would help strengthen sport and leadership education and improve learning outcomes for children, students and etc. Additionally, she said that only by providing comfortable circumstances for women and their children can be achieved at least some enlargement of women leaders in sports management:

“The quality of education should be improved in Uzbekistan. We should invite speakers, especially women leaders from other countries. Promote gender issues and provide more opportunities for women to develop career in sports. This means must be well developed education as a pre-school and school so that woman could keep the child in the kindergarten, at school, where a good child care will be provided”.

The second respondent as well on the same opinion with first respondent, she gives her credence to education to improve the situation of female sport decision makers and to change the dynamic culture of sports.

“Only by the enhancement the level of sports education which increases the level of culture in the field of sport also we can reach our set goals.”

Training and Professional Development of Female Faculty in Education System

The large proportion of interviewees mentioned that an effective way to expand the number of women in managerial positions and stimulate women to pursuit higher positions is in starting to build leadership in girls, especially during their adolescence, when young people often start looking for ways to engage in the public sphere, particularly in sports.

For that respondents considered active involvement of women primarily teachers with appropriate training and supervision, in higher education in sports and support the attempt to recruit and retain female faculty.

“The role of teacher and Professors in forming the attitudes of young girls in the development of sports and sports leadership qualities is great. They can develop a wide range of career choices of their students as well as

sports. In order to teach others one should possess good knowledge about sport leadership and have qualities to pass it. Therefore, it is important to continuously have educational development and training of female instructors” – suggested Respondent 5.

The Strengthening the Role of Women in Sports

As aforementioned, the respondents consider that the reasons of persistent underrepresentation of females in leadership positions are lack of knowledge and power. A number of participants emphasised that first of all to change the dynamics in sport leadership should be empowered the role of women itself social media to raise awareness of gender stereotyping and women involvement in sports. As advice I order to increase women sport leaders the respondent suggested the following:

“Strengthening the role of women begins in childhood, with education, so we should pursue activities to support women, to change the stereotype of patriarchal thinking, introduce systematic work among young people, explaining to them the need to respect the principle of equality between men and women at all levels of activity, orient the media for raising the prestige women use with an existing positive experience of women leaders.”

Community Engagement

Some respondents suggested that through volunteering and participating in community development activities women can gain networking skills and develop leadership capacity, breakdown social isolation and stereotypes. Hence, they believe in creating and developing different kind of activism programme regarding sports involvement that will create the circumstances to further the role of women in sport and sport leadership.

“We have to involve women in communities and public life which can change and grow women cognition” – answered one of the participants.

The next interviewee on community engagement said

“It is needed to build leadership skills and create lasting social change through community in women life which help them discover the strength of their capacity for leadership, especially mothers’ life as they are upbringing future generation”

4.5. The Benefits of Female Sport Leaders in Uzbekistan

The goal of the research was to know is it important to raise the number of women in managerial roles, and why it is needed in the context of Uzbekistan. The women currently in leadership positions shared their

opinions on the benefits and importance of sport leadership specifically female leadership in Uzbekistan.

The Enhancement of Female Sport Participation

According to opinions' of Uzbek women sport leaders the enhancement of women leaders in sport brings significant changes in women's sport in participation of Uzbekistan. She explained giving women a chance to lead is the only sure way to bolster girls' sports participation:

“Women on executive roles can aspire and motivate girls to involve into sport and can show the essence of sports in their daily lives. The coming generation has to see successful females who could break boundaries despite limitations in a largely male-dominated area. Female coaches can contribute into develop strong character, assertiveness and confidence within the sport, and lead to better performance with the best of their ability”

The next research participant noted that developing women leaders is an avenue for the prosperity and progress of girl's sport. She elaborated:

“Promotion of women's leadership and their success will produce more girls and women who want to participate in sports as they would have other role models to look upto of the same gender”.

Diversity

The women interviewed attributed to a number of benefits can be obtained through diverse performance in organization. They believe that women and men have different approaches in solution of problems, therefore as one participant said “can be achieved good result through diverse creativity”. In her own words respondent 2 stated:

“As we know it is quite challenging when at work place you are surrounded by male colleagues in majority. When women come into leadership positions they can motivate other women, build interpersonal relations, boosts employee satisfaction which in its turn can discover the hidden talent of females in sport due to gender perceptions. New ideas and creativity will guarantee the improvement of the organization and success in female sports participation as well”.

Change in the Outlook of Society and Increase Awareness

In addition to advantages of female leadership interviewees listed the impact that will shift the society’s perception. They consider that female leader can rapidly change the environment. “It is of high importance to increase the exposure of girls and women’s sports involvement into all levels of sports by means of all the available communication tools”- proposed Respondents 8.

Another suggestion was prompted by Respondent 4 that “the active participation of women and girls in sport and leadership can breakdown deeply rooted stereotypes and discrimination and create platform to empower the role. At the same time it is one powerful tool which is able to reshape ingrained attitudes towards female aptitudes and capabilities in male dominant sphere like sport”.

4.6. Summary

Women despite existing difficulties succeed and were performing excellently in their taken role It can be concluded that a number of interviewees of this research are in the age group of 40s, 50s, and 60s and are career-oriented. Examining the experiences of women leaders within sports organizations in Uzbekistan delivered specific insight into the sport leadership.

This chapter provided an overview of the interview results with eight female leaders in sport organizations and universities with emerging themes concentrated on: factors of success and challenges in women sport leadership, leadership qualities and practices, female leadership development in sports and the benefits of female sport leaders. The obtained answers were the interviewees’ own opinion and insights on the issue, accordingly which are based on their own knowledge, beliefs, values and

experiences in managerial positions within sports bodies. Responses varied also depending on marital status and education background in the different fields.

Within the results positive factors were observed which affected women's career advancement and success. The results show that in Uzbek women's career life, family, mentor, education and personal factors played important role and brought them to leadership levels.

However many of the respondents had experienced some obstacles in their position. The majority of respondents argued about the existing perception about gender abilities and talent, work round hours and the lack of interpersonal relationships within same gender representatives.

The interviews allowed us to explore women's style of leading and special qualities. Women's self-awareness and continuous self-development as well as confidence and character were also mentioned and considered by many of the respondents to be too empowering and influencing their career advancements. Females' styles of leading Value relationships, trust and care, collaborative decision-making, Flexibility and democracy in sport management were also acknowledged.

The general comment on the possibilities of Uzbek women becoming sport leaders in the future was also positive. Improvement of the

level of education, Training and professional development of female, the strengthening the role of women in sports through media and community engagement of females were regarded to be the key factors which will support women move up hereafter as well.

Almost all research respondents commented on and mentioned the changes which have happened in Uzbekistan in last few years and have provided opportunities for women in the sport sector. However, they mentioned that career structures should be altered a little more as more female involvement in sport leadership can result in the enlargement of women and girls sport participation, lead to the diversity in male-dominated sport field and change the outlook of society thus increasing awareness among the general population.

The next chapter will consist of interpretations and conclusions drawn from the obtained results including recommendations for future studies

Chapter 5. Discussion and Recommendations

This chapter discusses the obtained results of the study in terms of prospects for enhancement of female leaders in sport governance of Uzbekistan. The objective of this study was to obtain deeper insights of the experiences of Uzbek women leaders in sports organisations and sport universities. Due to the absence of relevant literature in this specific subject within Uzbekistan, the afore demonstrated literature review investigated researches of foreign scholars related success, barriers and role of women leaders generally, and particularly in sport organizations, gender leadership styles and features, benefits of bringing and furthering female leaders in sport bodies.

As the framework was not limited to one study, ideas and perspectives from various resources were gathered together, however frequent references were drawn from the research of M'Mbaha and the study conducted by Loughborough University on "Gender equality and leadership in Olympic bodies".

The IOC / ISLR study researched by Henry (2004) on the women's' status and experiences in NOC discovered that female representation in NOC leadership positions still remains at a very miniscule level around the world. As an evidence of his findings similar situation can be demonstrated

in the National Olympic Committee in Uzbekistan. The percentage of women in decision making positions are negligible as compare to male counterparts. For example, it was also observed that negligible number also consisted silent members (NOC report, 2014). This provision shows the IOC targets of increasing female leaders still remains a distant dream due to some issues prevailing in sports federations and sport bodies.

Therefore, current study sought to find the reasons of women underrepresentation in sport bodies and retrieve patterns of women success, who could take executive roles, by examining their previous success and failures in sports bodies. Consequently, try to bridge the gap in gender sport leadership in Uzbekistan.

In comparison with previous four chapters, Chapter 5 analyses the received research results in greater detail and divided into three sections. The first part of chapter presents the answers to the four identified research and discusses study findings. The second chapter provides limitations of the study. And final section, drawn from the information gathered proposes suggestions and recommendations for future research.

5.1. What are the Positive Factors Affecting the Involvement of Women in Managerial Positions in Sport Organizations in Uzbekistan?

In the previous chapter the findings analysed the positive and negative experiences of women in leadership positions within sport governing bodies of Uzbekistan. Researches denoted and elaborated the concept of career success as one's work experience produces the positive work-related results and achievements. (Choi, 2015). In Chapter 4, I demonstrated the relative importance of family, mentorship, education and personal factors in explaining Uzbek women's career success in sport bodies. According to Hovden (2000) women in sport managerial ranks are often privileged with continuous family support, with social networks to which only female representatives have approach and they are highly educated.

Findings gave clarity that in a women leader's success, an important role is played by family members, including parents, spouse and children. A supportive family environment enabled to early formation of leadership qualities. Madsen's (2010) in her study defines family, particularly "open-minded" fathers to be the crucial empowering factor for the development of women leadership aptitudes. Also, leadership qualities do not form due to the lack of parental and community support. Other scholars Madsen (2010) and Singh (2014) consider that stable and comparatively prosperous

childhood of women encouraged pursuing a good education owing to family are more attributable with leadership capabilities.

Most of the women who were married (apart from one participant) their career was primarily influenced by spouse and children who were providing endorsement to women. Based on previous researches the male spouse plays a vital role. “The husband gives the women a free hand to actualize her and enables her to pursue her career without attempting to influence it negatively or interfere with her career choices” (Helsinki, 2010). Our result indicates that the family of female managers actually helped to overcome barriers faced in life and succeed in the sport organization.

This research found education and mentors to influence women’s participation in sport and involvement in leadership and their career choices in sports. As one organizational tool for enhancement of women leader performance and career advancement by scholars Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) considered mentors and mentoring relationships (p.1). According to him mentoring is “process in which a more experienced person serves as a role model, and provides guidance and support to a developing novice and... her career process”. Other researchers (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004) reported that those who had mentors in their career in comparison to those who didn’t, are often possessed with greater awareness

of their organization and have more life satisfaction. Out of the data sample collected 100% of Uzbek females who hold leadership positions in sports had mentors and majority of them were of influence by them, mentors were seen by their protégés as role models. The role models, including coaches and parents, as well as other leaders who build trust and confidence in women, consequently successful mentoring would guarantee young women's preparation in leadership positions (M'Mbaha, 2012).

Previous studies mention that educational achievements allow women to enter positions of leaderships in sports organizations (Branson, 2007; Coleman, 2007; Henry, 2004). As Cheung and Halpern (2010) said "An important path toward success for most of the contemporary women leaders was through education" (p. 188). Parents instilled and convinced them that education is the way to a better life and promotion to leadership positions.

5.2. What Factors Restrict the Involvement of Women in Managerial Positions in Sport Organizations in Uzbekistan?

Based on the interviews, including life histories, of women in different levels of sport government from eight women leaders, it was found that some common factors influenced them in a negative way as the way they were perceived towards women leaders in organisation.

As cited previously in findings 62% women leaders the main obstacle in holding managerial positions in sport showed that existing gender bias in organization and work hours round the clock were the prime concerns. Additionally 50 % women mentioned discrimination of their talent and absence of social network within sport bodies as one of the difficulties in their career graph.

Nowadays women's educational level is becoming higher and higher in many spheres including sports and often women outperform men. More than 40% of female leaders in sports bodies in Uzbekistan said that sometimes their talent is viewed through a prism of deeply rooted implicit gender stereotypes. They mentioned that leadership capabilities are evaluated mostly not in terms of professional endowment, but gender.

Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin (1999) marked that the societal status and power may be gendered due to disproportional occupation of men in high number of powerful and high-status societal roles. Thus, jobs that society correlates with characteristics expected of men are perceived as incompatible for women, and vice versa. And role congruity theory which was described and analysed in Chapter 2 explains this kind of prejudice when both gender representatives hold positions that are contradictory to their perceived roles (E. Buzuvis, 2015).

The findings revealed relative low financial support and extra working hours as constraining factors of women in decision-making positions. The majority of women mentioned that for male counterparts organization creates financial opportunities, providing different kind of projects or involving them to various paid programmes, while women are often side-lined. The research of Lovelin & Hanold (2014) indicates that women in sport organizations are more likely to be recruited into positions with “less power, less pay and fewer opportunities for advancement”. Everhart and Chelladurai (1998) found work round hours as a barrier to progressive increase of women in higher echelons in sports.

As one interviewee mentioned “Financial support and motivation had served our victories at the Olympics 2016 and world arenas. And in sport leadership, if you trust and provide all opportunities for woman - she is always ready to work and bring good results”.

Lamude (1993) denoted that female leaders highly value and need interpersonal relationships in the workplace. As I mentioned before 50% of respondents encountered major barrier in holding and progressing in managerial roles due to lack of interpersonal networks. As in the research paper of Ely, Ibarra & Kolb (2011) stated women’s absence of interpersonal

relations yield less leadership opportunities, “provide less visibility for their leadership claims, and generate less recognition and endorsement”.

5.3. What are the Experiences of Women in Current Leadership Positions that can Generate Future Positive Impacts in the Sport Management in Uzbekistan?

Findings from this study showed a number of Uzbek female leaders succeeding beyond expectations and performing in their assigned roles. From the findings a few common characteristics emerged that have influenced women’s appointment to leadership positions including self-awareness, continuous self-development and confidence.

Self-awareness has been distinguished as an important factor ensuring leadership success (Leary & Buttermore, 2003). Additionally, this quality of a person has been shown to influence the decisions leaders make and how they impact others. Findings gave insight that most women career choices shaped by their own self-learning and self-development. Ruderman and Ohlott (2002) explained women high in self-development can learn something regardless the situation, learn from failures and successes, and can approach any transitions with the perspective.

It is important to emphasize the suggestions of Ashford and Tsui (1991) the quality of self-awareness can be increased or gained through use of others feedbacks in order to understand and establish self-evaluation.

The next Uzbek women leaders' quality revealed by responses was confidence and ambition, which is key ingredient to their success. 88 % of respondents were possessed with this quality. Literature review observed that in comparison with men women tend to lack confidence and self-believe, hence they have a cautious approach in career advancement. Pfister (2006) noted that mostly women perception about male colleague that those have higher self-confidence serves to undermine them in managerial ranks equally with opposite gender representatives. Also courses led by women and in turn for women instil confidence and allow women to lead through leadership schemes.

In-depth interviews with female leaders in the sport sector in Uzbekistan also found commonly observed leadership styles of women value relationships, trust and care, collaborative decision-making and democratic style. The emphasis on consensus, collaboration, caring and on interpersonal relationships is consistent with what has been identified as a feminine approach to leadership (Fine, 2009; Rosener, 1990). Women

compared to men, while leading, adapt an approach that is democratic and participative style (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992).

The study also found that women try to foster genuine collaboration among colleagues, using inclusiveness, and building trust and relationships. They use soft power to achieve mutual results. According to Lakoff (1975), women's tend to speak more politely and use of a number of tag questions and pointed out that effective leadership is not genetic but developed and acquired ability through exercise, experience and training. This widens the scope of generating future women sports leader.

5.4. Recommendations

5.4.1. What recommendations will Impact a Higher Involvement of Women Sport Managers?

Considering the above discussed facts and advices of Uzbek female sports managers I provide some modest recommendations in hope that this fosters women participation and progress in the field of sport management.

Recommendation 1. Strengthen the role and status of women in sports in Uzbekistan through media: Media tends to play a vital role in the modern world and Uzbekistan is no exception. As data collected from 2010 of Gender Assessment of Uzbekistan, women made up 53.7% of the

total unemployed population of Uzbekistan and out of them only 43.5% women officially registered as unemployed. These women are generally engaged in house chores, family life, care of children, and care of relatives. It's also an indication that majority of their time is surrounded in their own house where television is the prime source of getaway for these women. Findings demonstrated that parents particularly mothers were critical in providing sports opportunities and socializing women into leadership and they were identified as one successful factor of advancement women into managerial ranks. Therefore its essential to shape perceptions of women, towards sports as a future career option for their kids.

Television often portray the females as the weaker sex, emphasis is given to the role of Uzbek women as housemakers, compared to their possibilities of growing in social and professional roles³, which contradicts the efforts of the government policies designed to uplift the status of modern Uzbek woman.

Therefore media's role is of utmost importance in promoting and inspiring females towards sports and leadership. Uzbekistan produced many female champions who could serve as sports idols. Hence media should show more collaborative models of sports leadership and help to break

³ <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/149311/women-uzbekistan-ru.pdf>

existing cultural stereotypes, as the media has the power and ability to change society⁴.

Recommendation 2. The improvement of physical education and education in sports/ sports management in schools, lyceums and

Universities of Uzbekistan - Education is a vital tool for women empowerment in sports and leadership roles. The importance of physical activities and sports, and a policy to drive equal representation for women and men in sports from an early age for girls and boy should be thought in schools and lyceums. Through physical education lessons, it is important to create opportunities for girls to progress in any sports, education on sports for all, rather than just for boys. Physical education classes in primary and secondary schools are deemed to be recreational activities. This leads towards a casual attitude towards sports and its importance is demeaned. Unfortunately it's also a stage for students to form all kinds of perceptions, specifically gender stereotypes and leadership qualities. (Ruziev, 2003). In order to break down existing obstacles towards women role in sport and enhance female sport leader it is essential to study of the theoretical foundations of physical culture, even better with the use of advanced teaching technologies.

⁴ http://www.taketheleadwomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/FEM-Inc._Leadership-Fictions.pdf

Sport management and sport leadership courses should be introduced in Universities of Uzbekistan which would emphasize the importance of both genders in sports management led by trained and competent teachers. The rich quality of teachers in physical education can act as means of creating role models and mentors and establish a platform for professional preparation of future sports leaders. Moreover, their professionalism provides an opportunity to inform families the need and importance for empowerment of girl's attitude toward leadership and developing confidence. Also to develop skills that allows them to make decisions. As the increase in female sports managers can be obtained only by being accompanied by changes in theories of sport leadership and implications of them (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

Recommendation 3. Professional training and development of female faculty in education system and potential women in sports management: In order to expand the number of women leaders and women mentors in Uzbekistan, it is of high importance to take steps at the professional and institutional level regarding development of coaches, teachers and other sports leaders which help to construct high quality physical education programmes in schools and related community sport programmes.

Therefore, sport organizations in collaboration with sport educational institutions should provide regular leadership and professional development programs to their female members and female faculties and further to develop leadership training programs for schools and universities. This kind of cooperation provides students with opportunities to involve in sport leadership. Developing training programmes will ensure enhancement self-improvement, self-development skills, confidence and knowledge of women working within sport organizations to perform significant roles. Also development projects provided by sport governing bodies helps to learn how to develop presentational skills to present themselves as leaders.

Recommendation 4. Introduction of professional programmes after maternity/parental leave - The legislation of Uzbekistan ensures paternal leave to care for a child upto two years which is leave with pay. This is a benefit provided by the government and is included in the legislature Article 234. Additionally, a woman, at her request, also is granted additional leave without payment to care for a child upto three years and can retain their jobs. As mentioned in literature review, a Uzbek family usually have 2-3 children, the respondent's background also demonstrated that. Later in chapter 4, some women mentioned that maternity leave slowed down their career. Therefore, it is necessary to support and hold training and

education programs to reinforce prior job responsibilities and update the female employees about the latest developments and transitions in the organization. This process will smoothen the work flow as well as retain former female employees

Recommendation 5. Effective Human resources practices: Equal status in financial and Job hierarchy - In Uzbekistan, women need organizational support in their development in leadership position. With an eye to significant reinforcement the catalyst effect of leaders' involvement and commitment first of all should be expanded opportunities and created a supportive workplace environment for women. Flexible working hours, equal and decent pay for women carrying out the same roles with men and family-friendly policies will remarkably impact employees' acquisition of new skills, ways of thinking and confidence and stimulate the change in sports.

Strong and transparent Human Resource policies and practices are also one of the key essentials to attract well-qualified female candidates. Therefore, in order to recruit well-qualified female candidates, sport organizations have to undertake a number of strategies and implement policies to attract women and create sufficient opportunities for them in the organization in Uzbekistan.

Moreover, the development of new awards focusing on female leaders' successes, will not only highlight the work that is being done by women but may entice more of them to become involved in sport administration. According to Chelladurai (2006) appraisals can influence and enhance subsequent performance and provide effectiveness of the HR system, result beneficial outcomes for the organisation, also the setting and achieving of organisational goals for the employees.

Recommendation 6. Community engagement, social networks / Role models - Women's involvement into different kind of relevant sport programmes and community engagement can develop their leadership, interpersonal and communication skills and also attracts girls and break down their restrictive gender norms built upon within their families and society at large. Community engagement through power of sports is able transform and makes social change. It builds in female leaders the skills of coordination, team working, resource building and also help to professionally develop and strengthen their networking skills.

On the other hand, it should be noted the role of communities called "Mahalla" in the sociocultural context of Uzbekistan, which plays an active role on the ground of the state in the sports development policy (Soliev, 2015). Therefore, more women should be attracted in various community

engagements first of all to develop personal and leadership skills, and secondly to serve as role models for other women in the community.

5.5. Conclusion

5.5.1. How will it benefit the sports' governing bodies in Uzbekistan to increase female leaders in sports?

The supreme authority of Olympic movement International Olympic Committee recognizing the importance of women developed and implemented strategic action on gender equality in sport for the period 2014 – 2020 at the European Union level in order to enhance the women participation in higher level of echelons.

The Olympic Agenda 2020 has committed to reach complete equality “the IOC to work with the International Federations to achieve 50% female participation in the Olympic Games and to stimulate women’s participation and involvement in sport by creating more participation opportunities at the Olympic Games” as a result to increase the women’s involvement on the board (European Commission, 2014).

One of the principles Good Governance in sport states:

Management (6a) – “the Board must promote equality and diversity and actively work to attract a diverse range of members, including, in

particular, but not limited to an appropriate gender balance at board level as part of an overall inclusivity programme”.

Therefore National Olympic Committee of Uzbekistan by bringing and engaging talented women in to the Olympic family will improve its governance and Olympic governance by setting an example and providing moral leadership to the nation and world of sport in terms of equity in representation.

Propaganda of women enhancement on the board in the sports organizations of Uzbekistan can call on both tangible and intangible benefits that to individuals, to organizations, to sports and to society.

At individual level tangible benefits may include better education, career progression, financial independence and new roles in society and intangible - freedom, choice and happiness.

At organizational level more female leaders in sports creates diverse organizational performance, workplace innovation, more productive working environment, more effective recruitment and of course better organization image in term of sports governance. Many scholars (Sartore and Cunningham, 2007; Avery and McCay, 2006), as was mentioned in Chapter II, considered that a more diverse workforce in organizations will provide access for managers and participants to gain experiences, a wider

skill and personal attributes. Therefore they suggested diversity management fragment regarding gender equality policies in response to the high incidence of gender discrimination and other forms of prejudice. Based on Cunningham (2008) greater gender awareness relating to appropriate sport administration practice should also increase retention rates of girls and women participating in sport.

At a societal level enlargement of women sport leaders can change the outlook of society, increase awareness among population and shift deep rooted paradigms on women's role which is needed in the context of Uzbekistan.

Finally, at sports level women leaders in sport plays great role in motivation girls and women to engage into sports. By spreading significant role participating in sports plays women sports leader involve and enhance female sports participation and provide them the tools – believes and hopes necessary to succeed in the competitive world. Women's increased involvement can endorse progress in sport by means of alternative values, norms, attitudes, knowledge, experiences and capabilities. The contributions of women, particularly in leadership positions, can bring diversity and alternative approaches and expand the talent base in areas such as

management and coaching (United Nations, 2007)⁵. And more importantly, the successful careers of leading sports women can give opportunity to same gender representatives being mentored and increase women sport participation.

To put in a nutshell, developing women leaders in sports is a broad based, long-term and effective approach to empowerment of women. In taking up this advocacy of women empowerment in sports and leadership it is essential to evolve new sport policies and new sport policy processes.

Based on literature review and discussions, strategies to successfully advance women into leadership positions in sports organizations in Uzbekistan, would require better education, professional development of women in sports; increase the organizational and societal awareness and development policies towards supporting women leaders in sport organizations.

5.6. Limitations

It is important to note that there are some limitations regarding this research. First of all, the relative small number of female leader interviews working within sport governing bodies. Initially the research aimed at

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<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/news/speech2006/WC%20Women%20and%20Sports%20Japan%202006.pdf>

involving women from Federations and sports clubs who had a prior experience in sport leadership or managerial roles. However, due to time limits and geographical constraints the sample population were respondents from different backgrounds and marital status. Additionally, all women leaders were from Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan where gender awareness and status of women is comparatively higher to other regions. Moreover, answers for interview questions collected from Uzbek female leaders in sports were self-reported in written format which creates some restrictions in disclosure of ideas.

The study limits its scope with regards to the designations these women female leaders held, for instance a majority of them comprised of middle managerial ranks and their experiences, perceptions and opinions might not represent a broader perspective of the real issues and challenges with women leaders with elite decision making status and positions experience.

The final aspect that limits the extent of this research is the lack of statistical data regarding the number of active women leaders in sport organization in Uzbekistan. Hence a realistic comparison of Uzbekistan women sports leaders is restricted against the figures available globally.

5.7. Recommendations for Future Research

- A future research on the perception of male sports leaders in providing equal status to women leaders in sports organization. This would enhance the understanding of the barriers and supports factors towards the increase of women sports leaders in Uzbekistan.
- A research on perception and desires of women employees to transform as future leader in sports organisation.

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Appendix

Interview questions

1. Can you share me a little about yourself like current job, main duties, age, nationality, education, marital status, family?
2. What was your path to a career in sport management? Did you play sports before?
3. Did you have a mentor at any stage of your career?
 - If yes, who are they? How did they influence you?
 - If no, which experiences or factors were critical /influential to take this position?
4. What has been your experience in sports organization while encountering with male counterparts? How have these experiences influenced your career?
5. Have you ever felt bias against you because you are a woman? Please explain.
6. What is your perception about the career opportunities available for women in sports organization?
7. Are the opportunities you perceive available for men different?
8. Do you see any barriers which may hinder women from obtaining decision making posts in sports?
9. How was your family role and support with regards to your work?
10. What are the challenges in balancing your work life with your personal life?

11. What was the response of people before and after you became sports manager?
12. How do you see yourself being a woman and as well as manager?
13. What is your advice to women of the next generation pursuing a career in sports management?
14. What kinds of action might be taken to foster female managers in sports?
15. What are the things that you would like to change in sports culture in Uzbekistan?
16. Up to what extent do you think that the role of women sports managers can help to motivate other women?

국문 초록

우즈베키스탄 여성스포츠지도자 역량 강화를 위한
연구 스포츠 조직 경영 상황에서 여성의 역할 변화에
대한 분석을 중심으로

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현재 우즈베키스탄의 스포츠 조직의 여성리더의 역할에 대한 연구는 매우 드물다. 그러나 우즈베키스탄 독립 후 26년간 우즈베키스탄사회에서 여성들의 역할이 매우 변화하고 있으며, 특히 스포츠상황에서의 여성의 역할 또한 많은 변화가 있었다. 하지만 여성 운동 선수의 스포츠 참여는 증가한 반면 여성 스포츠 리더십은 이와는 다르게 자주 나타나지 않았다. 이러한 상황에서 본 연구는 현재 스포츠 조직경영에서 리더로써 일하는 여성의 경험을 탐색함으로써 여성으로써 리더십을 함양하기 위해 필요한 요인들을 도출해내는데

그 목적을 두었다. 연구를 위해 우선 우즈베키스탄의 8 개의 스포츠 조직의 여성리더 8 인(1 기구당 1 인)을 정성적방법으로 심층 인터뷰를 하고, 이후 정량적인 방법으로 인터뷰내용을 코딩하여 여성스포츠리더십을 위한 경력, 성공 및 실패 원인, 리더십 자질, 리더십의 스타일 및 효과에 대하여 결론지었다. 본 연구는 우즈베크 여성 스포츠 지도자들이 그들의 직업적 경험 과정에서 공통된 경험이 있었다는 것을 발견하였다. 구체적으로 가족, 교육, 멘토십 및 개인적 요소가 성공적인 성과를내는 촉진제 인 반면 조직에 존재하는 성차별 및 인종 차별, 대인 관계의 제한 및 재정적 차별은 남성 지배적인 스포츠세계에서 여성리더십을 방해하는 장벽으로 작용하였다는 것이다. 이 결과에 근거하여 여성 스포츠 참여를 늘릴 수있는 자세한 조언과 정책이 본연구의 말미에 최종적으로 제안되었다. 또한 본 연구는 나아가 여성리더십의 위상변화가 우즈베키스탄의 스포츠조직경영에 긍정적인 역할을 할 수 있기 위한 여러가지 권장사항들을 제시하였다. 이를와 같은 연구결과가 우즈베키스탄의 국가 스포츠 정책에 적용되어 여성 스포츠지도자들이 경건하고 가족 친화적인 환경을 창출하는 데 도움이되기를 바라며 최종적으로 올림픽위원회(IOC)에 굿 거버넌스의 좋은 사례로 제시되길 희망한다

주요어: 여성 리더십, 여성 스포츠 리더, 여성 스포츠 경영, 스포츠 참여

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