Dominican Women: Their Perception as Leaders by the Dominican Population

Jorge Canaán
Glenda Corcino

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses

Recommended Citation

This Master's Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Thesis/Dissertation Collections at RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.
Dominican Women: Their Perception as Leaders by the Dominican Population

Jorge Canaán and Glenda Corcino

Professor: Dr. Linda Underhill

Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic
Abstract

In the Dominican Republic, women have traditionally been molded to be housewives, obey men, and not to interfere with men’s issues/matters (Duarte, 2009). As in other countries, this has changed over the years as more women succeed and achieve many accomplishments in society, but it still is present to some level in different places and circumstances across the Dominican Republic (Press, 2010). This study was conducted with the objective of gathering information of the Dominicans’ perception about the profile of Dominican women as leaders and their roles in society. Based on the interviews in Mujeres Extraordinarias: Mujeres en el tiempo, mujeres sin tiempo (Tatem, 2009), of some well recognized Dominican women leaders, a survey was developed to obtain the Dominican population’s opinion on the abilities, capacity, and attributes they consider Dominican women to have, and what are the obstacles or barriers they believe that women face trying to succeed in Dominican society. When asked about the capacity of Dominican women to be leaders, the respondents rated them with 8.33 out of 10, and ranked women to be better planners than men. However, 86% of the respondents considered that women feel the need to be physically attractive to obtain good job opportunities.
Dominican Women: Their Perception as Leaders by the Dominican Population

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Throughout history, Dominican culture has been recognized as rather chauvinist; even so, in recent years a considerable amount of women have achieved success. Most women from the middle and upper class in the Dominican Republic, seem to be expected to underperform or to be less capable of performing jobs, and are expected to stay at home and be house makers (Duarte, 2009).

However, there have been some great examples of successful female personalities within the Dominican Republic’s society; some examples are: Milagros Ortiz Bosch — who has been candidate for the presidency several times — and Nuria Piera, who has excelled at journalism and has been recognized with an Emmy Award as the best foreign journalist for her outstanding work on Dominican reality research.

If society brands women as incapable of performing and achieving success at the same level as men, it can become part of the general culture of people to not consider women as equal. This in turn, can become a big obstacle to women who seek opportunities in the Dominican Republic. The fact that women today perform more significant roles in different fields could represent a change in paradigm of the perception of women as leaders in the Dominican Republic (Press, 2010).

This study aims to provide information on the public opinion about the profile of women as leaders in the Dominican Republic.

1.2 Purpose of the study
In this study the value of Dominican women's role is not under scrutiny. Instead, it focused on the perception of the Dominican population in the Dominican Republic about the role and profile of women as leaders. It is important to know what the perception of Dominicans is about women as leaders, their opinion on Dominican society's situation, and the way women are treated and valued because of their gender. This is important to Dominican Republic’s society as explained below.

Knowing the behavior of Dominicans towards women and their work in leadership roles, can help determine if some educational changes are necessary in the Dominican Republic. Also, it can point to some problems that are yet to be addressed by the government and the private sector in terms of gender discrimination.

The purpose of this study is to obtain information on the perception of the Dominican population about women as leaders in different aspects of the Dominican society, such as: civic movements, politics, direction and management of business, religion, and entrepreneurship among others. With this information, a clearer view of the Dominican culture and society regarding this important subject can be obtained. This kind of research can serve as a way to attract attention on the matter, and inspire others to do more research and maybe promote a change in the status quo if necessary.

1.3 Problem Statement

The problem statement is: Is Dominican Republic’s society giving opportunities to women to rise as leaders or obtain high/important positions in public and private sectors?

As there is not much information regarding the aspects of women leadership and the situation they encounter in the Dominican Republic, as well as any correlation of gender
prejudice and demographics, it seems appropriate to address this subject and offer some insights on the perception of the Dominican population about Dominican women leaders’ profile.

1.4 Research questions and importance/significance of the study

Even though studies that directly addressed the perception of women as leaders depending on the educational level of the population could not be found, this subject was included, as there might be a correlation between the academic level and the perception that people have about women’s leadership profile. The following, are some of the sources that inspired the research questions.

As seen in Mujer y Política en la República Dominicana: Consensos y Disensos entre las Lideres y la Ciudadanía (Duarte, 2009), in the past, Dominican women have been molded to be housekeepers and prevented the chance to incorporate themselves into some aspects of Dominican society, such as politics, business, and social movements. In spite of this, Dominican women have been able to rise as important figures and have become recognized leaders. The fact that Dominican women, in the past, have been able to break some of the barriers that society had against them, has opened the doors for women to show their true potential (Duarte, 2009).

As explained in Dominican Republic Women in Culture, Business and Travel (Press, 2010), in recent times, Dominican women have an increased presence in different activities and matters of Dominican Republic’s society, and are no longer treated as they were in the 1960’s and earlier.

As in other countries, women might still be facing obstacles to arise as leaders, as Lockhart and Mollick (2013) showed in their article Political Women: Language and Leadership, in which women are found underrepresented in political affairs. Also, Peters (2004) shows that in American institutions, women are held on subordinate roles.
As explained in Women “Take Care”, Men “Take Charge”: Managers’ Stereotypic Perceptions of Women and Men Leaders (2009), the perception of the general population was that women as leaders are more caring and men are more effective at problem solving. But, as Eagly (2007) reported, even though in the US women are being recognized as having great skills for leadership, the general population still prefers male bosses. Also Rosette (2010) showed that women are perceived as being more loyal to ethical values than men.

Based on these sources, as well as all the others, the following research questions were proposed:

1. Are women perceived as being capable of assuming leadership roles?
2. Are there any leadership attributes women seem to possess?
3. What prevents women from being perceived as leaders?
4. Does gender, age, job/occupation, or educational level make any difference in perception of women as leaders?

The significance of the study was to determine the perception of Dominican women’s role as leaders by the Dominican population, as it might be the case that talented and intelligent women could occupy certain positions, but are not given the chance to do so. Thus men would be hired for these leadership positions instead. Also, women who want to start their own businesses might face discrimination and it could make things much more difficult for them to succeed. The information collected could be useful for the benefit of developing projects through the Dominican government institutions, which could result in better understanding of the role that women could play in Dominican society and the development of the country.
During this research, there were difficulties finding sources that addressed gender discrimination in the Dominican Republic. Also, no specific research on the correlation between educational level and the perception of women as leaders could be identified. Having faced these difficulties to find sources of this subject in the Dominican Republic, it was decided to specifically include it in this research to be used for future reference.

1.5 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The perception of women as leaders in DR is misled by gender stereotypes about leadership abilities.

Hypothesis 2: Although women are conscious of their abilities, the older female section of the population would show more prejudice or negative perception to women as leaders.

Hypothesis 3: Participants with higher levels of education would show a stronger or positive perception of women’s profile as leaders.

Chapter 2

2 Literature review

2.1 The perception of Dominican women as leaders is uncertain

In recent years, much research has been performed in different cultures about leadership and the perception different segments of the population could have about the profile of women as leaders and the barriers they might encounter. This review has been organized by categories, according to the key aspects addressed by them.

2.1.1 Cultural barriers and perception

In the Dominican Republic, mostly within middle to upper class families, women are expected to take on the role of homemakers or housewives and let the men be the leader of the family. On the other hand, lower-class families have the mothers as the head, as sometimes,
fathers don't even live in the house. Gender roles are taught at an early age. Even though, historically, women have not been able to obtain as good job opportunities as men, there have been some recent changes toward female employment in the last years as women have attained success in many fields and hold high-level management positions, such as the Vice-Presidency of the country. Women also have equal access to free and mandatory education, the literacy rate of women and men is almost the same, around 84%, but dropout is higher among girls. However in the work field, women do not get job opportunities corresponding to their educational level (Press, 2010).

The study conducted in How discrimination and stress affects self-esteem among Dominican immigrant women: An exploratory study (Panchanadeswaran, 2011), examined how discrimination and stress influenced self-esteem of Dominican immigrant women in the United States. A cross-sectional study was conducted among immigrant Dominican women in New York City, and the results indicated that, women living in the US for less than 20 years were more likely to have experienced discrimination than women in the US for more than 20 years or older than 50. Also, it showed that educational level, income, and discrimination, were directly associated with low self-esteem, which could affect their mental health (Panchanadeswaran, 2011).

It is widely recognized that women face cultural barriers almost everywhere to succeed in any leadership position in the Dominican Republic, but despite the obstacles and barriers they face, they have left their mark in history. There was Mamá Tingó – well known rural activist in favor of the recognition of the rural population’s rights, María Trinidad Sánchez – who fought in the Dominican national independence movement in 1844, or Patria, Minerva y María Teresa
Mirabal – the three well known Dominican sisters who were assassinated for confronting Dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (Duarte, 2009).

The presence of women in legislatures across Latin America has grown significantly over the past 30 years. But, a wide variation still persists across countries within the region. Schwindt-Bayer (2010) examined the reasons for this discrepancy and found out that these countries have different electoral rules and quotas. The author also points out, that female legislators give more priority to gender equality issues. The book also examines the difference between men's and women's committees, and states that women's committees deal more with social welfare than men's. Other data shows that normally, women tend to be more satisfied with democracy than men (Schwindt-Bayer, 2010).

In Latin America, patriarchal systems of power still reign. The systems traits still influence how women are perceived among their culture and society, making it difficult for women to arise as leaders in politics and social organizations in countries such as Chile, Argentina, and El Salvador. The paper states that women are restrained from taking on important roles, and in the case of El Salvador, are even victims of violence (Cosgrove, 2010).

The collection Political Women: Language and Leadership (2013) examined the various factors that continue to restrict leadership opportunities for women in politics. It addressed the ways in which women have used political rhetoric and political discourse to provide leadership, or assert their right to leadership. It states that, even though women have broken through traditional roles over the years, they are still underrepresented in political leadership (Lockhart & Mollick, 2013).

Karin Klenke has written broadly about women as leaders. She offers detailed information about aspects such as gender role and cultural barriers women encounter in a
traditionally male oriented society. The author refers to reported data in 1991 from the Small Business Administration which collected data regarding the percentage of women owned businesses. It resulted in an increase of 58% coming from 2.6 million to 4.1 million women owned businesses. This report disclosed relevant information, such as women owned businesses representing the fastest growing segment of the economy in the United States. Women are not lacking confidence in their role as leaders, yet they face vulnerability and precariousness. In the present day, where technology is everywhere and community organizations are developing, women are mostly related to the latter due to qualities such as nurturing or caring which are related to female behavior (Klenke, 2004).

Dana H. Levitt explores leadership from a gendered perspective and addresses the barriers and challenges that women face (Levitt, 2010). Levitt explains that the traditional definitions of leadership need to change due to the increased presence of women in the workplace. According to a report issued by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2001, women represented 47% of all workers, had earned 51% of all bachelor’s degrees, 45% of all advanced degrees, 43% of all professional degrees, and 42% of all doctoral degrees.

Sharon Segrest and Eric Romero (2003) explore the machismo across the cultures of Mexico and the United States, and shows evidence which indicates that masculine roles are perceived as they are because of the influence of cultural factors rather than the capacity and ability required for the jobs and functions assigned.

Adler (1997) looks at the nature of leadership on a global scale and the role that women have played at senior leader levels. The article includes information about women presidents, prime ministers and CEOs of international companies. It addresses the subject of cultures, human relationships, and treating others in a more civilized way. The author explains that women
become political or private sector leaders with the people’s support. Women are indirectly forced to obtain popular support in order to escalate into higher positions because they are not taken seriously or are not accepted in the hierarchical structure of the system. This in turn, has made political women leaders become widely supported by the countries’ population and has given women CEOs the means to create an organizational flattened structure.

2.1.2 Women in the work field

Based on a theory about congruity in leadership that relates prejudice against women to their role in industries, the study conducted by Garcia-Retamero and López-Zafra (2006), reports that the participants showed prejudice for women when they were asked to evaluate them in positions within industries that were incongruent with their gender role. This behavior also appeared when the participants were evaluating women in a different work environment than they normally work in López-Zafra (2006).

Karen Klenke, in Women in Leadership: Contextual Dynamics and Boundaries (2011), analyses the nature of women leadership in environments that favor men over women, the paradoxes that these women have to confront, and the conflict of change and the persistence of the status quo. The author also refers to the amount of women that perform in different professional careers and contrasts this with the past. The contexts for women leadership cover examples of many women leaders in different aspects, such as: history, politics, organizational structures, information technology, military, and sports, among others. She points out, that women usually get top executive positions in companies when the situation is not good, otherwise the jobs go to men. Also, it is mentioned, that women still face problems with salaries, where men are better paid, and women are still underrepresented on the boards of directors. But,
women are being presented with more opportunities as organizations change from a top-down to a team-base structure.

According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 1972, women held 18% of administrative positions in the United States; and by 2002, these positions increased to 46%. Also, a study reveals that women have higher emotional intelligence than men, which might represent an advantage for leadership positions (Porterfield & Kleiner, 2005).

In Engineering: Women and Leadership (2008), Zoli, Bathia, Davidson, and Rusch address the role of women in certain academic fields and the barriers they may encounter when performing these roles in their career advancement and success. The book refers to the American Council of Education's 2007 edition of The American College President notes to point out the stagnation of women's growth in universities and other educational institutions' top positions. "While the percentage of women university and college presidents has more than doubled from 9.5 to 23% from 1986 to 2006, growth has slowed in recent years, as percentages of women presidents remained at 19.3% in 1998 and 21.1% in 2001" (Zoli, 2008, p. 2). This behavior according to the authors is due to the transformational changes that giving women leading roles mean to institutions. They refer to the discrepancy between women with high academic degrees and the ones with leadership roles in educational institutions.

In American institutions, the representation of men and women in leadership roles is disproportionate as women are found more often in subordinate roles (Peters, 2004). Female professionals may be led by social structure and norms into thinking that there is a low probability of obtaining a leadership position because men usually get them. Despite women constituting about 51% of the population, and earning about 56% of the Bachelor's Degrees and about 51% of the PhD's between 1996 and 1997, they usually earn three fourths of what men
earn in the same occupation. Results revealed a gender bias in leadership perception among African Americans and European Americans that were consistent with a gender inequality model (Peters, 2004).

2.1.3 Women leadership attributes

The purpose of Huarng’s study (Huarng, 2012) was to examine the relation between the skills of women entrepreneurs and the barriers they face along with their motivations and performance. The author reviewed the skills required to own and manage a business, such as: educational level, occupational experience, and prior business expertise and management skills. The analysis shows that the lack of education and managerial skills of women business owners are among the most important variables to understand the motivations and the difficulties they face (Huarng, 2012).

In recent years, much research has been performed about leadership and the perception different segments of the population could have about men and women leaders’ profile and the barriers they could encounter. According to Prime, Carter, and Welbourne (2009), respondents referred to women as “care takers” and men more as a “take charge” kind of leaders. Also, respondents considered that men leaders are more effective at problem solving than women. The authors examined the opinion of senior managers and CEOs about leadership behaviors and attributes (Prime, 2009).

In the United States, women are receiving more and more praise for having superior skills and effective leadership style. Still, there are more people who prefer male bosses, and this makes it more difficult for women to succeed in positions that are dominated by men. Although women are being considered more and more capable with time, there seems to be a prejudice and a resistance that prevents them to obtain top level jobs and leadership roles opportunities to the
same extent as men. Even though, women continue to face barriers and impediments to leadership roles within organizations, many of these can be removed by organizational changes and education/capacitation. Overall, it is clear that women will continue to rise toward higher executive roles and greater authority positions (Eagly, 2007).

According to the role congruity theory, women who exhibit agential behaviors are evaluated as less common or rare because they are perceived to have violated their gender role expectations and do not coincide with the stereotype. In the study conducted by Rosette (2010), women are normally expected to be more loyal to personal and ethical values. Women top leaders were evaluated as being more agential and communal than top men leaders and women middle managers when success was credited to them, and were evaluated more favorably on overall leader effectiveness. The study seems to indicate that women may be more inclined to lead in an effective way for contemporary organizations because of the same agential traits (Rosette, 2010).

Perceptions of women as leaders have also been evaluated in populations such as Ethiopia or Malaysia, regarding their self-perception. They suggest according to the results of their studies that women perform best as leaders in relationship with their educational and training background, as well as their experience in the field. The study conducted by Tsegay (2013) to women leaders of three major sectors: private, NGO, and public. The results indicate that the private sector women leaders seem to possess the ten leadership qualities better than the NGO and public sector women leaders. But, in terms of individual and group performance, NGO women, tend to use the power of the person more than the others, and seem to be more able to work with and through other people. The overall higher performance of women leaders might be attributed to their experience in high positions and their educational level (Tsegay, 2013).
Jeanine Prime, Karsten Jonsen, Nancy Carter, and Martha Maznevski (2008), examined the perceptions of managers from four Western European cultural groups about women's and men's leadership. Participants from all groups perceived gender-based differences in leadership effectiveness. Gender stereotypes of leaders were least prevalent among Latin respondents compared to egalitarian cultures’ respondents. In Nordic groups, most male respondents disparaged women’s performance at leadership and their skills. The article states that some stereotypically feminine attributes are considered to be feminine, because often women are put in roles where those attributes are required. For example, the attribute of nurturing, which is a stereotypical feminine attribute, might be the result of so many women performing as primary care-givers and house-keepers.

In 1990, research has begun to report differences in leadership styles between men and women. Female managers were seen as more participative and democratic leaders. Recent studies report that women exhibit more transformational leadership styles than male leaders (Jogulu, 2006). Jogulu illustrates how women were not seen as leaders in a management context until recent times (2006).

A study by Nicole Stelter-Flett (2006) is based on interviews with women leaders in which the researcher explored their perspectives and experience in leadership development. Five important themes were discussed: experiential versus theoretical leadership, being different means experiencing leadership development differently, growing leadership from adaptation to the circumstances, transformational leadership development, and the influence of important people in their leadership development process. All of these women leaders seemed to agree on the subject that leadership classes are not pragmatic. They said that leadership classes are good to learn concepts, but don’t make leaders, because, according to them, people learn to be a leader
with the experience, in other words, along the way. Regarding the gender prejudice and perception of society, some of these women said that they used this as motivation to prepare themselves and worked harder than their male peers just to prove they were capable of becoming good leaders. Regarding transformational leadership, they specified that they did not do things thinking of personal benefit or individual rewards, but thinking about their team and the company. According to them, working for the team and with the team, is the correct and most efficient way of helping the organization (Stelter-Flett, 2006).

The subjects in a study conducted by Boone (2001) included 736 male and female principals from high achieving North Carolina schools. The researcher gathered principals' demographic profile, schools' demographic profile, and principals' perceived leadership strengths and challenges. Although the results did not reveal significant differences in visionary leadership scores for males and females, male leaders perceived themselves to be more visionary than females, and females thought of themselves as being more creative. The study concluded that females and males display visionary behaviors, even though they use them to a different extent (Boone, 2004).

In *The perceptions of women's role and progress: A study of Malay women* (2008), women were asked to fill in questionnaires regarding their own perceptions of their role as leaders. They were from rural and urban areas; the facilitating factors as well as the barriers they came across were evaluated. These women came from different age and income groups. The results indicate that women were generally perceived as supportive, strong, responsible, and influential. Also, the results show that most of the respondents believed that women's primary role was to the family. The rural respondents said that women should support the husband and/or
nurture children. According to them, family should be more important to women than work (Abdullah, 2008).

Chapter 3

3 Methods

3.1 Research Design: Mixed Methods

The perception the Dominicans have of Dominican women as leaders is uncertain. As previously explained, this study focused on the perception of the Dominican population in the Dominican Republic about the profile of women as leaders and their roles in society. The research approach taken was a mixed-method approach and was also conducted in two phases. This type of method approach was chosen to obtain a clear conclusion that answered the research questions proposed: Are women perceived as being capable of assuming leadership roles? Are there any leadership attributes women seem to possess? What prevents women from being perceived as leaders? Does gender, age, job/occupation, or educational level make any difference in perception of women as leaders?

The first phase of the research was qualitative in nature, and consisted of content analysis of the documentary Mujeres Extraordinarias: Mujeres en el tiempo, mujeres sin tiempo (Tatem, 2009). Based on the results of this analysis, the second step of the research, which was quantitative in nature, was conducted. Specifically, a survey was developed to objectively test the hypotheses raised by the research questions.

3.2 Phase I: Content Analysis

The documentary Mujeres Extraordinarias: Mujeres en el tiempo, mujeres sin tiempo (Tatem, 2009), consists of interviews conducted by Yildalina Tatem, public attorney and human rights activist, with six Dominican women recognized for their leadership in different fields —
from political involvement, community service, to union movements, whose actions provoked social and political changes in the Dominican Republic politics and society. The interviewees in the documentary were Ms. Dedé Mirabal, Ms. Josefina Padilla, Mrs. Ivelisse Pratt de Pérez, Ms. Tomasina Cabral, Ms. Gladys Gutiérrez, and Mrs. Mary Pérez de Marranzini. The documentary also contains videos and pictures from Dominican historic and transcendental moments, in which the interviewees were directly, and in some cases, indirectly involved.

The data collection from these sources was made by watching each interview and taking notes of the topics that were addressed, with emphasis by the interviewees, as well as writing down important aspects from the different videos and pictures presented. After watching and extracting the main ideas from all the interviews, these notes were compared with each other to obtain the common issues that were discussed by all six interviewees. These observations, along with the characteristics of leaders identified in those videos, created a number of important aspects to elaborate on the survey questions for phase two. So not only would the survey serve as a way of obtaining information about the respondents' opinion, but also would help compare society's perception of women as leaders today with the perception that the population had around 50 to 60 years ago.

"The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (Creswell, 2013, p. 237). "A final category of qualitative data consists of qualitative audio and visual materials. This data may take the form of photographs, art objects, videotapes, website main pages, e-mails, text messages, social media text, or any forms of sound. Include creative data collection procedures that fall under the category of visual ethnography (Pink, 2001) and which might include living stories, metaphorical visual narratives, and digital
archives (Clandinin, 2007)” (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 238). “Because text and image data are so dense and rich, not all of the information can be used in a qualitative study. Thus, in the analysis of the data, researchers need to “winnow” the data (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012), a process of focusing in on some of the data and disregarding other parts of it” (as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 243).

In the case of this study, Mrs. Tatem’s documentary (2009) offers an inside view about this topic from these women’s perspective and served as a base for the design of the survey. Given that, as described, these ladies are well known and recognized Dominican leaders in different fields, their opinions and shared knowledge is to be considered significant and of high cultural value. Out of the variety of information shared by them, the analysis focused on those details related to this research project topic, such as: their upbringing as women in Dominican Republic, characteristics or details related to educational and cultural values, traditions regarding women’s occupational expectations, the authority figure in their environment, statements about gender prejudice related to job, occupation, or/and leadership positions. Their position in Dominican Society today, how they were brought up, as well as details about their development as women – family, jobs, and barriers encountered in their development – offered us relevant information about women and leadership perception in the Dominican Republic.

The notes taken from these videos were handwritten transcripts from which key words and phrases were selected as themes to code the information related to the topic. For instance, male and female perception of women as leaders, educational level related to it, job and occupation of women, characteristics or qualities of women as leaders were specified in order to narrow down the wide and varied information collected from the interviews.
Afterwards, the intention was to evaluate the relationship between these interviewees’ comments and opinions, and the survey’s results of the perception of the Dominican population about women as leaders in the Dominican Republic.

3.3 Phase Two: Survey

A quantitative research approach, described as an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables through the data collection, analysis, and interpretation – was conducted to test this study’s hypotheses (Creswell, 2013, p. 31).

Hypothesis 1: The perception of women as leaders in DR is misled by gender stereotypes about leadership abilities.

Hypothesis 2: Although women are conscious of their abilities, older female section of the population would show more prejudice or negative perception to women as leaders.

Hypothesis 3: Participants with higher levels of education and social status would show a stronger or positive perception of women’s profile as leaders.

In this research, a survey was conducted as a non-experimental study. It provided the simplest and most efficient way to obtain people’s opinion on the subject, and proved to be practical for the analysis the data. “Survey research provides quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell, 2013, p. 41). The survey method was selected because of its economical design and its rapid turnaround in data collection.

3.4 Population and sampling

The total population for this study consists of all Dominicans living in the DR. The Dominican Republic’s last census conducted in 2010 and published in 2012, offered the demographics for stratification (ONE, 2012).
Stratified random sampling was considered to obtain a representation of the population, in which the objective was to obtain a proportional representation of men and women, as well as different educational levels, and social classes. The sample was stratified by gender, age, educational level, marital status, and job/occupation.

Dominican Republic census in 2010 offered an objective source of demographics and population information for this study's random stratification. The sample number was calculated based on the information obtained with the Census (ONE, 2012).

The sample consisted of 100 random respondents were chosen to complete the survey following these guidelines:

- 9,445,281 million inhabitants
- 4,739,038 million men = 50.2%
- 4,706,243 million women = 49.8%
- 40.0% elementary education
- 24.3% high school education
- 13.1% university graduate
- n/a masters, doctorate degree, or PhD.
- 9.0% no education

The sample size was determined with the help of an online tool to calculate random sample sizes based on total population, confidence level, and confidence interval. A 95% confidence level was chosen, with a confidence interval of 10, and the total population of 10,000,000. This gave a sample of 96, which was rounded up to 100 respondents (Creative, 2012).
The survey conducted online, provided the opportunity to reach many people from all over the country. These respondents were later classified by their gender, age, educational level, marital status, and occupation. All of these aspects allowed a specific categorization, which could be matched with the ones proposed for stratification.

3.5 Pilot Survey

The researchers first conducted a 15 respondents' pilot survey consisting of 22 questions (Appendix A). The data obtained with these 15 persons, as well as their comments on improving the survey, was then analyzed to further determine some modifications. These changes varied from changing question format to replacing others.

Some closed end questions were changed to open end ones where respondents could express their opinions freely and willingly. Other questions were restructured to have a value range for the answer in order to obtain more exact information of their appreciation. Also, a final comment section was added to obtain personal opinion that the respondents considered to be important. The pilot study allowed us to develop a more complete and organized questionnaire for the analysis and evaluation of the answers.

3.6 Definitive Survey

The definitive survey, as seen in Appendix B, consisted of 21 questions. These questions were the result of the analysis of the data obtained by the pilot survey. These answers, along with the comments and suggestions of the respondents, resulted in replacing some questions, removing one, and changing the format of some others. The final survey was applied at a specific time frame – as a cross sectional design – from September 26th to October 11th, 2014.

3.7 Data Collection
The Data collection was made via Internet, and in some cases, personally. An online survey was created using the services of Survey Monkey, which is an online survey Services Company founded in 1999. Survey Monkey provides free customizable surveys, and also offers a suite of paid features that include data analysis, sample selection, bias elimination, and data representation tools. Online surveys are accessible by many people, and help save time by organizing and classifying the information for further analysis (Survey Monkey, 2014).

The variables of the survey, cross-referenced with the hypotheses for this study, were: Dominican women’s capability to assume leadership roles; qualities or characteristics of leaders; barriers women might encounter; perception of women as leaders by age, education, and social status. This data was collected by including various questions referring to each of the variables, as well as questions that offered some insight in other aspects regarding women and their capacity to succeed.

The survey was intended to be entirely administered online, but to reach people with low resources and limited access to the internet; the survey had to also be administered in-person to a smaller group. From the 100 respondents, 73 were collected from the online survey published on the website www.SurveyMonkey.com (SurveyMonkey, 2014). The remaining 27 respondents were collected from in-person survey.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data analysis was made partially via Survey Monkey tools for survey analysis (Survey Monkey, 2014), which counts and summarizes the answers of the different questions of the survey. The 27 physical surveys that were used were later introduced to the Survey Monkey website, choosing exactly the same answers chosen by the respondents. This facilitated the data analysis in terms of unifying the results for in-person surveys and online surveys.
The Survey Monkey analysis service (Survey Monkey, 2014), plotted the results for each question into pie and bars figures. After this, the raw data was taken as a table, see Figure 1. This data was then filtered and counted to stratify the respondents, see Figure 2.

Figure 1. Shows raw data from the survey answers.

Figure 2. Shows a summary of the answers from the survey.
THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN

Following the stratification, was the analysis of the data by category, in which, the answers were summed, and in some cases, averaged, to obtain information about the respondents’ answers according their age, gender, marital status, and occupation, see Figure 3.

Figure 3. Shows the grouping of answers based on gender, age, and educational level of the respondents.
Finally, these numbers were plotted into different figures, so the information could be represented in a clearer way, see Figure 4.

Figure 4. Shows the bar graphs for the different answers of the respondents after being stratified.
4 Results

4.1 Interviews’ content analysis

Yildalina Tatem, public attorney and human rights activist, conducted interviews with six Dominican women recognized for their leadership in different fields – from political involvement, community service, to union movements, whose actions provoked social and political changes in the Dominican Republic politics and society. Sponsored by INDOTEL – Instituto Dominicano de Telecomunicaciones (Dominican Telecommunications Institute) – a government institution responsible for regulating and improving communication services in the Dominican Republic. This documentary was awarded the Green Woman Film Award and presented to the United Nations Women Film Festival in 2010. The interviewees in the documentary were Ms. Dede Mirabal, Ms. Josefina Padilla, Mrs. Ivelisse Prats de Pérez, Ms. Tomasina Cabral, Ms. Gladys Gutiérrez, and Mrs. Mary Pérez de Marranzini (Tatem, 2009).

These women talked about their lives and experiences, how Dominican society treated them, and the culture reigning in the Dominican Republic in their youth and throughout their lives. They addressed issues such as women’s role in society, the jobs and occupations permitted to women, freedom of speech, and the obstacles they faced trying to accomplish their goals. They reflected on all the difficulties they had in the past, and compared it to today’s culture.

All interviewees mentioned family values, such as unity, love, and faith in God, as key aspects in their lives that helped keeping the rest of the family together. They felt responsible for the upbringing of their children, which they did mostly on their own. Determined to do so, they dedicated their lives and worked hard to accomplish that goal. Josefina Padilla, a strong personality who referred to herself as committed to life, has been persistently working in favor of
human rights after being tortured in jail for defending the right of free speech and free will of the Dominican people (Tatem, 2009).

Dedé Mirabal, sister of the well-known Mirabal sisters, who were assassinated for participating in anti-Trujillo’s movements, turned out to be a successful businesswoman in charge of a family museum dedicated to Dominican history, specially dedicated to the Trujillo’s dictatorship and her sisters’ involvement in a revolutionary movement that later on would assist and result in the death of the dictator (Tatem, 2009).

A common subject in all interviews was how difficult it was for women to actively incorporate into Dominican society as women in the 1940’s to the 1960’s. Women were not considered as productive entities but destined to raise and take care of children, and cook and clean the house. Women were kept apart from any social or political activity, and although they had access to education, were not able to get important job opportunities (Tatem, 2009).

All six women insisted that their upbringing was based on the customs and tradition of the common values at that time. These common values, as they referred to, could be identified as: being raised to be housewives, to become good mothers, not pursuing their artistic dreams, or to not get involved in social or political affairs. Moreover, they demonstrated with their lives that they were and are capable of much more. All of them have showed that they possess qualities, such as being patriotic, respectful, hard-workers, builders, thinkers, grateful for life, loyal to friends and family, and grateful to God, all of which, enabled them to accomplish great things in their lives. They all have proven to be successful not just economically but on achievements as well. These women have conquered extreme difficulties such as being wrongly imprisoned and tortured, and being forced to leave the country alone without any resources because they had
been threatened by death. Still, they “rose from the ashes” to become, for instance, the first Latin American woman to be elected president of a political party – Ivelisse Prats de Pérez, first Dominican woman candidate to the vice-presidency in DR – Josefina Padilla, Human Rights advocate – Tomasina Cabral, and founder of the Dominican Rehabilitation Association and Paul Harris Rotary International awarded – Mary Pérez de Marranzini (Tatem, 2009).

Regardless of paradigms, cultural barriers, gender prejudice, or perception of fellow Dominicans, their courage, determination, strong love for their families, commitment to the development and progress of the Dominican society, and their relentless effort, inspired their lives and drove them to become women leaders in the Dominican Republic. These videos are valuable regarding aspects not only about women leaders in the DR, but also about other Dominican issues involving historical events and cultural facts. Regarding this study, the aspects related to qualities they possess and barriers they encountered when performing as recognized Dominican leaders were considered (Tatem, 2009).

These women had to fight against all odds to obtain success, even imprisonment and death threats, but driven by their willpower, protective instinct, patriotism, family support, and religious beliefs, managed to survive and rise as talented and respected leaders (Tatem, 2009).

Based on these testimonies, enough information was obtained, and that helped answer the research questions in terms of Dominican Republic’s culture and society at that time. It is clear that, from the 1940’s to the 1960’s, women were not recognized as leaders, nor were seen as possessing leadership attributes that could make them progress and succeed in the Dominican Republic. Rather they were expected to remain silent and hidden inside the house, putting their efforts into family care. It also appears that, generally, the age, social class, and educational level,
didn’t make a difference in the perception of Dominicans about women and the roles they could occupy in society.

4.2 Results analysis

These are the results from the different questions of the survey:

With the first six questions of the survey, respondents were identified and grouped according to demographics for a better analysis of their answers and comments. After identifying and counting the answers for the first six questions, the following information was obtained:

- 53% of the respondents were female.
- 67% were under 36 years old, and 33% were 36 years or older.
- Regarding their marital status: 45% were single, 39% were married, 7% divorced, and 7% were life partners.
- In terms of educational level (academic level), 26% were at Elementary/Middle/High school stage, 52% had a Bachelor’s degree, 17% had a Master’s degree, and 5% had a Doctorate Degree.
- Of all one hundred respondents, nineteen were currently unemployed. Ten of the nineteen respondents were women; from which, three were housekeepers, five were students, and the other two had no occupation. From the nine male respondents, seven were students, one was a Doctor, and the other was an entrepreneur.

Respondents rated caring and organized as the most notable characteristics of women. Sixty five considered men and women to be equally capable of making good decisions, and picked women as better planners than men. Votes for who is more visionary were split, but seventy four respondents considered men and women to be equally intelligent. Overall, they
rated women at 8.3 out of 10 as having the capacity to be good leaders, which indicates, that the majority consider women to be capable of performing well in leadership roles.

Half of the respondents said they had worked or are working with a woman who they consider to be a leader. Among the abilities and qualities they mentioned about these women are: being great team workers, responsible, cohesive, good planners, opened to suggestions, good communicators, and supportive.

According to the participants, the occupations best suited for women, from the ones presented in the survey, are: doctor, nurse, managers, and administrative executive, in that order. Other respondents suggested teacher and administrative assistant. When asked their preference on whom to work for, sixty five said it didn't make a difference to work for men or women. The majority also responded that men and women can perform equally well in administrative jobs.

When asked about gender discrimination, seventy six of the respondents believe women in the Dominican Republic are discriminated against by gender prejudice. Out of that portion, forty nine were 35 years of age or younger, which represent 73% of that age group. The other 27 participants were of 36 years of age or older, which represents 82% of that age group.

The participants voted family and other personal reasons as the highest motivators for women to become leaders in the Dominican society, and voted religion as the lowest of the options presented.

When asked about physical appearance, eighty six respondents believed that women feel the need to be physically attractive to obtain opportunities to develop and progress in Dominican society. According to some comments from the respondents, it is a custom to hire women based on their appearance rather than their capacity to do the required job, and this prevents well prepared women to obtain working opportunities and develop as professionals, even when they
are specialists on the subject required.

In the last section of the survey, the respondents were given a group of statements which they could select if they agreed with them, and these were their selections’ results:

Eighty nine respondents agreed that women can perform different roles efficiently, and ninety agreed that women can perform as well as men at managerial positions. Thirty participants admitted that, when growing up, they were told that women should stay out of men’s affairs, such as business, politics, and physical jobs.

Thirteen respondents considered women are better staying at home as mothers and/or housewives, twelve think women should not embark on their own business projects, and only three suggested women should only work as second chair and let men be the higher authorities.

In the final section of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to freely express their opinions on the subject. Some male respondents said that Dominican women have been limited by old generations of administrators, directors, and business owners, who didn’t give women the same opportunities as men. Most female respondents pointed out, that women are not valued as they deserve, and that in most cases, women are underpaid in relation to men.

Some shared comments between male and female respondents mentioned that women are insecure about their professional abilities, but that gradually they are becoming more confident of themselves. Also, most female and male respondents agreed that due to women’s hard work and persistence, society is changing and giving them new opportunities to develop and grow professionally. Moreover, the participants stated that women have the abilities and the intelligence to embark on any projects they desire.

4.3 Tables and figures

The next set of tables and graphics, represent information from the answers to different
questions of the survey. In them, the answers have been organized by gender, age, and educational level to obtain a clearer perspective on the opinion of the respondents.

Of the total 100 respondents, 47 were male and 53 were female. Tables 1, 2, and 3, represent the demographics of the respondents by gender, which were used for stratification purposes.

**Table 1**  
*Age of the respondents by gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-50</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-older</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2**  
*Marital status of the respondents by gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>53.20%</td>
<td>37.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>34.00%</td>
<td>43.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
<td>7.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow/Widower</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Partner</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
<td>7.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3**  
*Educational level of the respondents by gender*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic level</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figures 5 and 6 illustrate the answers of men and women about their opinion on women's capacity to become good leaders in Dominican society. In them, it can be seen that older — 50 years or older — respondents, men and women, rated women to be more capable of being good leaders than the younger ones.

Figure 5. Bar graph showing male respondent's rating by age of women's capacity to be good leaders.

Figure 6. Bar showing female respondent's rating by age of women's capacity to be good leaders.
Figure 7 illustrates the rating of women’s capacity to be good leaders categorized by educational level. It shows that the higher the educational level, the higher the rating.

Figure 7. Bar graph showing respondent’s rating by educational level of women’s capacity to be good leaders.
Figures 8 and 9 represent the opinion of the respondents about women's intelligence compared to men's. The majority considers men and women to be equally intelligent.

**Figure 8.** Bar graph showing male respondent's opinion by age on women's vs. men's intelligence.

**Figure 9.** Bar graph showing female respondent's opinion by age on women's vs. men's intelligence.
Figures 10 and 11 illustrate the opinion of men and women on discrimination against women. The results indicate that 66% of male and 85% of female respondents believe that women are discriminated against by gender prejudice.

Figure 10. Bar graph showing male respondent's opinion by age on women discrimination by gender prejudice.

Figure 11. Bar graph showing female respondent's opinion by age on women discrimination by gender prejudice.
Figure 11. Bar graph showing female respondent's opinion by age on women discrimination by gender prejudice.

As illustrated in the above Figures, male and female respondents over 50 years of age, as well as the more educated, considered women to be more capable of being good leaders. The majority of respondents considered women to have the same intelligence compared to men. It is also evident that more women than men consider that society discriminates women because of gender.

Chapter 5

5.1 Conclusions

After conducting this research project, the respondents' opinion about women as leaders in Dominican Republic offered answers to the research questions and hypothesis proposed.

Having compared the videos' analysis with the survey analysis, common ideas from the respondents and the women leaders interviewed in the documentary were obtained (Tatem, 2009). But mostly, a change of culture can be seen in today's society in relation to 40 and 50 years ago. While in the past, women were underestimated and deprived from opportunities to develop, in the survey, which reveals the opinion and perception of a representation of today's Dominican population, women are seen mostly as capable as men to perform on leadership roles, and are attributed with different abilities and aptitudes that put them in an equal position as men.

Based on both analyses, qualitative and quantitative, conclusions were drawn, and with them, the research questions were answered.

- Question 1: Are women perceived as capable of assuming leadership roles?

Yes. The respondents' overall rating of women's capacity to be leaders was 8.33 out of 10, which means, that on average they consider women to be good leaders. They also
THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN

considered women to be good visionaries, capable of being in charge, and good decision makers.

- Question 2: Are there any leadership attributes women seem to possess?

Yes. According to the respondents, women are better planners than men and equally intelligent. They also consider that women excel at being careful, organized, performing multiple tasks simultaneously.

- Question 3: What prevents women from being perceived as leaders?

In the open comments made by respondents, they said that women were more discriminated against in the past than they are now. According to some, this was due to the chauvinist culture that had prevailed since the 19th century when women were expected to become housewives, and were expected to only raise children and take care of the house.

Other respondents said that up until recent times, women were not taken seriously as business owners and leaders. Also, a general opinion was that some Dominican men that have a high position in some companies, look for women that are physically attractive rather than capable of performing the job needed and this deprives capable women of opportunities to escalate in their professional careers, and possibly prevents them from rising as leaders.

Nonetheless, most of the respondents seem to agree that women have been able to break through all those barriers and become more relevant in today's society.

- Question 4: Does gender, age, job/occupation, or educational level make any difference in perception of women as leaders?

Yes. As seen in the answers given by the respondents, women rated higher than men the Dominican women’s capacity to be good leaders. Also, in both cases, male and female older respondents consider women being more capable and having the skills to become good
leaders than the younger section. Also, the higher the educational level, the higher the evaluation of women's leadership abilities and capacity. According to this, it would seem like less educated people, hold some prejudices that more educated people have surpassed. In terms of occupation, based on the respondents' answers, the occupation apparently doesn't make a difference in their perception of women as leaders.

- Hypothesis 1: The perception of women as leaders in DR is misled by gender stereotypes about leadership abilities.

Male and female respondents agreed that both, men and women, are equally intelligent, visionaries, and good decision makers. They also agreed on women being better planners than men. It seems that having the father or mother as the authority figure in the house didn't make a significant difference in the rating of women's capacity to be good leaders. This suggests that contemporary families are not raised under gender prejudice regardless of the authority figure. Although female participants rated women to be more capable of becoming leaders than men did, both ratings were relatively high, resulting in an 8.33 out of 10 overall valuation.

According to the results of the survey, hypothesis 1 was wrong.

- Hypothesis 2: Although women are conscious of their abilities, older female section of the population would show more prejudice or negative perception to women as leaders.

Even though 85% of female respondents believe that women are discriminated against by gender prejudice, overall, they considered women to be more capable of being good leaders than male respondents. Older (50+ years) respondents evaluated women higher in their capacity of being good leaders than the younger ones in both genders case.

According to the results of the survey, hypothesis 2 was wrong.
- Hypothesis 3: Participants with higher levels of education and social status would show a stronger or positive perception of women’s profile as leaders.

As seen in figure 7, there is a difference in the ratings between each academic level category. The higher the educational level of the respondents, the higher their valuation of women's capacity to be good leaders.

According to the results of the survey, hypothesis 3 was right.

5.2 Compare and contrast videos’ analysis and survey results

In Mujeres Extraordinarias: mujeres en el tiempo, mujeres sin tiempo (Tatem, 2009), the interviewees said, that when growing up, their paternal figures encouraged them to become good housewives, and stay out of politics and men businesses. These women emphasized on this subject, because according to them, this was the common way of raising girls at the time. In the open comments made by some respondents of the survey, the topic of women seen as homemakers/housekeepers was addressed. They said that this behavior and custom of raising girls to be in the house and be good housewives was present in the past, but that it is now changing as more women receive high education and start to incorporate more and more into society activities. 30% of the respondents admitted to have heard, when growing up, that women should stay out of men’s affairs. But only 13% of the considered that women are better staying at home as housewives.

All the interviewees mentioned family values and unity to have been key aspects in their lives and their quest into becoming the persons they are today. They said that they felt the strong responsibility of raising their children, providing health and education, and contributing to a better and fairer society for them. The survey’s respondents rated family, with 8.23 out of 10, as one of the strongest motives that drive women to become good leaders. This confirms that
women are hard workers that care and provide for their families and the Dominican population acknowledges it.

All the interviewees have become recognized personalities in the Dominican Republic. Due to their hard work and persistence, they were able to achieve great accomplishments and inspire others to do the same. When commenting, respondents also mentioned that through the years, women have been able to break barriers and impose themselves in many areas and aspects of society, such as politics, commerce, civil activism, administration, and several professional careers. 62% of the respondents consider women as capable of performing as well as men in high administrative positions, and 28% said women could perform better in this type of jobs. This once again confirms that today's society recognizes women's courage, value, and capacity, as opposed to the time when the interviewees grew up and had to confront tough situations due to the under-appreciation and discrimination of the past.

All the interviewees insisted in their faith in God as possibly the biggest source of strength and courage that helped them fight through all the obstacles they had to face. In contrast to this, the respondents rated Religion, with a 5.45, as the least powerful motive for women to become leaders.

Overall, the answers and comments given by the survey's respondents were consistent with the testimonies given by Ms. Dedé Mirabal, Ms. Josefina Padilla, Mrs. Ivelisse Pratt de Pérez, Ms. Tomasina Cabral, Ms. Gladys Gutiérrez, and Mrs. Mary Pérez de Marranzini. All the interviewees coincided in how difficult it was for them to incorporate into society, given that in the Dominican Republic, the culture was that women should stay out of politics, businesses, and social activism. Even when admitting that gender prejudice was latent in the past, the respondents believe that this is changing with time, and that women today, are getting more and
more opportunities to develop in the Dominican Republic. 46 out of the 100 respondents voted politics as a good occupation for women, 31 of them being under 36 years of age. This means that the younger population has a more mature and open mindset about women getting involved in politics.

As the majority of the respondents agree that women have the capacity to perform well in leadership roles, and that women possess good leadership qualities such as good vision, planning, intelligence, good decision making, and well organized, among others, this might indicate that the future of women in the Dominican Republic is going to change for the better. Even though female and male respondents admitted that women still face barriers in the Dominican society, they seemed to agree that it has changed over the last decade, and will continue to do so, as women themselves, are proving their worth and capacity more and more every day.

### 5.3 Limitations

Qualitative analysis of data: It was difficult to contact important women leaders of the Dominican Republic, so an external source was used. Even though, someone else recorded the interviews, Mrs. Yildalina Tatem granted permission to use the interviews for the research and the videos had been published on www.youtube.com for public use, but there was no access to the actual process while those interviews were conducted. At the end, the source was considered reliable because it was sponsored and conducted by the INDOTEL (Institute of Dominican Telecommunications), a governmental organization in favor of communication development in the Dominican Republic.

Some of the respondents had no access to the internet. Since Survey Money is web based, some surveys were printed in order for them to fill in personally. It was time consuming due to
the fact that these persons had to be contacted first to later wait for them to fill in the survey. These answers were later introduced to the online survey to unify all the data and be able to analyze it altogether.

The research studies about educational level related to leadership and women were insufficient or unavailable when structuring the literature review. Regardless, it was added as relevant to this project as data to be collected with the survey.

5.4 Recommendations for further research

As expressed by the interviewees in *Mujeres Extraordinarias: Mujeres en el tiempo, mujeres sin tiempo* (Tatem, 2009), in the past, Dominican culture was chauvinist. Women were restricted to stay in the house and were not accepted in society to occupy business work positions, political, activist, or any leadership role. This subject was pointed out by some of the survey participants, and other studies about women leadership in Latin America as well. In the survey, many participants commented that women are still underpaid when working in the same positions and under the same conditions as men.

But, according to the survey's results, just thirty of the respondents admitted that when growing up, they were told that women should stay away from men's affairs, such as business, politics, and physical jobs. This would seem to indicate that the culture in the Dominican Republic regarding women is changing.

When asked about gender discrimination, seventy six of the respondents believe women in the Dominican Republic are discriminated against by gender prejudice. Out of that portion, forty nine were 35 years old or younger, which represent 73% of that age group. The other twenty seven participants were of 36 years of age or older, which represents 82% of that age group. Moreover, although respondents rated women with 8.33 out of 10 overall in their capacity to be
good leaders, younger participants, from 18 to 35 years old, had a lower valuation than the older segment, of 36 years of age or older.

Both of these cases indicate that the older segment of the population seems to have a better perception of women as leaders than the younger segment. This corresponds to the fact that twenty one out of the thirty participants that admitted to have been told, when growing up, that women should stay out of men’s affairs, were 35 years old or younger.

Because of the recurrent indications that the younger population might still hold prejudices against women as leaders during the research, it is recommended that it be studied in more depth, as it might be the root cause of gender discrimination in the Dominican Republic as mentioned by a group of the survey participants.

On the other hand, as seen in the tables and figures section, education seems to make a difference in the perception of women as leaders. There is an evident increase in the rating made by the respondents as their academic level is higher. This is an important aspect to be studied, as it might represent a viable solution by the Dominican Republic’s government to help reduce the gender discrimination against women in this country.

Also, based on the results of the survey and the opinion/comments of the respondents, it is recommended that further studies be conducted on why Dominican society seems to require that women possess certain physical appearance traits in order for them to obtain opportunities and good job offers, instead of qualifying the capacity, preparation, and abilities required for the work position.
References


THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN


The perception of Dominican women as leaders is uncertain


THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN


THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN


Hello dear survey respondent,

In recent times, Dominican women have performed an array of roles in society from housewife to vice president of the Dominican Republic, even so the perception the Dominican population has about women as leaders is still uncertain.

There are few studies regarding this topic, therefore we decided to conduct a study about it at our master’s degree program at RIT (Rochester Institute of Technology) and PUCMM (Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra) which would help determining how women are perceived as leaders in DR.

Hereby we are inviting you to participate by answering these questions. It is nineteen (22) questions long and some of the questions have writing sections where you are welcome to extend your answer willingly.

The participation in this survey is completely confidential and the information is strictly anonymous.

Please mark with an X the answer which best describes your opinion. There are comment boxes at bottom of some questions if you want to add a comment.

1. Gender:

   Masculine

   Female

2. Age:
THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN

1. Ages:
   - 18-25 [ ]
   - 26-35 [ ]
   - 36-50 [ ]
   - 50 or older [ ]

2. Marital status:
   - Single [ ]
   - Married [ ]
   - Divorced [ ]
   - Widowed [ ]
   - Life partners [ ]

3. Educational level, up to:
   - Primary School [ ]
   - High School [ ]
   - College [ ]
   - Master’s degree [ ]
   - Doctoral degree [ ]

4. Are you currently employed? If your answer is no, skip the next question.
   - Yes [ ]
   - No [ ]

5. Current job position:
   - Technician [ ]
   - Customer service [ ]
THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN

Human Resources
Manager
Entrepreneur
Administrative executive
Other:

7. Do you consider women to be capable of being in charge and making decisions?

   Yes
   No

   Please explain:

8. From the list below the characteristics you consider women to have. Select all that apply:

   Multi-tasking
   Emphatic
   Helpful
   Organized
   Careful
   Caring
   Capable of being in charge
   Making decisions
   Others:

9. What do you think about women’s capacity to be leaders?

   Not capable

   □
10. In your opinion, are men or women more capable of making good or right decisions?

- Men
- Women
- Either

Comment:

11. Who do you consider to be more visionary?

- Women
- Men
- No difference

Comment:

12. Who do you consider to be better planners?

- Men
- Women
- Either

Comment:

13. Have you ever worked with a woman you consider to be a leader?

- Yes
- No
If you have, please comment:

14. When growing up, who was the authority figure in your family?

- Mother  □
- Father  □
- Other, please explain:

15. Do you feel women are of equal, less, or more intelligence than men?

- Less intelligent than men  □
- Equal to men  □
- More intelligent than men  □

16. Please indicate the best occupation for women working outside of the house. You can indicate more than one occupation if you desire. Here are some samples you may choose from:

- Manager  □
- Cook  □
- Stylist  □
- Nurse  □
- Dressmaker  □
- Fashion designer  □
- Politician  □
- Administrative executive  □
- Engineer  □
- Doctor  □
- Architect  □
Other:

17. Would you prefer to work for a man or a woman?

- Woman
- Man
- Either

Please explain:

18. Do you think women in the DR are discriminated against by gender prejudice?

- Yes
- No

Comment:

19. Do you think women can do a better job than men as managers, presidents, or CEO’s?

- Yes
- No
- The same

Comment:

20. Please choose from the list below the motives you understand drive women as leaders

- Religious beliefs
- Family unity
- Political reasons
- National identity
- Personal Conviction
- The well-being of the majority of people
21. Do you think women feel the need to be physically attractive to get the opportunity to develop and progress in Dominican society?

Yes  [ ]
No   [ ]

Comment:

22. Select the statements you understand are correct. You can indicate more than one if you desire.

- Women are better as stay at home mothers or wives. [ ]
- When growing up, I was told that women ought to stay away from men affairs (business, politics, tough jobs, etc.). [ ]
- Women are better off as being artists, stylists, craftswoman, or fashion designers, than occupying top management positions or performing leading roles in society. [ ]
- Women can perform as well as men, or even better, in managerial positions (executive administrator, director, president, or supervisor). [ ]
- I understand women can perform different roles efficiently. [ ]
- I trust men to be better than women when it comes to making decisions.
- Women are more oriented towards human values than men. [ ]
- Women would be better performing as second chair – where a man is the boss. [ ]
- In the Dominican Republic, women are expected to be physically attractive above their skills and other abilities. [ ]
○ If a woman can choose whether to take a job in a managerial position or stay home and raise the children, she should get the job and arrange child care.

○ If a woman can choose whether to undertake an own business project, or work for someone else, she should choose the latter.

Thank you for your time and collaboration. Jorge Canaán and Glenda Coreño

PUCMM – RIT / August, 2014.

Those items instructing to select an option were redesigned to a scale format due to respondents’ suggestions and recommendations about some of the qualities to be somewhat more or less important at the moment of selection. Modifications were included in the definitive survey.
Appendix B – Definitive Survey

Hello dear survey respondent,

In recent times, Dominican women have performed an array of roles in society from housewife to vice president of the Dominican Republic, even so the perception the Dominican population has about women as leaders is still uncertain.

There are few studies regarding this topic, therefore we decided to conduct a study about it at our master’s degree program at RIT (Rochester Institute of Technology) and PUCMM (Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra) which would help determining how women are perceived as leaders in DR.

Hereby we are inviting you to participate by answering these questions. It is twenty two (22) questions long and some of the questions have writing sections where you are welcome to extend your answer willingly.

The participation in this survey is completely confidential and the information is strictly anonymous.

Please mark with an X the answer which best describes your opinion. There are comment boxes at bottom of some questions if you want to add a comment.

1. Gender:

   Male □
   Female □

2. Age:

   18-25 □
   26-35 □
   36-50 □
THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN

50 or older

3. Marital status:

   Single

   Married

   Divorced

   Widowed

   Life partners

4. Educational level, up to:

   Primary School

   High School

   Bachelor’s Degree

   Master’s Degree

   Doctoral Degree

5. Are you currently employed?

   Yes

   No

6. Current job or occupation:

   Technician

   Customer service

   Human Resources

   Manager

   Entrepreneur
7. From the list below, please rank from 1 to 10 (1-lowest, 10-highest) the characteristics you consider women to have? Select all that apply:

- Multi-tasking
- Empathic
- Helpful
- Organized
- Careful
- Caring
- Capable of being in charge
- Decision making
- Others:

8. Please rank from 1 to 10 (1-lowest, 10-highest), what you believe the capacity level of women is to be good leaders.

Capacity level
9. In your opinion, are men or women more capable of making good or right decisions?

   Men    □
   Women □
   Either □

10. Who do you consider to be more visionary?

   Men    □
   Women □
   Either □

11. Who do you consider to be better planners?

   Men    □
   Women □
   Either □

12. Have you ever worked with a woman you consider to be a leader?

   Yes  □
   No   □

   If you have, please comment:

13. When growing up, who was the authority figure in your family?

   Father □
   Mother □

   Other, please explain:

14. Do you think women are less, equally, or more intelligent than men?
THE PERCEPTION OF DOMINICAN WOMEN AS LEADERS IS UNCERTAIN

Less intelligent
Equally intelligent
More intelligent

15. Please indicate the best occupations for women working outside of the house. You can indicate more than one occupation if you desire, or indicate one that is not on the list:

Manager
Cook
Stylist
Nurse
Dressmaker
Fashion designer
Politician
Administrative executive
Engineer
Doctor
Architect
Other:

16. Would you prefer to work for a man or a woman?

Man
Woman
Either

17. Do you think women in the DR are discriminated against by gender prejudice?

Yes
18. Do you think women can do a better job than men as managers, presidents, or CEO's?

- Yes
- No
- The same

19. Please rank from 1 to 10 (1-lowest, 10-highest), the motives you understand drive women to become leaders.

- Religious believes
- Family unity
- Political reasons
- Patriotism
- Personal reasons
- The well-being of the majority
- Other:

20. Do you think women feel the need to be physically attractive to get the opportunity to develop and progress in Dominican society?

- Yes
- No

21. Select the statements you understand are correct. You can indicate more than one if you desire.

- Women are better staying at home as mothers or housewives.
- When growing up, I was told that women ought to stay away from men affairs (business, politics, tough jobs, etc.)
Women are better off as being artists, stylists, craftswoman, or fashion designers, than occupying top management positions or performing leading roles in society.

Women can perform as well as men, or even better, in managerial positions (executive administrator, director, president, or supervisor).

I understand women can perform different roles efficiently.

I trust men to be better than women when it comes to making decisions.

Women are more oriented towards human values than men.

Women would be better performing as second chair – where a man is the boss.

In the Dominican Republic, women are expected to be physically attractive above their skills and other abilities.

If a woman can choose whether to take a job in a managerial position or stay home and raise the children, she should get the job and arrange child care.

If a woman can choose whether to undertake an own business project, or work for someone else, she should choose the latter.

Your comments and opinions are welcome if you are interested in adding more about how you perceive women and their role as leaders in the Dominican Republic:

*  

Thank you for your time and collaboration. Jorge Canaán and Glenda Coreino

PUCMM – RIT / August – September, 2014.
Appendix C – Dominican Republic Census from 2010

The following tables contain information obtained from the results of the 2010 Census of the Dominican Republic population, conducted and published by the ONE – Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas – (2012). Table 4 contains the Dominican population by gender and age, Table 5 contains information about the Dominican population’s marital status, and Table 6 contains information about the Dominican population’s educational level.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9</td>
<td>932,805</td>
<td>902,361</td>
<td>1,835,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-17</td>
<td>789,194</td>
<td>778,450</td>
<td>1,567,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>635,206</td>
<td>631,068</td>
<td>1,266,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>743,167</td>
<td>736,138</td>
<td>1,479,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-64</td>
<td>1,356,163</td>
<td>1,353,595</td>
<td>2,709,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>282,503</td>
<td>304,631</td>
<td>587,134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from IX Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda - Características Demográficas Básicas - Volumen III, by ONE, 2012, p. 158.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separated (marriage)</td>
<td>41,219</td>
<td>76,965</td>
<td>118,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>42,793</td>
<td>94,610</td>
<td>137,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widow/Widower</td>
<td>57,071</td>
<td>229,071</td>
<td>287,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated (life partner)</td>
<td>349,697</td>
<td>488,985</td>
<td>838,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>570,048</td>
<td>582,609</td>
<td>1,152,657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>1,146,054</td>
<td>1,172,585</td>
<td>2,318,639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life partner</td>
<td>1,105,415</td>
<td>678,186</td>
<td>1,783,601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. These are 15 years or older people. Adapted from IX Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda - Características Demográficas Básicas - Volumen III, by ONE, 2012, p. 315.
Table 6
Dominican Population by Educational Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Level</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>376,425</td>
<td>350,810</td>
<td>727,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>1,994,291</td>
<td>1,783,556</td>
<td>3,777,847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1,126,174</td>
<td>1,171,368</td>
<td>2,297,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>503,224</td>
<td>731,656</td>
<td>1,234,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>455,420</td>
<td>394,720</td>
<td>850,140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from *IX Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda - Características Educativas Básicas - Volumen IV*, by ONE, 2012, p. 16.