Women and Leadership:
Towards a Gender, Race and Class Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines women and leadership and presents a critique of leadership within a framework of gender, race and class. It discusses the crucial role that leaders play in transforming Canadian society, and how women factor into that role. It explores the way in which leadership is also contextualized within and outside of gender. It also examines the way changes in Canadian demographics have resulted in a more diverse group of students in schools, out of which have arisen new problems. Consequently, this study proposes alternative educational leadership to help transform the situation. This study is based on content analysis using a series of books, periodicals, journals, and internet articles, and incorporates a theoretical framework of feminist theory, black feminist theory and black feminist thought and spirituality, and anti-racism theory.
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Chapter One: Introduction

Leadership is a process which involves influence, power, authority, vision, and goals. Leaders and followers engage in a relationship in order to bring about change (Daft 2005). Global changes in the twenty-first century call for new leadership ideas, skills, and the ability to support transformation and stability in society. However, current discourse is deeply embedded in prejudicial practices based on gender, race and class. Men have been more involved in leadership than women (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007; Acker, 1990; Heller, 1982, and white women typically occupy more leadership roles than black women (Daft, 2005; Kanter, 1976; Kanter, 1977; King, 1995; Klenke, 1996). Moreover, changing demographics in schools are necessitating alternative educational leadership approaches, such as indigenous, spiritual and inclusive leadership to deal with issues of diversity, inequality and varying identities. The research described herein examines women and leadership and presents a critique of leadership reflecting issues of gender, race and class. The research questions that guided this research project were as follows: How do race, gender and class impact leadership? How appropriate are current approaches to educational leadership in light of changing societal demographics? What is the potential significance of alternative approaches to educational leadership?

This thesis presents findings based on in-depth research on women. Theorization of women and leadership involving a critique of gender, race and class analysis is outlined and grounded in feminism, black feminist theory, black feminist thought and spirituality and anti-racist theory frameworks (Dei, 1996; Collins, 1990; Harding, 1987; Hartmann, 1984; Wane, 2007).
Concepts of leadership have been structured on patriarchal views and assumptions of the dominant culture. Men are more likely to be leaders than women because societal concepts of gender “institutionalize male sexual dominance and female sexual submission” (MacKinnon, 1997, p.73). Gendered divisions of labour and economic inequality restrict women to certain types of work and behaviours. Additionally, with respect to leadership, white women are promoted at a much faster pace than black women. Black women face triple oppression based on their gender, race, and class (Hill Collins, 1990).

Clearly, the leadership discourse in Canada limits opportunities for individuals based on gender, race and class. Perceptions within the discourse are embedded throughout society, including in educational institutions. Men are more likely to become leaders than women; whites are more likely to become leaders than blacks; the rich are more likely to become leaders than the poor. Thus, power and privilege define who can and cannot become leaders, and where and in what positions they can lead.

The purpose of this research is to examine women and leadership and to critique the current concept of leadership in terms of gender, race and class. Some of the scholarly works that have played a major role in the development of this research are Daft (2005), Northhouse (2001), Nix (1983), and Burns (1978). Their work examines the leadership process. Chafetz (1991), Blumberg (1991), and Kanter (1978) discuss gender and leadership. Wane (2007), Bell and Nkomo (2001), Collins (1990), hooks (1987), and hooks (1981) explore black women issues and gender, race and class, while Dei & Calliste (2000), and Dei (1996) help us understand the ways race is conceptualized in society. Portelli & Solomon (2001), Lingard, Hayes, Mills, & Christie (2003), Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach (1999) inform us of the increasing number of diverse

**Significance of Study**

Very little research has been done on women and leadership from an African Canadian perspective (see Johncilla, 2006; Sadlier, 1994; Braithwaite & Ireland, 1993). There is far more research available on white female leaders than black female leaders, and furthermore, most of the literature on women and leadership has been examined from an American perspective (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; Klenke, 1996; Kanter; 1977; Kanter; 1976). Hence, there is a paucity of information regarding African Canadian female leaders, and a need for more research to be conducted in this area. This study will add to the body of literature in the area of Canadian women and leadership in terms of gender, race and class. Additionally, this thesis seeks to assist educational leaders in finding alternative solutions to the growing problems associated with changing demographics within schools. The Canadian population is becoming more diverse as an increasing number of immigrants make this country their home. As a result, issues of diversity are becoming much more prevalent in our schools, organizations, communities and societies. In our educational system today, there is now a concern that minority students do not see themselves represented in the curricula and texts, and as a result feels disconnected and alienated. Therefore, this study will foster representation among students who feel marginalized in terms of race. It will also provide students with the knowledge needed to become contributing members of a multicultural society.

This research can be used in schools, among community groups and leaders, policy-makers, businesses, parents, and counsellors. The data collected can also be used to promote
alternative leadership addressing the changing demographics of Canadian society, particularly in the educational system.

**Methodology**

This research involved content analyses of books, periodicals, articles, journals, and internet articles. Most of the information is based on primary research, although some data were gathered from secondary sources. To understand the processes of leadership, I examined various studies analyzing leadership in the following order: the leadership discourse, gender and leadership, women and leadership, leadership in terms of gender, race and class (examining who benefits), different types of leadership (within and outside of gender), and educational and alternative leadership styles. This set the framework for examining women and leadership, and presenting a critique of leadership within the context of gender, race and class.

Content analysis has several advantages. Once a researcher establishes a hypothesis, it allows the researcher to document relevant information, to detect how information was gathered, to raise more questions, and finally, to have a better understanding of the research conclusions (Carney, 1972).

Content analysis also carries with it certain limitations. Non-scholarly literature may not be conducted as rigorously as scholarly, undermining the validity of the results, because of inappropriate sampling or poorly constructed questions. Scientifically objective premises are not always inherent in the assumptions of the available literature, and therefore conclusions drawn through the analysis may not always be feasible (Carney, 1972). Thus, while content analysis may provide data that are readily available, face-to-face interviews are often more likely to provide a rich source of information not otherwise accessible.
Assumptions and Limitations

Thus, the research is based primarily on a content which inherently limits the findings to published information. Qualitative research involving personal perspectives adds to the data, potentially providing a greater richness and validity to the findings. Although findings in the research are limited to women, I assume the same can be said for racialized men. Additionally, while the conclusions are not limited only to women, for the purposes of this study, the researcher is concerned only with exploring women and leadership, and critiques of leadership based on gender, race and class analysis.

Personal Location within the Research

This research project has emerged out of my own experiences while serving as a leader in the community. During that period, it became evident to me that despite changes in the demographic in Canada, there was a lack of black female leaders, despite the fact that more black women were graduating with a post secondary education than ever before. Most of the leaders in the community, organizations and schools that I came in contact with were Caucasian males. Based on personal observations, I knew that women (female leaders) had a lot to offer, yet they were few in numbers. The female leaders I was acquainted with served with empathy, supportive and nurturing attitudes in order to transform situations.

As a black female leader, the situation became of personal interest to me, and I felt a need to help in the raising of awareness to the situation. Historically, black women have contributed significantly to the development of Canada and other societies as female leaders, but their contributions tend to be overlooked. During my research, I came across numerous studies of women and leadership, but these spoke almost exclusively about the lives of white women; black women share totally different, yet invisible, identities and experiences.
Moreover, because of the emphasis on the white male perspective, many studies have presented findings about leadership that are hierarchical and do not represent racialized bodies. I embarked on this research to give voice to those who are too often silenced. Thus, the research is meant to encourage dialogue within a broader context of leadership. Finally, it is my hope that this work will engage students, the educational community and other members of society in ways that challenges the dominant discourse of leadership; because acquiring leadership knowledge based on social justice is essential in helping educational leaders find alternative ways of dealing with situations that affect diverse students.
Organization of the Thesis

Chapter One: Introduction. The introduction lays the groundwork for this research. It gives an overview of the research and provides some of my personal thoughts, as well as the statement of the problem, purpose of the research, methodology, assumptions and limitations of the work and definitions of the terms used herein.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework. This chapter describes the theoretical framework upon which this work is based.

Chapter Three: Literature Review. This chapter provides a literature review examining the work of various researchers, academics, theorists, and educators. It also captures the theme and the societal context of women and leadership, and provides a critique of leadership concepts in terms of gender, race and class. Finally, it presents issues surrounding educational leadership and the rapidly increasing diversity among Canadian students.

Chapter Four: Understanding Leadership. This chapter presents an overarching portrait and historical sweep of leadership. It examines the meaning, functions, and structures of leadership in society. It also looks at ways in which leadership has been conceptualized to bring change in society. This chapter also discusses hegemonic and dominant discourses which limit opportunities for racialized bodies, and the need for changes in educational leadership and the education system in Canada.

Chapter Five: Women and Leadership. This chapter provides a historical view of women as leaders. It brings to light cultural views of gender, and race that have resulted in discrimination against women in leadership.
Chapter Six: Discussion. The final chapter summarizes the findings and shows that leadership must be addressed within and outside the context of gender, and that there is a need for alternate forms of leadership to address the changing demographics of students in the school system.
Definitions of Terms

Black women/African Canadian women/Minority women: These terms are utilized interchangeably in this study and refer to women of African descent. The word “black” also refers to race and ethnic identity or to people, such as the black women in the study, who define themselves as such.

Concrete ceiling: This term refers to strata of discrimination against minorities that have accumulated over the years and have become hardened in the social order; as time progresses, a figurative concrete wall forms, preventing advancement up the leadership ladder.

Diaspora: This term, as used in this study, refers to a people living outside of their native homeland. Often they retain their culture or some sort of identity that is affiliated with their country of origin.

Gender: These are socially constructed categories that are allocated to men and women to take on particular behaviours, attitudes, activities, and positions based on their sex.

Glass ceiling: This term refers to barriers in the male-dominated corporate world that hinder the advancement of women beyond a certain level in leadership or management.

Leadership: is usually characterized by a certain set of skills and practices that involve power or influence, control, vision, persuasion, relationships, and goals. Leadership also involves some sort of distinction between the leader and the people led.

Patriarchy: This term is used to describe the dominion of men in contemporary societies in family, government, corporations, and in determining the roles women play in society.

Race: This is a social construct based on skin colour or various types of physical characteristics.

Racialized: This term refers to individuals who are non-European.
Social class: This involves the delegation of positions in society along the lines of economic success and social status. It is usually used to differentiate two or more groups in society that may or may not compete for control.

Spirituality: This term refers herein to a belief or an affinity towards a greater and more trustworthy force in the universe.

Token: Highly visible individuals put in place as representative of a certain category.

White/Caucasian: These terms are used herein to refer to people of European ancestry.

Women: The word “women” is used to mean women of all races.
Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this race, gender and class-based analysis of women and leadership incorporates feminism, black feminist theory, black feminist thought and anti-racist theory. These frameworks were used to explore the concepts of leadership, gender and leadership, women and leadership, and the role that race, gender and class play in leadership within and outside of gender in Canadian society today.

Feminism

This research incorporates three different strands of feminism; feminist theory, black feminism and black feminist thought and spirituality. All three strands of feminism help us understand women and leadership and provide a platform to question the ways in which leadership is conceptualized based along the lines of gender, race and class. All three epistemologies connect sexuality to the way in which men and women are organized in leadership. They demonstrate that gender is a social process that determines distribution of power and inequality between men and women. The points at which the theoretical frameworks of each of these strands converge and diverge are discussed at the end of the relevant section.

Most research on feminist theory has been conducted by white feminists (MacKinnon, 1997; Harding, 1987; Hartmann, 1984). Their research usually speaks to and captures the experiences of white women in society, from a white feminist perspective. These theories question women’s status, role and position in society and generally agree that women’s roles in the workplace are centred on women’s gender. They contend that the workplace is organized, structured and determined by men to keep women out of leadership positions. From a feminist perspective, women’s work is structured to confine women to the private sphere or in low-paying positions, which hinders leadership mobility. Hartmann (1984) contends that patriarchy is
hierarchical and affects all women, regardless of race, class or ethnicity, yet despite men’s race, class or ethnicity, they “are united in their shared relationship of dominance over women” (p.177). Therefore, men’s powers are used to control women’s employment, thus preventing women from accessing leadership positions in society.

Black Feminist Theory and Black Feminist Thought and Spirituality

Black feminist theory is deeply embedded within the historical experiences and ideas of black women (Hill Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981; hooks, 1987). It gives an in-depth understanding concerning the difficulties, oppression and complexity of their lives in society today. Black feminist theory informs us of the way in which black women’s historical context plays a significant role in their current access to leadership; this historical context is far different and more complex than that of white women.

Black feminist theory gives voice to black female leaders’ subjective knowledge, experience, and triple oppression in the work force, which is based on their gender, race and class, as well as their political dimension and ideologies. Patricia Hill Collins (1990) informs us that historically, black women, “were forced to serve as economically exploited, politically powerless units of labour” (p.49). Hence, their access to leadership has been hindered; they have been discriminated against and subjugated in comparison to their white counterparts.

This epistemology ruptures the dominant discourse on black women and introduces us to knowledge that helps us understand the history and continuous struggles and challenges of black females in leadership. It also informs us of the ways in which black women have historically held leadership positions in their communities, and that their work has always been devalued. Similarly, the work of black professional women has been continuously undervalued in a society run by white patriarchal rule. Over time negative images of black women have produced
negatives stereotypes (hooks, 1981), which have in turn impacted leadership opportunities. Black feminist theory serves as an alternative perspective to the dominant discourse of knowledge. It has given voice to black female leaders, whereas white feminist research has failed to address black women’s issues directly.

Black feminist thought, although similar, is different from black feminist theory. Black feminist theory is situated within the historical/social and political contexts of African American women (Hill Collins, 1990). It speaks to the lives of black women and the legacy of slavery, and the oppression that originates from their situation. Conversely, black feminist thought situates itself within an African Canadian diasporic setting (Crawford, 2007; Opini & Wane, 2007; Wane, 2007). It clarifies and examines the historical, social, cultural, and economical aspects of African Canadian women, offering us a different understanding of black women’s struggles and challenges in Canadian society.

Most black women leaders in Canada are transnational migrants, and they come from different situations, cultures, and geographical locations. Black feminist thought allows us to view the challenges of black female leaders from a non-dominant perspective, knowing that much of the research on women and leadership has been incomplete or inappropriate for black female leaders because it does not define their experiences in Canada. For example, Opini and Wane (2007) posit that educated black women experience a great deal of difficulty in the workplace, simply because they are still subject to notions of the stereotypical “domestic worker” (p.185). Black feminist thought also carries with it a praxis that could empower and change the lives of black women in Canadian society.

Black feminist thought, like Indigenous knowledge, also draws from spirituality. Dei (2002) contends that spirituality “embraces humility, respect, compassion and gentleness that
strengthen the self and the collective spirit of the learner” (p.4). Black women have used spirituality to inspire and make sense of their lives and experiences within the Canadian state. Spirituality is embedded in the desire to create, examine and transform situations. Spirituality, like Indigenous knowledge involves inclusiveness, and allows black women to unite philosophically with others. For black women, courage and spirituality bring about a kind of transformative action or hope. It helps them envision situations as they ought to be, and causes them to strategize in order to achieve change. Spirituality helps black women take the necessary actions to transform marginalizing circumstances (Dantley, 2005). Dei (2002) informs us that spirituality also assists with shared empowerment, liberation and reclaiming our rightful place in society. Spirituality has been used by colonized individuals to question, identify, and challenge the limited views and ways in which things are done in society (Amadume, 1987; Smith, 1999; Some, 1994; as cited in Wane & Neegan, 2007).

Spiritual education is shunned within the walls of Canadian academia because of “dominant colonial discourses” that are promoted and buttressed throughout the educational system (Greenwood & Levin, 2000, as cited in Shahjahan, 2004). Therefore, it is used to rupture the relationship between the dominant view and non-dominant perspective of acquiring knowledge based on black female leaders. Black women have a long history of activism, which has been informed by their inner strength and spirituality. Over time, black women have embraced spirituality, individually and collectively, for hope, wholeness, healing and in the fight for social justice. Spirituality allows black female leaders to connect to their communities in order to bring about change; Dei (2002) argues that “(t)he individual has responsibilities to the community and it is through spiritual education that the connection between the person and the community is made.” Through spiritual learning the “self/other dichotomy” is destroyed, causing
one not to be self-directed, but reach out to the entire community (p.7). Spirituality as an anti-colonial discourse is the wheel that causes black women leaders to function in the universe. It has also helped them to become transformative agents in the community and among themselves.

Feminism is seen as an empowering and transforming standpoint that aims to bring about changes in the lives of women, and black feminism, which informs this study, sheds light on black women’s struggles in particular. Black feminist thought and spirituality helps us understand the historical characteristics of black women’s (black female leaders’) lives in Canada. But using a feminist approach can also be controversial. It is important to note that even though all women may encounter similar experiences of patriarchy, and for black women, racial discrimination, not all women may identify with the principles of feminism or black feminism, or black feminist thought and spirituality, because women express themselves differently in terms of values, cultures, and religions.

**Anti-Racist Theory**

This study draws on an anti-racist theoretical framework in that it highlights the issues of race and racism, the continuous marginalization, and the differential and asymmetrical treatment of black female leaders, racialized leaders and minority groups in society. Anti-racist theory helps us to understand the situation that confronts black female leaders in society today. Its principles allow us to understand the dynamics of power and fairness between the dominant and minority groups in society (Dei, 1996).

This research uses Dei’s (1996) anti-racist framework, situated within an African Canadian context. Dei’s work clarifies the historical, societal and personal connections of race in society. His work also demonstrates the way in which certain groups of individuals are much more privileged than others in terms of their gender, race and class. Also, it highlights how
concepts of gender, race and class interrelate and constitute various forms of oppression among minority groups in society.

Dei’s anti-racist theory is used herein as a framework to examine black women and leadership in terms of the way in which various forms of oppression and privilege that impact black women have been constructed historically. Dei discusses the way in which marginalization and structured power are connected and have shifted over the years, based on varying situations in society. The discourse informs us of the ways in which black women are more disadvantaged and discriminated against in terms of societal leadership than other groups, and how white women are perceived differently in leadership on the basis of their race, gender and class. Dei examines the way in which gender, race, and class are interconnected and how various forms of oppression are defined along those lines.

Anti-racist theory is also rooted in resistance, empowerment and transformation. Dei contends that it seeks to address the “politics of difference” in that its interest lies in working towards a much more productive end for those who are disadvantaged in society (1996, p.57-58). As such, anti-racist theory serves as an impetus in the fight for social justice and fairness for marginalized individuals based on their rights within Canadian democracy. It is also seen as a possible and necessary vehicle to equip marginalized individuals for economic, social, and political change. It calls for leaders, as well as all members of the community, to work together towards social transformation despite their differences. Anti-racist theory is used in this study to demonstrate how black women can challenge discriminatory practices in society on the basis of their race, gender, and class.

Feminism, black feminist theory, black feminist thought and spirituality, and anti-racist theory converge and diverge within this research. Their convergence incorporates the use of all
frameworks, while their divergence involves the examination of data based on each epistemology separately. The epistemologies converge to encapsulate the issues of resistance, transformation, and empowerment. They bring to light various types of oppression, such as those based on race, gender, class, and sexuality. Together, these epistemologies present an in-depth and well-rounded treatise of the themes of this research. They also set the basis for questions, challenges, and diversity within the research, thus enabling the researcher to carefully analyze the experiences and challenges of white and minoritized women in North American societies. Finally, they bring to the forefront the fact that knowledge is not produced only from the dominant perspective, but that there are many forms of knowing. Voice is extremely significant in the convergence and divergence of black feminism and anti-racist theory. Voice within these epistemologies brings to light the experiences of women and leadership.

There are more convergences than divergences within these four epistemologies; however, there is a separation of knowledge, or divergence between feminism, black feminist theory, black feminist thought and spirituality, and anti-racist theory. Feminism is based on a dominant perspective, while black feminism has moved away from the dominant form of knowledge. Proponents of black feminism have chosen to create their own empowering form of knowledge based on their personal history and experiences. Black feminist thought and spirituality situates itself specifically in a Canadian setting and highlights the importance of spirituality which has been the bedrock of transformation and meaning for black women in Canada. Anti-racist theory has shifted away from a hierarchical form of knowledge and instead seeks to address social injustice and oppression in North American societies. It seeks to engage individuals to work towards positive change within their communities to bring about a more just society.
Chapter Three: Literature Review

This literature review examines the work of various researchers, academics, theorists, and educators, with regard to the themes of women and leadership, and leadership in terms of gender, race, and class. It also highlights gaps in the research in these areas. There are serious limitations to the literature on these themes. For example, several of the current books written on leadership were written from the mainstream perspective, and contain hegemonic and dominant ideologies. Perspectives of sex and gender roles are also written from a dominant perspective. Some of the views involved are patriarchal. Literature which does focus on women and leadership tends to be more relevant to white than black women. And finally, many of the books on educational leadership have been written from a white male perspective.

Not much is written on black female leaders in North America. Johncilla (2006) examined black female leaders in Canada from an Indigenous perspective, while the work of Braithwaite and Ireland (1993) and Sadlier (1994) provided biographical information of African Canadian female leaders in Canada. Most of the studies on black women and leadership in the contexts of gender, race, and class represent an American, rather than Canadian, point of view (Bell & Nkomo, 2001; 2003; Brinson, 2006; Parker, 2005). Although this literature examines the issues of racial and gender-based discrimination experienced by most black women, the research and findings are situated within an American context, and do not necessarily address the problems that confront black women in Canada. The historical context of African American women in the United States is far different from that of African Canadian women. Hence, this research will be examined within a Canadian context.

To thoroughly examine women and leadership and present a critique of leadership within the contexts of gender, race and class, we must learn through the lenses, experiences, and work
of various researchers, academics, theorists, and educators. We must also examine the ways in which women and minorities are perceived in society and the ways and means they utilize to bring about changes to their situation. It is with this in mind that I designed this research project with six areas of concentration: (1) leadership; (2) women and leadership; (3) gender and leadership; (4) black women in the diaspora; (5) education and leadership; and (6) alternative leadership.

Leadership

Leadership is a multifaceted, complex concept. There are several different aspects to leadership, and this is reflected in the broad scope of the available literature. Northhouse (2001) describes many different theoretical frameworks that contextualize the processes of leadership. Northhouse points out that leadership can be studied both qualitatively and quantitatively, in various situations. Hence, the study of leadership is much more complicated and multifaceted than it may at first seem. Northhouse’s work gives an in-depth explanation and function of various approaches to leadership.

Many researchers discuss leadership in terms of power. Burns (1978) examines the dynamics of power in terms of human interactions and the ways in which we engage with each other. Burns brings to light the way in which power is used in leadership through “mutual persuasion, exchange, elevation, and transformation” (p.11). He contends that power and leadership are closely related in that one precedes the other, and that the relationship between the two must be examined in terms of the potential leader’s intentions and restrictions. Burns’ work, however, fails to examine power and leadership in terms of gender, as his work is rooted in the subtle yet pervasive societal perspective in which men are seen as having more power in leadership than women.
Lassey and Saskin (1983) conducted research on authority, power and leadership in groups, organizations and the community. Their study helps us recognize specific behaviours that identify leaders and are essential to understanding and doing leadership work. It also highlights some of the reasons why people seek leadership. Nix (1983) conducted research on community power and decision making, and concluded that only a very small percentage of individuals in the community play an essential role in decision making. Nix contended that a successful community has to find and involve the right community leaders. However, neither Lassey and Saskin (1983) nor Nix (1983) discussed the role of gender in leadership, but rather spoke of specific behaviours essential for leadership which could be applied to either sex.

Daft (2005) also examined leadership in terms of power within organizations, corporations, and in society. However, rather than focusing on the traits of the individual, Daft focused on the processes, practices, types of leadership and the perspectives shared between leaders and followers. His research is situated within a North American perspective and has contributed significantly to the understanding of leadership.

Women and Leadership

Women have played significant roles in leadership throughout history. Sertima (1988) and Sweetman (1984) give biographical accounts of many female leaders who ruled in Africa and Egypt in ancient times. They discuss that ancient Egypt, known to be the first of Africa’s great civilizations, was ruled by some of the most powerful female leaders in history, demonstrating unequivocally that black women have played an influential role in leadership.

Klenke (1996) tells us of the ways in which women have played significant roles in shaping history. Klenke claims that women have led in many different ways, as outstanding individuals. But they have also led as the wives, well-known mistresses, and partners of many
great men. Hence, the saying “behind every great man, we can expect to find a beloved woman” (p.28). Female leaders in history cannot be ignored; their history is indisputable and is of importance just as is men’s.

Heller’s (1982) research introduces us to ways in which women can become leaders but warns that the path to leadership can be extremely difficult for women.

**Gender and Leadership**

The concept of gender and leadership are contested concepts. In North American contexts, men (particularly white men) are more often viewed as leaders than women. Chafetz (1991) posits that gender is structured based on sexual division in society. Men’s works are allocated to the public sphere, while women’s are geared to the private. This structure creates a separation between men and women, thus creating inequality. Men’s power is exercised to create differences and inequalities in society. She further states that most individuals are raised in ways that cause them to be exposed to gender perspectives in a particular way as children. This approach is transferred to adulthood, thus perpetuating gender-biased behaviours.

Collins (1991) points out that even though men and women each have some sort of relationship to society; they are not related in a similar manner, especially in terms of economic production. Since women are more connected to the private sphere, they are seen as a group confined to the “realm of consumption” (p.52), whereas men are connected to the public sphere, to leadership, the production of economically pertinent materials, and the power that comes with that role. Thus, men and women are connected to society in totally different ways.

Blumberg (1991) furthers this perspective with the contention that men do less housework than women. However, he states that the situation changes when the income gap shrinks between the couple; the higher the woman’s income, the more likely the couple’s
domestic work is shared. Additionally, he states that a woman’s income determines her power, because the more money she earns the greater her decision making power (p.17). This is not always the case in reality, though. The power men have at the micro level in society can be used to their advantage, even to avoid domestic and child-rearing work (Chafetz, 1991). Hence, the superior male power restricts women to low-paying jobs. At the same time, women do not have the resources or power to bring about change. In contrast to Chafetz’s opinion, Tamerius (1995) claims that when women hold certain positions of leadership, they bring about changes to the landscape which they occupy. When in political office, they are not just there symbolically, but are actively representing women’s interests. In other words, they are there to make sure that women’s voices are being heard and their needs taken care of, from a female, rather than a male, perspective. Although this may be so, some women may feel that female leaders in public office are there for their own benefit and not for the benefit of others.

According to Duerst-Lahti and Kelly (1995), gender power works in a way to undermine the positions of women who are in public office. For this reason, complete equality in leadership may be more complicated to achieve than is immediately apparent.

Spangler, Gordon, and Pipkin (1978) found that when minority groups are involved in an organization, the more isolated they are from the majority group, the less likely they are to be successful. But the more minorities there are in a group setting, the greater their chances of succeeding. Spangler, Gordon, and Pipkin’s research did not identify race in their research, however; the “minority group” to which they referred was white women. But their conclusion also holds true concerning black women in an organization.

Spangler, Gordon and Pipkin (1978) also addressed the hierarchical structure of the corporation and its inherent disadvantages to women. They talked about the structure of power in
the organization, and explained why women were not preferred as leaders. They acknowledged that it is the hierarchical system of organizations which needs to be transformed, not women’s characteristics. In contrast, Sashkin and Lassey’s (1983) thoughts of leadership were centred on the “great man” approach, which is based on a male model of leadership. This model completely ignores the gender power dynamics that subordinate women. Sashkin and Lassey failed to acknowledge that not only white males have leadership traits.

More recently, Chin (2007) argues that men and women have different leadership characteristics, and one of the key strengths of female leaders is their ability to empower others. They empower others through many different channels, such as: “(a) creating the vision; (b) social advocacy and change; (c) promoting feminist policy and a feminist agenda (e.g., family-oriented work environments, wage gaps between men and women); and (d) changing organizational cultures to create gender-equitable environments” (p.15). They work towards transformation in their community, and for that reason, they should be given the opportunity to help bring about changes for those that are less fortunate.

Rhode and Kellerman (2007) remind us that women may not obtain leadership positions because they may appear too feminine or not feminine enough. Women who behave in a more masculine manner may be perceived as too aggressive, although women who appear more masculine are more likely to become leaders than those who appear too feminine. Furthermore, women’s chances of leadership diminish after having children in comparison to men. Although Rhode and Kellerman examined a number of issues involving women and leadership, they did not specifically examine race, which plays a crucial role in an individual’s chances of attaining leadership. Given today’s diverse workforce, race is an issue just as pertinent, if not more so, than gender.
Heller (1982) discusses the increasing number of female leaders in today’s society and the concurrent rise of negative female images in the media. These unflattering images depict women on the cover of magazines as “cookie makers, manipulators, workaholics and egalitarians” (p.3). Most negative images do not improve the lot of women, but rather help to further perpetrate sex-based stereotypes. Thus, they should be flat out rejected.

White feminist MacKinnon (1997) tells us that men often perceive women as “sex objects” and that they tend to identify themselves as “subjects.” She also suggests that men’s power makes women who they are, and their way of seeing women becomes women’s reality (p.75). Although this may carry some truth, for black women the situation is more complicated, evidenced by the fact that white women have greater mobility moving into top hierarchical positions than black women. Instead, black feminists (Hill Collins 1990; hooks, 1981) suggest that white men have deliberately perpetuated myths about black women based on sexuality, employment, and race in the media and other aspects of society. These myths have caused black women to be tremendously disadvantaged in almost every area of their lives.

Hutchings (2003) claims that modern patriarchy has caused women to be disadvantaged. The subordination of women to men in a number of areas in society is connected to the laws, and the social and political make up, of the community. Additionally, certain groups of women are much more disadvantaged in various forms of employment in the workplace, because of their gender, race and class. Parker (2005) states that feminist visions of change in the organization do not incorporate the voices of women from different races, class and ethnicities, but instead represent a strictly white feminist perspective. In essence, they do not address oppression of and discrimination against black women in leadership. To advance women’s leadership solely on the
basis of the white feminist perspective will not help black women; race, culture, history, and societal prejudices must be considered in addition to gender.

**Black Women in the Diaspora**

Parker (2005) argues that black women carry with them an untapped resource of leadership knowledge. During the time of slavery, many black female leaders fought and resisted slavery. They also helped develop their communities through education, and as spiritual guides. Simultaneously, they supported families, fought racism and provided healthcare to many. Their leadership contribution was extremely effective in the community, and in society at large. Therefore, black women’s leadership should be specifically taken into consideration, because their leadership arises from a history which is different from that of white women.

King (1997) contends that black women have to deal with racism, sexism and classism—the equivalent of “triple jeopardy.” Each of these different forms of discrimination has a “single, direct, and independent” consequence on their status in society (p.222). Despite their situation, black women have managed to fulfill economically productive roles in society.

Dei and Calliste (2000) explore the ways in which gender, race and class defines us in society. They note that individuals socialize and are identified based on gender, race and class. Identities can also be altered, based on particular powers in society that determine limits and make decisions, based on the particular situations of groups or individuals in society. However, it is this particular power that we need to confront to help bring equality into leadership.

In Canada, the term “black women” involves radicalized immigrant women of colour or visible minorities who have come to Canada from the United States as slaves, or as immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean (Dei & Calliste, 2000; Elabor-Idemudia, 2000; Wane, 2007). Even though all black women share a common history because of their race, continental African
women may experience a different type of discrimination from Caribbean Canadian black women in terms of language, culture, cultural attire, and religious differences. Because of their shared history, black women’s experiences and integration have been unlike that of other immigrant women, and they are at greater risk of being disadvantaged in society because of their race.

Opini and Wane (2007) posit that black women of African descent are more likely to be unemployed, even though they may be better educated than other Canadians. Attaining a higher level of education should result in a better paying job, but this is not always the case for black women in Canada. Opini and Wane (2007) discuss the significant impact that racial discrimination has had on the job markets for visible minorities: lower wages, higher rates of unemployment, and a higher concentration of women employed in precarious work. As well, black women experience more difficulties in securing a job than other women. Stereotypes of black women have labelled them inadequate; they are seen as domestic workers, single mothers or unfit for leadership positions. They are discriminated against at the stages of recruitment, selection, screening, and promotion. Racial discrimination within the workforce should be challenged based on the rights of equality and justice granted to all citizens in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom. Moreover, with the changing demographics of this country, and with more black women attaining advanced degrees, there is a need for significant change.

Black women face more than race-based discrimination. Karsten (2006) argues that from 1999 to 2002 the proportion of women of colour in corporate positions only rose from 1.3 to 1.6%. In 2002 there were no black female CEOs of Fortune 500 companies. Oprah Winfrey, CEO of Harpo, was tenth on Fortune’s list of the top fifty black business executives in 2004;
most of the rest were men (p.25). This study demonstrates gender discrimination in that there has been slower progress for black women in leadership than black men.

Bell and Nkomo (2001) posit that all women are confronted with barriers in the workplace, but that black women are confronted with a lot more difficulties than white women. Their study on black and white women’s managerial careers showed that white women advanced much more rapidly than black women. They found that about 45% of white women were in top level managerial positions in comparison to 19% of black women. Bell and Nkomo’s study clearly indicates that there is a significant difference in upward mobility between black professional and white professional women in the workplace. In addition, Karsten (2006) reported that white women made 77% of the average white man’s salary, while black women made only 70%. Bell and Nkomo’s (2001) research on black and white female managers also indicated approximately 25% of white women earned $100,000, in comparison to only 10% of black women.

Patricia Hill Collins (1990) discusses that black women have been discriminated against in all areas of their lives based on their race, gender and class. Collin’s research has been central to understanding black women’s marginalized voices. Patricia Hill Collins notes that race, class, and gender oppression of black women would not persist in our society if it were not for the negative images. These images are major factors in promoting the oppression of black women. Sadly, these images are perpetuated in various ways by wealthy white males and their agents to maintain power. Once presented, these negative images take on a life of their own. They make racism, sexism, and economic deprivation seem normal in everyday life. Even when they are removed, they linger on in the consciousness of the populace, thus maintaining an oppressive interconnecting structure of race, gender, and class.
Collins (1990) claims slavery has caused black women to be seen as “other” in our society, thus providing the grounds for their oppression. The concept of “other” categorizes individuals, people, or things into dichotomous groups such as either/or, white/black, male/female, rich/poor, and the list continues (p.68-69). But these types of dichotomies are ideologies which imply superiority and inferiority, and hierarchical ties which have interwoven themselves into the production systems of societies, thus resulting in oppression based on race, gender, and class. The position of black women in each dichotomy has caused them to become the focal point of subordination. Restricting black women in almost all areas in society, then alleging that they do not have the intellectual capacity to make proper judgements, reduces them to the lesser side of each dichotomy. Refuting black women’s ability to be completely human by treating them as “other” demonstrates the influence dichotomies can have in perpetuating oppression and illustrates the way in which controlling images of black women bring about their objectification. It also demonstrates the ways in which the social systems of gender, race, and class are interconnected.

Race has also played a significant role in the decision of who does and does not belong to the nation state. Goldberg (2002) contends that the racial state, as it exists in North American societies, has its roots in Eurocentric colonial rule. Its citizens are defined based on a split of the self, seen both historically and presently. The nation is socially defined as “myself” versus “others.” According to Goldberg, the state plays an important role in the structure of society and so the state has a responsibility to address the situation that confronts all women, and particularly minority women, as they try to advance into leadership.

Dei and Calliste (2000) demonstrate that the idea of race is embedded in various ways in institutions to maintain certain dominant powers and to produce particular consequences based
on gender, race and class. They point out that through these ideologies, race, gender and class are connected to the availability, or lack thereof, of opportunities for different groups in society.

**Barriers to Leadership for Black Women**

Jenner and Ferguson report in Catalyst (2008) that women make up almost half of Canada’s workforce; they graduate with university degrees more frequently than men, they comprise over one-third of individuals in managerial positions, and they increasingly play leadership roles in a number of organizations. However, the number of leadership positions held by women is still far lower than the representation of women in the general labour force. More women in leadership positions were found in government-run corporations and in privately owned companies than in public companies. Also, women are still outnumbered by men in leadership positions. Catalyst’s work does not address the issue of race, however, and so the results reported may not be applicable to all women.

Patricia Hill Collins (1997) indicates that black female intellectuals are faced with two different types of conflict in society; one which represents “elite white male interests” and one representing “Afrocentric feminist concerns.” As a demographic, they may also resemble black men or white women, but they still retain differences, and have difficulties fitting into either group. This lack of belonging forms an essential part of black women’s consciousness.

As Hite (1996) points out, race can be a factor in determining opportunities for those who are not part of the dominant group. While white women advance into managerial positions, such progress has not been the case for black women. Black women who aspire to managerial or leadership positions are often confronted with difficulties that arise as a result of their difference from the dominant culture in these organizations. Hite notes that the racism that encapsulates perceptions of race and gender undermines credibility, rules, training and processes within the
organization, which puts black women at a disadvantage. Hence, these types of racism undermine black women’s capabilities and act as a concealed barrier to their advancement. Black women have contributed intellectually to the well-being of Canadian and other North American societies as historians, scholars, authors, teachers, and more. Denying them employment silences their voices, intellect and ideas, but listening to them can help bring creativity, new knowledge, and productivity to Canadian society.

The challenges of gender and race are manifold for black women in employment organizations. Karsten (2006) contends that black women have to deal with “squishy floors and revolving doors,” biases that prevent them from attaining top managerial positions (p.37). She also points out that black professional women have to deal with biculturalism; behaving according to one culture at work and a different one at home. Bell and Nkomo (2001) inform us that where white women are concerned about the “glass ceiling,” black women have to deal with both the “glass ceiling” and the “concrete wall.” They describe these concepts as “daily doses of racism, being held to a higher standard, the invisibility vise, exclusion from informal networks, challenges to authority and hollow company commitment to the advancement of minorities” (p.140). Bell and Nkomo point out that the position of black women within the organization is that of an outsider caught between two groups, one with the dominant power, the other with less. Moreover, black women managers have some power in their jobs by virtue of accreditation, but as a group they hold very little power and status in society. However, although black women do encounter great difficulties in the workplace, this does not mean that these difficulties cannot be overcome, because glass ceilings can be shattered, and concrete walls can be broken down, or climbed over.
Brinson (2006) posits that black women must perform their jobs under conditions that are very different from those of their colleagues. They stand out, and as a result they are always under more scrutiny, because symbolically they are an embodiment of their own “kind.” Consequently, they feel more pressured to perform well, particularly if they know their chances in leadership could determine future opportunities for other members of their group. Black women do face cultural barriers, and, those who have penetrated the barriers have to work harder to make sure that their success is noticed. They have to be extremely careful because they see themselves as symbols of their group: their actions, thoughts, and views taken to be those of all the members of their group.

hooks (1981) writes that black women have to deal with both racism and patriarchy as an oppressive force in their lives. Historically, even though black women did the same work as black men, black men still held a higher status in society. When black men became leaders, black women could not. Black women, for quite some time now, have had to struggle with “acceptance” on many fronts in society. Sadlier (1994) informs us of the work black female leaders have contributed to society, but points out that their leadership has not been recognized. Black women have been leaders in their homes, churches, and communities, yet black female leadership is something that has been challenged and questioned. It has also been rejected, gone unrecognized, and has been under-researched and under-represented in society. Consequently, very little is known about black women and leadership in Canada.

There has been a growing interest in leadership in contemporary society. This interest has been sparked by the rapid social changes that are taking place globally. As a result of these changes, society needs a constant turnover of new leaders with new ideas and who can effect change in their respective positions in society. Klenke (1996) notes that true change will require
both male and female leaders. Therefore, men and women should be educated in such a way that they will be able to help society grow and develop for the common good of humanity.

Leadership research indicates that women are evaluated more negatively, and are more likely to be faced with tremendous barriers to leadership than men. But despite the circumstances, both black women and white women have taken up activism to bring about changes to their situation. For this reason, this research also seeks to resist and challenge the dominant discourse on leadership. It aims to promote a new phase in the development of leadership for all women in Canadian society. This research seeks to cause others to question norms, become more socially aware, and take up action to bring about change.

hooks (1984) tells us that our opponents are much more powerful than we are, and they are skilled and knowledgeable and have various ways to defeat us. Therefore, in order to bring about change, hooks informs us that we need to figure out ways of eradicating the hierarchies inherent in society, even though the process will be a slow and tedious one. Kanter (1976) also acknowledged that hierarchy is the root problem holding us back. Hierarchical structures dictate the behaviour of men and women and generate the behaviours that put us at a disadvantage. Kanter argues that sexual discrimination in the workplace should be exposed and the organizational system be restructured as a whole instead of retraining individual men and women. But Kanter fails to discuss how the organization should go about restructuring to incorporate more women into leadership. According to Catalyst (1996), for change to occur, companies must put in place diversity programs which would enable the advancement of minority women. Some of these might include employment and improvement programs designed to recognize and prepare potential minority female leaders. These programs should target and represent a certain number of minority women, at various levels of office. Research on such
programs and their implementation can serve as a starting point for many corporations, organizations and various groups in the community.

**Educational Leadership**

Canadian school systems are experiencing tremendous cutbacks, resulting in tremendous damage to schools (Portelli & Solomon, 2001). However, cutbacks may affect racialized students more than white students. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) tell us that educational leadership involves developing visions, goals, and support for students. However, frequently the vision, goals and support of educational leadership do not take into consideration the perspectives of racialized students.

Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) tell us that every student is capable of learning. Even though this may be the case, if the learning environment is not conducive for that student, he/she will not be able to learn. The Canadian school system is hierarchical (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991), which is not appropriate for all students. Hence, we need to find alternative structures for education.

In addition, educational leaders now have to struggle with difficulties that are connected to leading a diverse population of students (Ryan, 2003). Students from diverse backgrounds experience exclusion and marginalization in various aspects in the school system. Darling-Hammond and Garcia-Lopez (2002) acknowledge that while much has been said concerning this diversity, but very little has been done about it. Hence, there is a need for alternative solutions and structures for education which would consider the needs of diverse students.
Alternative Leadership

There are several alternative forms of leadership that have been put forward as solutions to effect change in the education system in Canada today. These include indigenous knowledge, spiritual leadership, and inclusive leadership approaches. Historically, indigenous knowledge has been used to help transform individuals, communities and societies (Maurial, 1999). Indigenous knowledge is communal and non-hierarchical, which distinguishes it from the dominant form of knowledge in North America. It takes into consideration the needs of all in the community rather than a few privileged groups. Hence, it is recognized as a potential instrument for change in the Canadian school community. Dantley (2005) brings to our attention that spiritual leadership is essential in dealing appropriately with the diversity in schools. Spiritual leadership complements bureaucratic and hierarchical forms of school leadership and is embedded in creativity and transformative behaviours. Ryan (2006) contends that inclusive leadership is the solution to the problem of diversity in schools. Everyone in the school community must have equal opportunities to influence the decision making processes in order to realize a more just and equal society. All of these types of leadership are important and can contribute to the transformation of the Canadian educational system; a transformation which is badly needed to deal with increasing diversity among students.

Conclusion

Leadership is a process involving a relationship between leaders and followers. Leadership concepts are embedded within the dominant discourses of society, which limit opportunities for racialized bodies based on gender, race and class. Traditional leadership theory argues that men are more suitable for leadership than women and this sets the basis for women’s disadvantage in the workplace. Black women, however, are especially disadvantaged, as
evidenced by the fact that very few are in top leadership positions. In fact, black women who aspire to leadership positions are often confronted with difficulties because of their gender, race and class. Also, schools today are experiencing tremendous difficulties arising from increasing diversity among the student body. Educational leadership must come up with alternative solutions to solve these problems.

The literature calls for opposing-hegemonic methods to combat leadership issues in society. These opposing-hegemonic ideas, research, and methodologies can be found in the framework of feminism, black feminist theory, black feminist thought and spirituality and anti-racist theory (Collins, 1990; Dei 1996; Hartmannn, 1984; Wane; 2007). These frameworks seek to address the systematic inequality in society, and can be used as a vehicle for social change. However, there is still a need for continuing research in terms of women and leadership and regarding alternative leadership to assist in the changing demographics of Canada.

**Point of Departure**

The relevance of this study is in the fact that it can be used to empower women and increase leadership among all women in society. Additionally, although there have been numerous studies on gender and leadership, there are relatively few on race and professional opportunities, and an even smaller number on the impact of race, gender, and class on leadership opportunities. The frameworks of feminism, black feminist theory, black feminist thought and spirituality and anti-racist theory are the lens through which this study examines the situations that confront female leaders in the Canadian diaspora, and within which we can make recommendations for change. Although Canadian researcher Johncilla (2006) examined “black women and leadership,” within the context of indigenous knowledge and empowerment, this research examines women and leadership and offers a critique of leadership as it is impacted by
race, gender and class. Thus, this research is a significant contribution to our understanding of women and leadership.

Additionally, this study considers the need for change in leadership styles within the Canadian education system. The face of Canadian educational institutions is changing rapidly; the population of racialized bodies in Canada has been predicted to surpass the dominant group. Thus, acquiring leadership knowledge based on social justice will become essential as educational leaders try to find alternative ways of dealing with situations that affect diverse students. The discussion presented in this study can be used to assist educational leaders to maximize their potential in bringing about alternative solutions to the many problems that confront them.
Chapter Four: Understanding Leadership

Leadership has always been symbolic of the greatness of men. Klenke (1996) claims the word “leadership” goes back as far as “ancient Egypt” (p.6). Our fascination with leadership has been demonstrated in history, stories, symbols and characters. Our daily conversations centre on the lack of it, and the need for more effective leadership in diverse contexts in our societies. Over the last decade there has been a significant increase in interest in leadership. Interest has grown among individuals, youth, groups; church commutates, business organizations, communities, and academics. It has also become the topic of workshops, conferences and debates in university lecture halls. Discussions on leadership also take place across demographics in terms of gender, race, and class.

A common theme that resonates in many of these discussions is “change.” Change in our lives, communities, economies; in fact, in every thread of the fabric of society. Part of the reason for this is that the world we live in is uncertain and constantly changing. The world has become a place of instability, particularly when we consider the events that have taken place since 2001; the rise of terrorism, the global economic crisis, the increasing rate of unemployment, natural and environmental disasters. Change and crisis have become everyday issues that individuals, groups, communities and corporations must deal with. Hence, in today’s society, leaders are extremely important.

Leaders are found in almost every facet of society. For some they may be parents, teachers, politicians, educators, doctors, and so on, but for others a leader is simply an individual who has influenced or changed their lives in some way. Nix (1983) writes that most people who identify themselves as leaders are found in “small groups, organizations and communities”
One of the main functions of a leader is to guide, direct and help us achieve a better future. We hold them in high esteem because we think they have the ability to make our situation better. We rely on them to foresee, envision, be analytical, strategic, flexible, and work with followers to instigate changes that would bring about a competitive edge for the organization, community or wherever they are positioned.

Leaders can see crises as an opportunity for renewal, because if things do not change, they will deteriorate. Therefore, they see circumstances as a prospect for change. The emphasis on changing what is happening in our environment today has caused many to embrace and embark upon change, to transform the community as well as the organization. Consequently, many in society have become fascinated by the idea of leadership, for various reasons. Some are fascinated by it because they associate it with their “calling” and presume they have what it takes to get the job done, while others are attracted to leadership positions because of the association with power, influence, and status, which means success. Overall, many corporations today believe that individuals who possess leadership skills have certain abilities that are beneficial to the growth of their organization. Therefore, leadership is now seen as a valuable and sought-after capability.

Over the years, the concept of leadership has become increasingly complex; leadership in itself is multifaceted. The paradigm of leadership holds different meanings for different people. Daft (2005) informs us that scholars and writers have given more than 350 different definitions to the word leadership. It is one of the most scrutinized and highly misunderstood words on the planet. In general, leadership involves a process between a leader (an individual, whether male or female) and followers. This process involves power, influence, persuasion, relationship, interaction, vision, purpose, change, role modeling, and goal achievement. Northhouse (2001)
notes that the process of leadership means that the trait does not exist in the leader alone, but is an interaction that takes place involving both the leader and followers; leadership is interactive and not just dictated to people.

According to Daft (2005), the concept of leadership entails creating change that involves a “culture of integrity”; the goal of leadership is to ensure that the organization or community develops over a period of time. This is done by encouraging “openness and honesty, positive relationships, and a long-term focus” (p.22). Daft believes that leadership philosophies challenge the status quo. They examine the ways in which certain principles are non-productive, out of date, or morally wrong and in need of replacement, so that people in society can progress successfully. In essence, leadership creates an environment that enables the implementation of difficult and alternative decisions, decisions that for some may seem hurtful.

For change to occur, the process of leadership must include influence. Leadership is an interaction that is shared by both leaders and followers. Daft (2008) posits that influence involves an interactive relationship between the leader and the followers. It is also non-coercive and it functions in many different ways. One way in which leadership operates is that, in organizations, leaders who occupy superior status influence their subordinates. However, subordinates also, in one way or another, influence those who are superior to them. In general, leaders influence followers on how to act, conduct themselves and proceed to reach their desired goal.

People engaged in these interactions are connected because they want to see significant changes within their organization, community or society. The changes that are desired are not determined solely by the leader, but are seen as a shared commonality between the leader and the
followers. Change is often directed towards a common goal that both the leader and the followers share—a shared vision. Therefore, leadership must involve the influence of individuals in order to bring about change.

On their leadership journey, leaders draw on powerful forces from within themselves for direction. In addition, to bring about change they must be open-minded, willing to embrace new ideas, care strongly about others and well able to develop personal relationships. Leaders must also be willing to take on challenges. Daft (2005) contends that “leaders are willing to be nonconformists, to disagree and say no when it serves the larger good...” (p.22). Daft suggests that leaders tend to go outside of traditional norms to get things done, even to the point of taking risks and making mistakes. Overall, leaders set high standards by doing what is right instead of doing what others think they should do.

Self-confidence, honesty, integrity and drive are some of the most essential aspects of successful leadership. According to Daft (2008), a leader with a certain level of self-confidence reinforces a strong self-image in the community, and is respected and highly regarded and thus better able to confront situations successfully. A leader who is honest and has a certain level of integrity is admired, respected and loyal to the cause. These qualities help reinforce a strong relationship of trust between the leader and his followers. Drive is also essential to successful leadership. When an individual is driven, she or he is highly ambitious and has a strong desire to achieve set goals. Thus, self-confidence, honesty, integrity and drive are essential virtues for effective leadership.
Trait Theory

Trait theory lists essential characteristics of a leader. One of the strengths of the trait approach is that it can be used in an intuitive way to identify someone who possesses leadership qualities. Northhouse (2001) states that “leaders are individuals who are ‘out front’ and ‘leading the way’ in our society” (p.21-22). This gives us the perspective that leaders are different and their difference is found in the unique traits they have. The trait approach provides people with a framework by which to judge the competence of their leaders. Additionally, it helps us identify the particular traits that we need to possess if we desire to take on leadership.

Daft (2005) asserts that the traits involved in leadership are one’s “intelligence, honesty, self-confidence, and appearance” (p.46). Traditionally, the study of leadership involves examining historically great men. This approach has raised many questions about the difficulties of leadership processes. Daft writes that the “great men” concept was based on the supposition that some people are born with certain abilities or traits that predispose them to become leaders. It is presumed that those who had achieved a certain degree of individual greatness are the ones who made history, and therefore were holders of these types of traits. Hence, the traditional concept of leadership, popularized through legends of kings, heroes, princes, and warriors, has been the leadership concept promoted within many cultures.

One of the limitations of the great men concept of trait theory is that it focuses primarily on those in the historical record, and thus excludes others who may have constituted leaders. The concept has been used to identify certain individuals as leaders and differentiate them from non-leaders. For example, Lassey and Sashkin (1983) classified men like Winston Churchill, Franklin Roosevelt, and Napoleon Bonaparte as “great men” based on traits of intelligence and physical
appearance, and the ability to perceive fear, fantasies, and objectives in others (p.92), but totally disregarded female leaders who possessed the same traits.

Trait theory is also limited in that it focuses solely on the leader and fails to take circumstances into account. As Northhouse (2001) points out, some people may have traits which cause them to function well in one situation and fail in another. As well, certain individuals may have the traits that make them leaders, but this does not guarantee that they will maintain their leadership over a period of time. Daft (2005) brings to our attention a 1948 literature review by Stogdill of over 100 studies on leadership traits, which revealed a number of traits connected to successful leadership. These traits were “general intelligence, initiative, interpersonal skills, self confidence, drive for responsibility and personal integrity” (p.47). But the qualities that made a leader successful varied according to each one’s specific situation (Daft, 2005). Trait theory does not emphasize the type of leader that is most suitable for a particular situation, or what actions a leader should take when they are confronted with a particular situation.

Another criticism of the trait approach is that it is highly subjective. Northhouse (2001) posits that since the findings on trait theory are so widespread, there is quite a lot of subjectivity regarding the importance of the data. For instance, one author may classify ambition and creativity as quintessential leadership traits, while another might regard power and achievement as such (p.23). Overall, trait study does not offer information as to whether leaders who are highly intellectual, honest and have a lot of integrity are more effective than those who do not possess these traits.
Power

One of the most basic elements of leadership is power. Power is intimately linked to leadership because of its strong connections to influence. Leaders have power to affect beliefs, attitudes and actions, and effect change in society. Doctors, lawyers and teachers are examples of people who have the power to influence others.

Power is dependant on motivation and resources. Where there are resources, there is dependence upon those who control the resources. One of the key components of power is that dependence. As Burns (1978) points out, power is the force of “A over B.” In other words, it is “equal to maximum force which A can induce on B minus the maximum resisting force which B can mobilize in the opposite direction” (p.12). The more a person has to depend on another person, the greater that individual’s power. To understand leadership is to take into consideration the real meaning of power, because leadership embodies power. In leadership, power is a relationship. It entails the meaning and purpose of both the leader and the follower; hence leadership is shared. Burns (1978) contends that power is involved because the leader wants to achieve certain goals. The leader has the motivation, and the potential to introduce change in their environment by utilizing their skills and abilities, which are part of their power base.

Most discussions of leadership examine five different categories of power. They are legitimate power, reward power, coercive power, expertise power and referent power. Daft (2005) tells us legitimate power is authoritative power that is given in a “formal position” in the organization. It is a position that subordinates recognize as legitimate and to which they must conform. Reward power deals with pay increases that are granted to assigned leaders. Sometimes it can be used by leaders to control subordinates’ attitudes. Coercive power refers to the power which a leader uses to hire or fire subordinates. Expert power deals with the unique knowledge,
skills or abilities that the leader brings with him to his leadership position. Subordinates usually follow instructions, based on that superior knowledge. Referent power emanates from the leader’s characteristics that cause followers to identify, respect and admire their leader (p.481).

**Followers**

Burns (1978) writes that the relationship between the leaders and followers lies “in the transformation of wants into needs, social aspirations, collective expectations” (p.61). Leaders and followers are inseparable because of the needs involved, even though those needs may be different.

The leadership process usually begins with a bargaining process based on meeting the needs of both the prospective leader and the followers. Once leadership is established, it is up to the leader to continue the bargaining process in order to hold the followers in place. The leaders and followers are not mutually bound to the same extent, but rather it is an abstract and uneven interconnectedness that unites them in order to reach their goal. Burns (1978) informs us that when the relationship between leaders and followers takes place, “it is not one that binds leader and follower together in a mutual and continuing pursuit of a higher purpose” (p.20). Followers can alter their support from one leader to the next, but leaders need followers to help them achieve their goals. Active leadership involves the wants, needs, objectives, and anticipation of both the leader and the followers. Both are engaged in a way that brings each other to a higher level of inspiration and ethical principles. During this period, leaders visualize and do things based on their understanding of what motivates and is of importance to the followers. Throughout the relationship between active leaders and followers each party recognizes the other’s motives, objectives, aspirations and goals.
Although leaders and followers work together, they function differently. The leader is the one who initiates the relationship and maintains the connections. Burns (1978) states that, “it is the leader who creates the links that allow communication and exchange to take place” (p.20). The leader has the knowledge and skills needed to get the job done. He knows how to motivate or anticipate a response. He is also aware of the power of the followers. Leaders play an essential role in assisting followers in reaching their goals. Followers, however, tend to do what is required of them in terms of supporting and justifying the moral cause. Often, followers act because they feel the need to do something based on the principles of equal rights or human dignity. Ultimately, leaders play the major role in effectively establishing and carrying out the relationship between themselves and the followers. Their ultimate goal is to look into the wants and desires of their followers, as well as to take into consideration their own personal goals and objectives. Thus, they serve as a self-governing force that is geared towards changing situations in their environment.

The Contingency Model

In today’s society, leaders are faced with difficult situations. Since no two individuals think exactly alike, some decide on similar courses of action, while others do not. Leaders have to adjust their leadership abilities in response to the issues with which they are confronted. In any given situation, leaders tend to be chosen based on the possession of traits which are deemed essential and appropriate for the situation. Hence, the word “contingency” embraces the notion that “for a leader to be effective there must be an appropriate fit between the leader’s behaviour and style and the conditions in the situation” (Daft, 2005, p.81). The contingency model thus does not present a set standard for leadership, but a changeable array of leadership qualities based on the circumstances of the moment. According to the contingency model, the factors most
important to appropriate leadership are the situation and the followers. Daft suggests that in specific situations, qualities such as task completion can be quite important. Organizational skills are also important in that they enable the leader to get the job done in a professional and orderly manner. The context and environment allow the leader to know whether he can perform well, or what the outcome will be. Overall, the contingency model helps to differentiate various situations and the followers who make up part of the team. It also looks at the leadership approach that is most suitable for each unique situation.

In path-goal theory, which is another contingency theory, leaders are solely responsible for increasing followers’ desire to achieve personal or organizational objectives. Northhouse (2001) states that this is done by clearing the way to the obtainable incentives or adding to the incentives that reflect followers’ wants and needs. In essence, path-goal theory means that leaders’ work juxtaposes with that of followers to enable them to recognize and gain knowledge of behaviours that bring success.

**Visions**

Vision is an essential part of leadership. Visions are the connections, motivations, aspirations and dreams of both the leader and the followers. They are used to build commitment. Visions are the ultimate goal that people rally around and that inspire them to be successful. They represent the future; they reflect the highest standard of what is being strived for, and what is not yet accomplished. Visions are not only essential, but also powerful. Schneier, Russell, Beatty, and Baird (1994) contend that a vision has to be, “challenging, meaningful, and worthy of pursuit, but it also needs to be credible” (p.282).
To be inspired, people must be hopeful that a vision can be achieved, and so it must be articulated in a clear and compelling way. In 1963, during the civil rights movement in the United States, Martin Luther King Jr., during his most famous speech, uttered these four profoundly affecting words: “I have a dream.” He told his followers of his vision, in which he saw equality between blacks and whites. Daft (2005) writes that a vision can be broad; it not only pertains to the leader, but also to the followers. It inspires them to work together towards a common attainable goal. The ideologies put forward build faith and hope, and cause individuals to take action and commit to a brighter future. A vision arouses and energizes individuals to act. It defines the goal and the road map by which the goal can be accomplished.

Vision requires strong leadership to assist with the problems and disputes that arise in the present and to move the situation towards a better future. Thus, the leader and followers must be in a state of equilibrium of agreement and connectedness in order for a vision to be fulfilled. According to Burns (1978), “each person has within him a set of norms and goals which are a composite of his own idiosyncratic ideals, the expectations of the group in which he is participating at the moment...” (p.291). Hence, a vision must be something that followers want and need, and one that the leader can potentially accomplish. It is based on a reciprocal relationship in which followers offer their support and the leader assists or satisfies their needs. This relationship is founded on a basis of trust, integrity and honesty of both the followers and the leader.

Change and Leadership

In some cases, leaders emerge in times of crisis or emergency. During such times, change is crucial to improve conditions and ensure survival. Daft (2005) notes that it is during such times of need that emergent leaders scrutinize the environment, situations, social and economic
conditions, demographic patterns and other issues. Moreover, they build a sense of unification and increase understanding among people in the organization or community. Their main objective is to bring stability, give a sense of balance, bring about hope and give a deeper meaning to life. Leadership is about helping people, communities and organizations prosper, change and grow.

A great example is Barack Obama, who became president of the United States in 2008 after the country underwent a severe economic crisis. Barack Obama emerged with alternative solutions to the problems that the country was facing and consequently won the election. He presented ideas that would transform policies, practices, traditions, and ideologies. By so doing, as a leader he developed trust with powerful alliances as well as followers who directed the change process. He then developed a vision that provided direction for that change, and a plan to make that vision possible. Being determined to achieve his goal, Obama used every means that he could think of to get his message across. He then empowered members of the community with information, resources, and various ideas to take action based on his vision. These resources equipped communities with a level of awareness that caused them to want to do away with certain ideas, traditions, structures, hindrances, systems, and practices that would hold back the change effort. By employing these ideas, Obama was able to win the presidential election. Leaders who articulate a well-formed vision and communicate with followers in ways that influence and motivate them to act towards their goal do end up with a solid groundwork for success.

Dynamics of Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Leaders make up part of the social milieu. They are linked to various sectors, and, based on their knowledge, create a system that responds to the everyday wants and needs of people in
society. Additionally, they make decisions in response to social pressures. Their influence causes a reaction in followers’ thoughts and actions. Most leaders cannot stand by and watch society deteriorate, and they see themselves as a response to society’s problems. They explain, intervene, instruct and guide. Thus conflict is the driving force for the action of leadership. During a crisis period leaders are caught between the negative and the positive, the old and the new, barriers and reform. Their need for change is embedded in questions based on what Burns (1978) calls, “moral and social conflict, the legitimacy of tradition and custom, the place of man in the universe, the relation of reason and the passions, the inevitability of evil and the natural rights of man” (p.143). In essence, leaders attempt to draw the best out of their followers to change unsuitable situations and to bring justice. This positive social reform is of necessity fashioned from the current situation as an answer to the corruption of human beings and their deceitful and fraudulent institutions.

Change occurs with the help of transformational leadership, which is geared towards transforming and altering individuals’ lives. Northhouse (2001) informs us that transformational leadership involves “values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals.” It is concerned with “assessing followers’ motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings” (p.131). This type of leadership can be used to influence followers, organizations, and even cultures. Its concepts are so profound that it engages individuals and forms a bond that elevates motivation and morals in both the leaders and his followers. Transformational leaders help meet the needs of individuals and assist followers in reaching their potential. They have the ability to change one societal situation to another while attracting different types of followers. At the same time, followers respond in the exact same way, in what is termed reciprocity. Leaders are flexible and can easily adapt to any situation.
Some leaders are bargain seekers and their works are based on a transactional or exchange relationship. Burns (1978) writes that the “bargaining is restricted in scope because the process works only in easily identifiable, calculable, tangible, measurable properties” (p.258). For transactional leaders, transactions may not always be physical, but can also be psychological. When the needs and wants of followers are identified, they find ways to address those needs based on an exchange process, by identifying objectives or doing specific duties. Followers are compensated, in one form or another, while leaders benefit when the job is done. This approach to leadership builds followers’ self-confidence, drive and productivity, and also brings about stability (Daft, 2005). Transactional skills can be extremely important for leadership, particularly in organizations that undergo constant change. In fact, transactional leadership practices are quite prevalent in our workforce today.

**Leadership in the Community and Organization**

Today, organizational change is becoming extremely important as societies respond to rapid global, economical and technological shifts. If an organization does not embrace change, it will eventually shut down. Due to competition in many businesses, organizational change needs to be implemented quickly. These types of situations bring the issue of leadership and management into a whole new light. Different types of changes in an organization require different types of leadership.

Daft (2005) posits that there is not much of a difference between managers and leaders. Most managers have the same capabilities and skills needed to be successful leaders. But they do differ in terms of aspiring towards organizational goals; they go through the process of “planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling organizational resources” (p.16). Both leaders and managers provide vision, guidance and inspiration. They create an environment that
allows individuals to develop, thrive and create an environment that promotes honesty, fairness and accountability.

A charismatic leader is the best suited for managing the organization, because they encourage and motivate individuals to do what they would not otherwise do, even though there may be hindrances and sacrifices involved. Daft (2005) posits that they, “galvanize people to action by infusing leadership with their own passion for the work, thus tapping into followers’ emotions as well as their minds” (p.149). However, if changes have to be made in the organization, successful leadership not only entails charisma, but also skills in building teamwork and establishing support systems to maintain those changes. To make this happen, Schneier, Russell, Beatty and Baird (1994) explain that charismatic leaders have three observable characteristics: envisioning, whereby vision is created; energizing, in which the leader displays a high level of excitement; and enabling, wherein they demonstrate a great deal of personal support and empathy (p.282). However, charismatic leadership can have limitations, such as the fact that, even though they may do everything right, it may still not be enough to transform the organization. Or the vision undertaken may not always be the most appropriate for the organization.

**Community Leadership**

As in corporate organizations, community members may share a particular exchange relationship between youths, adults, groups, and organizations. In their quest for survival they are constantly engaged in the exchange of goods or services. Communities are not without disagreements: when they interact, individuals, groups and organizations usually experience conflict at one point or another. Nix (1983) writes that one of the main purposes of a community is to help curb the conflict and opposition that arise out of the need to trade goods and services
because of “the division of labor in society” and “the scarcity of goods and services” (p.240). Hence, the community is not always a place of harmony, but one that is constantly in need of organizing and organized leadership to manage competition and conflict.

Most leaders in the community obtain their position through their community influence. This form of social power is based on the individual’s persona. Nix writes that the successful persona is based on “appearance, age, family background, reputation, special skills, and communication abilities; his control of or access to scare resources, such as: jobs, land goods, services, power and prestige; and the cumulative influence growing out of all the positions or offices held” (p.241). Community leadership takes into consideration one’s ability to manage the behaviour of individuals, groups and organizations. It may not be confined to only one individual, because in the community there are different types of leaders. They operate on different levels, roles, influences, and directions. Four different types of community leaders are recognized. The first, described by Nix (1983), are legitimizers. They are known as the “gatekeepers, key leaders, influential and institutional leaders” in the community. They hold the most powerful positions in financial businesses and labour institutions as well as industries, churches, governments, and educational facilities (p.242).

Nix (1983) describes the second type of leaders as effectors, which are also known as “second-level leaders.” Effectors are often top government workers, specialized experts, and members of staff of huge privately owned corporations. These individuals are likely to hold positions involving decision-making important to implementing change in the community (p.243). But overall, effectors tend to work based on their expertise on policies within their organization as well as in the community.
Activists are the third type of community-based leaders. Activists may not have power or the practical skills needed to partake in decisions in the community, but they are active in informing people in society and increasing support for certain decisions that have been made. When a decision has to be made, activists also help put public pressure on those who are making the decisions. Sometimes these pressures are effective—many decisions have been reached by public figures because of the demands placed on them by community activists (Nix, 1983).

Nonetheless, legitimizers, effectors and activists do not make up the entire leadership body in the community, nor do they work alone. When a situation in the community needs improving they work long and hard alongside their supporters to bring about that change.

The fourth type of community leadership, and one that is extremely important, is leadership in schools, or instructional leadership. Having good educational leaders enables students to learn about the world in which they live and bring about necessary changes for themselves and the community. Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) discuss that in instructional leadership, power and influence are assigned to “administrative roles (usually the principle)” whereas in transformational leadership authority and power is allocated to whoever is able to commit to particular goals and follow through to realize those goals. Effective instructional leadership involves vision, goals, providing intellectual motivation, support, projecting school values, identifying high performance prospects, developing a prolific school culture and building systems that facilitate decision making. In moral leadership, leaders demonstrate values and morals to which to the community adheres (p.8-11).

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) describe participative leadership as “group,” “shared” and “teacher” types of leadership. It is assumed that in participatory leadership, joint influence will emerge in issues relating to the institution. An effective managerial leader
functions to make the work of others involved much easier. Contingent leadership engages
matching leaders’ behaviours to the needs of individuals’ “expert problem-solving and decision-
making processes” (p.11–17). According to Ryan (2006), inclusive leadership gives everyone the
opportunity to impact decision making policies and practices. Its philosophies are based on the
notion that everyone is “a part of” society and is represented properly. Proponents of
emancipatory leadership also support inclusiveness. They desire to assist individuals to recognize
and analyse the status quo and to support individuals to transform oppressive institutions (Ryan,
2006). However, as Ryan points out, this is a complicated undertaking.

Discussion

The way in which the many leadership models are contextualized reflects the language of
the dominant discourse. Hegemonic and dominant discourses within society limit opportunities
for racialized bodies or leaders who are perceived as different. These types of discourses are
found in particular spaces and are taught in our educational institutions. Hence, we need to reach
out to academia, because it is through education that we become aware and understand the
circumstances around us. In turn, this enables us to bring about changes to our communities and
society. Foucault (1980) notes that dominating powers in society “permeate, characterize and
constitute the social body... these relations of power cannot themselves be established,
consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning
of a discourse” (p.93). Thus, in Canadian society, power and the privilege of being white are at
the centre of the dominant leadership discourse. Dei & Calliste (2000) contend that white
privilege articulates differences in society. It thrives within a structure of “economic, political,
cultural, psychological, emotional and social disadvantages for dominant groups at the expense
of racialized others” (p.28). At the centre of these concepts lies power, which connects with
economic advantages, and thus we need to understand social differences based on race and gender, the organization of power and the way that organization affects individual experience.

Whiteness symbolizes ways in which power and privilege are attained by some and denied to others. Thus, recognizing white privilege and being aware of its connections to the larger powers in society is a step towards recognizing racism and various forms of oppressions. Dei, Karumanchery and Karumanchery-Luik (2004) argue that the privilege associated with whiteness is one that is unseen. It is an “invisibility that in many ways places our oppressor outside the racial sphere, vested with a power and social advantage they themselves need not consider—‘That’s just the way it is’” (p.84). Generally, the social sphere is structured in a way in which skin colour is constructed to benefit some while discriminating against others. For many followers, a white leader with a vision of change is, like “an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides…” (McIntosh, 1992, as cited in Dei, Karumanchery, and Karumanchery-Luik 2004, p.84). Meanwhile, a black leader carries with him “hardship, difficulties and deterrences.” For white leaders, even before their vision for change has materialized, they carry with them power and privilege that are available based on their skin colour. Overall, race plays a significant role in an individual’s chances of leadership. It defines who can be leaders and where and in what positions they can lead. Race in society has been the primary context within which almost all types of social oppression are understood (Dei, 1996, Goldberg, 1993, Omi & Winant 1994). The visions of radicalized individuals and their ability to bring about changes in the community are more closely scrutinized, questioned and are less readily accepted.

Historically, these concepts of intelligence, honesty, self-confidence, and appearance are deeply rooted in social Darwinism. Social Darwinists believe that human races compete for
survival and that those who are more intelligent will outlast those who are less intelligent (Dei, 1996). Over time, these racist ideologies have caused eugenicists to link race with intelligence, resulting in certain groups being seen as having less intelligence than others. Since the white race is known to possess certain physical characteristics, they are presumed to be superior to all other races (Dei, 1996).

Gender, race and class interrelate in society and play a determining role in one’s chances for leadership. The connection of gender, race and class to social and material production has led to various forms of injustice and oppression. Current leadership concepts reinforce a white upper- and middle-class male’s model of leadership, which relegates women to the periphery. Patriarchy not only discriminates against women, but is committed to maintaining a political order that is male-dominated (hooks, 1981). The language used in leadership is one that seeks to control others, maintain the status quo, and attain status (Parker, 2005). Thus, concepts of leadership, vision and change do not speak to the lives of black women in Canada.

Most black women in Canada are transnational immigrants. They bring with them different identities and cultures (Massaquoi, 2007; Wane, 2007). A balanced discussion of leadership must echo the lived realities of black women in Canada. It must take into consideration the “specific materiality of Black women’s lives, while acknowledging uprooting, movement and reconstitution” (Massaquoi, 2007, p.7). Black women have a different view of being black, female and a member of the Canadian state than merely what is presented in stereotypes. hooks (1981) contends that one has to watch television daily for one whole week to understand the way in which black women are viewed. They are perceived as “fallen” women; the whore, the slut, the prostitute (p.52). These types of images are central to their subordination.
Patricia Hill Collins (1990) tells us that these controlling images are connected economically, politically and ideologically to keep black women in a subjugated position.

In leadership, black female bodies are like “bordered criteria of...exclusion” and must deal with “silent rules” (Goldberg, 1993, p.54). The concern here is to help eliminate certain conditions and exclusions that prohibit particular groups from participating equally in society. Anti-racist and black feminist theory, black feminist thought and spirituality seek a non-dominant discussion of leadership. They are focused on dealing with human injustice and various forms of oppression based on gender, race and class. These forms of oppression are linked to the material construction of society. They work interchangeably to maintain the structure of oppression in society. Thus, black feminist theory, black feminist thought and spirituality and anti-racist theory seek to address oppressive situations that create differences. This “politics of difference” incorporates “the material consequences of myriad social identities and subjectivities” (Dei, 1996, p.57). Therefore, anti-racist theory seeks to change stereotype-based understandings of the identities of individuals to identities based on who they are and what they have to offer. Furthermore, the personal experiences of racialized leaders should be taken into account because they create knowledge for change. Dei (1996) discusses that the lives led by individuals, along with their personal experiences, are essential to the well-being of social knowledge. The lived and social experiences of the oppressed can help bring about social change.

Differences in power and privilege result in discrimination, but when diverse groups come together and share in decision making, then equality will be more accessible in society. As more immigrants come to Canada through globalization, we must be able to deal with the situations and challenges that come with cultural integration. We must also find ways in which
people in the community can work together collaboratively for social change. Patricia Hill Collins (1991) informs us that we should not be surprised that black women, in dealing with oppressive systems, will come up with a standpoint that is different from that of the dominant group. Our marginal position in society gives us the ability to criticize hegemonic practices, as well as perspective to see things differently from the dominant group. This in itself can enable us to work together collectively in society to bring about changes. Hence, black women’s struggle against discriminatory practices of gender, race and class is a struggle for human rights, equality, and social justice.

In Canada, where “the diversity of Canadian Black women tells different and similar herstories conjoined from multiple vantage points” (Reece, 2007, p.275), the unique oppressive experience of black women must be understood in terms of gender, race and class, and the way in which these constructs have structured their lives (Reece, 2007; Wane, 2007). Dei (1996) tells us that black women’s social image and position in North American society were formulated to help sustain “hegemony production relations” within the white patriarchal capitalistic system (p.62). Hence, in order for there to be real change, the education system needs to create a positive and balanced learning environment to enable our young people to go out and transform society. The job of instructional leadership is to lead in the process of transformation, in that school leaders must create and sustain conditions which optimize academic and social learning. Black feminist theory, black feminist though and spirituality and anti-racist discourse engages students critically and analytically with a non-hierarchical form of knowledge. It informs our understanding that there are different ways of producing knowledge.
Conclusion

Leadership discourse holds different meanings for different people. But the language of leadership discourse reflects that of the dominant social discourse. Hegemonic and dominant discourses limit opportunities for racialized bodies or leaders who are perceived as different based on their gender, race or class. Whiteness, privilege and power are at the centre of the dominant leadership discourse. Anti-racism and black feminism seek a non-dominant discussion of leadership, to deal with inequality and various forms of oppression based on gender, race and class.

Educational leadership is critical in the transformation of society. It creates expectations and equips students academically and socially to transform the world around them. All students have a right to knowledge, experience and the history that has structured our society. They also have a right to be informed about issues regarding diversity, difference and social justice. Hence, there is a need for change and the implementation of new approaches in educational leadership and the Canadian education system.
Chapter Five: Women and Leadership

Historically, the study of leadership has always been conceptualized upon the lives of “great men,” because men have been more closely associated with political leadership, power, influence and reason. Most of us are familiar with great male leaders from Julius Caesar to John F. Kennedy, but not too many people know of great female leaders, even though history has produced many of them from the Neolithic age to modern day; women such as the Queen of Sheba of Ethiopia, Queen Nefertiti of Egypt, Margret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of England, and Chancellor Angela Merkel, leader of Germany, not to mention the many other women who have made significant leadership contributions in their homes, churches, communities, groups and organizations. There is also a common phrase that acknowledges that, “behind every great man there is a great woman.” Yet many of these women are not talked about. Despite the fact that they may have done outstanding work, it is “great male” leadership that is most often described. Many believe women cannot be successful leaders unless they are measured according to the standard of men. Despite the active involvement of women in leadership throughout history, it has only been recently that women are beginning to advance into visible positions of leadership in society.

As a result of unequal status and the resulting absence of women in positions of power, several forces in society have emerged to support the existence of women in leadership. These include the Women’s Movement, employment equity laws, and a school of thought on human relations in industry, based on feminist values and role theory, and in turn also introduced the “sex role stereotyping” concept (Heller, 1982, p.2). They have all in one form or another contributed to increase the number of women in leadership positions.
However, despite changes in equal employment opportunity legislation, women’s opportunities for leadership are not the same as those of men, although Kellerman and Rhode (2007) write that there has been an increase in the percentage of female leaders in both the formal and informal sectors and that the number is growing, specifically in management and service sector jobs. Women are also found in positions of power in governments, non-profit organizations, and in the religious sector. In fact, women are found in all places of leadership in society. Yet even though the situation has progressed considerably, women are still very much under-represented in top positions and over-represented at the bottom of the employment ladder.

Even though progress is being made, women still have a very long way to go. Jenner and Ferguson, in their discussion in Catalyst (2009), indicate that more women than men graduate from university in Canada. Women make up almost half of the workforce. They are also one third of Canada’s managers, and they play an increasing role in leadership in many of the country’s organizations. However, Jenner and Ferguson revealed that only 16.9% of corporate officers in large corporations in Canada were female. There has been only a 1.8% increase since 2006 and a 2.9% increase since 2002 (p.1). Although this report proves that some form of progress has been made, the slow rate of that progress shows that women continue to experience numerous barriers in positions of leadership.

Women, Families and Leadership

With so many talented women ready to contribute to the success of their organizations and communities, one may question why they are not advancing as quickly as men. One reason is that males and females have different experiences and circumstances in life. Even though many women would like to participate in leadership, they may encounter difficulties based on gender stereotypes. Also, female leaders on average have to make different choices than men
regarding family. Those who have very young children sometimes abandon their positions and those who choose to remain may not have children.

A study by the Center for Work-Life Policy, as reported by Kellerman and Rhode (2007), that surveyed about three thousand American men and women who held graduate degrees, high honours undergraduate degrees or professional degrees, indicated that almost four out of ten women left their jobs or took a job with lower pay and fewer responsibilities in order to take on family responsibilities. This is in comparison to only one in ten men who left their jobs for family reasons. Kellerman and Rhode point out that other reports showed that 20% of women with graduate degrees did not have a job, relative to 5% of men with the same accreditation. One in three women with MBAs were not in full-time jobs, relative to one in twenty men. These findings were consistent with data regarding a number of other Western countries (p.5).

Overall, the majority of women do want families, but they cannot have them without difficulties or some negative impact on their careers. Some women who choose to have full-time professional careers remain childless because of the demands of their careers. Nevertheless, in contemporary society, an increasing number of women are seeking leadership positions compared to their male counterparts.

**Gender Stereotypes in Leadership**

Sex and gender roles are interconnected in every aspect of our society today. The ways in which we view our private and public lives are closely associated to the way in which we view men and women and gender roles in our society. In many industrialized nations, men are more highly valued and, consequently, more dominant than women. King (1995) cites that countries that value men tend to have more men in power. Consequently, fewer women are found in
leadership positions. In countries that have less masculine dominance, more women are found in leadership positions. In other words, sex and gender roles seem to be a significant factor of leadership in society. Where men are more valued, they have more power and it is more difficult for women to attain positions of power. Where men are less valued, conditions are more favourable for both parties.

In most Western societies, men and women are confronted with different obstacles when attempting to attain leadership positions. Since the term “leadership” is often associated with “great man,” this model is entrenched deep within our psyche, and it is very difficult to purge ourselves of it. This creates difficulties for potential female leaders. Kellerman and Rhode (2007) argue that people associate men with having more leadership abilities than women, and they often acknowledge them as leaders more readily than they do their female counterparts.

Kellerman and Rhode continue by stating that women who take on male attributes are seen as “strident and overly aggressive or ambitious,” and consequently they do not gain much respect from their associates (p.7). What may be accepted in a man may not be acceptable in a woman. Conversely, some female leaders may appear too feminine. People may also assume that she is too “soft” or not strong enough to make difficult decisions in a position of great authority. Kellerman and Rhode posit that over 100 studies confirm that women are lower-rated as leaders when they demonstrate authoritative and masculine behaviours. Yet other studies show that women with masculine approaches were more successful as leaders than those who were more feminine. Having children tends to make things even more difficult for female leaders, as mothers are seen as not being capable or not having enough time to take on leadership responsibilities. In essence, society implies that women should not consider leadership if they
have a family: their responsibility is to take care of their children, rather than being societal leaders; they can’t do both.

**Men, Women and Hierarchical Positions in the Organization**

In contemporary society, women tend to be both managers and leaders. Klenke (1996) describes managers as rational, controlled, hard-working, and intelligent. Their work involves structure, whilst leadership involves a process. Klenke cites that a manager’s duties are usually directed towards goals, resources, structure in the organization and taking care of the needs of people, as well as trying to bring about a solution to the problems that confront the organization. Women, then, have greater access to management than leadership positions, because their skills as managers are more recognized and more respected.

The culture of organizations is about power relationships. A hierarchical power network identifies who can be influential and who can hold certain positions within the organization, and it is based on race, gender or sex. Kanter (1976) argues that the hierarchical system in the organization defines mobility, progress, employment opportunities, and opportunities that are in place for the organization to grow and expand. Consequently, it is the hierarchical power networks that structure the way in which men and women are perceived in terms of employment and employment opportunities within the organization, and set a precedent for sex-based differences in the organization. The structure of the hierarchical system helps us understand why men and women are situated in certain gendered positions. It also helps us understand why the differences in the way they are positioned affect their behaviour. Based on Kanter’s research, women are faced with discrimination more than their male counterparts, and are found more often at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder.
Women are often blamed for their own lack of advancement. Many feel that women are not responsible or are not committed strongly enough to their work. They can interrupt their work at any time to start a family, for example. Kanter (1976) posits that these types of behaviours can easily be explained in opportunity structure. Whether male or female, people in “low-mobility or blocked mobility situations tend to limit their aspirations, seek satisfaction in activities outside of work” (p.416). When people are not given opportunities to advance into higher positions of leadership they tend to have very little interest in the organization and they begin to seek satisfaction elsewhere, relative to professionals who work in leadership, who tend to be more involved, interested in their jobs and have a greater desire to work.

Male leaders are strongly preferred over female leaders, even though male versus female leadership styles vary and they each bring different skills, knowledge and expertise to the table. Kanter (1976) notes that a study done by Rousell (1974) on high school teachers had participants rate the heads of their departments with regard to “aggressiveness, suggestibility, and professional knowledge.” Rousell found that men were rated higher in terms of “structure” and women were rated higher when they showed “consideration” (cited in Kanter, 1976, p.422). Overall, these studies suggested that men were considered better leaders than women. Men were more aggressive and had more knowledge and made what were thought to be better suggestions, a state of affairs still prevalent today. Kanter also discusses a number of studies that indicated that neither men nor women wanted to have a female boss. Women were more likely to prefer male bosses than men, and men felt that women were not fit for leadership positions in management, although individuals who had actually worked with a woman as their boss were more comfortable with the idea. Men are taught to feel more superior to women, and most people do not like working for someone they feel does not have much power. Also, some women may
be hesitant to work for other women simply because of age differences and feelings of competition. Women who are older tend to find it difficult to work for women who are younger than them (Powell, 1994). Just by working for a younger woman, an older woman may feel stigmatized in society, where it is known that most bosses are older males.

Some men may have difficulties with female leaders for economical, psychological and sociological reasons. Economic troubles can be difficult for both men and women, but an unemployed man who’s just been fired by his female boss can experience tremendous psychological and sociological problems. Since the man’s traditional societal role is to be the breadwinner, being fired by a woman may leave him feeling very resentful, belittled and embarrassed. Powell (1994) cites that during the time of immense layoffs in the 1980s, men felt that they were in tough competition with other men for the very few available mid-management jobs, and that it would be a devastating situation if women were to be promoted ahead of them.

For some men, having a female boss can bring about significant psychological struggles, because they do not feel comfortable when a woman is in authority. Powell (1994) argues that they see “women’s talent, energy, and combination of competence and sexuality” as intimidating (p.95). In society, some men see themselves as being better than women. This view can be cultural or learned. Boys grow up with the intention of becoming leaders, lawyers, chief executive officers and so on, while girls are trained to be much more restricted in their intentions. Their focus is more towards falling in love, getting married and starting a family, instead of aiming towards leadership. Men feel that women should not have power over them, and as Powell (1994) states, “they feel it is their birthright to hold higher positions than women” (p.96).
However, if women are given the opportunity, they are more likely to exercise their abilities, skills and expertise. Women in leadership are often in a minority relative to men, who are more prevalent and are the majority. Groups that are categorized as a minority become more visible. Kanter (1977) notes that because of this visibility, minorities are more scrutinized, have less privacy, and perform under pressure. They are also seen as tokens of their group, and their performance not only affects them as individuals, but also the advancement of their group. The constant pressure can cause them to perform in an ineffective way. Consequently, the individual’s characteristics are perceived as symbolic of whatever group that individual is associated with. The only behaviour that is acknowledged is the behaviour that has been indicated by the stereotype. However, women can help break down those types of stereotypes if they are willing to challenge their male counterparts.

North American culture does seem to have a higher preference for masculinity in leadership positions. Managers and leaders are the ones who we look to for decisions. Most often, decisions are gendered and the masculine decisions are valued more highly than the feminine. According to Kathlene (1995), appointed men and women exercise power differently. Even though some women may have more power than men and other women who are not in leadership positions, they still do not have as much institutional power as male leaders. Kathlene discusses that when men and women are appointed to committees, men tend to dominate. Their presence signifies “power.” Female leaders are often at a disadvantage and are assigned to “chair lower-status committees.” Depending on the gender of the individuals in authority, individuals may react in ways that “validate or challenge” their authority (p.169).
Gender, Leadership and Representation

Men and women who are in leadership positions experience life differently. Simply put, their experiences are contextualized in terms of femininity and masculinity. Tamerius (1995) argues that men and women differ in “socialization, prejudicial treatment, occupation, socioeconomic status, domestic roles, and criminal victimization” (p.97). Men and women simply cannot live each other’s experience; they can only understand it from the perspective of a gendered lens.

Men and women lead differently. When a woman is in a leadership position, she takes on a very conflicted role. Caught between the dichotomies of being too masculine or too feminine, leading effectively is not always an easy task. Kellerman and Rhode (2007) posit that a meta-analysis done from 1961 to 1987, and again in 1987 through 2000, revealed that leadership styles were gender-stereotypical. Women demonstrated more democratic leadership, while men were more task-oriented and autocratic.

The meta-analysis indicated that female leaders are more transformational than male leaders. They tend to be more supportive, motivated, empathic and more encouraging to subordinates. They also offered much more intellectual encouragement. Meanwhile, male leaders were more transactional. They were more likely to practice “active and passive management-by-exception” (p.138). Overall, women’s leadership styles were much more effective than men’s leadership styles.

Daft (2005) notes that a survey of followers rated female leaders higher than men, based on a number of characteristics that are extremely important for “developing fast, flexible, learning organizations” (p.439). Based on these data, Daft makes the argument that female
leaders are more influential. They also have a greater tendency to inspire and motivate. These women were more caring than their male counterparts and had a greater understanding of the individual’s needs than men, and they also offered more intellectual incentives. These attributes earned admiration, respect, and trust, and also helped them sustain a much higher standard of labour. They were able to maintain a certain level of power based on who they were as individuals rather than by virtue of the position they held. These female leaders worked in the best interest of their followers or subordinates. Their followers’ needs were recognized and satisfied. Additionally, when new needs arise, these female leaders saw to it that their subordinates were treated fairly and with due consideration.

Generally, women tend to be much more interested in developing relationships, creating a positive environment, sharing, and being compassionate than are men. Daft (2005) informs us that when a woman holds an authoritative position she is more willing to “share power and information, to encourage employee development, and to strive to enhance others’ feelings of self-worth” (p.438). As Daft points out, there is evidence that men can become less powerful in a workplace where women hold key positions, because women tend to be more geared towards the needs and beliefs of the changing demographics of society. James Gabarino, author and professor of human development at Cornell University, states that women are better able to bring about what contemporary society wants in terms of dealing with people, such as “paying attention, abiding by rules, being verbally competent, and dealing with interpersonal relationships in offices” (cited in Daft, 2005, p.438). Whereas men see effective leadership from the top down, women see it as being inclusive and based on equity.

Male and female leaders associate differently in a social context as well. Men usually associate with other men, as in the “old boys club,” while women are more likely to associate
with other women. When women are involved in public office, they are more likely to show their support and dedication towards some of the problems with which women in society are confronted. As well, they tend to raise awareness or bring in their knowledge to assist in a particular situation. Tamerius (1995) informs us that female leaders in the legislature tend to support policies for women more so than men. Women’s experiences shape the way in which they see a situation that is geared towards the needs of women. For example, a female legislator who has experienced sexual discrimination in the workplace is more aware that the problem exists, while a male legislator may be cynical (p. 99). Since he has not experienced sexual discrimination, he may not find it to be an important issue, and so will disregard it. Tamerius states that because a female legislator has experienced certain forms of discrimination, she can offer more helpful and valuable insights into the situation. She can also judge and bring about a better solution to the problem than can her male colleagues.

Female leaders are more likely to push for changes in the lives of other women, as well as make women’s issues a priority. Tamerius argues that because female legislators bring with them a different type of experience, they tend to prioritize women’s issues and by so doing, women’s needs in society are given greater priority and much more attention than they might otherwise receive, resulting in possible change (p. 100). Female legislators do feel a greater responsibility in assisting other women. Based on their association and experience they are more knowledgeable about women’s issues than men and, as a result, can bring about tremendous change. Tamerius discusses that in her interview with legislators she found that women were more aware of women’s issues than men; whereas men associate women’s issues with “discrimination and devaluation” — the so-called women’s concerns such as “abortion, child care, and family leave,” — women identified broader concerns, such as the “economy, and health care” (p. 101).
Kennedy (2003) claims that female legislators are quick to sponsor support or pass bills that are related to women’s and children’s issues. Women were also found on committees that have an interest in issues relating to the health and welfare of others. When an increasing number of women are legislators, more priority is given to women’s issues, parental rights, and child care. As well, there is an increase in legislative bills concerning women and women’s issues.

As a result of their caring and nurturing capabilities, women tend to be more motivated to assist others than men. They are more likely to choose professions that are geared towards changing the lives of individuals. Fine (2007) tells us that women’s egalitarian and nurturing abilities make them quite different from men in terms of leadership style. They bring with them excellent communication and collaboration skills and an interest in attending or assisting others. Female leaders usually view their profession as a mission or calling, which they can use as a vehicle to address injustice or discrimination. This can be seen in the careers of female leaders who are school principles, lawyers, doctors, politicians and teachers. Still, different women may bring different styles to leadership, based on their culture and experience.

**Black Women and Leadership**

Women irrespective of race are disadvantaged in leadership. But some women are at a much greater disadvantage than others. In fact, white women have made more gains in leadership than black women. Focusing research on black female leaders causes one to examine carefully the way in which race, gender and leadership is conceptualized. Leadership approaches for black women in the 21st century must be established within the context of globalization, which in itself signifies diversity, social change and development.
Black female leaders carry with them an untapped source of leadership knowledge. African women who arrived in the New World as slaves were already independent individuals. Some of them were descendants of great female leaders. Sweetman (1984) discusses that ancient Egypt is known to be the first of Africa’s great civilizations, and points out that it was ruled by some of the most powerful female leaders in history. Furthermore, several of these women ruled massive empires and built splendid palaces. Others put together far-reaching trade systems, and erected great monuments, such as the third pyramid at Giza. Some were mighty warriors who fought wars against the enemies of the state, while others were advisors and, in one notable case, Secretary of State (Sertima, 1988, p.6-7). Sertima informs us that Continental African female leaders in antiquity were seen as “the stabilizing force in the nation” and that “the imagination of the world, not just of Africa, was haunted by these black women” (p.5-8). Therefore, when black women arrived in the New World during the period of slavery, they had embedded within them the ability to survive, be independent and also to lead. Moreover, even under the exploitative nature of slavery, black women still managed to embrace leadership.

Slavery has been seen as the epitome of the degradation of black women everywhere, even in Canada. The literature on black women in the labour force in the United States during the time of slavery depicts black women in a negative light. Parker (2005) suggests that images of white women in the workforce have been portrayed as the ideal, while black women in the workforce have been devalued. These images perpetuate racist assumptions about ideals of womanhood. They hold up white women as the model for all women, while black women are denigrated as the antithesis of womanly virtue.

Parker goes on to point out that the images of black women that came about during the time of slavery still persist today. Black women are as seen as: (1) Sapphire, a highly sexualized,
dishonest, sly and angry servant; (2) Mammy, the servant who was incompetent, obese, ugly, but ever so hilarious; and (3) Matriarch, whose behaviour was manly, a bossy version of Mammy. These stereotypes have functioned in ways that have caused black women to be controlled, marginalized and exploited over the years.

During the time of slavery in the United States, black women were very active in their communities, and they worked tirelessly to bring about changes to the exploitative conditions under which they lived. They were also determined to develop their communities. Black women worked to help support and develop relationships among families, combat injustice, and empower and move their communities forward. Parker (2005) contends that black women were essential leaders in their communities. They worked “to preserve their community through education, healthcare, spiritual leadership, and support for the slavery resistance movement” (p.41). As Maria Stewart, a black female leader and feminist, argues, “Let every female heart become united, and let us raise a fund ourselves; and at the end of one year and a half, we might be able to lay the corner stone for the building of a High School...” (p.37, as cited by Patricia Hills Collins, 1990, p.4). Stewart saw the incredible leadership potential that black women possess, and, when put to use, that brought about tremendous transformations in the lives of people in the community.

Over the years black female leaders have managed to make their presence felt in churches, organizations, communities, as legislators, and in various other aspects of society. Despite their oppression, Patricia Hill Collins (1990) argues that female leaders such as Anna Julia Cooper, Sojourner Truth, Mary McLeod Behune, Toni Morrison, Barbara Smith, Ida B. Wells and many others, have managed to bring about significant changes in their communities (p.5). But despite their achievements, black women continue to struggle with oppression in
society. A report published by Catalyst (1999) indicated that in comparison to white women, women of colour are under-represented in managerial positions. Even though they have been in the workforce for a long time, they continue to struggle in leadership. Catalyst contends that “for every $1 white managers earn...white women managers earn $.59, and the average for women managers of color is $.57” (p.6). Black women continue to face discrimination and other barriers within corporate organizations. They are also faced with the pressure to perform extremely well, and the knowledge that how they perform could determine future prospects for other women like themselves.

As white women advance into leadership positions, the same advance has become more difficult for black women. Hite (1996) argues that even though race and gender may work to their advantage through affirmative action, affirmative action can also work against the individual, because it can undermine their authority. Black women often face institutional racism, and when they do become managers and leaders they are faced with constant hidden barriers that inhibit their advancement. For example, one of the respondents in Hite’s study remarked, “I have always felt that I had to do much better than my peer white managers” (p.15).

Many black professional women see themselves as tokens in their positions. Hite (2008) found that some women felt that as they advanced in their organization it got lonelier, especially as a minority. One woman remarked, “The support that is needed very often is not there for the minority, and a minority woman, even more so...” (p.16). Black women leaders have to deal with discrimination in the workplace, despite their position of authority, because of their “differentness,” which is highly noticeable. Consequently, they are treated differently; always scrutinized and left on their own. Black women require strength, courage and great skill in order to deal successfully with their situation.
When a black woman is in a leadership position, she is seen as a symbol of other black women. Whatever she does may not be seen as being “individualized” but can be attributed as being typical of all black women. Brinson (2006) states that black women in authority are treated as a representation of their marginalized social group. Their “thoughts, beliefs, and actions are likely to be taken as typical of all in their social group” (p.27). In addition, the intersection of gender, race and class is very different for black and white women. As a result of their race, white women have a greater chance of becoming leaders than black women. Brinson cites that black women are separated in society by social barriers such as the ghettos, stereotypes of single families, wage discrimination, and discrimination against their husbands and children.

Bell and Nkomo (2001) posit that while race plays an important role in the way in which black and white women become managers, gender plays a much more dominant role, since management has always been male-dominated. In terms of their career paths, most women in their study had relatives, friends, parents or someone in their lives who encouraged them to succeed. Mamie Jefferson, a black woman and vice president of a large discount merchandising store, remarked that it was her black teacher who encouraged her to succeed. Her family was relatively poor, with no means of taking care of her. It was her teacher who encouraged her to pursue a career in fashion and designing. Women who were middle- and upper-class often had their fathers as role models.

Bell and Nkomo found that there was a major distinction in the number of years it took black and white women to advance into management positions after getting an MBA. It took white women an average of 2.1 years and black women 3.6 years to advance in management; thus, black women spent on average 1.5 years longer in non-managerial positions than white women. Both groups of women entered the workforce immediately after completion of their
MBAs, and the difference in their rates of advancement clearly demonstrates that white women tend to excel more than black women in leadership. Bell and Nkomo cite that 45% of the white women studied were in upper-level management positions, relative to 19% of the black women studied (p.119). Most of the women of both races had to deal with organizational culture regarding management, however, because of the fact that it is an area that has been largely dominated by white males.

Bell and Nkomo (2001) discuss that Brenda Boyd, a lone black manager in a Fortune 500 company, stated that she had a very difficult time adjusting when she first started her position. She was the only one of her kind and had to adapt to a white male culture (for example, learning baseball and football). Brenda states that her white male colleagues “could not believe I was good for the business” (p.123).

Most black professional women are very much aware of the hierarchy, aggression, and politics of their corporations. They know that they will face difficulty not only in acquiring accreditation but also in upward mobility. For most professional black women, even those holding leadership positions, they just don’t feel accepted into the “old boy’s club.” Even though they may have the power, accreditation and title, they are still looked down upon as being a part of a group in society that does not have power or status.

A report by Catalyst (1996) had female executives indicate their financial compensation, which included salary and bonuses. The report showed that white women earned on average $250,000, in comparison to women of color who earned on average $229,000 (p.11). In the corporate world, most women who desire to climb the corporate ladder encounter tremendous difficulties in doing so. For a very long time it has been part of the culture in the organization to keep women from acquiring top leadership positions. Morrison (1987) states that the glass
ceiling is not only a barrier for an individual who desires to move to the top but has not been given the skills for the position, it applies to all women who desire to excel, have the necessary skills, yet are kept from doing so. As an example, Bell and Nkomo (2001) present the case of Jean Hendrick, who always wanted to be an officer at her corporation. For Jean, advancing up the corporate ladder was not easy. After eight years she became an officer; two years later she became vice president and had a baby. Seven years later she became a group vice president. Shortly thereafter, she was told by the men that she should stop talking about her children and dress less colourfully. She was also told that she was “too dramatic and too emotional” and had to behave in a more masculine manner. She often wondered if she would ever get the opportunity to move to the top (p.140). While all women have to deal with the concrete wall, black women have to deal with both the concrete wall and racism. These barriers can be persistent, pervasive and very difficult to deal with.

Conclusion

Women have been leaders since the dawn of time. Today, women are leaders in workplace organizations, public office, academia, the community and more. This seriously refutes the myth that women are not fit to be leaders. However, despite an increase in female leaders, women are still under-represented in leadership positions in society. In fact, if change were to continue at the current rate, it would take a very long time before women and men would be equally represented in society. And even where a significant number of women occupy management positions, they still do not have much influence or power, and are not as well-respected as men. When women are in leadership positions, they do help to bring about transformation in the lives of other women and in society, through their unique leadership skills and experience. Although all women are disadvantaged in society, white women have made
many more gains in leadership than black women. They have quicker access to leadership, they are paid a lot more, and they experience less discrimination than black women. Thus, there remains much work to be done to bring about equality.
Chapter Six: Discussion

Leadership and Society

Based on the literature analyzed, our concept of leadership remains a controversial and multifaceted one. Philosophies of leadership embrace trait ideologies, conflict, power, authority and values, which occupy locations in society, whether they are community, organizations, institutions or schools. Leadership is about change, which involves interactions between the leader and the followers. It is a relationship between the leader and the followers, wherein transformational change is sought based on a unified goal, which involves a “better future.” However, the way in which leadership is conceptualized reflects the language of the dominant social discourse.

The consequences of the dominant discourse of leadership are found in almost all places in our society. They are taught and also found in our educational institutions, which should function to prepare students to participate in and transform a democratic society. However, with the current ever-increasing diversity of our society, there is a need for new approaches to promote inclusiveness.

Our cultural view of gender is deeply embedded within the societal perception of leadership. Hartmann (1984) emphasized that patriarchal and capitalist notions are responsible for sexist types of structures in society. Patriarchal ideologies result in greater privilege for men than women. The “great man” theory has produced, reproduced, and maintained negative images of femininity and makes men seem more suitable to be leaders than women. These concepts have also reinforced notions of difference, which have in turn caused and maintained a divide between men and women, masculinity and femininity. De Beauvoir’s analysis of Hegel’s Philosophy of
Nature on sexual differences cites that “male sexual and reproductive roles are associated with a principle of activity and individuation and female sexual and reproductive roles with passivity and species identification” (De Beauvoir, 1953, p.52, as cited by Hutchings, 2003, p.66). She contends that this “species alienation” is imposed on women’s lives by the male of the species and that it has become women’s lived reality in which “all women are female mammals” (De Beauvoir, as cited in Hutchings, 2003, p.66) that are ruled as unfit for leadership. De Beauvoir (1949) argues that men see themselves as different from women. Woman is what men dominate. She is called “the sex,” and is seen by men as a “sexual being.” Therefore, “she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute, she is the Other” (p.337–338). This view of woman persists in Canadian society today and keeps women in a position of subjugation, limiting her chances in leadership.

Even though today women’s chances in leadership are better than in De Beauvoir’s time, this is not necessarily the case for black women. Wane (2007) and Patricia Hill Collins (1990) contend that intellectual black women carry resources for change, yet they have been discriminated against in all areas of their lives based on their gender, race and class. Black women’s historical background has limited their access to leadership opportunities. If there is to be meaningful change, our education system needs to incorporate an inclusive learning environment that would equip our young people to go out and transform society. Black feminism and anti-racist discourse offers students a non-hierarchical form of knowledge that informs our differences, informing us of the different ways of generating knowledge. Thus, educational leaders must re-examine “leadership” to bring about change.

The language, text and expressions of leadership construct meanings and ideologies of the discourse. Bhabha (1990) describes ideologies as an “articulation of elements.” Leadership
discourse is rooted in hegemonic, colonialist and dominant ideologies. As Loomba (2001) points out, colonial ideologies have left their mark in many areas of society, including issues of gender, race and class. Colonialism limits opportunities for bodies that are perceived as “different.” Thus, there is a need to rupture the current prevailing colonial perspectives and to look at alternative ways of knowing and understanding leadership. This means we must find new ways of transforming ourselves as ethical and caring social beings.

Gender, Race and Class

Moral leadership allocates values and ethics to the leaders themselves, but black female leaders cannot fit into this position without being under constant scrutiny, because historically and in the media, black women have been portrayed as the “Jezebel, whore, or sexually aggressive” (Hill Collins, 1990, p.77). Most of the language in the discourse does not speak to the lived experiences of black women, who have been discriminated against for centuries based on their gender, race and class. Patricia Hill Collins (1990) argues that black women have been oppressed based on (a) “the exploitation of Black women’s labor” which has been the enslavement of black women and the exploitation of black women in domestic and ghettoized service jobs, (b) the denial of the rights and privileges given to white men, and (c) the negative images of black women that began during slavery (p.6-7).

Over time, these phenomena have resulted in the myth of black female inferiority. They have also been used to deprive black women of material production, power and status. Brand (1999) contends that the myth of black inferiority, along with the myth of white femininity and feminine weakness, has denigrated black women in society. Brand discusses that these historical myths have “been structured by capitalist relations of production from the time of the colonizers and the slave trade to the present” (p.85). Brand posits that during slavery concepts of “white
femininity” and “black femininity” was identified. Black women were seen as lacking the “natural” sophistication of white women, thus causing them to be seen as fit for field work. Consequently, “black femininity” has been seen as “good for hard physical labour and the “benefit” of “natural refinement” would never accrue to them within the moral codes of the day” (p.86). In Canada, most black women were not employed in jobs such as “clerical, secretarial, and sales work” until the late 1960s and 1970s. Today, when white women perform domestic or service-related types of jobs at home, they are seen as having “moral value,” but when done by black women for monetary compensation, these same jobs are not considered valuable (Brand, 1999, p.89-90).

Educational leadership does not take into consideration “differences and ideologies” based on gender, race and class. It defines its own structure, purpose and interest, and therefore we need to interrogate the language of the discourse to show how educational leadership can function to systematically create greater effects of power and knowledge in relation to the lived experiences of racialized bodies based on gender, race and class.

**Leadership and Education**

A crucial area for change in leadership is our educational system. We live in a world where there is constant economic reorganizing, massive capital and population movements, and an increase in global communication and information technology (Dei, 1996, p.18). With an influx of geopolitical diversity, society and the school community are currently being shaped by diversity, change and the effects of globalization. Consequently, instructional leaders must create and maintain inclusive conditions which increase academic and social knowledge for all types of students. Thus, the educational system must consider an alternative form of leadership to bring about this goal. The very definition of successful educational leadership is being challenged.
Educational leaders now have to work to develop the student’s ability to create a world in which they and many others would like to reside.

Traditionally, schools are hierarchical institutions. The knowledge promoted within them carries markings of Western dominant colonial discourses. Arguably, these dominant discourses are reinforced and upheld by the structure of the educational system. School leadership discourse in turn serves the interest of the dominant group. Goldberg (1993) argues that these discourses are laced with authority, power and status. The language of these discourses demonstrates the material relationships and values of society.

Educational leadership reflects how the school system is organized and the way in which power functions within the institution. As Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie (2003) state, educational leadership must be “placed under scrutiny” because it contains certain concepts based on “normalizations” of “production leadership” (p.128). However, the current form of educational leadership is no longer appropriate in our society: the processes of globalization have brought individuals from diverse backgrounds, identities and cultures to North America, and subsequently to the education system. Thus, educational leadership is increasingly comprised of many individuals representing diverse groups, and the structure of “normalization” does not necessarily apply to their lived experiences. Dei (1996) argues that gender, race and class point to social differences, rather than the concept of diversity.

School leadership should be about hope and change. By creating hope in schools, we can provide inclusive opportunities for all students within the institution, especially those that are “disadvantaged by poverty, marginalized by difference and surrounded by violence” (Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003, p.2). This will in turn create opportunities for sustainable
education, employment, intellectual knowledge, change, and creating positive interactions in society. Academics should engage students critically and analytically, with different ways of knowing that seek to transform our workplaces and careers.

All aspects of student learning, academic and positive social interaction, are rooted in productive school leadership. Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) suggest that productive school leadership engages academic discussions and debates regarding the “purposes, nature and content” of a good education. It encourages significant discussion, sponsors research in schools, and makes sure that scholarly work is connected with issues that concern teachers, students, parents and the larger school community. Productive school leaders make sure that teachers and other school employees have the necessary support structure to participate in academic discussion regarding their “pedagogical and assessment practices” (p.20).

Current educational leadership discourses do not hold true to the lived experiences of black female school leaders, because of their identity, culture and historical background. For example, instructional leadership takes into consideration authority and influence based on the expertise of the individual. However, black women’s intellectual abilities and ideology have always been oppressed to keep them in a subordinated position (Hill Collins, 1990). Black women have been excluded from positions such as “scholars, teachers, authors, poets, and critics” (Hill Collin, 1990, p.7). Keeping black women in subordinated positions reinforces the patterned social relations of gender, race and class.

The culture of our education system is changing. The school system across Canada has gone through restructuring in an effort to reorganize education so that our young people can be more competitive in the global economy. Legislative reforms have brought changes in the form
of “budget cuts, adoption of province-wide standardized testing, re-written mandatory curricula with a focus on a profusion of fragmented learning outcomes, the cutback of teacher development support and preparation time, and the vast reduction in structures that enable local participation in school governance” (Simon, 2001, p.11). However, Lingard, Hayes, Mills, and Christie (2003) posit that these types of restructuring efforts should be rearticulated in this era of globalization, because the changing demographics have brought about a more diverse society, including new inequalities and identities. Hence, we need a new form of schooling in which the neo-liberal state should find ways of bringing about equality for all (p.3).

In fact, education is a key feature of politics. It offers the knowledge, social connections, skills and capabilities through which individuals begin to see themselves as “social and political agents” of social justice (Simon, 2001). In other words, education equips individuals for social change. Giroux (1997) expands on this notion when he informs us that the knowledge and skills learned in school prepare students for society. It helps them build a web of connections to enable them to function effectively in a democracy.

The productive school leader must take all this into consideration. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) state that school leadership includes developing school vision, goals, support, offering intellectual motivation, promoting values, developing a prolific school culture, and creating ways to encourage engagement in intellectual debates and school decisions. Lingard, Hayes, Mills and Christie (2003) argue that school leadership is based on the principle that all students are capable of learning and should be given pedagogical and evaluative methods that highlight their capabilities. Such leadership would allow students to be exposed to “intellectual challenges” and would link students to life outside of their classroom. It would support learning and help students to be “actively engaged with difference” (p.20).
Educational leadership seeks to ensure successful growth and outcomes in all students’ academic and social lives to prepare them for society. The problem with educational leadership is that its dominant conceptions of leadership are ensconced in liberal and neo-liberal educational agendas that embody ideas of rigidly defined quality, competencies, excellence, standards, accountability and transparency, and these ideologies do not engage critically with the equity discourse. Giroux (1992) argues that under the guise of the language of leadership and reform, there is a “dangerous attack on some of the most fundamental aspects of democratic public life and the social, moral, and political obligations of responsible, critical citizens” (p.5). Giroux contends that what is being demonstrated in this language is an “elitist view” of schooling that is a commemoration of cultural togetherness. This outlook of educational leadership is contradictory, however; it ignores the notions of community, solidarity, and the public good. Furthermore, students need to have the required “skills and knowledge” to be able to acquire meaningful employment, and to be educated regarding “economic and social justice” (p.5).

Racialized students may find educational leadership exclusionary. Ryan (2006) informs us that not all students benefit from current educational leadership approaches. In a comprehensive analysis on educational change, Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) argue that the school is a hierarchical social order, in that students from wealthy families are more advantaged, well-favoured and perform a lot better in school than students from less affluent families. Dei and Calliste (2000) posit that capitalism and racist schooling interrelate in a liberal state. Goldberg (1993) offers a view in which he contends that in the liberal state racism takes on various forms, representations, and implications. Domination and power lie at the centre of the situation. Marx acknowledges that it is only one form of domination, one that is directly connected to the economy (as cited in Ryan, 2003). Historically, whites have been associated
with opportunities and advantages, while racialized bodies have not. When racialized students enter the educational system, they are viewed as “different,” and seen as “racialized, gendered and classed subjects” (Dei & Calliste, 2000, p.38).

Educational leadership does not meet the expectations of certain racialized bodies. Many racialized students routinely come across situations that they have never encountered before, and the way in which they handle the situation is according to the way they see and understand the situation, which is not necessarily the way that the dominant group does (Ryan, 2003). Leaders in schools with a diverse population routinely have to struggle with situations that arise from differences, often times with very few solutions available to them. They may not understand individuals’ “modes of dress, relationships between men, women and children, interactional styles, values and attitudes.” (Ryan, 2003, p.13). They also may be limited in their understanding of racism.

Students experience exclusion and marginalization in various aspects in the school system. According to Ryan (2003) “exclusion” may be either “obvious or not so obvious” (p.17). For example, in one study, black students found that they were bored with the information they were being exposed to at school. Most thought that the Eurocentric structure of the curriculum was not relevant to them because it did not reflect their own history or culture. The teaching styles were not inclusive and the school lacked student engagement. Additionally, students could not connect the education they received with their everyday experiences in society. Racial issues juxtaposed against a Eurocentric curriculum did not provide intellectual stimulation. Instead, it created a “fatalistic attitude about themselves, their education and their future” (Dei, 1997, p.69). These circumstances resulted in a reduction in the number of minority students pursuing higher education.
As Darling-Hammond and Garcia-Lopez (2002) point out, a lot has been said about diversity, but not much has been done concerning the educational gap between those who are privileged and those who are not: “the so-called normal kids and those who are different” (p.9). Students’ social identities are conceptualized within the contexts of race, gender, and class, and it is within these contexts that student experiences are played out both in schools and in society. Many minority students have an extremely difficult time in the school system and there is a high drop-out rate among minorities (Dei & Marcia-James, 2000, p.172). A report done in Canada showed that in 1996, 53.6% of the aboriginal population above the age of 15 did not complete high school. Furthermore, most students on reserves were one year behind the average grade level by the time they reached grade 13. The quality of education on reserves did not prepare students for post-secondary education, thus resulting in a high drop-out rate (Aboriginal People...2004, p.11-12). Ryan (2003) indicates that some of the problems that aboriginals encounter arise from the fact that their pattern of learning is different from that of the white teachers who teach them, thus causing a conflict in learning (p.27).

Moreover, a number of black students claimed that they were treated differently by teachers, students or administrators based on their race (Dei, 1997). They reported that “teachers and administrators [were] singling out groups of Black students as responsible for disobedient or disruptive behaviours.” Students reported being segregated in the classroom, picked on by teachers, stereotyped, and so on (Dei, 1997, p.86). Hence, educational reform is needed in leadership to engage racialized students, to increase and encourage participation and to help reform the way in which resources are distributed in society. By so doing, this will increase students’ performance, help them to achieve academically, and will bring about positive social results for the school and community.
Educational leaders play a crucial role in transforming the lives of students in the school community. Giroux (1992) remarks that, “educational leadership takes on the issue of responsibility as a social relationship in which difference and otherness become articulated into practices that offer resistance to forms of domination and oppression” (p.6). To bring about transformation, educational leaders consider a number of factors such as individuals, environments, and institutions. School leaders’ history, background, beliefs, work history, role identities, and group affiliations also determine the leader’s way of interpreting and solving situations (Evans, 2007, p.162).

Black and white educational leaders take on leadership differently. According to Evans (2007), an increasing amount of research indicates that race and identity play a significant role in the black educational style of leadership. Black leaders are committed to assisting black students and are opposed to ideologies and any form of hindrances to black student education. They also give fair and reasonable punishment to black students. However, white leaders admitted racism but made race an insignificant issue simply because to do so projected a positive reflection on the school, on themselves, and on the school community. In addition, these school leaders did not perceive race or racism when dealing with situations because of their constricted perspective on the insidious ways in which racism can operate.

Black and minority educational leaders are less likely to be promoted to leadership positions than whites. A study by Powney et al. (2003) of 2,158 teachers in England regarding participation of leadership indicated that 52% of black and minority leaders held positions as classroom teachers, in comparison to lower rates for white women and white males who held leadership positions. Some of the barriers included “marginalization, indirect racist attitudes and post-ghettoization” and the glass ceiling (Powney et al., as cited in Bush & Moloi, 2008, p.105).
Bush and Moloi (2008) argue that blacks are confronted with tremendous difficulties in the preliminary phase of accessing leadership positions. This is because “gatekeepers” limit or discourage potential leaders. Gatekeeping tactics can take the form of inequitable hiring practices, course requirements, credentials and so on which are so restrictive that they hinder and discourage potential minority educational leaders, rendering them “unfit” for leadership. Ultimately, race and the structures of racism must be identified and addressed before real change can occur. School leaders must incorporate diversity, equity and inclusive ideologies into their leadership styles to bring about transformation to the system.

**Alternative Forms of Leadership**

The Western form of leadership has been considered the most productive way of bringing change to education, simply because Western knowledge has been seen as the only valid way of producing knowledge, while the validity of other forms of education is denied. Historically, societies and individuals that did not meet Western criteria were seen as “non-progressed, primitive, underdeveloped.” Individuals who do not adhere to what they presume to be the “truth” were depicted as inferior (Maurial, 1999, p.60). Modernity and colonization have produced differences based on whiteness, by which all other cultures and cultural values have been measured. These ideologies have caused the dominant group to be celebrated and the culture of other groups devalued. Even in our school systems these forms of knowledge have caused “other” groups to be alienated. The knowledge, value, skills, and interests of the “other” are disregarded in favour of those of the majority. Consequently, many bright students are alienated, which causes discouragement and dropouts (Cajete, 1994).

Our colonial way of passing on knowledge must be re-examined before we can bring about transformation in educational leadership. We need to reject the colonial discourse of
leadership that produces false dichotomies between Western and non-Western ways of leadership. This will help us to examine an anti-colonial way of educating. Our conception of ourselves, our world and education will not change unless we examine our identity and ourselves in a historical context.

**Indigenous Leadership.**

For centuries, Indigenous knowledge has been used to help bring about changes to individuals, communities and societies. Maurial points out that this knowledge is local and non-Western; it derives from local indigenous peoples through interactions among their communities, families and culture. It is also “holistic,” which means that it is unified. It is produced and reproduced via interaction in relationships among individuals and it also incorporates a specific view of nature. Indigenous knowledge is agrapha, in that it is not written but passed down from parents to children (Maurial, 1999, p.63). Cajete (1994) argues that indigenous knowledge is about oral history and cultural tradition and considers how a people contextualize themselves in their journey. The purpose of this type of learning is to help bring about “transformative vision” (p.193).

Thus, an indigenous form of leadership could be instrumental in establishing a holistic form of education that would bring about transformation and development in the lives of students, families, school communities and society. Indigenous educational leadership would prepare students for “self actualizing themselves, fulfilling their human potentials, enlivening their creative spirit, and finding their personal meaning, power” (Cajete, 1994, p.1991). This alternative form of leadership will require commitment and hard work from all those involved; students, leaders and the education community. Still, Semali and Kincheloe (1999) acknowledge that indigenous knowledge should be in the university and school curriculum, because instead of
“difference, it promotes unity” (p.38). Indigenous forms of knowledge will introduce teachers and students to diverse ways of learning. It will also answer questions as to the meaning of education and will take into consideration humility, the meaning of development, identity formation, and the power of difference (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999, p.47). Semali and Kincheloe point out that students who are taught in this format understand that the Western way of knowing is not the only way knowledge is acquired. It also enables Westerners to interact more effectively based on “difference.” This form of learning is far more empowering and transformative than the Western way of learning. Exposure to this and other alternate forms of learning will allow Westerners to consider equity, justice, oppression and the way in which we are constructed socially.

**Spiritual Leadership.**

In all societies, to have successful democratic citizens, minority students require leadership that not only emphasizes academic achievement, but also social change. School leaders should work together with students, teachers, parents, and members of the community on issues relating to self-identity, power, and the curriculum. This could help transform the curriculum, engage students critically, and construct knowledge (Dantley, 2005). One way to deal with bureaucratic and hierarchical forms of school leadership, and to reach a diverse set of students, is to incorporate on a more spiritual approach to educational leadership. Dantley informs us that spirituality encourages “creativity, inquiry and transformative conduct.” It helps unite us with one another, helps in the struggle against injustice, and at the same time creates ways to bring about change to demeaning situations. Our spirit is the centre of who we are as individuals (p.654). Our spirit motivates, inspires and gives us meaning and purpose in this life. Spirituality has been the backbone on which the black community and a number of other
minorities have built resistance against colonialism, oppression and inhumane conditions. Icons such as Harriet Tubman, George Washington Carver, W.E.B. DuBois, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. have all brought about changes based on spirituality (Dantley, 2005, p.655).

David Scott, chancellor of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, acknowledges that we need to have a more integrative “knowledge, practice of research, and facilitation of student learning.” He informs us that we do not need to reject sciences, but we should not rely solely on the sciences to create knowledge. A combination of science and spiritualism helps us with the concepts of being whole and staying connected with fellow human beings like ourselves (Chavez, 2003, p.70, cited in Scott & Awbrey, 1993). However, Shanjahan (2004) argues that spirituality is marginalized in schools because of the dominant discourse, which thrives on developing one’s ego; “the worship of the self.” This self is geared towards its own well-being, and it engages the intellect to assist in creating and maintaining a false self-image. It tries to outdo at the cost of others (p.7). Spirituality offers a different perspective or understanding of the world and who we are as humans. Spirituality can be used by educational leaders, as Shanjahan discusses, as a type of epistemology to ask questions about “difference” and to understand the types of theories and methodologies that can be used to bring about change.

Dantley (2005) tells us that spirituality gives us a sense of self and identity that causes us to resist the oppressive and discriminatory behaviours that attack and destroy the psyche of minority students. Moreover, educational leaders can bring together parents, teachers, and students to develop an agenda for change through spiritualism. Dantley further argues that these school leaders can engage in discussions during “teacher’s meetings, through staff developing opportunities, and during parent/teacher meetings.” They can develop ways to dismantle issues such as “racism, elitism, classism” and other forces that cause silence in the educational system.
Spiritual educational leaders can then use these discussions to help improve student academic achievement (p.68). Schools that need transformation must be willing to address social justice in the effort to assist students to contribute towards positive change in their community.

The individual is accountable to the community, and Dei (2002) informs us that spiritual education links the community and the individual. Spiritual education, which thrives on meekness, value, kindness and love, creates a bond between the self and the spirit of the student. The self is comprised of many layers of meaning, namely “emotional, spiritual and cultural,” elements which are not typically addressed in Western academia. Spirituality addresses those needs, and to promote change is to see the self as an opposing entity (p.7). Spiritual education emphasizes the power of the spirit and the individual, for empowerment and change.

**Inclusive Leadership.**

The presence of students from diverse cultures is not necessarily automatically enriching within schools. For many of these students, their cultural practices are not included in the schools, and since they are not part of the dominant culture they may feel like outsiders. Many in the school community don’t understand cultures that differ from the dominant one, or can’t relate to the students from these cultures. This is simply due to ignorance. Often, the student and parents do not speak the language of the dominant group, nor are they or their communities represented in the school curriculum. Consequently, they are shut out from all discussions and policy-making decisions. Therefore, in order for minorities to truly have equal opportunities, minority students need to be included and appreciated like all other students. It is up to school leaders to see this materialize.

There is a growing need for leadership to transform schools and diverse groups. Smyth (1998) notes that educational leaders are expected to build successful schools, to bring about a
productive feel in the school culture, and to nurture the best in the students and members of the school community. Ryan (2006) argues that hierarchical leadership causes powerful and skilled leaders to encourage, have power over, and systematize those that they assist. When an individual is in a leadership position, followers do not share in the decision making processes; they simply abide by the rules that are being imposed. Ryan proposes that leadership should be inclusive, in that everyone should have equal opportunity to influence the decision making process. In fact, a collective is a lot more effective than an individual in decision making. Since leadership is allocated among individuals and interaction consists of “language, theories in action, interpretive schemas, organizational structures and different material resources,” it will not succeed based on the work of a few individuals, but only on a wide range of individuals in various contexts (Ryan, 2006, p.100).

Inclusive leadership takes into consideration all members of the school community: parents, teachers, and students. These individuals can participate in various ways, whether officially or casually, such as through offering opinions about “teaching-oriented matters, curriculum and school-level administrative issues such as budget” (Ryan, 2006, p.102). Today, we live in a world that is hostile to inclusion. Goldberg (1993) informs us that just as the liberal cloth was being woven in society, race and other forms of exclusions became “naturalized in the Euro-centered vision of itself” (p.10). This helps explain why teachers and other members of the school community have been opposed to inclusion based on difference and adhere to mainstream education.

Giroux (1992) argues that in a democracy there are practices of “social justice, equality and freedom.” These practices are articulated in social relations in the classrooms of the educational system and in our everyday lives. Democracy also encourages equal opportunity for
all members of society as well as the institutions with which we are associated. Thus, parents, educators and other members of the school community must work together for transformation and to see that the practices and perspectives of democracy are worth fighting for (p.5). Hence, inclusive leadership is based on social justice, which takes into consideration rights, equal opportunities and fairness. As Ryan (2006) points out, inequality is founded in the rules and regulations of the way in which people in society treat each other. This is why change has to take place within the structure of the educational system. Social justice fosters inclusion and vice versa. Leaders who believe in inclusion also believe that social justice is attainable if individuals are included in a meaningful way in the decision making practices and policy implementation in the institution.

New practices need to be incorporated into the system for inclusion to be effective, which will require effort and commitment. To make this possible, members of the school community must be open to new knowledge, acceptance and difference. All members of the school body must take on the position of teacher and learner. Educational leaders must educate parents regarding the school system, communities and the various opportunities that are available. Parents have to teach educational leaders about themselves and their communities (Ryan, 2006, p.10). In order for inclusive leadership to take effect, educational leaders have to be active. They need to create a plan so that others can buy into it. Members of the school community must work together with individuals who desire equity change.

Conclusion

This work represents a significant contribution to the body of knowledge about leadership in Canadian society. Our understanding of women and leadership is increased by this critique of leadership based on gender, race and class. This work presents a perspective that is non-
hierarchical, and is of importance to the classroom, schools and education in general. It is not in opposition to the dominant form of knowledge in our society, but is made to acknowledge that there are different ways of producing knowledge.

For centuries, cultures and knowledge that were perceived as different have been silenced. Part of the reason for this in Canada is that the educational system is predominantly Eurocentric, which does not address the needs of minority students. The numbers of minority students in Canadian schools are rapidly increasing, and they currently lack representation in the educational system and school curriculum. Therefore, this study is of importance to the educational system, because it illuminates alternate forms of knowledge and learning that promote social justice and human rights.

These alternate forms of learning can enable students to combat alienation and to function successfully in a multicultural society. If students are taught the necessary skills and information not only for employment, but to be knowledgeable in issues of equality, they will leave the education system as adults, able and motivated to improve and broaden democracy and human rights both locally and globally.

There are alternatives to hierarchical leadership in our educational system. Indigenous leadership proposes that a holistic form of education brings transformation and development in the lives of students, families, school communities and society. Educational leaders, through spiritualism, can bring together parents, teachers, and students to develop an agenda for change. Spirituality inspires and transforms lives. It helps us unite with each other, and in the struggle against injustice. It also creates ways to bring about changes to demeaning situations. Since schools are made up of a diverse group of students, proponents of inclusive leadership believe in incorporating the views and ideologies of all members of the school community, parents,
teachers, and students, to influence the decision making processes for change. All of these types of leadership are of importance and can contribute to the transformation of the Canadian educational system, a transformation which is badly needed to deal with increasing diversity among students.
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