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Leadership in Global Business
– Questionnaire Survey Results from IFUW Workshop 2013 –

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Abstract

This paper introduces the JAUW-NZFGW workshop held at the IFUW Triennial Conference 2013 in Istanbul, where we asked the participants to fill in a questionnaire on leadership factors. Results driven from the statistical analysis of collated data indicated that 'logical thinking' is the most important factor of leadership among those respondents who have multiple cultural backgrounds, in contrast to 'decisiveness' for single cultural background. Other important leadership qualities were 'communication' and 'education' both of which we can also include in prospective leadership training programmes.

1. Introduction

In the global world of competition and cooperation, leadership has always been focused upon; and scholars as well as business people explored questions such as: What is leadership? How do organizations cultivate productive people? How do people and organizations learn and change? And as our economies become globalized, companies and organizations are starting to seek for global leadership that is indispensable to survive in the world market. At the same time, more and more women are joining the workforce, and climbing the organizational ladder, and we are beginning to consider whether women's leadership is different from that of men. In this respect, leadership in the present world cannot be discussed without considering diversified backgrounds of societies and cultures.

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This paper is the first step of our study on global leadership, and is largely a report of statistical findings from questionnaire results of the workshop we held in Istanbul in August 2013, at the occasion of the 31st Triennial Conference of the International Federation of University Women (IFUW). Over 400 members gathered from five continents to exchange ideas and enjoy face-to-face communication in Turkey. We considered that it would be an ideal opportunity to gather the voices of women leaders at this international conference.

Under the theme of 'Can we have a sustainable future without women's leadership?' three members of the Japanese Association of University Women (JAUW) together with two members of the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women (NZFGW) held the workshop titled 'Distinctive Traits Women Bring to Leadership in Different Societies'. This workshop was held to exchange ideas and views about leadership, particularly women's leadership, if there is such a criteria, and also whether there are differences of leadership by societies and cultural backgrounds.

After introducing the major aim and outline of the workshop, we will introduce the questionnaire survey, which was distributed to the workshop participants, and from which, data on leadership qualities was collated for statistical analysis. Finally, we conclude our views and indicate points for further investigation.

2. Aim and Outline of the Workshop

Major aim of the workshop was firstly, to introduce several successful cases of women's leadership in Japan and New Zealand by presentations, secondly, to draw common factors of leadership in a multicultural context by using the questionnaire sheet. And thirdly, to develop a list of key characteristics women bring to leadership in different cultures, which can be used to develop leadership programmes, through group discussions.

After a brief introduction of how the workshop will be organized, four speakers presented case studies of women's leadership, from different cultural backgrounds. First, Dorothy Meyer of New Zealand summarized the session she chaired in Mexico City in 2010 where she introduced Ginka Toegel, who spoke of the Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer of Pepsi Cola, Indra Nooyl, commenting on perceptions of women leaders: When women are perceived to violate the gender stereotype, which prescribes communal female values such as being helpful, friendly, caring and gentle, the result is a perception of a lack of authenticity. And Dorothy concluded by describing that women are seen to be nurturing, inclusive, collaborative, and encourage participation, and they like to create an egalitarian environment. She added that women like to emphasize communication, listen, reach out and include, motivate others to look beyond their own interests, and to seek consensus.

The second speaker, Pushpa Wood, handed out a one page study that the participants were asked to read: New Zealand case study of a young Indian female leader – Vanisa Dhiru, who is Chief Executive Officer of Volunteering New Zealand. She identifies networking as being of the greatest benefit to her current roles, and states that understanding and sharing is a priority for leadership. Vanisa's conclusion is: Education is also empowering and critical for leadership, but what we do with it and how we share it with our families, friends and communities is much more important.

The third presentation was by Teruko Hirota, who introduced the case of Mayako Inoue, a feminist counsellor of Kyoto, Japan. She established a counselling office for women victims of domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment. Her unique counselling of feminist counselling aims to empower women by asserting their values through communication and by building concrete relationship with the patient to enhance self-esteem. The final goal of feminist counselling is, in her

words, to change the society. And Teruko identified two types of leadership: task-oriented, which is generally common among men leaders, and relationship-oriented leadership, which can often be taken as a characteristic of women leaders, emphasizing open, fair, responsible and pleasant communal qualities.

The fourth presenter, Kayo Okabe began by describing the interviews of four women entrepreneurs in agribusiness in the north Kyushu area in Japan. Their statements were introduced: The most important thing is mutual confidence among the people involved; Look for a place where women groups can be accepted; I kept my dream for a long time when my family was against the idea of starting my own business; We use vegetables from our neighbours and invite children to teach them about healthy food. Together with the statistical analysis of a questionnaire posted to women entrepreneurs all over Japan, the study[3] clarified that these successful women entrepreneurs value communication with customers and smiling staff, rather than the rate of return and low price. And their business could be identified as social business, placing importance on activating the community and realizing gender equality.

3. Questionnaire Survey and Statistics

After the four presentations, we asked the workshop participants to go through the questionnaire (Appendix a – IFUW 2013 WS Questionnaire on Leadership). In the questionnaire, major factors of leadership are classified into three categories, A) personal characteristics, B) knowledge and skills, and C) practical considerations. Personal characteristics include the following factors, which describe the personality. Knowledge and skills indicate those knowledge and skills required to

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[3] Kayo Okabe and Mayumi Dan (March 2013) "Research, Analysis and Network Development to Sustain Business of Rural Women Entrepreneurs; from North Kyushu to Asia" in Journal of Asian Women's Studies Vol. 21.

http://www.kfaw.or.jp/publication/pdf/JAWS_21_Okabe.pdf

administrate business efficiently. And practical considerations for effective leadership are those measures surrounding the leader as environmental factors, and which are indispensable for the leader to actually utilize personal strengths and skills. Following are the factors in each category.

A) Personal characteristics of a leader

1. decisiveness, 2. patience, 3. logical thinking, 4. creativity, 5. flexibility, 6. toughness,

7. enthusiasm, 8. self-confidence, 9. to be considerate, 10. sense of humour, and

11. other, please specify.

B) Knowledge and skills required in a leader

1. English, 2. computer, 3. mathematical literacy, 4. communication, 5. presentation,

6. basic knowledge of culture, 7. management, 8. information processing,

9. planning and coordination, 10. social ethics, and 11. other, please specify.

C) Practical considerations for effective leadership

1. government measures, 2. quota system, 3. incentive in the workplace,

4. financial background, 5. education, 6. Internet access, 7. support from family,

8. friends' encouragement, 9. advisor, 10. international network, and 11. other, please specify.

The questionnaire sheet was developed through discussions among workshop presenters, and we classified the major leadership factors into three categories as above. Participants were asked to mark five factors of leadership that they considered were important and also to mark the single most important one within the five.

3.1 Data of questionnaire responses

Below are the outcomes of the questionnaire. In addition to the workshop participants, we asked some other conference participants who couldn't come to the workshop, to fill in the questionnaire, which made the total response 54. The respondents were from 23 countries, namely Austria,

Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, England, France, Hong Kong China, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Nigeria, Panama, Scotland, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, USA, and Zambia.

All of the five factors each respondent checked are included in the total, and the figures show the percentage of each factor in the total. The three graphs show the responses for the important factors of leadership in three categories: A) Personal characteristics, B) Knowledge and skills, C) Practical considerations, respectively.
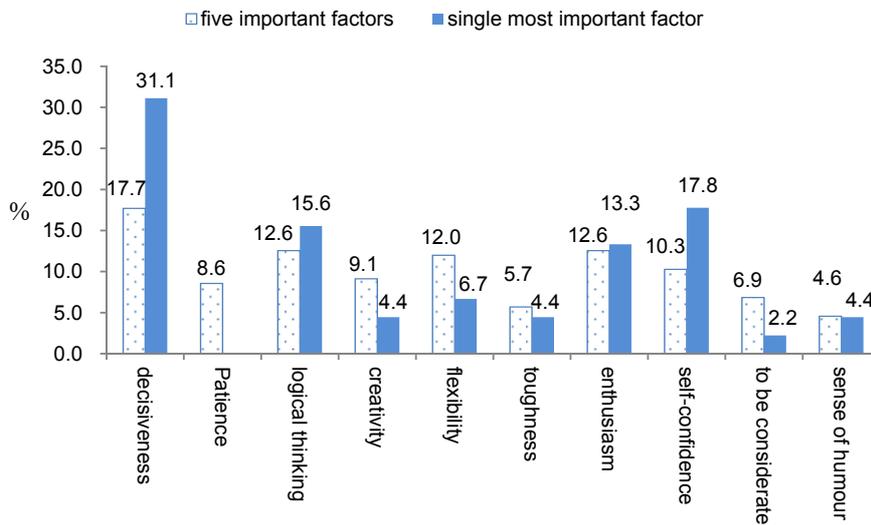

Figure 1. Personal characteristics

Among the leadership factors in the area of personal characteristics, decisiveness ranked top, particularly clearly as the single most important factor. Those responses for 'Other' were: inclusivity, dedication, commitment and hard work, resourcefulness, courage, adjustment ability, negotiation, persuasion, leading by example and initiative, integrity, to be a visionary, to have a vision, and, convincing.

In the area of knowledge and skills, planning and coordination ranked top in the total of five important factors, however, as the single most important factor, communication came first, with more than three times the score of planning and coordination. The responses for 'Other' were: characteristics of group to be led, recognising and deciding goal, governance, legislation, domain, relevant knowledge, basic education, and, research skills.
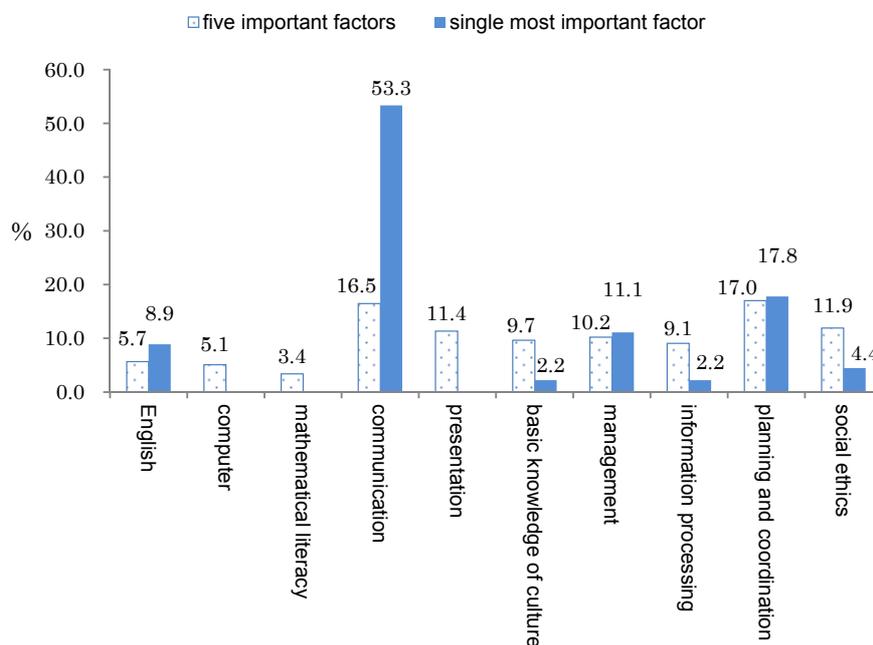

Figure 2. Knowledge and skills

In the area of practical considerations, education came first both under the five important and also under the single most important factor. Figure 3 tells us that nearly half of all the respondents marked education as the single most important factor of leadership. And responses for 'Other' were: effective and efficient communications, adjusting to situations, creating situations, legitimacy – a valid leader, communicative competence (including any foreign language), team work, and, friendliness to reach all kinds of people at all levels of society.
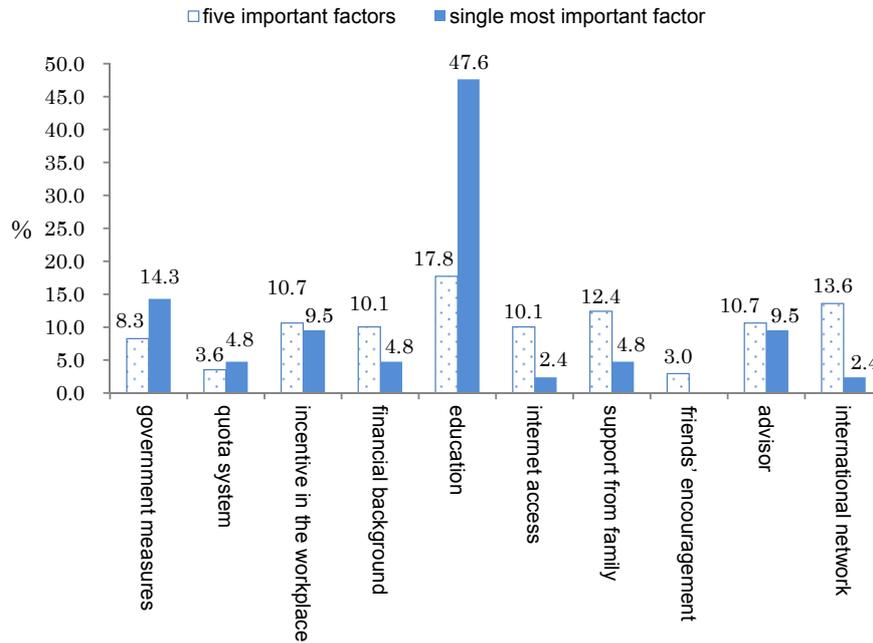
Figure 3. Practical considerations

3.2 Respondents by personal experience

After compiling the data simply to see the overall results of the questionnaire, we looked into some

personal data, which included the following:

Q4 (1) What is your age? Under 29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and over 70.

Q4 (2) Which country have you lived in?

Q4 (3) What is (was) your major occupation? Office worker/bureaucrat, teacher/researcher, student,

housewife, and other.

Using the responses of Q4 (2), we divided the data into two groups by the number of countries the

respondent has lived in. Group 1 consists of respondents who have experience of living only in one

country, and Group 2, living in more than two countries. We had 31 respondents for Group 1, and 22

respondents for Group 2. The purpose of classifying the respondents by the number of countries the

respondent has lived in is to seek if there is a difference in the leadership factors that personal

experience may influence. When one has experience living in multiple countries, she may face

differences in cultures and the way people live and work. In this respect, such personal experience can have some influence on the leadership factor that the respondent choses to be important. We focused our statistical analysis to find out whether these two groups differ or not, and if they do, how different they are. The results may be crucial to our argument of the workshop on leadership in different societies.

3.2.1 Figures from leadership factors of two groups

As for the five important factors of leadership, results for the three categories are shown in the next graphs respectively. Respondents of Group 1: with experience of living in one country are shown in bars with oblique line, and those of Group 2: with experience of living in multiple countries are shown in brick red bars.
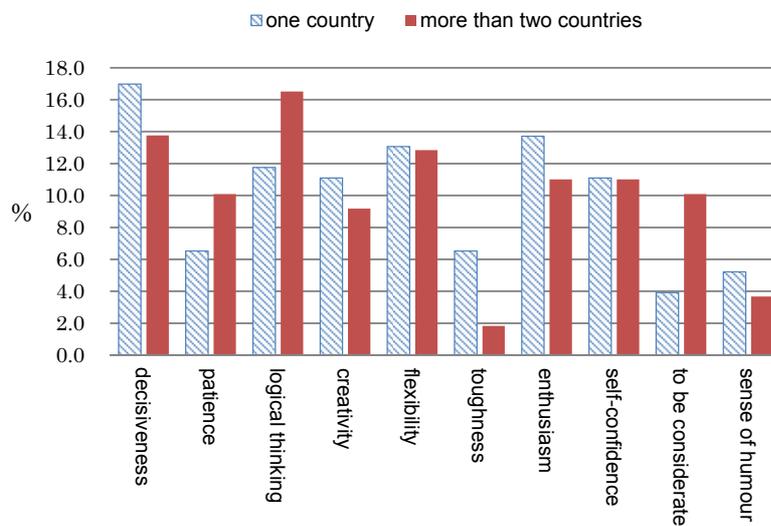

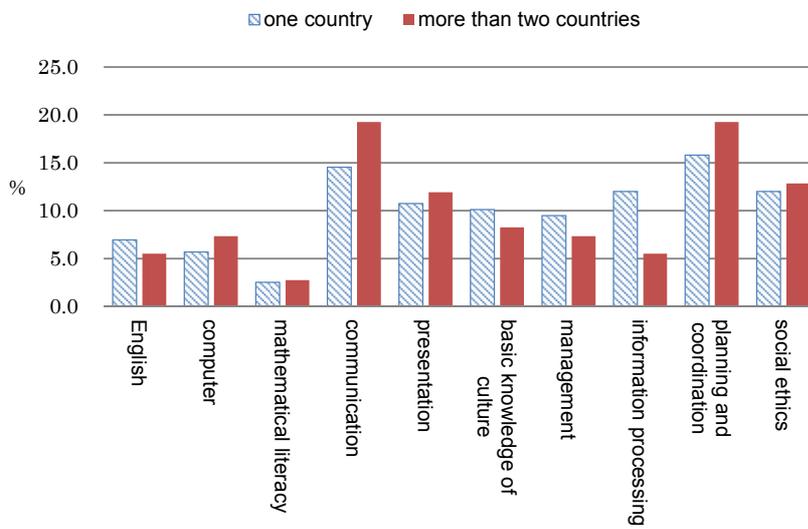Figure 4. Personal characteristics (five important factors)

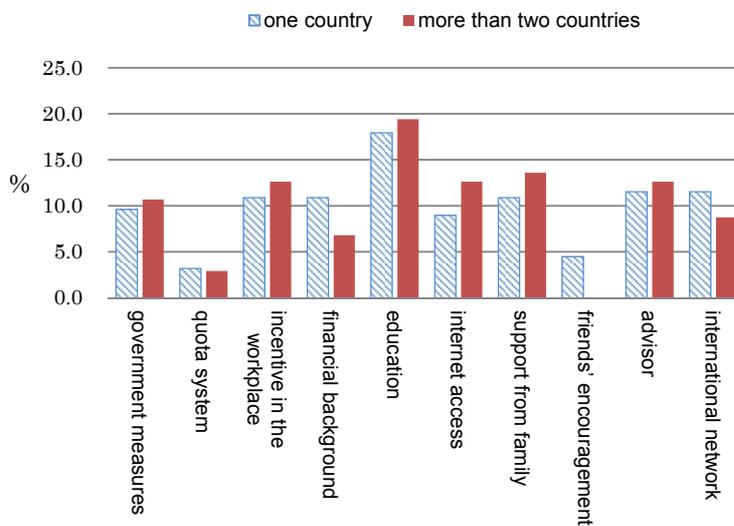Figure 5. Knowledge and skills (five important factors)

Figure 6. Practical considerations (five important factors)

To see the differences between the two groups, we used the chi-square test for independence. The test showed that there is no statistically significant difference (p-value<0.05) between the two groups regarding the choice of five important factors in any of the three categories.

The results for single most important factor for three categories are shown in the next graphs respectively.
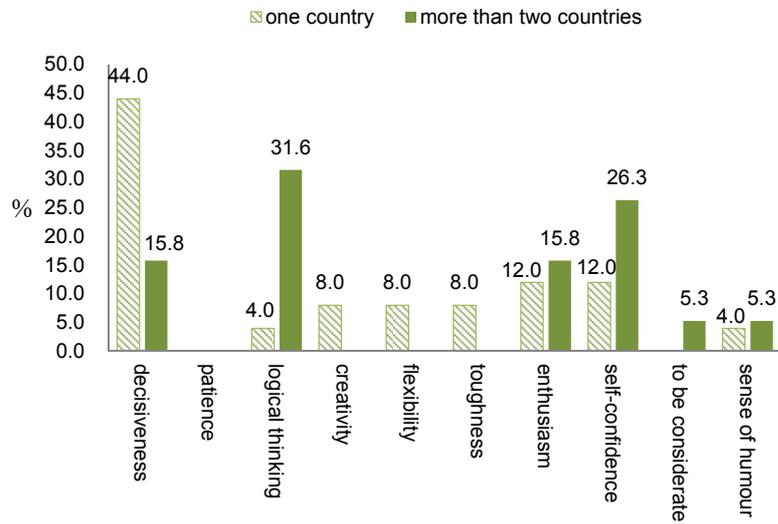

Figure 7. Personal characteristics (single most important factor)
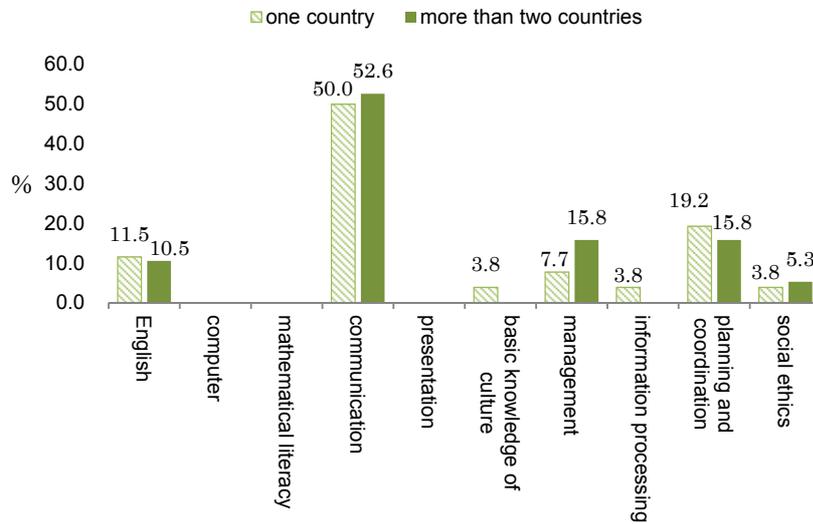

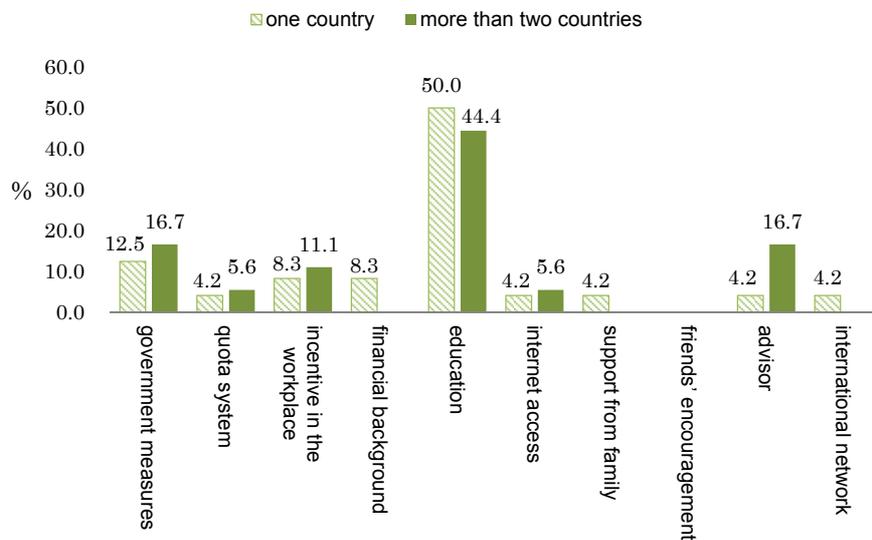Figure 8. Knowledge and skills (single most important factor)

Figure 9. Practical considerations (single most important factor)

From Figure 7, we can observe some differences between the two groups. Respondents who have lived in one country have marked 'decisiveness' to be the single most important factor of leadership, sharing 44.0%. In comparison, respondents who have lived in two or more countries have checked 'logical thinking' and 'self-confidence' to be the single most important factor of leadership, with 31.6% and 26.3% response, which indicate a clear difference from 4.0% and 12.0% response of the single-country experience, respectively. On the other hand, we can confirm that 'communication' is the most important factor in the category of knowledge and skills for both respondents of single-country and multiple-country experience, with 50.0% and 52.6% respectively as in Figure 8. Also in the category of practical considerations, we can see that 'education' ranks top for both single-country and multiple-country experience, with 50.0% and 44.4% respectively, in Figure 9, which are in line with the results of Figure 4 and Figure 6.

In order to see whether the difference between the two groups is the same or different statistically, we applied the chi-square test for independence. The null hypothesis here is: there is no difference between Group 1 and Group 2. From the test, p-values are obtained with respect to the

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three categories: personal characteristics, knowledge and skills, practical considerations, as

shown in Table 1.

Table 1. P-value of three categories

	p-value
Personal characteristics	0.05
Knowledge and skills	0.70
Practical considerations	0.77

Concerning the category of personal characteristics, p-value is 0.05. This p-value indicates that

difference is significant at the level of 5%, which corresponds to our observation in Figure 7. The

level of 5% means that the null hypothesis occurs with probability less than or equal to 5%.

Regarding the other two categories of knowledge and skills, and practical considerations,

differences are statistically not significant. Therefore, the results of the test show us that

respondents of the two groups consider the single most important factor for personal

characteristics differently. However, for knowledge and skills and practical considerations, what

respondents think single most important is quite the same.

Since there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups regarding personal

characteristics, we further investigated to see to what extent these two groups are different. To find

which factor significantly contributes to the difference, the residual analysis was applied to the

cross table of the category: personal characteristics.

Table 2. Cross-section residual analysis for the two groups

	decisiveness	logical thinking	creativity	flexibility	toughness	enthusiasm	self confidence	to be considerate	sense of humour
Expected	31.8%	15.9%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	13.6%	18.2%	2.3%	4.5%
Group 1	44.0%	4.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%	12.0%	12.0%	0.0%	4.0%
Group 2	15.8%	31.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.8%	26.3%	5.3%	5.3%

In Table 2, the blue figures indicate that the ratios were significantly larger than the expected value

under the null hypothesis with 5% level. The red figures indicate that the ratios were significantly

smaller than the expected value with 5% levels. Therefore, from Table 2, we conclude that both 'decisiveness' and 'logical thinking' are the factors that are influential in creating differences of the two groups. Among those who have only lived in a single country (Group 1), 'decisiveness' is significantly larger (at 5% level) than the expected value while 'logical thinking' is significantly smaller (at 5% level) than the expected value. While for those who have experience living in multiple countries (Group 2), 'decisiveness' is significantly smaller (with 5% level) than the expected value, and 'logical thinking' is significantly larger (with 5% level) than the expected value.

These findings suggest that for Group 2, the way of progressing with logical thinking is emphasized in leadership, rather than the act of being decisive. In brief, Group 2 with multiple experiences puts importance on logical thinking in the course of discussing or explaining business, and this was proved by the statistical analysis in comparison with Group 1 of single-country experience.

4. Views and Prospects

By taking advantage of the opportunity to actually collate responses of women leaders who gathered in Istanbul for the triennial conference, we drew some results from our questionnaire survey on leadership factors. One of the most explicit findings from the statistical analysis of questionnaire results is the difference in important leadership factor by personal experience of living in a single country or multiple countries. For those leaders with single-country experience, 'decisiveness' is statistically the most significant factor, and for those with multiple-country experience, 'logical thinking' is statistically the most significant leadership factor. When the leader is conscious of establishing leadership in a domestic context, that is to say, in an environment of a single cultural background, decisiveness is crucial to pull people toward the goal. However, when the leader is familiar with a diversified, multi-cultural environment, having worked with people from

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different backgrounds and cultures, leadership needs to be persuasive, with logical explanation, to involve people to proceed to the goal. However, we need to investigate the background and to look further into the data in order to obtain the reasons for such results.

The findings from the questionnaire survey are limited to women leaders of the world, and we should gather data for men leaders to compare, and see whether there is a difference by gender. In addition, to look into differences of leadership factors by societies and cultures, we would need further research. However, through this survey, we have made it clear by statistical analysis, that there are leadership factors that are common among countries, and also that there is a clear difference of leadership factor, by personal experience of living in a single country or multiple countries.

As the ultimate aim of the workshop was to develop training programmes to strengthen leadership qualities, we can use the above results obtained from the questionnaire survey. It is without doubt that we are in a field of globalization, and although we may belong to a specific cultural background, it is vital for us to strengthen leadership qualities that are emphasized in a diversified cultural context. In this sense, the results of our questionnaire survey direct us to put importance on 'logical thinking' and 'self-confidence' in our prospective leadership training programmes.

Lastly, we would like to express our thanks to all the participants of the workshop, and to our friends who took the time to respond to our questionnaire. We hope this paper may help associations to actually develop training programmes for the empowerment of women.

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Appendix a: IFUW 2013 WS Questionnaire on Leadership JAUW-NZFGW

Appendix a

IFUW 2013 WS Questionnaire on Leadership JAUW-NZFGW

The characteristics that can contribute to leadership are grouped into three:

   A. Personal characteristics   B. Knowledge and skills   C. Practical considerations

Q1. Identify the personal characteristics of a leader. Please mark ◯ for 5 important factors and mark with ＊ what you consider to be the single most important one of the 5.

   1. decisiveness ( )   2. patience (   )   3. logical thinking ( )   4. creativity ( )
   5. flexibility ( )   6. toughness ( )   7. enthusiasm ( )   8. self-confidence ( )
   9. to be considerate ( )   10. sense of humour ( )
   ( ) other, please specify: _____

Q2. Identify the knowledge and skills required in a leader. Please mark ◯ for 5 important factors and mark with ＊ what you consider to be the single most important one of the 5.

   1. English ( )   2. computer ( )   3. mathematical literacy ( )   4. communication ( )
   5. presentation ( )   6. basic knowledge of culture ( )   7. management ( )
   8. information processing ( )   9. planning and coordination ( )   10. social ethics ( )
   ( ) other, please specify: _____

Q3. What are the practical considerations for effective leadership? Please mark ◯ for 5 important factors and mark with ＊ what you consider to be the single most important one of the 5.

   1. government measures ( )   2. quota system ( )   3. incentive in the workplace ( )
   4. financial background ( )   5. education ( )   6. Internet access ( )
   7.support from family ( )   8. friends' encouragement ( )   9. advisor ( )
   10. international network ( )
   ( ) other, please specify: _____

Q4. About yourself
  (1) What is your age? Please check.
      ☐ Under 29   ☐ 30-39   ☐ 40-49   ☐ 50-59   ☐ 60-69   ☐ over 70

  (2) Which country have you lived in? _____

  (3) What is (was) your major occupation?
     ☐office worker/bureaucrat ☐ teacher/ researcher ☐ student ☐ housewife ☐ other

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Thank you very much!
Please hand this form in for data collation.

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