6. Strategies for overcoming barriers in women's careers: agency as autonomy and authority-building courage

Mona Haug and Gry Osnes

1. INTRODUCTION

'You know, I was quiet and ignored what happened. I do not care what they said and did but they know it has made me angry.' (US-based female owner and top leader, 35 years old, with two children under three)

Let us consider the context of the statement above, taken from a coaching session in early May 2021. Paula alternated between working online from Miami, where her husband had his business, and from New York, where the business she ran with her father was located. Over several years a coaching process had helped to develop a board, creating a more formal top leadership team and planning exit roles for the senior generation of leaders, including Paula's father. This organisational development process did not accelerate during the pandemic in this business. While Paula was running the business and preparing to take over her father's role as CEO, her male colleagues, in an important Zoom meeting during the pandemic, focused mainly on her role as a parent and her presumed need to be with her children. Her substantial achievements as a leader were ignored in review meetings.

We will explore how women engage strategically with challenges when they encounter barriers in their working environments. We build on a description of power games, reported by the women in this study, and their association with women's experience of gender bias, incongruity, tokenism and being overlooked for promotion, ignored and excluded from networks (e.g., Fletcher 2004; Lines 2007; Sümer 2006; Turner and Hawkins 2016). According to Huse and Solberg (2006), women who are aware of the perception of strong (male) leadership characteristics and their own female traits can change the power game. The main findings reveal the ways in which women, in two different organisational contexts, developed authority and used their power to overcome obstacles and exploit catalysts. Although embedded gender images constitute

obstacles, women can use certain catalysts to overcome them (Haug 2016, 2020). Building on this assumption and the success stories described below, we analyse the strategies that women use to advance. Based on the concepts of authority, autonomy, affordable loss, leadership and logics (Osnes 2011, 2020; Osnes et al. 2016), we analyse how individuals can break up power dynamics, decode them and create some agency when the power dynamics that create barriers are closely intertwined (Higgins and Kram 2001; Kram 1983).

Female owners and/or leaders often face questions about whether they are entitled to their roles and leadership, or, more specifically, to the power and authority their roles give them. Women encounter these issues when dealing with colleagues and top leaders of any gender during reviews, evaluations, career paths and the execution of a strategy or ownership vision. According to Vial et al. (2016), issues related to power and legitimacy can represent significant obstacles for women in top positions. A mentoring, supportive dialogue or coaching process can play an important role. Ye et al. (2016) are particularly interested in the relationship between gender, societal culture and managerial coaching: 'globally, female managers may overcome the gender disadvantage by displaying more coaching behaviour towards their subordinates' (p.1792). For women, managerial coaching behaviour, which favours communal traits such as nurturing and listening, appears to correlate well with societal and cultural expectations of their leadership and gender roles.

1.1   Ownership and Leadership Careers in Non-family Businesses

Autonomy and paradoxes within family ownership are associated with emotional ties and the obligation to consider the needs of individual family members during negotiations (Osnes et al. 2017). A sense of autonomy can enable family members to assert themselves while taking up and developing authority, giving them the courage and ability to take risks. We will explore how women owners and women working in non-family businesses rely on support (sometimes provided through coaching and/or mentoring) to overcome obstacles, while also using catalysts to provide leverage. As several authors have pointed out, in certain family-owned firms, women are developing and gaining access to very strong ownership and leadership roles. The advances made by some family-owned and regional companies are more profound than those made by most listed companies. By exploring the emotional ties within families, we can promote a dynamic in which women are given strong or key roles, even in formerly traditional systems, with strongly patriarchal ownership. The family bond enables the review and acknowledgement of embedded gender images and the unconscious biases embedded within them, and a new process of configuring authority.

We illustrate the relevance of this exploration by returning to the coaching client. In doing so, we emphasize the need for a more forensic, in-depth understanding of dynamics and dialogues to help us understand how they are intertwined (Higgins and Kram 2001; Kram 1983) and embedded (Haug 2016, 2020). Paula did not care for the way male leaders treated her in May 2021, when she returned from working digitally. Successful succession and entry into a role are, in themselves, not enough. Like all other employees, she returned to the office in May, when the lockdown regulations were eased. The pandemic had delayed the formal transfer of the company's top leadership role from her father to herself. In effect, she was about to become the top decision maker, a move that has traditionally been made in a favourable transaction atmosphere (Boyd et al. 2015) between two owners. In Paula's case, the transfer involved a delicate dance with a group of male leaders within the business (Osnes 2020). Alongside issues related to successful succession, other gender-based issues also persisted. Strategically, over the previous three years, Paula had, with the support of her father, recruited more women into top leadership roles and as non-executive members of the recently established board. Despite and before this, perhaps accentuated by the pandemic and her parenting and family considerations, the habits, rituals and symbolic actions of her father and other leaders had generally reflected the issue that we will explore here: that of embedded gender images.

2.   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

We will now present the notion of embedded gender images, briefly summarising the ways in which research has revealed advances in women's leadership and relevant topics within the field of family entrepreneurship.

2.1   Embedded Gender

The umbrella term 'embedded gender images' (Haug 2016, 2020) encompasses several concepts and metaphors within a historical, societal and cultural context. One example of embedded gender images is the Howard/Heidi case study (Bohnet 2016; Muir 2012), in which students were invited to evaluate résumés. One group considered a 'man's' résumé, while a peer group evaluated a 'woman's' résumé. The résumé belonging to 'Howard' was evaluated as impressive; the first group felt that Howard was a leader they would like to work for. The second group evaluated 'Heidi' as equally effective, but also rather selfish – someone they would be less eager to work for. In fact, both groups were given the same résumé; the only difference was a slight name change – the non-existent 'Howard' evaluated by the first group simply became 'Heidi' for the second group. This study was repeated by Bohnet

(2016) with the same result. In this way, embedded gender images represent systematic disadvantages for women.

Embedded gender images derive from our perceptions and evaluations of people, our conscious or unconscious bias (Fan et al. 2019), and implicit bias, which is firmly anchored in our minds (Tetlock and Mitchell 2009). They may be regarded as a cultural imprint, since we are unconsciously shaped by our culture and socialisation (Hummelsheim and Hirschle 2010). Within the male-breadwinner model, gender roles and tasks are clearly outlined: men are employed full-time, while female carers are responsible for running the household and raising children (Cooke 2006).

2.2   Women in Top Leadership Roles

Embedded gender images are perceived characteristics, competences and associations (such as being 'emotional' or 'decisive') which we unconsciously align with male and female leaders, regardless of their effectiveness. Ample research has revealed the way in which gender influences women's career paths and their ability to access and achieve top leadership roles (e.g. Ely et al. 2011; Swartz et al. 2016). Studies have also considered discrepancies in the perception of women's and men's performance and potential, highlighting the challenges that women face when pursuing careers towards top positions. These barriers also include the existing wage gap (Kunze 2008), the limited pipeline of qualified women versus hierarchical responsibility 'at a macro-contextual layer' (Graham et al. 2017, p.251), and domestic responsibilities (Cooke 2006; Eagly and Carli 2007), which still represent a prominent research area. The common denominator involves discrepancies in the perceived performance and potential of women and men, highlighting the challenges that women encounter on their career paths towards top positions.

2.3   Family Entrepreneurship

Undeniably, family business research is a vast field. Our work shows that ownership is evolving, significantly influencing a new generation of competent women as they take on ownership roles (Osnes 2016). Not only do women create more distributed leadership systems with their siblings (Gronn 2002), but (if disadvantaged, or as a part of a family tradition) they also start new ventures, which may become part of the main business at a later date. We consider it important to capture both new and old forms of entrepreneurship within the family ownership field (Gronn 2002; Tsabari et al. 2014). The most agile and long term-focused family owners often incubate new ventures, outside (or in addition to) the succession process. Members of the senior or next generation may change their roles or enter into business life, starting new ventures that

are partly funded by or connected to a family office or established business. When researching the complexities of women's family ownership trajectories, new ventures, whether built on or linked to the original family business, are important for research.

Bringing together the above research fields, we build on embedded gender images, in the form of unconscious bias towards women in ownership and top leadership roles. Using two different research projects, we investigate how women accept authority and relate to barriers, including embedded gender images. Based on earlier research on the factors that foster women's access to top leadership and ownership roles, we explore how certain unique factors can help women gain important roles in such organisations.

2.4   Research Aims

Based on our findings, we argue that there is a need to raise awareness of embedded gender images, which act as barriers to female entrepreneurs and managers (as proxies for stereotypes, biases, prejudices and barriers) and are often firmly established in a historical, cultural and societal context. We also address the importance of strategic career coaching, mentoring and sponsorship as catalysts for female entrepreneurs and managers on their career paths toward top positions.

Based on a selected group of top leaders (Research Project 1) and family owners (Research Project 2), we set out to explore how women overcame barriers when ascending to top leadership positions. The research questions focused on the strategies they employed. The initial data analysis found that support, in the form of formal or informal coaching or mentoring, was a key contributing factor. We used family ownership cases to explore how such support increased the women's ability to address biases, which are often unconscious. In doing so, we explored how support, built on emotional ties with others (such as coaches and family members), could increase women's autonomy and give them a stronger sense of authority when addressing obstacles based on embedded gender biases.

3.   METHODOLOGY

There are many possible explanations for the continued relative absence of female managers in top positions. However, we were curious about aspects of the issue that numbers could not easily explain – a puzzle piece seemed to be missing. We therefore used semi-structured interviews and narratives from two different research projects to gain a better understanding of women's roles and trajectories and the critical incidents they experience. First, we used 4 out of 16 interviews transcribed during dissertation research. Second, we investi-

gated a global family-business project, the 'Learning from Family Ownership project' (Osnes et al. 2016). Each project is described below, with details of the cases and interviews.

3.1 Project 1: Exploring the Relationship between Tokenism and Gender Quotas through the Concept of Embedded Gender Images

3.1.1 Selection and participants

Dissertation interviews were carried out with ten female managers who were contacted via social networks, including XING and LinkedIn; at conferences; and via snowball sampling. These women were chosen for interview based on their roles, their positions and the size of their organizations. All held more or less equivalent positions and were responsible for managing a team or project. Notably, 90 per cent of participants worked for a current or former German automotive family business. In terms of seniority level, the women ranged from reporting directly to a CEO to being responsible for 25,000 employees as an HR representative on the management board. This analysis draws on biographical narratives and semi-structured interviews with four female managers in leading positions in the German automotive industry.

3.1.2 Structure and content of the interviews

Each interview consists of two parts. The first part involves biographical-narrative themes, while the second consists of a semi-structured interview (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Schostak 2006). Each semi-structured interview lasted 60–90 minutes. For both projects, the interviews followed an interview guide and research protocol; all semi-structured interviews were transcribed and translated into English.

3.2 Project 2: Learning from Family Ownership

3.2.1 Selection and participants

The Learning from Family Ownership project is a global study of several family-owned businesses conducted collaboratively by an international research team. Interviews with four to eight family members and top leaders in each business were carried out in Sweden, the US, Israel, Norway, China and Germany by researchers who spoke the interviewees' mother tongues (Osnes et al. 2016). We have focused on the barriers and catalysts facing four female entrepreneurs, based on a heritage of male-dominated leadership, which had been in place for some for four generations.

3.2.2 Structure and content of the interviews

Family members were initially asked about the roles they played in the family, business or other contexts. They also discussed the history of key roles. Critical incidents were a focal point, seen as milestones and key events and explored for their significance in relation to learning, tension, conflicts and family implications. Succession dynamics, leadership and inheritance, selling a company, health issues and expansion were typical critical incidents. Most interviewees were asked to share their experiences and stories. All significant events in the family or family business and the individuals' thoughts, feelings and reflections on their experiences were followed up with questions about the implications of those experiences for the family and family business.

3.3 Treatment of Data

In both projects, the interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. This was essential to ensure accuracy in processing the data and conducting subsequent comparison studies across different countries. Any details or combinations of details that could have disclosed the interviewees' identities, such their names, addresses or ages, were replaced appropriately to ensure that all cases were anonymous.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

In addition, draft versions of the case descriptions and subsequent publications were given to the interviewees for evaluation to ensure that their preferred level of anonymity was preserved and that no unintentional reference was made that could affect or offend others.

3.5 Analytic Approach

The objective was to gain knowledge of 'a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data' (Braun and Clarke 2006, p.5) and to understand those data at a deeper level (Galletta 2013). Initial findings from Research Project 1 were applied to materials from the family ownership project. This deductive analysis made a comparative analysis possible. It further enabled an inductive analysis of the common denominator linking various obstacles. An abductive analysis (Timmerman and Tavory 2012) allowed us to explore strategies and establish a more nuanced sense of 'doing' or agency.

3.5.1 Deductive analysis

The barriers and catalysts (Haug 2020) that female managers, owners and leaders encounter on their career paths towards top positions illustrate the

stark influence of embedded gender images within the historical, cultural and societal background of a male-dominated environment. The barriers listed by women managers include the following: being the only woman (token); being considered 'exotic'; having to fight for access to information; feeling excluded from influential networks; getting their voices heard; the concept of (potential) motherhood; and stereotypes such as emotional relatedness. Other barriers include the classical perspective on the division of roles and tasks, sexual harassment and negative gendered power experiences. The following catalysts were crucial for women working toward top positions: influential networks, such as alumni networks; being in an eligible pool; critical factors influencing, for example, policy outcomes; critical mass in top positions; and female managers acting as role models in top positions (Haug 2020). Strategic career coaching and mentoring impacted the way they addressed and leveraged these; in addition, these tools were in themselves a catalyst. For working mothers, support also came from external networks, including partners, nannies and domestic help. For female entrepreneurs the family network proved to be the most important asset, in relation to role ownership, information flow, the exchange of business strategies and re-entry into the family business.

3.5.2   Iterative and abductive analysis

An abductive analysis allowed us to explore a given phenomenon (in this case, the success of certain strategies) and what it would take to create this outcome (Timmerman and Tavory 2012). We have therefore selected strong, surprising and positive outcomes from our data to explore the factors that made these outcomes possible. The first stage of analysis involved deducing barriers and the emergence of catalysts. To develop more in-depth insights into the inductive aspect of this analysis, we parsed the relationship between autonomy, authority, courage and aspects of intermediate space, assessing what the catalysts did to help women overcome barriers.

4.   FINDINGS

The findings are presented in two sections: strategies for engaging with barriers and in-depth research on transitions and the participants' autonomy and authority. The strategy section introduces four top leaders and their strategies for addressing the following barriers: (i) overcoming tokenism and informal/male networks; (ii) negative gendered power experiences; (iii) power issues and sexual harassment; and (iv) motherhood. Lastly, we describe the shifts made by these women (v) after support was received and authority acquired.

The research section explores transitions and the development of autonomy and authority. In the case of the four families described below, emotional bonds, a sense of autonomy and a process of authority-building were part of the

family dynamic, resulting in strong female ownership and leadership roles: (i) a collective family effort in Germany succeeded in addressing invisible female leadership roles; (ii) a co-entrepreneur couple in Israel shared autonomy and authority; (iii) a second-generation entrepreneurial succession consisted of a father–daughter relationship; and (iv) a mother–daughter relationship spun off a new business, based on the main business.

4.1 Part I: Strategies for Engaging with Barriers

The women who participated in this study were highly qualified managers, and all had developed a range of survival strategies within their work environments. What follows focuses on four of the ten women and the strategies they used to engage with particular barriers. The important question to explore further is how the support provided by husbands, coaches, mentors and parents strengthened the women's sense of autonomy and courage. What factors helped them develop strategies for liberating themselves and, in some cases, even stepping out of the system?

Katharina was born in 1970. She is hard-working, dedicated to everything she does and proactive across several different jobs. She remembers her same-level colleagues viewing her as an inconvenience and feeling uncomfortable in her presence. After the CEO left and three lower-level managers moved up, her situation changed dramatically. These managers had not supported her before and did not support her after their promotions.

Jasmin was born in 1968. Being straightforward and outspoken, she raised the alarm with colleagues and offered solutions when a project was at risk. Her male managers warned her not to speak out, but she decided to ignore them and prepared a presentation for a supervisory team member. Her efforts were successful and she received resources, support and a budget.

Ulrike was born in 1965. She has risen to a top leadership position, one level beneath the supervisory board. Her journey to the top reveals her inner strength, perseverance, value-based leadership style, well-honed fighting skills, intelligence and strategic approach. Often, she is the only woman in a hostile, male-dominated arena.

Stephanie was born in 1970. Her first years as a working mother with two children were awful. In 2008–9, her supervisors had the unspoken expectation that, even though she was working only 25 hours, she would somehow achieve the performance of a full-time manager. She had to grow a thick skin – especially among her colleagues, who included other women without children, as well as men.

4.1.1   Strategies for overcoming the barriers of tokenism and informal male networks

Katharina was the only woman in her firm to hold a top management position. As the HR Global Director, she held the highest-ranking position in her company. She was on the road 36 out of 52 weeks and would often meet her (fully supportive) husband at the airport between business meetings. She was responsible for 24,000 employees and an international rollout programme for 14 plants in 14 different countries. Although she enjoyed her international leadership role, in 2014 she decided to become self-employed, after experiencing the playing of power games and feeling that she could not continue to live by her values. Given the power games she had witnessed, Katharina was strongly convinced that men would not support the promotion of women onto executive boards. For this reason, Katharina decided to set up her own company.

In the beginning, Katharina had to fight for access to general information and discussions. As the only woman in a circle of men, she felt that she did not exist to them. They talked to each other as if they were a group of male friends drinking beer together. She recalled a few incidents which suggested that no one took her seriously at the beginning. As long as she talked about HR they were fine, but as soon as she spoke about strategy or organisational development she lost their confidence and felt unwelcome. Although they did not express hostility, their non-verbal communications made her feel excluded. Katharina noticed this non-verbal behaviour in meetings and workshops and said it conveyed a certain message: 'Just let her talk. What is she doing this time? They would cross their arms to express scepticism: Let's see what she's talking about.'

Katharina remembered how challenging it was to be accepted as an equal partner by her male colleagues. Initially, she was denied timely information, which the men shared within their 'informal, male information network'.

> If you are the only woman in a circle of men it feels as if you do not even exist. Of course, I went with them to events, went to a bar and watched a football game. You have to do it step by step until they realise I'm interested in it as well and that I'm not disturbing them. But you really have to be at the same level with them and you have to be knowledgeable about the topic.

When Jasmin was excluded from the 'male information network', she applied a different strategy. She collected all the information she needed by visiting a range of different premises to inquire about technical requirements and the actual state of the project: 'I was an exotic person. I had always been different. I was guided by my father's behaviour who taught me to be open and friendly.'

Katharina's strategy for countering the impact of perceived culturally embedded gender images within the German automotive industry was to prove that she was an equal. After her lower-level colleagues accepted her, she moved on to the decision-makers. Her chosen strategy was to convince and engage with male CEOs, who began to fully support her ideas and projects. Her new position – supported by the CEO and CO, who acted as mentors – enabled her to roll out an international benchmark and achieve high levels of positive visibility. Strong support from her superiors encouraged her to succeed in her powerful new role. However, her same-level colleagues viewed her as an inconvenience and felt uncomfortable around her:

> I had the impression that they could now work against it. They didn't have the power to work against the initiatives before, but now they could. All of a sudden, they demonstrated immense resistance. It was overwhelming. That was the moment when I decided not to be part of it anymore. I did not need it. I had the feeling that I had to fight even more than before. It wasn't something I wanted any longer.

Ulrike was the first woman in the back office. She was also the first woman sales representative and the first woman to become an inhouse broker for another company. Today she has risen to a top leadership position, one level beneath the supervisory board.

> I was not meant to be successful in a job. My male colleagues would be wondering why I was so dedicated to my job since my position in life would be another one. When those people realised that I was not only good at my job, but also cooked well and liked it, it didn't fit into their worldview at all.

The right to succeed in a somewhat hostile environment was central to the story and identity of every female manager.

4.1.2 Strategies for overcoming the barriers created by negative gendered power experiences

Jasmin describes her parents as strong personalities, with her father as the family alpha male for many years until his health deteriorated and the roles were switched, with her mother becoming the alpha partner. Jasmin had a strong and close relationship with both of her parents. She drew on them as mentors throughout her life. In her professional career, she referred to a work mentor who supported her as treating her like 'his daughter'. She also worked with a female mentor when she was launching a new company. Attacks on her authority marked her life as a sales manager. Fighting for her core values and struggling to live by them within a hostile, mainly male environment was a repetitive business pattern for many years. When Jasmin was a manager and new to the job, she identified weak points and critical loopholes in several

projects, and made the decision to forward this information to high-ranking company decision-makers. As she told her husband, she would either survive or be fired. However, her action had more long-term implications, as her male colleagues took steps to undermine her. 'My strategy to inform my big boss about the poor state of the project saved the company's reputation. The project has been very successful and the product is No. 1 amongst the competition', she said. Apparently she did not anticipate any backlash from her actions, which undermined the company hierarchy by going over the heads of her immediate bosses. However, these male managers may have perceived the actions of this young woman as risking a loss of power, control and reputation, leading them to turn against her. At one point in her career, Jasmin decided to take a sabbatical year; later, she became self-employed.

Ulrike left her company, where she was part of a program for employees with high potential, because she could not support the company's values. She had learned during her life that it was important to stay true to one's own convictions, regardless of other people's expectations. She drew strength from staying true to her beliefs and holding on to her values: 'What I have witnessed is that very often men recruit other men rather than women because they know what to expect. I believe that women are extremely powerful in times of uncertainty and crisis situations. More women are needed to become significant decision makers on supervisory boards.'

The recession in 2009 prevented Stephanie from participating in a programme for employees with high potential. However, she had a male mentor who supported her, and a friend of her parents also mentored her. She loves her job, in which she is responsible for a budget of 70 million euros, a flood of information and meeting the needs of staff members:

> I wouldn't know of one position which was occupied at my company where the responsible manager would recruit someone he hadn't known before. Men only recruit someone who is from a hierarchy level below. There are enough women who could be in a higher position at my company, but it would require a bottom-up approach. Women do not get developed into higher positions. At the moment there is a blockage from above that hinders it.

Stephanie still wonders whether she could have made it to the top had she been able to participate in the programme for employees with high potential. Although the strategies introduced by the female managers were generally successful, all of these women faced a backlash at some point in their careers.

4.1.3   Strategies for overcoming barriers related to power issues and sexual harassment

Ulrike favoured a different survival strategy in her male-dominated environment. Her successful strategy for career advancement was to identify the key

decision-maker in each project or company and to ensure that she was visible to him: 'I have learned to identify the grey eminence in the room. The silver-back (gorilla) who is an influential decision-maker. I build a relationship, find out their points of view, make them interested in me and my projects and keep them informed about my development.'

When it comes to power issues, Ulrike prefers to address a threat head on:

> I have very seldom met a woman trying to wield power over me. Mostly men. I have learnt to recognise it when someone tries to wield power over me. Today, power is active and not reactive any more. That makes the difference, due to what I have experienced in life and have been able to overcome emotionally.

When she perceives a misuse of power she refuses to back down, given what she has learned from the coaching process and her own life experiences. The coaching process has empowered her to find new ways of dealing with 'doing power and doing leadership' other than those she has experienced in the German automotive industry. For more than six years she worked with a coach, learning from her how to be a warrior but not how to be her authentic self. Although she knew she had a warrior within her, she felt that she was missing a female identity and did not know who she truly was. The second coach who entered her life helped her get in touch with herself. Finally, after working with the coach for quite some time, Ulrike was capable of putting the missing puzzle pieces together. Nowadays, she accepts that her life will have ups and downs: 'If the sea is rough, I'll find a way and if the sea is calm, it is ok with me too. I am at peace with myself.'

Katharina remembers her first apprenticeship as a negative power experi-ence, which she decided to end early and move on from. She has had several jobs in the course of her career and some experiences were better than others. However, she was fortunate to have two great mentors and a husband who consistently supported her. She was always financially independent. After many years of working for large organisations, she finally decided enough was enough and set up her own company. Since then, she has been hiring employees; her social media presence in 2021 suggests that she is happy to be her own boss:

> My first boss was someone you wouldn't want to work with. He was narcissistic and self-assured and did not treat the team well. As an apprentice one is placed lowest in the ranking. I remember that I was completely terrified by him and had great respect for him. I did not trust or look up to him even though his professional competence was enormous. He was not empathetic and one could not talk to him. He wrote notes instead of speaking. He would avoid conflicts by hiding behind his post-its.

4.1.4   Strategies for overcoming barriers to motherhood

At times, Stephanie thought she would never be able to regain her previous professional reputation. In her circle of friends, a man who didn't know that she was working said nasty things about a woman who worked and put her child in childcare. He called her 'Rabenmutter', a term used to criticise working mothers. Stephanie had to decide quickly how to cope with the situation because there wasn't much time to react:

> I told him that I too was what he called 'Rabenmutter' and that I had better leave the discussion because I didn't think I had to put up with it. The automotive industry has a history of 100 years or rather 150 years and is marked by men who will not be changed overnight.

While Jasmin was going to school she helped a neighbour with her children, and experienced childcare as very stressful. Jasmin's neighbour, a young mother, could not handle her situation, with three young children, and her marriage suffered as a result. Later, this mother was diagnosed with cancer and died at a young age. Jasmin supported the widower as best as she could, often spending half a day with one of the children. Ultimately, Jasmin decided to remain childless, although people in her social environment could not understand or accept the fact that she did not want children:

> The real reason for me was that I had seen my mother being very tight in regard to money. My mother sacrificed a lot for me. I have a different expectation of my life with children. I would want to be able to afford a nanny and a nice lifestyle for my children, myself and my husband.

Jasmin's arguments for not having children taught her that people would not respect her decision. However, when she explained that parenthood had just not worked out for her husband and herself, the discussions and inquiries stopped because people accepted this as a legitimate reason.

Katharina was grateful to her boss, who smoothed the path for her, enabling her to combine her career ambitions and family plans. After three months in a top leadership job, Katharina realised she was pregnant. She went to her German boss, who had a degree in social education, and explained the situation. Her boss advised her to train an assistant to support and back her up, enabling her to work part-time at first and build up gradually to full time. By using the latest technology she could work from home, avoiding the need to travel so much. She began working part-time, for 20 hours a week, and then moved up to 30 and 40 hours. She stayed with the company for four years and successfully combined motherhood with being a manager in a top leadership position. Having a male mentor act as an enabler made all the difference to

Katharina's career. With his support, she successfully managed the demands of her varied roles as a manager, mother, wife and daughter-in-law:

> My job involved a lot of strategic decisions, like closing plants and opening new ones. My four years at Kolobi were the icing on the cake. I could bring in all my ideas and my boss and his colleague supported everything. My husband first swallowed hard at the thought of me being away for three days a week. I knew he would be able to manage the child with the in-laws. He had taken on a position as CEO and did not have to travel so much anymore. He left the house at 9 in the morning and came home at 7 in the evening. To him it was more important to see his son growing up than it was to me. I was fine with not seeing our son for three days a week.

4.2   Part I Findings: The Role of Autonomy, Courage and Authority in Creating a Shift

This section will examine the Part I findings in more depth. First, we examine the narratives above, analysing how these professional managers were able to shift from a sense of autonomy to a new sense of authority. We explore four such shifts among female owners, based on the sense of autonomy, the freedom of choice that autonomy imparts and the way it can be used to develop authority. We explore a German case in which such a shift was created for the next generation after three generations of assumed male leadership. We also explore female co-entrepreneurship in Israel, a father and daughter collaboration in the US and a mother and daughter in China who created a spin-off new venture, which later became a merger. Appendix 6.1 presents an extract from the data analysis of the Israeli and American cases, in the form of a data matrix; this shows how we built inductively on strategies for addressing obstacles, exploring autonomy, courage and authority in more depth.

4.2.1   Shifts in autonomy and authority among female managers

The participants focused on implementing innovative ideas successfully. They negotiated over issues that were vital for them, such as resources and budgets. They also rescued projects in crisis, changing the context by demonstrating high commitment, passion and endurance. They achieved this by applying a multi-stakeholder strategy, involving key decision-makers, great determination and threats addressed head on. The participants displayed the agentic traits typically associated with male managers: they delivered top results, achieved top performance and demonstrated endurance, perseverance and courage. It could be argued, however, that some of these positive outcomes were achieved with the help of protective mentors or superiors or via long-term support networks.

4.2.1.1   Katharina's progression from an informal to a formal role

Katharina's new role as HR Global Director and the support she received from the CEO and CO enabled her to achieve significant positive visibility, fulfilling her formal role as an official international change agent:

> I was really lucky to have two members of the supervisory board who supported my projects. If they hadn't backed me up and I would have had to push through the projects all by myself, I think I would have experienced more resistance. Those two executive board members and I were on the same page. They knew that the projects I was committed to were significant for the company. They weren't the driving forces themselves, but were content to go along with it. The issue was how I developed the organisation strategy. How I broke the organisation strategy down to the department strategy.

4.2.1.2   Jasmin's progression from an informal to a formal role

Jasmin was just 30 years old and had been with the company for three months when she had to tell her 'big boss' that all of his other employees were dishonest, that they had done a lousy job, and that the project on which they were working would not succeed. Jasmin's role within the department changed as soon as she found the courage to reveal to the boss what other managers had done wrong. She was given full authority over a project that was vital to her company. 'But do you know, Mrs Haug, with this, I have again hit many, really many men against the shinbone in their positions. They bear a grudge against me to this day because I believe that it has done harm to their careers.'

Jasmin's professional behaviour is proactive, determined, open and honest. She lives by the values her father taught her.

4.2.1.3   Ulrike's progression from an informal to a formal role

Ulrike's informal role as a regular employee changed completely when her boss asked her to implement an idea she had proposed for strengthening the company. He trusted her and gave her the necessary resources to achieve it. The business has achieved significant profits because of her innovations. The processes are still in place and working well after seven years. 'My boss has never understood what I actually implemented, but he trusted me completely. He was courageous enough to give me a chance. He earned an extreme amount of money with it and I could test my idea.'

Looking back at the various different companies for which she had worked, Ulrike commented that power games were still in place and had not changed at all. However, the opportunity she was given to test her idea resulted in a win–win situation for her boss and herself.

4.2.1.4   Stephanie's progression from an informal to a formal role

Stephanie recalls losing team members in her first leadership role because she was unaware of her own leadership style. She did not lose team members because they applied for other positions, but because they felt she was too remote. A leadership seminar and her children taught her that she could choose what kind of person and leader she wanted to be:

Team: You are the locomotive, but at the very back are the wagons and you have just lost them. We would like to work together with you.

Stephanie: I enjoy motivating others to go the extra mile and showing them how to break down an immense workload into small manageable chunks.

She read a book about power and applied some of that knowledge, which ultimately worked for her. She now has a good relationship with the members of her team and often knows about their private lives.

4.2.2   A family in Germany acknowledging invisible female leadership roles

One case of family ownership discussed here involves a four-generation family which founded a medium-sized German utilities company in 1952, after the Second World War; the company had approximately 140 employees and 39 million dollars in revenue. With a tradition of passing down ownership from father to son, the business is now preparing for a shift to a gender-balanced leadership, which will be continued by the coming generation. What was once the founder's vision has become the company's leading strategy and main financial, socio-emotional and symbolic advantage. Preserving a company that family members see as their 'real home' motivates their actions, according to the current leader of this family-owned business. The interdependent aspects of their group identity reveal themselves in statements such as 'we try to hold on to our strengths as a family-owned business'. Various financial failures and safety issues experienced by the company over the past 40 years have placed the current male leader in a strong decision-making position. Now, with a long-term perspective in mind, the present leader has recognised the need to pass on the baton to the fourth generation. He will be joined by one of his female cousins on the executive board. In addition, the following generation will consist of his son and niece.

Developments in the socio-political landscape after the 1940s and 1950s have increased the entitlement of female entrepreneurs with family businesses. The daughters of a business family working in the German utilities industry were free to have children, received support from the entire family and were

able to stay up to date on all business-related issues and re-enter the family business whenever they chose. These female entrepreneurs did not have to choose between family and career, only when to return to the company. At the same time, our findings highlight several embedded images that have guided the family for four generations. These suggest that female entrepreneurs should consider taking steps to develop their gender-specific potential and increase the number of women on their executive boards.

This German case illustrates the way in which emotional bonds and women's informal leadership roles can act as a catalyst, enabling a female successor to take up a leadership or ownership role. The three cases further illustrate how emotional ties within a family can generate support and coaching/mentoring relationships.

4.2.3　A co-entrepreneurial couple in Israel, with female authority

This case study involves a husband-and-wife team in Palestine/early Israel. The business in question was co-owned initially by the husband and wife, and later by their sons. When the interviews took place, a succession plan was developed for three of Wada's grandchildren. What we will show is the unusual level of support between husband and wife. In particular, the husband supported his wife in her role as co-entrepreneur. They both came from a Christian Arab background and a strongly patriarchal culture.

Wada:	In 1957 and 1958, we had lots of these individual tours and archaeological digs for American professors and very educated people who really used to come, not just to see the country, but to go through history. The work started with the good service of my husband. And everybody who used to come I used to take them here, to my home, to give them tea. And every tourist who comes would then like to go to a native home and see how people live. You know, these professors and priests who used to come, they were happy here and they used to go home and talk about it with their friends or at school or in churches. And since my husband was driving and guiding I had to organise it.
Interviewer:	And your husband didn't mind? I mean, he liked it or he …
Wada:	Who?
Interviewer:	Your husband.
Wada:	Oh. No, I mean, there was a big difference between my husband and me, I was 17 [and] he was 32. He was much older. But he was very free minded, very […] Working with foreigners makes quite a difference. He was not a very strict minded man. He gave me the freedom to do whatever I wanted.

When Wada was in her early eighties, she was still the head of accounts. She had oversight of a large tourism agency (the main business), with one son as the majority owner, and a chain of hotels, with another son as the majority owner. In addition, they owned a bus company, which was part of the tourism agency and linked to the hotel business. As the work and career she had chosen were highly unusual, there was a price to pay. Not only was tourism in Jerusalem a volatile and risky business but it also had social implications, as she was isolated from her female peer group:

> Oh yes. Oh yes. Lots of people gossip. I didn't care, I didn't mind. I did, I am not from here, I am from Bethlehem, from Beit Jala. I was born in Beit Jala, so I didn't care. I didn't know anybody and until now I don't know anybody. I don't visit people and nobody visits me because I didn't have time. First it was with the kids and then with the office. So, I don't care what people say. As long as I am satisfied and I know myself.

This grandmother represents a visible leadership model for several of her granddaughters, while the cross-generational emotional bonds, initially with her sons but then also across the generations, enable the necessary support, mentoring and knowledge transfer. This structure sets the stage for future diversity, with women in top leadership roles and other positions:

> We have one female top leader who is not in the family. It was Dalia, Hani's daughter, who employed her. We – I mentioned before that we opened a Rome office for her, after she graduated. First, she wanted to work and we had another manager in the Amman office, who was not a good man. He was good at promoting the business but he was a thief. He really robbed us. We nearly lost that office. So when Dalia came, we thought that she would learn from the beginning. We put her in the Amman office. And she met that girl, she was a guide. She met her and saw her; she is capable. And when she went to Rome, she took over that office. Dalia learned from her father how to do things, how to do a programme. And this girl, being a guide, she knew every corner in Jordan and that helps. And this is, she is smart. She just took over and everything […] It is, for this part of the world in our culture, not […] Of course, you will find many girls working in offices. And we have in our office about 12 or 13. It wasn't like this before, when I started working. Only men were managing the whole thing.

4.2.4   A father–daughter team in the US: building authority

> The separation was hard, but it was best for all concerned. We shared ideas in the beginning. At least we did back then, we don't much anymore. My mother is, well, she's not a hands-on operator any longer. She pretty much lets the people she has hired run it. But she still has a presence there – through today's technology she supervises the business using a TV camera over the register, a little TV monitor at home, and she calls them any time that she's not satisfied with something. But as far as us sharing ideas, that probably hasn't taken place for a few years now. But we,

at one time or another, would share ideas with each other: what would work for one and what was working for the other to enhance her business or mine. Our businesses are different now.

The statement above comes from a second-generation entrepreneur: the father of a family in which three generations have been serial entrepreneurs. In the quotation above he describes the moment of 'separation' when he set up his own business after having worked for several years, alongside his wife, for his mother and stepfather. It was the start of a story about emotional ties, and also one of healthy separation and new ventures with continued cooperation across the generations. After the family sold the original business and leveraged the profits, the father built increasingly large businesses. Working with his wife and a younger brother, he guided his daughter in starting her own business. She described her initial engagement and sense of autonomy as she became involved and grew up with the business during her childhood and young-adult years:

> I guess I always felt a part of the BBQ business, as soon as I was able I would help out by wiping down tables and when I was old enough, I would run the cash register. But when I got further into high school, I got an independent streak and I decided I wanted to work for somebody else for a while. I just wanted to have the experience of working in a different environment so I got a job at a chicken finger place. I liked it; it seemed like a really simple, neat, popular concept and I just saw how packed it was all the time. I was 18 and graduating high school and I went to daddy and said I wanted to open a chicken finger restaurant. It gave me a greater appreciation even working for someone else. I saw, you know, how good daddy was to his employees. He was never just a boss and not just because I was his daughter. He is that way with all of his employees. He cares about them and wants to be a part of their lives and to influence them. I had a very deep appreciation for him as a business owner and a boss.

The father, along with all the family, welcomed the new venture and appreciated his daughter's desire to balance her emotional ties with a need and drive for autonomy. For both father and daughter, this new venture involved risk and worry. However, they both believed that they could see the project through and manage the risk. They had the courage to take an affordable risk, building on existing family support and emotional ties:

> It was actually Gail who came up with the new idea for a restaurant and she sold us on it. But […] we all had to work together to get the ball rolling. I remember how we learned how to cook chicken. We got a deep fat fryer and put it out on the back porch. We already had our bank loan approved and everything. When the first big batch came out green and greasy, I thought to myself, 'Oh, my goodness, what have we gotten ourselves into, we don't know how to do this!' And so, I said, 'I'm glad the bankers are not in our back yard watching this or they would take back the loan

they promised us.' But anyway we did test cooking almost every day, it seems like for weeks, but eventually we came up with a product we all really liked.

Also, when I was there before, that was when we first opened 20 years ago and it was me, my ex-husband, my mom and my dad so we all just had our positions. When I came back this time I had a lot to learn. The ex is gone, so I am responsible for the bookwork, the employees, ordering, everything. So it was very overwhelming to do all of that by myself. I had to overcome that and be like daddy.

4.2.5   A mother and daughter supporting each other in China

The He family from southern China has run a wooden toy business for more than three generations. The company dates back to 1973, when China began a process of dramatic social, political and economic change. Even during communism, when the communes owned all businesses, the business still had a 'co-founder couple', namely a husband and wife. The first-generation wife had an invisible leadership role. The second-generation wife was also involved, both as an employee and in an invisible leadership role. Although the first two generations did not own the business, leadership roles were still passed down from father to son, based on a staff vote.

When capitalist ideas and private ownership were introduced into the economy, several family members created spin-off businesses. New ventures, launched and owned by members of the younger generation, produced competing products and more modern designs; some also acted as suppliers to the main business. Although these companies sometimes cooperated on larger contracts, they also competed against each other. In addition, the family launched and invested in a business designed as a small-scale incubator for new design ideas and product development. One next-generation family member, the future owner of the main business (in what had become a cluster region in China), was a young woman, the sister of an owner and top leader. She was not given the opportunity to work in the business and settled in Beijing. Her mother had been one of the earlier-generation wives who had worked in the business and held an informal leadership role.

In 2005 the daughter started a business, initially in bamboo coal, a sustainable product. She learnt how the budding internet trade operated and realised that the low margins and distribution difficulties would make it difficult to earn much money:

Yes. It was fun. I set up my own e-shop on Taobao.com (the Chinese equivalent of eBay). In 2005, I just gave birth to a baby and was quite boring at home. The only entertainment was surfing the Internet. One friend of mine sold children's clothes online at home, which inspired me. There were credit grades for buyers and sellers on Taobao.com and I felt like I was playing some game. I bought a lot of stuff online and had a very good record as a buyer, so I wanted to have credit as a seller too. So

at the beginning, I was selling bamboo charcoal, but there is no bamboo charcoal production in Yunhe County.

My mother saw my business and said: 'Why don't you sell our wooden toys online at home? If, sometimes the client was not satisfied with our wooden toy or there was some unexpected situation, plenty of toys were back in stock. Why don't you give it a try and see if anyone is interested in them?' I thought my mom was right. Besides, I have nothing much to do so it won't hurt to give it a try. So I took pictures of the toys and uploaded them online. The toys were made of original wood and the style was quite trendy. Some Japanese clients placed orders with our company but they could also withdraw them for many reasons, even after paying the deposit. Cooperation was suspended while the toys had to be returned to stock. I later on found that many customers like Japanese-style wooden toys. So the online sales were quite good.

After five years, the daughter's online store received the top 'Imperial Crown' rating as a trusted seller. In 2010 she sold her online business to her brother, finalizing an ownership and credit transfer and keeping only around 10 per cent as a minority shareholder in her own venture. In this way she increased the family assets more broadly and developed her own financial independence. The experience and learning she created would make her an owner with a choice and a proven reputation as an innovative entrepreneur and owner. Her brother had always appreciated her efforts and achievements but was more strategic as a top leader. His support, and the purchase and integration of the online business, came at a crucial time. This transition occurred just before 2009, when the global recession set in. Global buyers suddenly had less need for wooden toys. Instead, these global companies sought distribution networks within China, with the main company as a new market. Suddenly, the main family firm and assorted smaller ventures were able to sell their own designs and products in the local Chinese market. The global companies became suppliers rather than buyers.

5.   DISCUSSION

Despite the barriers that still exist, our research findings show that the following factors help more women ascend to active and top ownership roles. The stories of successful women share one common feature: they all received some type of support, which enabled them to overcome obstacles and leverage catalysts. Supportive dialogues were provided by formal mentors, coaching relationships or informal family mentors and coaches. We will discuss three aspects of these findings, which relate to social changes, ways of challenging barriers and the use of catalysts. Women who learned to use catalysts to create a shift had access to supportive dialogues with mentors or coaches; the dialogue became an intermediate space, in which the 'other' provided support and the women learned to treat obstacles as determining moments, offering

options and choices. The dialogues, and their reflections or aftereffects, built autonomy, courage and the authority to act. Autonomous authority-building changed the roles and authority assigned to the company leader and/or owner. Coaching and mentoring, whether provided by family members or a formal coach, acted as a catalyst for building an awareness of their own choices and autonomy. They provided understanding, built authority and helped the new entrepreneur develop courage by exploring affordable loss.

We will start with a surprising finding: that family business owners may be ahead of societal gender-inclusivity trends. We also discuss aspects of the courage that the women appeared to need to create shifts in their careers.

Our findings support the documented obstacles and biases that woman encounter (Sümer 2006; Huse and Solberg 2006). We contribute a more in-depth understanding, revealing new aspects of the ability to use catalysts. These show what it takes to develop the courage to challenge barriers to female leadership and ownership.

The present study has some limitations. Multiple interviews with each participant would have allowed us to probe specific areas further. Ideally, we could have returned to themes that emerged from the data. Despite this limitation, however, the fully transcribed interviews and data analysis provide a strong argument for the role played by embedded gender images and other themes in both projects. Another limitation involves the number of partici-pants in the two research projects. However, 90 per cent of the participants worked for a current or former family businesses and 10 per cent worked for a non-family business, thus mirroring the high percentage of family businesses in the German economy. The female entrepreneurs represented the fourth generation of a family-owned business in Germany. In addition, both projects would have benefited from member checks, external coders or third-party analyses by the participants themselves.

5.1 Ahead of the Times amidst New Gender Dynamics

The increasing number of women in powerful roles, as top leaders and/or business owners, is accentuating various conflicting images and notions of women in positions of authority and power. When Ulrike, one of the study participants, was developing her own agency, her strategy was to (a) approach the threat by confronting it directly and (b) make sure that she was noticed by influential multi-key stakeholders (Turner and Hawkins 2016). The strength of her approach shows that a person who decides to fight back develops a self-in-relation (Fletcher 2004) and determination. Other strategies that include less confrontation, such as complementarity or following another set of considerations, are also explored in our data. The common denominators, based on inductive and abductive analyses, relate to the fact that agency

existed in different types of strategies that were built on a sense of autonomy. In addition, women who developed authority in their roles were able to assess risk and develop courage.

Within the family dynamic, both invisible and visible leadership roles can act as the main catalyst. In many of the family businesses discussed here, the family narrated out female roles. Rewriting or discovering those roles could provide catalysts for future generations. Collinson has argued that embedded images guide both men and women in their decision-making (Collinson 2011). As the German case shows, one of the most surprising results is the fact that, over the past 10–15 years, a new cohort of female owners has emerged. They are negotiating owner and leadership roles and advancing rather quickly. Family ties seem to force through a more radical shift. It seems typical, as in the German and Chinese cases, that the interviewees did not initially consider their grandmothers, the female co-founders, to be noteworthy.

Earlier entrepreneurship research has shown that autonomy is a crucial driver or aspect of entrepreneurship processes. Studies have called for a stronger focus on the way in which family dynamics affect fundamental entrepreneurial processes (e.g. Aldrich and Cliff 2003: 573–4). The traditional approach to exploring family dynamics has been to focus on the family's strategy for managing life stages and succession; this becomes less relevant given the conditions on the variables discussed here.

5.2   Courage: Autonomy, Authority and Affordable Loss

Coaching and mentoring, whether from a family member or a formal coach, can act as a catalyst, raising awareness of one's choices and autonomy, building understanding and authority and developing courage by exploring affordable loss. Building on Ye et al. (2016), our findings confirm that women on career paths towards top positions should adopt managerial coaching behaviour to mitigate the impact of embedded gender images. Such concepts can capture the lived experience of female entrepreneurs and leaders and prove useful to aspiring women entrepreneurs and their coaches and advisors.

5.2.1   Awareness of choice and autonomy

Female managers see various power games being played during the course of their business lives. As Sümer (2006), Huse and Solberg (2006) and Vial et al. (2016) have pointed out, each power game has its own locked-in dynamic, which embeds and intertwines (Higgins and Kram 2011; Kram 1983) with gender bias. These dynamics include tokenism, exclusion from networks, lack of promotion and incongruity, to name just a few. According to Huse and Solberg (2006), awareness is the key to changing power games. Our findings reveal, in depth, how women create career advances. They include an

awareness of the rules that provide access to power and authority. As various succession studies have shown, the process of shifting leaders in and out of roles requires an established or renewed process of decoding the dynamic and logic of leadership (Osnes 2020). During any transition into an established role, there is a process whereby the logic of leadership determines what constitutes access to power and how it bestows legitimacy. Understanding the game creates a choice: to be a part of a system, or to leave or challenge it.

5.2.2   Risking an affordable loss to gain courage

It is also worth asking what price an individual must pay for bending or breaking the rules of the game. Dialogue and mentoring within interrelationships make such analysis possible, allowing each individual to understand the effect of the game on herself as a person and on the organisation. Like the family dynamics in family ownership cases, dialogue and mentoring lead to a sense of autonomy and the ability to consider choices. In venturing into a new business, as the daughter did in China, a sense of autonomy can lead to risk taking but also to a successful venture, which gives the entrepreneur authority, power and a strong ownership position.

Non-family members can also benefit from such dialogues, in the form of coaching, to create shifts and develop courage. Ulrike's experience with two female coaches, one of whom was an external consultant to her company, focused on developing her inner strengths. The coaching process helped her become stronger, more self-confident and tougher (Rogers 2012). She also mentioned the management and business skills (Lines 2007) that she learned from her first coach, arguing that every leader in a work environment requires professional learning (Turner and Hawkins 2016). The affordable loss that Ulrike faced was the risk that her boss would be unwilling to consider or annoyed by her idea of changing the entire IT system. He also had to estimate the risk and determine what he was willing to lose to follow Ulrike's proposed course of action. The women discussed in this study all benefited from coaching, developing strategies to develop support for their projects, resources and ideas.

5.2.3   Authority and carving out role(s)

At the practical level, some participants struggled to understand what they had the authority to do or felt guilty for aspiring to or accepting the authority and power that came with ownership or top leadership roles. If they or others experienced themselves as powerful or strongly influential, they framed themselves as merely 'supportive'. Since 'supportive' is a term that reflects traditional female roles within the home or society, it bears the cultural imprint of approval. A supportive function is often seen as enabling others, while staying in the background. Based on this logic or modus operandi, women's actual

decision-making and influence has been hidden behind their supporting roles. Further research should focus on the way in which roles at the top of an organisation, such as on the board or leadership team, are assigned to leaders, and how this differs from less formal initiatives such as dialogues about needs and tasks, which, over several discussions, can become a process of carving out a new role. As the latter is a more innovative process, it can be carried out with ease within family systems (Osnes 2016). This finding also supports Tsabari et al. (2014) by confirming that new roles and ventures have an important impact on career trajectories.

6.   CONCLUSION

The empirical evidence gathered through these research projects reveals that embedded gender images are deeply ingrained in historical, societal and cultural attitudes. This evidence should not be restricted to a single theoretical domain: it can apply to several, including role authority, gendered leadership, entrepreneurship theory, gender diversity and barriers to women in general. We have presented our findings across several case studies. Coaching or advising should use the concept of embedded gender images, allowing female entrepreneurs and managers to benefit from targeted awareness training, which can help them respond to the embedded gender images rooted in their culture and work environments. The findings on coaching, mentoring and sponsorship show that women need to be taught and trained by mentors and coaches. To start this process, universities and training schools could offer tailored programmes of strategic coaching and mentoring for career advancement.

To conclude, this chapter has addressed a number of significant issues, all of which raise the following question: what does it take to navigate around the challenges and barriers most likely to impede female leadership?

REFERENCES

Aldrich, H.E. and J.E. Cliff (2003), 'The pervasive effects of family on entrepreneurship: Toward a family embeddedness perspective', *Journal of Business Venturing*, 18(5), 573–96.

Bloomberg, L.D. and M. Volpe (2018), *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Bohnet, I. (2016), *What works*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Boyd, B., S. Royer, R. Pei and X. Zhang (2015), 'Knowledge transfer in family business successions', *Journal of Family Business Management*, 5(1), 17–37.

Braun, V. and V. Clarke (2006), 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–102.

Collinson, D. (2011), Critical leadership studies, in A. Bryman, D. Collinson, K. Grint, B. Jackson and M. Uhl-Bien (eds), *The Sage handbook of leadership*. London: Sage.

Cooke, L.P. (2006), 'Policy, preferences and patriarchy: The division of domestic labor in East Germany, West Germany and the United States', *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, 13(1), 117–43.

Eagly, A.H. and L.L. Carli (2007), 'Women and the labyrinth of leadership', *Harvard Business Review*, 85(9), 62.

Ely, R.J., H. Ibarra and D.M. Kolb (2011), 'Taking gender into account: Theory and design for women's leadership development programmes', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 10(3), 474–93.

Fan, Y., L.J. Shepherd, E. Slavich, D. Waters, M. Stone, R. Abel and E.L. Johnston (2019), 'Gender and cultural bias in student evaluations: Why representation matters', *PloS One*, 14(2).

Fletcher, J.K. (2004), 'The paradox of postheroic leadership: An essay on gender, power and transformational change', *The Leadership Quarterly*, *15*(5), 647–61.

Galletta, A. (2013), *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: From research design to analysis and publication*, New York: NYU Press.

Graham, M.E., M.A. Belliveau and J.L. Hotchkiss (2017), 'The view at the top or signing at the bottom? Workplace diversity responsibility and women's representation in management', *ILR Review*, 70(1), 223–58.

Gronn, P. (2002), 'Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 13(4), 423–51.

Haug, M. (2016), Das Coaching der weiblichen Herausforderer im 21. Jahrhundert, in *Coaching als individuelle Antwort auf gesellschaftliche Entwicklungen* (pp.247–54), Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien.

Haug, M. (2020), 'Exploring the relationship between tokenism and gender quotas through the concept of embedded gender images' (Doctoral dissertation, University of the West of England).

Higgins, M.C. and K. E. Kram (2001), 'Reconceptualizing mentoring at work: A developmental network perspective', *Academy of Management Review*, 26(2), 264–88.

Hummelsheim, D. and J. Hirschle (2010), 'Mother's employment: Cultural imprint or institutional governance? Belgium, West and East Germany in comparison', *European Societies*, 12(3), 339–66.

Huse, M. and A.G. Solberg (2006), 'Gender-related boardroom dynamics: How Scandinavian women make and can make contributions on corporate boards', *Women in Management Review*, 21(2), 113–30.

Kram, K.E. (1983), 'Phases of the mentor relationship', *Academy of Management Journal*, 26(4), 608–25.

Kunze, A. (2008), 'Gender wage gap studies: Consistency and decomposition', *Empirical Economics*, 35, 63–76.

Kvale, S. and S. Brinkmann (2009) *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. London: Sage.

Lines, R. (2007), 'Using power to install strategy: The relationships between expert power, position power, influence tactics and implementation success', *Journal of Change Management*, 7(2), 143–70.

Muir, S. (2012), 'Heidi versus Howard – perception barrier to be hurdled: Commissioner', *Agriculture Today*, accessed 13 August 2014 at www.dpi.nsw.gov .au/content/archive/agriculture-today-stories/ag-today-archive/march-2012/heidi -versus-howard-perception-barrier-to-be-hurdled-commissioner.

Osnes, G. (2011). 'Succession and authority: A case study of an African family busi-ness and a clan chief', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 11(2), 185–201.

Osnes, G. (2016), 'Strategic avenues for succession' in G. Osnes (ed.), *Family cap-italism: Best practices in ownership and leadership*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, pp. 179–92.

Osnes, G. and A. Wilhelmsen (2020), *Leadership and strategic succession: the how and why for boards and CEOs*, Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Osnes, G., A. Uribe, L. Hök, O.Y. Hou and M. Haug (2017), 'Autonomy and paradoxes in family ownership: Case studies across cultures and sectors', *Journal of Family Business Management*, 7(1), 93–110.

Osnes, G., L. Hök, O.Y. Hou, M. Haug, V. Grady and J.D. Grady (2018), 'Strategic plu-rality in intergenerational hand-over: Incubation and succession strategies in family ownership', *Journal of Family Business Management*, 9(2), 149–74.

Ostner, I. (2010), 'Farewell to the family as we know it: Family policy change in Germany', *German Policy Studies*, 6(1), 211.

Rogers, J. (2012), *Coaching skills: A handbook*, London: McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Schostak, J. (2006), *Interviewing and representation in qualitative research*. Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Sümer, H.C. (2006), 'Women in management: Still waiting to be full members of the club', *Sex Roles*, 55(1–2), 63–72.

Swartz, E., F.M. Amatucci and S. Coleman (2016), 'Still a man's world? Second generation gender bias in external equity term sheet negotiations', *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 21(03), 1650015.

Tetlock, P.E. and G. Mitchell (2009), 'Implicit bias and accountability systems: What must organizations do to prevent discrimination?' *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 29, 3–38.

Timmerman, S. and I. Tavory (2012), Construction in qualitative research: From grounded theory to abductive analysis, *Sociological Theory*, 30(3), 167–86.

Tsabari, N., R. Labaki and R.K. Zachary (2014), 'Toward the cluster model: The family firm's entrepreneurial behavior over generations', *Family Business Review*, 27, 161–85. doi:10.1177/0894486514525803.

Turner, E. and P. Hawkins (2016), 'Multi-stakeholder contracting in executive/busi-ness coaching: An analysis of practice and recommendations for gaining maximum value', *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 14(2), 48.

Vial, A.C., J.L. Napier and V.L. Brescoll (2016), 'A bed of thorns: Female leaders and the self-reinforcing cycle of illegitimacy', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 27(3), 400–414.

Ye, R., X.H. Wang, J.H. Wendt, J. Wu and M.C. Euwema (2016), 'Gender and managerial coaching across cultures: Female managers are coaching more', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 27(16), 1791–1812.

Table 6A.1   Appendix

Emotional bond in family ownership	Autonomy	Authority	Courage and affordable risk
CHINA: support from mother to daughter *Barrier:* patriarchal culture *Catalyst:* invisible leadership roles	'The first order I placed was for original wood buttons, which could be pinned on a bag or sweater. They sold so well that I thought, why not put other patterns on the wood buttons? With this thought, I went to the factory and asked if they could put strawberry patterns or colourful patterns on the wooden buttons? They said yes.'	'This one customer bought more or made a wholesale deal each time and then I would be very pleased. For me, it was a great win if I sold it out. After all, these toys were in stock and we could at least cover the original cost. There was one client who bought a lot from my store and then resold it on his own store and did well. Every time he put the new products online, the next day they would be gone.'	'The first order I placed was for original wood buttons, which could be pinned on a bag or sweater. They sold so well that I considered why not put other patterns on the wood button? With this thought, I went to the factory and asked if they could put strawberry patterns or colourful patterns on the wood button. They said yes.'
ISRAEL: support between husband and wife; from grandmother/ father to granddaughter *Barrier:* (for woman in focus) a patriarchal culture *Catalysts:* poverty and need; female leadership role-modelling	'Well, I have been in that office since 1963. My husband, when he was a guide, when he started having groups coming and the Jordanian, we were under the Jordanian regime and they said, "you cannot be a guide and a travel agent without an office. Either you be this or that." So of course when we had groups coming, we had to have an office. And we used to work from home.'	'Yeah. When he was a guide and we used to have groups coming, I used to hand in everything from our home. I used to make the correspondence and he would meet the groups in Turkey, in Jordan and bring them over. And then we thought, when he couldn't do any more guiding we had to open an office. And we opened an office. Not this office, it was in A-Zahra street. I was the head of the office.'	'The tourist business is very interesting. But in this country, I always say, working in the tourist business is like cards, it is like gambling. You can never say what will happen tomorrow. Anything that happens in the Middle East affects the tourist business.'

Emotional bond in family ownership	Autonomy	Authority	Courage and affordable risk
	'To be frank, if I stayed in Beit Jala, I would have married a boy from Beit Jala and I would have been nothing. Just sitting there and having more and more kids. But marrying my husband has great influence on me. He really helped me a lot and encouraged me.'		
USA: support from father to daughter *Barrier:* historic patriarchal culture *Catalysts:* poverty and need; visible female leadership role-modelling	'I have always been impressed how well mother and dad work so well together. Mother is, like I said, the brains behind the financial part of it and knowing what will work there and you know, how much you can spend to build it and what you would need to make – and kind of thinking through all of that.	'I guess I always felt a part of the BBQ business. As soon as I was able, I would help out by wiping down tables and when I was old enough, I would run the cash register. But when I got further into high school, I got an independent streak and I decided I wanted to work for somebody else for a while.	'But I learned a lot. I saw the way they did things and it worked for them but I saw where I could also make improvements and have different things in the meal. They only had fried chicken. I thought that it would be good to have grilled chicken because everybody was becoming more health conscious at that time

Emotional bond in family ownership	Autonomy	Authority	Courage and affordable risk
	She is very much the strength behind him and both of them are very strong people with very good character. They are people-oriented so they are very good with customers. They always want to please the customer and that is very important and obviously, in the restaurant business, the customer is always right.'	I just wanted to have the experience of working in a different environment so I got a job at a chicken-finger place. I liked it; it seemed like a really simply, neat, popular concept and just saw how packed it was all the time. I was 18 and graduating high school and went to Daddy and said I wanted to open a chicken-finger restaurant. It gave me a greater appreciation even working for someone else. I saw, you know, how good Daddy was to his employees. He was never just a boss and not just because I was his daughter. He is that way with all of his employees. He cares about them and wants to be a part of their lives and to influence them. I had a very deep appreciation for him as a business owner and a boss.'	and just some things like that and just a very simple, easy-to-fix menu and daddy was interested but I was so young and I wasn't married and I needed to go to college and all of that so we kind of put in on the back burner for a while. About that time, daddy came and said that if we wanted to go ahead and open one instead of taking all those years to finish college that he and momma would put up the money to do that. My husband really took to the idea of doing that. So we went ahead and dove in—Mom and Dad put up the money and owned the restaurant and we ran it together. I was very proud to be in business with Daddy and that he would trust us enough to do a good job. We would then buy it from them.'