

**Mighty Girl:
Empowering girls through leadership development**

by
Lauren Tetford
April 22nd, 2020

A Portfolio submitted to the Faculty of Education in partial fulfillment for the requirements for
the degree of Master of Education (Education for Change, Social Justice)

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
Orillia, ON

© Lauren Tetford 2020

Abstract

Many girls face a significant decline in their self-esteem during adolescence. However, there is a connection between the skills girls can develop in order to improve their self-esteem, and the development of a leadership identity. Those who develop a leadership identity redefine leadership in a way that disrupts gender stereotypes and expectations, and allows them to see their own capacity to be a leader. What is notably missing from extant research are the resources that can be used to develop and practise leadership skills, and spaces in which girls can see themselves as leaders.

This portfolio provides a workshop that encourages girls to see themselves as leaders, and aims to improve girls' leadership skills as well as target societal barriers and stereotypes that lead to the decline of many girls' self-esteem. The research that served as the foundation for the workshop focused on two research questions: *How can encouraging the development of leadership skills help girls improve their self-esteem and create a leadership identity? How might girls' participation in community engagement serve as an opportunity to practise their leadership skills and, in that process, improve their self-esteem?*

The portfolio encompassed three tasks; a formal literature review, conducting a survey, and developing a leadership workshop for adolescent girls in grades 6-12. From the literature review and survey responses, four themes emerged: Changing dominant ideas about gender, redefining leadership, creating a leadership identity and utilizing leadership skills. These themes were used as the structure of the workshop. Overall, the aim was to create a resource that would help girls recognize their capacity to be a leader at a time in adolescence when many girls' self-esteem displays a decline.

Acknowledgments

I have learned so much during the process of completing my portfolio. Over the past two years I have been challenged, stretched, frustrated, excited, inspired and encouraged. Both my portfolio and I have grown in so many ways, which is due immensely to the people who have come alongside me in this journey.

To Dr. Jenny Roth, my supervisor. You took my initial rough portfolio idea and helped shape and mold it into what it is today. Thank you for your guidance and incredible insight and knowledge. Thank you for the encouragement, and the smiley faces you would put next to a critique or particularly large edit. This portfolio is more than I ever thought it could be because of the time and commitment you poured into it. Thank you Dr. Gerald Walton for taking the time to so carefully edit my work. Thank you to Dr. Frances Helyar, who I had the privilege to work as a Graduate Assistant with. It has been such a privilege to work, and learn, alongside you for the past two years.

To my family, thank you for your constant love, support and encouragement throughout this entire process. Thank you for providing me with a safe space in which I could work, but also where I could seek comfort and kindness when things were particularly challenging. Thank you for all the laughs just when I needed them, and encouraging me to take a break now and then. You believed in me when I did not always believe in myself. I made it here because of all of you.

Thank you to my friends for the fun study days and breaks in between, and for your understanding and support. Thank you for constantly asking how my portfolio was going, even when you would receive the same answer (“fine”). Thank you for taking the time to tell me you believed in me, it meant so much! To Shauna, my fellow Master’s buddy thank you for your constant listening ear and words of encouragement. I hope you know how much of an inspiration and motivator you were during this journey. I am grateful I could share in the ups and downs of Master’s with you!

To the women in my life, young and old, you inspire me each and every day. You exemplify, exactly, the image of a strong leader in your actions and your words. As you uplift and empower the people around you, you are also providing them with a space to “just be”. Together, you are creating a better world and I am inspired by you. You have encouraged me to want to see every girl have the guidance and mentorship in their lives that I have received. I chose to include the word “mighty” in the title of my workshop because I felt it described the strength, and resiliency, but also the grace and kindness of the women around me. You all showed me what being “mighty” truly means.

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	7
Overview and Research Questions	7
Portfolio Process	11
Personal Connection	14
Definitions	18
Chapter Two: Literature Review	20
Self-Esteem	20
Changes to Girls’ Self-esteem in Adolescence.....	20
Negative Messages within Society	23
Societal Norms and Expectations	24
Marginalized Voices.....	26
Girls’ Leadership Identity Development	27
Redefining Leadership.....	28
Barriers to Leadership Roles	29
Leadership as a Capacity Not a Character Trait	31
Developing Leadership Skills.....	32
Leadership and the Importance of Mentorship.....	34
Community-Engagement: Links to Leadership Development	35
Experiencing Leadership and Skill Development	35
Improving Well-being and Self-esteem.....	36
Fostering Engagement Without Barriers	38
Group Dynamics in Community.....	39
Resources and Support	40
Conclusion	41
Chapter Three: Methodology	43
Design	43
Participants	44
Procedure and Materials	44
Ethical Consideration	45
Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion	46

Aim One	46
What Was Significant About the Way the Participants Defined Leadership?	49
Was There an Existence of Gender Stereotypes in the Definition?	51
Aim Two	52
Aim Three	56
What did the participants say were beneficial activities and what was beneficial about these activities?	56
How could the survey participants' examples be made into a workshop activity?	58
Limitations	59
Future Research	60
Chapter Five: Workshop	61
Introduction	62
Definitions	63
Facilitator's Guide	65
Leading Activities and Discussions.....	65
Safety Measures.....	65
Workshop Logistics	66
Participants	66
Location and Set-up.....	66
Promotion and Waivers	66
Registration.....	66
Workshop Timelines	67
Outline of Activities	72
Workshop Additions	84
Mentors/helpers	84
Community Engagement Opportunities	84
Speaker	84
Quiet Journal time	85
Additional Guiding Discussion Questions:	85
Icebreakers:.....	86
Material List	88

Resources	90
Workshop References	95
Chapter Six: Conclusion	97
References	99
Appendices	105
Appendix A: Survey questions	105
Appendix B: Underage Participant Information Letter & Consent Form	106
Appendix C: Adult Participant Information Letter	111

Chapter One: Introduction

My portfolio project is grounded in work that notes the particular challenges that many girls face in building leadership identities. Those who develop a leadership identity redefine leadership in a way that disrupts gender stereotypes and expectations, and allows them to see themselves as leaders. For example, as a researcher in feminist theory and empowerment, Harris (2004) believes that girls are important future stakeholders (p. 15). However, Harris also recognizes that the societal barriers, stereotypes and pressures that most girls face can leave them feeling “alienated and self-destructive” (p. 14). Researchers in self-esteem, Baldwin and Hoffman (2002), found that during adolescence, most girls experience a drastic decrease in self-esteem (p. 101, see also Harris, 2004, and Williams & Ferber, 2008, p. 50). Similarly, according to Williams and Ferber (2008), many girls have higher self-esteem entering school than they have at graduation (p. 50), and Steese et al. (2006) found that most adolescent girls face a serious decline in self-esteem by age eight or nine, “from which some will never recover” (p. 58).

Overview and Research Questions

The goal of my portfolio was to create a workshop that improves girls’ leadership skills and targets societal barriers and stereotypes that lead to the decline of many girls’ self-esteem. I designed a leadership workshop based on feedback from girls and women who have participated in community-based volunteer activities. My portfolio focuses on two research questions: *How can encouraging the development of leadership skills help girls improve their self-esteem and create a leadership identity? How might girls’ participation in community engagement serve as an opportunity to practise their leadership skills and, in that process, improve their self-esteem?*

My portfolio provides a tool to encourage girls to see themselves as leaders. Developing leadership self-perception is one way to provide girls with skills that will help them to resist

gender stereotypic norms that negatively impact their self-esteem. For example, in their work on skills that are critical to adolescent development, Zarrett and Eccles (2006) found that young people need “confidence in their abilities, good social skills, high self-esteem, and good coping skills” to confront the challenges they face (p. 17). Mongrain, Chin and Shapira (2010), Archard (2013) and Steese et al. (2006) found a significant correlation between improved leadership skills and building the skills that Zarrett and Eccles identify. Similarly, Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) note that a focus on female leadership is useful because many females “struggle to develop a leadership identity, have to account for gaps in confidence and self-efficacy for leadership and face structural and organizational barriers in leadership” (p. 33). However, biases, stereotypes, and gendered expectations hinder many girls from developing certain skills which would serve to mitigate the decrease in self-esteem they experience in adolescence. For example, characteristics associated with females are often not assigned to leadership roles. Nash, Davies and Moore (2017) state, “women are considered to be more suitable in scenarios demanding teamwork, whereas men are perceived to be more effective in situations requiring authority” (p. 1). In contrast, women demonstrate male-associate traits are assumed to be less likable and socially desirable (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 86). These stereotypes and gender biases can deter some girls from pursuing leadership roles in the first place. Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) put it clearly when they state that “in order to develop girls’ and young women’s leadership, we need to focus on developing their leadership identity, their efficacy for leadership, and their capacity to practise leadership” (p. 39).

In addition to connections between girls’ self-esteem and their development of leadership skills, there is also a correlation between actively utilizing leadership skills and improved self-esteem, which is why I wanted to gather data from girls and women who had taken part in

leadership activities. Participants in the survey portion of my portfolio (please see “Chapter Three”), were able to confirm which leadership activities were particularly useful to building their leadership skills. In addition, their responses provided insight into how leadership can be defined, and the importance of resources that encourages leadership development.

I used the survey responses to build an activity in my portfolio that aims to help strengthen girls’ leadership skills by applying strategies they learn in the workshop. In addition, my portfolio also suggests community engagement as a means of practising leadership skills. Some scholarship indicates that community and group-based work does impact positively on self-esteem. For example, Marmarosh and Corazzini’s (1997) work on the influence of group membership and self-worth incorporates the *Social Identity Theory*, which argues that the “self” involves both individualist and group-centered components (p. 65). Based on the *Social Identity Theory*, Marmarosh and Corazzini argue that there are positive correlations between personal self-esteem and group self-esteem.

Furthermore, the need for resources in order to improve leadership skills is apparent. Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) find a lack of empirical research on the experiences and challenges faced by many girls in leadership positions (p. 36). What Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) as well as Brown, Hoyer and Nicholson’s (2012) findings suggest is that more resources need to be available to improve the leadership skills and self-esteem of young women. Similarly, Williams and Ferber (2008) found that girls tend not to grow up to be empowered adults “unless they are encouraged to see themselves as capable and valuable and to develop self-confidence and resiliency” (p. 51).

From a young age, children unconsciously internalize gender norms that derive from gender biases and stereotypes perpetuated in families and within society. Due to this

internalization, Eagly and Carli (2017) found that gender norms might instantly come to mind when thinking of males and females, so that it “feels right” to categorize them in certain ways (p.86). For example, Eagly and Carli (2017) note that if two jobs, a kindergarten teacher and a prosecuting attorney, are proposed, most people would associate a woman as the kindergarten teacher and a man as the prosecuting attorney because it “feels right” (p. 86). The internalization of gender norms also reflects how leadership roles are perceived. Internalizing gender biases, as Eagly and Carli (2017) suggest, means that the belief that “men make better leaders” is also internalized as Cousineau and Roth (2012) also note, because of the characteristics associated with leadership roles, and the skills men are expected to have. Cousineau and Roth (2017) describe this as “patriarchal leadership,” in which the internalized understanding that men make better leaders means that males, and masculine-associated skills, are preferred in leadership roles; including skills that include problem-solving, assertiveness, decision making and dominance (p. 430). Accordingly, Nash, Davies and Moore (2017) state that females pursuing leadership positions feel pressure to adopt stereotypical masculine characteristics (p. 4). However, when women take on more masculine-associated characteristics to be accepted as leaders, they will likely be criticized for not conforming to gender norms. Gregory-Mina (2011) found that when women adopt masculine characteristics, they are “chastised for deviating from their stereotypical gender role” (p. 7). Even more so, Eagly and Carli (2017) note that women in leadership who appear more masculine in their character, are also painted as “less likable, less attractive, less happy and less socially desirable” (p. 105). This is evident in the way famous female leaders are perceived by the public. For example, Margaret Thatcher, the former Prime Minister of England, was described by Ronald Reagan as “the best man in England” (Belfast Telegraph, 2013, line 15). In her run for American President, Hillary Clinton was often labelled

as “disconnected”, “flawed”, and “unlikable” (Pittman, 2019, para 2, respectively). Other historic leaders such as Catherine the Great and Queen Elizabeth, were seen as cold and cruel when in male-dominated positions. Seeing women in leadership roles criticized for taking on masculine qualities because it is expected of them, does not welcome girls into these types of positions. The fear of criticism or punishment for conforming to masculine characteristics may cause girls to feel hesitant, or even fearful, to pursue leadership positions altogether. To combat this, leadership roles should evolve to become de-gendered. Doing so may allow girls to feel they can create a leadership identity that is not defined by gender expectations, in addition to helping them identify themselves as leaders and apply their own identity to leadership roles.

Given the research outlined above that indicates connections between many girls’ self-esteem and their future capacity to become leaders, I explored, using the participant survey feedback, the best ways that self-esteem and leadership skills could be improved through participation in my workshop. Drawing from the research that I have explored, I created a workshop which will encourage leadership among girls and that aims to challenge existing gender stereotypes, assumptions and norms. Steese et al.’s (2006) study on a girl-focused community group found significant changes that were beneficial for the girls’ development. The principles of the community group align with the goal of my portfolio: to create an accessible workshop that can be used in a variety of contexts, such as in schools, camps or clubs to engage girls in activities that will enhance their understanding of themselves as potential leaders.

Portfolio Process

My two research questions have helped shape my portfolio into three tasks: producing a formal literature review, designing and implementing a survey and designing a workshop. The literature review focuses on three themes: leadership identity, self-esteem and community

engagement. Each of these themes directly correlate to, and therefore serve as, the workshop foundation. The literature review identifies evidence-based approaches to increasing most girls' self-esteem; the role of gender norms in constructing leadership stereotypes, and ways to undo those stereotypes; and the usefulness of community engagement in building girls' self-perception as leaders. This data led to the creation of most of the workshop activities, as well as supporting the use of a survey to incorporate girls' voices into my portfolio process.

The second aspect of my portfolio consists of a short, three question survey that asked participants to share how they define leadership, leadership activities they have taken part in, and what they gained from these experiences, specifically, what skills they felt they developed. The survey was distributed to girls and women over the age of twelve who had participated in leadership activities during adolescence. The girls ages twelve to eighteen were recruited from the not-for-profit group WE2 Unite. As the aim of my portfolio was to build a leadership workshop based on the findings in my literature review and the feedback from adolescent girls, my qualitative approach allowed me to see how the survey participants made meaning of their experiences. Their experiential knowledge was used to justify the necessity of a workshop for adolescent girls. In addition, themes were drawn from the leadership activities the participants felt were beneficial, which were then applied to the creation of an activity within my workshop.

The final task of my portfolio, built on the research from my literature review, and the experiential knowledge of the girls I surveyed, was to create a workshop that helps girls to see themselves as leaders.

Based on the literature review and the survey, the workshop was structured around four main themes:

1. **Redefining leadership:** Encourage girls to define what leadership means to them in order to challenge stereotypes of ‘undesirable’ feminine-linked leadership qualities, and help the girls to understand that leadership takes many different forms. The activities that support this theme focus specifically on encouraging the girls to see the different leadership skills that are unique to each girl.
2. **Creating a leadership identity:** Building on, and interwoven with, the foundations of the first theme, these workshop tasks aim to help girls create a vision of themselves as leaders and to see their capacity to be a leader in different contexts.
3. **Changing dominant ideas about gender:** Activities in support of this theme will discuss and debunk assumptions, pressures and gendered expectations girls may already face, to help target the self-esteem decline many girls experience in adolescence that can discourage girls from pursuing leadership roles.
4. **Utilizing leadership skills:** The task(s) associated with this theme are based on the survey results and incorporate the benefits of community engagement as a suggested means of practising the strategies learned in the workshop. In addition, this theme will serve as a space in which the girls will explore how they can utilize leadership skills in their daily lives.

The survey findings and literature review were utilized to create the activities in each of these themes. My workshop is also centered on one main purpose: that each participant realizes she has the capacity to be a leader in her own unique way. Based on this purpose, the goals of this workshop target societal barriers and stereotypes, redefine leadership, help the girls create a leadership identity, and offer ways in which the girls can strengthen and utilize their leadership

skills. Community engagement is suggested as an optional way in which the leadership skills discussed in this workshop can be practised.

Personal Connection

When I was in grade school, if I had been asked whether I was a leader, my response would be an emphatic “no”. My grade 6-12 self would have defined a leader as someone who was outgoing and charismatic; loud and domineering. I believed a leader had a presence that drew everyone’s attention, was confident in who they are and what they do and was bold and extroverted. These characteristics seemed to completely contrast my personality. I drew the conclusion that I was not, nor could be, a leader. However, if I were asked that same question today, it would give me pause. My definition of what a leader is continues to evolve and change, especially since beginning my Master’s research study.

Reflecting on what led me to this research topic, there are a few experiences that particularly stand out. These experiences have forced me to reconsider how I defined what it means to be a leader, and my assumption that I was not one. The first is my experience in university, and particularly how involved I became with various clubs in the Wilfrid Laurier University’s Students’ Union (WLUSU). Beginning in my first year, I began volunteering with the WLUSU committee *Laurier Students for Literacy*, which tutored local elementary students at the library. From there, I became more involved over the years, volunteering with most of the committees and taking on greater responsibilities. I became an executive on *Laurier Students for Literacy*, in which I ran a weekly after-school club with 5-6 other volunteers, was the vice-president of a kindness club, and was on the WLUSU *Hiring Committee*, on which I helped interview and hire students for the committees themselves. I also became an ice-breaker for our first year Orientation Week; an experience that would once have been very much outside of my

comfort zone. The second experience that comes to mind is when I worked as a Section Coordinator for the primary division at a summer day-camp. My role was to plan the crafts and games for the primary division, along with overseeing the day-to-day running of that division. Specifically, I helped and supported the camp leaders, and worked with campers that needed particular attention. I also helped with training the counselors and providing them with tools to work with primary-age children, which at this camp was grades 1-2. My third experience has been working with WE Unite, a local not-for-profit that assists people in crisis within the community, particularly with the loss of loved ones through providing meals and organizing funerals. WE Unite also hosts a number of events in order to bring the women in the local community together. Their overall goal is to empower women by providing opportunities to volunteer and engage with their community. My role with WE Unite is overseeing WE2 Unite, which is aimed at empowering girls in grades 6-12. I also assisted with the planning and running of WE Unite events.

Each of these three experiences stand out to me, particularly because, at the time, I did not consider myself to be a leader. While I was taking on leadership roles, I did not feel as though I fit into my definition of what it means to be a leader. I was still quiet and withdrawn, I was more of a helper and a listener, and I liked to be in the background more than I liked to be front-and-center. It was not until I began to work more closely with the girls in WE2 Unite that I began reconsidering what defined someone as a leader. I started to realize that each of the girls in the group brought with them their own strengths, talents and perspectives, and that each of them had so much to offer. However, they were also critical of themselves and their abilities. I began to consider why they did not consider themselves leaders, and then made connections to my own ideas about how we create a definition of a leader in the first place. How would providing girls

the opportunity to define leadership in their own way, separated from possible gender stereotypes and self-criticism, change the ways girls view themselves? Would they begin to see their capacity to be a leader and, if so, what greater impact could this have on their self-esteem?

It is statistically demonstrated that most adolescent girls face a significant decline in their self-esteem and confidence. Steese et al. (2006) state that by eight or nine, girls are at risk of a serious decline in self-esteem, “from which some will never recover” (p. 58). LeCroy and Daley (2004) state that while 60% of girls ages eight to nine report having positive feelings towards themselves, their self-value drops to 29% by age sixteen (p. 50). Beyond statistics, this decline is something that I experienced personally. I have always been passionate about empowering females, particularly girls, but it was not until it became very personal that I started making these connections and began to question how encouraging leadership development might make an impact on their self-esteem.

As I have begun to reconsider the definition of leadership, I think back to those three experiences and how each of them helped me develop different skills. I learned teamwork, communication and organizational skills; I learned how to support and guide others, how to be resilient and creative when challenges arise; I learned how to use my voice and share my ideas; and I learned that being observant, patient and quiet can actually be a strength. Along the way, I learned how to be a leader, and I began to realize that these skills are all important in leadership. It is a constant, and evolving process and one I am still working on, but it makes me even more passionate to share this with young girls. If we can begin changing how we view leadership, begin showing girls that they have the capacity to be leaders by developing their own skills, and if we can show girls that they can make an impact in their communities, what influence will this have on their futures as women? How much sooner could they recognize that they are already

leaders? From my own experiences, I know the impact this recognition can have on an individual. This knowledge has led me into this research topic, and the construction of my workshop.

Definitions

In my research, I employ terms that readers outside the field of women's studies might not be familiar with. In order to help, I describe, drawing from scholarship, a few terms used commonly throughout my writing.

Feminine-linked: The term feminine-linked is defined as qualities, characteristics, skills and traits that are associated with traditional feminine expectations (Haber-Curran and Sulpizio, 2017, p. 37). These connections are not related to the biological make-up of a female, but rather are social constructs of assumed behaviors a women should have. Men can also be feminine-linked; when they are, as in the case of queer men for example, they are often vilified for it. In a leadership context, specific skills such as being empathetic and organized might be expected of women in leadership positions because traditional feminine expectations are applied to a woman's leadership style (Gregory-Mina, 2011, p. 9).

Gender Bias: Gender bias is the partiality or favouring of boys and men over girls and women (Haber-Curran & Sulpizio, 2017). Gender-bias exists when a man's socially-constructed skills, behaviours or characteristics are valued over a woman's. Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) found that, in leadership, skills such as aggressiveness and dominance are often favoured. As these skills are often associated with men, they then tend to be favoured in leadership roles (Gregory-Mina, 2011). Favouring men in leadership positions occurs because it is assumed they obtain more desirable traits than women is an example of gender-bias.

Gendered: Applying gender stereotypes, norms, or characteristics, which are social constructs, not biological, to an object, concept or position. Examples include gendered positions, such as associating men with lawyers and CEO positions, and women with nursing or teaching, as well

as gendered skills, such as perceiving men as rational decision-makers and women as nurturing caregivers.

Masculine-linked: The term masculine-linked is defined as qualities, characteristics, skills and traits that are associated specifically with men because of expectations on men to be masculine; often meaning assertive, competitive, and dominant (Haber-Curran and Sulpizio, 2017, p. 37).

These connections are not related to the biological make-up of a male, but rather are social constructs of assumed behaviours a man should have. Similar to feminine-linked men, women can exhibit masculine-linked behaviours (Halberstam, 1998). In a leadership context, specific skills such as being aggressive, dominant and charismatic might be expected of men in leadership positions because of gender ideology (Gregory-Mina, 2011, p. 9; Armstrong, 2019). This gendered perspective often divides skills and characteristics between men and women, and can lead to a gender-bias that favours men, as well as the perpetuation of a false gender binary.

Social Norms: Social norms are defined as a set of beliefs that become normalized in society. Social norms are often assumed to be true and are expected to be followed in order to uphold the societal status quo of gender ideology. Social norms significantly influence the stereotypes used to categorize men and women (Haber-Curran & Sulpizio, 2017, p. 41). In the context of this study, social norms often assume certain behaviours and actions of females that meet the socially-constructed expectations of their gender as girls and women (Rouhani, 2017, p. 36). For example, one social norm for a female might include that they should be naturally nurturing and will want to pursue having a family (Armstrong, 2019). The need to satisfy and uphold certain social norms can affect both men's and women's self-esteem and identity (Gregory-Mina, 2011, p. 153).

Chapter Two: Empowering Girls through Leadership Development: A Literature Review

The goal of my portfolio was to create a workshop that improved girls' leadership skills and targeted societal barriers and stereotypes that lead to a decline of self-esteem among most girls. I incorporated skills development in the context of community engagement. I was interested in exploring three themes: Self-esteem, leadership identity and community engagement, in order to gain a well-rounded understanding of the topic, and to create a useful workshop. My literature review analyzed each of these themes, and their underlying components. In addition, I outlined how the literature aligns with the tasks that structured my portfolio.

Self-Esteem

Changes to Girls' Self-esteem in Adolescence

Adolescence marks a critical time in life, but for girls it can also introduce challenges of specific gendered issues. For example, when they are young, many girls tend to possess a positive perception of themselves and their identity. However, as they enter into adolescence, their perception can become distorted by societal standards, socialization and gender biases. As Polce-Lynch, Myers, Kilmartin, Frossman-Falke and Kliewer (1998) found, most girls' "fragile perception of self takes a downward tumble during middle school years" (p. 1027). Mosknes and Espnes (2013) argue that self-esteem is dynamic, constantly fluctuating and changing as an individual moves through their life. However, theorists, including Baldwin and Hoffman (2002), argue that this change is most noticeable during the adolescent years, especially for girls. Baldwin and Hoffmann (2002) also note that during girls' adolescence, many experience changes in their physical, mental and social identities and a shift in their self-concepts and self-consciousness (p. 101). This change brings with it a decrease in self-esteem, as more awareness of their "self" leads to a greater awareness of insecurities (p. 101).

Similarly, according to LeCroy and Daley (2004), while 60% of girls ages eight to nine report having positive feelings towards themselves, their self-value drops to 29% by age sixteen (see also: Williams & Ferber, 2008, p. 50). This observation is noted in past work, such as Pipher's (1994), who found that "something dramatic happens to girls in early adolescence... they lose their resiliency and optimism and become less curious and inclined to take risks. They lose their assertive, energetic and 'tomboyish' personalities and become more deferential, self-critical and depressed" (p. 19). Pipher's (1994) comment, however, does make the generalization that all girls will go through the same experience. While applicable to some girls, it is important to note that Pipher's assumption cannot be applied to all girls.

Using seven years of data collected from the *Family Health Study* in Midwestern US and the *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale* (1979), Baldwin and Hoffman's (2002) study revealed that both age and gender have a significant effect on self-esteem. Hack, Garcia, Goodfriend, Habashi and Hoover's (2019) more recent study found that "individuals who experience discriminatory behaviour based on their gender report negative effects on psychological well-being, including lowered self-esteem" (p. 3). Hack et al. (2019) went on to note that when girls are teased about their gender, they may disengage from activities such as school sports or physical activity from a lack of self-esteem (p. 24). Baldwin and Hoffman's (2002) data showed much more dramatic fluctuations in self-esteem among most girls than most boys, and that the self-esteem of females aged 12-17 decreased immensely, while males' decreased, but then quickly rose again, between ages 14 and 16 (p. 110). For females, a decline at ages 12 or 13 indicates the start of puberty, a time when most girls experience changes that make them self-conscious of their bodies (p. 110). Baldwin and Hoffman (2002) also cite stress as an impact on self-esteem for females, who, they

argue, “are more likely to react to stress with attenuated self-esteem and perhaps more depressive symptoms” (p. 110).

Similarly, Lecroy and Daley (2001) argue that, “during their early-adolescent year, many young girls experience a ‘crisis in confidence’ that can seriously undermine their chances for educational and career success later in life” (p. 8). Zarrett and Eccles (2006) concur, showing that before most youth can pursue their future path, they first need “confidence in their abilities, good social skills, high self-esteem, and good coping skills” in order to manage the challenges they may face (p. 17). Without a space in which their confidence and leadership skills can be developed, however, how can girls be expected to pursue a life in such roles?

In addition, adolescence marks a time in most girls’ lives in which the perception of themselves often relies on the approval of others. Robinson (1995) describes adolescence as a time when “the struggles to define the self and to arrive at an adaptive level of connectedness with, as well as independence from, others is particularly salient” (p. 254). Marmarosh and Crazzini’s (1997) “social identity theory” argues that an individual’s identity is not only based on self but also what they define as “group memberships” (p. 65). This “group membership”, according to Marmarosh and Crazzini (1997), is based on two fundamental needs: to belong and to be unique (p. 66). Thus, the complexities of self-esteem rely not only on the self-worth a girl places on herself, but also on what she believes others think of her, creating an added fragility to a girls’ self-esteem. This research highlights the need to prepare, uplift and encourage girls, and justifies the importance of focusing on girls within the context of my own study.

Negative Messages within Society

The decline of self-esteem for many girls at adolescence is linked to messages embedded in social norms. Harris' (2004) study on self-esteem finds that the current state of society can either "fill young women with confidence" or "leave them alienated and self-destructive" (p. 14). Many researchers support the latter of Harris' claims, including Williams and Ferber (2008) who argue that the media, which they call "girl-toxic", is the cause of decreased self-esteem among most girls (p. 49). Although not all media is "girl-toxic" as Williams and Ferber suggest, their argument is salient. Certain forms of media can perpetuate patriarchal gender ideology that leads to issues including body image, relationships, gender socialization and bullying, which are all contributing factors to a decreased self-esteem in the majority of girls (Williams & Ferber, 2008, p. 49). Harris (2004), like Williams and Ferber, argues that some forms of media, such as television advertisement and magazines, play a large role in sending the message that girls must fit into a certain feminine "box". The expectation to live up to certain gendered standards is often detrimental to a girl's self-esteem because they seem unattainable. This is why Harris (2004) calls for a change to the gendered messaging that is perpetuated within society.

Robinson (1995) finds that often some adolescent girls internalize the approval of others as positive feelings towards themselves (p. 255). Having one's self-worth rely on the approval of others leaves one in a state of identity fragility. Peer groups, in particular, play a significant role in self-worth among adolescents (p. 257). The results of Robinson's (1995) study on interventions aimed at improving self-esteem, found that approval had a greater impact on self-worth than any other type of aid (p. 272). The message promoted in society is often that adolescent girls must conform to certain standards which are categorized by specific gendered stereotypes. Gendered stereotypes are perpetuated by the expectations of many peer groups and girls feeling the need for approval.

Societal Norms and Expectations

Part of the pressure facing most adolescent girls comes from the expectations of gender norms that girls can face from a young age. Sexism and chauvinism existent in society often perpetuates certain gender norms that can categorize girls into groups based on their skills and characteristics. For example, based on their early behavior, girls may be labelled “girly” or, by contrast, “tomboyish”. In addition, girls are often expected to fall into certain roles, such as the nurturing caregiver, the polite and gentle lady, or the good student. Harris (2004) notes two groups in particular in her book, *Future girl: Young women in the twenty-first century*: “can-do girls” and “at-risk” girls. According to Harris, the “can-do” girl is “flexible, individualized, resilient, self-driven, and self-made” (p. 16). Can-do girls aim for success and are determined to achieve their goals (p. 16). On the other hand, the “at-risk” girl is described as “either most at-risk or those most likely to be risk-takers” and is often judged for her circumstantial disadvantage (p. 24). Harris (2004) argues that gender norms categorize girls into one of these two groups, often based on perceptions of the girls’ “strategic effort and good personal choices” (p. 31). Harris finds that these social expectations place undue pressure on the girls themselves, noting that “can-do girls are rarely able to fail, while other young women have few opportunities to succeed” (p. 31). Harris (2004) and Haber-Curran Sulpizio (2017), among others, argue that gender biases, gender norms sexism and chauvinism can negatively impact a girl’s self-esteem. Baldwin and Hoffman’s (2002) own proposed theory argues that “a positive evaluation of the self stems from having more success than one expected, whereas a negative evaluation stems from having fewer successes than one expected” (p. 101). In relation to Harris’ (2004) “can-do” and “at-risk” girls, Baldwin and Hoffman’s (2002) theory assumes that achievement dictates the level of self-satisfaction a girl feels. Therefore, they argue that whether it is a girl’s constant

striving for success or her feelings of failure, most girls' sense of self-value comes from unattainable standards.

Baldwin and Hoffman's (2002) discussion highlights a dire need for many girls to break free from societal expectations placed on them in accordance with their gender. For example, some research shows that some women are hesitant to pursue certain fields because they are associated more significantly with male-related characteristics. Cousineau and Roth's (2012) study, for example, highlights a hesitancy for women to enter outdoor recreational positions (p. 422, 433) and Nash, Davies and Moore (2017) related the lower number of women in the STEM fields to gender expectations and biases (p. 4). Similarly, Eagly and Carli (2007) found that the existence of gender biases and stereotypes in the workplace can deter women back from pursuing certain positions (p. 72, 78). Eagly and Carli state:

When people hear about a woman succeeding in a male-dominated occupation such as electrical engineering, they assume that the woman is less likable, less attractive, less happy, and less socially desirable than a woman who succeeds in a typically feminine career. (p. 105)

Harris (2004) found that gender stereotypes also exist in media such as advertisements, magazines and television shows (p. 120). In addition, women may also feel hindered by the pressure women often feel to have a family, which may be supported by familial traditions, certain religions or ethnicities, in addition to perpetuated by certain sources of media (Eagly & Carli, 2017, p. 67; Rouhani, 2017). Overall, gendered categories, expectations and assumptions serve only as barriers to most girls, and may dissuade them from pursuing roles that might be outside what is categorized as "feminine". Girls need to be provided with the opportunity to define their identity, and their futures, for themselves in order to change the way they view

leadership. Doing so can create a greater awareness of societal barriers they might unconsciously internalize, disrupting gender stereotypes that are often applied to leadership roles. This is what my workshop aims to accomplish through the use of discussions and activities.

Marginalized Voices

A significant cause of low self-esteem among many girls is that gender norms tend to encourage girls' compliance and silence. Researchers such as Harris (2004) recognize that marginalized people often do not have the opportunity to have their voice heard. Harris (2004) states that when they reach adolescence and become aware of the barriers and expectations of them, most girls lose their ability to freely express themselves. In fact, Harris (2004) marks the time of adolescence as a "loss of voice, the narrowing of desire and expectations, the capitulation to femininity" (p. 132). Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) argue that building a healthy self-esteem relies on learning to access, use and embrace the power of one's voice (p. 41). Therefore, any hope of improving self-esteem means creating spaces in which girls use their voice.

Research that incorporates feminist methods, and utilizes the stories of otherwise marginalized participants, also emphasizes the importance of creating spaces where individuals have the opportunity to use their voice. Hilfinger, Messias, De Jong and McLoughlin's (2005) study, for example, focused on the voices of the marginalized group they were working with, which positively impacted the participants' confidence. Robinson's (1995) youth participants highlighted the importance of allowing young voices to be heard. Other examples include Aoun's (2011) thesis that incorporated the voices of mentors in order to better understand what benefits mentors received from their experiences, and Gregory-Mina's (2011) dissertation that incorporated the voices of male and female MBA students to find their perspective on the gender characteristics of corporate officers. Gregory-Mina (2011) argued that including otherwise

marginalized voices allowed her to find embedded gender biases and sexism within the corporate world. In each of the above studies, the participants were understood to be experts, because they had experienced the research question first-hand.

The aim of my portfolio project is not just to empower the voices of girls in the workshop itself, but during the entire study process. As Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) note, girls need to learn how to embrace the power of their own voice. In the workshop process, it is important that girls are provided with the opportunity to share what does, and does not, improve their leadership skills and help tackle self-esteem issues. Providing spaces in which girls can begin to find, and develop, their voice is the first step in accomplishing Haber-Curran and Sulpizio's (2017) goal, therefore one aim of my workshop is to create such a space.

Girls' Leadership Identity Development

Before any girl can begin to develop their leadership skills, they first need to be able to recognize themselves as leaders. During adolescence, when many girls' self-esteem declines, creating a leadership identity can be a challenge. Archard (2013) argues that it is difficult for some girls to create "an image of themselves as a leader", and that a gendered "sense of self" is often the key barrier (p. 53). One of the aims of my workshop is to improve the willingness of participants to take on leadership roles as adults, so the workshop aims to help girls see themselves as leaders at a young age. Archard (2013), along with Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017), describe seeing one's self in a leadership role as a leadership identity. Archard notes that creating a girl's leadership identity means "providing girls with an understanding of themselves as leaders, enabling girls to envisage themselves within this role, and thus ensuring that girls [are] less likely to feel excluded from such positions in the future" (p. 65). Haber-Curran and

Sulpizio (2017) argue that building a leadership identity can help many girls to find their voices, recognize their power and see their capacity for authority (p. 38).

Redefining Leadership

In the course of creating a leadership identity, it is helpful to redefine leadership in order to disrupt the gender perceptions that tend to favour masculine-linked characteristics. Archard (2013) argues that presenting different forms of leaders can allow girls to see themselves in leadership roles much more clearly; rather than feeling they need to fit into a certain gendered role. Bean (2004), for example, outlines two types of leadership: the *autonomous leader* and the *interdependent leader* (p. 391). As Bean (2004) describes, the *autonomous leader* is outgoing, forthcoming and ambitious (p. 391). They are often the mouthpiece of the group and are very goal-oriented. The *autonomous leader* is often stereotyped as a “male style” of leadership (p. 391). The *interdependent leader* is a team player, thinker, and planner. Bean (2004) acknowledges that this type of leadership often “goes unrecognized or undervalued” (p. 391), and is not masculine-linked. Bean (2004) states that the characteristics of a leader are associated most often with an *autonomous leader*. However, Bean (2004) emphasizes the need to recognize interdependent leaders, who are also important at accomplishing tasks. Bean’s (2004) argument supports Archard’s (2013) assertion that there is more than one type of leader. However, Bean (2004) assumes that there are only two types of leaders, and that those leaders are associated with gender-linked traits, which runs the risk of continuing to cast some girls and women in the less-desirable leadership position. What other researchers, such as Archard (2013) and Harris (2004), have concluded is that girls must define leadership in their own way. Leaders take many forms, and by defining what it means to be a leader themselves, many girls could be able to see their leadership capacity.

Barriers to Leadership Roles

Due to the existence of gender biases and stereotypes, many women face various barriers, often when in leadership roles. Archard (2013) finds that leadership is often “suffused with masculine images as the norm” (p. 53). In addition, a woman’s place in society is often influenced by the “social and cultural assumptions that exist about women” (p. 52). Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) find that, at a young age, most girls tend to feel pressure to “adhere to traditional feminine expectations” which serve as barriers to many girls’ willingness to explore leadership opportunities (p. 37). Shinbrot (2019) found that a patriarchal social structure means that power and dominance are often valued in leadership capacities (p. 12). As these qualities are also associated with masculinity, women face negative responses from their peers when they try to take on these roles (p. 130). Similarly, Gregory-Mina (2011) found that when women adopt masculine characteristics “they are chastised for deviating from their stereotypical gender role” (p. 7). However, when women abide by socially accepted gender norms, at least in the corporate world, they are perceived as “having inadequate skills” for leadership (p. 7). Gregory-Mina (2011) describes this as a “Double Bind” in which “acting feminine is associated with incompetence, and acting competent is associated with the opposite polarity of masculine traits” (p. 9). As did Harris (2004), Gregory-Mina (2011) also found that a “gendered lens” is established in childhood, making many males’ and females’ perceptions of themselves carry on into adulthood (p. 51). The findings of Gregory-Mina’s (2011) study, which surveyed the perceptions of male and female MBA students on the association between gender roles and corporate office characteristics, highlighted the way in which sexism and these gender biases are carried into adulthood. Gregory-Mina (2011) concluded that there is a “significant relationship between gender and the characteristics of corporate officers” and that regardless of the biological sex, age, ethnicity or self-esteem of her participants, they all considered male-linked gender traits

more valuable for leadership, and feminine-linked gender traits less valuable (pp. 139, 140). Gender biases and stereotypes are so embedded in society that they are often unconsciously internalized by many girls, affecting girls' self-perception. A focus by researchers such as Gregory-Mina (2011) on stereotypes in leadership raises a challenge as to how these biases can be tackled. On one end, Shinbrot's (2019) study finds that the perceptions of leadership styles have begun to shift, in that many corporations are seeing the benefit of having a balance between masculine- and feminine-linked characteristics in leaders (p. 122). However, other researchers like Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) found that women should challenge the "rigid gendered standards" that dissociate feminine-linked traits with leadership altogether. Either way, stereotypes are an obstacle that my workshop must tackle in order for girls to create a leadership identity. My workshop will use activities designed to reveal and challenge the gender stereotypes associated with leadership, in order to have many girls redefine leadership in their own way, enabling the girls to see their own capacity to be a leader.

Outside of leadership roles, women continue to face barriers based on their gender. Barriers may encompass a number of factors including social norms and expectations, opportunities for women in the community, in addition to community values and culture. Overall these barriers serve as a hindrance to some girls in pursuing leadership roles and may also contribute to a decline in self-esteem, as many females do not feel represented or respected in their own spaces. A study conducted by Maranzan, Sabourin and Simard-Chicago (2013) looked at the perspectives of women in Canadian first nations communities after the women participated in self-esteem workshops. Maranzan, Sabourin and Simard-Chicago (2013) found that, when asked about the barriers that females face in their communities, 37.9% of the Participants identified a lack of support, and 26.1% identified self-esteem issues (p. 5). The gender barriers

that are evident in all areas of many girls' lives need to be identified so that they are tackled. Creating an awareness of these barriers in the community can be the first step.

Leadership as a Capacity Not a Character Trait

In redefining the meaning of leadership, and who can be a leader, researchers such as Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) call for a different focus: they argue that leadership is not an inherent personality trait, but can be developed through process, experience, and learning (p. 39). Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) find that traditional approaches to leadership will often favour "masculine" styles of leadership, such as assertive, domineering or intense (p. 34). Due to emphasized gendered expectations in society, Archard (2013) states that some girls may have a lack of confidence in, or doubt, their "capacity as a leader" (p. 60). The challenge, Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) note, is allowing girls to explore their "authentic self" while also "developing their capacity to exercise leadership across a spectrum of leadership behaviours and approaches" (p. 41). Changing the present mentality from leadership as a trait to leadership as a capacity means disrupting gendered definitions of leadership (p. 41).

Part of developing a perspective which sees leadership as a capacity means offering opportunities in which leadership skills can be nurtured. Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) found that, in order for girls to develop a belief in their capacity for leadership, they must have an opportunity to create a leadership identity (p. 38). The women in Maranzan, Sabourin and Simard-Chicago's (2013) study, for example, stated that "improved access to training opportunities would help support women leaders" as well help women recognize their own skills and abilities (p. 7). Steese et al.'s (2006) study on the *Girls' Circle* program, found that skills training can "increase positive connections, personal and collective strengths, and competence" (p. 56). Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) go on to state that building a leadership capacity

entails girls learning to use their voice and understand their own power and authority (p. 38). Developing skills such as confidence, resilience, self-efficacy, resourcefulness and teamwork can help many girls better understand themselves as potential leaders. In addition, a change in perspective enables girls to look beyond the categorization of gendered skills. Accordingly, the aim of my workshop is to encourage girls to see that they have the capacity to be a leader. Creating a hands-on workshop will allow girls to have a space where they can utilize their voice, recognize their power and learn to look beyond the gendered norms encouraged within society in order to develop their capacity to be leadership.

Developing Leadership Skills

Seeing leadership as a capacity entails providing many girls with the opportunity to explore and strengthen their leadership skills. In their analysis of the program *Go Grrls*, Lecroy and Daley (2001) highlight specific skills they argue are important to help girls recognize in themselves and strengthen. These skills include self-control, social awareness, group participation and problem-solving (p. 62). In addition, Lecroy and Daley (2001) found that most girls need to be encouraged to envision the kind of future they wish to see, and then provided with the support and resources to help shape that future (p. 93). Lecroy and Daley (2001) state, “By honoring the visions of girls and helping them set goals and take credit for their successes, we will help them build strong futures” (p. 94). Zarrett and Eccles (2006) also highlight a list of skills they argue are “critical for healthy development” (p. 23). Their list of skills includes the ability to regulate emotions along with having confidence in one’s ability to achieve goals and make a difference in the world (p. 23). Compassion is another example of a skill often mentioned by researchers such as Mongrain and Shapira (2010). Mongrain and Shapira (2010) regard compassion, which encompasses characteristics such as caring, empathetic and sympathetic, as a

human strength with the capacity to benefit the well-being of both the recipients, and the providers. The difficulty with viewing compassion as a skill is that it is often associated with being nurturing. While nurturing, in itself, is not a negative stereotype, it is often stereotyped as a “feminine” characteristic and is not often considered important to leadership roles. Mongrain and Shapira (2010) question the practice of associating certain skills with leadership when they describe compassion as a “human strength” (p. 963). Changing the way skills are analyzed so as not through a gendered lens can provide many girls the freedom to redefine leadership in their own way.

The skills previously mentioned are just a few examples of what helps to create a leadership identity for each girl. What needs to be recognized, however, is that there is no one set list of skills that define girls as a leader. It is important to be aware of gender bias, sexism and chauvinism with leadership skills, in order to stop the common practice of assigning most girls certain skills defined as “feminine”. As researchers such as Mongrain and Shapira (2010), Lecroy and Daley (2001) and Zarrett and Eccles (2006) find, leadership skills vary and are unique to the person. The activities within my workshop will focus on encouraging the girls to create their own leadership identity and view each of their skills as a strength. Zarrett and Eccles (2006) also argue the importance of programs that allow youth to nurture and develop these skills. Zarrett and Eccles (2006) contend that youth need a safe place to “explore themselves, their interests, and their abilities in a wide range of activities and among a diversity of people” (p. 24). These programs allow youth to create their own social identity, as well as develop a respect for others, in addition to nurturing their cognitive skills and learning to make well informed plans and decisions for their future (p. 24). During the time of adolescence for most girls, programs that develop a variety of skills are imperative for them to, as Zarrett and Eccles

state, “navigate adolescence and their transition to adulthood” rather than “flounder” throughout it (p. 23).

Leadership and the Importance of Mentorship

A significant aspect in helping girls recognize themselves as leaders is having female leaders present in their lives. Archard (2013) argues that leadership can be modelled, not just taught (p. 61), and others, like Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017), also argue that mentorship improves the leadership development of mentees and mentors alike. Haber-Curran and Sulpizio argue that mentors support, provide feedback and help make meaning of the girls’ experiences, while girls work to develop a leadership identity (p. 43). Mentorship is a pivotal part of leadership development and a process that should be “collaborative, relational and focused on creating positive change” (pp. 43, 35). It is often the women around them that can influence girls’ understanding of themselves. Maranzan, Sabourin and Simard-Chicago (2013) argue that introducing female mentors into girls’ lives can help to increase the girls’ sense of leadership ability (p. 7).

Zarrett and Eccles (2006) found relationships between mentor and mentee are “primary supports that help youth navigate adolescence and the transition to adulthood” (p. 24). Zarrett and Eccles (2006) also note the mutual benefits of mentoring relationships, in which mentors, knowing they are making a difference in the lives of others, also succeed (p. 24). High-Pippert and Comer’s (1998) study focused on the political representation of women and its influence on female voting. High-Pippert and Comer (1998) found that mentoring relationships between females can create an opportunity for the mentor to serve as a role model, providing many girls with an example that may differ from one they see in society or media. Their study found that it was “the act of being represented by a woman itself” that had the most significant impact (p. 62).

Overall, girls need the opportunity to have female role models who exemplify for them what it means to be a leader.

Community-Engagement: Links to Leadership Development

Experiencing Leadership and Skill Development

The benefits of community engagement are significant. Self-worth, self-esteem, happiness and overall well-being often improve when an individual participates in community engagement experiences. Archard (2013) argues that in order for girls to develop their leadership skills, they must have opportunities to actively utilize them (p. 64). In addition, Bond et al. (2008) found that a women's engagement with their community has a significant correlation with a woman producing positive self-image (p. 48). Therefore, my workshop will suggest community engagement as a means through which many girls can actively utilize their leadership skills.

Taking part in community engagement can establish a sense of belonging for many girls. Participants in Maranzan, Sabourin and Simard-Chicago's (2013) study found that community engagement helped to create a community amongst the girls themselves, which increased their self-confidence, and improved the girls' leadership skills (p. 7, 9). As one participant noted, "we had nothing, but then we realized we have everything, we had each other" (p. 6). This sense of community is beneficial in developing teamwork, communication and empathy skills.

In addition, for the women in Maranzan, Sabourin and Simard-Chicago's (2013) study, taking part in the community led to a stronger sense of self, and knowing "how much power each person has" (p. 7). Maranzan, Sabourin and Simard-Chicago's (2013) analysis of community engagement serves as a justification for why it is beneficial for practicing leadership skills.

Improving Well-being and Self-esteem

Beyond serving to develop leadership skills, engaging in community work also helps to improve the well-being and self-esteem of the volunteers. For example, the female volunteers in Hilfinger, De Jong and McLoughlin's (2005) study found that volunteering not only improved the lives of others, but impacted the women themselves who were taking part in these opportunities (p. 80). Hilfinger, De Jong and McLoughlin highlighted a number of benefits to taking part in community engagement opportunities, including "increased self-esteem, enhanced social skills, a sense of purpose... and the personal sense of well-being that comes from making a difference in the lives of others" (p. 80). Thoits and Hewitt (2001) justify that taking part in community engagement contributes to "decreased psychological distress and buffers the negative consequences of stressors, it increases life satisfaction and decreases depression" (p. 119). Elias, Sudhir and Mehrota (2016) state that taking part in community engagement creates positive youth development (p. 3). Their study's findings included the responses of volunteers between the ages of 18-35 who were asked about the benefits of community engagement. The volunteers' responses included a sense of purpose and life goals, increased tolerance and empathy, an openness to change as well as a contentment with their life (p. 8-9). Overall, Elias, Sudhir and Mehrota's (2016) findings highlight that community engagement is beneficial because it improves not just cognitive well-being but emotional and behavioral as well.

Community engagement develops skills that apply to other roles in the volunteer's life, including confidence in one's abilities. In analyzing the relationship between community engagement and well-being, Brown, Hoye and Nicholson (2012) sought to find whether well-being, defined by social connectedness and self-esteem, showed improvements when practicing community engagement by measuring and comparing characteristics in volunteers and non-volunteers. What they found was that well-being, social connectedness and self-esteem were

significantly higher in volunteers than non-volunteers (p. 480). Confidence in one's self is an important skill in relation to developing a leadership identity. Brown, Hoye and Nicholson (2012) present evidence that community engagement is a means in which volunteers can practise and develop their self-confidence.

As LeCroy and Daley (2004) found, in adolescence many girls face a rise in stress and anxiety, which can contribute to a decline in self-esteem. Community engagement can also serve as a means of combating a rise in anxious and stressful thoughts. In Mongrain and Shapira's (2010) study, they found that experiences which provide opportunities to practise compassion, also helps to create a "vital path to releasing the human mind from the effects of harmful negative emotions" (p. 963). Mongrain and Shapira (2010) also found that taking part in compassionate experiences can "ease anxious individuals' concerns regarding the availability, reliability, and responsiveness of others" (p. 965). In addition, Mongrain and Shapira's (2010) study found that compassionate acts can initiate self-validating and self-esteem improving experiences, and encourage individuals to begin valuing themselves because of the role they play in others' lives (p. 965). Mongrain and Shapira (2010) noted, "Becoming the provider rather than compulsive seeker of compassionate support, anxious individuals could also derive a sense of empowerment and self-reliance" (p. 966). Community engagement opportunities have many beneficial qualities, which may help adolescent girls develop important leadership skills and combat the anxiety and stress common at this age. This is why community engagement will be suggested in my workshop as an optional means of putting into practise the leadership identity the girls attending the workshop will create.

What must be taken into consideration when encouraging community engagement in this workshop is that some individuals will be more willing or able to volunteer than others. While

individuals who volunteer often experience improvement in their wellbeing, Thoits and Hewitt (2001) argue it is often individuals with greater well-being or privilege to begin with who have the opportunity to volunteer in the first place (p. 119). Therefore, limited opportunity to volunteer may serve as a barrier to girls in the workshop.

Fostering Engagement Without Barriers

Power dynamics in society are often associated with gender biases. For example, masculinity, over femininity, is often associated with power, therefore, it is necessary to my workshop that power dynamics are considered. Gender is not the only power dynamic in society, however, Rouhani's (2017) study raises a consideration when analyzing community engagement and power. Rouhani notes, "It is important to understand power and power dynamics that govern how community members can participate, specifically women" (p. 34). As my workshop aims to encourage community, not only as a means of practising leadership skills, but also as a dynamic within the group itself, the concept of power must be considered. Social barriers like gender bias and sexism can deter women from taking on certain leadership roles. Often these barriers come down to power, how it is controlled or how it is used as a means of control. When integrating engagement within any group dynamic, it is important to consider how power is being used.

Programs seeking to empower girls must ensure that girls have the opportunity for their voices to be heard throughout the entire process. In addition, it must be acknowledged that each girl is different, and with that, has their own perspectives and opinions. As Rouhani (2017) states, "communities do not speak with a single voice" (p. 35). Rouhani also cautions falling into the "female solidarity" mentality when working with girls (p. 37). Rouhani (2017) describes "female solidarity" as the assumption that females think and feel the same about every topic. Rouhani (2017) cautions that this assumption can "dislocate women from their social networks

and relationships” (p. 37). Applying Rouhani’s beliefs to the workshop means considering how to overcome the “hierarchies of power” that might exist in a group dynamic, ensuring all girls have an opportunity to use their voice, and dismissing the belief that each girl will think and feel the same way.

In order to encompass the diversity of each girl, it is important to not force certain skills on individuals based on their gender. Bowdon, Pigg and Mansfield’s (2015) study analyzes a similar idea in the context of empathy. Bowdon, Pigg and Mansfield note that empathetic responses are often described as “feminine impulses” which assumes girls will feel a certain way, placing pressure on girls to fulfill this societal expectation (p. 59). As noted earlier, gendered expectations and stereotypes in society can occur subtly, and often unconsciously, but are still detrimental or confusing to a girl’s identity. Encouraging community engagement, which favours qualities like empathy could, therefore, unintentionally support dominant gendered characteristics that stereotype girls as nurturing or caring. Mongrain and Shapira (2010) encourage a different outlook on skills such as empathy, one that views it as a human strength, rather than a characteristic of being female (p. 963). The topic of empathy can also be used to better understand how our perception of self is related to our understanding of others.

Group Dynamics in Community

Marmarosh and Crazzini (1997) raise an important consideration in regards to their previously mentioned social identity theory (p. 66) from which it can be assumed that an individual’s understanding of self is significantly based on the influence of those around them, which can have either positive or negative implications. Marmarosh and Crazzini emphasize the need for a positive group environment within a workshop or program that seeks to improve self-esteem. However, Mongrain and Shapira (2010) find that taking part in compassionate

experiences can “ease anxious individuals’ concerns regarding the availability, reliability, and responsiveness of others” (p. 965). Therefore, the challenge of my workshop is to find a way to create a healthy group dynamic while also encouraging the development of the individual.

Resources and Support

The women in Hilfinger, De Jong and McLoughlin’s (2005) study stated that “access to information is empowering” and that having resources available for women is “vital to community development and empowerment” (p. 83). The women in Hilfinger, De Jong and McLoughlin’s (2005) research displayed that taking part in community engagement led to learning opportunities that encouraged involvement, connection and empowerment. One woman stated, “[I used to be] quiet, shy. Now I’m not afraid to voice my opinion” (p. 81). The benefits of resources that can derive from community engagement extend to adolescents as well. In their study on empathy and community engagement, Bowdon, Pigg and Mansfield (2015) stated that students need support and resources as they make important and life-changing decisions (p. 67). Thus, the conclusion can be drawn that a lack of resources aimed at empowering adolescents may have a negative impact later in their lives. Marmarosh and Crazzini (1997) found that allowing an individual to develop a group identity will “bolster their personal self-esteem” (p. 66). Marmarosh and Crazzini’s (1997) study, which analyzed the benefits of group identity, displays that “self-esteem and a collective self-esteem were correlated, suggesting that increases in the value attached to one’s group go hand-in-hand with the value attached to oneself” (p. 71). The findings of Marmarosh and Crazzini’s (1997), along with Hilfinger, De Jong and McLoughlin’s (2005), study exemplifies the need for resources which provide opportunity for, and encourage, group engagement in different ways.

Conclusion

Overall, the research that I reviewed justifies the need for a workshop, as many adolescent girls need support during this time. I aimed to design a workshop that encourages girls to see that they have the capacity to be leaders, by giving them the opportunity to redefine leadership. A hands-on workshop will allow the girls to have a space where they can develop their leadership skills. For example, Steese et al.'s (2006) study on the *Girls' Circle* program, found that skills training can “increase positive connections, personal and collective strengths, and competence” (p. 56).

My workshop will aim to help girls develop skills such as confidence, resiliency, self-efficacy, resourcefulness and teamwork, so they can better understand themselves as potential leaders. Rather than telling girls they must fit into a certain category, the workshop provides girls with the opportunity to define their identity, particularly in leadership, for themselves. In addition, the workshop aims to encourage community among the girls participating in the workshop, in that they can lift each other up, rather than tear each other down. The workshop sends a message counteractive to the one that gender ideology often perpetuates; an individual does not need to fit into a certain category to be a leader, they already have the capacity and simply need opportunity to grow within it.

The workshop activities will be centered on tools that can help girls improve their self-esteem and create their own leadership identity. For example, mentorship serve as a way to exemplify the diversity of leadership, while also providing support for adolescent girls through positive role models. My workshop will aim to incorporate mentorship and female representation in order to encourage the girls with examples of female leadership. In addition, the practice of community engagement is a way in which the girls participating in the workshop can utilize their

leadership skills and improve their self-esteem. However, the workshop cannot assume that every girl will have had, or will have, the opportunity to take part in community engagement. Thoits and Hewitt's (2001) perspective will be taken into consideration when creating activities for the workshop. For example, the girls will be encouraged to brainstorm ways that they can help in the community, but will not be expected to find and take part in volunteer opportunities on their own. The workshop will also emphasize that finding small ways to help others is meaningful, and that it does not need to take place in a formal setting to be beneficial. However, the workshop will avoid placing girls in categories or encouraging any behaviour that might cause these barriers by emphasizing the diversity of each girl.

In addition, the workshop will focus on placing the power in the girls' hands, by making them aware of their voice and capacity to be a leader. Overall, while fostering engagement needs to be included in my workshop, it is important to consider the diversity of each girl. Being aware of gendered stereotypes that may act as barriers will help to create a more positive environment within the workshop, in which each girl has the freedom to develop her own leadership identity. As each of the above ideas drawn from the literature review provide insight into improving the self-esteem of adolescent girls, while also encouraging the development of their leadership identities. Accordingly, the secondary-source research will serve as the foundation to the workshop.

Chapter Three: Methodology

As part of my portfolio, I chose to conduct a small survey to better understand how females, ages 12 and over, define leadership, what leadership activities they had taken part in, and how these leadership activities aided their leadership skill development. The aim of the survey was to incorporate the voices of girls in the entire process of the portfolio. The responses from the survey not only served as a support and justification for the necessity of a workshop, but also assisted in developing an activity for the workshop. As the participants have taken part in leadership activities that have benefited their leadership development, their experiential knowledge and insight was very valuable. The contributions of the participants' responses ensure the workshop is relatable to adolescent girls.

Design

The aim of my portfolio was to build a leadership workshop based on the findings in my literature review and feedback from girls and women who have taken part in leadership activities. My qualitative approach allows me to see how the survey participants make meaning of their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, pp. 23-24), and to use their understanding to produce a workshop activity that is supported by these particular girls' own experiential knowledge. In order to gain an in-depth understanding on this topic, I sought out, and incorporated, the perspectives of those who understood the issue best. In my portfolio, this perspective came from girls in grades 6-12 who are part of the group WE2 Unite along with women over the age of eighteen, both of which had taken part in leadership activities. The aim of surveying both age groups was to receive a variety of responses that would reflect the diversity of girls and women, and their experiences in leadership.

My qualitative research consisted of a short, three question survey which was distributed to approximately 15 girls and women over the age of twelve that have participated in leadership activities. The survey asked the participants how they defined leadership, what leadership activities they have taken part in as well as how they felt those leadership activities benefitted them, and what skills they felt they developed from these experiences. The responses of the survey were applied to the creation of one activity for the workshop, in addition to justifying the need for a workshop. In addition, the use of a survey helped to incorporate the voices of girls in the entire process; something I argue is important to do when empowering girls.

Participants

After obtaining REB approval from Lakehead, my survey was distributed both to girls and women over the age of twelve that had participated in leadership activities during adolescence. The girls ages twelve to eighteen were recruited from the not-for-profit group WE2 Unite. I chose WE2 Unite because the goals of this group aligned with the three themes I have chosen to focus on (community engagement, leadership identity, and girls' self-esteem). These participants were also able to speak directly to their personal experiences in engaging with leadership-building activities. I chose to also recruit women over the age of eighteen, because I felt their insight would be valuable in showing that all females benefit from the opportunity to develop their leadership skills. In addition, these two groups of participants provided diverse examples of leadership activities. In total, the survey received ten responses from girls and women over the age of twelve that had participated in leadership activities.

Procedure and Materials

The survey was distributed electronically through *Google Forms* and was accessed by the adult participants through the link included in the preliminary email sent to them by me. The

underage participants' parent or legal guardian received the URL, which they were asked to pass along to their daughter, in response to returning the consent form.

The girls of WE2 Unite were contacted through the use of a social media post that was posted on the WE2 Unite Instagram page, which prompted the girls interested in taking part in the online survey to have their parents/guardian contact the researcher by email to receive the information letter and consent form. The women eighteen and over were recruited through an email which described the survey and included the information letter and the link to the survey. The participant responses were transcribed into a google document.

I conducted a content analysis of the responses and identified trends in the types of activities the participants found most useful to developing their leadership skills, in addition to an analysis of their definition of leadership and why these activities were beneficial. The participants' responses were applied to the portfolio in a few ways: Firstly, the surveys were used to understand how females ages twelve and over define leadership. Secondly, responses that highlighted areas in which the participant received beneficial leadership development were utilized to justify the workshop, and thirdly, the leadership activities the participants felt were beneficial, and the skills they felt they developed, were applied to the creation of one specific activity and helped to shape the focus of all the workshop activities.

Ethical Consideration

This research study was reviewed and approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board.

Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

The survey consisted of three short-answer questions, and was distributed to twelve females over the age of eighteen via email, and the members of WE2 Unite via social media. The survey received ten responses in total; eight adult members and two WE2 Unite members. The survey was anonymous, and so the participants were labelled from A-J.

The survey responses provided information on the three aims of the survey, which included understanding how girls and women over the age of twelve, who have taken part in leadership activities, define leadership, seeking whether the participants' leadership activity examples would justify the need for a workshop, and to create a workshop activity based on the response themes. Overall, the themes of the responses aligned with the workshop themes as well as the themes from the secondary-source research that made up the literature review and served as the foundation to the workshop.

Aim One: How do Girls and Women over the Age of Twelve Define Leadership?

There were three themes drawn from the participant responses in how leadership was generally defined. The first theme was leading and guiding others, which could also be described as mentorship. Almost all of the definitions emphasized that leadership entailed rallying others towards a common goal, and helping guide and support the group to reach that goal. Many of the participants believed that this goal could be accomplished by a leader with skills such as communication and teamwork. For example, participant G stated that leadership is “the ability to lead a group of individuals by setting an example, communicating effectively, and empowering to succeed”. Similarly, participant B stated that a leader is “someone who has the ability to work [alongside] and empower others”, while participant C stated that leadership was “a quality or position where someone's actions or words inspire and encourage others”. Overall, many of the

participants felt that the responsibility of a leader correlated significantly with being a mentor. Participant D specifically noted that leadership is “guiding and/or mentoring others” while participant G described leadership as “empowering to succeed”. A leader, therefore, should use their position as a means of helping others to succeed and grow. Participant A’s response supported this by stating, “I define leadership as...someone who doesn’t use the platform for selfish purposes but rather strives to see growth in others”. This is further supported by participant H’s response which notes leadership might entail “stepping back and allowing someone else to take on a stronger role in a group setting”. This is a unique perspective on leadership, and one that is supported in my workshop. The girls participating in the workshop are not only encouraged to create their own leadership identity, but also to learn how to support those around them. Having a leadership role does not necessarily entail working independently or always being at the forefront of the group. Participant H also noted, in a later response, that leaders may have to “lead from the back instead of the front”. Learning to communicate with, support, and guide others is an important leadership quality. Mentorship is a different way to consider leadership, as participant A noted, “leadership creates leaders”. Mentorship is also included in the workshop, and participants’ responses emphasize its importance.

The second theme taken from the participant definitions of leadership was that leaders also serve as role models. A number of definitions highlighted “leading by example” as an aspect of leadership. For example, participant D stated, “I define leadership as the practise of modelling behavior,” and participant H commented, “Leadership is the ability to guide others by example”. It is important that a leader has a vision for the group, and supports them in accomplishing their goals. However, to do so they must reflect the work ethic and values they wish the group to adopt. Participant C highlights that a leader's actions must “inspire and encourage others”.

Leaders must be aware of how they are guiding others, and ensure it is empowering and helpful. Leadership, therefore, is a weighted role, and one that must be taken on with the best intentions. As participant J stated, leadership is “when a person takes charge in an act of responsibility and hopefully does so in a good way”. The following responses emphasize two considerations that will be incorporated into the workshop. The first, is that the roles of the facilitator and helpers as an example of a leader must be taken very seriously. The second consideration will note that while the activities emphasize all girls have the capacity to be a leader, the activities will also help the girls understand that being a leader also entails responsibility.

The third theme that was common among the survey responses to this question, was that a leader must have vision for their group, and strive to rally them towards that common goal. As previously mentioned, participant B stated, a leader is someone who aims to “empower others to reach their individual goal and/or collective goal”. Similarly, participant C noted that leadership is “A quality or position where someone’s actions or words inspire and encourage others to strive towards a common goal”. A leader is also, according to the survey responses, someone who “facilitates action” and “gathers people” (participant A; participant E, respectively). In summary, a leader has a vision or objective, and is able to encourage others to follow that vision, and then support the group, in that journey.

The definitions from the participants had both similarities as well as diversities. For example, some seemed to view leadership as rallying the group and being the “mouthpiece” while others saw leadership as “leading from the back”. Overall, however, their definitions support the concept that leadership is unique to each person. There are many different ways to be a leader, just as the definitions were unique to the participant responding. Within the workshop I encourage the participants to find out what leadership means to them. However, these definitions

also highlight the importance of encouraging teamwork, communication, confidence and learning to support others while also learning to lead.

What Was Significant About the Way the Participants Defined Leadership?

One of the most significant findings in how the participants' defined leadership was the correlation to Haber-Curran and Sulpizo's (2017) belief that leadership is not a personality trait but a capacity that can be learned, experienced and developed (p. 39). Each of the definitions focused on an aspect of leadership that was learned behaviour, not natural. This differs from the belief that leaders are "born" or that certain individuals are more affiliated or naturally inclined to leadership than others. In contrast, the use of skills such as communication, leading from behind, gathering, and mentoring in the descriptions of leadership suggest that most of the participants believe leadership is a learned behaviour, rather than a natural trait. The participant's responses, therefore, displayed a way of defining leadership that was developed beyond what was expected of the girls in the workshop.

Another notable theme that arose from the participant responses was the positive view of skills such as consideration, care and compassion towards others. This relates to Mongrain and Shapira's (2010) finding that skills such as compassion can be perceived negatively because it is often a skill associated with "feminine" characteristics. However, Mongrain and Shapira (2010) also argue that compassion should be viewed as a human strength rather than a gendered characteristic (p. 963). By dividing skills by what is considered "feminine" and what is "masculine", we also unconsciously draw a line between what a leader should, and should not, be. Rather, my workshop emphasizes that girls must define leadership for themselves. The participants in the survey seemed to view compassion as a strength, as well as a significant part of being a leader. Participant H explained that, when working with others, leadership is "helping

them to make use of their assets”. Participant I argued that leadership is “the pride you feel while you make a difference in other people’s lives”. Other participants felt that leadership entailed caring about, and empowering, others. Compassion is not a trait the girls attending the workshop should feel they need to avoid, not be proud of, or feel obligated to be good at. Rather, if they feel compassion is what makes them a leader, they should embrace and celebrate in that, however it is also not expected of them because they are girls. This is why the workshop focuses, first, on breaking down the existence of stereotypes in leadership, and then helping the girls rebuild their own definition of what leadership is to them.

The last theme taken from the participant responses was their perspective on confidence. More specifically, many of the participants responded that leadership is finding a balance in their confidence and their humility. Participant F emphasized that leadership is “having the confidence and ability to take action and guide a group of people”. Confidence in particular, is a beneficial skill to incorporate into a leadership workshop. Researchers such as Archard (2013), Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) and Zarrett and Eccles (2006) all emphasize that girls must develop their confidence in order to better understand their leadership identity and capacity to be a leader. Understanding one’s leadership skills, and having the confidence to utilize them, are two different things. However, participant B noted a leader is also, “someone with a fine balance of confidence and humility”, suggesting that while a leader can confident in themselves, they also need to be constantly open to learning and growing. Interestingly, participant J’s definition infers that leaders have a choice, and may use their role in a positive or negative way. Participant J notes that leadership is when a person takes on responsibility and “hopefully does so in a good way”. Part of finding a balance between confidence and humility is ensuring, as a leader, their intentions are beneficial to all. However, participant J’s definition raises an important factor in

leadership, which is that all leaders have the freedom and choice to decide how they use their “power”. This is imperative to consider, and discuss, within the workshop. The workshop encourages girls to take on leadership roles, but it should also discuss how the girls will act in these roles. While a leader should be confident in themselves, they also need to be constantly open to learning and growing. In addition, confidence might look different from one leader to another. The workshop is designed so as not to force a certain “personality” onto the girls, as that is counteractive to the goal of the workshop in general.

Was There an Existence of Gender Stereotypes in the Definition?

A significant aspect of the workshop, and the focus of the first theme and set of activities, is the way in which gender stereotypes might influence our perspective of leadership. The assumption of this theme (in the workshop, “Challenging Dominant Ideas about Gender”) is that a girls’ perception of leadership would have most likely been influenced by gender expectations we often don’t realize we internalize. It was surprising, therefore, not to find significant reference to gender stereotypes within the survey definitions. However, the responses suggest that there may be discursive, unconscious connections between gender expectations and the way in which the female participants responded to the questions in the first place. For example, the terminology used by the participants could be defined as “feminine” if following specific gender stereotypes. Terms such as “growth, inspire, encourage, guide, gather and support” were quite dominant among the definitions. Some researchers, such as Harris (2004) or Gregory-Mina (2011) might attribute this to the unconscious gender stereotypes we internalize that can impact the way we perceive something in our lives. Researchers like Harris (2004) and Gregory-Mina (2011) might suggest that the female participants used terms like “gather” and “encourage” rather than “dominant”, “forceful” or “aggressive” to describe a leader, because they are female.

This was not done consciously, but because, as females, they have internalized the idea that this is what a female should act like, and so it seemingly occurs naturally.

This suggestion, however, is contrasted by the appearance of terms such as take charge, confidence, “empowering to succeed” and getting out of their comfort zone found in the responses. The existence of these terms suggests that the participants do not feel that they need to conform to a certain type of “feminine” leadership. In contrast, it appears they are able to choose the type of leadership that fits them best, which is a much more empowering perspective. Overall, the appearance of feminine-linked descriptors alongside masculine-linked descriptors suggest that participants saw both feminine- and masculine-linked traits as integral to good leadership.

Aim Two: Justify the Need for a Workshop for Adolescent Girls that Focuses on Leadership

Without being specifically asked, many of the responses indicated a need for a workshop that aims to improve leadership. Specifically, three themes could be used to justify this workshop: workshops provide the opportunity to practise leadership, workshops provide a space for girls to learn and grow in their leadership, and third, the workshop will create opportunities for mentoring relationships.

Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) stated that leadership must be developed through process and experience (p. 39). My workshop aims to provide girls the opportunity to practise leadership in a variety of ways. This goal is supported by a number of the participants’ responses. For example, when describing why taking part in a leadership activity benefited her, participant A stated, “...because I was given a space to actively use them... using my leadership skills improved my confidence, my self-esteem, and my voice”. Participant D also noted that

having the opportunity to practise leadership, "...boosted my confidence and assured me that I have the ability to grow through struggles". Participant I commented that experience is what helped her improve her leadership skills. Similarly, participant J found her experiences with leadership activities, "helped me become more comfortable in front of crowds and become more respected by my peers". Participant J goes on to note that taking part in one leadership activity led to the pursuit of more, "the first role I did helped me seek out more leadership opportunities". Overall, the responses can be summarized by participant B: "...to sum up all of my thoughts I would say 'opportunity is key!'". These responses can be used as support to justify the necessity of a workshop focused on leadership for adolescent girls. Without opportunity, girls may be less likely to develop their leadership skills, if they realize their capacity to be a leader at all. One way my workshop suggests girls can practise their leadership skills is through community engagement, which is also incorporated into one of the activities. As participant B noted, "opportunity is key".

A positive environment encourages trial and error, learning from failures and exploring who you are as an individual and a leader. This is the type of environment that my workshop aims to create. Many of the participants felt that it was the provision of a positive and encouraging environment, and the space in which they felt they could grow and learn, that contributed so significantly to their leadership development. Participant B stated that having been provided the "freedom to try new things, make mistakes and grow, [and be] empowered at a young age" helped to develop her "communication, budgeting, team work, organization and visioning skills". Participant H also noted that having the space to develop her leadership skills, allowed her to learn many different things that will help her in leadership positions in the future. She stated, "I've learnt to think on my feet, and have confidence to tackle new things knowing

failure is okay. I've learnt it's okay to depend on others and work as a team. I've learnt the importance of communication and how many things can go wrong without it". This concept is supported by Lecroy and Daley (2001), who contend that there are certain skills, like group participation, problem-solving and social awareness, that girls must be able to strengthen in order to recognize themselves as leaders (p. 62). Participant H's response emphasized that having both the opportunity as well as the space to learn, helped her develop leadership skills. Participant J found that taking part in leadership opportunities helped her become more comfortable with others and motivated her to seek out further leadership opportunities. As the women in Hilfinger, De Jong and McLoughlin's (2005) study stated, "access to information is empowering". A leadership workshop would provide resources for the girls to learn about working as a team and the importance of communication. In the workshop, the aim is to help the girls see themselves in a more positive light.

Mentorship was a term that came up often in the survey responses. Many of the participants felt the guidance of others was a significant factor in their leadership development. The responses suggest that mentorship can take on many forms. For example, for many participants, mentorship was one person mentoring another. However, for others mentorship included role models, and groups of people who were not necessarily designated mentors, but did mentor others through their actions. The commonality between these mentorship experiences is that they positively impacted the recipients. For example, participant G noted that her experience in a co-op working in a classroom helped her develop her leadership skills, mainly due to the teacher she worked with. In regards to this teacher, participant G stated, "She led by example and gave me the opportunity to do the same... She was patient with me and supported me in my period of learning. It allowed me to grow in my communication skills, learning to talk to

different people (adult and child)". Participant C's response noted that mentorship does not have to mean a one-on-one relationship. In this participant's experience working at camp she noted, "being surrounded by other leaders who had more experience when I first started allowed me to learn valuable lessons". What appeared to be significant to many of the participants in their experience with leadership activities was the existence of role models who exemplified for them what a leader is. As participant G reflected, "The role models placed around me had grace and integrity, and challenged me to be my best self which I've learnt to be and do for other people". Mentorship was already included in the workshop as the facilitator, and any helpers, are meant to serve as female role models and mentors to the workshop participants and exemplify what it means to be a female leader. The inclusion of mentorship in the workshop derived initially from studies by researchers such as High-Pippert and Comer (1998), Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) and Archard (2013). Archard (2013), for example, argued that leadership needs to be modelled, not just taught (p. 61) and Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) found that mentorship can help make meaning of a girl's experiences as she works to develop her leadership identity (p. 43). Although older, High-Pippert and Comer's argument that mentorship between females can provide positive role models for girls that may not find in society is still relevant today (p. 62). High-Pippert and Comer noted that, "the act of being represented by a woman itself" had the most significant impact on mentoring (p. 62). What the participant responses serve to do, on top of this research, is to emphasize that mentorship is an absolute necessity. Based on the participants' responses, mentorship was given a greater focus in the workshop.

Aim Three: Create an Activity for the Workshop Based on the Data***What did the participants say were beneficial activities and what was beneficial about these activities?***

Although the participants were asked to reflect on, and describe, leadership activities they experienced in grades 6-12, it was not a requirement. Therefore, a few of the adult participants chose to include more recent activities. While these activities would not be experienced by the girls in the workshop, the responses were still applicable.

Participant A's activities included being the assistant manager at a private golf course and working for a professor in a graduate assistantship role. Participant A found the benefits of these leadership activities included improving her confidence, self-esteem and voice. Taking part in activities that encouraged the use of leadership skills also provided her with "a space to actively use them".

Participant B listed summer day camp and cross-cultural community development work as her leadership activities. Participant B noted that these experiences provided her with "the freedom to try new things, make mistakes and grow, empowered at a young age, mentored [alongside] my expected tasks" along with learning to develop her budgeting, communication, teamwork and organizational skills. Participant B's experience with cross-cultural community development work also helped develop her "cultural sensitivity skills, empowering skills and highlighted the importance and value of humility".

Participant C listed residence community advisor and being the president of the student association as her activities. Participant C felt that being provided with responsibility to look after a team of dons, as well as a group of students, in addition to being around other leaders who supported her, is what helped her learn to "rise to the challenge".

Similarly, participant D listed taking part in student council and an environmental education program as her leadership activities. Participant D felt that the experiences helped her learn to “problem solve, advocate, support my peers, and challenge myself in ways that made me uncomfortable.” In addition, participant D felt these activities boosted her confidence in herself, and her ability to face challenges.

Participant E identified classroom teaching and student council as her leadership experiences. As a classroom teacher, participant E felt she learned to “understand and empathize with a variety of backgrounds” and that her student council experience taught her “organization, decision making and gathering people to participate”.

Participant F noted a Day Camp Section Coordinator role along with working with a church mid-week program. Working as a day camp section coordinator helped participant F develop her decision-making skills, and working at the church mid-week program taught her organizational skills, as well as learning how to help others “use their skill sets to [perform] various tasks and encouraged them to do so”.

Participant G noted she worked in an elementary school classroom for her high school co-op as well as volunteered at her church’s summer Day Camp. Participant G’s experience in her co-op provided her with the experience to learn from, and be mentored by, the classroom teacher. This gave her confidence in herself because the teacher believed in her abilities. She notes that “I remember being excited/encouraged knowing she thought I was competent enough to take a few kids at a time and help them learn”. Participant G felt that her experience at the summer Day Camp influenced her character, as she was able to observe others and then “try things for myself and make mistakes, try them [differently] next time and grow, to fail and be encouraged to try again (with no shame at failing in the first place)”. In both experiences,

participant G had positive role models who helped her develop her communication skills and confidence in herself.

Participant H stated that her experience as a teacher has helped her become a better leader every day. Participant H felt her experiences with leadership helped her learn how to lead effectively, think on her feet, and take on challenges with confidence. Participant H also stated she learned the importance of communication, problem solving, learning from mistakes and that “it’s okay to depend on and work as a team”. Participant H credits the opportunities she was provided with to learn and practise these skills. She states, “I value the intentional, supportive, encouraging working environments that I had the opportunity to participate in and appreciate the safe space it/they provided for me to learn, grow, and lead in”.

Participant I stated that her experience with WE2 Unite and in her Global Perspectives high school program has helped to develop her leadership skills. These experiences have specifically helped her develop social skills, in addition to, organizational skills. Participant I stated her overall leadership skills have improved through experience.

Participant J listed multiple leadership activities she has taken part in, including her school’s leadership team, reading buddies, Safety Patrol and being a lunch helper. Participant J found that taking part in these leadership opportunities helped her feel more comfortable with her peers, which encouraged her to take charge in groups and lead in sports. She also notes that “the first role I did helped me seek out more leadership opportunities”. This includes, for example, raising \$400 for Sick Kids on her own.

How could the survey participants’ examples be made into a workshop activity?

While the responses of the participants were diverse, there were a few significant commonalities. The similarities highlighted problem-solving, communication and teamwork

skills specifically as important. Each of the participants seemed to include at least one aspect of these three themes in their responses. Many of the participants felt that their leadership activities provided the opportunity to work on these specific leadership skills. Many of the workshop activities include communication, teamwork and problem-solving. However, from the responses, one specific activity was created to focus on these skills under the theme “Utilizing Leadership Skills” (please see *Activity 1: Utilizing leadership skills in everyday situations*). As part of this activity there are two options for the facilitator to choose from, both focusing on encouraging the girls in the workshop to utilize communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. The follow-up discussion to the activity encourages the girls to analyze how these skills might apply to their daily lives, as well as why they are important to leadership.

Limitations

This study was intended to be small, as fulfilling the aims of the survey did not necessitate a large number of responses. Receiving ten responses was sufficient to gain an understanding of what impact taking part in leadership activities may have, as well as meet the three aims. However, from those ten responses, only two were from the organization WE2 Unite, and therefore under the age of eighteen. The difficulty in recruiting minors under the age of eighteen is that their parents/guardians must complete a consent form prior to the girls participating. As recruitment was carried out solely through social media and email, this made the consent process time consuming and possibly challenging for the parents, which may have served as a limitation to the survey. If this study were to be repeated, it might be helpful to invite parents to attend an in-person meeting to learn about the study and then have the opportunity to sign the consent form. The girls could, then, be invited to complete the survey in person. This might have increased the amount of responses received from the WE2 Unite members under the

age of eighteen. While this did not make a significant impact to the study, particularly because the responses remained anonymous and so WE2 Unite responses could not be selected from the group, it may have provided a greater diversity to the responses.

In addition, in the interests of time limitations connected to the portfolio, a small study was necessary.

The participants recruited for this study were all females who had taken part in leadership activities. As they have experienced being a leader, this may have influenced the way in which they define and view leadership. This may have restricted the diversity of definitions of leadership from a female perspective that the survey received. Including females who have not taken part in leadership activities may have provided a different perspective.

Future Research

As noted, this survey was part of a small-scale study, and therefore the number of recruited participants was minimal. While the small scale still provided significant insight and obvious trends, it could be interesting to conduct the survey with a larger population, and see if the results differ. Furthermore, while the definitions of leadership received in the survey were all positive, the survey did not ask whether the participants would apply their definition of leadership to themselves. A future study could also conduct interviews, and inquire as to whether the participants would see themselves as leaders in the same way they are defined in the surveys. This future study could reveal a gap between the way we view leadership and the way we view ourselves as leaders. While these two ideas are integrated into workshop activities, a study that looks at how we view ourselves as leaders could help the facilitator of the workshop better lead the girls through the activities.

Chapter Five: Workshop

mighty GIRL

LEARNING TO LEAD, LEADING TO LEARN

A leadership workshop with the goal of helping girls recognize their capacity to be leaders and practise the leadership skills that are unique to them.

Introduction

The creation of my workshop derived from the belief that leadership is unique for each person and that every girl has the capacity to be a leader, they just need to recognize that in themselves. This workshop aims to encourage self-realization in girls and empower them at an age where their self-esteem often takes a decline. The workshop is grounded in research gathered for a study as part of the requirements of graduating from Lakehead's Masters of Education program. My study was guided by two research questions: *How can encouraging the development of leadership skills help girls improve their self-esteem and create a leadership identity? How might girls' participation in community engagement serve as an opportunity to practise their leadership skills and, in that process, improve their self-esteem?*

In addition to secondary-source scholarly research this workshop is also based on data gathered through a survey. This survey aimed to gather the perspectives of girls and women over the age of twelve that had taken part in leadership experiences, as well as incorporate the voices of girls throughout the entire process. To read more on the research process of the workshop, you can access my portfolio by searching for the title "Mighty Girl: Empowering girls through leadership development" on the Lakehead Knowledge Commons homepage [<https://knowledgecommons.lakeheadu.ca/>].

This workshop is centered on one main purpose: that each girl participating realizes she has the capacity to be a leader in her own unique way. Based on this purpose, the themes of the workshop, of which the activities are centered around, include: Changing dominant ideas about gender, redefining leadership, creating a leadership identity and utilizing leadership skills.

Definitions

The following definitions can be used to clarify some of the language used in the activities.

Feminine-linked: The term feminine-linked is defined as qualities, characteristics, skills and traits that are associated with traditional feminine expectations (Haber-Curran and Sulpizio, 2017, p. 37). These connections are not related to the biological make-up of a female, but rather are social constructs of assumed behaviors a women should have. Men can also be feminine-linked; when they are, as in the case of queer men for example, they are often vilified for it. In a leadership context, specific skills such as being empathetic and organized might be expected of women in leadership positions because traditional feminine expectations are applied to a woman's leadership style (Gregory-Mina, 2011, p. 9).

Gender Bias: Gender bias is the partiality or favouring of boys and men over girls and women (Haber-Curran & Sulpizio, 2017). Gender-bias exists when a man's socially-constructed skills, behaviours or characteristics are valued over a woman's. Haber-Curran and Sulpizio (2017) found that, in leadership, skills such as aggressiveness and dominance are often favoured. As these skills are often associated with men, they then tend to be favoured in leadership roles (Gregory-Mina, 2011). Favouring men in leadership positions occurs because it is assumed they obtain more desirable traits than women is an example of gender-bias.

Gendered: Applying gender stereotypes, norms, or characteristics, which are social constructs, not biological, to an object, concept or position. Examples include gendered positions, such as associating men with lawyers and CEO positions, and women with nursing or teaching, as well as gendered skills, such as perceiving men as rational decision-makers and women as nurturing caregivers.

Masculine-linked: The term masculine-linked is defined as qualities, characteristics, skills and traits that are associated specifically with men because of expectations on men to be masculine; often meaning assertive, competitive, and dominant (Haber-Curran and Sulpizio, 2017, p. 37).

These connections are not related to the biological make-up of a male, but rather are social constructs of assumed behaviours a man should have. Similar to feminine-linked men, women can exhibit masculine-linked behaviours (Halberstam, 1998). In a leadership context, specific skills such as being aggressive, dominant and charismatic might be expected of men in leadership positions because of gender ideology (Gregory-Mina, 2011, p. 9; Armstrong, 2019). This gendered perspective often divides skills and characteristics between men and women, and can lead to a gender-bias that favours men, as well as the perpetuation of a false gender binary.

Social Norms: Social norms are defined as a set of beliefs that become normalized in society. Social norms are often assumed to be true and are expected to be followed in order to uphold the societal status quo of gender ideology. Social norms significantly influence the stereotypes used to categorize men and women (Haber-Curran & Sulpizio, 2017, p. 41). In the context of this study, social norms often assume certain behaviours and actions of females that meet the socially-constructed expectations of their gender as girls and women (Rouhani, 2017, p. 36). For example, one social norm for a female might include that they should be naturally nurturing and will want to pursue having a family (Armstrong, 2019). The need to satisfy and uphold certain social norms can affect both men's and women's self-esteem and identity (Gregory-Mina, 2011, p. 153).

Facilitator's Guide

Leading Activities and Discussions

As the facilitator, it is your role to lead and guide the activities and discussions. It is important for the facilitator to “learn their group” and gain an understanding of where they are and how they are understanding the workshop material. The facilitator’s responsibilities also include ensuring each girl is provided with the opportunity to share their thoughts and use their voice. An important goal of this workshop is to create an environment in which the girls feel they have the space to have their voices heard, share, engage with others and discuss leadership in new ways.

Safety Measures

It is required for each participant to have a waiver signed by a parent/guardian, along with registration forms (please see template in resources), prior to taking part in the workshop. Depending on the location, security measures may need to be established to ensure the safety of the building and who may enter. Creating systems such as the girls moving around the building, using the washroom etc. can also help ensure the safety of the girls. It is also required that the facilitators and adult helpers have some form of “clearance” (police check etc.). As there are many roles the facilitator is responsible for, we suggest recruiting assistance. This is both for the safety of the participants, as well as to help the workshop go seamlessly. We recommend having 2-3 additional helpers depending on the size of the group. This workshop provides a unique opportunity to recruit female high school or university students (depending on the age of the participants) to assist the facilitator. Recruiting female students can be conducted through local high schools or universities, depending on location, and could be used for volunteer hours or work experience.

Workshop Logistics

Participants

This workshop is geared towards girls between grades 6-9.

Location and Set-up

The workshop's activities require tables and chairs, space for chart paper or a white board, and wall space to hang participants' work. The girls will also need room to walk around. Set-up the room for discussions in a way that reflects the group size.

Promotion and Waivers

It would be helpful to advertise for the workshop in schools or local community centers, and allow for sign-up prior to the workshop taking place (please see the resource section for a template of a flyer that can be edited and used by the facilitator). It is important that the facilitator ensure that each participant has a waiver signed by their parent/guardian, which should also be advertised. The facilitator will need to decide on the maximum number of participants, dates, times and locations prior to advertising for the workshop. The template for the flyer has been developed so that these details can be edited by the facilitator.

Registration

Having registration at the workshop is important, both for ensuring the safety of the girls, as well as to help the facilitator keep things organized. This is an opportunity for parents/guardians to sign in their daughter, hand in the waiver and registration form, and notify the facilitator of any additional information (such as who may be picking up the participant). It is recommended that the parents/guardians should also have to sign-out their daughter as well. The facilitator can welcome the participant and provide them with any materials they may need. Registration is an example of where having helpers would be necessary.

Workshop Timelines

This workshop is broken down into two different timelines in order to provide flexibility for the facilitators. The first timeline is a one-day workshop option and the second is a 5-week workshop. Each workshop's activities are the same, with the only difference being how the themes and activities are grouped. Each workshop is structured to allow the participants to grow as a group, learn and have fun. Please see the detailed timelines on the next two pages.

Workshop Outline-One Day

Each Theme is allotted 1 hour and 15 minutes to complete, 30 minutes (20 minutes + set-up) per activity and 15 minutes for discussion (big and small group)

9:00-9:30- Registration, Introductions, Welcome, Overview of the day and Ice-breaker Game

- Suggested Games/Activities: have girls create their own name tag, have activity at each table for girls to complete together as they come in.

Theme One: 9:30-10:45**Challenging Dominant Ideas about Gender**

9:30-10:00 Activity 1: Step forward if...

10:00-10:30 Activity 2: A look at stereotypes

10:30-10:45 Discussion

BREAK 10:45-11:00

Theme Two: 11:00-12:15**Redefining Leadership**

11:00-11:30 Activity 1: Leaders in real life

11:30-12:00 Activity 2: What makes a leader?

12:15 Discussion

LUNCH 12:15-12:45

Theme Three: 12:45-2:00**Creating a Leadership Identity**

12:45-1:15 Activity 1: What makes me a leader?

1:15-1:45 Activity 2: Leadership gallery walk

1:45-2:00 Discussion

BREAK 2:00-2:15

Theme Four: 2:15-3:30**Utilizing Leadership Skills**

2:15-2:45 Activity 1: Utilizing leadership skills in everyday situations

2:45- 3:15 Activity 2: Kindness business plan

3:15-3:30 Discussion

Wrap-up 3:30-3:50

Activity: Word Power

- If there is extra time at the end another icebreaker game can be played or an extra activity chosen

Pick-up: 4 pm

Workshop Outline- Weekly

4-5 weeks (5th week is an optional wrap-up session). Meeting one evening a week for two hours (start time is flexible). Each activity is designated 30 minutes and discussions (large and small group) will take approximately 20 minutes. Please see the list of “guiding discussion questions” in resources.

Week One: Theme One: Challenging Dominant Ideas about Gender

Welcome, Introduction & Ice breaker- 20 minutes

Intro Discussion: 20 minutes

Activity 1: Step forward if... (30 min.)

Activity 2: A look at stereotypes (30 min.)

Discussion: (15 min)

Wrap-up & pick-up: (5 min).

Week Two: Theme 2 Redefining Leadership

Welcome, Introduction & Ice breaker- 20 minutes

Intro Discussion: 20 minutes

Activity 1: Leaders in real life (30 min.)

Activity 2: What makes a leader? (30 min.)

Discussion: (15 min)

Wrap-up & pick-up: (5 min).

Week Three: Creating a Leadership Identity

Welcome, Introduction & Ice breaker- 20 minutes

Intro Discussion: 20 minutes

Activity 1: What makes me a leader? (30 min.)

Activity 2: Leadership gallery walk (30 min.)

Discussion: (15 min)

Wrap-up & pick-up: (5 min).

Week Four: Utilizing Leadership Skills

Welcome, Introduction & Ice breaker- 20 minutes

Intro Discussion: 20 minutes

Activity 1: Utilizing leadership skills in everyday situations (30 min.)

Activity 2: Kindness business plan (30 min.)

Discussion: (15 min)

Wrap-up & pick-up: (5 min).

Potentially: Week Five

Wrap-up/Party

Alternatively: The fifth week serves as a buffer week, to allow for one week to be used by a speaker, or taking part in a community engagement opportunity.

Outline of Activities

Below is the list of activities for the workshop. Each activity is organized in pairs, based on one of the four themes. These activities are meant to scaffold onto the next. Below the description of the activity you will find reminders, follow-up discussion questions and a list of required materials.

Theme One: Challenging Dominant Ideas about Gender

Activity 1: Step Forward if...

Aim of the Activity: To allow the girls to reflect on social norms in addition to gender stereotypes and biases we might not realize we unconsciously agree with or follow.

Instructions: Have the girls line up side by side at one end of the room. Read out loud the list of statements (please see below). If the girls agree with the statement, they will take a step forward. You may read as many statements as you see fit and then have the girls either return to their seat, or stay where they are for follow-up discussion questions.

Reminders:

- This activity is not meant to cause any distress; however, some questions may be sensitive to a few of the participants. Before beginning, make it clear to the girls that they do not have to step forward even if they agree, however, encourage the girls to reflect on why they chose not to step forward.
- Remind the group that this is a judgment-free environment and we must be respectful of everyone's opinion, even if it is different than our own.

Follow up Discussion:

- Did anything from this activity stand out to them?
- Which statement most surprised them? Why?
- Were there any stereotypes they became aware of?
- How did this activity make them feel? Explain.

Materials & Resources:

- list of statements (see below)
- chart paper or a white board for discussion

Step Forward if... Statements**Step forward if...**

Have you ever been told you “play like a girl”.

You have ever felt too athletic/sporty.

You ever feel like you can be too loud or aggressive.

You have ever been called bossy.

You ever feel like you are too quiet.

You ever feel like you can’t share what is on your mind.

You ever feel like you have to fit in and be like everyone else.

You have ever been too afraid to be the leader of the group.

You have ever been called a “tomboy”.

You have ever felt pressure to do well in school.

You have ever seen a picture on social media or in a magazine and felt like you should look or be more like them.

You don’t think you have many positive female role models in your life.

You are ever afraid to pursue a dream because it feels too “different” or outside of your comfort zone.

You ever feel like what people expect of you is different than who you really are.

You ever feel like you need to hide your true self.

You ever wish you were better at sports.

You ever feel the need to act sweet and nurturing towards others.

You have ever been told you need to act more “girly”.

You have ever been told you are too “girly”.

You have ever been told you are too shy or “wimpy”.

You wish you could be braver.

You ever find it hard to share your ideas with others because you feel like they won’t listen or that your ideas aren’t good enough.

You ever feel that jobs such as a lawyer, a CEO or a doctor are meant for boys more than girls.

You ever feel that jobs such as teacher, nurse and librarian are meant for girls more than boys.

You have ever been told that “girls should not act that way” or that “girls shouldn’t do ...”.

The idea of being a “powerful woman” ever seems too intimidating or too hard to accomplish (it is for others but not for you).

Activity 2: A look at stereotypes

Aim of the Activity: Comparing, contrasting and discussing common masculine and feminine-linked stereotypes.

Instructions: Create a chart with two sides, writing “girls” on one side, and “boys” on the other. As a large group, create a list of gendered stereotypes that are common for girls. Encourage the girls to think of describing words often used for girls. Prompt the group with questions such as: “What have you heard people say about girls that upsets you?”, “Have you ever had someone assume something about you that was not right because you are a girl?”, “Where do we see these stereotypes? School, sports, careers, leadership?”, “What are considered “feminine qualities” or qualities people think girls should have?”. Write down the adjectives and words that the girls suggest.

On the other side of the chart, have the girls brainstorm words and stereotypes that are often used to describe boys. Use the same questions to prompt discussion. After this chart is complete, discuss as a group where the girls see, in their experience, examples of girls who exhibit one or more of the gender-norms associated with boys, and vice-versa. Feel free to cross things out and write different words and notes the girls come up with instead.

Reminders:

- Once the list has been written it should be removed, so it is not a visual reminder to the girls of the stereotypes as they complete the next two activities. The list will be brought out at the end of the next session so the different lists can be compared and contrasted.

Follow-up Discussion:

- Have the girls discuss “why” these stereotypes happen and also reiterate that we don’t have to create our identity based on these ideas.

Materials & resources:

- chart paper/white board
- markers

Theme Two: Redefining Leadership**Activity 1: Leaders in real life.**

Aim of the Activity: The goal of this activity is to encourage girls to consider leadership skills that women have, by looking at real examples they have seen in their lives. By the end, the girls should begin to name skills for leaders that do not fit into the “male vs. female” categories.

Instructions: Provide each participant with a *Female Leaders in Real Life* worksheet (please see resources for template). Independently, participants will be asked to brainstorm and write down three examples of **female** leaders in three different capacities: family/friends, media (social, TV, etc.) and in a community or global capacity (government, organizations, authors etc.). Under those different leaders, the girls will be asked to write down at least three characteristics/skills (this can be just one word) that makes this person a leader. You can provide a few examples of skills the girls can use (i.e. outgoing, kind, smart, confident, organized etc.).

Reminders:

- Encourage the girls to be specific with their skills and the examples they choose
- Have the gender stereotype list from theme one taken down

Follow-up Discussion:

- Provide time at the end for the girls to go around their table and share what they wrote. Have a few volunteers share with the large group.

Materials & Resources:

- *Female Leaders in Real Life* worksheet (please see resource section)
- pencils/pens

Activity 2: What makes a leader?

Aim of the Activity: Encourage the girls to consider what defines a leader and analyze how masculine and feminine-linked stereotypes and social norms might influence the way we view leadership.

Instructions: Building on their smaller group work, the girls will create a list of characteristics/skills that make a leader. Provide each girl with two post-it notes. Each girl will brainstorm two skills they feel are important for leaders to have. The girls will write these words on their post-it note (one word per post-it) and then place them on the front board or chart paper. Encourage the girls to choose their skills from the list they created on their *Female Leaders in Real Life* worksheet. Once everyone has placed their post-it notes, read the words out loud and

expand on them a bit further. Then, bring back the gender stereotypes list that was completed in the first session and place it up next to the leader characteristic list. Have the girls compare and contrast what has been listed for each one. From this discussion, add any skills that are missing from the list, for example, any that might have been considered skills for males and were left out.

Reminders:

- Bring the gender stereotypes list back out after the post-it notes have been reviewed
- If working with a smaller group, the facilitator may ask the girls to write down more than 2 skills.

Follow-Up Discussion/Activity:

- Prompt their discussion with questions such as: “What similarities do you see?”, “Are there characteristics of boys (from the stereotypes list) that can be found on our leaders list?”, “Why might we think these are characteristics for boys?”, “Why does this make a good leader?”, “Can we see how girls can have characteristics from both lists? Are they still leaders?”.
- Either in a large group or table groups, have the girls come up with a definition of leadership based on the skills the group has identified. If in small groups, have girls write this definition down on a large piece of paper and place it up for everyone to see.

Materials & Resources:

- post-it notes
- pencils/pens for each girl
- white board or chart paper
- stereotypes list

Theme Three: Creating a leadership identity**Activity 1: What makes me a leader?**

Aim of the Activity: To encourage girls to begin seeing themselves as a leader.

Instructions: Provide each girl with a large piece of paper to write their name in the middle of and, at the bottom, the words “I am a leader because...” with space underneath to write. Provide the girls with 10-15 minutes to pull words from the large list of leadership skills they created as a group, and write down the ones they believe fit themselves. Encourage the girls to think about what skills they utilize in their everyday lives. They do not have to be sure, but write it down even if they are working on it! After 5-10 minutes, have the girls come up with their own **I am a leader because...** statement that they will write at the bottom of their page. This can be pulled from the words they write down as well as the definition that was written as a group.

Reminders:

- This activity may require more than the allotted 20 minutes, so the next activity can be flexible.
- Encourage the girls to create a statement and write down skills that fit them, not what they think a leader should be.
- Leave the leader list created in the previous activity up on the board for the girls to reference.

Materials & Resources:

- one large piece of paper per girl
- example of activity
- pencils/paper, pencil crayons or markers (to write their name with)

Activity 2: Leadership gallery walk

Aim of the Activity: Providing the girls with an opportunity to see the diversity of leadership skills and how everyone is a leader in different ways.

Instructions: Once everyone’s poster has been completed, tape them up around the room and have the girls walk around and look at everyone’s poster and leadership statement. An optional follow-up activity (after the girls have done a rotation) is to have the girls go around and add positive leadership skills to each of the other girls’ posters.

Reminders:

- Remind the girls that the workshop is a judgement-free zone, and that they are not critiquing the other girls' posters. Encourage the girls to walk around independently and look at the posters silently.
- Be sure to discuss beforehand that the girls are not comparing themselves to each other. They are, instead, looking at all the different ways each girl is a leader.

Follow-up Discussion:

- “What did you notice as you walked around?”
- “Was everyone’s page the same or different?”
- “Did you see some new leadership skills you wouldn’t have thought of before?”
- “Why do we need everyone to be different?”, “What is the benefit in having different leadership skills?”, “How can we treat people better knowing this?”.

Materials & Resources:

- pens/pencils/markers for each girl if the facilitator chooses to have them write on each other’s poster.
- tape/sticky tack

Theme Four: Utilizing Leadership Skills**Activity 1: Utilizing leadership skills in everyday situations**

Aim of the Activity: Providing opportunity for the girls to practise leadership skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving.

Instructions: There are two options that the facilitator may choose from. If time permits, you can utilize both activities. Both activities include similar themes and focuses.

Sneak Peek:

Prior to the activity, create a small sculpture of some kind utilizing materials such as blocks, Legos or classroom items (i.e. few books, pencils etc.). The sculpture will be hidden at the front of the room from the groups. The girls will be placed into groups of approximately 4-5 (depending on the size of the group). The goal of the activity is for each team to recreate the sculpture in 5-10 minutes. Each group should have, on their table, the same materials as the sculpture, so they can recreate it. Only one person from each group is allowed to look at the sculpture at a time. They will have 10 seconds to look at the sculpture and then one minute to return to their group and try to describe what they saw. The person who “peeked” cannot touch the sculpture during that 1 minute. After 1 minute, another group member may return to the sculpture to look for 10 seconds, and then return to describe it for 1 minute. This will continue so that each team member will have a chance to look at the sculpture, and then continue to rotate, until the time has completed. At the end, the facilitator will reveal the sculpture and allow the groups to compare it to their own.

Reminders:

- Have a helper keeping time to announce when the 10 seconds and then 1 minute are up (for a new person to “peek”), as well as helpers to walk around the room and observe the groups/give them reminders.

Follow-up Discussion:

- Have the girls come back to their seats and ask: “What was challenging about that task?”, “Did your group come up with any strategies?”, “How does this show us that communication, teamwork and problem solving are important to leadership?”.

Materials & Resources:

- Materials to create the main sculpture, and the same materials for 3-6 groups to recreate the sculpture.

Creative Solutions:

Prior to beginning the activity, the facilitator will choose four random objects (i.e. a book, kettle, mug, spoon, rope, bucket, bottle of water etc.) and place them on a table at the front of the room. Place the girls into groups of approximately 4-5 (depending on the size of the group). Have the groups facing the front. Explain to the participants that they will give them a scenario that they must problem-solve a solution to as a group (please see examples of scenarios in the resources section). In their solution, they may only use the four items at the front of the room. The participants must also rank the items at the front of the room in their usefulness. Once the facilitator provides the group with the scenario, they will have 5-10 minutes to create a solution and rank the items. Once the time is up the groups can have an opportunity to share.

Reminders: Remind each of the girls that this is an opportunity for them to work on their communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills. Each person on the team should be provided with the opportunity to share their ideas. Encourage the girls to allow everyone to speak and to work together. The helpers and facilitators should be circulating around the room to help if needed.

Follow-up Discussion:

- After the groups have had the opportunity to share, ask the large group: “What was challenging about that task?”, “How did your group work together?”, “Did you have differing ideas?”, “How did you work through any conflict? “How does this activity show us that communication, teamwork and problem solving are important to leadership?”, “How might we use these same skills in our everyday lives?”.

Materials & Resources:

- scenarios
- four items
- optional paper & pens/pencils on the table for the girls to write down their thoughts

Scenarios for “Creative Solutions” Activity:

1. You and your group are stranded on a deserted island and must find a way to get off or survive.
2. You and your group are snowed in at a deserted cabin and there is no electricity. How will you survive the night?
3. The local zoo’s monkeys have escaped and it is up to your group to find them all and bring them back.
4. Your team is hiking in the woods and you all get lost.
5. Your group is meant to give a big presentation on a new invention you just created, but none of your materials showed up.
6. Your group is standing in the middle of a bridge when it begins to fall apart.

Activity 2: Kindness Business Plan

Aim of the Activity: Encouraging the girls consider how they can use their leadership skills in their daily lives to help others.

Instructions: Provide each girl with a *Kindness Business Plan* worksheet (see resources for template). On a separate page or on the white board, write out a number of social justice issues. These might include: animals, recycling, girls education in Developing countries, the cleanliness of the oceans, mental health, girls self-esteem etc. Each girl will choose one issue they are interested in from the list, or come up with their own. Using their worksheet, the girls will create a “business plan” for one small way they could help this issue.

Reminders:

- Remind the girls that, while their business plan does need to be practical and something they could actually put into practise, they are not expected to do so as part of the activity.
- Encourage the girls to think about how they can utilize the leadership skills they wrote on their poster to enact change (i.e. are they creative, tech savvy, outgoing, a good writer? Use those skills).
- The girls may not complete their business plan during the workshop, but the facilitator can encourage the girls to take it home with them and keep thinking about their ideas.

Follow-up Discussion:

- The girls may want to discuss in their small groups as they work, to help each other brainstorm.
- If time, the girls can share their plan with a small or large group

Materials & Resources:

- *Kindness Business Plan* worksheet
- pencils/pens
- chart paper or white board to write down issues examples.

End task: Word Power

Aim of the Activity: Helping girls to remember their capacity to be a leader every day.

Instructions: Provide each girl with a small piece of paper or card. On this paper/card, each girl will choose a leadership skill that they would like to work on and grow in, or that reminds them of being a leader and write it down. Encourage the girls to place this paper/card in a special place (i.e. their pocket, jacket, pencil case) and carry it around with them to serve as a reminder that they have the capacity to be a leader. If time, the girls can share the word they chose with their small or whole group.

Materials & Resources:

- a small piece of paper or a small card, pens/pencils

Workshop Additions

Below a list of optional additional activities that you may choose to include into the workshop should time, resources and availability permit.

Mentors/helpers

It is recommended that the facilitator is assisted by at least two adult female helpers. This workshop serves as an opportunity to include girls in high school or university, depending on the age of the participants. The helpers would be responsible for assisting the facilitator with set-up, leading activities and transitioning between activities. In addition, the helpers would serve as mentors and role models to the participants, presenting examples of girls in leadership. As an added benefit, while the helpers provide guidance for the participants during activities and discussion, they are also developing their own leadership skills.

Community Engagement Opportunities

Taking part in community engagement activities would provide opportunities for the girls to practise their leadership skills and see themselves in leadership roles. An optional activity for the fourth theme of this workshop, *Utilizing Leadership Skills*, is to provide an opportunity for the participants to take part in a community engagement experience. The experience could be in connection with a school, church or community outreach program. As this experience would take up quite a lot of time, this option would only be available for the weekly workshops. As there are requirements and waivers for taking part in this kind of experience, you will need to coordinate this opportunity in advance and be given parental permission.

Speaker

This workshop provides an opportunity to have a woman who is a leader, whether in a community, business or personal capacity, come speak to the girls. The speaker could share her

experiences in leadership, how she became a leader and encourage the girls in the group. This speaker would be coordinated by the facilitator to fit into the workshop schedule.

Quiet Journal time

The time during breaks or at the beginning or end of the workshops when there are no scheduled activities offers an opportunity to provide the girls some quiet time to think about what they learned that day. The girls might like to journal or doodle their thoughts down on paper. If resources allow, each girl could be provided with a notebook to use for this reason.

Additional Guiding Discussion Questions:

Below is a list of additional discussion questions that can be used during the designated weekly workshop time, or when there is extra time. The aim of these discussion questions are that they will be asked to the whole group, and then participants can either volunteer to answer, or each girl will be provided with a turn to answer. You may choose to have the girls sit in a circle, to encourage community and create a space that the girls feel welcome to share in.

Discussion Question Examples:

1. Tell the group something you have always wanted to try. Is something holding you back from trying it? How could you overcome that fear/hesitation?
2. What is one thing (like a hobby) that brings you joy?
3. What is one thing about yourself that you are proud of?
4. Name someone you look up to (note: not compare yourself to, but someone you respect). Why do you look up to them?
5. What is one dream that you have?
6. What is something that often worries you?
7. Do you feel like it is easy or difficult to share what you are thinking?
8. What is one goal you have set for yourself that you feel you have achieved? What is one goal you are still working on?
9. (silly) If you could be one crayon colour, what would you be? Why?
10. Name one thing you find fun. Do you like to do it alone or in a group?

Icebreakers:

Icebreaker activities are a great resource to use to help the girls become more familiar and comfortable with each other. They are also a fun way to start off the workshop and calm some of the nerves many of the girls will be feeling. Below is a list of suggested icebreaker activities and games options you could use. Activities focus specifically on questions that will help everyone get to know each other, whereas games are more active.

Icebreaker ideas:

1. (activity) You may choose to ask the group a question from the “discussion question” list.
2. (activity) Have the girls create a name tag with paper to place on their table (this should be done at the very beginning of the workshop). The girls can make it as creative as they wish.
3. (game) **Shoe Pile:** Have each girl take off one of their shoes and place it in a pile in the middle of the floor. Once all the shoes are in the middle, either the facilitator hands out the shoes or the girls go to the middle and pick one shoe. The facilitator then gives an allotted time (30 seconds, 1 minute, 3 minutes etc.) for the girls to find the owner of that shoe.
4. (game) **Guess who:** each participant will write one fun-fact about themselves on paper. The facilitator will then read the fact out loud, and the group must try to guess who wrote down that fact.
5. (game) **This or that:** The facilitator will have the group create a line in the middle of the designated space. The facilitator will then ask the group a “this or that” question. For example, they may ask: “would you rather eat hot salad or cold soup”, “do you prefer summer or winter”, “do you prefer something sweet or something salty?”, “would you rather read the book or watch the movie”. The facilitator will designate a side of the room for each response and then count down to 10, while each girl chooses a side. Having some silly questions will add to the fun of the game.
6. (game) **Organize without speaking:** The facilitator will ask the group to organize themselves in a line based on a fact (i.e. birthdate- month & date, height, grade etc.) however, the group cannot speak as they organize themselves.
7. (game) **Collecting autographs:** The facilitator can create a sheet with a list of facts (i.e. this person has travelled to another country, has a pet, plays a sport, plays a musical instrument, has the same favourite colour as you, has the same eye colour as you etc.). Each participant is provided with a sheet and must go around the room and try to find someone in which a fact is true for them. If it is true, the participant will have them sign their initials on that square. The goal is to have the sheet completely filled out.

8. (activity) Have each of the participants choose one word that they feel describes them best. Have each person share that word with the group. They may choose to explain why they chose that word.

Material List

Materials needed: This is a list of materials required in order to run the workshop activities

- Chart paper/white board (+markers)
 - Chart paper= 4-5 sheets
- Post-it notes
 - 2-4 per participant
- Pens/pencils
 - 1 per participant + extra
- Large paper (any colour)
 - 1 per participant
- markers/pencil crayons
- Small paper/card
 - 1 per participant
- Tables & chairs
 - Space for each participant
- Materials to create a sculpture + enough material for each group to recreate the sculpture (i.e. Legos, blocks, classroom materials)
- 4 random items
- Lined paper

Additional materials: These materials are not necessary to run the workshop, but might help in creating a fun and comfortable space for the participants

- Container on each table to hold pencils/pens, erasers, post-it notes and any additional materials
- Name tags
 - Sticker version and/or paper for the girls to create their own and place on their table
- Clipboards (to allow girls to work around the room)
- Extra utensils (if during the one-day where there are lunch and snack breaks)
- Kleenex
- First aid kit
 - There should be one on location, but another in the room is helpful
- Speaker for music (to play during breaks or work time)
- Notebooks for each girl
 - This can be a place where they can make notes or write down their thoughts after each session
- Games (to play during break time)
- Completion Certificates (please see template in resources)

Resources to print:

- List of “step forward if..” statements
- *Female Leaders in Real Life* worksheet
 - 1 per participant
- *Kindness Business Plan* worksheet
 - 1 per participant

Resources

Below you will find the resources needed to run a few of the activities. In addition, a link to an electronic copy of the Flyer and registration form has been included for your convenience. Please note that some formatting may be altered when opened in Google Docs, but will return to its original form when downloaded to word.

Flyer template link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VCBXr_rDtytVN76wPCXeUSh1WWD0fVh5/view?usp=sharing

Registration form template link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1t5c4RfLw7vpyrVgAVZ7MR5RJwII6XhvF/view?usp=sharing>

**Mighty Girl: Leadership Workshop
Registration Form**

Participant Information:

First Name (please print): _____

Last Name (please print): _____

Age: _____ Birthdate (dd/mm/yyyy): _____

Grade: _____ School: _____

Please describe any allergy or medical needs we need to be aware of:

Family Doctor Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact Information:

First & Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Home #: _____ Cell/work#: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact Information (OTHER than above):

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Relation to participant: _____

Address: _____

Home #: _____ Cell/work#: _____

PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE ALSO COMPLETED AND SIGNED THE WAIVER.

Female Leaders in Real Life

The following activity is meant to get you thinking about the female leaders you see in your day-to-day life and what makes them a leader. Brainstorm one leader for each category and then write down 3-4 skills this person has that, in your opinion, makes them a leader.

Leader #1: Family/Friends

Brainstorm a leader that is a family member or friend.

Name:

Three skills that make them a leader:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Leader #2: Media

Brainstorm a leader that is in the media; social media, television, movies, YouTube etc.

Name:

Three skills that make them a leader:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Leader #3: Workforce

Brainstorm a community or global leader; organizations/charities, government, authors, teachers etc.

Name:

Three skills that make them a leader:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Kindness Business Plan

From the list, which social justice issue are you interested in?

Brainstorm a few ways you could help this issue in your community. Think practical, realistic and simple.

-

-

-

Choose **one** idea from your brainstormed list that you would like to put into practise. Describe it with more detail by answering these questions:

1. What activity could you do in your community that would raise awareness about this issue or make an impact in some way?

2. What are the steps you would take to put this activity into action?

3. How will this activity help the social issue?

4. What leadership skills will you be using to put this plan into action?

mighty GIRL

LEARNING TO LEAD, LEADING TO LEARN

The following certificate demonstrates that

has successfully completed the Mighty Girl leadership workshop!
Congratulations!

"I alone cannot change the world, but I
can cast a stone across the water to
create many ripples"

-Mother Teresa

Date: _____

Signature of workshop facilitator: _____

Workshop References

- Archard, N. (2013). Female leadership framework: Developing adolescent girls as future women leaders through the formation of a Female Leadership Identity. *Leading & Managing*, 19(1), 51-71.
- Aoun, K. D. (2011). Mentors' self-esteem and social support (Master's thesis). California State University, Fullerton, CA. (UMI: 1499135). Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/openview/4c61e809f78aa488d9cc835bee1084d8/1pqorigsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- Gregory-Mina, H. J. (2011). A correlational study of gender barriers of women striving for a corporate officer position (Doctoral dissertation). University of Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ. (UMI: 3463546). Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Gender-Barriers-of-Women-Striving-for-a-Corporate-A-Gregory-Mina/bb606638ec585f47d7c3fecab566da21d199f5a7>
- Haber-Curran, P. & Sulpizio, L. (2017). Student leadership development for girls and young women. *New Directions for Student Leadership*, 154, 33-46. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20238>
- High-Pippert, A. & Comer, J. (1998). Female empowerment. *Women & Politics*, 19(4), p. 53-66. https://doi.org/10.1300/J014v19n04_03
- LeCroy, C. W., & Daley, J. (2004). *Empowering adolescent girls: Examining the present and building skills for the future with the go grrrls program*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2001.
- Maranzan, K. A., Sabourin, A. & Simard-Chicago, C. (2013). A community-based leadership development program for First Nations women: Revaluing and honoring women's

strengths. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 4(2), 1-12. Retrieved from <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/iipj/vol4/iss2/5>

Rouhani, L. (2017). Unpacking community participation: A gendered perspective. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 20(1), p. 31-44. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1170216.pdf>

Williams, R. L. & Ferber, A. (2008). Facilitating smart-girl: Feminist pedagogy in service learning in action. *Feminist Teacher*, 19(1), p. 47-67. doi: 10.1353/ft.0.0027

Zarrett, N. & Eccles, J. (2006). The passage to adulthood: Challenges of late adolescence. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 111, 13-28. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.179>

Chapter Six: Conclusion

Adolescence marks a fragile time in many girls' lives; while girls are attempting to develop their own identity, their self-esteem shows a serious decline. However, adolescence also marks a time of growth and discovery. Providing resources and mentorship at this time could make a difference in the confidence many girls have in themselves. Based on secondary-source research and the survey responses of women and girls over the age of twelve, leadership development could have a positive impact on the self-esteem of adolescent girls. I have aimed to accomplish with the creation of my leadership workshop "Mighty Girl".

Part of tackling the decline many girls face in adolescence is becoming aware of the barriers they may face. Amongst becoming more aware of herself and increasingly seeking the approval of others, most girls also face gender biases, stereotypes and labelling through social norms and gendered expectations. Each factor often acts as a barrier for girls to seek out leadership roles in their lives. A correlation of societal pressure and of gender expectations and biases makes leadership roles seem unattainable or uncharacteristic for most girls. In order to change the influence these gender norms and expectations have, girls must redefine leadership, develop a leadership identity, and become aware of, and practise, their own leadership skills. To do so girls need to be provided with resources, support and the space to see their capacity as a leader and find their own voice.

Utilizing the existing research on self-esteem, leadership and community engagement, along with survey responses from girls and women ages twelve and over who have taken part in leadership experiences, I have created activities for my workshop that aim to help girls create a leadership identity and improve their leadership skills. These activities attempt to redefine leadership away from gendered stereotypes and biases and help girls see leadership as a capacity,

not a trait. In addition, my workshop serves as a space in which girls can learn to use their voices.

Existing research emphasizes the need for resources to provide girls with guidance in their leadership development. The need for resources is supported by the survey responses, in which most of the participants found having the opportunity to develop and utilize their leadership skills, as well as having mentors to guide them, helped them become a leader. My workshop will build on these ideas, and encourage girls to redefine leadership in a way that allows them to see their capacity to be a leader. In doing so, I hope it will encourage a more positive, confident and resilient outlook on their identities and their futures.

References

- Archard, N. (2013). Female leadership framework: Developing adolescent girls as future women leaders through the formation of a female leadership identity. *Leading & Managing, 19*(1), 51-71.
- Armstrong, S. (2019). *Power shift: The longest revolution*. House of Anansi.
- Aoun, K. D. (2011). Mentors' self-esteem and social support (Master's thesis). California State University, Fullerton, CA. (UMI: 1499135). Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/openview/4c61e809f78aa488d9cc835bee1084d8/1pqorigsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- Baldwin, S. A. & Hoffman, J. P. (2002). The dynamics of self-esteem: A growth-curve analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 31*(2), 101-113. doi: 10.1023/A:1014065825598
- Baumgardner, J. & Richards, A. (2000). *Manifesta: Young women, feminism and the future*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Bean, S., Meyer, B. & Denner, J. (2004). The interplay of leadership and friendship in the young women's leadership alliance. *Feminism & Psychology, 14*(3), 389-394. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.lakeheadu.ca/10.1177/0959353504044640>
- Bond, L. A., Holmes, T. R., Byrne, C., Babchuck, L. & Kirton-Robbins, S. (2008). Movers and shakers: How and why women become and remain engaged in community leadership. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 32*, 48-64. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.2007.00406.x>
- Bowdon, M., Pigg, S. & Mansfield, L. P. (2015). Feminine and feminist ethics and service learning site selection: The role of empathy. *Feminist Teacher, 24*(1-2), 57-82. doi:10.5406/femteacher.24.1-2.0057

- Brown, K. M., Hoye, R. & Nicholson, M. (2012). Self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social connectedness as mediators of the relationship between volunteering and well-being. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 38, 468-483.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2012.687706>
- Canadian Women's Foundation. (n.d). Gender equality: Our progress is at risk. Retrieved from <https://www.canadianwomen.org/the-facts/>
- Carmen, L. & Gore, J. (2013). *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Clay, D., Vignoles, V. L. & Dittmar, H. (2005). Body image and self-esteem among adolescent girls: Testing the influence of sociocultural factors. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 15(4), 451-477. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2005.00107.x>
- Cousineau, L. & Roth, J. (2012). Pervasive patriarchal leadership ideology in seasonal residential summer camp staff. *Leadership*, 8(4), 421-440.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715012444052>
- Eagly, A. H. & Carli, L. L. (2007). *Through the labyrinth: The truth about how women become leaders*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Elias, J. K., Sudhir, P. & Mehrotra, S. (2016). Long-term engagement in formal volunteering and well-being: An exploratory Indian study. *Behavioural Sciences*, 6(20), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs6040020>
- Gregory-Mina, H. J. (2011). A correlational study of gender barriers of women striving for a corporate officer position (Doctoral dissertation). University of Phoenix, Phoenix, AZ. (UMI: 3463546). Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Gender-Barriers-of-Women-Striving-for-a-Corporate-A-Gregory-Mina/bb606638ec585f47d7c3fecab566da21d199f5a7>

- Haber-Curran, P. & Sulpizio, L. (2017). Student leadership development for girls and young women. *New Directions for Student Leadership*, 154, 33-46. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20238>
- Hack, T., Garcia, A. L., Goodfriend, W., Habashi, M. M. & Hoover, A. E. (2019). When it is not so funny: Prevalence of friendly sexist teasing and consequence to gender self-esteem. *Psychological Reports*, 0(0), 1-32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294119896045>
- Halberstam, J. (1998). *Female masculinity*. Duke University Press.
- Harris, A. (2004). *Future girl: Young women in the twenty-first century*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- High-Pippert, A. & Comer, J. (1998). Female Empowerment. *Women & Politics*, 19(4), 53-66. https://doi.org/10.1300/J014v19n04_03
- Hilfinger Messias, D. K., De Jong, M. K. & McLoughlin, K. (2005). Being involved and making a difference: Empowerment and well-being among women living in poverty. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 23(1), 70-88. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010104272023>
- Holstrom, A. J. (2012). What helps-and what doesn't-when self-esteem is threatened?: Retrospective reports of esteem support. *Communication Studies*, 63(1), 77-98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2011.586399>
- Karnes, F. Bean, S. & Wallner, R. (Eds). (1993). *Girls and young women leading the way: 20 true stories about leadership*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.
- LeCroy, C. W., & Daley, J. (2004). *Empowering adolescent girls: Examining the present and building skills for the future with the go grrrls program*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2001.

- Marmarosh, C. L., & Corazzini, J. G. (1997). Putting the group in your pocket: Using collective identity to enhance personal and collective self-esteem. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practise*, 1(1), 65-74. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2699.1.1.65>
- Maranzan, K. A., Sabourin, A. & Simard-Chicago, C. (2013). A community-based leadership development program for First Nations women: Revaluing and honoring women's strengths. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 4(2), 1-12. Retrieved from <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/iipj/vol4/iss2/5>
- Merriam, S. B. & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mongrain, M., China, J. M. & Shapira, L. B. (2010). Practising compassion increases happiness and self-esteem. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 12, 963-981. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-010-9239-1>
- Moksnes, U., & Espnes, G. (2013). Self-esteem and life satisfaction in adolescents-gender and age as potential moderators. *Quality of Life Research*, 22(10), 2921-2928. doi: 10.1007/s11136-013-0427-4
- Nash, M., Davies, A. & Moore, P. (2017). What style of leadership do women in STEMM fields perform? Findings from an international survey. *PLOS ONE*. 12(10), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0185727>
- Orenstein, P. (1994). *Schoolgirls: Young women, self-esteem, and the confidence gap*. Ed. American Association of University Women. New York: Doubleday.
- Parajuli, B. (2014). Students' motivations towards volunteerism: A comparative study of the United States and Nepal (Master's thesis). University of Louisiana at Lafayette,

- Lafayette, LA. (UMI:1585866). Retrieved from
<https://pqdtopen.proquest.com/pubnum/1585866.html>
- Pittman, A. (2019). Elizabeth Warren, Hillary Clinton and the sexist hypocrisy of the ‘likability’ media narrative. Here we go again. *THINK*. Retrieved from
<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/elizabeth-warren-hillary-clinton-sexist-hypocrisy-likability-media-narrative-here-ncna955021>
- Pipher, M. (1994). *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the selves of adolescent girls*. New York: Grosset/Putnam.
- Polce-Lynch, M., Myers, B., Kilmartin, C., Frossman-Falke, R. & Kliewer, W. (1998). Gender and age patterns in emotional expression, body image, and self-esteem: A qualitative analysis. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* 38, 1025–1048.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1018830727244>
- Robinson, N. S. (1995). Evaluating the nature of perceived support and its relation to perceived self-worth in adolescents. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 5(2), 253-280. doi: 10.1207/s15327795jra0502_5
- Rouhani, L. (2017). Unpacking community participation: A gendered perspective. *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, 20(1), 31-44. Retrieved from
<https://www.tc.columbia.edu/cice/pdf/CICE-Fall-2017-Volume-20,-Issue-1.pdf>
- Shinbrot, X. A., Wilkins, K., Gretzel, U. & Bowser, G. (2019). Unlocking women’s sustainability leadership potential: Perceptions of contributions and challenges for women in sustainable development. *World Development*, 119, 120-132.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2019.03.009>

- Steenbergen, C. (2006). *Best practises: Experience, knowledge and approaches for working with and for girls and young women*. Montreal, QC: POWER Camp National.
- Steese, S., Dollette, M., Phillips, W., Hossfeld, E., Matthews, G. & Taormina, G. (2006). Understanding girls' circle as an intervention on perceived social support, body image, self-efficacy, locus of control and self-esteem. *Adolescence*, 41(161), 55-74. https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A145526473/AONE?u=ocul_lakehead&sid=AONE&xid=5f91dc4e
- Thoits, P. A. & Hewitt, L. N. (2001). Volunteer work and well-being. *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*, 42(2), 115-131. doi: 10.2307/3090173
- What others said about Margaret Thatcher-beastly, best man in England...* (2013, April 8). Belfast Telegraph. Retrieved March 29, 2020, from <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/uk/what-others-said-about-margaret-thatcher-beastly-best-man-in-england--29181681.html>
- Williams, R. L. & Ferber, A. (2008). Facilitating smart-girl: Feminist pedagogy in service learning in action. *Feminist Teacher*, 19(1), 47-67. doi: 10.1353/ft.0.0027
- Zarrett, N. & Eccles, J. (2006). The passage to adulthood: Challenges of late adolescence. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 111, 13-28. <https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.179>

Appendices

Appendix A: Survey questions

1. How do you define leadership?
2. Describe two activities you have taken part in (for example with WE2 Unite, school, church, or other volunteer organization) that you feel have given you better leadership skills or helped you become a leader.
3. What was it about those specific activities that you feel helped improve your leadership skills and what skills did you improve?

Appendix B: Underage Participant Information Letter & Consent Form

Empowering Girls through Leadership Development

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jenny Roth, +1 (807)-766-7116 ext. 7116 jroth@lakeheadu.ca

Researcher: Lauren Tetford (MEd Student) letetfor@lakeheadu.ca

February 19th, 2020

Dear Parent/Legal Guardian of Potential Participant,

Thank you for your interest in allowing your daughter to participate in our Master's research study, which will analyze girls' leadership skills and target societal barriers and stereotypes that lead to the decline of girls' self-esteem. The purpose of this study is to create a leadership workshop based on the feedback from adolescent girls. This is part of Masters of Education Research conducted by MEd student Lauren Tetford through Lakehead University.

Taking part in this study is voluntary. Before you and your daughter decide whether they will take part, please read this letter carefully to understand what is involved. After you have read the letter, please ask any questions you or your child may have before deciding to participate in the survey.

WHAT IS REQUESTED OF ME AS A PARTICIPANT?

As a potential participant in this study your daughter will be asked to complete an anonymous survey through *Google Forms*. The survey will open Wednesday, February 19th, 2020, remain open for three days, and close on Saturday, February 22nd, 2020 at 9:00 am.

This survey will consist of three open-ended questions on the topics of leadership, leadership opportunities, and the impact they have had on your daughter. Your daughter will be asked to define leadership in her own words, and highlight two activities she has taken part in that she feels benefitted her leadership development. In addition, your daughter will be asked to outline which leadership skills she feels she has had the opportunity to develop. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey will remain open to responses for three days, closing on Saturday, February 22nd, 2020 at 9:00 am. Once the survey has been submitted your daughter's responsibilities are complete.

A consent form **must** be signed by a parent or legal guardian, along with the participant themselves. The consent form must be returned to Lauren Tetford, whether by email (letetfor@lakeheadu.ca) or in person, prior to completing the survey. Once the consent form has been received, Lauren will respond in the same format, either on a piece of paper in person or as a link in an email, with the url that will be used to access the survey. We request that you pass along the url to your daughter so she may take part in the survey. Participants will remain anonymous in this study and the email address used to submit the consent form will not be connected with the survey in any way.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?

Your daughter will be asked to respond to three open-ended questions on leadership activities she has taken part in, and what impact the activities had on her leadership skills. Participants may choose to skip any question they are not comfortable answering without penalty.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You or your daughter may ask questions before beginning the survey, and your daughter may withdraw without penalty prior to submitting the survey. If your daughter is a member of WE2 Unite, and knows the researcher, Lauren, please note that any decision she makes not to take part in this study, or withdraw from it, will not affect her standing with WE2 Unite or WE Unite in any way.

The survey platform, *Google forms*, does not allow the researcher to identify which surveys are submitted by which participants, so your daughter's responses cannot be withdrawn after submitting the survey. However, if your daughter wishes to withdraw from the survey before submission she can end the survey and close the browser without her results being saved. If you or your daughter have any questions regarding the survey, please contact Dr. Jenny Roth (jroth@lakeheadu.ca) or Lauren Tetford (letetfor@lakeheadu.ca).

As previously noted, a participant may choose to skip any question on the survey without penalty. They can provide as much or as little information in their survey responses as they wish to.

Please note that the online survey tool used in the study, *Google Forms*, is hosted by a server located in the USA. The US Patriot Act permits U.S. law enforcement officials, for the purpose of anti-terrorism investigation, to seek a court order that allows access to the personal records of any person without the person's knowledge. In view of this, we cannot absolutely guarantee the full confidentiality and anonymity of your daughter's data. With your consent to allow your child to participate in this study, you acknowledge this. However, your daughter will not be asked to include any identifying information on the survey, and the computer used to complete the survey will not be linked in any way to its submission.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND BENEFITS?

Your daughter's responses will be applied to the creation of one activity as part of a workshop that aims to encourage girls to see their capacity to be a leader and create a leadership identity. Taking part in the survey will help your daughter reflect on her own experiences with leadership and potentially reflect on her own capacity as a leader. In addition, your daughter's responses will help create a workshop that, if put into practice, could help other girls develop their leadership skills. As a participant, your daughter's understanding and insight is important. Her experience in developing her leadership skills will be very valuable to other young women, as it will contribute to the production of a workshop activity.

We do not anticipate any risks associated with your daughter's participation in this study, as all measures will be taken to keep her data anonymous and confidential. There may, however, be the slight risk that

describing any negative events or experiences may cause distress; however, the survey asks only that a participant describe what they felt were positive experiences.

HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE MAINTAINED?

The survey form is anonymous. Your daughter will not be asked to include any personally identifying information on the survey, and any email tracking is disabled on *Google Forms*.

Contact information will be destroyed or kept in a password safe computer file accessible only to the principal researcher. The email used to send the scanned consent letter will not be included in any data and will be deleted after the form is received and a response has been made with the survey url.

WHAT WILL MY DATA BE USED FOR:

The responses from this survey will be used to help create a workshop activity. This workshop is part of a larger Masters of Education Research study, which is the requirement of graduating the Lakehead Masters of Education program. This Masters of Education Research study may also be presented at conferences held at Lakehead University.

WHERE WILL MY DATA BE STORED?

During this study the data will be analyzed directly from the survey and documented in a Google Doc. The survey responses and Google Doc will be stored on a password protected shared folder on Google Drive that is accessible only to the researchers Jenny Roth and Lauren Tetford. For long-term preservation, the consent forms and a copy of the documented responses will be sent to the principal Investigator (Jenny Roth), and stored for up to five years on a password protected Lakehead University computer. All data will be destroyed five years after the completion of this study.

HOW CAN I RECEIVE A COPY OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS?

As the surveys are anonymous, the researchers are unable to provide participants with a copy of their responses. However, you or your daughter may request a copy of the research study by emailing Dr. Jenny Roth (jroth@lakeheadu.ca) or Lauren Tetford (letetfor@lakeheadu.ca). A copy of the study will be sent to you or your daughter once it has been submitted and approved.

RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have any questions regarding the purpose of this survey, or to raise any concerns, please contact the principal investigator Dr. Jenny Roth (jroth@lakeheadu.ca) or MEd student and researcher Lauren Tetford (letetfor@lakeheadu.ca)

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research and would like to speak to someone outside of the research team, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at [807-343-8283](tel:807-343-8283) or research@lakeheadu.ca.

Empowering Girls through Leadership Development & Community Engagement

Parent/Legal Guardian Consent Form

As the parent/legal guardian of **(participant's name)** _____ I,
(state first and last name) _____ agree to the following:

- ✓ I and my child have read and understand the information contained in the Information Letter
- ✓ I agree to provide my consent for my child to participate in this study
- ✓ I and my child understand the risks and benefits to the study
- ✓ I and my child understand that the survey is voluntary, that my child can withdraw from the study up until the survey has been submitted, and that they may choose not to answer any questions they are not comfortable answering
- ✓ I and my child understand that the data will be securely stored by Dr. Jenny Roth at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Lakehead University, for a minimum period of 5 years following completion of the research
- ✓ I and my child understand that the research findings will be made available to us upon request, once the Research study has been submitted and accepted
- ✓ I understand that my child will not have to provide identifying personal information on the survey and will remain anonymous
- ✓ All of my, and my child's, questions have been answered

I, and my child, have read and agree to the above information and acknowledge that once the consent form has been submitted to Lauren Tetford by email at letetfor@lakeheadu.ca, or in person, Lauren will respond in the same format with the url to access the survey. Once the url is received, I will pass along the url to my daughter so she may access the survey.

By consenting to participate, I have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (Please Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Participant Name (Please Print): _____

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Adult Participant Information Letter

Empowering Girls through Leadership Development

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jenny Roth, +1 (807)-766-7116 ext. 7116 jroth@lakeheadu.ca

Researcher: Lauren Tetford (MEd Student) letetfor@lakeheadu.ca

February 19th, 2020

Dear Potential Participant,

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information letter, which will provide you with an overview of this research study. This study aims to analyze girls' leadership skills and target societal barriers and stereotypes that lead to the decline of girls' self-esteem. The purpose of this study is to create a leadership workshop based on the feedback from adolescent girls and women who have taken part in leadership activities. This Masters of Education Research is being conducted by MEd student Lauren Tetford through Lakehead University.

Taking part in this study is voluntary. Before you decide whether you would like to take part, please read this letter carefully to understand what is involved. After you have read the letter, please ask any questions you may have before deciding to participate in the survey.

WHAT IS REQUESTED OF ME AS A PARTICIPANT?

As a potential participant in this study you will be asked to complete an anonymous survey through *Google Forms*. The survey can be accessed through the secure link included in the email sent to you by Lauren Tetford. The survey will open Wednesday, February 19th, 2020, remain open for three days, and close on Saturday, February 22nd, 2020 at 9:00 am.

This survey will consist of three open-ended questions on the topics of leadership, leadership opportunities, and the impact they have had on you. You will be asked to define leadership in your own words, and highlight two activities you took part in, between grades six through twelve, that you felt benefitted your leadership development. In addition, you will be asked to outline which leadership skills you feel you have had the opportunity to develop. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey will remain open to responses for three days, closing on Saturday, February 22nd, 2020 at 9:00 am. Once the survey has been submitted your responsibilities are complete.

Please note that by completing and submitting the survey you are consenting to take part in this Master's research. As the surveys are anonymous, your responses cannot be retrieved once the survey is submitted, which therefore serves as your implied consent to participating.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE COLLECTED?

You will be asked to respond to three open-ended questions on leadership activities you have taken part in, and what impact the activities had on your leadership skills. You may choose to skip any questions you are not comfortable answering without penalty.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may ask questions regarding any aspect of the study before beginning the survey, and you may withdraw without penalty at any time. The survey platform, *Google forms*, does not allow the researcher to identify which surveys are submitted by which participant, so your responses cannot be withdrawn after submitting the survey. However, if you wish to withdraw from the survey before submission you can end the survey and close the browser without your results being saved. If you have any questions regarding the study, please contact Dr. Jenny Roth (jroth@lakeheadu.ca) or Lauren Tetford (letetfor@lakeheadu.ca).

As previously noted, participants may choose to skip any question on the survey without penalty. You can provide as much or as little information in your survey responses that you want.

Please note that the online survey tool used in the study, *Google Forms*, is hosted by a server located in the USA. The US Patriot Act permits U.S. law enforcement officials, for the purpose of anti-terrorism investigation, to seek a court order that allows access to the personal records of any person without the person's knowledge. In view of this, we cannot absolutely guarantee the full confidentiality and anonymity of your data. With your consent to participate in this study, you acknowledge this. However, you will not be asked to include any identifying information on the survey, and the computer used to complete the survey will not be linked in any way to its submission.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND BENEFITS?

Your responses will be applied to the creation of one activity as part of a workshop that aims to encourage girls to see their capacity to be a leader and create a leadership identity. Taking part in the survey will help you reflect on your own experiences with leadership and potentially reflect on your own capacity as a leader. In addition, your responses will help create a workshop that, if put into practice, could help girls develop their leadership skills. As a participant, your understanding and insight is important. Your experience in developing your leadership skills will be very valuable to young women, as it will contribute to the production of a workshop activity.

We do not anticipate any risks associated with your participation in this study, as all measures will be taken to keep your data anonymous and confidential. There may, however, be the slight risk that describing any negative events or experiences may cause distress; however, the survey asks only that you describe what you felt were positive experiences.

HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE MAINTAINED?

The survey form is anonymous. You will not be asked to include any personally identifying information on the survey, and any email tracking is disabled on *Google Forms*.

Contact information will be destroyed or kept in a password safe computer file accessible only by the principal researcher.

WHAT WILL MY DATA BE USED FOR:

The responses from this survey will be used to help create a workshop activity. This workshop is part of a larger Masters of Education Research study, which is the requirement of graduating the Lakehead Masters of Education program. This Masters of Education Research study may also be presented at conferences held at Lakehead University.

WHERE WILL MY DATA BE STORED?

During this study the data will be analyzed directly from the survey and documented in a Google Doc. The survey responses and Google Doc will be stored on a password protected shared folder on Google Drive that is accessible only to the researchers Jenny Roth and Lauren Tetford. For long-term preservation, a copy of the documented responses will be sent to the Principal Investigator (Jenny Roth), and stored for up to five years on a password protected Lakehead University computer. All data will be destroyed five years after the completion of this study.

HOW CAN I RECEIVE A COPY OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS?

As the surveys are anonymous, the researchers are unable to provide you with a copy of your responses. However, you may request a copy of the finished Master's Research study by emailing Dr. Jenny Roth (jroth@lakeheadu.ca) or Lauren Tetford (letetfor@lakeheadu.ca). A copy of the study will be sent to you once it has been submitted and approved.

RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have any questions regarding the purpose of this survey, or to raise any concerns, please contact the Principal Investigator Dr. Jenny Roth (jroth@lakeheadu.ca) or MEd student and researcher Lauren Tetford (letetfor@lakeheadu.ca).

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research and would like to speak to someone outside of the research team, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at [807-343-8283](tel:807-343-8283) or research@lakeheadu.ca.