

WOMEN AND MEN IN MANAGEMENT
STEREOTYPES, EVALUATION AND DISCOURSE

Hanna Li Kusterer

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To juggling, struggling and
loving mothers – especially
my own.

Abstract

Very few women hold top corporate positions in Sweden, and women are underrepresented as managers in all work sectors. The present thesis examined stereotypes, perceptions and presuppositions about women, men and management with a combination of perspectives from social and organizational psychology, discourse analysis and gender in organization research. Study 1 of Paper I was a content analysis of management attributes and cultural stereotypes of female and male managers. In Study 2, an inventory of these attributes was formed, and participants' stereotype endorsements tested. Stereotypes of female managers resembled good management more than male managers, and they were rated more positively, but a masculine norm was implied. Paper II aimed to study and compare gender-related management stereotypes and evaluations of actual managers, and examine perceived gender bias. Men evaluated the female manager stereotype more positively on communal attributes, and, contrary to women, judged the male manager stereotype more positively on agentic attributes. This may help explain the scarcity of women in top management. Women perceived more gender bias favoring male managers than men. Actual male and female managers were rated similarly. Still, the Euclidian distances showed that ratings of actual managers and stereotypes were linked. Paper III examined the discourse on the lack of women in top corporate positions, explanations and links to proposed measures in a project to counter the gender imbalance. A liberal discourse with contradictions and textual silences was exposed. Gender had to be construed in line with traditional gender norms and division of labor to make sense of the proposed explanations. To conclude, one can be reassured by the largely communal portrayal of good management and positive evaluations of female managers, but also apprehensive about the masculine norm of management, perceived gender bias in favor of men, and traditional gender constructions.

Keywords: gender, management, leadership, stereotypes, gender typing, liberal discourse, ideology, agency, communion, social roles.

Sammanfattning

Sverige anses vara ett jämställt land, men trots detta förekommer nästan inga kvinnor i näringslivets topp, och kvinnliga chefer är underrepresenterade i arbetsmarknadens alla sektorer. Organisationer är uppbyggda kring maskulina värden. Kopplingen mellan maskulinitet och föreställningar kring ledarskap, t ex ledarskapsstereotyper, är stark. I föreliggande avhandling undersöktes stereotyper, föreställningar och antaganden om kvinnor, män och chefskap. En kombination av kvalitativa och kvantitativa metoder från social- och organisationspsykologi, diskursanalys och genusperspektiv på organisationsforskning användes för att öka förståelsen för kvinnors underrepresentation som chefer.

Studie 1 i Artikel I var en kvalitativ innehållsanalys av kvaliteter som utgör en bra chef samt innehållet i kulturella stereotyper (d.v.s. uppfattningen om vad "folk i allmänhet" tycker) av kvinnliga och manliga chefer. Studie 2 i samma artikel syftade till att utveckla ett mätinstrument med chefsattribut för att kunna undersöka stereotyper av både manliga och kvinnliga chefer. De chefskvaliteter som nämndes i Studie 1 kunde oftare kopplas till stereotyper av kvinnliga än manliga chefer. I Studie 2 skattades den kvinnliga chefsstereotypen överlag mer positivt än den manliga; samtidigt framkom en norm som förknippar bra chefskap med män i båda studierna.

I Artikel II användes mätinstrumentet som utvecklats i Artikel I. Syftet var att undersöka manliga och kvinnliga chefsstereotyper, upplevd favorisering av manliga chefer, och värdering av de anställdas egna chefer, samt att undersöka kopplingen mellan stereotyper och värderingar av verkliga chefer genom en direkt jämförelse. Män skattade den kvinnliga chefsstereotypen mer positivt på attribut som tidigare kopplats till den kvinnliga könsrollen (*communal* attributer, t ex vänlig, lyhörd och empatisk), och den manliga chefsstereotypen mer positivt på attribut som tidigare kopplats till den manliga könsrollen (*agentic* attributer, t ex professionell, målorienterad och beslutsför). Kvinnor skattade den kvinnliga chefsstereotypen mer positivt både på attribut som traditionellt kopplats till såväl manliga som kvinnliga könsroller. Samtidigt upplevde kvinnor att manliga chefer favoriseras i jämförelse med kvinnliga chefer, detta i större utsträckning än vad män upplevt. De anställdas egna chefer skattades lika högt oavsett kön. Trots denna likhet fanns det en starkare koppling mellan stereotypskattningar och egna chefer av samma kön (kvinnlig chefsstereotyp och egen kvinnlig chef, manlig chefsstereotyp och egen manlig chef) än motsatt kön (kvinnlig chefsstereo-

typ och egen manlig chef, manlig chefsstereotyp och egen kvinnlig chef). Detta resultat pekar på att stereotyper kan påverka bedömningen av faktiska personer, exempelvis vid en chefsrekrytering eller utvärdering. Denna påverkan kan, trots de över lag positiva kvinnliga chefsstereotyperna, vara till nackdel för kvinnliga chefer, eftersom män värderade den manliga chefsstereotypen mer positivt på agentic attribut. Dessa attribut anses vara särskilt viktiga för chefer på högre nivåer, och i dessa rekryterings- eller befördringsprocesser är det ofta män som faller avgörande beslut.

Syftet med Artikel III var att analysera diskursen kring bristen på kvinnor i näringslivets topp, förklaringar till denna, samt kopplingen till föreslagna åtgärder för att förbättra jämställdheten bland toppchefer. En kritisk diskursanalys användes, vilken skildrade en liberal diskurs med motsättningar och möjliga manipulativa tystnader. Exempelvis behöver läsaren konstruera kön i enlighet med traditionella könsroller, normer och uppdelning av ansvar för lönearbete, hem och barn för att kunna förstå de föreslagna åtgärderna. Detta blir en form av manipulativ tystnad, eftersom alternativa konstruktioner av kön inte möjliggörs i en sådan framställning. Motsättningarna inom en liberal diskurs som både förespråkar individualism, valfrihet och jämlikhet bidrar till en otydlighet i kopplingen mellan presentationen av problemet med bristen på kvinnliga toppchefer och förslag till åtgärder. Att det är staten som bör vara drivande i många av åtgärdsförslagen blir ytterligare en motsättning inom denna typ av diskurs.

Sammanfattningsvis visar avhandlingens resultat att det är möjligt både att ha tillförsikt om en mer jämställd framtid, men också vara oroad över svårigheter som möter kvinnliga chefer i svenskt näringsliv. Bra chefskap beskrevs i stor utsträckning med communal attribut, d v s egenskaper som oftast förknippas med kvinnor, och kvinnliga chefer värderades positivt av sina medarbetare. Samtidigt framträdde den manliga normen inom organisationer och chefskap, och kvinnor upplevde att manliga chefer favoriseras över kvinnor, vilka i sin tur har det svårare som chefer. Traditionella könskonstruktioner i relation till hemarbete och ansvar för familj och barn verkar ännu som hinder för kvinnliga chefer. I avhandlingens avslutande kapitel diskuteras flertalet förslag för framtida forskning samt praktiska implikationer av föreliggande resultat.

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Hanna Li Kusterer
Stockholm, October 2014

List of studies

The present doctoral thesis is based on the following studies:

- I. Kusterer, H.L. (2008). Exploring the gender typing of management characteristics in an egalitarian context. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 49, 549-557. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9450.2008.00662.x *
- II. Kusterer, H.L., Lindholm, T., & Montgomery, H. (2013). Gender typing in stereotypes and evaluations of actual managers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 28, 561-579. DOI: 10.1108/JMP-01-2013-0012 **
- III. Kusterer, H.L. (2014). Gender equality and liberal individualism: A critical reading of economist discourse in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 30, 306-316. DOI: 10.1016/j.scaman.2014.01.002 ***

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Introduction

Management has a long tradition of male dominance. This pertains not only to the fact that historically, most corporate managers have been men (e.g., Svanström, 2003). The conceptions of good management have largely masculine connotations and are strongly associated with stereotypes, norms and prejudicial attitudes relating to gender (e.g., Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Schein, 1973, 1975, 2001; Wahl, 1994).

Sweden can be considered an interesting paradox regarding gender equality. It is repeatedly ranked as one of the most egalitarian countries in the world (e.g., Hausmann, Tyson, Bekhouche, & Zahidi, 2013). There is a higher educational attainment for women than men, extensive legal and financial support surrounding parental leave for both women and men, and women's labor force participation is almost as high as that of men (Statistics Sweden, 2014). It is apparent that a great deal has happened in the last fifty years. Sweden has moved far from a situation when women started entering the workforce in larger numbers and women managers were a rarity (Svanström, 2003). However, in the 21st Century, the solid increase of women in management and top corporate positions has been interrupted (Franco, 2007). Still today, many more women work part-time, and the labor market is highly segregated into typically male and female work-sectors (Statistics Sweden, 2014). There are higher proportions of female employees than managers in both private and public sectors, which means that women are underrepresented as managers in all sectors. For example, 77 % of all local government employees are women, but only 67 % of the managers. In the private sector, 39 % of all employees are women and 29 % of the managers (Statistics Sweden, 2014). Top corporate positions such as CEOs, top managers and board directors remain an extensively male dominated field (e.g., Allbright, 2013; Fristedt, Larsson, & Sundqvist, 2014). Sweden can hardly be perceived as a leading actor in the reduction of gender segregation in the labor market more generally, and of closing the gender gap in workplace authority more specifically (e.g., Bridges, 2003; Franco, 2007). This may be viewed as a paradox considering the country's strong emphasis on gender equality, with laws and regulations governing equality in many aspects of society, including for example laws stipulating gender equality plans for employers (Equality Ombudsman, 2011, see also Linghag, 2009).

This thesis concerns perceptions of managers in the corporate sphere, which contains most privately owned companies as well as companies partly

or fully owned by the state. The focus on business is of importance, because these companies are driven mainly by the goal of producing revenue for their owners. Other goals, such as striving for gender equality, are assumed to play a rather trivial role. Ironically, arguments for justice and equality have often worked against implementation of initiatives to further the advancement of women (c.f. Kottke & Agars, 2005). However, recent years have shown that diversity appears to pay off: Fortune 500 companies with the most women board directors have had stronger financial performance than companies with no women on the board (Carter & Wagner, 2011; Joy, Carter, Wagner, & Narayanan, 2007). Indirect or intangible benefits are also likely to emerge from women's advancements (see Kottke & Agars, 2005). Accordingly, different reasons for striving for gender equality among managers do not need to be in conflict with another, thus giving good prospects of change. Nevertheless, not even large-scale equality programs with highly committed participants may be enough if there is too much discrepancy between reflection and practical action (see Eriksson-Zetterquist & Styhre, 2008). In addition, research on for example gender stereotypes and conceptions of good management, selection procedures, and career prospects for women and men in management, all give reasons to be more hesitant about the future for women managers (e.g., Cox & Harquail, 1991; Eddleston, Veiga, & Powell, 2006; Gorman, 2005; Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Hultin, 2003; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011; Lyness & Heilman, 2006; Tienari, Meriläinen, Holgersson, & Bendl, 2013; but see Elsesser & Lever, 2011).

Different perspectives

This thesis is placed at the crossroads of social and organizational psychology, management studies and gender in organization research. As such, it could be critiqued for not following one specific epistemological perspective. On the other hand, it could be approved for combining different perspectives and using inventive approaches. It is my intention and wish to argue for the latter response. To paraphrase Billig (2012), I have remained unorthodox to the field of social psychology and undisciplinable in my pursuit of combining different perspectives.

Emphasis on quantitative methods has been significant of scientific psychology since its early days (Nilsson, 2004). However, psychological research within other social sciences has long used qualitative methods. Since the 1980s, discourse analysis and other methods focusing on language have permeated social and organizational psychology alongside the development of quantitative methods (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Nilsson, 2004). Historically, the heterogeneity of qualitative approaches has been overlooked, and there are many unexplored possibilities to combine and integrate both qualitative and quantitative methods (see Allwood, 2004). The present thesis is an example of such integration.

The starting point for the current research was a qualitative content analysis of what a good manager is considered to be, and moved on to describe cultural conceptions of female and male managers. Later on, these stereotypical beliefs were tested quantitatively among a larger group of students, and items were selected for a more extensive study where employees' stereotype endorsement was compared with evaluations of their own managers. Finally, a critical discourse analysis of texts within a project aiming to further gender equality in Swedish business and industry completed the thesis. The qualitative method in Paper I was used in order to explore the concept "manager" (Swedish: *chef*) from a Swedish point of view, with an aim to yield quantifiable measures to be used in further studies. In that sense, Paper I was a precursor of Paper II, which must be considered the main study of the current thesis. In Paper II, only quantitative methods have been used. One of the main objectives was to compare stereotype judgments with evaluations of actual managers, which was done with a measure of profile similarity (Euclidian distances). To make such a comparison using a qualitative method would most likely amount to many more complications, and would not be as suitable given the purposes of the study. Finally, in Paper III, critical dis-

course analysis, another qualitative method, was used, in order to delve further into preconceptions, norms and common sense-knowledge concerning gender and management within the corporate discourse. Although somewhat separate from the other two studies, it concerns the same content area. With this kind of method, questions can be posed that are next to impossible to answer using mainstream, quantitative methods. Together, but from various perspectives, these studies shed a broad light on conceptions of men and women in management. Through the combination of perspectives, the thesis is set out to bring the research in this topic area forward (cf. Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Calas & Smircich, 2006).

Because of the domination of quantitative methods within social and organizational psychology, the theoretical and empirical background of the current research is preceded by a short introduction to discourse analysis. This enables important differences between a discursive approach and mainstream social and organizational psychology to be discussed in forthcoming chapters. Next, the concepts of gender and gender stereotypes are elaborated on, followed by an overview of research pertaining to gender in organization, management and leadership. After this presentation of the context and previous relevant research, the separate studies are summarized and subsequently discussed.

Discourse analysis

The term discourse can be defined as a certain way to describe and interpret a part of the world (Fairclough, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). This entails the understanding that language is looked upon as containing several, and often competing, patterns or modes of interpretation. Using the term discourse within research implies doing a textual as well as a social analysis of a phenomenon. Nearly all discourse analytical approaches adhere to the central tenets of social constructionism and post structuralism. Unlike a realist assumption, knowledge is not considered to be an objective truth about the world. Instead, all knowledge is contextually bound, historically and culturally situated, and created in social processes (see Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). Social categories such as gender are created, recreated and challenged in social interactions and practices. Within a certain discourse, some subject positions are made available for certain individuals or groups of people, and others are limited, partly because discourse entails presuppositions, or taken-for-granted knowledge. For example, a racist discourse would presume a hierarchical division of people based on their skin color, which means that people with a darker skin color are precluded from holding prestigious subject positions such as political or corporate leader. This division need not be explicitly stated; rather, in a culture like the Swedish, with explicit emphasis on egalitarian values, it is more common with tacit assumptions and silences regarding such social ordering (c.f. Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003; Huckin, 2002; Kulick, 2005).

In a critical discourse analysis (CDA), presuppositions, categorizations and other forms of discursive work are studied. There is a particular emphasis on unequal power relations that contribute to which discursive constructions are construed as legitimate (e.g., Fairclough, 1992, 2003). The analysis entails revealing what discourses are normalized and legitimized. This is done by deconstructing the discourse(s), and denaturalizing its presuppositions, social constructions and possible subject positions. In this way, dominant and sometimes institutionalized interpretations are challenged (c.f. Calas & Smircich, 2006; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003; Jansson, 2010).

CDA emphasizes the dialectical relationship between particular discursive events and the situations, institutions and social structures framing them (Fairclough, 1992, 2003). Any social practice, including discourse, is both constitutive of situations and social structures, and socially shaped by them, and can reproduce as well as transform the social status quo. With a critical

discursive stance (e.g., Fairclough, 1992, 2003), three levels of analysis should be in focus simultaneously: the text, the discursive practice and the social practice. This means that a detailed, more or less linguistic analysis of the texts should be paralleled with mapping out the production and consumption of these texts, as well as tracing the broader social implications of this discursive practice.

In principle, meanings are flexible and unstable. But dominant discourses usually structure interpretations of truth, knowledge and behavior, which perpetuate a particular social order, including its uses of power (see e.g., Fairclough, 1992; Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). Ideology is considered as discourses that categorize the world in certain ways more broadly and thus legitimize and maintain a social order (Fairclough, 2003). Perceived from within an ideological discourse, the social order (e.g. regarding gender) can appear indisputable. However, through an analysis of the discourse, the pre-suppositions and social constructions can be revealed and thereby questioned.

Gender and gender stereotypes

Gender is probably the most important social categorization in everyday life and society. The gender labeling of people occur more or less instantly, and the division of men and women as separate social entities with distinct characteristics, roles and obligations appear all over the world and is seemingly fundamental to how society functions (see e.g., Beall, Eagly, & Sternberg, 2004; Eagly, 1987; Fiske, 1998; West & Zimmerman, 1987). However, rather than being a natural division, gender is a complex, dynamic, context-dependent, situated and interactional phenomenon (c.f. Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; Martin, 2003, 2006; West & Zimmerman, 1987). In this section, some important social psychological aspects of gender will be discussed, focusing on stereotypes, social roles, and status. This is followed by alternative representations from other disciplines of the constitution of gender.

Stereotypes can be seen as simplified descriptions of social categories that often augment negative and extreme behavior (see e.g., Operario & Fiske, 2004). They are both descriptive – e.g., attributes, roles and behaviors that characterize women or men – and prescriptive – e.g., attributes, roles and behaviors to which women or men are expected to conform (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Fiske, 1993). That is, stereotypes yield expectations not only of people's actual behavior, but also the ideal behavior of people depending on group membership (see also Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Ridgeway, 2001). Although social categorization and stereotypes can be considered helpful and pragmatic in social life, they have many negative aspects, specifically concerning power and control of other people (Fiske, 1993; Operario & Fiske, 2004). Stereotypes exert control, in that more powerful people (e.g., white men) do not need to pay as much attention to the less powerful (e.g., women, people of color) as the people with less power need to attend to the powerful. Hence, the powerful often rely on stereotypes of the powerless, thereby maintaining the status quo, while the powerless are more motivated to form more complex and perhaps non-stereotypic impressions of the powerful (see Fiske, 1993; Operario & Fiske, 2004). Often, disadvantaged people hold similar stereotypes of their own groups as the more advantaged do, and display bias in favor of the advantaged groups, thus contributing to the maintenance of social hierarchies and rationalization of inequalities (Operario & Fiske, 2004).

Expectation states theory (Ridgeway, 2001; Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004) argues that many perceived gender differences, such as different expecta-

tions of task accomplishment for men and women or unequal pay for similar work, are not inherent to gender. Instead, they stem from gender status beliefs, which are widely held beliefs that men have higher status than women and thereby higher performance expectations. People are aware of these status differences, and expect different behaviors from men and women, which also includes how we act ourselves. Other social divisions (e.g., ethnicity, occupation) share similar core status content in the stereotypes of high status groups and low status groups respectively, even though stereotypical content not related to status can vary considerably (see Ridgeway, 2001; Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004).

According to social role theory, gender stereotypes stem from the different social roles that men and women hold in family and society (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984). Most notably, men are associated with occupational roles of higher status, and women are associated with family obligations such as child rearing, and part-time, lower status, occupational roles often involving responsibilities of caring and nurturance. Consistent with Eagly (1987), the two dimensions involved in gender stereotypic beliefs are agency and communion. Agency involves characteristics relating to assertion and control, such as aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, self-reliant, direct and self-confident, and is associated with men and masculine behavior. Communion centers on the concern with the welfare of other people, involves characteristics such as affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, aware of others' feelings, emotionally expressive and gentle, and is associated with women and feminine behavior. Rather than being each other's extreme opposites, Eagly (1987) stresses that gender stereotypes do not represent men and women as completely separate categories, rather, it is a matter of differences in the degree of agency and communion ascribed to each gender. These differences can nevertheless have substantial social consequences (see e.g., Agars, 2004; Eagly & Carli, 2003a; Martell, Lane, & Emrich, 1996). Because stereotypes are believed to reflect the social roles men and women possess, changes in social roles should affect the dynamics of gender stereotypes (Diekmann & Eagly, 2000).

Expectation states theory and social role theory are not conflicting theories. Instead, they can be considered complementary in that Ridgeway (2001; Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004) builds on the stereotypical contents explicated by Eagly (1987) and singles out the importance of the status-related contents and how they function. In addition, while social role theory posits how gender stereotypes are originated and developed, expectation states theory is more concerned with how status beliefs function and perpetuate a system of social hierarchy and inequality (see also Diekmann & Eagly, 2000).

The stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Fiske, Xu, Cuddy, & Glick, 1999) proposes that all stereotypes, including those pertaining to gender, comprise two primary dimensions: warmth and competence. With some variations, this model has been confirmed cross-culturally

(see Cuddy et al., 2009). Although Eagly (1987) criticized other labels than agency and communion of the two dimensions, frequently no definite distinctions are made between agency, competence and masculinity on the one hand, and communion, warmth and femininity on the other hand (c.f. Fiske et al., 2002; Koenig et al., 2011). Specific stereotypes vary along these dimensions depending upon intergroup relations, such that higher status predicts competence, and competition predicts low warmth (Cuddy et al., 2009; Eckes, 2002). Generally, women are seen as warm but not so competent, and men as competent but not so warm (Fiske et al., 2002). Looking further at subtypes of women, housewives are considered high on warmth and low on competence, while the reverse is found for businesswomen as well as feminists, that is, low warmth and high competence (see Eckes, 2002; Fiske et al., 1999).

Gender stereotypes exemplify the ambivalence often contained in stereotype descriptions (e.g., Fiske et al., 1999, 2002; Operario & Fiske, 2004). This means that stereotyped groups are described with many negative attributes, but also some positive. Because of the interdependence between women and men, stereotypes of women usually comprise a seemingly more positive mix than many other low status groups (e.g., Eckes, 2002; Glick & Fiske, 1996). Women are typically more liked than men, something that has been coined the “women are wonderful”-effect, but not necessarily more respected (see Eagly & Mladinic, 1989). However, this liking only applies to women conforming to traditional gender roles, and can in fact be considered the front side of a sexist ideology legitimizing women’s subordination to men (see Glick & Fiske, 2001; Jost & Kay, 2005). Ambivalent sexism theory (Glick & Fiske, 1996, 1997, 2001) differentiates between hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism can be described as antipathy or hostility toward (non-traditional) women, while benevolent sexism contains seemingly favorable but patronizing beliefs about (traditional) women. Especially in cultures with more gender inequality, women acting outside of traditional social roles are often the targets of hostile sexism (Glick et al., 2000). Ambivalent sexism is controlling in that women breaking out of prescriptive gender stereotypes are punished with hostile sexism, while women keeping with the prescriptive norms are praised with benevolent sexism (see Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Glick, Diebold, Bailey-Werner, & Zhu, 1997; Glick & Fiske, 1996, 2001; Masser & Abrams, 2004). What is more, while hostile sexism is mainly supported by men, benevolent sexism is often displayed by men and women alike (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick et al., 2000, see also Rudman, 2005).

From a social constructionist perspective, stereotype and social role research is criticized for having a too static and essentialist view of gender (see Deaux & LaFrance, 1998). One of the most influential approaches within this perspective is West and Zimmerman’s (1987) understanding of gender as an accomplishment or activity, in the sense that gender is something we

do in everyday interactions (see also Martin, 2003, 2006). In this approach, gender is considered a product of these social doings, not a collection of traits, a variable or social role. Discourse analysis is well aligned with a doing gender-approach, and often considers how social categories such as gender are created, recreated and challenged in social interactions and practice (see Fairclough, 1992; Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). The discrepancy from mainstream social and organizational psychology may seem large, but looking more closely, there are prospects of integration where these two perspectives converge. More specifically, although a discursive approach sees meanings as flexible and unstable in principle, dominant discourses most often set the framework for what is considered truth, knowledge and appropriate behavior, for example regarding gender. In that way, a particular social order, including its gender beliefs and presumptions about status hierarchies, is habitually preserved (c.f. Sools, van Engen, & Baerveldt, 2007). This means that results and conclusions from mainstream social psychology and discursive psychology are not necessarily incompatible. From a social psychological position, Deaux and LaFrance (1998) argue for a gender-in-context perspective, where we need to consider social structures, social roles, power, status, and culture for a full analysis and understanding of gender. They see meta-analyses as useful tools in exploring the how and why in gender-related attitudes and behavior. I would argue that at any one time, and in similar contexts, discursive patterns and appropriate (in-context) measures of for example gender stereotypes may render similar inferences. If they do implicate differences, for example in the construction of gender or stereotype content, a synthesized approach enables the exploration of these differences. It is my intention to aim for such an exploration of the results from the complementary methods used in the present thesis.

Gender and organization

While the previous section discussed different perspectives on gender and gender stereotypes more generally, the following section will focus on gender relating to work and organizations. Most of the reviewed research is to be found outside of psychology (but see Dick & Nadin, 2006), and many studies are conducted from a doing gender and/or social constructionist perspective (e.g., Calas & Smircich, 2006; Martin, 2003, 2006; West & Zimmerman, 1987).

The masculinity and male dominance of organizations was previously taken for granted, at the same time as organizational structures most often were considered gender neutral (Acker, 1990; Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Martin, 2003, 2006, see also Calas & Smircich, 2006; Dick & Nadin, 2006). However, Acker (1990) challenged these assumptions and argued that abstract jobs and hierarchies, symbols and processes actually are gendered. There are no abstract job categories separated from the worker, and the disembodied, abstract worker is in fact a man. Assumptions about gender are often ingrained in organizational rules, procedures and policies, and they permeate symbolic aspects of the organization (Acker, 1994; Dick & Nadin, 2006; Martin, 2003, 2006). Together with interpersonal interactions, that is, the doing of gender (West & Zimmerman, 1987), and self-making gendered practices, these patterns of intertwining processes form the gender regimes (see Acker, 1994), or more generally inequality regimes if relating to intersections with class and race (see Acker, 2006; Martin, 2003).

The focus in earlier research on gender and organization was on women and women's experiences. A critical analysis of men and masculinities was absent (Collinson & Hearn, 1994). In studies of management, gender issues were generally neglected, and an implicit, unspoken association of men and masculinity with management and authority was present. Collinson and Hearn (1994) tried to counter this by explicating multiple masculinities within organizations, and highlight previous research of importance as well as future possible research avenues. Five masculinities embedded in discourse and management practices were identified, namely authoritarianism (incl. preference for coercive power relations), paternalism, entrepreneurialism (high competitiveness and control), informalism (informal relationship building with the ingroup) and careerism (competition and preoccupation with hierarchical advance). The authors stress the simultaneous sense of unity and differentiation between men, and point out that shared unities

should not be overemphasized. Instead, as the discourse and practice of careerism most clearly highlights, there is often vast competition between men in similar positions who simultaneously share unity and identification through the differentiation from other men and masculinities (e.g., men lower in the organizational hierarchy).

Hegemonic masculinity is a widely used, but also highly contested concept with various understandings (see Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Hearn et al., 2012). It usually denotes the societal norms for being a man and displaying masculine behaviors, as a kind of gender stereotype (Hearn et al., 2012; Holgersson, 2003). This could mean a sort of idealized behavior, which is not necessarily realized by actual individual men, but nevertheless related to and perpetuated by men displaying other kinds of masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, see also Holgersson, 2003). Women, too, can reinforce hegemonic masculinity, for example in order to avoid feminization and uphold a prestigious, masculine profession despite a large majority of women (e.g., veterinary medicine, see Irvine & Vermilya, 2010). However, in Sweden, with its strong gender equality norms, hegemonic masculinity has also come to symbolize outdated, non-modern, often working class and/or minority ethnic masculinities (see Hearn et al., 2012). The concept is probably best described as hegemonic masculinities, where it is important to stress its local variants, with differences and multiple understandings both between and within societies. Nonetheless, despite variations in actual contents across cultures, the central aspects remain, namely that certain masculinities are more valued than others, and that the most valued masculinities always are the highest, above all femininities, and regulating the local gender regimes. For example, feminine behavior is often appreciated in a middle manager, but as we move up the managerial hierarchy, a leader with more masculine attributes – included in a specific type of masculinity considered appropriate for upper level management (e.g., white, heterosexual, middle to upper class, “right” academic background, moderately forceful and assertive, self-reliant, informal networking skills) – is called for (c.f. Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Hearn & Morrell, 2012, see also Calas & Smircich, 2006).

Empirical studies in Sweden on gender constructions in organizations have often pointed at a preservation of traditional gender norms (e.g., Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005; Linghag, 2009; Renemark, 2007; SOU 1994:3; SOU 2003:16). Despite an allegedly positive view of women in management, they most often include men and masculinities as a norm for leadership (e.g., Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005; Holgersson, 2003; Jansson, 2010; Linghag, 2009). Gender equality is habitually considered an issue for and about women (see Jansson, 2010), which could entail an exclusion of men in pursuits towards gender equality, as well as a lack of accountability for actions taken. This hinders many attempts to achieve greater gender equality in Swedish business and industry, particularly because most of the people in power are men. For example, the combination of parenthood and career making has

been posited as especially problematic for women, due to their assumed responsibility for home and family (c.f. Bekkengen, 2002; Kugelberg, 2006; Tienari et al., 2013). Such assumptions steer women in the direction of home-making and non-managerial positions, and men in the direction of career-making and managerial positions. However, alternative types of discourses and social practices are also present. Parenthood is not always considered an obstacle, and when it is, family responsibility may be shared or largely upheld by men (see e.g., Kugelberg, 2006; Linghag, 2009).

What is a good manager?

As the previous section highlighted, gender is undeniably a central aspect of the structures and doings of organizations. Gender is also an indispensable part of the present thesis. Nevertheless, this section will review theories on what constitutes good management without gender as an essential feature, which reflects much of the research conducted in this field. After assessing theories on the perception of leaders and managers, gender will be reintroduced in the following sections, and continue to be the main focus throughout the remainder of the thesis, which will be more specifically concerned with leadership and management.

A good manager needs to display good leadership behavior, that is, be able to influence followers (employees) to pursue the goals of the group or organization. Research in leadership has been conducted with different approaches, and emphasized different features of leadership and attributes of the person (for an overview, see Hogg, 2007). A first, and still remaining, focus was on personality, that is, traits and dispositions, in finding the effective leader (see Dinh & Lord, 2012). Situational perspectives, on the other hand, stressed the importance of adjustments to different situations, and largely ignored individual differences. Later on, contingency theories emerged that recognized the importance of particular leadership styles and behaviors, and how they need to be adjusted to specific contexts or situations (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Hogg, 2007, see also Arvonen & Pettersson, 2002). Process theories or connectionist models emphasize the mutual influence of various sources within and outside of the individual leader, which all interact in complex ways to yield various degrees of effectiveness or acceptance from co-workers (e.g., Dinh & Lord, 2012; Hogue & Lord, 2007).

Transformational leadership theory

Since its conception and reformulations during the 1980s and 1990s (e.g., Bass, 1995), transformational leadership theory has been established as the most dominant theoretical perspective regarding leadership styles and behavior (Judge & Bono, 2000). Transformational leadership is conceptualized as a leadership style that inspires followers to transcend beyond individual self-interest, for the good of the organization (see e.g., Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass, 1995, 1997; Bono & Judge, 2004). It comprises four dimensions: ide-

alized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, although the first two dimensions rarely can be separated statistically and are often combined to form a dimension called charisma (see Bass, 1995, 1997; Bono & Judge, 2004). Idealized influence implicates being a charismatic role model to followers, while inspirational motivation entails instilling a clear and inspiring vision. Intellectual stimulation involves questioning assumptions, and challenging practices and ways of thinking, thereby stimulating followers' creativity. Individualized consideration, finally, means attending to and coaching followers as individuals, with a focus on their development and thus raise aspirations and improve abilities. Transformational leadership is contrasted with transactional leadership, which is a more instrumental form of leadership, and involves an appeal to followers' self-interest, aimed at controlling employees through rational and/or economic rewards and punishments. It contains contingent rewards (i.e., exchange of resources in return for efforts and performance) and active as well as passive management by exception (i.e., setting standards and monitoring deviations from these, more or less actively). An addition to this categorization is the notion of laissez-faire leadership, which has been described as a general failure to engage in leadership or management.

The different components of transformational leadership appear to be more effective than the transactional component of contingent rewarding, which in turn is more effective than active and passive management by exception (see Bass, 1995, 1997; Judge & Bono, 2000). Nevertheless, it is important to note that transformational leadership is a complement and extension, not a substitute, to transactional leadership, especially the component contingent rewarding (e.g., Bass, 1995, 1997; Judge & Bono, 2000). These propositions yield support cross-culturally, but variations between cultures and different types of organizations are also present and important to be attentive to (Bass, 1997).

Although links have been made between transformational leadership and personality traits, these associations were quite weak, and it appears that not only (self-reported or observed) leadership behavior is measured, but sometimes rather perceptions, attributions, or implicit theories (see Bono & Judge, 2004; Judge & Bono, 2000). It is, however, clear that leadership behavior can be learned (see Bono & Judge, 2004), thus not fully determined by personality. As it always involves relations with followers, subjective perceptions play an important role in the evaluation and execution of leadership. Because the present thesis focuses on (others') perceptions and evaluations of managers, the question of the existence or importance of personality traits for leadership will be set aside and so left unresolved.

The perception of leaders and managers

It has been recognized that the perception of a particular leader is influenced by people's own leadership schemas or prototypes, or more generally, expectations stemming from categorization processes (see Hogg, 2007; Ritter & Lord, 2007). From the perspective of leadership categorization theory, Nye and Forsyth (1991) assessed leadership prototypes relating to socio-emotional and task-oriented content. They found that a closer match between the observer's prototype and an assessed leader's attributes and behaviors led to more favorable evaluations of the leader. Ritter and Lord (2007) found that people use either their (idiosyncratic) general leadership prototype, or mental representations more similar to a particular previous leader, depending on context. In line with expectation states theory (e.g., Ridgeway, 2001; Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004), the perception of a leader is contingent upon the attribution of high-status characteristics to the person, thus categorizing him/her as a leader, and thereby possessing leadership skills. Because men in general are perceived as more high-status than women in general, it may be easier for a man to be categorized as a leader, and consequently receive further high-status characteristics connected to the occupation of this role.

Leadership prototypes are partly cross-culturally generalizable as well as culture specific (e.g., Prime, Jonsen, Carter, & Maznevski, 2008). Transformational leadership is preferred over transactional leadership in a variety of countries (see Bass, 1997). The GLOBE study, with over 60 participating countries, gave support for universally shared leadership prototypes regarding many transformational/charismatic leadership attributes, including motive arouser, foresight, dynamic, positive and encouraging (Den Hartog et al., 1999). There was also agreement on some negative attributes, that is, impediments to good leadership, none of which can be considered part of transformational leadership. However, there were many cultural variations as well (Brodbeck et al., 2000; Den Hartog et al., 1999). Regarding Swedish management styles, these can partly be differentiated from others by a greater emphasis on team-orientation, participative and autonomous leadership, and a distancing from self-protection (Holmberg & Åkerblom, 2006). More reliance on peers and less on formal rules and superiors are aspects that contrast Nordic managers to other European managers (Smith, Andersen, Ekelund, Graversen, & Ropo, 2003). In addition, Swedish managers were interpreted to show "formality in a culture of equality", with relatively strong reliance on formal rules and "beliefs that are widespread in my nation as to what is right" in comparison to other Nordic managers (p. 499, Smith et al., 2003).

From a social identity perspective of leadership (e.g., Hogg, 2001a, 2001b, 2007; Hogg, Hains, & Mason, 1998), effective leadership is a product of the interactions between what the leader does and how this is perceived by the followers, as well as expectations shaped by societal and group

norms. Member identification with the group and group prototypicality of the leader (how similar the leader is to a prototypical group member) are central features. With these aspects in place, members can be willing to sacrifice self-interest for the good of the group, and internalize group norms, with the overall aim of accomplishing organizational goals. Leaders need to be viewed as persuasive, innovative and transformational or charismatic, which is easier for a prototypical leader (see Hogg, 2007). Hence, to the extent that gender identity is an important part of group identification and leader prototypicality, this theory can provide additional explanations to why women are less accepted as leaders than men (c.f. Kottke & Agars, 2005).

Gender and leadership stereotypes

Research on gender and the perception of leaders/managers has generally found a strong association between masculinity and leadership stereotypes (e.g., Duehr & Bono, 2006; Heilman, 2001; Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002; Schein, 2001). Building on social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984), Eagly and Karau (2002) developed role congruity theory of prejudice (RCT) to explain the mismatch between stereotypes of women and leadership demands that persists in most cultures. RCT posits that leadership roles and the masculine gender role mainly involve agentic qualities, while the feminine gender role is described with communal qualities. Hence, leadership and masculinity are associated, and leadership and femininity are disassociated. This leads to considerable obstacles facing women leaders and potential leaders. Firstly, the descriptive aspect of stereotypes entails expectations of women largely lacking the agentic qualities necessary for good leadership, making it difficult for potential women leaders to be appointed to management positions. Secondly, prescriptive or injunctive beliefs render women managers' agentic behavior as inappropriate because it violates the gender prescriptions of communion, which results in less favorable evaluations of women managers compared to men (Eagly & Karau, 2002, see also Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Heilman, 2001; Koenig et al., 2011; Schein, 2001). Many experimental studies give support to RCT, and have shown that agentic behavior on part of a woman is negatively evaluated or needs to be attenuated by communal behavior in order for her to avoid backlash and be evaluated positively as a manager (e.g., Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004; Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). A more male-congenial environment, presumably calling for more agentic characteristics, and thus increasing women's role incongruity, is also to the detriment of women (e.g., Eagly et al., 1992; Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006, see also a meta-analysis by Davison & Burke, 2000, on the gender typing of jobs). Conversely, female-typical occupations or environments can elicit role incongruity for men (e.g., Frauendorfer & Schmid Mast, 2013; Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007, see also Rudman et al., 2012).

The resemblance of leader stereotypes or requisite management characteristics to male and female stereotypes has been studied within social and organizational psychology since the 1970s, mainly with the help of two study

paradigms (see Koenig et al., 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973, 1975). Schein's (1973) think manager-think male paradigm directly tests the similarity of male and female stereotypes to leadership stereotypes by asking three separate groups of participants to rate women, men or a leadership category (often successful managers) on a long list of attributes. This list includes both stereotypically male and stereotypically female attributes. The mean ratings of the male and female stereotypes are then correlated separately with the mean ratings of the leadership stereotype, and subsequently the correlations are compared to yield an estimate of the cultural gender typing of leadership (see also Koenig et al., 2011). Powell and Butterfield's (1979) agency-communion paradigm yields no direct comparison of gender stereotypes to leadership stereotypes. Instead, it is based on the association of agency with masculinity and communion with femininity, and compares participants' ratings of a leadership category on these two dimensions (see also Koenig et al., 2011). In addition, the gender typing of management roles can be assessed by bipolar masculinity-femininity scales; however, these scales force participants to conceive of masculinity and femininity as opposites without the possibility to vary independently, which has received considerable criticism (see e.g., Koenig et al., 2011; Vecchio, 2002).

In the most comprehensive and current meta-analysis of the gender typing of leader stereotypes, Koenig et al. (2011) analyzed data from all three of the described paradigms. They all demonstrated a masculine gender typing of leadership (i.e., higher intra-class correlations for men-leaders than women-leaders, greater agency than communion, or higher masculinity scores), with a more masculine construal of leadership for male than female participants, and a general decrease of this gender typing over time. Although there was great variability in the degree of masculinity, and sometimes androgyny, leadership stereotypes were never depicted as clearly feminine.

One may expect less masculine gender typing of managers in Sweden compared to most other countries, due to the strong emphasis on gender equality (e.g., Johansson, 1998). However, the only study with Swedish participants, using Schein's think manager-think male paradigm, found masculine gender typing to a similar or even greater extent than Turkish participants, and on par with US, British and German participants in an earlier study (Fullagar, Sverke, Sumer, & Slick, 2003; Schein & Mueller, 1992). Another study with European participants also revealed greater differences between the male and female management stereotypes in Nordic countries compared to Latino cultures with more traditional gender roles and less emphasis on gender equality (Prime et al., 2008). Moreover, the weakened gender typing of managers on part of women found in the US does not appear as readily in Europe, including Sweden (Brenner, Tomkiewicz, & Schein, 1989; Deal & Stevenson, 1998; Duehr & Bono, 2006; Fullagar et al., 2003; Schein, 2001; Schein & Mueller, 1992), perhaps due to lower proportions of

female managers in Europe compared to the US. In line with social role theory and RCT, diminished masculine gender typing of managers may be associated with a rising number of female managers within a nation, but this proposition needs further and more systematic investigation (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Koenig et al., 2011).

However, an increased number of female managers may not necessarily entail a more positive evaluation of women managers or decreased gender typing. Duehr and Bono (2006) found that it was people with positive past experiences with female managers that tended to rate the stereotype of women more in congruence with successful managers. That is, the experience as such of a female supervisor did not influence stereotype ratings; rather, it was the satisfaction with female supervisors that was of importance.

Concurrently with the studies showing continuing masculine gender typing of management and leadership stereotypes, ideas on management and leadership have developed towards endorsing more participatory, relationship oriented and employee focused styles – thus a more feminized leadership style (see e.g., Billing & Alvesson, 2000; Eagly, 2003, 2007; Fondas, 1997; Kark, 2004). Transformational leadership and the contingent reward component of transactional leadership, which are considered effective forms of leadership, can likewise be interpreted as compatible with the female gender role (e.g., Eagly, 2003; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Kark, 2004). While this may open up routes for women in management, and lessen the postulated role incongruity (c.f. Eagly & Karau, 2002), labeling a certain leadership style as feminine may nevertheless have negative consequences (c.f. Kark, 2004). Although it may challenge traditional notions of management, Billing and Alvesson (2000) argue that the construction of feminine leadership entails a number of problems. First, the ideas are based on women and men occupying separate social roles, where women as primary care givers have developed certain skills that also would render them suitable for leadership roles. A change in the division of labor is thereby ruled out. Second, these feminine leadership attributes developed in the family sphere may not be fully transferable, and could clash with the instrumental concerns of a business organization. Third, selecting and praising women based on their feminine characteristics runs the risk of essentializing gender, reinforce gender stereotypes, and thus restrict or even repress actual women (and men) in leadership positions (see also Calas & Smircich, 2006; Kark, 2004). Fourth, if women are positioned with special skills attributable to their gender, they risk being exploited in situations involving relations, feelings and conflict resolution, and, as a consequence, will be left out of central business matters such as economical and technological issues. For example, it has been shown that women, more often than men, are put on a ‘glass cliff’, that is, appointed to precarious and unpromising leadership positions, often under difficult circumstances, presumably due to stereotypical expectations (see Ryan & Haslam, 2005, 2007).

Evaluation of women and men as managers

Whereas the focus of the previous section was on stereotypes, this section will concentrate on studies concerning evaluations of actual managers. Even though the masculine connotation of leadership appears strong in stereotype research, it does not automatically transfer to gender typing in the evaluation of actual men and women managers. Through a long series of meta-analyses, Eagly and colleagues have investigated the propositions of RCT, both in experimental and organizational studies. The focus of the present thesis is on organizational studies, that is, studies involving participants who either evaluate their own managers or manager participants rating themselves. The first comprehensive and systematic meta-analysis in this field revealed no gender differences on task-oriented style and interpersonally oriented style, but women were seen to lead in a more democratic or participative style while men adopted a more autocratic or directive style (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). A meta-analysis examining the effectiveness of leaders found men and women to be equally effective, but in accordance with RCT, men emerged as more effective than women in masculine defined roles and with numerical male-domination among superiors or subordinates (Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995). Van Engen and Willemssen (2004) carried out a follow-up on Eagly and Johnson's (1990) meta-analysis, using studies published later, and also included studies on transformational and transactional leadership. Results in organizational studies partly conformed to gender stereotypes, such that women used more democratic, interpersonal and transformational styles than men, and men used a more task-oriented style than women. Investigating transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles, Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt and van Engen (2003) revealed that women leaders generally exceeded men on transformational leadership and the contingent reward component of transactional leadership, which are considered the most effective forms of leadership. Men leaders, on the contrary, displayed active and passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership, less effective or even detrimental forms of leadership, to a greater extent than women. These differences were small, but could still have positive implications for women leaders (c.f. Agars, 2004; Eagly & Carli, 2003a, 2003b; Martell et al., 1996, but see Vecchio, 2002, 2003). Summing up these meta-analyses, it is possible to discern that women are generally not negatively evaluated in comparison to men, nor are they portrayed as lacking in leadership ability. Nonetheless, the gender differences that do appear are

coherent with stereotypical expectations, and may therefore entail negative or problematic aspects as well (see previous section on gender and leadership stereotypes, c.f. Billing & Alvesson, 2000; Calas & Smircich, 2006; Kark, 2004).

The role of stereotypes in the evaluations of actual managers is an issue that has not been resolved. Cultural stereotypes may suggest the direction of evaluation, but they are not necessarily endorsed by every individual within a particular society (see Rudolph & Baltes, 2008). Landy (2008a) argues that individuating information is of such importance that stereotypes could cease to matter. His proposition has received support (e.g., Tetlock, Mitchell, & Murray, 2008), but it has also been challenged. Several researchers put forward a variety of study paradigms that have indicated the importance of stereotypes (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo, 2008; Leslie, King, Bradley, & Hebl, 2008; Wessel & Ryan, 2008). For example, it is not always possible, due to lack of motivation or capability, to seek out individuating information in order to abolish initial, stereotypical expectations (see Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Maynard & Brooks, 2008). Nonetheless, the direct link between stereotypes and workplace evaluations has scarcely been studied. There is also a concern that too widespread generalizations have been made using student samples and fictitious characters (c.f. Landy, 2008a, 2008b). It is important that such studies are conducted with a working sample rating actual managers as well as stereotypes. In order to understand the association, a design allowing direct comparisons of stereotypes and manager evaluations is necessary. To date, I have only found one study examining gender-related management stereotypes and ratings of actual managers in the same sample (Maher, 1997). However, this study did not compare stereotype ratings and ratings of actual managers directly. Maher (1997) found no difference in the subordinates' ratings of actual male and female managers, but a difference in stereotype ratings such that female subordinates rated the female leader stereotype higher on transformational and transactional leadership.

Other studies complicate the picture further. Ayman, Korabik and Morris (2009) found that male subordinates devalued women leaders' transformational leadership. Men leaders' levels of self-reported transformational leadership, on the other hand, did not appear to influence subordinates' performance ratings. Lyness and Heilman (2006) studied the performance evaluations of male and female upper-level managers in either line or staff positions. They found that women line managers had received lower evaluations than women staff managers and than men in both line and staff management. At the same time, promoted women had received higher evaluations than promoted men. This could indicate that women needed higher evaluations than men (i.e. perform to higher standards) in order to be promoted. In contrast, Powell and Butterfield's (1994, 1997, 2002) studies of promotions to top management in US federal departments indicated that decisions favored women over men.

The evaluation of men and women as managers should not be considered without the awareness of the masculinity and male dominance of organizations (c.f. Acker, 1990; Calas & Smircich, 2006; Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Dick & Nadin, 2006). Gender bias in favor of men is frequently perceived by women, but often unnoticed by men (c.f. Ayman et al., 2009; Elacqua, Beehr, Hansen, & Webster, 2009; Martin, 2003, 2006). The preservation of traditional gender norms regarding both the structure of organizations and features of leadership prevail, also in Sweden (e.g., Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005; Holgersson, 2003; Jansson, 2010; Linghag, 2009; Renemark, 2007; SOU 1994:3; SOU 2003:16). Such norms often have negative implications for the identity constructions and self-presentations of women managers, especially when leading male subordinates (see Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005; Pini, 2005). Moreover, the experiences of women managers are frequently challenged, marginalized or made invisible (Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005; Holgersson, 2003; Pettersson, 2002), and executive search processes repeatedly exclude women and reproduce male dominance among top managers (see Tienari et al., 2013). A contradictory discourse where gender equality and competence are positioned in opposition to each other has appeared (see Tienari, Holgersson, Meriläinen, & Höök, 2009; Van den Brink & Stobbe, 2014). While contradiction is common within any one type of discourse, and is often displayed by individuals, even without awareness (see e.g., El-Sawad, Arnold, & Cohen, 2004; Mähle, 2004; Riley, 2002; Wetherell, Steven, & Potter, 1987), this particular contradiction is problematic. By positioning gender equality in opposition to competence it questions the competence of (potential) women managers and thus connotes competence with men and masculinity (Tienari et al., 2009). Accordingly, a change in evaluation and selection procedures remains redundant (see also Bacchi, 2009, for a more general discussion on anti-discrimination).

Problem representations

I have now introduced the empirical studies of this thesis within a cross-disciplinary field containing studies of gender in organization, management and leadership. This review included various epistemological presuppositions, methodological perspectives and research foci. By doing this, a multitude of questions and problematizations can be formulated, scrutinized and challenged. It is how our questions are posed that control in what direction we will search for answers. Bacchi (2009) has formalized such an inquiry with a series of interrelated questions, which starts with the identification of implied problem representations (in regard to a specific topic). In turn, additional questions can be posed, relating to underlying assumptions as well as the formation and development of this representation, effects, silences, reformulations and alternative representations. Because we are governed through our representations and assumptions, it is important to study these. Although Bacchi's (2009) approach is directed at policy studies, it can be of use in many other types of critical endeavors within the social sciences. A discourse analysis is an integral part of this approach and it bears many similarities with critical discourse analysis (c.f. Fairclough, 1992, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999).

The overall objective of the present thesis was to add to the understanding of women's underrepresentation in management and its implications. This issue is very complex and is unlikely to be fully understood from the perspective of only one paradigm (c.f. Calas & Smircich, 2006). The present thesis focused on attitudes, perceptions, and presuppositions concerning women, men and management, and was an effort to combine different perspectives (c.f. Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Billig, 2012). Nevertheless, it is only a small piece of the puzzle in identifying and describing constraining and enabling factors for women in or heading for management positions. In accordance with Bacchi's (2009) approach, the problem representations and results of the separate studies can be scrutinized, and potential effects and alternative representations can be discussed. It is thereby possible to discern what is left out, and hence what future studies need to address.

Rather than relying on concepts and measures introduced from a different cultural context, it was important to consider Sweden's specific relation to gender equality. Therefore, an open exploration of the concept manager and how it is related to gender was deemed necessary. More specifically, the perceptions of management and men and women as managers were investi-

gated qualitatively before the construction and employment of quantitative measures took place. Finally, an examination of economists' discourse concerning the lack of women in top corporate positions approached the issue from a different perspective, and could capture nuances that are most often left unnoticed in quantitative studies.

General aims

The overall aim of this thesis was to examine stereotypes, evaluations and discourse concerning men and women as managers. The following specific aims were formulated:

- 1) To explore requisite management characteristics and link these to descriptions of male and female managers (Paper I).
- 2) To investigate the endorsement of gender-related management stereotypes (Paper I, Paper II).
- 3) To examine the similarity between gender-related management stereotype ratings and evaluations of own managers (Paper II).
- 4) To investigate the perception of gender bias favoring male managers (Paper II).
- 5) To analyze the discourse concerning the lack of women in top corporate positions, its explanations, and their links to proposed measures in a project to counter this gender imbalance (Paper III).

Overview of papers

Paper I

Kusterer, H.L. (2008). Exploring the gender typing of management characteristics in an egalitarian context. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 49, 549-557. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9450.2008.00662.x

Background

Masculine characteristics have usually been associated with management to a greater extent than feminine characteristics, but not many have paid attention to gender-neutral characteristics (e.g., Eagly, 2003; Schein, 2001; Schein et al., 1996; Schein & Mueller, 1992). In addition, stereotypes are dynamic and culture specific (e.g., Diekmann & Eagly, 2000), and cross-cultural differences in leadership conceptions have been confirmed (see Brodbeck et al., 2000; Den Hartog et al., 1999; Holmberg & Åkerblom, 2006). Sweden is considered a feminine country (Hofstede, 1984), and the relevance of management stereotypes found in other countries cannot be automatically assumed.

With these aspects in mind, the present two studies sought to investigate what kind of stereotypes are used in Sweden to describe male and female managers, and to what extent gender-neutral characteristics are used in the description of requisite management characteristics.

Study 1: Content analysis of requisite management characteristics and cultural stereotypes of female and male managers

In contrast to pre-formulated statements, a free response format allows the participants to express their own thoughts, without direction from the researcher (see Devine, 1989). This method was considered important to start with in a cultural context that differs from the American, where most of the established measures were developed (cf. Lepore & Brown, 1997). It was of interest to capture the cultural gender stereotypes, rather than participants own beliefs, in order to accumulate as many attributes as possible. Furthermore, in order to distinguish between participants' view of requisite man-

agement characteristics, and the gender stereotypes pertaining to management, these issues needed to be addressed separately.

The main purpose of the first study was to generate a set of categories containing requisite (as well as unfavorable) management characteristics, and to link these to cultural stereotypes of female and male managers. Moreover, the overlap of the gender-specific stereotypes and requisite management characteristics acts as a preliminary evaluation of the extent of role incongruity of female leaders in this context.

Method

The participants, 37 women and 33 men (mean age 33 years), were recruited at a variety of settings. All had previous work experience, and 18 (11 men and 7 women) had previous or current management experience. Participants were asked four open-ended questions. The first two asked for participants' view of a good and a bad manager. The third and fourth questions concerned the common conceptions of female and male managers respectively. All answers were divided into separate items and were coded using qualitative content analysis. Items concerning good and bad management were used in the creation of the coding scheme. Because not all items pertaining to male and female managers fitted into the coding scheme based on the answers to what constitutes a good and a bad manager, additional categories were created specifically describing male or female managers. Two independent coders categorized all items from the 70 participants. Inter-rater agreements (Cohen's kappa, κ) before discussion was 0.86 for the question concerning good manager, 0.83 for bad manager, 0.76 for female manager, and 0.70 for male manager. Differences in coding were discussed until consensus was reached on all items.

Results and discussion

Most often, a category was either used more extensively to describe female managers or male managers, not both (see Table 1). Female managers were described in a more contradictory way, and often in comparison with men, while the categories describing male managers formed a more coherent picture (see Table 2). The description of female managers often reflected communal characteristics (e.g., helpful, good listener, and concern for the well-being of the employees), and male managers were often described with agentic characteristics (e.g., assertive, independent and decisive, see Tables 1 & 2). Although the respondents used more communal than agentic characteristics when describing good management, they did associate agentic characteristics more with male managers and communal characteristics more with female managers, just as Eagly and Karau (2002) would anticipate.

Table 1. Examples of items included in the categories describing good and bad manager, and frequencies of items describing female (F) and male (M) managers in these categories.

Category	Good manager	F	M
1. Communication	Good communication skills/ Accessible	14	4
2. Openness to change and different opinions	Flexible/Show their co-workers respect	5	2
3. Motivate and support employees' work	Encouraging/Take an interest in their employees' work	2	4
4. Social aptitude and morality	Empathic/Fair	31	3
5. Professionalism and determination	Experienced/Goal-oriented	21	45
Category	Bad manager	F	M
1. Communication	Bad communication skills/Bad listener	3	12
2. Openness to change and different opinions	Controlling/Lack humility	10	22
3. Motivate and support employees' work	Negative criticism/Not engaged in their employees' work	3	10
4. Social aptitude and morality	Bullying/Abuse their position of power	7	31
5. Professionalism and determination	Inexperienced/Afraid of conflicts	54	7

Table 2. Examples and frequencies of items included in the categories specifically describing female or male managers.

Unique qualities of female manager		
Category	n	Example
Hard and too strong-minded	20	Tougher than men/Iron-willed
Less competent than male managers, or less accepted by males	21	They are treated with some skepticism by both women and men/Not as good as male managers
More competent than male managers, and/or must prove their competence	12	Because it is harder for women to become managers, female managers are often very good/They have to work harder than male managers
Soft and gentle, or softer and more gentle than men	20	Kind/"Softer" leadership
Trying to be or are like men	12	Trying to direct in the same way as men/ Trying to copy male leadership
Appreciated as females and managers	5	Many women have shown great capability in the corporate world, and have attracted attention accordingly/I'm convinced that female managers are good
Unique qualities of male manager		
Category	n	Example
Tough and dominant	16	Strong/Stern
Under less pressure than female managers to perform, also when less capable	9	Male managers don't have to prove their capability in the same way as women/It works out the best
Focus on results and performance	21	Sales-oriented/Career-minded
Male networking	8	The male network counteracts female managers/Old Boys Network
Involved everywhere	4	Constantly occupied/Involved in many projects simultaneously

Study 2: Constructing a descriptive inventory of management characteristics

The aim of Study 2 was to select items for the descriptive inventory of requisite (and unfavorable) management characteristics, and test the categorization scheme of the attitudinal items pertaining to the situation of male and female managers as well as the additional characteristics ascribed to either gender but not as requisite management characteristics. In this study, participants own attitudes were asked for, in order to test the adherence to the cultural stereotypes elicited in Study 1.

Method

Participants were 140 Business Administration students at Stockholm University and Stockholm School of Economics (M = 25.5 years, SD = 4.4). All had work experience, and 28 had previous supervisor or management experience. Participants indicated degree of agreement on a scale from 1 = *Fully agree* to 7 = *Do not agree at all* on 189 items reflecting the categories extracted in Study 1. Each participant responded to items concerning both female and male managers in every main category, but to different items regarding female and male managers, in order to make between-subjects comparisons. In addition, there were items from the additional categories focusing on female or male managers respectively. For all of the main five categories, items were selected in order to function in ratings of both male and female managers, using principal components analysis along with tests of Cronbach's alpha (α). The additional categories were refined, and items selected using a similar procedure.

Results and discussion

Because there were two versions of the questionnaire, the main differences between the ratings of female and male managers were tested for two sets of items in each category (see Table 3).

Table 3. Mean ratings (standard deviations) of female and male managers in the categories reflecting requisite management characteristics. The two sets of items in each category, deriving from the two versions of the questionnaire, are presented separately.

Category	Female managers	Male managers	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1. Communication	3.37 (0.79)	3.91 (0.84)	-3.87	0.000
	3.18 (0.96)	3.91 (0.90)	4.65	0.000
2. Openness to change and different opinions	3.58 (0.74)	3.81 (0.87)	-1.67	0.098
	2.95 (0.97)	3.46 (0.99)	3.07	0.003
3. Motivate and support employees' work	2.74 (0.95)	3.23 (1.14)	-2.79	0.006
	3.19 (0.76)	3.73 (0.75)	4.17	0.000
4. Social aptitude and morality	3.34 (0.86)	3.96 (0.88)	-4.18	0.000
	2.71 (0.99)	3.43 (0.97)	4.35	0.000
5. Professionalism and determination	3.25 (0.91)	3.15 (0.91)	0.69	0.494
	3.12 (0.95)	3.15 (0.68)	0.23	0.816

1 = *Agree fully*, 7 = *Do not agree at all*

For the additional categories, differences in ratings between female and male participants were tested (see Table 4).

Table 4. Mean ratings by women and men participants of the categories specifically describing female or male managers.

Category (α)	Women	Men	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Female managers meet with more difficulties than men (.74)	2.96 (0.96)	3.28 (1.05)	-1.88	0.063
Female managers are soft (1) vs. tough (7) (.74)	4.63 (0.83)	4.33 (1.01)	1.92	0.057
Female managers are not as good as male managers (.70)	6.01 (0.79)	5.30 (1.08)	4.32	0.000
It is easier for male managers than female managers (.79)	2.88 (1.11)	3.49 (1.34)	-2.87	0.005
Male managers are focused on career and results (.72)	2.55 (0.72)	2.54 (0.87)	0.063	0.950
Male managers are tough and dominant (.68)	4.14 (0.83)	3.71 (1.02)	2.73	0.007

1 = *Agree fully*, 7 = *Do not agree at all*

It was possible to select a set of items in each category reflecting requisite management characteristics, where each selected item could be used to measure beliefs about both female and male managers. In addition, the categories relating specifically to female or male managers were further refined. While the main categories pertain to more specific management characteristics, the categories relating to the situation of female or male managers can be seen as more general measures of gender inequality in the workplace.

General discussion

The results show support for the idea that male and female managers are construed in different ways, and often to the advantage of women, which is contrary to many previous studies (e.g., Fiske et al., 2002; Fullagar et al., 2003). Requisite management characteristics showed a greater resemblance to the descriptions of female managers than male, but a lack of gender association was also present. This feminine representation of management could also be noted in Study 2, where female managers generally were rated more positively, and attributes ascribed to men in Study 1 were considered just as descriptive of women. The contrast between the two studies is probably due to the two different methods used (c.f. Hemlin, 1993), and the fact that participants in Study 1 were asked for the cultural stereotypes while participants in Study 2 expressed their own opinions.

Despite many positive attributes, female managers also need to be attentive to different demands, and especially to avoid opposite negative features (e.g., not too hard, and not too soft). They are also compared with men more than vice versa. In this sense, choosing a middle way appears essential for female managers in order to avoid negative opinions (cf. Eagly, 2003; Rud-

man & Glick, 1999, 2001). Hence, the descriptive aspects of stereotypes investigated here may have prescriptive aspects that could hinder women on their way to top management positions (cf. Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fiske, 1993; Heilman, 2001; Heilman et al., 2004).

Paper II

Kusterer, H.L., Lindholm, T., & Montgomery, H. (2013). Gender typing in stereotypes and evaluations of actual managers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 28, 561-579. DOI: 10.1108/JMP-01-2013-0012

Introduction

The lack of women in management has often been attributed to stereotypical conceptions and traditional gender norms, where individual men and women are evaluated against gender stereotypes (e.g., Eagly & Karau, 2002). Accordingly, there should be an association between applicable stereotypes and evaluations of actual managers. Studying both stereotypes and evaluations of actual managers in the same sample could help clarify the link between stereotypes and workplace assessments. Gender bias favoring men is another disadvantage for women in management, particularly as it is often overlooked by men (c.f. Ayman et al., 2009; Elacqua et al., 2009; Martin, 2003, 2006). Therefore, investigating gender differences in perceived gender bias is an additional and important aspect of the present study.

The purpose of the present study was to obtain descriptions of gender-related management stereotypes, perceived gender bias and evaluations of actual managers, and to investigate the link between stereotypes and evaluations of actual managers by directly comparing stereotypes and ratings of actual managers. The following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: The management stereotypes will be gender-typed, such that the female manager stereotype will include more positive evaluations than the male manager stereotype on communal attributes, and the male manager stereotype will include more positive evaluations than the female manager stereotype on agentic attributes. This tendency will be more pronounced for male than female participants.

Hypothesis 2: Female participants will perceive a higher degree of gender bias in favor of male managers, or more difficulties for female managers, than male participants will.

Hypothesis 3: The ratings of actual managers will be gender-typed, such that female managers will be rated more positively on communal attributes, and male managers will be rated more positively on agentic attributes, but not as pronounced as the stereotypes.

Hypothesis 4: Stereotypes and ratings of actual managers will be associated, such that ratings of actual female managers will be more similar to the female manager stereotype than the male manager stereotype, and ratings of actual male managers will be more similar to the male manager stereotype than the female manager stereotype.

Method

Questionnaires were sent to employees (incl. 82 managers) in the bank and insurance sector, and 240 participants (155 women and 85 men, $M = 45$ years, $SD = 10.4$) rated their actual managers and stereotypes of male and female managers on a scale ranging from 1 = *Do not agree at all*, to 9 = *Fully agree*. The questionnaire contained the stereotype measures and measures of gender bias derived from Study 2 of Paper I. The items from the main categories came in two versions, in order to allow comparisons of the ratings of female and male managers on the same items in subsequent analyses, while preventing participants from performing this comparison themselves and hence adjust their answers accordingly. All main categories except Professionalism and determination were highly correlated. Therefore, instead of a five-factor structure, a more parsimonious two-factor model reflecting management-related aspects of communion and agency were used. Gender bias was measured by the categories Evaluation, which assessed whether women are not as good managers as men, and Perceived difficulties, which assessed whether the conditions for female managers are perceived as more difficult than for male managers. The items from the categories measuring perceived gender bias were given in the same form to all participants.

Results

Two 2(participant gender) \times 2(questionnaire version) \times 2(stereotype gender) mixed-model ANOVAs with repeated measures on the last factor were performed, one for communal attributes and one for agentic attributes, to assess differences in stereotypes of male and female managers by male and female participants. On communal attributes, the female manager stereotype was rated more positively than the male manager stereotype: $M = 6.33$ ($SD = 1.09$) vs. $M = 5.58$ ($SD = 1.13$), $F(1, 236) = 62.66$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.21$. There was also a significant participant gender \times stereotype gender interaction: $F(1, 236) = 12.31$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.05$. Tests of simple effects revealed that both female participants: $M = 6.35$ ($SD = 1.07$) vs. $M = 5.41$ ($SD = 1.07$), $F(1, 236) = 92.48$, $p < 0.001$, and male participants: $M = 6.27$ ($SD = 1.12$) vs. $M = 5.89$ ($SD = 1.18$), $F(1, 236) = 7.50$, $p = 0.009$, rated the female manager stereotype more positively than the male manager stereotype, but that female participants did so to a greater extent than male participants did. On agentic attributes, there was again a significant participant gender \times ste-

reotype gender interaction: $F(1, 236) = 33.69, p < 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.13$. Female participants rated the female manager stereotype ($M = 6.48, SD = 1.22$) more positively than the male counterpart ($M = 5.87, SD = 1.21$), $F(1, 235) = 31.56, p < 0.001$, whereas the opposite pattern was obtained for male participants: $M = 6.56, SD = 1.00$, for the male manager stereotype, vs. $M = 6.07, SD = 1.45$, for the female manager stereotype, $F(1, 235) = 10.99, p = 0.001$.

Ratings of perceived gender bias were analyzed by two one-factor (participant gender) between-subjects ANOVAs. In the category Evaluation, male participants ($M = 2.61, SD = 1.56$) agreed more than female participants ($M = 2.18, SD = 1.35$) with the proposition that women are not as good managers as men, $F(1, 238) = 5.09, p = 0.025, \eta_p^2 = 0.02$. In the category Perceived difficulties, female participants ($M = 5.98, SD = 1.48$) perceived greater difficulties for women managers than male participants ($M = 4.33, SD = 1.68$) did, $F(1, 238) = 62.59, p < 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.21$.

Two $2(\text{participant gender}) \times 2(\text{actual manager gender})$ between-subjects ANOVAs on the ratings of actual managers, one for communal attributes and one for agentic attributes, revealed no significant effects (all $ps > 0.10$). Mean ratings were 6.49 ($SD = 1.50$) for communion and 6.64 ($SD = 1.60$) for agency.

The Euclidian distances measuring similarity in ratings of stereotypes and actual managers were analyzed with a $2(\text{participant gender}) \times 2(\text{actual manager gender}) \times 2(\text{type of distance: same-gender vs. cross-gender distance})$ mixed-model ANOVA with repeated measures on the last factor. The cross-gender distances were greater than the same-gender distances: $M = 2.66 (SD = 1.01)$ vs. $M = 2.32 (SD = 0.73)$, $F(1, 236) = 33.57, p < 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.13$. There was also a significant interaction effect of type of distance and actual manager gender: $F(1, 236) = 14.60, p < 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.06$. Tests of simple effects revealed that, despite the interaction effect, the same-gender distance was smaller than the cross-gender distance both for participants with female managers: $M = 2.14 (SD = 0.70)$ vs. $M = 2.91 (SD = 0.96)$, $F(1, 236) = 47.84, p < 0.001$, and male managers: $M = 2.39 (SD = 0.73)$ vs. $M = 2.55 (SD = 1.01)$, $F(1, 236) = 4.17, p = 0.047$. Moreover, there was a main effect of participant gender: $F(1, 236) = 8.75, p = 0.003, \eta_p^2 = .04$, such that the distances were greater for female participants.

Discussion

The present results give mixed prospects for current and future female managers. Both men and women had positive views of their own managers and the stereotypes of male and female managers, although women were overall more positive towards the female manager stereotype and men gender typed the stereotypes such that the male manager stereotype was rated more positively on agentic attributes and the female manager stereotype was rated more positively on communal attributes. Female participants perceived a

higher degree of pro-male bias. The results indicate that using stereotype-based judgments would not necessarily be to the detriment of female managers (c.f. Eagly & Karau, 2002). However, a positive stereotype of the female manager does not necessarily entail the acceptance of female managers in all settings (c.f. Ayman et al., 2009; Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997; Catalyst, 2007; Eagly, 2005, 2007). While women appeared biased in favor of their own gender, men may underestimate the difficulties that female managers encounter. Managers and human resource practitioners should notice these different views, and recognize that gender equality is not achieved in Sweden.

Paper III

Kusterer, H.L. (2014). Gender equality and liberal individualism: A critical reading of economist discourse in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 30, 306-316. DOI: 10.1016/j.scaman.2014.01.002

Introduction

Liberal discourse, such as the market or corporate discourse, is based on assumptions of the independent, rational and goal-seeking individual (e.g., Parchev, 2008). However, what is concealed in this individualistic, meritocratic and superficially gender-neutral discourse is the gendered nature of this individual, who is most often assumed to be a man (e.g., Calas & Smircich, 2006; Tienari et al., 2009).

Many studies have revealed how people use discourse to appear non-prejudiced and in favor of equality, while at the same time displaying prejudice (e.g., Mählck, 2004; Riley, 2002; Wetherell et al., 1987). El-Sawad et al. (2004) challenge the assumption that contradiction is uncomfortable and people therefore seek to resolve it whenever possible. Instead, what they label “doublethink” is a way to contain the contradiction in – for the individual – manageable forms, because it is neither experienced as contradiction, nor perceived as uncomfortable.

Measures taken to increase gender equality in the workplace often fail to provide actual changes, and the gender imbalance in top corporate positions prevails (see e.g., Allbright, 2013; Fristedt et al., 2014). The Swedish Centre for Business and Policy Studies (SNS) ran a project during the years 2001-2004 called “More women in leadership posts in business and industry”. Its aim was to work towards greater diversity and more women in leading positions in business and industry (SNS, 2004). However, their own follow up two years after the project had come to an end revealed that the number of women in management had decreased (Renstig, 2006). The present study sought to explore reasons why changes were not realized. Accordingly, the

purpose was to analyze the discourse concerning the lack of women in top corporate positions, its explanations, and their links to proposed measures to counter this gender imbalance. Specific attention was given to presuppositions and contradictions in the gender constructions, in order to understand their connections to the proposed measures. That is, it was not the constructions of gender or the problem at hand that were significant per se; rather, it was their alignment – or lack thereof – with the proposed measures that were of particular interest.

Method

Materials

The book *Roads to greater gender equality in Swedish business and industry*, by Magnus Henrekson (2004), was compared with another book written as part of the SNS project, *Balance at the top. Incentives for a more even representation of women and men in management posts in business and industry*, by Anne D. Boschini (2004).

Analysis

At first, the text was sorted according to its sub-topics. The analysis that followed employed critical discourse analysis (CDA). Along with the study of presuppositions and contradictions in the discourse, two analytical tools were used: transitivity, that is, how events and processes are connected (or not) to subjects and objects, and modality, which is the speaker's degree of affinity with a proposition (see Fairclough, 1992, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). The identification and interpretation of nominalizations is a central part of a transitivity analysis. Nominalizations occur when clauses, including verbs, are turned into nouns, and are used to generalize and make something concrete more abstract. This analysis is vital in order to unfold hidden agents, chains of causality, and the ascription of responsibility (Fairclough, 1992; Sykes, 1985). For example, placing an individual or group without agency, or ability to act¹, ascriptions of responsibility for a chain of events become difficult.

In addition, textual silences were identified (see Huckin, 2002). Boschini's (2004) book was added to the analysis in order to examine whether Henrekson's presuppositions and textual silences could be considered genre-based or interpreted as manipulative silences. Genre-based silences are based on the conventions in a particular genre, and cannot be considered manipulative. Presuppositional silences, on the other hand, can work manipulatively,

¹ Note that the use of the term *agency* in the context of critical discourse analysis is somewhat different from how the term is used within social role theory or other theories pertaining to gender stereotypes and the distinction between agency and communion.

for example by presuming a particular belief that is not shared by the listener. I looked for similarities and contrasts in the way Boschini (2004) represented the situation, and alternative explanations for women's lack of power.

In the actual Paper III, extracts from the original texts were analyzed in detail. Due to the brevity of this overview, only the deductions from the analysis will be presented and discussed.

Analysis: ideology, agency and ascriptions of responsibility

Point of departure – ideological prerequisites

Henrekson's (2004) points of departure are the liberal goals of individualism, freedom and equality. He also positions an increase of women in top corporate positions as one of many potential goals to strive for. Equal opportunities turn into "gender lacks significance" (p. 15). Norms are considered a by-product of the rationally acting, target-seeking individual. A disregard for any explanations based on a social constructivist framework functions as a manipulative silence, because Henrekson can ignore all explanations incompatible with his ideological presumptions.

The mitigation of the lack of female leaders

Historical comparisons render the current development as outstanding, and accountability for the situation is taken away from the people with power (i.e., mostly men) of today. By claiming automatization of the process toward a more equal gender distribution of leaders, active measures become redundant and their importance can be challenged. Boschini (2004), on the contrary, dismisses "the myth that things will automatically be put right" (p. 47), in which it is assumed that people can make rational decisions based on full information coverage. According to her, women will not "automatically" have the same access to top corporate positions as men, because for various reasons, people do not make rational, fully informed decisions.

Explanations to women's lack of power

One explanation concerns the high proportion of women working in the public sector in Sweden. Most other explanations position women as agents in the process that excludes them from power, for example concerning the division of labor in the home. The problem becomes one of avoiding housework. To increase men's contribution to household tasks is not mentioned as an alternative. Boschini alludes to the rational, goal-seeking individual, and places women as active agents, just as Henrekson does. However, the chain of causality regarding norms goes in the opposite direction. According to Boschini's line of reasoning, prejudice affects behavior, which in turn affects financial outcome. This means that rational women would devote less time for work than men, because they know they will earn less.

Suggestions for change and alignment with liberal individualism – Where is the agency?

Nearly all of Henrekson's suggestions are based on actions from the state by promoting various legal changes. The point of departure is how to relieve the situation for women, particularly women with small children, in order to accelerate a process that has already started - the influx of women in management. Male agency is lacking or at least not assumed.

Boschini gives numerous suggestions on what the state, companies and individual women and men can do. The multitude of ideas and perspectives may be a good thing, but it could also create a diffusion of responsibility.

Discussion and conclusions

Several contradictions and possible manipulative silences were revealed in the analysis of Henrekson's (2004) text. One contradiction regards the construction of gender, which is based on an implicit recognition of a traditional view of gender and gender-based division of labor (i.e., a manipulative silence) that clashes with the notion of an independent, goal-seeking and rational individual. Another contradiction is an indirect questioning of measures to increase the number of women in top corporate positions despite giving suggestions to further gender equality. A third contradiction involves the lack of agency, especially on part of men, in the accounts of people and their behavior, for example by evoking "psychological mechanisms". This is contrary to the ideology of liberal individualism, and thus a form of doublethink (c.f. El-Sawad et al., 2004; Weltman & Billig, 2001). A lack of agency could be seen as a lack of accountability. It could lead to a reduced alignment with the proposed remedies, as these require action on part of men, mainly as policy makers and top managers, and on part of women, mainly as individuals. Boschini (2004) has not explicated who is responsible for changing the situation, which conveys similar problems.

The corporate discourse includes a preserved notion of gender roles and norms (c.f. Acker, 1990; Billing & Alvesson, 2000; Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005; Linghag, 2009; Renemark, 2007; SOU 1994:3; SOU 2003:16). Coupled with the removal of agency and thus accountability from men in power, and the assumption that gender equality is an issue for and about women (see Jansson, 2010), it poses serious threats to all efforts towards greater gender equality in Swedish business and industry. It is not until these conceptions give way to more pluralistic and emancipating perspectives that suggestions for change such as those given by Henrekson (2004) and Boschini (2004) can be realized, and have a genuine, positive impact in the upper tiers of the Swedish corporate world.

Discussion

The general aim of the present thesis was to examine stereotypes, evaluations and discourse concerning men and women as managers. More specifically, requisite management characteristics were explored in relation to descriptions of male and female managers (Paper I), the endorsement of gender-related management stereotypes was investigated (Paper I and II) and these stereotypes were compared with evaluations of participants' own managers (Paper II). The consideration of the perception of gender bias favoring male managers was initiated in Paper I and continued in Paper II. In Paper III, the discourse concerning the lack of women in top corporate positions, its explanations, and their links to proposed measures in a project to counter this gender imbalance was analyzed. The thesis contributes to the field of gender in management research in a number of important ways.

All studies were conducted in Sweden, a country with strong norms of gender equality that consistently ranks highly on various gender equality measures (e.g., Hausmann et al., 2013; Statistics Sweden, 2014). At the same time, the country does not assume a leading position regarding gender equality in the workplace, and the increase of women in top corporate positions has stagnated (Allbright, 2013; Franco, 2007; Fristedt et al., 2014; Statistics Sweden, 2013a). Even though plenty of studies on the topic have been conducted, studies on gender in management from a social and organizational psychology perspective are scarce in Sweden. It is of interest to a wider social psychological research community to be able to compare results from various cultural settings. Swedish research regarding gender in management, on the other hand, could benefit from additional quantitative studies from the field of social and organizational psychology. The present thesis contributes in both of these ways.

The use of open-ended questions to probe for requisite management characteristics (Study 1 in Paper I) was an alternative to the more frequently used adjective checklists employed in similar previous studies (e.g., Schein, 1973, 2001, see also Koenig et al., 2011). This method can capture unforeseen aspects as well as nuances that are difficult to discover using pre-formulated statements. Here, the descriptions of male and female managers not only entailed different characteristics and behaviors, but a norm of male management was also manifested explicitly and implicitly in the wording of the answers. While the masculine norm of management is nothing new, both within and outside of Sweden (e.g., Duehr & Bono, 2006; Fogelberg Eriks-

son, 2005; Fullagar et al., 2003; Heilman, 2001; Heilman et al., 1989; Holgersson, 2003; Jansson, 2010; Linghag, 2009; Powell et al., 2002; Schein, 2001), the present results differ from most previous ones in that requisite management characteristics entailed many communal characteristics, that is, aspects associated more with women than men (c.f. Eagly & Karau, 2002; Koenig et al., 2011). In addition, the second study in Paper I revealed a more positive rating of the female manager stereotype than the male manager stereotype.

Both Paper I and Paper II illustrate a social context in which stereotypes of women managers are largely positive; still, bias against them is believed to prevail. This view was held particularly strongly among female participants in Paper II. They consistently rated the female manager stereotype more positively, while men rated the male manager stereotype more positively than the female manager stereotype on agentic attributes, and the female manager stereotype more positively than the male manager stereotype on communal attributes. At the same time, ratings of participants' actual managers were similar, regardless of manager and participant gender. Although it is encouraging that there is no apparent devaluation of female managers, one must be careful in the interpretation of these results. First of all, agentic attributes are often considered more important than communal attributes, and more descriptive of the demands in higher management positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Holmberg & Åkerblom, 2006, see also Johnson & Cochran, 2008). The current situation is such that men dominate in positions of authority (Fristedt et al., 2014), and if men continue to ascribe more positive agentic attributes to male managers than female managers, it means that women may still encounter more difficulties in reaching higher management positions (Ayman et al., 2009; Powell & Butterfield, 1994, 2002).

This line of argument can be strengthened by the interpretation of the profile similarities that were calculated in Paper II. The Euclidian distances were shorter between same-gender ratings (distances actual male manager – stereotype of male manager, and actual female manager – stereotype of female manager) than cross-gender ratings (distances actual male manager – stereotype of female manager, and actual female manager – stereotype of male manager). The calculation of Euclidian distances is done using each individual's difference scores, which allows for variations in stereotype endorsement, as requested by Rudolph and Baltes (2008). This revealed patterns of responses that were not possible to discern through comparisons of composite mean differences. More specifically, even though there were no significant differences between the ratings of actual male and female managers, stereotypes and ratings of actual managers of the same gender were still associated. The results indicate a link between stereotypes and evaluations of actual people, and give support to the notion that stereotypes can predict workplace evaluations (e.g., Ashburn-Nardo, 2008; Heilman & Eagly, 2008;

Leslie et al., 2008; Wessel & Ryan, 2008, but contrary to Landy, 2008a; Tetlock et al., 2008).

Paper III exposed a liberal discourse with contradictions and possible manipulative silences within a project to counter the lack of women in top corporate positions in Sweden. One contradiction concerned the implied meaning of gender, which had to be constructed in line with traditional gender norms and division of labor between men and women in order to make sense of the proposed explanations. Such (implicit or explicit) gender constructions are obviously nothing new (see e.g., Bekkengen, 2002; Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005; Kugelberg, 2006; Linghag, 2009; Renemark, 2007; SOU 1994:3; SOU 2003:16), neither is the adherence to a liberal/neo-liberal discourse (e.g., Davies, Browne, Gannon, Honan, & Somerville, 2005; Jansson, 2010; Larner, 2000). However, through the critical discourse analysis in Paper III, it was possible to show that the author of the text (Henrekson, 2004) contradicted his own, explicitly stated, ideological premises of liberal individualism – where gender is supposed to lack significance – by means of these implicit gender constructions (a form of textual silences). The realization of proposed measures to advance the number of women in top management is challenged in further ways. By positioning women’s advancement as one of many goals, and claiming automatization in the process, there is room for active measures to be disputed. Yet, the most striking contradiction regards the lack of agency² in the accounts of people, and particularly the lack of male agency. The suggestions given in Henrekson’s (2004) text require action from policy makers and top managers, of which the vast majority are men. A lack of agency implicates a lack of accountability (Sykes, 1985), which means that no one is positioned with the ability to take charge and deliver concrete measures of change, for example those suggested by Henrekson (2004) and Boschini (2004). Jansson (2010) performed a discourse analysis on texts from the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise, and found similar discursive patterns, where men were repeatedly positioned with lack of agency and responsibility concerning housework. The present analysis of Henrekson’s (2004) text, however, reveals a more extensive lack of agency, and includes the adherence to “psychological mechanisms”, involving both women and men. By positioning the psychological mechanisms as agents, questions of accountability are made redundant (Montgomery, 2008). This clashes with many of the proposed measures, which require agency from individual women concerning their own careers as well as responsibility for children and household chores.

Generally, there is an inconsistency in removing agency from individuals and simultaneously adhering to a liberal ideology. It can be understood as one example of the inherent contradiction in a liberal democracy, involving individual rights in conflict with restrictions from the state and its social

² Agency here denoting an ability to act.

institutions (see Parchev, 2008). The notion of distributive justice augments this contradiction by positioning the state as an active agent to reduce inequalities, for example in the redistribution of material resources (Calas & Smircich, 2006; Parchev, 2008). Because both authors (Boschini, 2004; Henrekson, 2004) draw from a liberal discourse including the presupposition of independent, goal-seeking individuals, and give suggestions for change including distributive justice, this more general and inherent contradiction of liberal democracy is yet another way that the realization of the proposed measures is hampered.

To the extent that such economist discourse is more widespread than in these selected texts (and there are many indications that it is, e.g., Davies et al., 2005; Jansson, 2010; Larner, 2000), my analysis can be of use in the understanding of why it appears so difficult to work towards more women in leadership posts in Swedish business and industry. It is worth pointing out again that textual silences working manipulatively, such as Henrekson's (2004) implicit gender constructions working against equality, do not need to be intended in order to obstruct an envisioned course of action. Nevertheless, undetected presuppositions and contradictions in the discourse hinder constructive discussions as well as concrete actions. A first step towards the envisioned improvement of gender equality is exposing these and disentangling the confusion they entail.

Paradoxical results

The present thesis, especially Paper I and II, yield some rather paradoxical results. Pondering over the future prospects for women as managers, it is possible both to be reassured by the largely communal description of good management and positive evaluations of female managers found in these studies, as well as apprehensive about the masculine norm of management, perceived gender bias in favor of male managers, and traditional gender constructions, including the division of labor and responsibility for home and family. In part, I believe that this "Swedish paradox" is at the heart of the problem for current and prospective women managers: a country with strong norms of gender equality, where gender differences are difficult to admit but indirectly allowed for (c.f. Johansson, 1998). Many people are positive to women as managers, and evaluate them positively, for example the participants in the present thesis. But there is also resistance against measures to improve gender equality, such as gender quotas, changes in recruitment procedures or re-evaluation of merits (c.f. Tienari et al., 2009, 2013), that is, a reluctance to consider present procedures and processes as biased in favor of men.

The Swedish labor market is strongly segregated both horizontally and vertically (Statistics Sweden, 2014). Very few professions, upper secondary

education programs and academic degrees have an equal gender distribution (Statistics Sweden, 2013b). Even though there is much more to gender equality than just counting the number of women and men in different positions, skewed gender distributions nevertheless involve many problematic aspects, such as stereotypical gender constructions, diverse expectations on men and women, and, in the case of male dominance in top positions, the pervasiveness of hegemonic masculinity (see e.g., Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Ely, 1994, 1995; Fisher & Kinsey, 2014; Holgersson, 2003). Somehow, these problems appear at least as difficult to address in Sweden as in many other countries with less emphasis on gender equality, and fewer labor market regulations and less support for women and men with small children. What happens in this process is outside the scope of the present thesis; however, the contradictory results obtained can perhaps be a reflection of progression in one area and resistance in another (cf. Kugelberg, 2006; Linghag, 2009).

Shifting standards?

Looking more specifically at Paper I and II and the way the stereotypes were measured, the paradox can perhaps in part be explained by the shifting standards model (Biernat & Manis, 1994; Biernat, Manis, & Nelson, 1991). According to this model, results obtained in judgment procedures involving stereotypes are dependent on type of measurement scales. Objective, or common rule, rating scales, such as estimation of height, weight or salary level, usually show assimilation to stereotypes (e.g., men's height, weight and salary rated on a higher level than women's). On the contrary, subjective rating procedures (e.g., to what extent a person is considered tall, heavy or financially successful) can diminish, mask, or sometimes reverse, typical stereotype effects (Biernat, 2003; Biernat et al., 1991; Biernat & Manis, 1994). This is because the subjective rating scales evoke within-group comparisons, while common rule rating scales call for a comparison across groups. Consequently, the meaning attached to a specific rating category shifts depending on target group in subjective ratings, thus yielding different evaluations for members of different groups for similar behavior. Correspondingly, the same evaluation can reflect different behaviors or evoke different expectations depending on group membership of the target of evaluation (see e.g., Fuegen & Endicott, 2010).

The shifting standards model has been tested extensively in regards to gender stereotypes both within and outside of the workplace (e.g., Biernat & Eidelman, 2007; Biernat & Fuegen, 2001; Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997; Bosak & Sczesny, 2011; Bosak, Sczesny, & Eagly, 2008; Fuegen & Endicott, 2010). Although the predicted effects are not always found, and other influences can be at play concurrently (c.f. Biernat & Eidelman, 2007; Bier-

nat & Fuegen, 2001; Bosak & Sczesny, 2011), interpretations in support of shifting standards cannot be ruled out in the present studies. Participants in the second study of Paper I and in Paper II were asked to indicate degree of agreement on statements concerning attributes of male and female managers. Generally, this type of rating scale is regarded as a subjective measure (Biernat, 2003; Biernat et al., 1991; Biernat & Manis, 1994). Hence, it is possible that some or all of the participants used different standards in the ratings of men and women. The category Professionalism and determination (agentic characteristics) was associated with men in the first study of Paper I, but ratings of stereotypes of male and female managers were similar in the second study of Paper I. It is conceivable that participants in the second study used within-gender comparisons when rating female managers, and thus compared them to women in general, while male managers not necessarily stand out in comparison to other men on this dimension. It is, however, also possible that participants made use of the social role information contained in the label manager, and therefore did not differentiate substantially between men and women on a highly relevant aspect of management (c.f. Bosak et al., 2008; Bosak & Sczesny, 2011; Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 1982).

In Paper II of the present thesis, participants' ratings of their actual female or male managers did not differ. Such ratings are commonly more externally anchored than stereotype ratings (Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997; Landy, 2008a, 2008b). Thus, in line with social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 1982), men and women occupying the same role can be described similarly. However, many previous studies have shown that women managers are evaluated more harshly than men (e.g., Ayman et al., 2009; Pazy & Oron, 2001; Sczesny, 2003), which is something that participants in Paper II also believed is occurring in Sweden. According to the shifting standards model, confirmatory standards are higher for the group described more negatively by the relevant stereotypes (Biernat, 2003; Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997). It means that it takes more instances of effective leadership behavior for a woman to be described as a successful manager than it would for a man. Hence, the ratings of actual female managers in Paper II could in fact be an indication of more instances of positive leadership behavior than what the ratings of the actual male managers reflect.

What complicates this frame of interpretation even further is the fact that individuals' endorsement of relevant stereotypes should influence how much standards differ between women and men, and between objective and subjective measures (see Biernat & Manis, 1994). That is, individuals endorsing gender stereotypes to a higher degree should shift their standards more between the evaluation of men and women on subjective rating scales than individuals who do not endorse gender stereotypes to the same degree, which could yield a null effect (or even reverse) on such measures. The more subjective a measure is believed to be, the greater the difference in standards.

The degree of subjectivity in the measures used in Paper II is likely to differ between stereotype ratings and ratings of actual managers, and it is also expected to vary depending on familiarity or experience with managers of both genders (e.g., Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997). Hence, definite theoretical inferences with regards to the shifting standards model are very difficult to draw from the present studies. This theoretical framework is presumably best tested in further experimental studies where manipulation and control of important variables is possible.

Examining problem representations

As laid out in the section introducing the general aims of the thesis, and consistent with Bacchi (2009), it is important to consider the problem representations and assumptions of the separate studies in the thesis, in order to explore potential effects, alternative representations, and what is left out. Apart from yielding a critical examination of my own work, potential directions for future research are then easier to identify.

The problem representations in Paper I and II of the present thesis concern the use of stereotypical judgments in the perception of good management and men and women as managers (c.f. Fiske, 1993; Operario & Fiske, 2004). Moreover, it is implied that men and women can be thought of as coherent categories, often with distinct characteristics separating the two groups (c.f. Beall et al., 2004; Eagly, 1987; Fiske, 1998). A central tenet of this approach is that the social world is too complex for any individual to be able to evaluate thoroughly, and therefore, we need to simplify what we experience (e.g., Fiske, 1998). The use of stereotypes is one such simplification that inevitably smoothens out discrepancies and places focus on similarities within groups and variations between groups. Subtle nuances are often left unanalyzed. Instead, in statistical analyses they are more often considered measurement error.

The problem representation in a critical discourse analysis, such as Paper III in the present thesis, has a completely different conceptual logic based in social constructionism. The aim of Paper III was, in accordance with Bacchi (2009), to challenge assumptions, social constructions and possible subject positions. The results revealed a liberal discourse entailing many of the presuppositions found in a social cognitive approach. Thus, challenging these assumptions also means challenging the assumptions of Paper I and II of the present thesis. Even though it is hard to distance oneself as a researcher from the pervading neoliberal discourse (see Davies et al., 2005), in a sense, the critical examination of my own work has been partly accomplished through the presentation of Paper III. One can question whether the study of stereotypes with its focus on gender differences does more than preserve and reify a hierarchical order where men dominate over women. However, it is also

plausible to treat the findings of stereotype studies as instants of this socially constructed order, and use the more stringent methods within a social cognitive approach to delve further into exactly how these instants function and what they reproduce (c.f. Deaux & LaFrance, 1998). Treating the results of these studies, such as Paper I and II of the present thesis, as examples of how people do gender within the dominant discourses included in the present inequality regimes would open up for a convergence of perspectives (Acker, 1994, 2006; Dick & Nadin, 2006; Martin, 2003, 2006; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Variations and challenges, as well as confirming patterns of gender stereotypical discourse would all fit within such an approach.

Further methodological considerations

Although I consider the use of different methods a strength of the present thesis, there are also certain problematic aspects that need to be discussed. Of particular pertinence is the quantification of answers from qualitative, open-ended questions and the construction of rating scales based on categories that were qualitatively derived. As already noted, the qualitative and quantitative methods yielded somewhat different answers, with a greater contrast between the descriptions of male and female managers in the qualitative study (see Paper I). Hemlin (1993) showed that open-ended questions could produce more spontaneous answers that emphasize differences between groups or their most distinctive characteristics. In contrast, rating scales bring about the opportunity to reflect on taken-for-granted statements, and the possibility to indicate degree of agreement and thereby play down perceived group differences.

The qualitatively derived categories describing management characteristics did not sustain the test of quantitative factor analyses. Most of the categories reflected communal attributes related to management, but even when combining these four categories into a communal factor, leaving the category Professionalism and determination as an agentic factor, was the factor structure barely acceptable. A major problem was the high correlation between factors. One may thus consider these scales as poorly constructed. Alternatively, I would locate the problem in the difficulty to merge two complementary methods and look at the weak factor structure as an interesting result in itself. First of all, many requisite management characteristics mentioned in Paper I were communal. Therefore, creating more communal than agentic categories was in keeping with the participants' portrayal of good management. Secondly, the participants in Paper II generally gave a positive evaluation of their own managers. Considering the halo effect (e.g., Nisbett & Wilson, 1977), it would not be surprising that these managers were considered good at many different aspects of management – including all of the categories mentioned by the participants in the previous study. Thus,

high correlations between the factors are probably to be expected, also when they measure separate qualities.

To combine the use of qualitative content analysis based on open-ended questions, rating scales measuring stereotypes and evaluations of actual managers, and the employment of critical discourse analysis on already published texts, in the same thesis is a form of method triangulation (e.g., Ragin & Amoroso, 2011). Even though these different methods also produced diverse results that are difficult to consolidate fully, it is not necessary to regard the differences as shortcomings. Rather, they all contribute to the understanding of the lack of women managers in Swedish business and industry, and demonstrate that it is important to approach an issue from various perspectives and with a range of problem representations (c.f. Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Bacchi, 2009; Calas & Smircich, 2006; Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; Powell, 2012).

Future directions

Notwithstanding the immense amount of research already carried out in this field, several important directions for future studies can be identified. One concerns the theoretical development. As already mentioned, the functioning and applicability of the shifting standards model (Biernat, 2003; Biernat et al., 1991; Biernat & Manis, 1994) as it relates to gender in management would benefit from further investigation, both in experiments and more realistic settings. The concurrent or conflicting applicability of social role theory (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984) and role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) in these evaluations is also worth additional attention, especially in more egalitarian cultures such as the Swedish. It is difficult to fully consolidate the positive view of female managers on both communal and agentic attributes found in Paper I and Paper II with a postulated role incongruity of female leaders. The study of changes in gender stereotypes, presumably due to changes in social roles (see Diekmann & Eagly, 2000), and their association with the acceptance and perceived effectiveness of women managers would be one direction to search for answers. Because there is already plenty of research investigating social role theory and RCT that have used experimental methods and/or employed student samples (see e.g., Brown, Diekmann, & Schneider, 2011; Diekmann, Goodfriend, & Goodwin, 2004; Hoyt & Burnette, 2013), more non-experimental, organizational studies involving the evaluation of actual people are required.

The inconsistencies and contradictions in the findings call for both further empirical and theoretical studies. How can such a positive view of women as managers be consolidated with the difficulties for women to advance in management? Previous research has shown that a positive stereotype does not readily translate into the acceptance of women managers (Ayman et al.,

2009; Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1997; Catalyst, 2007; Eagly, 2007). This question could be explored with the help of the concept relational authenticity, which denotes the leader's ability to communicate values and keep them attuned to the subordinates' ideas (Eagly, 2005). Why is it that women routinely are set aside, for example in executive searches (see Tienari et al., 2013), despite a positive description of their abilities as managers? A discrepancy between discourse and action has been shown previously (e.g., Bekkengen, 2002; Tienari et al., 2013), and it is most likely at the heart of this problem. The notion of doublethink (El-Sawad et al., 2004) offers interesting possibilities of exploring such discrepancies. The idea that contradictions are managed through a form of renunciation is compatible with the results of Paper III as well as Tienari et al.'s (2013) findings that company representatives and executive search consultants are convinced that it is important to promote more women but still fail to do so. For example, it would be interesting to study policy documents and politicians' discursive constructions of gender in management and proposed measures to counter inequality in Swedish business and industry with the notion of doublethink in mind.

The research in this field would also benefit from the application of a larger variety of research methods. One good example is Fisher and Kinsey (2014), who used an ethnographic and longitudinal method to study the masculine culture in British academia. A combination of research methods and perspectives is likewise called for (e.g., Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Calas & Smircich, 2006; Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; Powell, 2012).

Cross-cultural comparisons and other forms of contextual variability are also important avenues of study. A paradox opposite to the Swedish is that Latin American female business executives denounced being victims of gender discrimination and admitted to very few career barriers, despite living in cultures described as historically permeated by machismo ideology (Cárdenas et al., 2014). How can similarities and differences between Scandinavian and Latin American organizational cultures be identified, and how can this knowledge advance gender equality in all of these countries? This requires the attention to, and critical examination of, more social categories and stratifications than gender alone. That is, in such studies, as well as in this field of research more generally, an intersectional perspective is required (see e.g., Cole, 2009).

A final comment on future directions regards the implementation of research findings to organizations and management. Fiske and Borgida (2011) suggest that managers in the private sector are slower to adopt principles based on research findings than for example policing, teaching and medicine. They claim that one of the reason for this reluctance is that managers are further away from research contexts and are rarely scientists themselves. There are problems in raising the interest, understanding the importance of, and communicating relevant research. Personal and anecdotal experience is too often used over scientific approaches. A challenge for the future is how

to bridge this gap between researchers and practitioners, and how to adapt the relevant research for use in organizations in order to further gender equality at all managerial levels.

Despite Fiske and Borgida's (2011) cautionary argumentation, I see some implications of the present results that could be of use for practitioners. Because men and women hold partly different gender stereotypes pertaining to management, and these stereotypes are associated with evaluations of actual people (Paper II), it appears of pertinence to involve both men and women in recruitment and evaluation processes. Evaluators should also be sensitive to the fact that positive stereotypes are not equivalent with the acceptance of a certain individual. Managers and human resource practitioners need to be aware of gender differences in perceived gender bias, in which men may fail to see difficulties encountered by women managers. More generally, it is important to raise the awareness of the contradictions inherent in discourses used to discuss gender equality, for example the contradiction between individualism and measures of affirmative action. Disentangling these contradictions could be beneficial for the acceptance and success of gender equality projects. Perhaps more difficult, but not less important, is to increase the understanding of the constraining and sometimes manipulative character of textual silences relating to gender.

Concluding remarks

This thesis has contributed to the understanding of the lack of women in management through the examination of stereotypes, evaluations and discourse concerning men and women as managers. Similarities and differences between the studies, contradictions within, and implications of the results have been discussed. It was my intention to combine and integrate perspectives in order to further understand women's underrepresentation in management in Sweden and identify fruitful directions for research on gender in management. Hopefully, this thesis has provided new insights and can inspire further research with the aim of improving gender equality in management in Sweden and elsewhere in the world.

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