



SCHOOL OF  
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# Accommodative and Exploitative Management Styles: A Perspective from a Gender Equal Society

Jakob Selander & Enyu Wen

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Supervisor: Iva Josefsson  
Lund University

# Abstract

This thesis introduces two management styles labeled “exploitative” and “accommodative” with their fundamental definitions derived from Brenner & Vinacke studies in the 1970’s. Three hypotheses regarding gender, success and age, with the main variable being a gender neutral society, are created and researched through the creation of a questionnaire with the help of statements from the MACH IV, PCL-R, the HR-frame and Hofstede’s masculinity and femininity theories. 60 managers working for Swedish companies in Sweden responded to the questionnaire which resulted in a majority of the managers leaning towards an accommodative management style. The results suggest that the gender neutral society of Sweden is affecting how managers choose their management style, in turn, it also suggests that female managers do not have to adopt an exploitative management style in order to become successful managers, contradictory to certain literature. While the results also seem to propose that age is not a factor in the choice of management style either, several reasons lead the thesis to recommend further research on the topic in order to both validate the thesis results, but also to determine if this method could be useful for various managerial scenarios in the future.

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis has developed two different management styles and further researched gender differences as well as age differences based on previous studies made by Brenner & Vinacke (1979). Female and male managers are proven to have different managerial behaviours and according to Brenner & Vinacke (1979), male managers tend to behave in an exploitative fashion, whilst women tend to exhibit an accommodative management approach. This prefaces our thesis hypothesis as we use our own research to identify whether or not an exploitative behaviour is necessary for a female manager in a successful Swedish company. We also aim to find out whether gender and age has any affect on the management styles of our respondents. We do not define exploitative and accommodative in the same way as Brenner & Vinacke (1979), but it is however the foundation of our definition. We are defining an exploitative management style as a manager focused on being highly competitive, manipulative, opportunistic, less prone to emotional responses, small tendencies of narcissism and with a generally cold style of managing. An accommodative management approach is on the opposite side of the spectrum and considered to be warm, non-competitive, inclusive and leaning towards the HR-frame (Bolman 2013).

The research presented in this thesis is conducted in Sweden, an arguably gender equal society. In contrast to our research, we intend on comparing the outcome of this study to previous studies made in the U.S in the 1970's and current day Japan, an arguably not gender equal society. By understanding if an exploitative management style is more prevalent in either male or female successful managers in a gender equal society or not, we can speculate about whether or not gender should be a question when looking for exploitative managers. If a female manager works for a successful company without being exploitative in a gender equal society, then it would suggest that female managers should not be neglected for appearing "non-competitive", which Furnham (2008) argues that against. By conducting this research we also aim to figure out if younger managers tend to be more accommodative than the older counterpart, this is in order to understand if Landsztl's (2018) study applies to both global leaders as well as normal managers. With this information we would be able to further speculate whether or not there is a fundamental difference in the way management is understood by different generations.

The thesis takes advantage of the concept of the Dark Triad, Hofstede's research on Masculinity & Femininity and Bolman's (2013) HR-frame, to identify the characteristics of the management styles, but also validate our research. A literature review for each construct is provided, describing what part of the construct is important for the thesis to acknowledge, but also basic background research on the topics. The choice of Sweden as the gender equal society is due to its continued status as one of the most gender equal countries in the world

(Global Gender Gap Report 2020). The second reason is based on accessibility as the authors currently reside in Sweden.

## 1.1 Purpose & Background

Vinacke (1959) designed a psychological game presenting the results supporting his conclusion that “females are less concerned with winning, as such, and more concerned with arriving at a fair and friendly solution to the problem”(Vinacke 1959:357). He believes that from a broader understanding of the nature of the biological and psychological differences between men and women, it seems females are naturally not suitable to be managers in the private sector, as the ultimate goal of most private companies is to maximize its profits. An experiment under the business setting was conducted later and Vinacke reached the conclusion that female and male managers had different management styles in the 1970s’ New York. Although it is very hard to establish the difference between current day Sweden and New York 50 years ago, we are working under the premise that Sweden is much more gender equal.

This thesis initial aim was to further research the behaviours of managers, previously studied by Brenner & Vinacke (1979), with a focus on gender. However, due to the lack of details of the authors research, the decision was made to develop our own research based on the fundamental definitions of Vinacke (1959). The division between the two types of behaviour, accommodative and exploitative, was described as:

Vinacke describes accommodative behavior as based on a strategy that is more oriented towards social and ethical considerations than towards winning-i.e., a strategy that avoids an aggressive display of power and is directed at being fair to everyone. Exploitative behavior is described as competitive, with an orientation towards winning, and a willingness to use others to obtain one's objectives. - (Brenner & Vinacke, 1979, p.290)

Researching related studies, none were directly referencing Vinacke or the studies he has conducted. Neither does any research on his concept of exploitative and accommodative behaviour exist, outside of Vinacke’s own studies. This is where we find our research gap, as more than 50 years has passed since the last study on accommodative and exploitative behaviours was conducted.

This thesis aims to research several hypotheses regarding gender, age and the two different management styles we have created based on Brenner & Vinacke’s (1979) work. By researching these hypotheses in an arguably gender equal society, we can establish whether or not there is an argument for the gender stereotypes which Furnham (2008), among others, argue for. Furnham suggests that due to the inherent nature of men and women, females have to adopt what this thesis defines as an exploitative management approach to work as a manager. If the thesis research shows that gender is independent of choice of management style, as well as success, companies do not have to actively take gender into account when recruiting new managers.

One of the thesis' intentions is to create a valid, easy and empirical way of determining a manager's management style. By successfully creating a reliable method, various companies can take advantage of the method in training, recruitment and various scenarios involving managers. A company invested into the HR-frame, might be reluctant to recruit exploitative managers, whilst a company fitting into the Political-frame, would prefer an exploitative manager(Bolman 2013).



## 1.2 Hypotheses & Methodology

This thesis has adopted three hypotheses based on previously conducted research on machiavellianism, women in the workplace and behavioural psychology. We work with the assumption that the previously made research referenced in this thesis is mainly conducted dozens of years ago in a far less gender equal society. This is the main variable we are adding to the research.

The theory this thesis works with, suggests that women tend to be more accommodating compared to men. This is the conclusion by Vinacke (1959) which was also proven in a managerial setting by Brenner & Vinacke (1979). We still need to bear in mind that West (1982) suggests that female managers have been exposed to inequality in the workspace and are forced to adapt their behaviour to suit the male dominant field. By acknowledging that the studies referenced so far were conducted roughly 40 years ago, in an arguably less gender equal society and workplace, we can speculate that adding the variable of a more gender equal society would possibly affect the outcome of our research. With this in mind, adding the new factor of a, generally considered gender equal society, and the modern approach to equality, the results may surprise us. Our main hypothesis(H1) is therefore suggesting that if we add the element of a “gender equal workplace”, the visible gap between genders and management styles, concluded in Brenner & Vinacke (1979), will be smaller or non-existent. Bolman (2013) gives several examples of successful companies with the HR-approach. The HR frame is a people oriented frame which is a huge part of the accommodative mindset, which in turn clearly supports our hypothesis.

There are a significantly larger number of men than women in managerial positions, this applies to countries like Japan, who are ranked very low in terms of gender equality, but also Sweden who is consistently ranked in the top (Global Gender Gap Report 2020). Not only have women historically been less represented in the management field, but they also have a lower median salary than men (Furnham 2008). Today’s Sweden is not fully gender equal either, but it is far more gender equal compared to most of the world and majority of its history (Numhauser-Henning 2015). Furnham (2008) explains that these earning gaps have been empirically linked to personality traits. As much as 10% of the wage gap can be attributed to men simply being “masculine”. The author then describes these male traits as “competitive” and “egocentric”. This shows that there is a general, subconscious or conscious, consensus that to be successful and earn more as a manager, you have to have a management style which we define as exploitative. By using the previous research conducted, we have formulated our second hypothesis(H2) suggesting that women no longer need to adapt an exploitative management style in order to work for a successful business in a gender equal society.

Landsztl (2018) suggests that the new generation of global leaders display a lower sense of machiavellianism and a more “authentic” leadership compared to previous world leaders. (H3) This implies that a younger generation of managers lean more towards an accommodative management style. This thesis sets out to test this hypothesis using our own research and analysing the results with the variable of age.

To answer our research question and test our hypotheses, we plan to use a quantitative method and collect the relevant data by use of an online questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to determine people’s management styles with 30 statements gathered from the MACH IV, PCL-R, the short dark triad, Hofstede’s view on masculinity and femininity, and finally the HR-frame. By using a 1-5 likert scale, it allows us to calculate a score for each respondent and thus be able to understand where they positioned themselves on the exploitative/accommodative spectrum. The nonparametric Chi-square test will be utilized to test the correlations between management styles and variables including gender and age.

### 1.3 Management style

Previous studies show a great variety of the understanding of management styles. Mintzberg (2009) pointed out that a management style is a very wide and open concept which deals with the different behaviors of different managers under the identical job description and environment. This is the main reason the thesis employs the term “management style” when referring to the behaviour, leadership and personalities of the different managers. A wide term encompassing everything a manager does in their setting, gives this thesis a more valid standpoint. Mintzberg (2009) further pointed out that management styles are the result of both “nature and nurture”, meaning a managerial style is formed by a combination of “experience and character”. Çakmak (2019) highlighted the interaction between managers and tasks as two fundamental elements that would constantly shape management styles, and he believed it to be crucial to analyze management styles from managers’ competencies, roles and values. Kocher et al (2013) pointed out the importance of how people utilize their authority and that power could influence managerial styles.

Researchers have come up with various dimensions to describe and categorize management styles. Some scholars have designed models for categorization. Maccoby’s (1976) divided managers into “reliable craftsmen, power-hungry jungle fighters, steady company men, or competitive gamesmen”(Maccoby, 1976, p.46). Mintzberg (2009) proposed his model of “art, craft, and science” to define management styles as “the cerebral style, the insightful style being narcissistic, and the engaging style being tedious ”(p.127). Other researchers took a more descriptive approach by analyzing organizational culture, hierarchy, incentives and teams. Rotemberg & Saloner (1993) showed that managers could have either participative or autocratic management styles. Çakmak (2019) summarized them into four categories as authoritarian, protective, supportive and collaborative.

With acknowledging that there is no perfect understanding of what a management style entails, added on to the fact that there are researchers claiming different types of management styles, this thesis has decided to adapt the term “management style” and create our own two management styles based on the research conducted by Brenner & Vinacke (1979).

As we now chose to create these two management styles, we have to identify the different variables, personality traits and behaviours which define these management styles. We have named the two styles “accommodative” and “exploitative” with the basic definition derived from Vinacke (1959) and Brenner & Vinacke (1979). The following chapter of this thesis dives into the literature review which is used to define the components of each management style, but also the basis behind our research.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.2 Exploitative Management Style

We begin by discussing the components and definitions of an exploitative management style and continue to give examples of the typical thought process of an exploitative manager and provide examples of the questionnaire. We discuss the Dark Triad with a focus on Machiavellianism and Hofstede's view on Masculinity as ways of creating the questionnaire and validating our definition of the two styles with a literature background. The following sections also provide an understanding of which parts of the Dark Triad and Masculinity culture are featured in the exploitative management style.

According to Cambridge Dictionary (2020), being exploitative refers to a person who is "using someone unfairly for your own advantage". This is a very loose definition of what an exploitative management style could entail, however, it does provide an initial understanding. We are defining an exploitative management style as a manager focused on being highly competitive, manipulative, opportunistic, less prone to emotional responses, small tendencies of narcissism and with a generally cold style of managing. We base this definition on the research of Vinacke (1959) and Brenner & Vinacke (1979). With this definition we have decided to use the Dark Triad, with a prime focus on Machiavellianism, but also Hofstede's (1980) research on Masculinity to create our research of the exploitative management style. Vinacke (1979) describes exploitative behaviour as "winning" and "competitive", this is very similar to how Furnham (2008) explain the differences between men and women in the management field. The author explains that women who tend to be more competitive and masculine, seem to achieve more within the management field. Our main hypothesis tries to argue against this statement as this thesis tries to understand whether or not women need to adopt an exploitative management style in order to work for a successful company. It is however important to note that an exploitative management style should not be considered inferior to an accommodative, or the reverse. One of the main purposes of this literature review is to understand which parts of the Dark Triad can be used for our research. We are therefore very careful when constructing our research to make sure that it follows our definition of exploitative management style. This is an important part of the literature review as the Dark Triad is generally used to look for toxic or unwanted behaviours in employees (Jonason, Slomski & Partyka, 2012; Lyons 2019).

## 2.2.1 The Dark Triad

The concept of the Dark Triad circles around “Psychopathy”, “Narcissism” and “Machiavellianism”(Lyons 2019). The Dark Triad has, as the name implies, dark and toxic implications. As previously mentioned, it has been used to identify toxic and destructive employees within companies (Jonason, Slomski & Partyka, 2012; Lyons 2019). Considering that both Psychopathy and Narcissism can be clinically defined by psychologists as destructive mental disorders, it is not unreasonable to consider them as unwanted traits of employees and managers. We are using this triad as a means to conduct our research, each of these three concepts have multiple specific empirically tested trials and tests, which we can then take advantage of in our research. The three also tend to correlate with each other as the philosophy of machiavellianism tends to show both narcissistic and psychopathic tendencies(Lyons 2019).

Even though the Dark Triad has seen an influx of popularity within the scientific research society, it is heavily criticised for its length and inconclusiveness (Jonason & Webster 2010). The research conducted by this thesis has therefore carefully selected questions applicable to management styles from a couple of already empirically tried tests. The survey also consists of a few altered statements to reflect the current research and the workplace environment of managers, these statements are pointed out in a later section.

It is also important to note that this literature review’s main purpose is to define what parts of the Dark Triad are relevant for us to develop our theoretical model of the management styles. An exploitative management style is not considered a negative management style by this thesis and henceforth we are attentively identifying the non-destructive aspects of the Dark Triad which can be used in our research.

### 2.2.1.1 Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism is a philosophy deriving from the Italian politician and author Niccolò Machiavelli (Christie & Geis 1970). Machiavelli and his book “The Prince” is also considered one of the inspirations behind the mafia culture in the United States in particular(Franzese 2018). The term machiavellian has been around for a long time and it is generally believed to be what coined the phrase “The ends justify the means”. The phrase is also the very definition of what a machiavellian is: manipulative, opportunistic, not afraid to cut corners and ignoring moral codes are all traits of the typical machiavellian(Christie & Geis 1970). It is very important to distinguish machiavellianism from narcissism and psychopathy. Both psychopaths and narcissists are extremely egocentric and self indulgent, whilst a machiavellian doesn't necessarily have to be(Lyons 2019). A machiavellian will jump moral codes to attain the goals and wishes of the company or himself, a psychopath on the other hand will do the same, but only for his own benefit and not for the company’s

(Boddy 2011). This functions as an argument for why a machiavellian would be more attractive to a company than a “successful psychopath”, if such a thing was a possible to find out at a job interview.

Machiavelli wrote the book “The Prince”, a book describing how “princes” should conduct themselves, act and behave. This is the origin of machiavellianism. One of the quotes taken from the book reads “It is much safer to be feared than loved”, suggesting that because the fear of punishment is never ending whilst love can end at a moment's notice fear is a more stable emotion(Machiavelli 2013). It is this line of thinking which is the very heart of machiavellianism.

The reason this thesis aims to make the distinction between the three elements of the Dark Triad, is because the intention is not to portray machiavellianism as a negative philosophy. It can be argued that a certain degree of machiavellian traits in a manager could even be desirable as they are known to be highly effective in their work. Gunnthorsdottir, McCabe & Smith (2002) argued in their paper that people scoring high on the MACH IV tests, designed by Christie & Geis (1970), tended to win, or earn the most points, in their game by using deceitful methods, such as lying and creating distrust to get ahead. This also serves to prove that the MACH IV scale works in identifying machiavellian tendencies.

The MACH IV is used as the basis for this thesis' research. The test has proven to be successful in identifying Machiavellians and remains to this day the most reliable test in this area(Lyons 2019). The thesis recognises the criticisms of the MACH IV, suggesting that it does not incorporate all the factors and variables necessary, but nonetheless it remains as the most reliable method and due to limited resources and time, the thesis needs to take advantage of previous empirically tested research(Lyons 2019: Jonason & Webster 2010). Christie & Geis (1970) focuses on what they define as the two most important traits of machiavellianism: a cynical view of human nature and interpersonally manipulative tactics. For our thesis research, we have decided to use the statements from the MACH IV, connected to the interpersonal manipulative tactics, as they are more applicable to a manager specifically.

We have decided to slightly alter some of the statements due to clarity and for it to fit a modern writing style, the workplace and political correctness as the statements are generally “a bit outdated” as Lyons (2019) puts it. Two examples of the original statements read as follow:

“Generally speaking, men won't work hard unless they're forced to do so.” (Christie & Geis 1970)

“When you ask someone to do something for you, it is best to give the real reasons for wanting it rather than giving reasons which might carry more weight.” (Christie & Geis 1970)

The altered statements in the questionnaire reads:

“Generally speaking, employees won’t work hard unless I push them.”

“When you ask someone to do something for you, it is best to give the real reasons behind your actions, be honest with your intent.”

Both statements were changed due to clarity. The first statement was also altered due to the misunderstanding and political incorrectness of using the term “men” when referring to everyone. The statements have been altered with the intention behind them still intact.

### 2.2.1.2 Psychopathy

Psychopathy is a trait of the Dark Triad which this thesis will not engage with outside of how we define its core principle. In a similar way to narcissism, psychopathy has very dark implications (Lyons 2019). Psychopathy is a highly controversial topic as several researchers have different definitions and classifications of the indicators of the mental disorder (Skeem et al 2011). Whilst there is research suggesting that there are more psychopaths in the management field than any other, due to the concept of “successful psychopaths”, this thesis will only consider the core psychopathic definition as a lack of emotions such as sympathy, empathy, and general antisocial behaviour (Boddy 2011).

We use the term “successful psychopaths” when referring to what Boddy (2011) calls “corporate psychopaths”. The reason we prefer to use this term is because there is a very clear distinction between successful and unsuccessful psychopaths. As Boddy (2011) explains, a successful psychopath is someone who has avoided blatant criminal actions and instead blended in with society in various ways. McCormick & Burch (2005) describes them as charismatic people with a very machiavellian way of thinking. As previously mentioned, there are several studies showing a larger amount of successful psychopaths in the corporate world compared to any other sector, this aligns well with most psychopathic egoistic and narcissistic tendencies to strive for power and fame. As Bobby (2011) points out, psychopaths in the workplace are a major issue as he refers to the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. The authors “Corporate Psychopath Theory” suggests that the crisis was caused due to changes in the promotion and employment of people, leading successful psychopaths to positions of great power. The author points out how CEOs and executives walked away from the financial crisis with their pockets filled, whilst showing no remorse for what they had caused, not only their employees to suffer from, but the entire world. Bobby (2011) refers to how the concept of *noblesse oblige* has been entirely forgotten and done for, arguing strongly that changes need to be implemented to make sure the successful psychopaths do not have such authority over others life to prevent a crisis like this one ever happening again.

The PCL-R is the general test used for psychopathy in several western countries, however this test is widely controversial in its effectiveness, especially in terms of “successful psychopaths” (Skeem et al 2011). This test measures the anti-social and violent nature of psychopaths, but considering what we now know about successful psychopaths, arguably the target demographic of our research, the test is most definitely flawed. When designing the survey for our research we decided to incorporate two statements from the PCL-R, however, we altered the statements to address successful psychopathic tendencies. The original statements from the PCL-R leads as follows:

“People who mess with me always regret it.” (Jones & Paulhus 2014)

“I tend to lack remorse.” (Jonason & Webster 2010)

The changed statements were also altered to address workplace events in specific:

“Our company will eventually be the market leader one way or another”

“I feel guilty whenever I have to fire someone”

The second statement has been reversed. It has already been mentioned how psychopathy and machiavellianism correlates, this makes it harder to categorise the statements as psychopathic or machiavellian. It can be argued that the first statement leans more towards machiavellianism than psychopathy, however, this survey does not intend to display levels of machiavellianism nor psychopathy. The outcome of this survey will only show which management style the respondent prefers, which in turn voids the question of categorising the statements. These statements have also been chosen specifically for their correlating aspects, because as previously mentioned, an exploitative management style is not supposed to be a negative term. Hence we use the “soft version” of psychopathy which resembles the philosophy of a machiavellian. It should also be noted that disagreeing with the second or first statement in the previous example, does not by any means categories the respondent as a psychopath, that can only be done by a psychologist.

### 2.2.1.3 Narcissism

The mental disorder of narcissism might not be as critiqued or discussed as psychopathy, however, in a modern society traits of narcissism is ever present (Koterba, Ligman & Ponti 2020). Our daily use of social media and “selfies” have been connected to narcissistic traits, sparking more research on the topic and concluding that the younger generations seem to express more narcissistic behaviour (Koterba, Ligman & Ponti 2020). This is an important point, as the definition of an exploitative management style entails “small traits of narcissism”, meaning that an exploitative manager is not a clinically defined narcissist, but could possibly exhibit signs of narcissism, such as the examples provided in the end of this section. Recognising this fact and choosing to only focus on narcissism as a minor part of an



exploitative management style, we still have to identify which narcissistic traits are relevant to this research. The main difference between Narcissism and the other two parts of the Dark Triad is how narcissists seek mental boosts and admirations, whilst psychopaths and machiavellians prefer material gains (Jones & Paulhus 2014).

There have been countless studies showing that narcissistic managers and executives are prone to unethical behaviour with a general strive to become leaders within their field (Cook et. al 2019; Amernic & Craig 2010). The goal to become leaders, executives and CEO, is definitely not considered a bad trait, however, Amernic & Craig (2010) studied the correlation with what they refer to as “extreme narcissism” and ethical behaviours in the workplace. Their conclusion strongly recommends companies to avoid appointing CEOs with extreme narcissism as they are prone to unethical behaviour. Extreme narcissism is not part of the exploitative management style and therefore not relevant to our research, however the strive to become leaders and their attention seeking qualities could be considered valuable traits in certain managers, especially in an exploitative management style.

Narcissism has been linked with grandiosity which has displayed a great deal of self-destructive behaviour (Jones & Paulhus 2014). This thesis does not intend to make these behaviours a part of the exploitative manager definition. Instead we chose to focus on the narcissistic tendencies to lead others and enjoy attention. The research contains two principle statements from Jones & Paulhus (2014) exploring exhibitionism and leadership levels of the respondents:

“People see me as a natural leader.” (leadership)

“I hate being the center of attention” (reversed exhibitionism)

The second statement has been reversed, in other words, agreeing with the first statement shows signs of narcissism, whilst disagreeing with the second also show signs of narcissism.

### 2.2.2 Hofstede's Views on Masculinity

Hofstede's (1980) research and findings about national culture, which includes the concept of masculinity and femininity (later referred as MAS/FEM), was largely based on studying middle class people, in this case, managers working for IBM around the globe. He believes that the middle class are the stable samples of any given nation. The theory was developed by studying managers working in different cultures and could thus be applied to our study.

The concept of MAS/FEM is derived from Hofstede's (1980) definition of culture, and how culture could be measured in several different dimensions. According to him, culture is "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (Hofstede, 1980, p.260). Hofstede (1980) initially introduced four dimensions of culture and added the final dimension later (Hofstede & Bond, 1988):

1. Power Distance (unequal versus equal)
  2. Uncertainty Avoidance (rigid versus flexible)
  3. Individualism / Collectivism (alone versus together)
  4. Masculinity / Femininity (tough versus tender)
  5. Long/Short Term Orientation
- (Hofstede, 1998, p.6)

The MAS/FEM dimension addresses the issue of how people in a society prioritize different work goals and discusses if, or how much, the division of male and female plays a role at large. MAS/FEM deals with two layers of phenomena at the same time, the two layers of its definition actually "implies that a national culture as a whole takes a position on the assertiveness contra modesty continuum" (Hofstede, 1998, p.84).

1. On a societal level, if a society at large has an overall preference of work goals or values.
2. On an individual level, if gender differences define people's behavior or values at work.

The societal level of preference for goals and values generates more applications of Hofstede's definition of MAS/FEM in business context, as he believes "both men and women hold tougher values" (Hofstede, 1998, p.85). According to *Hofstede Insights* (2020), a more masculine society would focus more on "achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success", meaning people in general are leaning towards a more competitive business environment and craving success.

On the individual level, masculinity actually refers to male's tendencies of seeking more ego-booster and power, while female focuses more on social goals, which will be elaborated

upon in the next chapter. Under a more business context, Hofstede believes that in a masculine country, sex roles should be strictly defined as men and women should take different occupations as in “men should focus on material success and women concerned with the quality of life” (Hofstede, 1991, p.261-262). In general, in a masculine culture, a more ego-orientated person, mostly male, would apply an exploitative approach with the belief that people should “live in order to work” (Hofstede, 1998, p.42).

To better understand Hofstede’s view on MAS/FEM on the individual level, it is important to look at its psychological root. It does not root in the division of roles between men and women in the society, but more from the situation at home. Hofstede (1998) pointed out that this dimension is grounded in the power struggle between male and female at home, or which sex is deemed responsible for creating or eliminating ego.

To further elaborate on the gender bias behind the label of “masculinity and femininity”, it is crucial to see if it is undeniable that “in many or all cultures men tend to stress ego goals and women tend to stress social goals more” (Hofstede, 1980, p.272) in the family settings with other variables controlled. A clear exception is matrilineal societies (Mattison, 2011), even though some would argue they are primitive and do not really exist in modern societies. In the current world, the matrilineal Mosuo ethnic group is considered “the only human society that lacks fathers and husbands” (Mattison et al, 2014, p.591) located at Sichuan province of China, one of the authors’ home province. Their social system and culture enables women to be the dominating roles in the families and possess more social, economic and political power than men in the society. Therefore, it is wrong to assume men always tend to have more ego goals, and thus inconclusive to link the term “masculinity” with the more ego and power seeking direction. The thesis acknowledges the leading academic opinions on the difference between men and women regarding ego and social roles in families. However, it should also note that circumstances do exist as in some societies women take up the stereotypical men’s role at home.

To avoid the gender bias or sex element behind MAS/FEM, this thesis will refer to the masculine side as ego and the feminine side as social in the following text, the underlying and fundamental measuring index of MAS/FEM, which is “Ego/Social or Assertive / Nurturant” (Hofstede, 1998, p.13), as it better reflects the differences between feminine and masculine societies in the context of work as in “tough versus tender” cultures (Hofstede, 1998).

With these definitions of social and ego, it is very clear to draw the parallels between ego and an exploitative management style, the same goes for social and an accommodative management style. It is also interesting to see the parallels between machiavellianism and ego as the assertive, material gains-oriented and competitive aspects of them both. Especially since the people-orientated, employee centered and quality of life aspects of the social construct fits very well with the accommodative management style.

When conducting our research we drew inspiration from these definitions and constructs as we created statements in the questionnaire befitting of the masculinity and femininity culture:

“We work in order to live”

“We live in order to work”

Not only do these statements work well with social and ego, but it aligns well with the typical machiavellian’s thoughts on work.

By looking into the leadership aspects of this dimension under cross culture analysis in terms of how people understand competitions, results, performance, and relationship with others, we come to the summaries on how managers could act under an masculine/exploitative approach:

Ego (Masculinity/Assertive/Exploitative)

- Managers expected to be decisive and assertive
- Stress on equality, mutual competition, and performance
- Resolution of conflicts by letting the best “man” win
- Job-centeredness: centrality of work and career, emphasis on visible achievements, and desire for tangible expressions of success
- Performance-centeredness: challenge, excellence, “going the extra mile,” and competition
- Results orientation: initiative, decisiveness, and efficiency

Developed from Hofstede (1998, p.16 & p.42)

## 2.3 Accommodative Management Style

With the definition of an exploitative management style discussed and concluded, we now use the same format to identify the components of the accommodative management style. The primary detail which needs attention is the fact that not being accommodative does not necessarily mean that the manager is automatically exploitative. The survey is designed in a way to only give those two outcomes, however, when discussing the accommodative management style, it becomes evident that a manager doesn't have to agree with either management style. That being said, the research is designed to measure the levels of accommodative and exploitative management styles, not including any other styles of managing.

We use Hofstede's view on femininity and Bolman's (2013) HR-frame as guidelines for establishing statements more connected to the accommodative management style. With the basic understanding of "accommodative" derived from Vinacke (1959) and Brenner & Vinacke (1979), we can conclude that the style orients around a warmer, tender, people oriented and more liberal way of managing. A manager's job is not to force their employees to do work, but rather encourage them to do so. When describing the exploitative style as "competitive", the accommodative style can be interpreted as "non-competitive" (Brenner & Vinacke 1979).

Similar to the previous deconstruction of the exploitative management style, this section will consist of examples of the questionnaire, identifying which parts of the HR-frame and Femininity aspects are useful for this study. In this literature review of the accommodative management style, we do not need to stress on the "good and bad" aspects of the literature, similarly to how we did in the literature review of the exploitative management style. In this case, the literature does not have any dark or immoral implications, but nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that we do not treat either management style as worse or better than the other.

### 2.3.1 Hofstede's Views on Femininity

In contrast to a masculine society, Hofstede believes that on the societal level, a feminine culture means “both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life”(Hofstede, 1991, p.261-262). Furthermore, according to *Hofstede Insights* (2020), a more feminine society puts more emphasis on “cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life”, indicating a more friendly and consensus-building business environment.

On the individual level, femininity refers to a tendency for both male and female seeking more social goals. In general, in a feminine culture, a social-oriented person, could be both male and female, and would apply an accommodative approach believing “work in order to live” (Hofstede, 1998, p.42)

By altering Hofstede's view on femininity to the thesis's research focused on accommodative and exploitative management styles, we summarize how more feminine managers would act in the business context in parallel to the masculine ones:

#### Social (Femininity/Nurturant/Accommodative)

- Managers use intuition and strive for consensus
- Stress on equality, solidarity, and quality of work life
- Resolution of conflicts by compromise and negotiation
- Employee-centeredness: centrality of personal and family life, emphasis on mutual help and social interaction, and desire for personal fulfillment and belonging
- Relationship-centeredness: quality of human relationships and work environment / location, competence “being a sound contributor”, and collaboration
- People orientation: solidarity, empathy and consensus

Developed from Hofstede (1998, p.16 & p.42)

### 2.3.2 The HR-frame

The accommodative management style is a people-oriented style, meaning that such a manager cares for their employees ahead of the organisation. Bolman (2013) uses the statement “Our most important asset is our people.”(p.113) when describing the mindset of the HR-frame. This thought process aligns very well with how we have defined the accommodative management style so far. The author continues to argue for this sort of HR-approach by giving several examples of successful companies with this attitude towards their employees. The HR-approach is very similar to the “social” of Hofstede’s femininity and masculinity theory, which is why the research will not adopt several statements from the HR-frame. However, since the HR-frame is very relevant to the research, the decision to include one statement summarizing the entire HR-frame was made. This statement can also be used to analyze if the respondents have a general HR-focused mindset.

Bolman (2013) makes 4 assumptions regarding the HR-frame, the thesis considered two of them when creating the statement for its research.

“Organizations exist to serve human needs rather than the converse.” “People and organizations need each other.” (Bolman, 2013, p.118)

“Organizations need ideas, energy, and talent; people need careers, salaries, and opportunities.” (Bolman, 2013, p.118)

Based on these two assumptions the statement included in the questionnaire, leads as follows:

“The employees’ purpose within an organisation is to further its cause.”

The statement is reversed, meaning that a manager with an HR-focused mindset would not fully agree with this statement. The idea behind the statement is to see if the respondent would assume the mindset of a manager focused on material gains of the company or assume the position of the employees. Since the HR-frame assumption assumes that an organisation and its employees have a symbiotic relationship, a statement where one takes advantage of the other, goes against its core principles. Even though there exists a common logic that companies employ people to further its cause, an HR-manager would feel reluctant to fully agree with this statement compared to an exploitative manager.

## 3 Our Research

### 3.1 Research Design

The ontology of the thesis is based on the belief of positivism, in which we aim to “test cause and effect relationships” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.28) between certain variables and management styles with a more quantitative method, and our whole discussion around it under the Swedish context in order to get a more generalized conclusion should all be built upon the quantitative observation. In the meantime, a more constructionist perspective would argue that people all have different views of the world because of their “interactions with others and the context in which they take place” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.29), and thus it is not possible to generalize an objective reality about our research question on the necessity for people having certain management styles to become successful managers. Even if we acknowledge this perspective, the ultimate goal is still to theorize about some of our hypotheses in a gender equal society. Therefore, it is decided not to take a qualitative research method often used by constructionist researchers (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

To answer our research question and test our hypotheses, this thesis chose to adapt a deductive approach by using a quantitative method of an online questionnaire to collect empirical data and later use a statistical hypothesis test, Chi-square test and the Fisher’s Exact Test, to investigate the correlations between management styles and other variables as it “indicates whether or not the observed pattern is due to chance” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.286). The goal of this study is to collect a complete data set on the distribution of around 60 individuals into management style affiliation and variables including gender, age, and education background.

The first step of our research design is to determine respondents' management styles in the form of a questionnaire with 30 statements and a likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 depending on how much they agree or disagree with the statement, with some applying reverse scoring (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). By calculating the final score of each respondent, it would be possible to get a net sense of where they positioned themselves on the spectrum of exploitative and accommodative management styles. The statements in the questionnaire (see later for full version) are derived from, as previously mentioned in the literature review, the knowledge of MACH IV, PCL-R, the short dark triad, Hofstede’s view on masculinity and femininity, and finally the HR-frame. To examine the correlation by nonparametric tests, the Chi-square test and Fisher’s Exact Test are used, the next step is to convert respondents’ net score into categorical data.



After categorizing people's management styles, a statistical test would allow us to evaluate how likely it is that gender and management style affiliation are completely independent, or how likely it is that the distribution of males and females in each management style is due to chance. We will also be able to determine if age is a factor by again using the statistical test in the same manner but with age as the variable.

### 3.1.1 Designing the Questionnaire

The design of the statements in the questionnaire is a result of dynamic integration of psychological, managerial and cultural theories, altered in a constructive, positive, modern, and politically-correct business context. To ensure authenticity and validity, statements were chosen from a select few theoretical frameworks including Christie & Geis' (1970) MACH IV, the Short Dark Triad by Jones & Paulhus (2014), the HR-frame by Bolman (2013) and surveys based on Hofstede's view on masculinity and femininity.

Table 1-2 displays the statements presented in the questionnaire, not necessarily in the same order. The tables are presented in the following order:

Statement - Theoretical origins - Questionnaire reference - Accommodative (A)/ Exploitative (E)

It is wise to flatter important people.	Machiavellian	MACH IV	E
Anyone who completely trusts anyone else is asking for trouble.	Machiavellian	MACH IV	E
Most people are basically good and kind.	Machiavellian (R)	MACH IV	A
It is hard to get ahead without cutting corners here and there.	Machiavellian	MACH IV	E
At work, I need to have clear objectives and an evaluation system for what I accomplish.	EGO	Klinger*	E
Never tell anyone the real reason you did something unless it is useful to do so.	Machiavellian	MACH IV	E
There is no excuse for lying to someone else.	Machiavellian (R)	MACH IV	A
Generally speaking, employees won't work hard unless I push them.	Machiavellian	MACH IV	E
One should take action only when sure it is morally right.	Machiavellian (R)	MACH IV	A
Whatever it takes, you must get the important people on your side.	Machiavellian	SDT**	E
Avoid direct conflict with others because they may be useful in the future.	Machiavellian	SDT	E
It's wise to keep track of information about employees that can benefit you later.	Machiavellian	SDT	E
Most people deserve respect.	Machiavellian	SDT	A
I hate being the center of attention.	Narcissism (R)	SDT	A
I feel embarrassed if someone compliments me.	Narcissism (R)	SDT	A

Table 1

When you ask someone to do something for you, it is best to give the real reasons behind your actions, be honest with your intent.	Machiavellian (R)	MACH IV	A
People see me as a natural leader.	Narcissism (R)	SDT	E
People work in order to live.	SOCIAL	Hofstede (1980)	A
You have to grab things while the opportunity is there.	Psychopathy	SDT	E
Our company will eventually be the market leader one way or another.	Psychopathy	SDT	E
I feel guilty whenever I have to fire someone.	Psychopathy (R)	SDT	A
I admire winners and I think less of those who lose.	EGO	Klinger	E
At work, I am motivated by a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.	SOCIAL	VSM***	A
Decisions at work must be based on consensus.	SOCIAL	Klinger	A
People should be focused on material success and less concerned with the well-being of the others.	Dark Triad	SDT	E
It is more important to me to be paid well than to have a close relationship with my boss.	EGO	Stull&Von (1995)	E
People must learn to make their own way in this world.	EGO	Stull&Von (1995)	E
I would much rather work for a big company, than the public sector.	EGO	Stull&Von (1995)	E
People live in order to work.	EGO	Hofstede (1980)	E
The employees' purpose within an organisation, is to further its cause.	HR-frame (R)	HR-frame	E

Table 2

(R) indicates a reversed statement.

\*Developed by Walter Klinger, University of Shiga Prefecture, Japan

\*\*Short Dark Triad

\*\*\*VALUES SURVEY MODULE 2013 MANUAL

## 3.2 Sampling, Population & Data Collection

As the aim is to conduct the study in Sweden, ideally the population the thesis should target is all the managers in successful Swedish companies. Due to limited time and reachability of companies in the allotted time frame, the initial plan to reach out to three large companies headquartered in Lund with an approach of cluster sampling failed (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). As “the generalizability of the findings to the whole population is the main objective of the study” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.251), the representativeness of the sample is important to our research. The thesis, therefore, applies a simple random sampling method, also due to the fact that we have inadequate ability to select our respondents.

During the distribution time from April 20 to May 5 of 2020, data was collected through an online questionnaire of google forms sent out to managers and collected 60 responses. The respondents were reached through LinkedIn personal message or by the networks of the authors, MiM program lecturer, and Lund University’s alumni association. Each respondent meets the following three qualifications:

1. Hold a managerial position in a private company
2. Managers working in a Swedish company regardless of nationality
3. The company needs to be a Swedish company having operations in Sweden

The survey collects respondents’ information in two group-sets by basic general questions and a 1-5 likert scale measurement of 30 statements. Variables such as gender, age and education level are all included in the first group-set. Respondents are later instructed to rate a total of 30 statements with the choices of: agree, partially agree, neutral, partially disagree, and disagree, which corresponds to a net score from 1 to 5 or in a reverse order based respective statement.

In order to avoid any possible patterns among the statements, a number of reverse statements are also included to minimize respondents’ inertial thinking. The net score of those reversed statements are also adjusted accordingly, meaning that a choice of agree (score 1) in an accommodative statement would be the same as disagree (also score 1) in an exploitative statement. Upon completing the questionnaire, each respondent would get a net result ranging from 30 to 150, with scores from 30-90 being accommodative management style and 90-150 be exploitative management style. In the extreme case, respondents with the result of 90 would be counted along with the least assigned management style, due to the nature of the data analysis.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

As the purpose of the thesis is to investigate the relationship between management styles with gender and other variables, statistical methods would provide a quantitative understanding to better analyze the correlations. The null hypothesis in this case would be that gender and management style affiliation are independent of one another. To test this hypothesis, we need to construct a model which estimates how the data should be distributed if our hypothesis of independence is correct.

#### 3.3.1 The Chi-square Test

Under the basis of the P-value method when hypotheses zero and alternative were set, the Chi-square test is able to test the hypotheses. One of the questions in the research is about the relationship between gender and the choice of management styles. Take the variable of gender in our research as an example, the zero hypothesis should be determined as: gender and management styles are independent of each other ( $H_0$ ). The alternative hypothesis should be set as: gender and management styles are dependent on each other ( $H_1$ ). As commonly accepted in social science, the level of significance (p-value) is set at  $\alpha = 0,05$ , meaning the possibility of results collected in the research is random and lower than 5%. The collected data will be statistically investigated by Chi-squared test, with its mathematical equation written as:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{(x_i - Np_i)^2}{Np_i}$$

In this equation,  $x$  is an observed frequency and  $Np$  is an expected frequency. When p-value  $\leq \alpha$ ,  $H_0$  is rejected. When p-value  $> \alpha$ ,  $H_0$  is confirmed.

### 3.3.2 The Fisher's Exact Test

The Fisher's Exact Test for statistical testing is also applied to our research. The key difference between the Fisher's Exact Test and Chi-square test mainly lies in the number of frequencies. Hypotheses and its testing with the p value are identical. If any frequency, or category, is lower than 5, it would be impossible and invalid to test the data by Chi-square test. The thesis decides to calculate the p value by the Fisher's Exact Test as well to further validate our results.

The mathematical equation and data categorization are written as follows:

$$p = \frac{\binom{a+b}{a} \binom{c+d}{c}}{\binom{n}{a+c}} = \frac{\binom{a+b}{b} \binom{c+d}{d}}{\binom{n}{b+d}} = \frac{(a+b)! (c+d)! (a+c)! (b+d)!}{a! b! c! d! n!}$$

Matrix 2x2			Row Total
	<b>a</b>	<b>b</b>	$a + b$
	<b>c</b>	<b>d</b>	$c + d$
Column Total	$a + c$	$b + d$	$a + b + c + d (=n)$

### 3.4 Validity, Reliability and Generalizability of Data

To ensure the validity, reliability and generalizability of the data collected by the questionnaire we designed, several measures were taken before, during and after the hand-out.

For validity of the data, or “be reasonably certain that we are indeed measuring the concept we set out to measure” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.220), the thesis has developed the statements in the questionnaire from widely-acknowledged psychological, managerial and cultural theories published with a strict peer review process, all of which have been used and tested in different academic fields under multiple scenarios through various times. Small changes were made multiple times regarding the wording, questionnaire design, and the use of other languages.

For reliability of the data, or “the extent to which it is without bias or error free”(Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.223), a pilot test was carried out among a number of people before sending out the questionnaire to managers, which “tests the appropriateness of the question and their comprehension... and thus reduce bias”(Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.155). The purpose of the pilot test is to get general feedback from outsiders to see if the design of the questionnaire makes sense to them, and if all the statements/topics covered in the questionnaire is misleading or somehow biased from different interpretations. Both the authors of the thesis and the supervisor took the questionnaire to examine any possible structural or technical errors that might undermine the validity. The questionnaire didn't include the thesis's definition of management styles to avoid possible influence on respondents which might lead to inconclusive results undermining the quality of the data.

For generalizability of the research, or “the scope of applicability of the research findings in one organizational setting to other settings”(Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.22), issues regarding the distribution of the questionnaire are also considered. By taking a simple random sampling method, the thesis has reached as many managers working in Swedish companies with different backgrounds in terms of age, academic background, industry, size and nature of the company. This lowered the risk of a biased choice of management style in certain companies, industries or even demographics. All participants are strictly anonymous to prevent biased results as some respondents might know the researchers personally. In addition, the relevance of participants is achieved by making sure they have managerial experience in private Swedish companies operating in Sweden. The questionnaire was spread by a combination of utilizing our networks and contacting individuals online, which limits the possibility of only engaging the circles of the researchers. It is therefore believed that our choice of methods and approaches could be generalized in future research regarding similar topics. High level of transparency of the questionnaire design and collected empirical data is also maintained which allows future researchers to duplicate or borrow.

### 3.5 Limitations

Due to the limited timeframe of designing the questionnaire and conducting the survey online, it is inevitable that our research design has some limitations. This section includes a critical reflection on the sampling process, limitations of Chi-square and Fisher's exact test, the Likert scale and how people could have different interpretations of the statements in the questionnaire.

By applying simple random sampling, this thesis is supposed to take an approach in which “all elements in the population are considered and each element has an equal chance of being chosen as the subject” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016, p.249). The majority of our respondents are found through LinkedIn by searching Swedish managers, connecting with new contacts within our network by LinkedIn recommendations, posting survey participation requests in our profile or spreading the survey in certain groups, e.g. alumni network of Lund University. Even though we tried our best to reach people with diverse backgrounds, the chances of being selected as the subject is not equal. The algorithm behind LinkedIn is still very similar to other social media, which means people would have higher chances to connect with mutual friends and this also applies to the search engine where people with more connection to the researchers would show up on the top of the list. In addition, theoretically speaking, not every manager working in Swedish companies has a LinkedIn profile. With the statistics estimated by various market research reports, around 30-40% of Swedish population use LinkedIn in 2019 (Statista & Napoleoncat, 2019). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that our data only reflects a portion of Swedish managers' choice over management styles. If given more time and resources, a systematic sampling approach could provide more generalizability to our research.

There are mathematical limitations for the statistical tests we utilized in our hypotheses testing (InfluentialPoints, n.d.), naming Chi-square and the Fisher's exact test. To start with, both tests are very sensitive to the sampling size and there is some ongoing debate of what amount of data is suitable for each test, and whether its result could be representative for a small sample size. The result of their statistical analysis, namely the p value, only shows whether two variables are related to each other (The University of Utah, n.d.). The tests are only able to show the significance of the data from statistical perspective but could not entail its further correlations. A more in-depth research on its relations, e.g. causal effect, would require a more detailed analysis.

The key feature of our questionnaire is based on the widely used Likert scale, but there are obvious drawbacks of such an approach. We do get some feedback or questions from the respondents regarding the questionnaire. Dolnicar et al (2011) pointed out that people might

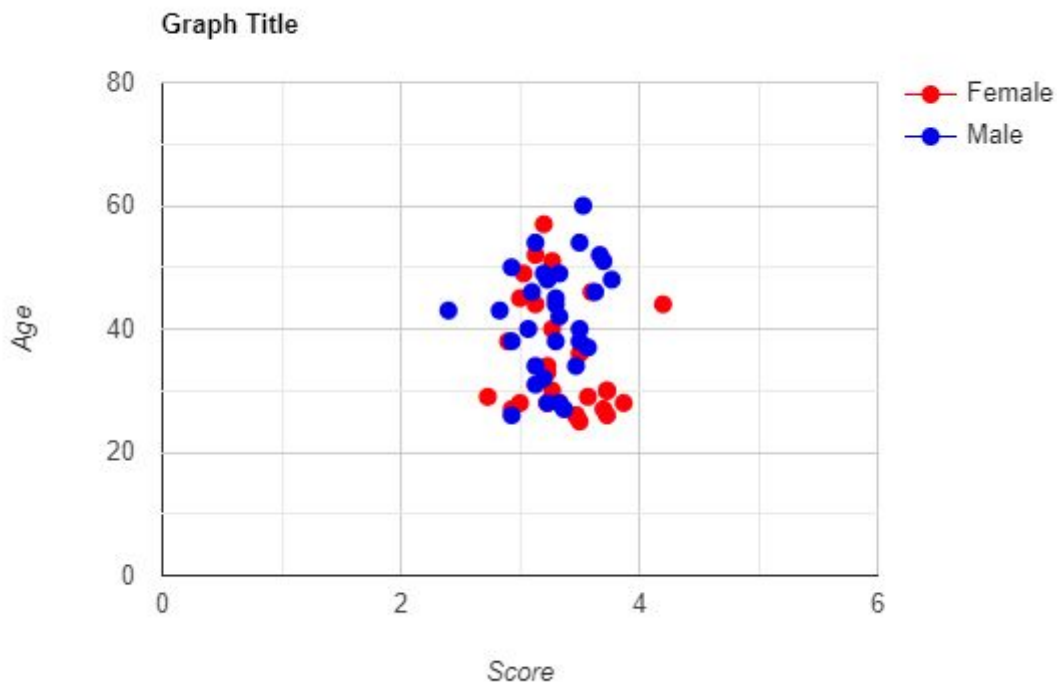


have response biases to the Likert scale questionnaire and that results are not as stable compared to the binary formats, indicating that the answers could be more related to the system rather than that the content and respondents could rate differently on the same set of questions over different occasions. They further points out that cross-cultural evaluation based on the Likert scale could be problematic, for instance, the answer “5” might have different implications by respondents from different cultures as some suggests “a high level of agreement” while others reflects “slight agreement plus a response style”(Dolnicar et al, 2011, p.2). Moreover, since our program is in English, all the statements are written in English rather than Swedish. Although Swedish people generally have a high level of English proficiency, this might slightly influence respondents’ understanding and judgement of certain statements. In connection to the language and the reverse statements used in the questionnaire, Hartley (2014) pointed out that writing exact opposite statements in English is not easy, people might have different interpretations towards the reverse statements rather than the opposite meaning of the original statement. He further points out that for most respondents reverse thinking might not be as easy as we believe, as it requires focus and attention.

# 4 Research Results

## 4.1 Introduction

Our research includes 32 male and 28 female respondents with a wide range of management positions, backgrounds and age differences. Chapter 4 will only display the direct results and the discussion of the results will take place in Chapter 5. This introduction will present all findings of interest for this thesis, some findings might not necessarily contribute to our hypotheses, but may be mentioned in the next chapter. The following section will then display the direct results of our hypothesis’.



*Graph 1. Scatter plot of the different respondents*

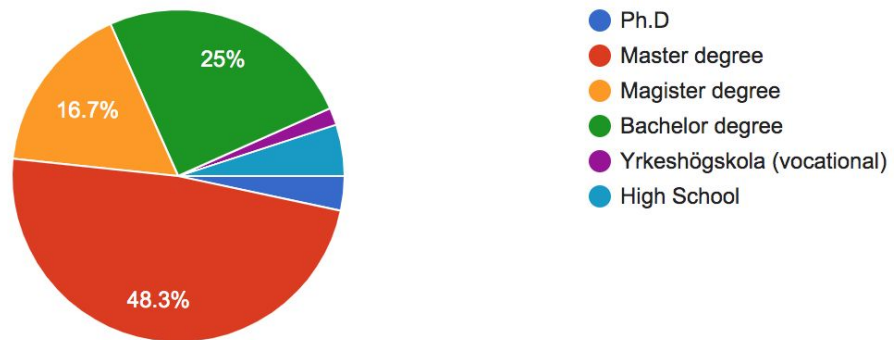
Out of the 60 respondents, 10 managers answered with an exploitative management style mindset. 2 of those respondents’ results showed as “neutral”, in other words, the mean value of their answers ended up in a “3”, on a scale of 1 - 5, 5 being accommodative. This means that the vast majority of the questionnaires respondents showed various levels of accommodative management styles as seen in Graph 1. The highest individual outcome, the most accommodative management style, of the respondents showed a 4.2 score. The lowest individual outcome, the most exploitative management style, of the respondents displayed a score of 2.4.

Because of the limitations of the likert scale, the thesis also compared the results of the standard 1 - 5 likert scale to a 1 - 3 model we created where only the “agree”, “neutral” and “disagree” options were available. In layman's terms, the option of “partially agree” was considered “agree”, respectively, “partially disagree” was then considered “disagree”. The results of this experiment showed that all respondents had an accommodative management style.

The most common position of our respondents was “CEO”, with 8 responses. Various HR-positions were also prevalent among the respondents. Furthermore, there was a great variety of managerial positions including but not limited to: Project managers, team & unit managers, product managers and business development managers.

### What is your highest educational degree?

60 responses



Graph 2. Division of the different degrees of the research respondents.

As seen in graph 2, almost 50% of the respondents have a Master degree and only 7.5% of the respondents did not have a university degree. 1 respondent answered that they had a Ph.D. The level of the education of the respondents is not used to reach any conclusions in this thesis but rather as a visible variable for its readers.

Similarly to the educational background of the respondents, the question of working and studying experiences abroad, may provoke discussion, but it is not used for any conclusion of our hypothesis. Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents answered that they had some experience outside of Sweden. 16 respondents confirmed that they had no such experiences.

The questionnaire included a question regarding the duration of the respondents stay at their current company. The question is no longer of any importance for this thesis as it was included in case several respondents from the same company were answering the questionnaire, to account for the variable of “time with the company”. However, due to various circumstances, we did not approach solely one or two companies, making this question null.

To research how many respondents had an HR-focused mindset, the thesis also implemented a reversed statement from the HR-frame. 7 respondents disagreed with the statement and 13 respondents stayed neutral. 6 HR managers responded to this survey, all of which answered either “neutral” or “partially disagree”.

## 4.2 Hypothesis' Testing

As discussed in the methodology section, our main hypothesis suggests that conducting our studies in the manner of which we have done, would show that there is only a small or no correlation at all between the management styles and gender. In this case, the null hypothesis should be determined as: gender and management styles are independent of each other (H1). The alternative hypothesis should be set as: gender and management styles are dependent on each other (H1). P-value is set at  $\alpha = 0,05$ . When  $p\text{-value} \leq \alpha$ , H1 is rejected. When  $p\text{-value} > \alpha$ , H1 is confirmed. A breakdown of accommodative/exploitative and female/male categorical data of our questionnaire is as follows:

	<b>Accommodative</b>	<b>Exploitative</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Female	23	5	28
Male	27	5	32
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60</b>

By using the Chi-square test, we have been able to calculate the p-value of this hypothesis as 0.817. As  $0.817 > 0.05$ , H1 (gender and management styles are independent of each other) is confirmed, which shows that there was no significant relationship between management styles and gender. This supports our hypothesis. The Fisher's test was also applied, but the p value outcome was 1. It should be pointed out that even  $1 > 0.05$  still supports our hypothesis, there is however a debate whether or not the value 1 is valid in a Fisher's test.

The second hypothesis(H2) argues that a female manager does not have to adopt an exploitative management style for her to work for a successful company. Due to the majority of the respondents displaying an accommodative management style and that the survey was handed out to managers working for what we have defined as "successful companies", this hypothesis is also supported by our data, within the perimeters of this experiment.

The final hypothesis(H3) of this thesis suggests that there should be an age gap between the choice of management styles, due to use of machiavellianism as a main component of the exploitative management style. This thesis divides the generation gap at the age of 38 for three reasons. First, the median age of our respondents is 38. Second, the average age of our respondent is 38.87. Third, in the western demographic research, millennials (Twenge et al, 2012) stood out with their personal traits in confidence and tolerance, but also a sense of entitlement and narcissism, compared to earlier generations when they were teens and in their twenties. It is generally believed that millennials are defined as "a person reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century"(Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2020), which refers to people born from 1981-1996 with the age between 39.5 to 23.5 in May 2020.

A breakdown of accommodative/exploitative and younger/older categorical data of our questionnaire is as follows:

	<b>Accommodative</b>	<b>Exploitative</b>	Grand Total
≤ 38 years old	25	6	31
> 38 years old	25	4	29
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60</b>

The initial plan is to use Chi-square test, but the data we collected doesn't fit the prerequisite that data in any category should be more than 5, as the older than 38 / exploitative category only reaches the value 4. Therefore, our data is not enough to perform a standard Chi-square test. An alternative statistical method was applied instead, the Fisher Exact Test.

This hypothesis was tried in the same way as H1, by using the Fisher's Exact Test. The p-value of this hypothesis is  $p=0.7323$ , which suggests that there was no significant relationship between age and management styles. It disproves this hypothesis, within the perimeters of this experiment.

## 5 Discussion and Conclusion

Whether our research results support our hypotheses or not, further research accounting for more variables with more respondents is required. Our discussion will mainly focus on the variables we have designed to measure what might influence people's choice of management styles.

Out of the 10 managers scoring 90 or lower, all had a university education. One had a bachelor degree and the rest had master degrees. Roughly half of all respondents had master degrees which makes this particular finding hard to deconstruct without further research from a qualitative perspective. We also enquired the managers regarding their experiences working or studying abroad, neither of which seemed to play an impactful role in the choice of management style.

The biggest factor to notice about the research result was the amount of respondents leaning towards an accommodative management style. There are three main reasons we can explain this outcome with.

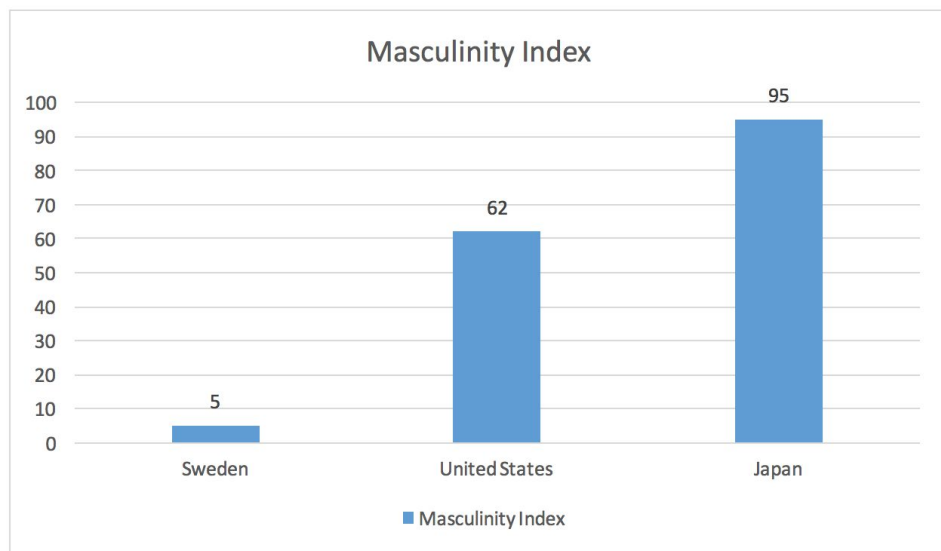
1. The approach taken to encourage managers to participate in the survey.
2. Sweden is a gender equal society and classified as a feminine country by Hofstede.
3. Swedish society has a track record of promoting gender equality over the years.

It is imperative to highlight the choice of distributing the survey. As previously discussed, this thesis worked with several limitations which forced us to reach out to managers via our own networks and LinkedIn. Therefore, no manager was forced to partake in the survey, and because of the natural characteristics of an accommodative manager, it is reasonable to assume that out of the managers we reached out to, more accommodative managers would feel inclined to help. This is possibly also the reason for why so few exploitative managers partook in the survey, as there were no material gains for them. For future studies on this topic, a more mandatory approach of distributing the survey would be required to reach a more accurate result.

Our data in the previous section clearly shows a picture in which gender does not show a correlation with management styles. Aside from the statistical test result, concluded using the Chi-square test, which showed no correlation, it is also noticeable from simple mathematics that the number of people identified by our research as exploitative managers are evenly divided by gender. It is also worth mentioning that more male managers (27 respondents) displayed a more accommodative management style compared to the female respondents (23 respondents). Given the fact that our data was collected across different established private Swedish companies in various industries, it is reasonable to assume that females in today's Swedish business environment do not have to change their "nature" to suit the need for a

managerial role. This is evidently different from Vinacke’s findings in New York. Lyons (2019) also found gender differences in their study about the Dark Triad, which suggested that men were far more likely to display characteristics of the Dark Triad. Their study might not be comparable to our research as the use of the Dark Triad in our study was limited, but it might imply that adding the variable of “a gender equal society” could affect their results as well.

What leads to these two contradictory scenarios? Why is Sweden considered a more gender-equal society? Answers towards those questions require some knowledge or perspectives from national culture and particularly the role of gender. The masculinity and femininity index, based on Hofstede’s research for Sweden and the U.S, could be a good starting point for our discussion considering that, as mentioned before, Sweden is viewed as a feminine country by Hofstede. The higher a country scores (range from 1 to 100) on the index, the more masculine the culture is(Graph 3).



Graph 3. Developed from data of Hofstede Insights (2020)

Sweden is evidently very low on masculinity level as a very feminine culture. Sweden is rated by Hofstede’s research as a country where “quality of life is the sign of success and standing out from the crowd is not admirable”(Hofstede Insights, 2020). As discussed before, this index has a lot of implications from societal, individual and business perspectives. The fundamental issue behind the dimension of masculinity and femininity is, as mentioned in the literature review, how people in a society prioritize different work goals and discusses if, or how much, the division of male and female plays a role at large, or in other words, “what motivates people, wanting to be the best, masculine, or liking what you do, feminine” (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

There are many interpretations of the characteristics of Swedish national culture, but it is often tied with key words including work-life balance, consensus-based decision-making



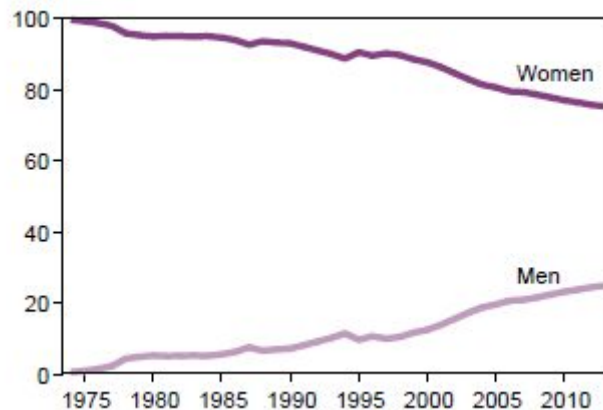
processes, and caring for the weak. As a part of the Scandinavian culture, the Law of Jante(Jantelagen) is also deeply rooted in all walks of life, it is a code of conduct that implies that the person is not supposed to act out of order and not to think of oneself as better than their fellow humans, and it is reflected in the Swedish expression of “Lagom” and Danish expression of “Hygge”, which both means not too much, not too little, but just enough.

So how does Swedish feminine culture link to our findings? On the societal level, the national culture influences all of the Swedish people to prioritize nurturant values starting from the school age and it is less important to stand out from others than striving for common goals. In general, one could consider that Swedish people welcome more “soft” rather than “hard” personalities. It is therefore not surprising to see Swedish male and female managers, as a whole, appear less competitive than their American or Japanese counterparts(see Graph 3). With the whole society valuing work-life balance, consensus and “the weak”, even if maximizing the profit of a company or the benefit of the shareholders is still the goal of many managers running companies, they are all in some way “programmed” to consider the social responsibilities, which includes caring for the environment and strict labor laws not allowing employers to easily fire their employees(Rönnmar 2019). To sum up, it is the commonly-sought after qualities of the Swedish people which contrast with the characteristics of exploitative management style which make it possible for the majority of both Swedish males and females to appear accommodative.

On the individual level, being extremely feminine would translate into the phenomenon that gender plays very little or no role at all in how people prioritize work-related goals. It is practically self-explanatory why people showing exploitative and accommodative management styles are almost evenly distributed in our sample. In other words, Swedish national culture welcomes or encourages people to do whatever they feel like doing and however they like to behave as long as it is within the acceptance of laws and regulations. Men can be extremely family-oriented and females can prioritize work over family.

Parental leave is a very typical example. It is not only for females but also equally for males, which really indicates a gender-neutral way of understanding which sex is responsible for parenting. It is common to observe Swedish fathers in the park, swimming pool, and on the bus taking care of their children alone, which would be considered as a shocking scene for several Eastern Asian cultures, like Japan and China. In several languages like Chinese and Japanese, parental leave is associated with females’ rest before and after giving birth, while in Swedish, “Föräldraledighet” is literally translated to “parental leave”. However, it should be noted that a debate regarding parental leave has been present in the political climate of Sweden for a long time(Sverige. Statistiska Centralbyrån 2014). Daddy leave (pappaledighet) has become an issue where a lot of people are arguing for dads to spend more time with their children and not lay the entire responsibility on the mother. As seen in Graph 4, there’s been an increasing amount of dads taking advantage of parental leave since 1974 when a new law was introduced in order to allow parental leave to be shared between both parents (KvinnSam

n.d; Sverige. Statistiska Centralbyrån 2014). Whereas in China, the Labor Law regarding parental leave does not mention male at all but writes “female staff and workers shall be entitled to no less than ninety days of maternity leaves for childbirth” (Article 62, Labor Law of People’s Republic of China). Even if China does not have any national legislation on this matter, it is legislated by 29 provincial level regions since 2016 (China News Service, 2016), where male could get parental leave from 7 days to 30 days. It is worth mentioning that Swedish legislation on parental leave is one of the key references for Chinese National People’s Congress on the topic(China Women’s News, 2013).



Graph 4. Change of allocation of parental leave between male and female in Sweden. (Sverige. Statistiska Centralbyrån 2014)

One might ask why or how does parental leave matter to managers’ management style? As discussed in the literature review, masculinity and femininity does not root in the division of roles between men and women in the society, but more from the situation at home. This is also in line with Furnham’s (2008) findings in the managerial settings that personality variables appeared among female and male managers are not in the biological sense. It is more of the result of “cognitive or belief variables, which are socialized into people” (Furnham, 2008, p.175). He further pointed out that these attitudes and beliefs are rooted in the family regarding the division of gender since a young age. If children were raised by both parents in the Swedish society, they would have a much earlier understanding of how gender has little or nothing to do with parenting. It would be the shared responsibility of the dads and moms to do everything together in the family. Starting from family, children, regardless of sex, would behave the same way later in school, in the workplace and in the society as a whole. Eventually, Sweden has more managers choosing their management style based on their personality rather than their gender, this can be argued for as a major contribution to why we consider Sweden as a gender equal society.

Without the comparison with the extremely masculine Japan, it is still widely accepted that Sweden keeps ranking in the top with consistent high levels of gender equality around the world. According to the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE), until 2017 (the latest data published by EIGE), Sweden has maintained its No.1 ranking among all European

countries since 2005 “with great improvements in the domains of power and knowledge.” The EIGE data shows improvement regarding education, which improves the chances for females to enter the job market equally as males with proper expertise within certain fields, and power-related activities both at home and at work, which promotes assertive approach and performance/result/job-centered values for females. It is therefore reasonable to assume that our data for female managers showing exploitative management style is benefiting from these results, as the gap between males and females is getting narrower.

The third thesis hypothesis addresses the potential age correlation with management styles, however, as the results suggest, there is no clear parallel to be drawn between the two. Since we have concluded Sweden as a very gender equal country, one could make an assumption that Sweden has been in that position for some time. It is true that Sweden has been considered a very gender equal country for the past 20 years or so (Sverige. Statistiska Centralbyrån 2014), however, the same cannot be said for the majority of the 1900’s. No statistical source exists to compare the Swedish workplace before the 2000’s with the rest of the world. However, it is a fact that Sweden was not as gender equal 35 years ago as it is today, an example of this can be seen in the graph below clearly showing the unequal gender distribution in various important positions (Sverige. Statistiska Centralbyrån 2014). Whilst in 2013, the gender distribution was practically even, the same can definitely not be said for 1985.

**Elected officials and members of trade unions 1985, 2001 and 2013**  
Sex distribution (%)

Organisation	1985		2001		2013	
	W	M	W	M	W	M
<b>LO</b>						
Congress	14	86	42	58	45	55
Board	-	100	36	64	17	83
Chairperson	-	100	14	86	14	86
Members	43	57	46	54	46	54
<b>TCO</b>						
Congress	36	64	58	42	58	42
Board	20	80	53	47	53	47
Chairperson	11	89	60	40	57	43
Members <sup>1)</sup>	57	43	62	38	61	39
<b>SACO</b>						
Congress	29	71	46	54	43	57
Board	12	88	43	57	55	45
Chairperson	15 <sup>2)</sup>	85 <sup>2)</sup>	57	43	32	68
Members	38	62	53	47	53	47

Graph 6.

The oldest respondent of our survey was 60 years old, which means that we would need to at least have data stretching back to the 1980’s to fairly make the assumption that all respondents have always been exposed to a high standard of gender equality. There is no such

concrete data, however thanks to figures such as Astrid Lindgren and Selma Lagerlöf, Swedish young women in particular have had role models for a long time (Kim 2012). Pippi Longstockings (Pippi Långstrump) is an example of a work published in the 1940's with a main character inspiring female empowerment (Rachel Donadio 2014). Such upbringing could have inspired a sense of gender equality, however that is pure speculation on the thesis part.

The hypothesis (H3) regarding age was based on Landsztl (2018), who suggests that machiavellianism was less prevalent in a younger generation of global leaders. An argument for explaining the different outcomes of Landsztl (2018) research results and our own, could be the different variables accounted for. The age difference between the two subgroups Landsztl research is merely 5 years. The author's definition of Global Leaders includes a wide range of professions, less than half of which are business related. The two major differences between the two studies would be the amount of respondents and the environment of the studies. As we have discussed, it is possible that Sweden's status as a gender equal society has had an impact on both older and younger generations. On the other hand, Landsztl conducted his study in 97 different countries with various degrees of gender equality. 60 respondents is enough to establish our research as valid, however to fairly compare it with Landsztl's (2018) 926 respondents, further studies would have to be conducted including several new variables such as a more diverse respondent pool.

We have defined two different types of management styles and developed a new method to establish the choice of a manager's management style. Further testing is required for this method to be considered a valid method of establishing the management style of a manager. The potential for this method could very well be limitless, it could be used for recruitment, training, managerial assessments and much more. The thesis strongly recommends a more detailed comparative study with a country such as Japan which Hofstede considers the polar opposite of Sweden in terms of femininity and masculinity (Graph 3) in order to further validate its results. It is also the thesis' recommendation to take these findings with caution due to the factors discussed in this section also accounting for the thesis limitations. This thesis had several limitations to work with and the result unfortunately led to a less certain outcome. Nevertheless, the data gathered by our research strongly suggests that:

1. Gender does not play a part in the choice of management style in Swedish companies operating in Sweden.
2. Women do not have to adapt an exploitative management style to work for a successful Swedish company in Sweden.
3. Age does not seem to be a factor in choice of management style in Swedish companies operating in Sweden.

With these three key-findings, the final conclusion of this thesis allows for many new opportunities for companies. By using this method in recruitment or project planning, one

could speculate that the group would work better together if their opinions on management align. The thesis also clearly shows that there is absolutely no reason for gender discrimination when choosing managers based on management styles, as each gender has shown preferences in both types of management styles.

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