

# Master's Thesis

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ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

Former students of Hjallastefnan and their  
leadership self-perceptions

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## Abstract

This thesis is meant to shed light on how former students of Hjallastefnan in Iceland, perceive their own leadership styles and whether they evaluate themselves to be more transformational leaders than individuals of the same age that attended other preschools. To the researcher's best knowledge, no research has been conducted in Iceland to understand whether different approaches in preschool education affect leadership self-perceptions later in life. The leadership approach used in the analysis is The Full Range of Leadership Model proposed by Avolio and Bass (2004) and the measure used was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (2004). Responses were collected from former students of Hjallastefnan and a comparison group, resulting in a total of 78 responses. Few significant results were found but results did give indication that former students of Hjallastefnan do neither perceive themselves as more transformational nor transactional leaders than others. However, these results must be interpreted with caution, due to the small size of the comparison group. The research also gives recommendations for possible future studies in the field of leadership and preschool education.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Hjallastefnan, Early education, Iceland, Gender differences

## Prologue

This thesis is my final project in Organizational Behavior and Talent Management at Reykjavík University. Initially, I vacillated whether I should take on the hard work of a 30 credit (ECTS) thesis but this project has been all but tiresome. I got inspired to research former students of Hjallastefnan when Margrét Pála Ólafsdóttir, the author of the Hjalli Model, came to give a lecture on how the Hjalli Model could affect leadership abilities. The main learning outcome of this whole process is the importance of being true to one's beliefs in spite of adversity and sticking to one's ideals throughout.

I would like to start by thanking my teacher and supervisor, Dr. Auður Arna Arnardóttir, for great guidance, assistance and patience. I have genuinely enjoyed working with her and been fortunate to have access to her expertise and excellent knowledge through this process. I would also like to thank Haukur Freyr Gylfason, my cousin and adjunct at Reykjavík University, for his expert methodological assistance and for answering his phone during a matter of urgency. I would also like to owe thanks to Hjallastefnan and especially Bóas Hallgrímsson for their cooperation. Bóas has been my contact and has assisted me with the attainment of information regarding Hjallastefnan. It has been a pleasure. I also give thanks to my father for his support and proofreading the thesis. A thank you to my friend Vésteinn Ingibergsson for his great assistance. Lastly I would like to thank my husband and three boys, who have been supportive and patient during the last months. Their presence has been a genuine resource of joy throughout the hard work.

## Affidavit

I confirm that I wrote this thesis independently and on my own without using any other sources and aids than stated herein. Where other sources were used I clearly marked them as not my own. This thesis has not been received by any examination board, neither in this nor in a similar form. Furthermore I agree to an anonymous test of plagiarism which electronically verifies the validity of my declarations. I am aware that my thesis will not be evaluated in case of not making this statement.

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## 1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to examine whether former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate their own leadership styles as being more transformational than former students of other preschools. This is interesting to investigate due to the unique approach Hjallastefnan has to early education. Companies and all kinds of fellowships seek to have leadership in their operations since good leadership has shown to increase performance and effectiveness (Northouse, 2013). Because leadership is in great demand all around the world, a lot of resources are spent on developing leadership (Einarsdóttir, Bjarnadóttir, and Oddsson, 2009; Bersin, 2009.). But shedding light on the antecedents to leadership can facilitate the identification of leaders and play a great role in leadership development and training (Schell, Youngblood, and Farrington, 2008). Former research on the antecedents to leadership reveals that education and role modeling at an early age increases the likelihood of leadership emerging later in life (Bass, 2008; Hartman, 1992). Leadership development research has gained increased interest, but recent approaches to such research suggests that it is crucial to investigate leadership development with a longitudinal focus due to the nature of development itself (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm and McKee, 2014). Murphy (2011) proposes that leadership development starts at a very young age and is strengthened through the different stages in life. Since leadership ability is a popular commodity and research suggests that it can be developed at an early age, it is interesting to understand whether different approaches in early education affect the emergence of leadership later in life. Here, we will examine individuals that are former students of Hjallastefnan and compare their leadership approach to former students of other schools.

The sample consists of former students of Hjallastefnan born in 1994 and 1995 and a comparison group which was acquired through a snowball sample.

The thesis is comprised of four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which is the literature review. Leadership is defined and leadership development will be reviewed. Former research on the antecedents to leadership will also be reviewed, as leadership development in youth. The Hjalli Model and its main operations will be brought together. Leadership will then be revisited and a popular approach to leadership will be presented.



Then the significance of the study and research questions will be introduced and reasoned. The second chapter is an overview of the methodology. The participants will be introduced and the sampling procedures and measures will be reviewed. The covariates will be accounted for, the authorization and statistical analysis will be documented. In the third chapter all results will be presented. The fourth and last chapter is a discussion regarding the results. First there is a general discussion, and then the strengths and the limitations will be reviewed. Finally, there will be recommendations regarding future research.

## 1.1 Leadership

Leadership as a phenomenon has existed among men throughout the ages and the earliest written principles of leadership are documented from close to the emergence of civilization in Egypt around 2300 B.C.E. Through the centuries and to this day leadership can be found in all aspects of the society; our families, friends, schools, sports clubs, political parties, organizations, governments as well as globally (Bass, 2008). History has shown us that leadership is extremely important whereas good leadership makes it possible to organize collective effort and bad leadership can create a lot of misery (Hogan and Kaiser, 2005). More than a century ago, leadership gained the attention of academics and has been studied throughout the century. Today, good leadership, as a commodity, is in great demand both by individuals and organizations. Individuals seek to become better leaders and organizations seek good leaders because they are seen to improve organizational results (Northouse, 2013). Consequently, leadership is widely debated. The debate is often characterized by identifying what makes a good leader and how individuals can become effective leaders in part due to the fact that it is in high demand. In an attempt to understand how individuals become effective leaders it can be informative to examine and study how leadership development works. But first, it is important to have understanding of what constitutes as leadership.

### 1.1.1 Definition

For some, the difference between management and leadership can be vague and some controversy has existed in that regard among researchers, which gives reason for

clarification. Most could agree that individuals can be leaders without being managers and vice versa. The fact is that the literature about management and leadership are parallel and do overlap and the controversy is in great part in regard to the size of the overlap (Yukl, 1989). Although these differences will not be resolved here it is useful to point out the distinction between the two. In general, management is viewed to be a function that is exercised within groups of people, but leadership is a relationship between a leader and the followers which drives people (Maccoby, 2000). According to Day (2000) leadership roles can come with or without formal authority, but management is about performance in formal managerial roles. In this light, Maccoby (2000) further defines the distinction between the two by stating that the function of management involves budgeting, evaluating, planning, and so within a group setting, but the relationship of leadership involves building trust, motivating, creating a vision etc. According to Zaleznik (1990), as for the individuals in managerial or leadership roles, they also differ a great deal with regard to their unlike personalities which result from their different developmental paths from childhood to later life.

According to implicit leadership theory individuals have their own implicit beliefs about what it is that defines leaders from others which can make it difficult to decide on one universal definition. Researchers have attempted to find a common definition of leadership but finding a definition to which everyone can agree, has proven to be difficult (Northouse, 2013). Many definitions have been presented which have different emphases, e.g. traits, behaviors, influence on others, tasks or organizations (Yukl, 1989), but following a review of leadership literature, Stogdill (1974) came to the conclusion that there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are individuals attempting to define it (as cited by Northouse, 2013). In the 1920s leadership was defined by the leader's ability to force his will on his followers and the followers' compliance and reliability to the leader, but more recent definitions include the relationship between the leader and the followers and the influence leaders have on the led (Bass, 2008). For the sake of argument, Northouse (2013) defines leadership as „...*a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal*“. Here, the key in this definition is that leadership is a process rather than a function, it entails influence rather than enforcement, and there is an existing common goal rather than a personal goal of the leader.

## 1.2 Leadership Development

The ongoing question in the leadership literature is whether leaders are born or made. It is clear that biological influences affect leadership, however there is also evidence that individuals are affected by their life experiences and influences in life (Bass, 2008). Early theories on leadership stated that it was not possible to develop leadership traits but that individuals were born with the traits needed to lead (Northouse, 2013). The main goal of these theories and research was to identify the traits that characterized a great leader. This was considered of key importance in order to identify individuals that were born with those traits and position them in significant leadership roles. However, these theories did not take into account the different situations leaders were in and the social context to which leaders led. Instead of focusing on leadership as a constant, later theories sought to understand how leaders behaved in given situations and the actions leaders took, i.e. what successful leaders did. This shift from focusing on traits over to focusing on behaviors also stated one crucial difference; that leadership could be trained and taught. If it was possible to understand the specific behaviors good leaders exhibited, those behaviors could be taught to others (Horner, 1997). More recent theories regarding leadership are focused on leadership being a process which is a result of the relationships between leaders and others. So, universally, concerning leadership development a change has occurred from being solely focused on the leader skills over to alternatively developing skills for creating relationships and interactions which the process entails. Or, in other words, a trend is existent where leadership development is focused on the leader having concern for both the tasks at hand and on the people surrounding him (Yukl, 1989).

Leadership development has enjoyed increased interest in recent decades. A trip to the library or a search on the internet can result with multiple sources on the topic. In modern society there are countless developmental leadership programs across different fields, i.e. schools, organizations, associations, fellowships and so, where the aim is to reduce the so called leadership gap, where leadership skills are lacking (Leslie, 2009). Many leadership developmental programs seek to increase skills and the ability of leaders to take on tasks and create the relationships necessary in leadership. The methods used can be very diverse. Former common leadership development methods are e.g. coaching,

mentoring and action learning. Coaching is a one-on-one method which is focused on its practical use and skills development. Mentoring is similar to coaching but is managed by a senior individual who trains another, but it is defined by the relationship between the two. Action learning is a form of development where the focus is to develop more skills and abilities by addressing real problems as they arise (Hernez-Broom and Hughes, 2004). As an example of how important leadership development is to organizations it is interesting to gain insight into the magnitude of the investment in leadership development. In 2009, 21% of large organizations in Iceland, that knew how much they spent on training, spent more than 2% of their labor cost on training their employees. In addition, 26% of the organizations that knew how much they spent on training, spent more than six days a year, training executives (Einarsdóttir, et al., 2009). A study by Deloitte in the United States showed that companies spent on average, \$500,000 a year on leadership development in 2008, which was roughly \$2,000 per employee (Bersin, 2009). These numbers show unequivocally that organizations pay a high price on leadership training for their employees. Although, former mentioned leadership developmental methods are still widely used by practitioners, Day proposes a different approach to leadership development and research in the field (Day, 2000).

In terms of leadership development, Day (2000), makes a distinction between leader development and leadership development. He argues that leader development has to do with developing human skills and abilities, i.e. intrapersonal skills and focusing on the individual leader, but leadership development emphasizes on creating social connections. In other words, the main difference between leader development and leadership development is that in leader development the focus is on individual factors such as personal power, knowledge, and trustworthiness, but in leadership development it is on relational factors such as commitment, mutual respect and trust (Day, 2000). According to Day's distinction between leader and leadership development, when understanding leadership development, an incorrect focus has been long-lived where personality is connected to leadership. The distinction between leader and leadership development is crucial because if leadership is solely linked to personality, little advancements would occur through development. In this light, leadership development focuses on the interpersonal skills which are developed through a process over a long period of time.

Therefore, Day et al. (2014) state that in leadership development, the emphasis is that interpersonal abilities and intrapersonal skills must be developed parallel through life. In this light, leadership development is a very complex process which requires a longitudinal focus.

As for leader development, in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, researchers brought their attention to the leader skills that could be developed. A great deal of studies has been conducted with the aim of identifying the essential factors that need to be developed for leadership to occur. Issues of interest have e.g. been personality, skills, experience and learning (Day et al., 2014). Through their research, Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs, and Fleishman (2000) found three skills that leader performance is based on. They called their skills approach to leadership the *skill-based model*. The skills that are a part of this model are; complex problem-solving skills, solution construction skills and social judgment skills. In order to understand whether these skills could be developed over time and what would actuate such developments, Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, and Reiter-Palmon, (2000), sought to examine officers in the U.S. Army. Their results showed that the development of these skills occurs through the interaction of individuals within their environments. The results further suggested that leader skill development happens through experience and over a long period of time. Another approach to skills related leadership, is referred to as WICS by Sternberg (2008). The foundation of this approach is that effective leadership is a synthesis of the essential skills that are; wisdom, creativity, and intelligence (WICS). In this approach Sternberg suggest that leadership can be developed when leaders seek opportunities and environments in which a synthesis of these skills can occur. He suggests that the WICS factors are modifiable over time rather than being stable attributes.

The process of leadership development is considered to play a significant role in development transpiring. The process happens over time where certain factors shape the development. The main process factors included in developmental research in recent years are 360-degree feedback, self-other agreement and self-narrative (Day et al., 2014). A 360-degree feedback is a common method of leadership development for executives and managers and is used among top companies in the world. The purpose of such feedback is to understand how leadership behavior is perceived and to give opportunity for

improvement in leadership behavior and skills (Seifert and Yukl, 2010). The second factor which is self-other agreement is also often used in managerial roles and entails examining and understanding whether there is a discrepancy in the way an appointed leader and his followers view him. According to theory, this method should help leaders understand where behaviors need to be developed in order to be more effective (Atwater, Ostroff, Yammarino, and Fleenor, 1998). The last factor is the self-narrative approach which seeks to link leadership development to certain life events and experiences. Then research has sought to explain how past experiences and life events are linked to specific types of leadership (Ligon, Hunter, and Mumford, 2008).

There is a myriad of developmental research for leaders but what they most have in common is the understanding that because development is longitudinal in nature, the process of leader and leadership development must also have a longitudinal focus (Day et al. 2014).

### 1.3 Antecedents to Leadership

In light of the great interest in leadership development, some could question when leadership development begins in life and perhaps claim that leadership development should start at a very early stage in life. Given that it has been suggested that leadership development needs a longitudinal approach, it is possible to propose that childhood experiences can prelude leadership development in life (Murphy, 2011). The fact is that children are easily influenced and are impacted by their experiences. For many years, educators have debated the different approaches of teaching children in early education and the effect they have on their social and motivational development (Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, and Milburn, 1995). Research has shown that early childhood programs are crucial in increasing individuals' potential in life and one review showed that the quality of early childhood programs played a great role in children attaining good social skills and behavior (Muijs, Aubrey, Harris, and Briggs, 2004). Also, some research shows that quality preschool programs do not only affect individuals' social outcomes but when effective they can prevent criminal behavior and delinquency (Boyd, Barnett, Bodrova, Leong, Robin and Hustedt, 2005). Research has shown that social skills are very important in leadership, and

leadership theory and leadership development programs increasingly emphasize the need for leaders attaining social skills (Phillips, 2012). However, preschool programs are not the only matter of essence. Children's experience in early education programs is highly dependent on the quality of the teachers and the attitudes displayed in their school surroundings (Taba, Castle, Vermeer, Hanchett, Flores and Caulfeild, 1999). Usually, children spend many hours a week at school or early education programs, so their teachers play a great role in promoting social and emotional development among them (Boyd et al., 2005). Bass (2008) states that to some extent leaders are born but leadership abilities can be developed at an early age as well.

As mentioned earlier, research shows that quality early childhood education programs can affect individuals' motivational and social abilities later in life as well as be preventative of delinquent behavior. This is no new science, however in connection to leadership development, although umpteen research has been conducted with the purpose of examining the outcomes of leadership and its effect on others, less research has focused on the antecedents to leadership (Bommer, Rubin, and Baldwin, 2004; Zacharatos, Barling, and Kelloway, 2000). But shedding light on the antecedents to leadership can facilitate the identification of leaders and play a great role in leadership development and training (Schell et al., 2008). In the early 1990s, Avolio studied whether life events and experiences were linked to individuals exhibiting transformational leadership (1994). He found that some tendencies which are linked to leaders can be connected to key life experiences. His research showed that when the parents of individuals had high moral standards and when they showed interest in their child's learning experiences, it was positively correlated with the individuals viewing themselves as being transformational. He further found that positive experiences from elementary and high school in terms of performance and enjoyment also correlated with individuals seeing themselves as being transformational. These findings have been supported, but in his unpublished doctoral, Schell (2010) found similar results suggesting that an individual's key relationships with his parents and/or mentors, were strongly related to transformational leadership (as cited by Nash, 2012). Avolio's (1994) and Schell's (2010) research focused solely on transformational leadership but another study by Hartman (1992), examined whether perceived leadership styles of parents in early childhood, related to an individual's leadership style later in life. The

results indicated that individuals showed similar leadership styles in adulthood as those they perceived of individuals that influenced them in early life, suggesting that leadership styles can be learned from parents and role models in early childhood. Zacharatos et al. (2000), found similar results as Hartman, but they specifically examined adolescents and their leadership approach. They found that if adolescents perceived transformational leadership from their parents, they would mirror the leadership approach with their peers. But they suggest that these results can have a significant importance and effect on the potential of exhibiting transformational leadership in adulthood. Oliver, Gottfried, Guerin, Gottfried, Reichard, and Riggio (2011), were the first to examine the early family antecedents of transformational leadership with a longitudinal study. Their results support earlier mentioned research giving importance to the environment that is displayed by parents and role models during childhood. Their research showed that the positive family environment related to individuals having strong, positive self-concepts which in turn related to them demonstrating transformational leadership. In a separate study they examined individuals from the age of 2 through adulthood, exploring other antecedents of leadership. They found that children that easily approached others and were open to new experiences, were more likely to be extroverted in adolescence. As adults they also showed better social skills which related to the potential of exhibiting leadership. However, they found that adolescent IQ did not relate to better social skills in adulthood nor leadership potential (Guerin, Oliver, Gottfried, Gottfried, Reichard and Riggio, 2011).

Since experiences in adolescence can affect leadership development and since social skills are an essential part of leadership it is possible to argue that childhood can have significant effect on leadership ability. Because in leadership development the emphasis is on having and using interpersonal competencies it can be productive to further examine the role youth has in leadership development.

### 1.3.1 Young Children and Youth

It is evident that experiences in adolescence can affect how individuals develop as leaders in adulthood. But what about youth? Susan Murphy has studied the development of leadership and claims that youth can affect leadership development later in life (Murphy



and Johnson, 2011). She states that leadership development begins in early childhood and that leadership is displayed by youths differently than in adolescence but that it is apparent among children. Her position is that leadership skills are developed through the whole lifespan but the years from preschool and through college play a significant role the development. Leadership skills develop through the stages of life but at the very early stages in life, leadership is mainly used to assure resources such as attention, toys and affection (Murphy, 2011). Day et al. (2014) have argued that leadership development research must have a longitudinal approach and Murphy concurs (2011). She states that when leadership development solely focuses on adulthood there will always be a lack of knowledge which is necessary to understand the development that occurs over the lifespan which makes it impossible to create a comprehensive model for leadership development (Murphy, 2011). According to Murphy and Johnson (2011), experiences in adolescence, as well as childhood, create the foundation that leadership development is built on. These assumptions are made firstly due to the sensitive periods of development in early life, i.e. a period when skills and behaviors are easily developed. So, if adequate development is given at these early stages while great changes are taking place, it will be a sort of foundation for future leadership development. In addition, reinforcement occurs when individuals experience confidence in their leadership abilities and as a result they will be more likely to exhibit leadership behavior. So, if children have exhibited leadership behaviors, peers and others might see them as leaders which will increase the likelihood of them finding motivation to continue to show leadership behavior and becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy (Murphy and Johnson, 2011). Murphy hypothesizes certain leadership tasks and skills that can be developed and accomplished by children in the preschool age, but they are e.g. that children can express their wishes, get others to like them, read the feelings of others and delay gratification (Murphy, 2011). Although these skills can be learned in youth, they will continue to be strengthened in other stages of life and they will create the foundation for future leadership development. In line with their ideology Murphy and Johnson (2011) proposed a model for leadership development showing the precursors to leadership development. The model can be seen in Figure 1.

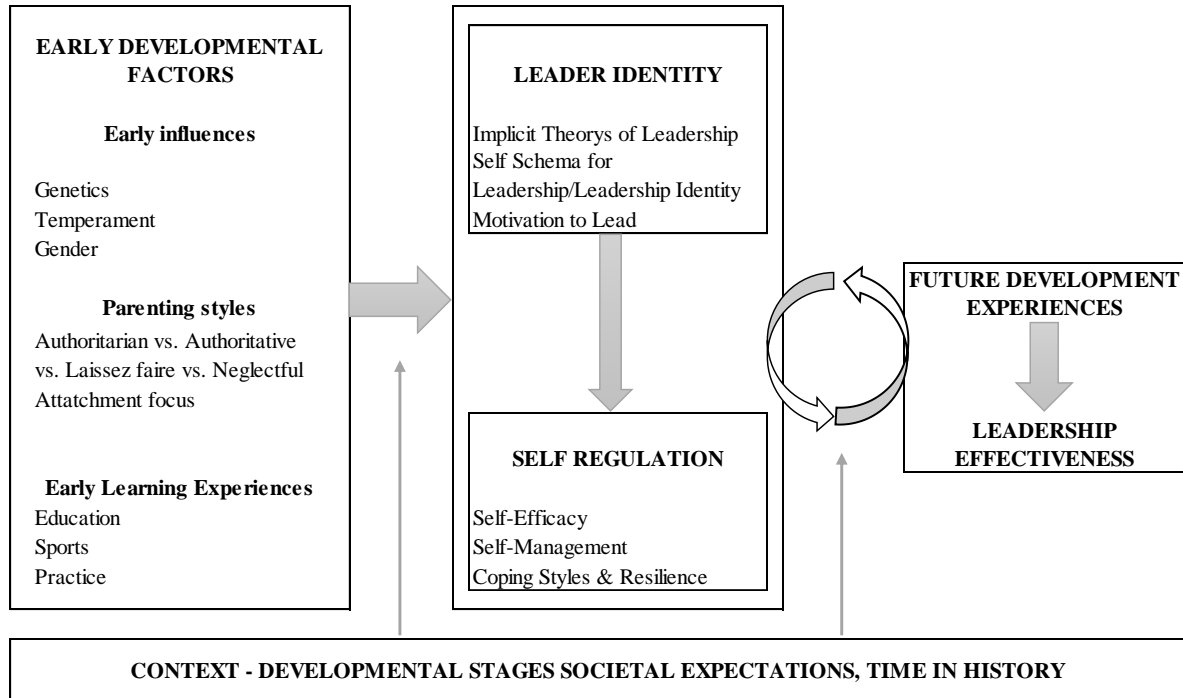


Figure 1 - A life span approach to leader development (Murphy and Johnson, 2011)

This model does not only fit one style of leadership but it is possible to apply all leadership styles to it. The first box of the model shows the factors that are a part of early development. Among factors in early development are gender, parenting styles and learning experiences. The second box shows factors of leader identity and self-regulation which are outcomes of leadership development. Leader identity is an individual's schema of how leaders act and what they do, and is considered to be important for the development of leadership skills. Self-regulation can affect the motivation individuals have to reach their aspirations as persons. The last box shows the engagement in leadership development and the leadership effectiveness as outcomes. The circular arrows between box two and three are to signify the reinforcement that takes place during the development through time (Murphy and Johnson, 2011). In relations to this research it is noteworthy to understand the effect education has on developmental factors of leadership. According to Murphy and Johnson (2011), at schools and preschools children should have many opportunities to practice their leadership skills, e.g. through their interaction with their peers and tasks in classrooms. According to Ensher and Murphy (2005) teachers are considered to play a role in the potential and likelihood of leadership development through their mentoring in schools (as cited by Murphy and Johnson, 2011). In addition, as an important part of

building leadership ability in students, Mitra (2006), claims that children should have their voices heard at schools. A part of having their voices heard is that they are given a chance to get their opinions across and knowing that they are listened to. Bass (2008) concurs concerning the significance of education and claims that leadership is in part a result of school activities.

As seen by this discussion, research does suggest that there are several factors that impact whether leadership is exhibited in adulthood. Given the significant role education has on an individual's development, it can be interesting to look at education from a gender perspective.

#### 1.4 A Gender Perspective

Since that leadership development can begin at an early age, the question may be asked whether the two genders receive different preparation for life through their early education programs. According to Icelandic law, equality should be encouraged at all school levels and children should not be discriminated on any grounds, including gender. The law further emphasizes that children should be prepared for equal participation in society (*Lög um jafna stöðu og jafnan rétt kvenna og karla*, 2008). Similar statements are included in treaties such as The Convention on the Rights of the Child which is effective within the United Nations (Barnasáttmáli, n.d.). But equality is closely related to discrimination because equality should work against discrimination. It is not uncommon that people are discriminated against on grounds of gender, and many have predetermined notions of the separate and fixed roles genders should take on in society (Dýrfjörð, Kristinsson, and Magnúsdóttir, 2013). These predetermined notions have often been labeled stereotyping but gender stereotyping are the beliefs about what characteristics are defined as typically girls' or boys' (Halim and Ruble, 2010).

For many years there has been a growing concern for certain gender inequality that exists within schools, mainly involved in the unequal attention given to boys and girls from teachers (Beaman, Wheldall, and Kemp, 2006). Research shows that boys do in fact receive more feedback than girls from teachers in schools (Howe and Scottish Council for Research

in Education, 1997). In a meta-analysis by Jones and Dindia (2004), it was indicated that teachers do in fact initiate interaction more often with boys, but the interaction with boys was more often on a negative note than positive. This could be due to the fact that generally boys are more prominent in classrooms. Howe and the Scottish Council for Research in Education (1997) pointed out in their research that the differences in attention toward boys can in part be attributed to the students themselves, whereas boys are more likely to create circumstances where teachers are more probable to seek their contribution. Boys will rather pursue attention even though teachers do not practically direct their attention to them. He also suggests that when boys seek attention from teachers they are seen to show interest but when girls seek attention they are believed to be boasting. The more attention boys receive is also evident at the preschool stage. Others have found similar results. Altermatt, Jovanovic, and Perry (1998) suggest that boys simply volunteer more often to participate, which results with teachers more often seeking interactions with them. Contrast to Jones and Dindia's (2004) analysis, Howe finds that boys are also more often positively evaluated by their teachers.

A research conducted by Rhodes and Brickman (2008) showed that preschool children believed that the gender differences remained a constant and did not develop over time. They concluded that children's motivation to perform better on tasks was highly dependent on how an individual of the opposite sex performed. In that context, it had negative consequences for children to compare their performance to the opposite sex, when the other individual of the opposite sex performed better. They suggest that when children compare their successes to the opposite gender, it can affect how they perceive their achievement behaviors and development concerning gender stereotyping.

These previous chapters have covered the difference between management and leadership and the definition of leadership. The antecedents to leadership have been discussed and how education affects the likelihood of leadership emerging later in life. Now, it is necessary to take a look at a specific approach to preschool education being used in Iceland and is called The Hjalli Model. The model will be introduced before reconverting to leadership where a leadership model will be proposed as an effective

approach to leadership. Then the research questions and hypotheses will be presented which will give understanding to the earlier discussions.

## 1.5 The Hjalli Model

As leadership skills can start to develop during early childhood and because of the different experiences for boys and girls in co-educated classrooms, it is interesting to take a look at the Hjalli Model. Margrét Pála Ólafsdóttir is the author of the Hjalli Model and in 1989 she became the director of the first preschool run according to this model (Ólafsdóttir, n.d.-a). The name of the model refers to the word “rock” and describes the ideology on which it was built. The rocks are a metaphor for the hindrances in our lives and refers to “climbing the rocks” or overcoming our hindrances (Ólafsdóttir, n.d.-b). Many schools in Iceland are operated according to this model and are referred to as “Hjallastefnan”. Hjallastefnan is the name of the establishment and was founded in the year 1999, and in 2000 Hjallastefnan took over the operations of the first preschool run with the Hjalli Model (Sigurjónsdóttir, 2008). Today Hjallastefnan runs a total of eighteen preschools and primary schools around Iceland. Schools and preschools of Hjallastefnan work with the ideology called the Hjalli Model (The Hjalli model, n.d.). The ultimate goal of Hjallastefnan is to reach gender equality and as a means to that end all schools are run with single-sex classes (Hreinsdóttir, 2009). It is safe to say that early on, the Hjalli Model met some controversy and many thought that the Hjalli Model was a regressive approach to running preschools. In Iceland in the sixties, single-sex classes were considered an unfavorable segregation and all single-sex classes were combined (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). According to the Hjalli Model, the sex segregation was not considered unfavorable, but rather beneficial for the children. But many believed that the approach could increase gender discrimination and some even made Margrét Pála’s sexual orientation a matter of relevance (Sigurðardóttir, 2006). However, the single-sex classes were not the only novelty. At the schools there are no traditional play material and the outdoor area was unadorned (Ólafsdóttir, 1992). Focus is put on having the environment simple and without necessary stimulus and all play material is kept in closed closets when they are not being used, and children’s artwork is only observable for a short time (Hreinsdóttir, 2009). Through the years, the Hjalli Model has been a source of much debate, but many have taken a liking to the model and Hjallastefnan has grown steadily

since the year 2000 and today it is comprised of thirteen preschools and five primary schools (Sigurðardóttir, Hallgrímsson, Högurður, and Kruse, 2014). Here the main operations of the Hjalli Model will be examined further.

### 1.5.1 The Main Principles

The principles of the Hjalli Model define the core values of the model and create the culture within the schools. The underlying theme in all operations of the model is equality, justice and democracy (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). These themes are emphasized in all aspects of operations within the schools. There are six principles concerning the children, staff, environment, material, nature and community.

The first principle concerns the children. The Hjalli Model acknowledges that all children are unique and each one has their own characteristics, abilities and interests (Sigurjónsdóttir, 2008). It is considered to be imperative that the differences among children are respected by all individuals within the schools and everybody should have the freedom and opportunity to succeed on their own terms (Main Principles of the Hjalli Model, n.d.). The main value is that children are not all treated as if they were all the same and have the same characteristics but rather, it is acknowledged that because of their individual differences the same demands cannot be made to each child (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

The second principle has to do with the staff. It is important and made clear that positivity, happiness and love should be prominent in all communications between staff, children and others (Sigurjónsdóttir, 2008). In communication, the staff is expected to be honest and positive in order to handle matters equitably. Of course staff needs to be firm at times, but positivity should follow as well. Because children are sensitive and they are easily influenced, this principle states unambiguously what is expected of the employees (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

The third principle has to do with the environment within the schools. It is Hjallastefnan's aim that the environment is kept simple and that routines are kept in balance. There are several factors which constitute the environment, but they are the agenda, the equipment and the surroundings. Furthermore, it is believed and found to be

crucial that all rules are visible and known by the children and staff. No rules should come as a surprise neither to the children nor the staff (Main Principles of the Hjalli Model, n.d.). The aim is that the factors of the environment that can be controlled are in fact controlled. Stating that factors of the environment should be controlled means that the factors of the environment which are used should be organized. According to the model, this is done to increase the likelihood of good communications and operations, because it helps individuals within the schools to understand what is expected of them and how to succeed in their work (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

The fourth principle relates to the material used in the schools. The basic aim of the material used, is that it is kept simple and that creativity and imagination is encouraged. The simplicity of the toys are meant to be a balance against the traditional toys children have at home. As a contrast to children's home environment and the combination of the diverse roles of the toys at home and at the schools, it is considered to support the different aspects of the children's development (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

Nature is the fifth principle of Hjalli Model. Children are taught to enjoy and respect nature. It is essential that children play and work outside and they are encouraged to enjoy being outside in different weather, to learn about vegetation and animals in our nature. The aim is that all working and learning materials are of a natural resource (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

The last but not least principle concerns the community. At Hjallastefnan the goal is to train children in learning discipline but it should be done in a constructive manner. According to the model, if rules are known and clear, and are followed through repetitively, the children will train within themselves self-discipline and self-control. Furthermore, it is believed that discipline gives children the security they need but when teachers are able to let go of control, children also have the freedom they need in order to train their self-control (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

It can be reasoned that some principles in the Hjalli Model create a part of the foundation needed for leadership development. First of all, as research has shown, role models and mentors in early childhood affect the likelihood of leadership development in

life (Murphy and Johnson, 2011). While the wellbeing of the children are above all other priorities in the Hjalli Model, it can be argued that children are encouraged to understand the importance of having consideration for others and learn to apply it through the role modeling. In addition, the second principle regarding teachers also concerns the significance of mentoring in leadership development. The teachers portray and display positive and honest communication while being firm when needed. This can be an important layer in the foundation on which leadership development is built. The last principle concerning the community, children are encouraged to use self-discipline and self-control which are essential factors of intrapersonal leadership skills. Therefore, strong arguments exist for these principles creating opportunity for a strong foundation for leadership development in later stages in life.

### 1.5.2 Single-Sex Classes

As noted earlier, the most obvious distinction of the Hjalli Model are the single-sex classes. With the emergence of co-education in the sixties, equality of the genders was the goal. However, experience has shown us that co-educating children was not the answer (Ólafsdóttir, 1992). Hjallastefnan recognizes that there is a big difference between girls and boys and that their needs are unlike. Boys and girls are given the opportunity to work and play on their own terms and the culture of each gender is accepted (The gender based curriculum of the Hjalli policy, n.d.). According to the ideology, when co-educated, the genders get very different educations in relations to motivation, instructions, time and so on. A quantification on the attention given to the genders during school shows that boys get approximately 75-80% of the attention but girls only around 20-25%. However, girls still show better results in performance than boys but that can be attributed to the fact that generally it is easier for girls to concentrate, they have more endurance and the fact that the education system is better fit for their needs (Ólafsdóttir, 2005). The Hjalli Model is designed to avoid this situation where the single-sex classes play a significant role. As a part of the single-sex classes there are three main factors emphasized. First is the understanding of the gender discrimination in our communities and in our co-educated school systems where boys and girls do not have equal opportunities. Boys get the most attention which implies that they are very important. However, they also get negative



attention because they are not as good students as the girls. Girls, on the other hand, get little attention and are not as prominent as the boys. They are strong learners for which they are mostly praised and which can lead to their perfectionism, which again can lead to diffidence and fear of trying new things. According to the Hjalli Model, by segregating the genders, this can be avoided and parallel to acknowledging individual differences, the gender difference is acknowledged as well and they get the attention fit to their gender needs (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). The second factor regards the different roles applied to the genders according to society. Children understand from an early age the difference of girls and boys (Halim and Ruble, 2010). As children they seek to take on tasks they know are expected of them. Society sends signals about what is appropriate for girls and for boys and in co-educated schools, each gender takes on the stereotypic roles making it difficult for them to try new things (Halim and Ruble, 2010). According to the model, when in co-educated schools each gender is mirrored by the other gender, which teaches them and strengthens the accepted roles of each gender (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). In that manner, according to the Hjalli Model, co-educated schools support gender stereotyping and the old traditional roles (Ólafsdóttir, n.d.-b). Therefore, in this model, it is essential to have single-sex classes in order for children to develop their own sense of individuality, however it also has to be combined with regular mixing of the genders in the class room (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). The third factor is the acknowledgement of the gender difference which calls for different methods in teaching boys and girls. Because boys and girls do generally behave differently from each other, they must be approached differently (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). In co-educated classes and when girls and boys are in in the same situation, they behave differently and the teacher reacts differently to their behaviors. If a teacher shows a reaction to a specific behavior, both genders take in the reaction that was initially meant to be addressed only to the other gender (Ólafsdóttir, n.d.-b). When this occurs, there is a chance that the other gender will misunderstand the reaction or misinterpret the teacher's intention. But in single-sex classes, teachers are able to approach children by methods that suits each gender (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

## 1.5.3 The Gender Scale

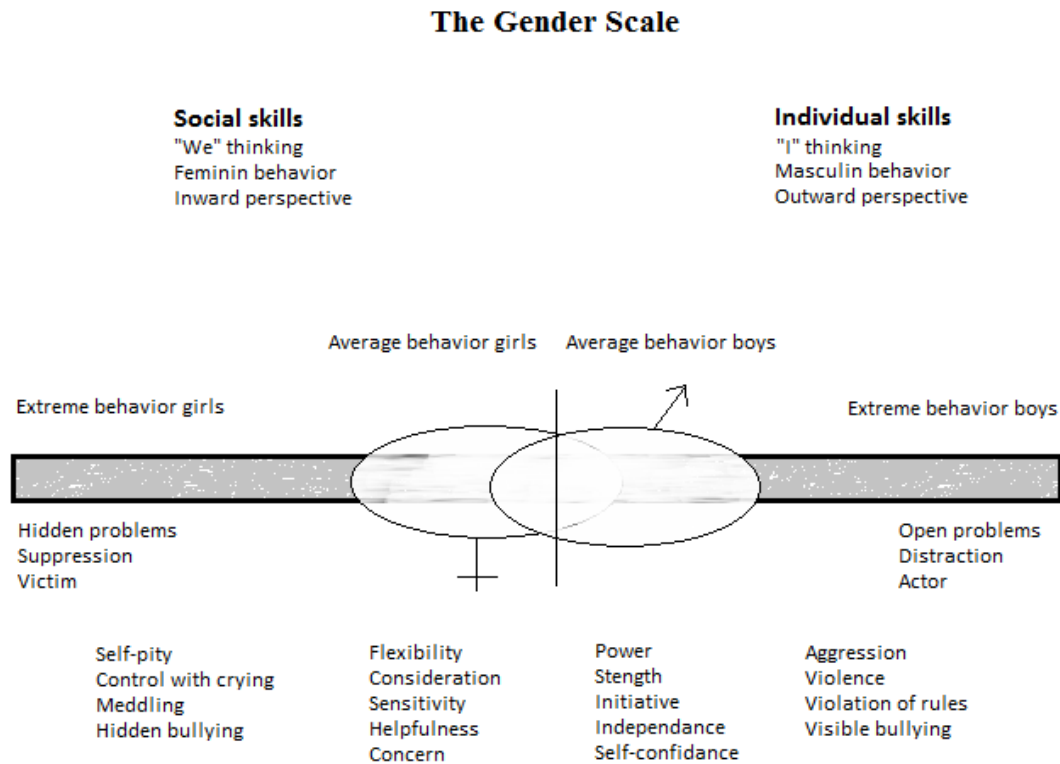


Figure 2 – The Gender Scale (Ólafsdóttir, 2012)

The gender scale shows how boys and girls develop their traits and abilities. The development of these traits is in part attributed to the different expectations society has to boys and girls (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). As seen in Figure 2, girls more often adopt a social way of thinking and the concept of “us” is more important than “I”. The social traits often known among girls are flexibility, consideration, sensitivity, helpfulness and concern. According to the model, these are the general, positive traits of girls. Boys on the other hand, more often think in terms of “I” and their positive strengths are power, strength, initiative, independence and self-confidence. But these general positive strengths should of course be feasible for both genders (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). In co-education, teachers have to handle the whole breadth of the scale. The extremes in both ends are the most difficult to deal with and they make it difficult for teachers and children to be successful in their assignments. In single-sex classes one of the extremes has been removed which makes the scale of behaviors shorter and more manageable for teachers to deal with (Ólafsdóttir,

2005). When behavioral problems arise among children which are usually due to the extremes on the Gender Scale, the Hjalli Model considers it to be a lack of the positive traits of the opposite gender. Therefore, it can be said that training children in the positive traits of the opposite gender, moves them further from their gender extremes and closer to the middle. The goal of the single-sex classes at Hjallastefnan and viewing the unlike characteristics of the genders with the Gender Scale is not to make all individuals the same but rather to minimize the extremes and enable individuals to be themselves, stand their own ground and acknowledge the rights of others (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

#### 1.5.4 The Courses

At the Hjalli schools there are six different courses and each course lasts for four weeks. Three courses are social courses and three courses are individual based (Sigurjónsdóttir, 2008). Each course then has four themes where certain skills are practiced every week. The courses and themes for each week are (The Hjalli model, n.d.):

- Discipline – respect, behavior, courtesy and conduct
- Independence – self-empowerment, self-confidence, assertiveness and expression
- Interaction – tolerance, helpfulness, broadmindedness and unity
- Positivity – positive attitudes, honesty, optimism and joy
- Friendship – friendship, caring, closeness and love
- Courage – courage, energy, activity and initiative

For each of these courses there are specific kinds of projects which all have the objective to train these traits among children. At the end of the courses, a whole week is used to demonstrate the achievements from the last four weeks (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). Those weeks are called the harvest weeks. The harvest weeks illustrate the goals and objectives of the courses. The harvest week for the discipline course is called “conduct week”, for the independence week “expression week”, for the interaction course is the “unity week”, for the positivity course is the “joy week”, for the friendship course is the “love week” and lastly for the courage week is the “innovation week” (The Hjalli model, n.d.).

### 1.5.5 Group and Selection Meetings

At Hjallastefnan, all children are assigned to a specific teacher and each teacher works with the same small group of children over a period of a few months. Each group is comprised of children of the same gender and at the same age. The groups do projects and take on assignments with their teacher. By using this grouping system, opportunities for conflict among many children is more easily avoided (Ólafsdóttir, 2012). The purpose of the group meetings is to assist children in practicing to go by instructions (Hreinsdóttir, 2009). Then, selection meetings occur every day where children have opportunity to choose what they want to do the next hours. At selection meetings, children choose their type of play themselves and it is emphasized that the children are not steered in their choices (Hreinsdóttir, 2009). The role of selection meetings are threefold; to train children in making decisions for themselves and knowing what they want, to practice expressing their will to others, and to learn that they cannot always get what they want (Ólafsdóttir, 2012).

So, summing up the main operations of the Hjalli Model and what distinguishes it from other preschools, are the six main principles where children's wellbeing is a priority, the courses which practice children's individual and social skills, the single sex classes where each gender is approached according to their own premise and the group and selection meetings which are balance of training children to work by instructions and to make decisions for themselves. In the next chapter, a popular approach to leadership will be introduced before proposing the research questions.

## 1.6 A Popular Approach to Leadership

As an important part of this research it is necessary to revisit the leadership theories. Like noted earlier more current theories on leadership suggest that leadership is a process where a relationship is formed between individuals. A more popular approach to leadership is one first introduced by Downton, a political scientist, in 1973 and later Burns in 1978 (Antonakis, 2001). They distinguish between the different leadership styles of transactional leadership and transformational leadership. Burns, in his work, makes an effort to connect leadership with followership (Northouse, 2013). Between 1990-2000, the literature concerning transformational leadership has experienced quite scrutiny, in fact more than

any other leadership theories (Judge and Bono, 2000). A study, which is a part of the GLOBE research (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness), by Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, & Dorfman, (1999), showed that the specific aspects of transformational leadership are valid across cultures. Here the transactional and transformational leadership approaches will be explored further.

### 1.6.1 Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership refers to a group of leadership theories that approach leadership as a relationship where exchanges occur between leaders and followers (DeCosmo, 2002). Transactional leadership can be a way of looking at reinforcement leadership, where acceptable behaviors are rewarded and behaviors that are not acceptable are corrected (Bass, 2008). This sort of leadership style makes it clear what the goals are, how they are going to be reached, what resources will be used and what the work standards are (Bass, Waldman, Avolio, and Bebb, 1987). Transactional leadership is a form of leadership which is generally viewed as a necessary part of group operations. When individuals fail to meet standards, a transactional leader will communicate effectively his expectations and make sure to clarify to others what the rewards are when expectations are met (DeCosmo, 2002). Transactional leaders work well within existing cultures in all sorts of operations and their actions and decisions are based on the norms therein. In that light, it can be assumed that transactional leaders are suitable in situations that are stable and little changes occur (Bass and Avolio, 1993). An example of transactional leadership could be when an employee receives a pay raise when he succeeds in reaching goals and meeting given standards.

### 1.6.2 Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is an approach which has enjoyed increased popularity in recent years. Northouse (2013) defines transformational leadership as “...*the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower*” (p.186). This leadership style is considered to augment transactional leadership and it enables followers to develop their abilities and reach their fullest potential (Bass and Avolio, 1993). Transformational

leadership can include influencing peers, subordinates and/or superiors. This sort of leadership can occur in all sorts of aspects of operations or non-operations but it is always remarkable (Krishna, n.d.). Transformational leaders support their followers and encourage their development and create circumstances for development to happen. They build strong relationships with associates (Horner, 1997) and give them the experience and opportunities needed for them to evolve and become leaders themselves (Avolio and Bass, 2004). Bass and Avolio (1993) state that these leaders communicate effectively a purpose of their being and have a strong sense of vision which is passed on to others. Transformational leaders are concerned about their followers, and they use their intuition and sensitivity to meet the needs of others. These types of leaders can easily deal with change and can initiate it as well (Horner, 1997).

### 1.6.3 The Model - The Full Range of Leadership

Bass has explored transactional and transformational leadership for many years and his theory from 1985 regarding these leadership approaches was built on the initial work of Burns (Antonakis, 2001). Later, Bass and Avolio joined forces and through empirical study, they mapped different but common leadership approaches on to a continuum (Transformational Leadership at Mind Garden, Inc., n.d.). Their theory is called “The Full Range of Leadership Model” and includes highly active leadership approaches, moderately active styles and passive forms of leadership (Antonakis, 2001). The model includes nine approaches to leadership which are listed in Table 1.

*Table 1 - Factors of The Full Range of Leadership Model (Avolio and Bass, 2004)*

| Transformational Leadership | Transactional Leadership         | Passive/Avoidant Leadership       |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Idealized Attributes        | Contingent Reward                | Management by Exception (Passive) |
| Idealized Behavior          | Management by Exception (Active) | Laissez-Faire                     |
| Inspirational Motivation    |                                  |                                   |
| Intellectual Stimulation    |                                  |                                   |
| Individual Consideration    |                                  |                                   |

## **Transformational leadership**

*Idealized Attributes (IA) and Idealized Behaviors (IB):* These two factors of transformational leadership are often grouped together, whereas one refers to how followers perceive the leaders' attributes and the other refers to the perceptions of the leaders' behaviors. Leaders that fall into these two categories are admired and they are often looked to as role-models. These leaders are considerate of the needs of others and take the needs of others ahead of their own needs. They generally have strong values, are ethical, have strong principles and show consistency in their conducts (Avolio and Bass, 2004). Usually, they are highly respected and can be trusted to act ethically. These leaders also communicate their vision effectively and give others a strong sense of mission (Northouse, 2013). Avolio and Bass (2004), distinguish between the two with the following factors:

### **Idealized Attributes**

- Others are proud of being associated with them
- Put the needs of others ahead of their own
- Their actions result in earning the respect of others
- Show that they have confidence and power

### **Idealized Behaviors**

- Discuss their values and beliefs
- Stress the urgency of having a common sense of mission
- Understand and consider the ethical implications of their doings
- Understand the significance of having a common purpose

*Inspirational Motivation (IM):* With this sort of leadership, team spirit is aroused and the leader gains commitment from others by inspiring them through motivation (Northouse, 2013). Motivation is further created by giving meaning and challenges in the followers work. These leaders are known to be enthusiastic, optimistic and visionaries and they communicate with enthusiasm and optimism. They will show confidence in that the goals that have been set will be met (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

*Intellectual Stimulation (IS):* These leaders urge their followers to be innovative and creative and question their own beliefs and values in order to find new approaches to deal with situations (Northouse, 2013). These leaders do not punish others for their mistakes, rather welcome them while stimulating individuals to question the norms and to address

problems in a new manner. Furthermore, they seek different opinions and perspectives when finding solutions to assignments (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

*Individual Consideration (IC)*: These leaders take on the role of a mentor or coach while paying attention to the needs of others and helping them develop their potential. This leadership approach refers to creating a climate where opportunities arise for individuals to grow (Avolio and Bass, 2004). Work is delegated in order for individuals to take on personal challenges and therefore develop personally (Northouse, 2013). These leaders treat others as individuals rather than members of groups and acknowledge that individuals do not all have the same needs (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

### **Transactional leadership**

*Contingent Reward*: This leadership approach includes communicating expected goals clearly and granting rewards when goals and standards are met. The leaders' expectations are that goals will be reached by providing recognition to those who achieve them (Avolio and Bass, 2004). It's likely that this leader will make agreements with followers concerning what rewards will be exchanged for reaching the given goals (Northouse, 2013). According to Avolio and Bass (2004), these leaders will:

- Assist others when they attempt to reach goals
- Communicate their gratification when expectations are met
- Make clear what the rewards are
- Clarify who is responsible for given assignments and goals

*Management by Exception (Active) (MBEA)*: This leadership style includes leaders monitoring mistakes and taking actions immediately to correct them. This leadership form contains negative reinforcement and followers can be punished for their mistakes. These leaders know about the mistakes that are made and direct their attention to them and when goals are not met (Avolio and Bass, 2004).



## Passive/Avoidant leadership

*Management by Exception (Passive) (MBEP) and Laissez-Faire (LF)*: These are the two passive, or avoidant leadership styles according to the model. Management by Exception (passive), differs from the active style regarding the time of intervention. These leaders do not intervene until problems have become recurrent and standards are repetitively not met. Instead of being proactive, they are reactive (Northouse, 2013). They show that problems have to be chronic and serious until action is taken to correct them. Both of the avoidant leadership styles, do not communicate with their followers regarding expectations or what the goals are (Avolio and Bass, 2004). The Laissez-faire approach is a so called “nonleadership” approach. This leader avoids making essential decisions and is not present when he is needed. Both these styles have negative affect on followers (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

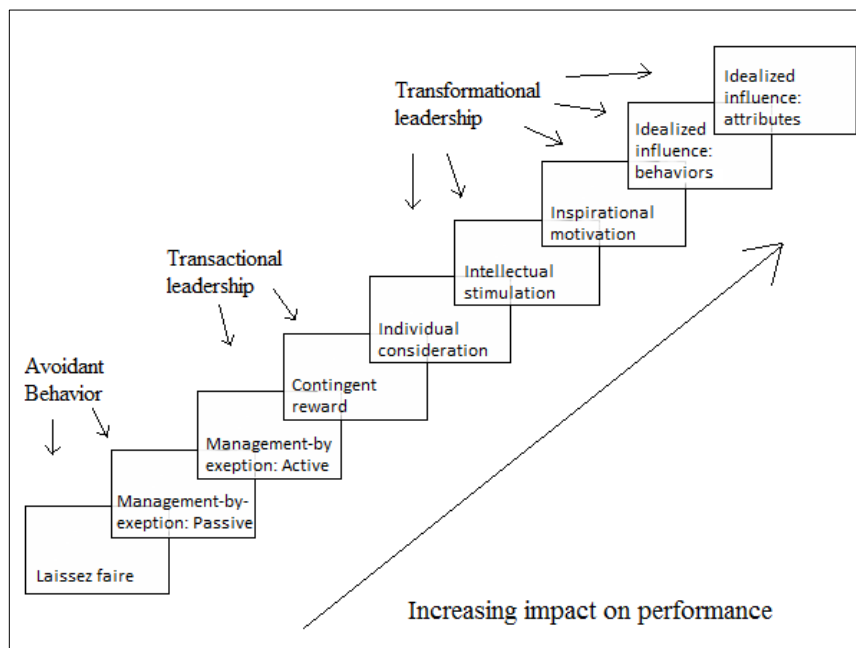


Figure 3 - The effect of leadership on performance (Kirkbride, 2006)

As seen in Figure 3, performance increases as leadership moves further from avoidant leadership styles and over to transformational styles. At the transactional level, followers are seeking to meet their personal needs of achievement and recognition. When adding transformational leadership to the equation, a shift can occur where the attention moves from the individual to the group of individuals and their achievements as a whole. When

such a shift occurs, there will be a change of perspective to considering what is beneficial for the group as well as individuals. In that way, it can be suggested that transformational leadership is a shift in orientation which has short and long term consequences for performance (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

Therefore, when individual and group development is the long term objective, according to the model, transactional leadership will not be effective. That is not to say that transactional leadership is not effective. On the contrary, it is effective to reach lower order objectives where reinforcements are used to reach them. However, when the goal is to reach higher order objectives, such as to further development, transformational leadership augments the transactional styles (Avolio and Bass, 2004). As shown in Figure 4, transactional leadership takes into account the personal needs of individuals, but when these needs start to elevate, the shift of leadership occurs from transactional to transformational. What constitutes as the base of transformational leadership is when the identification and elevation of needs becomes the focus (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

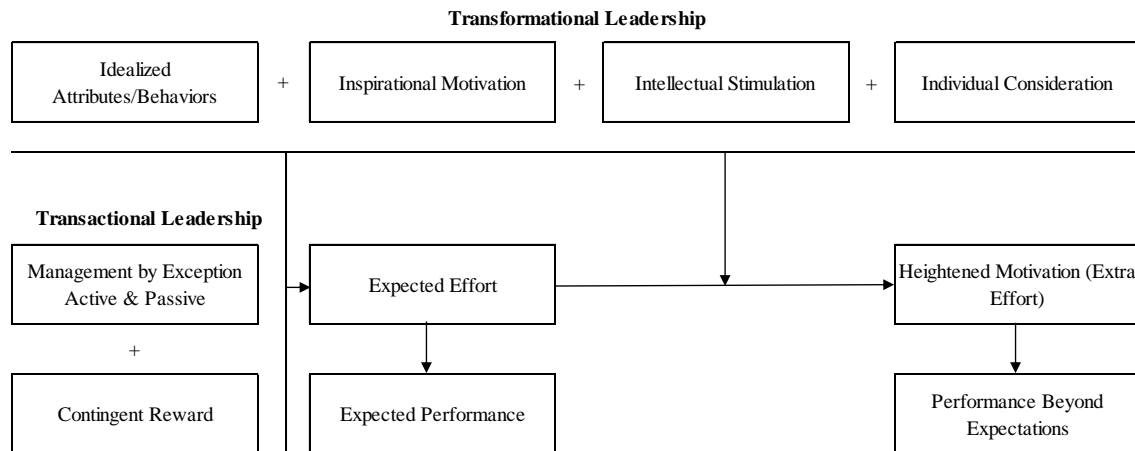


Figure 4 - The augmentation of transactional leadership (Avolio and Bass, 2004)

In that light, transformational leadership motivates others to do more than they expected initially. Through transformational leadership, individuals further enhance their potential and beliefs in their self-efficacy (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

#### 1.6.4 The Role of Gender in Transformational Leadership

Earlier theories concerning leadership suggested that individuals were born with special traits that could not be developed over time. When evaluating the differences of gender in leadership, generally there have been two different approaches. One, has been to study whether the traits important in leadership are more often exhibited by one gender. The other approach has been to examine whether stereotypical gender traits are associated with leadership (Maher, 1997). Through history it has been perceived that the traits needed for leadership were often associated with masculinity. The stereotypical perception that leadership is linked to masculinity has been long-lived and is at times still the perception (Hackman, Furniss, Hills, and Paterson, 1992). An example of the leadership traits that are masculine and often linked to leadership are self-confidence, action-orientation and aggression. According to Putnam and Heinen (1976) the traits that have been perceived more feminine and suggested to be negatively associated with leadership are, consideration, intuition, being emotional and submission (as cited by Hackman et al., 1992). Sinclair (2004), talks about the archetypes of leadership where societies develop a sense of leadership which is derived from history. In that sense leadership is oftentimes linked to masculinity and the displaying of toughness, heroism, commitment and sacrifice. As a result, these traits can make it difficult for women to consider themselves as leaders and to seek leadership roles in their environments. Jago and Vroom (1982), studied the perceived leadership differences of men and women. They found that when men and women both showed participative leadership styles they were both assessed equally positive. However, when women and men showed autocratic leadership styles, women were evaluated negatively but men more positively. As stated earlier, current ideas of transactional leadership are that it is a more traditional approach to leadership and transformational leadership, also a more current approach is an approach which augments transactional leadership. When studying the gender differences in transformational leadership from the perception of others, Bass, Avolio, and Atwater (1996), found that women were more often than men rated as displaying key aspects of transformational leadership. Other studies have found similar results (Burke and Collins, 2001; Eypórsdóttir, 2010; Rosenbusch and Townsend, 2004). However, an Icelandic research, studying the leadership styles of head

teachers found that men are more often transformational leaders than women (Ríkharðsdóttir, 2006).

Hackman et al. (1992) studied the gender characteristics and leadership behaviors which are linked to transactional and transformational leadership. In their research they found that transformational leadership should be a balance between the stereotypical gender traits rather than mainly masculine traits which are typically linked to traditional leadership. Their studies show that the balance should be between strong and positive feminine and masculine characteristics. Furthermore, they concluded that transformational leadership is correlated with the characteristics of both genders and they find it essential for individuals to exhibit feminine and masculine characteristics in order to ensure effectiveness as leaders. As a basis for their conclusions they put the masculine and feminine characteristics on a grid to understand the connection to transformational leadership. Figure 5 shows the Gender/Leadership Grid and illustrates that in order to use transformational leadership, an individual has to be able to use both masculine and feminine characteristics.

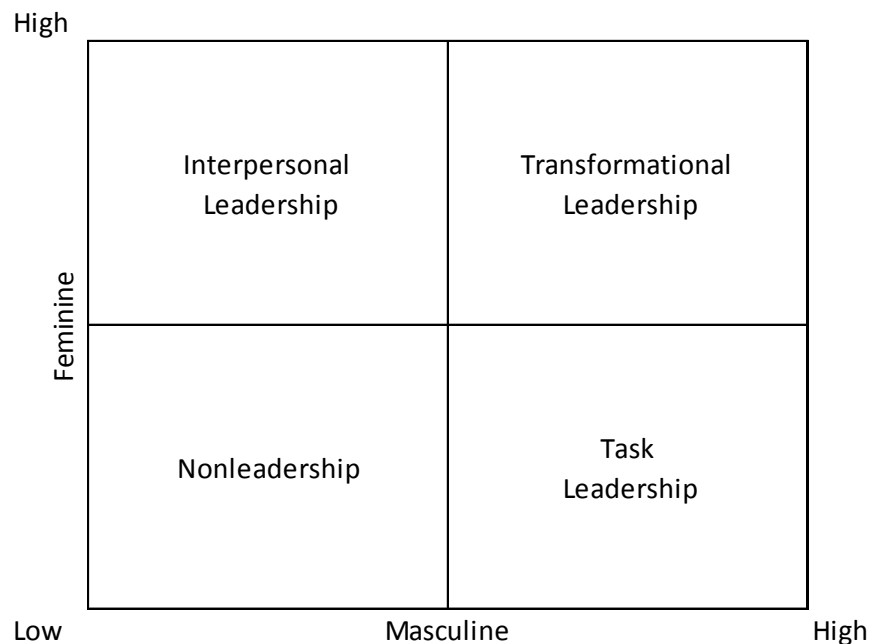


Figure 5 - The Gender/Leadership Grid (Hackman et al., 1992)

Nelton (1991), came to similar conclusions in his research but he states that the different characteristics of the genders can be complementary to each other in

transformational leadership. He stresses that the genders should learn from each other to increase their leadership abilities and capabilities. It could be suggested that the Gender/Leadership Grid corresponds to the beliefs behind the Gender Scale from Hjallastefnan. If individuals exhibit characteristics from both feminine and masculine aspects, there is increased likelihood of showing transformational leadership.

## 1.7 Significance of the Study

In the next chapter, the research questions will be presented which will be based on the previous overview of literature and models, but here it is important to report the significance of this study. It is evident that Hjallastefnan has a very different policy than other preschools and schools in Iceland. This is apparent not only by the sex segregation but also by the school's close environment in which it operates. Although much research has been conducted internationally on the effect education has on leadership, no research has been done to study whether the Hjalli Model can affect how former students evaluate their leadership styles. This research can give insight into whether preschool education influences how individuals evaluate their own leadership styles later on in life. In this research this is interesting in the light of different gender perspectives in leadership perceptions and the fact that Hjallastefnan segregates the genders. Therefore, this study can shed light on the influences different approaches in preschools have on leadership.

## 1.8 The Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to examine whether former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate their own leadership styles as being more transformational than former students of other schools. Here, the research question is proposed:

### **Research Question 1**

*Are former students of Hjallastefnan, by self-evaluation, more transformational leaders than others?*

This is interesting to examine in light of the unique model that Hjalli has in their approach to education. No studies have examined whether the Hjalli Model affects leadership later in life. It can be argued that the traits that are considered masculine in the Gender Scale in the Hjalli Model are comprised of characteristics that are more often linked to transactional leadership, although the list is not exhaustive. Furthermore, research has shown that men are more often transactional, which can support the suggestion that masculine traits are attributes of transactional leadership. Similarly, it can be suggested that the traits suggested as feminine in the Gender Scale are characteristics of transformational leaders. It can be argued that traits such as “Helpfulness”, “Consideration”, “Concern” and “Sensitivity” support the transformational factors of transformational leadership such as “Idealized Attributes & Behaviors” and “Individualized Consideration” where consideration and concern are at the forefront. The Hjalli Model suggests that by teaching genders the traits of the opposite gender they can adopt those traits and therefore be moved from the extreme pole of the scale and closer to the middle where they will exhibit positive characteristics of both genders and leadership. In addition, if Hackman’s et al. Gender/Leadership Grid is examined it shows that masculine and feminine characteristics is needed for transformational leadership to occur (Hackman et al., 1992). The Hjalli Model is conative to move both genders near the middle of the Gender Scale so that both genders can exercise positive characteristics of each gender. Nelton (1991), further states the same, that the genders should learn from each other in order to be more effective leaders. It can also be argued that the specific courses which are taught at Hjallastefnan can encourage the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills that are necessary in leadership. The courses are specifically aimed at encouraging the development of both social and individual behaviors among children. Since research shows the importance of genders internalizing each other’s characteristics and the way Hjallastefnan operates their different approaches to genders, there is reason to examine whether both the boys and girls of Hjallastefnan are more often transformational than others. In an attempt to answer the research question, the following hypotheses are proposed:

### **Hypothesis 1**

*Former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves as being more transformational than others*

**Hypothesis 2**

*Former students of Hjallastefnan, by self-evaluation, are a more homogeneous group of transformational leaders than others*

These hypotheses are proposed on grounds of the assumption that individuals that have not attended Hjallastefnan move more towards the extremes of the Gender Scale. In that light they therefore exhibit stronger characteristics which are attune with their own gender. However, those individuals that have attended Hjallastefnan, are closer to the middle, therefore showing characteristics of both genders and show less extremes on the Gender Scale and are more likely to fall under the transformational part of the Gender/Leadership Grid. This would apply both to boys and girls, therefore decreasing the difference between the genders.

**Hypothesis 3**

*Boys that are former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves as more transformational than other boys*

Research shows that men are less likely than women to show transformational leadership. This hypothesis is proposed because at Hjallastefnan boys are taught feminine characteristics that can be associated with transformational leadership. Therefore, it is suggested that boys that have attended Hjallastefnan are more transformational than other boys.

**Hypothesis 4**

*Girls, by self-evaluation, are more transformational leaders than boys*

Given that former research shows these results, it is assumed that the same applies to this sample. It is suggested that the results of this research will show similar conclusions in terms of women being more transformational.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Participants

The sample consisted of former students of Hjallastefnan born in 1994 and 1995, with a total of 101 individuals. Out of those contacted, 72 (71%) agreed to participate in the research. Among former students of Hjallastefnan and the comparison group, the total number of those opening the questionnaire was 190, 33% (62) did not answer any questions. That resulted in 128 (67%) of individuals beginning to answer the questionnaire. However, not everybody completed the questionnaire, but a total of 89 (70%) individuals completed the questionnaire, 52 of which (58 %) were former students of Hjallastefnan and 37 (42%) as a part of the control group and were gathered using a snowballing method on Facebook (see Table 2). The response rate for former students of Hjallastefnan is 72.2%. Due to the methodology in collecting the control group the response rate for the control group cannot be calculated.

As mentioned, 52 individuals were former students of Hjallastefnan, thereof were 32 (62%) women and 20 (38%) men. Everybody who claimed to be former students of Hjallastefnan were born in 1994 (65%) and 1995 (35%). However, as seen in Table 2, 11 (20%) of the individuals that had not attended Hjallastefnan were born in other years than 1994 or 1995 and were therefore withdrawn from the analysis. Then 26 individuals remained that had not been to Hjallastefnan, thereof 18 (69%) women and 8 (31%) men. Similarly, out of the 26 were 14 (54%) born in 1994 and 12 (46%) in 1995.



Table 2 - Descriptive statistics for participants

|              |         | Hjalli  | Others  |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
|              | % (N)   | % (N)   | % (N)   |
| Women        | 65 (58) | 62 (32) | 70 (26) |
| Men          | 35 (31) | 38 (20) | 30 (11) |
| Born in 1994 | 54 (48) | 65 (34) | 38 (14) |
| Born in 1995 | 34 (30) | 35 (18) | 32 (12) |
| Other years  | 12 (11) | -       | 20 (11) |
|              | N = 89  | N = 52  | N = 37  |

## 2.2 Sampling Procedures & Sampling Size

A list of all individuals born in the years 1994 and 1995 which have attended Hjallastefnan was obtained from Hjallastefnan. These individuals were chosen as according to Icelandic regulation, special consent is needed from legal guardians for individuals younger than 18, in order for them to take part in research as this (*Lögræðislög*, 1997). Their residence was found through Registers Iceland, and eight individuals did no longer live in Iceland and were therefore not contacted. The phone numbers of the remaining individuals were found through [www.ja.is](http://www.ja.is) and were contacted by phone in order to get their approval for participation. The number of individuals that approved to participate was 72. Then, a link to the survey was sent to these individuals through e-mail. In order to obtain a control group, the initial decision was made to ask the former students of Hjallastefnan to provide one to three e-mails of friends of the same gender that did not attend Hjallastefnan. This information was requested at the end of the survey when they concluded the questionnaire. However, soon it became evident that not enough e-mails for the control group were being retrieved in that manner. Thus, the control group was obtained through a snowball sample aimed at individuals born in 1994 and 1995. A link to the survey was sent out through Facebook and people were asked to share the link and to participate if they were born in the given years. The survey was conducted online and Questionpro was used to design the survey and gather responses.

### 2.3 Measures

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was initially based on Burns' description of transforming leadership. In 1985 while structuring the original MLQ, 78 executives were asked to describe what attributes a leader had which encouraged others to go above and beyond what was expected of them for the good of the group. The result of this research was the six-factor model, which categorized leadership into three transformational factors, two transactional and one passive-avoidant/laissez-faire. Since then the MLQ has gone through refinements following criticism and recommended adjustments by numerous researchers (Avolio, Bass, and Jung, 1999). A great deal of research has been conducted around the world using the MLQ, it has been translated into over forty-five languages and is used in developmental purposes as well ('MLQ for Researchers - Mind Garden, Inc. Home of Psychological Tests in Leadership, Self Esteem, and many more', n.d.). The MLQ has also been used to examine transformational leadership among young students and workers with fine results (Barling, Loughlin, and Kelloway, 2002; Rosenbusch and Townsend, 2004; Zacharatos et al., 2000). Today, the updated version is the MLQ Form 5X (MLQ 5X) and it continues to be widely used in leadership research and leadership development (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

The MLQ 5X is designed with a rater form which is an evaluation for followers, as well as a self-evaluation questionnaire for leaders. The purpose is to identify leadership styles for individuals. The questionnaire is comprised of 45 items and respondents judge how often behaviors occur. There are statements describing a behavior and respondents answer on a 5 point Likert scale, depending on the frequency of the behavior. The scale includes 1= "not at all", 2= "Once in a while", 3= "Sometimes", 4= "Fairly often" and 5= "Frequently, if not always" (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

The MLQ 5X has nine subscales in accordance with The Full Range of Leadership Model. The five subscales which represent transformational leadership are, *idealized attributes*, *idealized behavior*, *inspirational motivation*, *intellectual stimulation* and *individualized consideration*. Two subscales represent transactional leadership, they are: *contingent reward* and *management-by-exception (active)*. Lastly there are two factors

which comprise as passive/avoidant leadership, they are: *management-by-exception* (passive) and *laissez-faire*. Each item on the scale relates to one of these factors (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

Table 3 - Reliability of scales

|                                 | Number of Questions | Cronbach's alpha - Self | Chronbach's alpha - This sample |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Transformational leadership     |                     |                         |                                 |
| Idealized Attributes            | 4                   | .70                     | .49                             |
| Idealized Behaviors             | 4                   | .64                     | .60                             |
| Inspirational Motivation        | 4                   | .76                     | .72                             |
| Intellectual Stimulation        | 4                   | .64                     | .55                             |
| Individual Consideration        | 4                   | .62                     | .64                             |
| Transactional leadership        |                     |                         |                                 |
| Contingent Reward               | 4                   | .60                     | .68                             |
| Management by Exception Active  | 4                   | .75                     | .64                             |
| Nonleadership                   |                     |                         |                                 |
| Management by Exception Passive | 4                   | .64                     | .56                             |
| Laissez-Faire                   | 4                   | .60                     | .59                             |
| Outcomes                        |                     |                         |                                 |
| Extra Effort                    | 3                   | .79                     | .77                             |
| Effectiveness                   | 4                   | .67                     | .73                             |
| Satisfaction                    | 2                   | .78                     | .58                             |
| Total questions                 | 45                  |                         |                                 |

Table 3 shows the number of items relating to each subscale in the questionnaire and the reliability of the self-evaluation subscales in this sample compared to the reliability of self-form of the subscales as reported from Bass and Avolio (2004). As seen, the reliability of scale for this sample is at times very low compared to recent data. In Table 4 it can be seen how the reliability would change with the deletion of items. However, as the table shows the reliability would not increase if some items were deleted. Therefore, all results are derived from data leaving the subscales intact. It is important to bear this in mind while interpreting the results.

Table 4 - Reliability and possible adjustments

|                                 |            | N  | Cronbach<br>Alpha | Cronbach<br>Alpha if item<br>deleted | Mean  | SD   |
|---------------------------------|------------|----|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-------|------|
| Transformational subscales      |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
| Idealized Attributes            |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IA total   | 73 | .493              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IA1        | 73 |                   | .379                                 | 3.781 | .90  |
|                                 | IA2        | 73 |                   | .498                                 | 3.904 | .82  |
|                                 | IA3        | 73 |                   | .461                                 | 4.137 | .90  |
|                                 | IA4        | 73 |                   | .322                                 | 3.562 | .96  |
| Idealized Behavior              |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IB total   | 68 | .605              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IB1        | 68 |                   | .604                                 | 3.338 | 1.02 |
|                                 | IB2        | 68 |                   | .537                                 | 3.985 | .84  |
|                                 | IB3        | 68 |                   | .506                                 | 3.765 | 1.1  |
|                                 | IB4        | 68 |                   | .482                                 | 3.426 | .92  |
| Inspirational Motivation        |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IM total   | 72 | .720              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IM1        | 72 |                   | .715                                 | 4.139 | .97  |
|                                 | IM2        | 72 |                   | .682                                 | 4.111 | .72  |
|                                 | IM3        | 72 |                   | .585                                 | 3.708 | 1.03 |
|                                 | IM4        | 72 |                   | .638                                 | 4.056 | .75  |
| Intellectual Stimulation        |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IS total   | 72 | .549              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IS1        | 72 |                   | .460                                 | 4.000 | .75  |
|                                 | IS2        | 72 |                   | .594                                 | 3.389 | .99  |
|                                 | IS3        | 72 |                   | .457                                 | 3.778 | .88  |
|                                 | IS4        | 72 |                   | .395                                 | 3.708 | .81  |
| Individual Consideration        |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IC total   | 71 | .638              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | IC1        | 71 |                   | .556                                 | 3.366 | .94  |
|                                 | IC2        | 71 |                   | .523                                 | 4.366 | .72  |
|                                 | IC3        | 71 |                   | .584                                 | 4.366 | .72  |
|                                 | IC4        | 71 |                   | .610                                 | 3.761 | .75  |
| Transactional subscales         |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
| Contingent Reward               |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | CR total   | 69 | .681              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | CR1        | 69 |                   | .617                                 | 4.232 | .75  |
|                                 | CR2        | 69 |                   | .575                                 | 3.710 | .91  |
|                                 | CR3        | 69 |                   | .574                                 | 3.638 | .87  |
|                                 | CR4        | 69 |                   | .677                                 | 4.333 | .68  |
| Management by Exception Active  |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | MBEA total | 69 | .640              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | MBEA1      | 69 |                   | .548                                 | 2.754 | 1.06 |
|                                 | MBEA2      | 69 |                   | .584                                 | 2.884 | 1.02 |
|                                 | MBEA3      | 69 |                   | .598                                 | 3.203 | .85  |
|                                 | MBEA4      | 69 |                   | .550                                 | 3.101 | 1.05 |
| Nonleadership subscales         |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
| Management by Exception Passive |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | MBEP total | 66 | .555              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | MBEP1      | 66 |                   | .574                                 | 2.424 | .84  |
|                                 | MBEP2      | 66 |                   | .356                                 | 1.879 | .89  |
|                                 | MBEP3      | 66 |                   | .478                                 | 2.848 | 1.14 |
|                                 | MBEP4      | 66 |                   | .500                                 | 1.833 | .89  |
| Laissez Faire                   |            |    |                   |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | LF total   | 75 | .593              |                                      |       |      |
|                                 | LF1        | 75 |                   | .527                                 | 2.147 | .78  |
|                                 | LF2        | 75 |                   | .558                                 | 1.560 | .62  |
|                                 | LF3        | 75 |                   | .447                                 | 2.240 | .94  |
|                                 | LF4        | 75 |                   | .539                                 | 2.533 | .91  |

The MLQ 5X was developed in response to the criticism of earlier versions of the questionnaire. According to Bass and Avolio (2004), the self-form of the transformational scales highly correlate with each other and correlate to contingent reward. There is little or negative correlation between the transformational factors and the management by exception scales and they correlate negatively with laissez-faire leadership. The fact that there is high correlation between the transformational subscales could raise concerns regarding the questionnaire's validity. However, Antonakis' who conducted a doctoral research in terms of examining the reliability and validity of the MLQ concluded that the construct validity of the MLQ does effectively represent The Full Range of Leadership Model (Antonakis, 2001).

### 2.3.1 Translation of the MLQ 5X

The MLQ 5X is distributed through Mind Garden which is a psychological publishing company (Mind Garden, Inc. Home of Psychological Tests in Leadership, Self Esteem, and many more, 2014). The self-evaluation section of the questionnaire had not yet been translated into Icelandic, although the rater-form had been translated into Icelandic (MLQ for Researchers - Mind Garden, Inc. Home of Psychological Tests in Leadership, Self Esteem, and many more, n.d.; Ríkharðsdóttir, 2006). Therefore, initially the self-evaluation form had to be translated into Icelandic. Following a license to use the MLQ 5X, permission to make a translation had to be applied for at Mind Garden Inc. and when granted, the questionnaire was translated into Icelandic. During the translation process the translation of the rater form from Ríkharðsdóttir's research was used comparably (2006), since the rater form mirrors the self-evaluation form. Subsequently, the translation was then reviewed by an independent translator and all discrepancies were corrected in the translation. Following the completion of the translation, the final transcript was sent to Mind Garden for approval before sending the questionnaire to all respondents.

Following is a description of the remarks made by the translator and the emendations made to the statements in the questionnaire. The number of the questions apply to the numbers of the statements within the MLQ 5X.

- Question 2 was translated to “Ég fer yfir hugmyndir og skoðanir þegar þær koma fram til að athuga hvort þær eigi við“. The translator believed that “gagnrýnar hugsanir” was a better translation to the term “critical assumptions”. That change was applied.
- Question 4 was translated to “Ég beini athygli minni að neikvæðum þáttum, svo sem mistökum, undantekningum og frávikum frá reglum eða venjum”. The translator gave notice to “neikvæðum þáttum” and stated that the term was not in the English version. That was changed to “óreglu” which fit better with the English version.
- Question 13 was translated to “Ég tala af sannfæringu um það sem þarf að vinna”. Instead of using the noun “vinna” the noun “gera” was used which is more appropriate.
- Question 14 was translated to “Ég legg áherslu á mikilvægi þess að hafa vilja til framkvæmda”. The term “tilgangur” was found to be a better translation to “purpose” and was therefore changed.
- Question 17 was translated to “Ég sýni að ég trúi á: „Ef það er ekki bilað, þarf ekki að laga það”. This question was changed in terms of grammar, so it would be more correct in Icelandic.
- Question 18 was translated to “Ég geng lengra en mér ber til hagsbóta fyrir hópinn”. The translator suggested a change to “Ég geri meira en ég þarf ef það kemur hópnum vel” and was changed.
- Question 20 was translated to “Ég sýni að vandamál verða að teljast alvarleg áður en gripið er inn í”. The term “síendurtekin” was found to be a better translation to “chronic”.
- Question 21 was translated to “Ég starfa þannig að það vekur virðingu annarra”. The translator suggested another translation to “act” which was found more appropriate for this question.
- Question 24 was translated to “Ég fylgist vel með mistökum annarra”. The term yfirsýn was found to be better for “keep track” and was changed.
- Question 25 was translated to “Ég sýni að ég get stjórnað og vek traust”. The translator suggested a different translation which was found to more appropriate.

- Question 26 was translated as “Ég skilgreini nákvæmlega nauðsynlega framtíðarsýn”. Another translation was suggested which was better in light of the English version.
- Question 27 was translated to “Ég beini athygli minni að því þegar markmið hafa ekki náðst”. The order of the words was changed in order to be more fluent.
- Question 34 was translated to “Ég legg áherslu á mikilvægi þess að hafa sameiginlega sýn”. The translator suggested that “sýn” would be changed to “markmið”. However the researcher found the initial translation to better fit the English version of the question.
- Question 40 was translated to “Ég stend mig vel sem fulltrúi annarra gagnvart yfirvöldum”. The term “yfirvöld” was not found to be appropriate as a general translation, and was changed to “yfirmönnum”.

### 2.3.2 Adjustments to statements

- In question 37, the word “starfstengdum” was taken out whereas individuals are not being asked specifically about their leadership in a work setting.
- The term “frammistöðumarkmið” in question 11 was changed to “markmið” in an attempt to simplify the terminology.
- For the same reason, the word “skilmerkilega” was changed to “skýrt” in question 25.
- Question 43 where the company’s demands were addressed was changed to “annarra” as a general translation and as a better fit for the participants in this research.

## 2.4 Covariates

The questionnaire as a whole was comprised of 66 questions. They could be categorized into descriptive questions, questions that relate to individuals’ parental relationships, questions that consider preschool experience, the MLQ 5X and two questions regarding future aspirations. The questionnaire can be seen in Appendix I, but the MLQ 5X is excluded in the appendix due to a clause in the translation agreement stating "Research

Edition Translation instrument may not appear in full in any form of public media (including dissertations or theses)". Questions one through four in the questionnaire examined participants' year of birth, gender and whether they attended Hjallastefnan. Genders were coded as women = 1 and men = 2. Those that had not attended Hjallastefnan were coded = 0, and former students of Hjallastefnan = 1. Two questions (6 and 7) were designed and derived from Hoffman's article concerning parents' moral standards, but parental discipline is apt to reflect moral internalization (Hoffman, 1975). Two questions (8 and 9) were included to examine how individuals viewed their parents' interest in their education. Six questions (10-15) had the purpose to examine participants' attitudes toward their school and preschool experience. They were in part based on Owens and Schoenfeldt's questions toward positive academic attitudes and were adjusted to fit to preschool experiences (Owens & Schoenfeldt, 1979). Questions sixteen through nineteen were added by Hjallastefnan as factors they intended to be examined separately. The MLQ 5X questionnaire begins with question twenty and ends with question sixty-four. The last two questions (65 and 66) examine individuals' intention to pursue higher education or a leadership role in the future. The reliability of the parental scale (questions 6-9) was  $\alpha = .68$ , and the reliability for the preschool experience scale (questions 10-15) was  $\alpha = .87$ .

## 2.5 Authorization

In order to use the MLQ 5X, it is necessary to purchase the questionnaire and be granted authorization from Mind Garden Inc. A permission was bought from Mind Garden Inc. which then granted the questionnaire and a manual regarding the implementation. In addition, authorization was sought and granted from Mind Garden to translate the questionnaire into Icelandic. Furthermore, authorization had to be sought from Mind Garden in order to conduct the questionnaire on another online website.

Additionally, The Data Protection Authority in Iceland was contacted previous to conducting the survey, in order to verify whether specific permission was needed. However, that was not necessary whereas it was not possible to identify specific responses to specific individuals. All original data was deleted following processing the data.



## 2.6 Statistical Analysis

The data processor used for the statistical analysis was SPSS. Mean scores, standard deviations and T-tests were used in order to analyze the difference between the two groups of former students of Hjallastefnan and others. In some analyses, the subscales were combined into one transformational, one transactional and one passive/avoidant factor with the purpose of examining the differences between the groups for the total scale.

### 3 Results

Initially, it is important to clarify that questions were answered on a five point Lickert scale. Therefore, the lowest possible mean score for all results is 1 and the highest possible mean score is 5.

Table 5 exhibits descriptives and correlations between independent variables, the total scales of leadership and leadership outcomes. The variables that are reported in the table are year of birth, gender, students of Hjallastefnan, questions regarding parental relationships and preschool experiences, outcomes of leadership, and total scales of leadership. The table show valid answers (N), total mean scores (Mean), standard deviations (SD) and correlation between variables. Significant correlations are labeled and accounted for.

Table 6 shows the results of the self-evaluations for all subscales of the Full Range of Leadership Model for former students of Hjallastefnan and others. The table exhibits the amount of valid answers (N), total mean scores for each subscale (Mean Total), the total standard deviations for each subscale (SD Total) and mean scores and standard deviations for each group. The last two columns show the results of an independent samples t-test between the two groups, i.e. the t-value and the level of significance (Sign.) As seen in the table there was only a significant difference for the subscale of “*Intellectual Stimulation*”, the total scale for transactional leadership, the passive style of “*Management-by-Exception*” and the total scale of passive/avoidant leadership. While reviewing the results of these analyses it is important to bear in mind the low reliability of scales for many of the subscales in this sample.

Table 5 – Descriptives and correlation between independent variables, outcomes and total scales of leadership

| Variable  | N  | M    | SD   | 1    | 2    | 3      | 4      | 5     | 6     | 7    | 8    | 9      | 10    | 11     | 12    | 13    | 14    | 15    | 16    | 17   | 18     | 19     | 20    | 21     | 22   | 23 |
|---|----|------|------|------|------|--------|--------|-------|-------|------|------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------|--------|-------|--------|------|----|
| 1. Are you a woman or a man?  | 78 | 1,36 | ,48  | -    |      |        |        |       |       |      |      |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 2. What year are you born?  | 78 | ,38  | ,49  | ,07  | -    |        |        |       |       |      |      |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 3. Have you attended Hjallastefnan?                                       | 78 | ,67  | ,47  | ,08  | -,11 | -      |        |       |       |      |      |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 4. My parents set rules about what I was allowed to do at home            | 77 | 3,71 | 1,13 | ,10  | ,03  | ,12    | -      |       |       |      |      |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 5. My parents set rules about what I was allowed to do outside my home    | 77 | 3,77 | 1,05 | -,04 | ,05  | ,08    | ,74*   | -     |       |      |      |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 6. My parents participated in my school and/or recreational activities    | 77 | 4,14 | 1,06 | -,05 | ,10  | ,28*   | ,18    | ,48** | -     |      |      |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 7. I consider my parents good role models                                 | 77 | 4,45 | ,88  | -,08 | ,12  | -,05   | ,05    | ,26*  | ,34** | -    |      |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 8. I liked the teachers at my preschool                                   | 77 | 4,12 | ,78  | -,15 | ,13  | ,14    | -,025* | -,19  | ,14   | ,27* | -    |        |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 9. The teachers at my preschool affected my positive attitude toward      | 78 | 4,44 | ,77  | ,13  | -,04 | ,01    | ,03    | -,01  | ,09   | ,14  | ,20  | -      |       |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 10. The teachers at my preschool motivated my independent thinking        | 78 | 4,17 | ,80  | ,05  | -,10 | ,15    | -,03   | -,01  | ,06   | ,12  | ,25* | ,69**  | -     |        |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 11. I liked my preschool  | 78 | 3,90 | ,82  | -,07 | ,00  | -,12   | -,01   | ,01   | ,03   | ,13  | ,08  | ,55**  | ,57** | -      |       |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 12. My preschool education was good                                       | 78 | 4,50 | ,72  | -,04 | -,19 | ,15    | -,08   | -,05  | ,09   | ,08  | ,18  | ,59**  | ,72** | ,58**  | -     |       |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 13. I have done well in school  | 78 | 4,29 | ,70  | -,01 | -,11 | ,03    | -,07   | -,03  | -,01  | ,15  | ,13  | ,577** | ,65** | ,62**  | ,73** | -     |       |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 14. Preschool positively affected my attitude toward equal rights affairs | 78 | 3,72 | ,92  | -,06 | -,04 | ,08    | -,09   | -,13  | -,03  | ,10  | ,01  | ,51**  | ,45** | ,51**  | ,51** | ,47** | -     |       |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 15. It is important to me to attend single sex classes                    | 78 | 3,17 | 1,21 | ,03  | ,07  | -,15   | -,11   | -,08  | -,10  | ,12  | -,10 | ,09    | ,01   | ,10    | -,07  | ,08   | ,24*  | -     |       |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 16. I have a positive attitude toward individuals of the opposite gender  | 78 | 4,51 | ,68  | ,26* | -,05 | -,11   | -,04   | -,03  | -,07  | ,22  | ,16  | ,39**  | ,39** | ,28*   | ,48** | ,36** | ,21   | -,07  | -     |      |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 17. I would like my children to attend the same sort of preschool as me   | 78 | 4,12 | ,82  | ,09  | ,02  | ,10    | -,08   | -,12  | ,03   | ,14  | ,06  | ,31**  | ,41** | ,39**  | ,52** | ,39** | ,42** | ,33** | ,41** | -    |        |        |       |        |      |    |
| 18. Extra Effort  | 73 | 3,42 | ,68  | -,06 | ,04  | -,30** | -,14   | -,12  | ,01   | -,11 | -,02 | ,20    | ,15   | ,40**  | ,13   | ,09   | ,13   | -,12  | ,07   | -,01 | -      |        |       |        |      |    |
| 19. Effectiveness   | 76 | 3,76 | ,64  | -,19 | ,08  | -,13   | -,01   | ,09   | ,18   | ,24* | ,07  | ,24*   | ,16   | ,33**  | ,12   | ,17   | ,28*  | -,07  | ,16   | ,08  | ,33**  | -      |       |        |      |    |
| 20. Satisfaction  | 76 | 3,96 | ,69  | -,06 | ,05  | -,02   | ,18    | ,11   | ,09   | ,07  | ,07  | ,33**  | ,22   | ,22    | ,28*  | ,15   | ,09   | -,24* | ,26*  | ,18  | ,42**  | ,45**  | -     |        |      |    |
| 21. Transformational Leadership   | 77 | 3,84 | ,45  | -,03 | ,13  | -,14   | -,01   | -,01  | ,19   | ,21  | ,06  | ,30**  | ,23*  | ,36**  | ,33** | ,25*  | ,33** | -,15  | ,37** | ,17  | ,49**  | ,54**  | ,61** | -      |      |    |
| 22. Transactional Leadership  | 77 | 3,48 | ,48  | ,06  | ,16  | -,23*  | ,02    | ,04   | ,07   | ,07  | -,13 | ,31**  | ,17   | ,28*   | ,12   | ,08   | ,26*  | -,02  | ,19   | ,04  | ,35**  | ,47**  | ,45** | ,57**  | -    |    |
| 23. Passive/Avoidant Leadership   | 77 | 2,16 | ,51  | ,13  | ,11  | ,25*   | ,16    | ,00   | -,06  | -,22 | -,07 | -,15   | -,06  | -,41** | -,20  | -,18  | -,25* | ,01   | -,25* | ,01  | -,38** | -,39** | -,27* | -,46** | -,10 | -  |

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 – Results for all subscales for former students of Hjallastefan and others

| Leadership style            | Subscale title                           | N  | Mean Total | SD Total | Hjalli Students (n=52) |      | Other Students (n=25) |      | T-test | Sign.  |
|-----------------------------|--|----|------------|----------|------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|--------|--------|
|                             |  |    |            |          | Mean                   | SD   | Mean                  | SD   |        |        |
| Transformational leadership |  |    |            |          |                        |      |                       |      |        |        |
|                             | Idealized Attributes                     | 77 | 3,82       | 0,57     | 3,81                   | 0,59 | 3,83                  | 0,54 | 0,11   | 0,91   |
|                             | Idealized Behaviors                      | 77 | 3,66       | 0,66     | 3,63                   | 0,67 | 3,71                  | 0,63 | 0,50   | 0,62   |
|                             | Inspirational Motivation                 | 77 | 4,02       | 0,65     | 3,99                   | 0,62 | 4,06                  | 0,72 | 0,44   | 0,66   |
|                             | Intellectual Stimulation                 | 77 | 3,72       | 0,57     | 3,60                   | 0,59 | 3,96                  | 0,47 | 2,64   | 0,01** |
|                             | Individual Consideration                 | 77 | 3,96       | 0,55     | 3,92                   | 0,56 | 4,05                  | 0,55 | 0,98   | 0,33   |
|                             | <i>Total Transformational Leadership</i> | 77 | 3,84       | 0,45     | 3,79                   | 0,46 | 3,92                  | 0,42 | 1,19   | 0,24   |
| Transactional Leadership    |  |    |            |          |                        |      |                       |      |        |        |
|                             | Contingent Reward                        | 77 | 3,98       | 0,58     | 3,89                   | 0,56 | 4,16                  | 0,58 | 1,92   | 0,06   |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Active)         | 77 | 2,98       | 0,70     | 2,92                   | 0,71 | 3,11                  | 0,67 | 1,12   | 0,27   |
|                             | <i>Total Transactional Leadership</i>    | 77 | 3,48       | 0,48     | 3,41                   | 0,47 | 3,63                  | 0,46 | 2,02   | 0,05*  |
| Passive/Avoidant Leadership |  |    |            |          |                        |      |                       |      |        |        |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Passive)        | 76 | 2,21       | 0,60     | 2,31                   | 0,61 | 1,99                  | 0,53 | -2,27  | 0,03*  |
|                             | Laissaz-faire                            | 77 | 2,11       | 0,55     | 2,18                   | 0,60 | 1,97                  | 0,40 | -1,62  | 0,11   |
|                             | <i>Total Passive/Avoidant Leadership</i> | 77 | 2,16       | 0,51     | 2,24                   | 0,53 | 1,98                  | 0,41 | -2,21  | 0,03*  |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

### **Hypothesis 1**

*Former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves as being more transformational than others*

In order to examine support for Hypothesis 1 an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare all factors of transformational leadership scores for former students of Hjallastefnan and others, as mentioned, these results can be seen in Table 6. For the transformational factor “*Idealized Attributes*” there was no significant difference in scores for former students of Hjallastefnan ( $M = 3.81$ ,  $SD = .59$ ) and others ( $M = 3.83$ ,  $SD = .53$ ,  $t(75) = .11$ ,  $p = .91$ , two-tailed). Similar results were found for the “*Idealized Behaviors*” factor, where no significant difference in scores was found for former students of Hjallastefnan ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = .67$ ) and others ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = .63$ ,  $t(75) = .50$ ,  $p = .62$ , two-tailed). For the factor “*Inspirational Motivation*”, no significant difference was found in the scores for former Hjalldi students ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = .62$ ) and others ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = .72$ ,  $t(75) = .44$ ,  $p = .66$ , two-tailed). No significant difference was found for the “*Individual Consideration*” factor for former Hjalldi students ( $M = 3.9$ ,  $SD = .56$ ) and others ( $M = 4.05$ ,  $SD = .55$ ,  $t(75) = .98$ ,  $p = .33$ , two-tailed). However, for the factor “*Intellectual Stimulation*” there was a significant difference between former students of Hjallastefnan ( $M = 3.60$ ,  $SD = .59$ ) and others ( $M = 3.96$ ,  $SD = .47$ ,  $t(75) = 2.64$ ,  $p = .010$ , two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference =  $.36$ , 95% CI:  $.09$  to  $.62$ ) was moderate (eta squared =  $.08$ ). This significant difference shows that students of other schools evaluate themselves as exhibiting more “*Intellectual Stimulation*”. This result and the fact that other differences were not found to be significant result in Hypothesis 1 not being supported.

### **Hypothesis 2**

*Former students of Hjallastefnan, by self-evaluation, are a more homogeneous group of transformational leaders than others*

In order to examine support for this hypothesis, the standard deviation for each transformational factor between groups must be inspected. A higher standard deviation suggests more distribution between scores and heterogeneity. As seen in Table 6, the

standard deviation is higher among former students of Hjallastefnan for all transformational factors, except “*Inspirational Motivation*” indicating that former students of other schools are a more homogeneous group of individuals. Therefore these findings fail to support Hypothesis 2.

### **Hypothesis 3**

*Boys that are former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves as more transformational than other boys*

The results of an independent samples t-test for all subscales of the Full Range of Leadership between boys as former students of Hjallastefnan and other schools can be seen in Table 6. As seen in the table, boys that are former students of Hjallastefnan have higher mean scores for all subscales of transformational leadership except “*Intellectual Stimulation*”. However, no significant difference was found among any of the transformational factors. According to these finding Hypothesis 3 has failed to be supported.

Hypotheses 1-3 were proposed in order to answer the research question “Are former students of Hjallastefnan, by self-evaluation, more transformational leaders than others?” Since, through this analysis, there is not support for the former hypotheses, the answer and conclusion to the research question is privative.

Table 7 – Results for all subscales for boys that are former students of Hjallastefan and other boys

| Leadership style            | Subscale title                           | N  | Mean Total | SD Total | Hjalli Boys (N=20) |      | Not Hjalli Boys (N=8) |      | T-test | Sign. |
|-----------------------------|--|----|------------|----------|--------------------|------|-----------------------|------|--------|-------|
|                             |  |    |            |          | Mean               | SD   | Mean                  | SD   |        |       |
| Transformational leadership |  |    |            |          |                    |      |                       |      |        |       |
|                             | Idealized Attributes                     | 28 | 3,72       | 0,54     | 3,90               | 0,50 | 3,53                  | 0,57 | -1,53  | 0,14  |
|                             | Idealized Behaviors                      | 28 | 3,55       | 0,63     | 3,75               | 0,65 | 3,34                  | 0,60 | -1,52  | 0,14  |
|                             | Inspirational Motivation                 | 28 | 3,91       | 0,73     | 4,15               | 0,51 | 3,66                  | 0,95 | -1,39  | 0,20  |
|                             | Intellectual Stimulation                 | 28 | 3,88       | 0,54     | 3,68               | 0,64 | 4,07                  | 0,44 | 1,56   | 0,13  |
|                             | Individual Consideration                 | 28 | 3,86       | 0,48     | 3,93               | 0,46 | 3,78                  | 0,49 | -0,74  | 0,47  |
|                             | <i>Total Transformational Leadership</i> | 28 | 3,78       | 0,40     | 3,87               | 0,41 | 3,68                  | 0,38 | -1,22  | 0,24  |
| Transactional Leadership    |  |    |            |          |                    |      |                       |      |        |       |
|                             | Contingent Reward                        | 28 | 3,89       | 0,52     | 3,89               | 0,59 | 3,89                  | 0,45 | -0,01  | 0,99  |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Active)         | 28 | 3,19       | 0,52     | 3,10               | 0,69 | 3,28                  | 0,35 | 0,71   | 0,49  |
|                             | <i>Total Transactional Leadership</i>    | 28 | 3,54       | 0,37     | 3,49               | 0,51 | 3,58                  | 0,23 | 0,48   | 0,64  |
| Passive/Avoidant Leadership |  |    |            |          |                    |      |                       |      |        |       |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Passive)        | 28 | 2,30       | 0,55     | 2,44               | 0,59 | 2,16                  | 0,50 | -1,18  | 0,25  |
|                             | Laissaz-faire                            | 28 | 2,11       | 0,45     | 2,18               | 0,50 | 2,04                  | 0,39 | -0,67  | 0,51  |
|                             | <i>Total Passive/Avoidant Leadership</i> | 28 | 2,21       | 0,42     | 2,31               | 0,46 | 2,10                  | 0,38 | -1,22  | 0,24  |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 8 – Results for all subscales for girls and boys

| Leadership style            | Subscale title                           | N  | Mean Total | SD Total | All Girls (N=49) |      | All Boys (N=28) |      | T-test | Sign. |
|-----------------------------|--|----|------------|----------|------------------|------|-----------------|------|--------|-------|
|                             |  |    |            |          | Mean             | SD   | Mean            | SD   |        |       |
| Transformational leadership |  |    |            |          |                  |      |                 |      |        |       |
|                             | Idealized Attributes                     | 77 | 3,81       | 0,57     | 3,85             | 0,59 | 3,77            | 0,54 | 0,56   | 0,57  |
|                             | Idealized Behaviors                      | 77 | 3,65       | 0,66     | 3,67             | 0,66 | 3,63            | 0,65 | 0,25   | 0,80  |
|                             | Inspirational Motivation                 | 77 | 4,01       | 0,66     | 4,02             | 0,63 | 4,00            | 0,69 | 0,07   | 0,94  |
|                             | Intellectual Stimulation                 | 77 | 3,74       | 0,59     | 3,68             | 0,56 | 3,79            | 0,61 | -0,76  | 0,45  |
|                             | Individual Consideration                 | 77 | 3,94       | 0,53     | 4,00             | 0,60 | 3,88            | 0,46 | 0,92   | 0,36  |
|                             | <i>Total Transformational Leadership</i> | 77 | 3,84       | 0,45     | 3,85             | 0,48 | 3,82            | 0,41 | 0,27   | 0,79  |
| Transactional Leadership    |  |    |            |          |                  |      |                 |      |        |       |
|                             | Contingent Reward                        | 77 | 3,96       | 0,57     | 4,03             | 0,60 | 3,89            | 0,54 | 1,08   | 0,29  |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Active)         | 77 | 3,02       | 0,67     | 2,88             | 0,73 | 3,15            | 0,61 | -1,67  | 0,10  |
|                             | <i>Total Transactional Leadership</i>    | 77 | 3,49       | 0,47     | 3,46             | 0,50 | 3,52            | 0,44 | -0,55  | 0,58  |
| Passive/Avoidant Leadership |  |    |            |          |                  |      |                 |      |        |       |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Passive)        | 77 | 2,24       | 0,59     | 2,12             | 0,61 | 2,36            | 0,57 | -1,70  | 0,09  |
|                             | Laissaz-faire                            | 77 | 2,12       | 0,52     | 2,10             | 0,57 | 2,14            | 0,47 | -0,29  | 0,77  |
|                             | <i>Total Passive/Avoidant Leadership</i> | 77 | 2,18       | 0,49     | 2,10             | 0,54 | 2,25            | 0,44 | -1,17  | 0,25  |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)



### Hypothesis 4

*Girls, by self-evaluation, are more transformational leaders than boys*

Table 8 shows results for an independent samples t-test between the genders. The analysis shows that the difference for all subscales of transformational leadership are very slim, resulting in there being no significant difference between the genders for any of the transformational leadership factors. These results do not support Hypothesis 4.

### Other results

As formerly discussed, the MLQ 5X examines other aspects of leadership than solely transformational leadership. The results for the subscales of transactional and passive/avoidant leadership can also be seen in Tables 6-8 and were found by conducting independent samples t-tests in order to examine the subscales of the model between different groups.

According to Table 6, there was not a significant difference for the factor “*Contingent Reward*” in scores for former students of Hjallastefnan ( $M = 3.89$ ,  $SD = .56$ ) and others ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = .58$ ,  $t(75) = 1.19$ ,  $p = .058$ ). For the other factor of transactional leadership “*Management by Exception (Active)*” there was no significant difference in scores for former students of Hjallastefnan ( $M = 2.92$ ,  $SD = .71$ ) and others ( $M = 3.11$ ,  $SD = .67$ ,  $t(75) = 1.12$ ,  $p = .27$ ).

As for the passive/avoidant subscales “*Management by Exception (Passive)*” and “*Laissez faire*”, an independent samples t-test was conducted and the results can as well be seen in Table 6. The table shows that a significant difference was found for the factor “*Management by Exception (Passive)*” in scores for former students of Hjallastefnan ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = .61$ ) and others ( $M = 1.99$ ,  $SD = .53$ ,  $t(74) = -2.27$ ,  $p = 0.026$ ). As for the remaining subscale “*Laissez faire*”, no significant difference was found in scores for former students of Hjallastefnan ( $M = 2.18$ ,  $SD = .60$ ) and others ( $M = 1.9667$ ,  $SD = .40$ ,  $t(74) = -1.62$ ,  $p = .109$ ). If the subscales are combined and a total score found for passive/avoidant leadership, there is a significant difference between the groups for this factor (Hjallastefnan  $M = 2.24$ ,  $SD = .53$ , Others  $M = 1.98$ ,  $SD = .41$ ,  $t(75) = -2.21$ ,  $p = .03$ ).

Table 9 – Results for all subscales for girls that are former students of Hjallastefnan and other girls

| Leadership style            | Subscale title                           | N  | Mean Total | SD Total | Hjalli Girls (N=32) |      | Not Hjalli Girls (N=17) |      | T-test | Sign.  |
|-----------------------------|--|----|------------|----------|---------------------|------|-------------------------|------|--------|--------|
|                             |  |    |            |          | Mean                | SD   | Mean                    | SD   |        |        |
| Transformational leadership |  |    |            |          |                     |      |                         |      |        |        |
|                             | Idealized Attributes                     | 49 | 3,88       | 0,56     | 3,78                | 0,64 | 3,97                    | 0,48 | 1,07   | 0,29   |
|                             | Idealized Behaviors                      | 49 | 3,73       | 0,64     | 3,56                | 0,69 | 3,89                    | 0,58 | 1,67   | 0,10   |
|                             | Inspirational Motivation                 | 49 | 4,08       | 0,59     | 3,90                | 0,67 | 4,25                    | 0,51 | 1,94   | 0,06   |
|                             | Intellectual Stimulation                 | 49 | 3,74       | 0,53     | 3,56                | 0,56 | 3,91                    | 0,49 | 2,19   | 0,034* |
|                             | Individual Consideration                 | 49 | 4,05       | 0,58     | 3,91                | 0,61 | 4,18                    | 0,54 | 1,48   | 0,15   |
|                             | <i>Total Transformational Leadership</i> | 49 | 3,89       | 0,45     | 3,74                | 0,49 | 4,04                    | 0,40 | 2,15   | 0,04*  |
| Transactional Leadership    |  |    |            |          |                     |      |                         |      |        |        |
|                             | Contingent Reward                        | 49 | 4,10       | 0,58     | 3,90                | 0,56 | 4,29                    | 0,60 | 2,28   | 0,03*  |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Active)         | 49 | 2,91       | 0,74     | 2,80                | 0,71 | 3,02                    | 0,77 | 1,01   | 0,32   |
|                             | <i>Total Transactional Leadership</i>    | 49 | 3,51       | 0,50     | 3,35                | 0,45 | 3,66                    | 0,54 | 2,12   | 0,04*  |
| Passive/Avoidant Leadership |  |    |            |          |                     |      |                         |      |        |        |
|                             | Management-by-Exception (Passive)        | 49 | 2,07       | 0,58     | 2,23                | 0,62 | 1,90                    | 0,54 | -1,81  | 0,08   |
|                             | Laissaz-faire                            | 49 | 2,06       | 0,55     | 2,19                | 0,67 | 1,93                    | 0,42 | -1,44  | 0,16   |
|                             | <i>Total Passive/Avoidant Leadership</i> | 49 | 2,07       | 0,58     | 2,21                | 0,58 | 1,92                    | 0,58 | -1,80  | 0,08   |

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 9 shows the results of an independent samples t-test where the difference between girls who are former students of Hjallastefnan and other girls, was examined. For all factors of transformational leadership, the means for girls that are former students of other schools are higher than for girls from Hjallastefnan. However, these differences are not significant except for the factor “*Intellectual Stimulation*” where the score for girls that attended Hjallastefnan is  $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = .56$  and for other girls  $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = .49$  ( $t(47) = 2.19$ ,  $p = .034$ ). Table 8 also shows the results of an independent samples t-test for the two groups among transactional and passive/avoidant subscales. As seen in the table, there is a significant difference for “*Contingent Reward*” but not for other factors. For the combined subscale of transformational leadership the results show that there is a significant difference between the two groups (Hjallastefnan  $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = .49$ , Others  $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = .4$ ,  $t(47) = 2.5$ ,  $p = .04$ ). Similarly, there is a significant difference between the groups for the total scale of transactional leadership, i.e. the combined subscales (Hjallastefnan  $M = 3.35$ ,  $SD = .45$ , Others  $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .54$ ,  $t(47) = 2.12$ ,  $p = .04$ ).

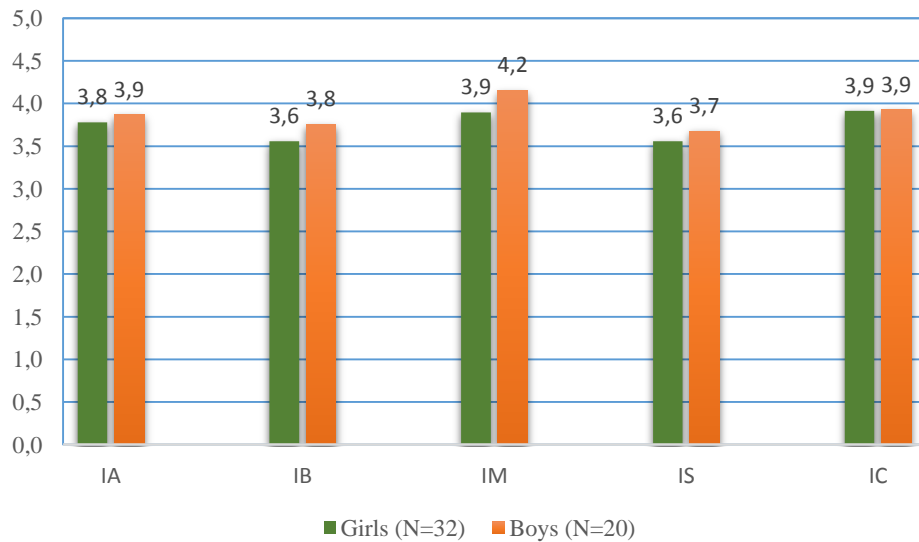


Figure 6 - Means in transformational subscales for former students of Hjallastefnan

Figure 6 shows the mean scores for all transformational factors for girls and boys that have attended Hjallastefnan. For all but one score, girls have lower means. An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine the difference in mean scores for all transformational factors which indicated that these differences are not significant.

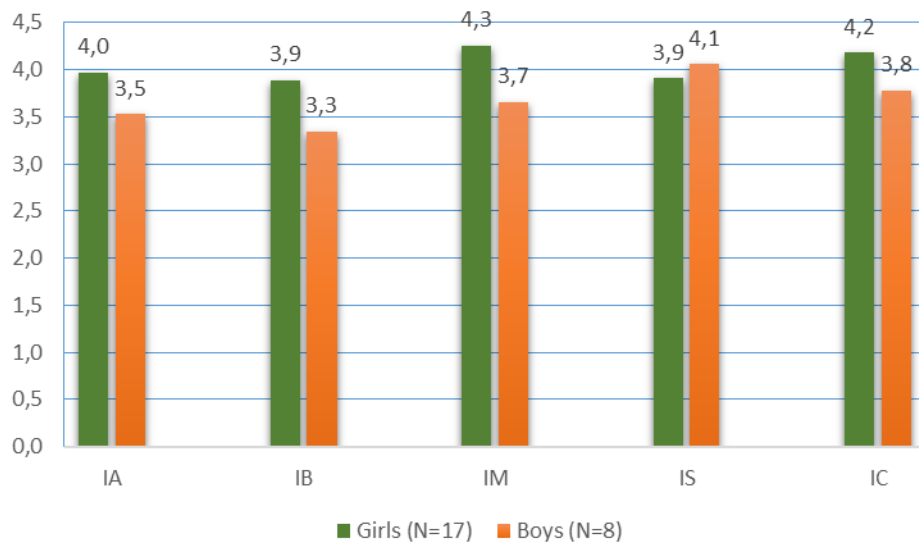


Figure 7 - Means in transformational subscales for former students of other schools

Figure 7 shows the mean scores for all transformational factors between girls and boys of other preschools. Girls had higher mean scores for all factors except “*Intellectual Stimulation*” but the difference is only significant for “*Inspirational Motivation*” (Girls  $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = .51$ , boys:  $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = .95$ ,  $t(23) = 2.07$ ,  $p = .05$ ).

The mean scores for the last two questions of the questionnaire regarding whether individuals envision themselves in a leadership role or acquiring a higher level of education in the future can be seen in Table 10. An independent samples t-test indicated that the difference between former students of Hjallastefnan and others is not significant.

Table 10 - Means in envisioned leadership roles and higher level education

|                          | N  | M   | SD  |
|--------------------------|----|-----|-----|
| Seek higher education    |    |     |     |
| Hjallastefnan            | 51 | 3,9 | 1,2 |
| Others                   | 24 | 4,0 | 1,3 |
| Pursue a managerial role |    |     |     |
| Hjallastefnan            | 50 | 3,7 | 1,0 |
| Others                   | 25 | 3,9 | 1,1 |

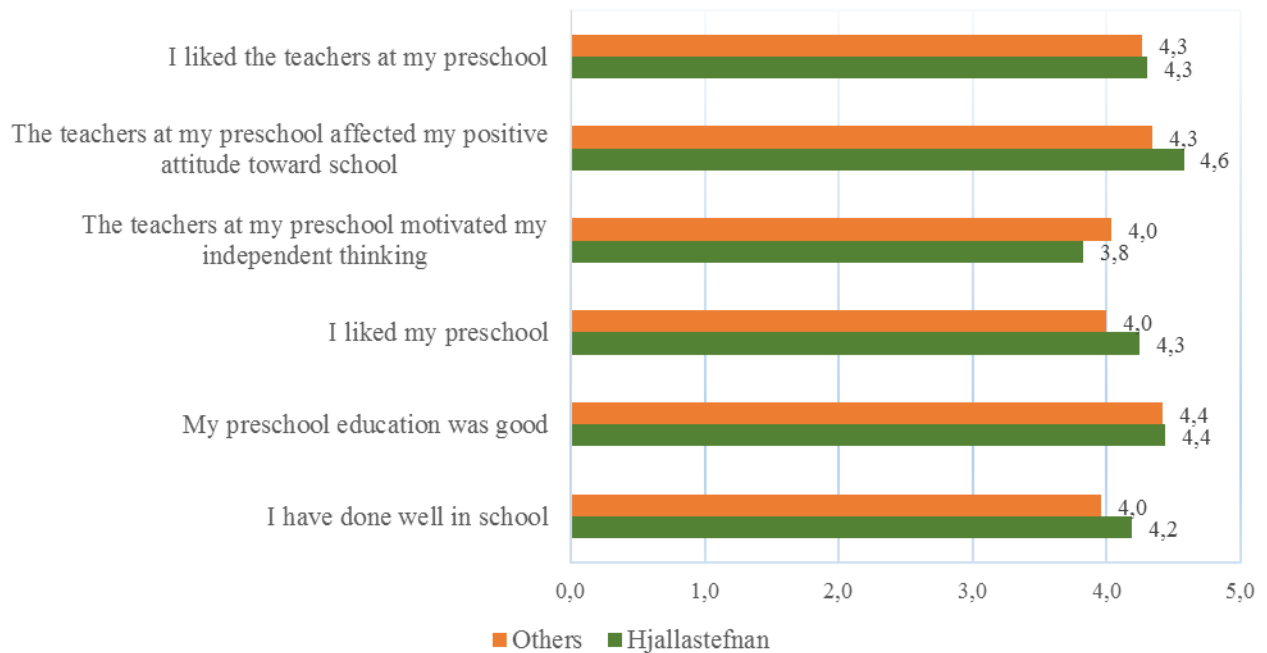


Figure 8 – Means for questions regarding preschool experience

Figure 8 shows the results for participants' attitudes toward their preschool experience. As seen, for two questions the mean for the two groups was the same and for other questions there was not much difference depending on what preschool participants attended. A t-test indicated that the differences are not significant.

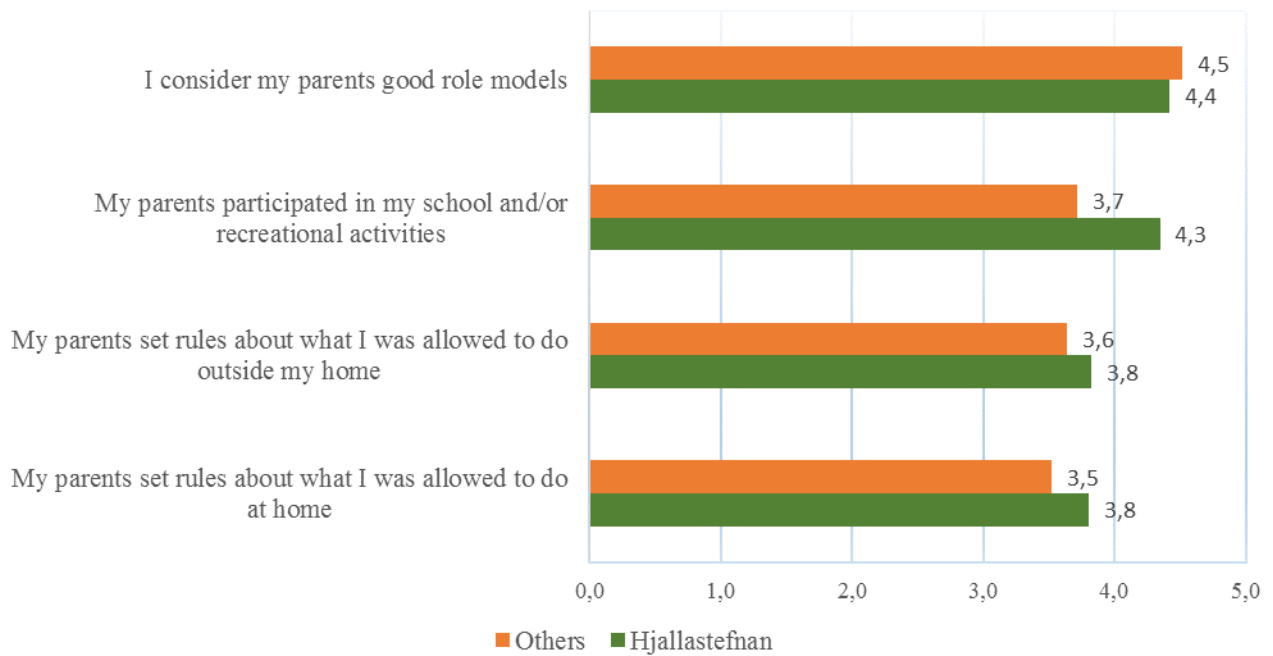


Figure 9 – Means for questions regarding parental relationships

Figure 9 shows the mean scores for questions regarding participants' relationships with their parents. There was only a significant difference between the groups for question "My parents participated in my school and/or recreational activities" (Hjallastefnan  $M = 4.3$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ , Others  $M = 3.7$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ,  $t(75) = -2.21$ ,  $p = .03$ ).

The mean scores and standard deviations for questions regarding attitudes toward preschool can be seen in Table 11. Although there are differences in mean scores, an independent samples t-test indicated that the differences in the scores were not significant.

Table 11 – Preschool attitudes

| Question  | Hjalli Students<br>(N=52) |      | Other Students<br>(N=26) |      |
|---|---------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|
|   | Mean                      | SD   | Mean                     | SD   |
| Preschool positively affected my attitude toward equal rights affairs | 3,77                      | 0,78 | 3,62                     | 1,17 |
| It is important to me to attend single sex classes                    | 3,04                      | 0,86 | 3,42                     | 1,70 |
| I have a positive attitude towards individuals of the opposite gender | 4,46                      | 0,67 | 4,62                     | 0,70 |
| I would like my child to attend the same sort of preschool as me      | 4,17                      | 0,73 | 4,00                     | 0,98 |

## 4 Discussion

### 4.1 General Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine whether former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate their own leadership styles differently than others. Clearly, Hjallastefnan runs their schools differently from other schools in Iceland and no research has been conducted to study how former students of Hjallastefnan fare with regard to leadership. In that light it is interesting to examine whether there is a relationship between the preschool education one receives and the way they perceive their own leadership styles later in life. However, here it is important to clarify and stress that this research merely gives insight into the differences in the self-evaluation of leadership styles for individuals but it does not give evidence to the actual leadership styles of participants. In addition, The Full Range of Leadership Model and the MLQ 5X do not classify or label individuals as transformational or transactional leaders, rather it is used to identify groups as more or less transformational/transactional (Avolio and Bass, 2004). While interpreting the results, it is important to remember that the reliability of scale was rather low for this sample for some of the subscales. Additionally, the comparison group was half the size of the group of former students of Hjallastefnan which could affect the results. These provisions are crucial to bear in mind in reviewing the results and, therefore, caution is needed and the results must be carefully interpreted.

#### **Transformational factors of leadership**

As covered earlier, The Full Range of Leadership Model and the MLQ 5X were used in an attempt to analyze the leadership styles individuals use in their environments. When examining the differences between former students of Hjallastefnan and others, among the transformational factors of the model, it revealed that the difference was not significant but for one factor or “*Intellectual Stimulation*”. The analysis showed that students that had not attended Hjallastefnan evaluated themselves higher for this factor. The results also revealed that students from Hjallastefnan are, according to their own evaluation, more heterogeneous when it comes to transformational leadership. This is suggested by the fact that the distribution of means is higher in most cases for this group. This therefore, suggests that



students from other schools are more similar concerning transformational leadership than individuals that attended Hjallastefnan.

The third hypothesis stated that boys that attended Hjallastefnan evaluated themselves as more transformational than other boys. However, the analysis revealed that there was not a significant difference between the groups. Yet, this can be partly explained by the fact that the group of boys from other schools was very small. The group was only comprised of eight boys. At times boys that attended Hjallastefnan got higher mean scores than other boys, but the difference must have had to be bigger or distribution had to be lower in order for the difference to be significant due to the small size of the sample.

Through this analysis and for the whole sample, there was not a significant difference between the genders in transformational leadership, opposite to what former research has suggested (Bass et al., 1996; Burke and Collins, 2001; Eypórsdóttir, 2010). If the mean scores are examined it can be seen that the difference between genders is very small and it can be assumed that the difference was too small for the results to be significant.

### **The girls**

The results suggested that there is not a significant difference in transformational factors for boys and girls that attended Hjallastefnan, but it is interesting to take a look at the mean scores for boys and girls for the subscales within transformational leadership. In all cases, girls have lower mean scores than the boys, though the difference is small at times. It is evident that girls from Hjallastefnan do evaluate themselves more moderately than other groups, because when they are compared to other girls the same results are revealed. Girls from Hjallastefnan score lower means than girls from other schools for all transformational and transactional subscales. In fact, while comparing the two groups of girls, the difference is significant for “*Intellectual Stimulation*”. The results indicate that girls from other schools evaluate themselves as more transformational and more transactional whereas they have higher means and the distribution is lower. Also when the transformational subscales are combined the results become significant where girls from other schools than Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves higher. Additionally, when examining transactional factors between girls from the two groups similar results appear. A significant difference

was found for “*Contingent Reward*” between girls that attended Hjallastefnan and other girls. For the other factor of the transactional factors “*Management by Exception (Active)*”, although not significant, girls that attended Hjallastefnan have lower mean scores. Similarly, when the transactional subscales are combined, the results are significant, indicating that girls that attended other schools than Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves as more transactional leaders. Furthermore, when the passive/avoidant subscales are examined, girls from Hjallastefnan have higher means than other girls, although the difference is not significant.

This is particularly interesting given that this only applies for the girls that attended Hjallastefnan. When other girls are compared to boys that did not go to Hjallastefnan, the mean scores for the girls is always higher excluding one factor (*Intellectual Stimulation*). There was a significant difference for the factor “*Inspirational Motivation*”. So, for the group that did not attend Hjallastefnan, girls are in fact more transformational than the boys.

### **Transactional and passive/avoidant factors**

When examining the difference between former students of Hjallastefnan and others for transactional factors, no significant differences were found. For both the subscales of transactional leadership, the mean scores for others were higher than for former students of Hjallastefnan. But, when the transactional factors were combined a significant difference was revealed. Then the results indicate that students that attended other schools evaluate themselves higher for transactional leadership. However, when nonleadership factors were analyzed there was a significant difference for “*Management by Exception (Passive)*”. When the passive/avoidant subscales were combined a significant difference was found between former students of Hjallastefnan and others, but others evaluate themselves lower for these types of leadership. So, former students of other schools than Hjallastefnan perceive themselves as being more transactional and former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves as more passive/avoidant leaders.

**Other results**

When individuals were asked about their preschool experience, it is good to see that generally individuals have nice experiences from their preschools. The means for each preschool question was relatively high and similar for the two groups. The most difference in mean scores was for the two questions “*The teachers at my preschool affected my positive attitude toward school*” and “*I liked my preschool*” where former students of Hjallastefnan had higher means than others. Similarly, the questions regarding participants’ relationships with their parents were generally answered positively. The most difference in means is for the question “*My parents participated in my school and/or recreational activities*” where former students of Hjallastefnan had a higher mean, but this difference was not significant.

For the extra questions regarding preschool attitudes, it is interesting to see that when asked how much they agree with the statement “*It is important to me to attend single-sex classes*” that the mean for former students of Hjallastefnan is lower than for others. But the explanation is likely that for the group of others this question is irrelevant. In addition, it is good to see that both groups generally have positive attitudes toward individuals of the opposite gender.

**The lack of significant results**

It is safe to say that for many of these analyses no significant differences were found. There could be a number of explanations for the lack of significance, but it is likely that the sample was not big enough to reveal differences between the groups. In any case, it would be valuable to have had a bigger comparison group. Where there were significant results, they all suggested that former students of other schools than Hjallastefnan evaluated themselves as more transformational and transactional. Additionally significant differences were found for passive/avoidant factors where former students of Hjallastefnan evaluated themselves higher. It can be suggested that the attainment of the comparison group could have affected these results. Or, this could be due to the method of attaining the comparison group. The comparison group was attained through a snowball sample and many of those who began answering the questionnaire did not finish. It can be suggested that those that finished answering the questionnaire, are individuals who are interested in the topic and

perhaps perceive themselves as good leaders. This could suggest a certain bias within the comparison group.

Again, what should be kept in mind here is that these are solely self-evaluations, but not necessarily proof of participants' actual leadership style. But, there is another possible reason which would however be very inauspicious. Although early education is extremely important and can affect social and motivational development, it may not be a predictor of how individuals perceive their own leadership styles. Even though research indicates that education affects leadership styles and ability, perhaps later education is a bigger influence factor than early education concerning the self-evaluation of leadership approaches.

As discussed in the methodology chapter, there were some independent variables in the questionnaire which had the purpose of making it possible to control for the effect of those factors, using a regression model. However, due to the size of the sample it was found that a regression analysis would not explain the variance of responses for these participants. Therefore, the decision was made to not use a regression model to understand the differences between the groups.

Despite, the lack of significant results, these results can still not be avoided. Only a few significant results are still results as such. It is clear that this sample, with the application of these models that former students of Hjallastefnan are not more transformational than others, but the results are not necessarily an indication of the opposite either.

## 4.2 Strengths and Limitations

Unfortunately all research has some limitations. The same applies to this research. But, first the strength of the research is the high response rate of former students of Hjallastefnan. A little more than 50% of all students born in 1994 and 1995 and attended Hjallastefnan, participated in this research. That results in a great response rate for that group. At the prime of this research, some concern existed in regard to attaining responses from former students of Hjallastefnan, but it was presumed that the attainment of the comparison group

would easily be successful. Then great consideration was put into the attainment of former students of Hjallastefnan but less for the comparison group, which could explain the difference in sample sizes.

While studying leadership styles and considering the measurement used, it can be accounted as a limitation that this is not an examination of actual leadership styles. This research only examines how individuals perceive their own leadership styles. Many could argue that merely using a self-rating form was a very subjective method of research. In addition, the size and the attaining of the comparison group did not go easily and as expected. The comparison group was only half the size of the group of students from Hjallastefnan, which could deviate results. Retrospectively, a promising method would have been to phone individuals in order to attain the comparison group similar to as was done with former students of Hjallastefnan. Again, it could have been advantageous to offer some sort of incentive for individuals answering the questionnaire. It is possible that the response ratio would have been higher. Last it is important to account for an error in the data, as three individuals that had not attended Hjallastefnan were identified as students from Hjallastefnan and were counted as such in the analysis.

### 4.3 Future Research

It should be considered alluring to continue to study how former students of Hjallastefnan fare, whether or not it is in regard to leadership or from other aspects. In regard to leadership, this research could be the foundation for another similar study, where more strength would be put in acquiring bigger samples. Also, with a bigger time frame it would definitely give the research more strength to use both a self-evaluation form and a rater form. Using both forms of the MLQ 5X, the leadership styles of participants would be better exposed. Surely, it would give a research as this more depth to examine individuals' Emotional Intelligence concurrently and examine relationships with transformational/transactional leadership between groups. Unequivocally, there is a mass of different approaches to leadership and methods to measure it, perhaps it could be beneficial to apply another leadership model, perhaps the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), while utilizing the rational from this research as foundation. It is especially

informative to continue to examine former students of Hjallastefnan from a gender perspective.

## Epilogue

The purpose of this research was to shed light on whether former students of Hjallastefnan perceive their own leadership styles differently from former students of other preschools. The results indicated that former students of Hjallastefnan evaluate themselves as less transactional leaders and more avoidant/passive leaders than students from other schools. This applies to the combined subscales of transactional and passive/avoidant leadership. There was not a significant difference for the total scale of transformational leadership. But few significant results were found for the subscales of the Full Range of Leadership Model. The lack of significant results could in part be attributed to the small size of the groups being evaluated. It was interesting to conduct this research in light of the unique approach Hjallastefnan has to early education and specifically towards a gender perspective as well. It is important for teachers and societies to understand the effect different approaches to early education programs have on individuals. Therefore, it is my hope that former students of Hjallastefnan will continue to be examined e.g. from a leadership perspective.

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# Appendices



## Appendix I – The Questionnaire

The questionnaire does not include the MLQ 5X due to the translation agreement stating "Research Edition Translation instrument may not appear in full in any form of public media (including dissertations or theses)". Other questions than the MLQ 5X can be seen below.

Kæri þátttakandi,

Þessi rannsókn er hluti af lokaverkefni mínu til Meistaragráðu í Stjórnun og eflingu mannauðs í Háskólanum í Reykjavík. Tilgangur rannsóknarinnar er að greina leiðtogahætti einstaklinga.

Með því að svara spurningalistanum er unnt að greina leiðtogahætti þína eins og þú metur þá.

Til að rannsóknin gefi sem raunsannasta mynd er mikilvægt að þú takir þátt. Spurningalistinn samanstendur af 66 spurningum eða staðhæfingum og tekur u.þ.b. 10 mínútur að svara öllum listanum.

Rannsóknin er nafnlaus og ég heiti fullum trúnaði við úrvinnslu gagnanna. Ef einhverjar spurningar vakna þá er þér velkomið að senda mér tölvupóst á [helgamaria01@ru.is](mailto:helgamaria01@ru.is).

Með fyrirfram þökk fyrir þátttökuna,  
Helga María Finnbjörnsdóttir  
Meistararnemi í Stjórnun og eflingu mannauðs við Háskólann í Reykjavík

1. Ert þú kona eða karl?

1. Kona
2. Karl

2. Hvaða ár fæddist þú?

3. Hefur þú stundað nám hjá Hjallastefnunni (leikskóla - og/eða grunnskólanám)?

1. Nei
2. Já. Í hve mörg ár?

Research Edition Translation TA-392 Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) – Self Form only– All 45 items – performed by Helga María Finnbjörnsdóttir on this date March 7th, 2014. Translated into Icelandic and reproduced by special permission of the Publisher Mind Garden, Inc, [www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com) from Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire by Bernard M. Bass & Bruce J. Avolio. Copyright © 1995 by Bernard M. Bass & Bruce J. Avolio. All rights reserved in all media. Further reproduction is prohibited without the Publisher's written consent. Published by Mind Garden, Inc. [www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

4. Hvar býrð þú?

1. Á höfuðborgarsvæðinu
2. Á landsbyggðinni
3. Erlendis

5. Ert þú nú í námi?

1. Nei
2. Já, iðnnámi
3. Já, framhaldsskólanámi
4. Já, háskólanámi
5. Já, öðru námi

6.-8. Vinsamlega svaraðu eftir því að hve miklu leyti sérhver fullyrðing á við um þig í uppeldi þínu

|   | Alls ekki                | Sjaldan                  | Stundum                  | Nokkuð oft               | Nánast alltaf eða alltaf |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Foreldrar mínir settu ákveðnar reglur um hvað ég mátti gera heima         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Foreldrar mínir settu ákveðnar reglur um hvað ég mátti gera utan heimilis | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Foreldrar mínir tóku virkan þátt í skóla- og/eða tómstundastarfi mínu     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9.-10. Hversu sammála eða ósammála ertu eftirfarandi fullyrðingum?

|   | Mjög ósammála            | Ósammála                 | Hvorki sammála né ósammála | Sammála                  | Mjög sammála             |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ég tel foreldra mína vera góðar fyrirmyndir | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ég hef staðið mig vel í námi                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11.-19. Hversu sammála eða ósammála ertu eftirfarandi fullyrðingum? Ef þú varst í Hjallastefnuleikskóla en einnig öðrum leikskólum, vinsamlega miðaðu þá við reynslu þína úr Hjallastefnuleikskólanum.

|   | Mjög ósammála            | Ósammála                 | Hvorki sammála né ósammála | Sammála                  | Mjög sammála             | Ég var ekki á leikskóla / Á ekki við |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mér líkaði vel við kennarana í leikskólanum mínum | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>             |

|  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Kennurunum á leikskólanum mínum tókst að móta jákvætt viðhorf mitt til skólans | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Kennararnir á leikskólanum mínum örvuðu sjálfstæða hugsun mína                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mér líkaði við leikskólann minn  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Leikskólanámið mitt var gott   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Leikskólinn hafði jákvæð áhrif á viðhorf mín til jafnréttismála                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mér finnst mikilvægt að hafa verið í kynjaskiptum hópi                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ég hef jákvæða mynd af einstaklingum af hinu kyninu                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ég myndi vilja að barnið mitt fari í samskonar leikskóla og ég var í           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Eftirfarandi spurningar eru samdar með það í huga að greina leiðtogahætti þína eins og þú metur þá nú. Vinsamlega svaraðu eftir því að hve miklu leyti sérhver fullyrðing á við um þig í dag. Ef einhver fullyrðing á ekki við, þú ert óviss eða þú veist ekki svarið, skilaðu þá svarinu auðu. Orðið „aðrir“ getur átt við um féлага þína, viðskiptavini, undirmenn, yfirmenn og/eða alla þessa aðila og getur átt við í skólanum þínum, íþróttafélagi þínu, vinnunni þinni, félagasamtökum þínum og/eða vinahópnum. Ef orðið „yfirmenn“ kemur fyrir, þá getur það t.d. átt við yfirmenn, þjálfara, kennara og/eða leiðbeinendur.

65.-66. Hversu sammála eða ósammála ertu eftirfarandi fullyrðingum?

|  | Mjög ósammála            | Ósammála                 | Hvorki sammála né ósammála | Sammála                  | Mjög sammála             |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ég sé sjálfa mig í langskólanámi í framtíðinni | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ég sé sjálfa mig í leiðtogastöðu í framtíðinni | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

