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Theoretical Classification and Evolution of Women's Leadership: A Comparative Analysis of Traditional and Non-Traditional Frameworks

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ABSTRACT

This research paper explores the conceptual development and classification of women's leadership within the broader trajectory of leadership theory. It synthesizes the historical transition from traditional trait-based and situational theories to modern "alternative" paradigms, including transformational, servant, and shared leadership. A significant portion of the study is dedicated to analyzing the unique historical-cultural model of leadership in Mongolian statehood, which defines a hierarchical progression of female influence: Motherhood, Wise Wife, and Wise Queen leadership. By analyzing data from 1,161 empirical studies conducted over 25 years, this paper argues that the current "Information Age" necessitates a shift toward feminine and feminist leadership styles, characterized by democratic participation, emotional intelligence, and horizontal organizational structures.

KEY WORDS: Leadership Theory, Women's Leadership, Gender Roles, Traditional Leadership, Non-traditional Leadership, Mongolian Statehood, Organizational Behavior.

1. Introduction

In the contemporary era, the quest for effective leadership has become a global imperative. As societies grapple with rapid technological advancements and shifting social norms, the demand for leadership that produces tangible and ethical results has never been higher. The 21st century, often defined by the information technology revolution, has created a particularly fertile ground for the maturation of women's leadership.

The core premise of this research is that women's leadership is not merely a modern social trend but a fundamental component of social maturity and political progress. To understand its current impact, one must view it through the intersection of psychology, sociology, and management science. This paper seeks to classify women's leadership by contrasting traditional "Command and Control"

models with emerging "Interactive and Relational" models, while providing a cultural bridge through the lens of Mongolian nomadic leadership traditions.

2. Literature Review: The Evolution of Leadership Studies

2.1 The Academic Timeline

The scientific study of leadership emerged in the early 1930s, but it was the post-1940 era that saw a diversification of theories across disciplines such as anthropology, education, and political science. Between 1985 and 2009, leadership research experienced an unprecedented surge. Empirical evidence shows that over 1,161 studies were published in 11 top-tier journals, including the *Academy of Management Journal* and *The Leadership Quarterly*.

2.2 The Paradigm Shift

Initially, leadership was viewed through the "Great Man Theory," suggesting that leadership qualities were inherited and genetic—an idea that "leaders are born, not made." However, research evolved through:

1. **Trait Theories:** Focusing on individual personality characteristics.
2. **Behavioral Theories:** Concentrating on what leaders do rather than who they are.
3. **Situational Theories:** Emphasizing that the "best" style depends on the specific context and environment.

Today, we are witnessing a transition toward Alternative Theories, which include charismatic, transformational, and servant leadership, where women's leadership occupies a central role due to its emphasis on empathy and collaboration.

3. Traditional Women’s Leadership: The Mongolian Context

While Western academia views women's leadership as a relatively modern phenomenon, Eastern history—specifically Mongolian statehood—offers a deep, ancient tradition of female governance and influence.

3.1 The "Chimeg" (Ornamentation) Concept

In Mongolian nomadic philosophy, leadership is tied to the concept of "Chimeg" or virtues. This is categorized into:

- **Lineage Ornamentation:** The origin and pedigree of the leader.
- **Action Ornamentation:** The tangible deeds and influence of the leader.
- **Virtue Ornamentation:** The inherent wisdom and ethical standing.

3.2 The Wisdom Hierarchy

The traditional Mongolian model is structured into three levels of increasing complexity:

1. **Motherhood Leadership:** Focused on the family unit, establishing the ethical foundation for future generations.
2. **Wise Wife (Enlightened) Leadership:** Focused on social harmony and advisory roles.
3. **Wise Queen Leadership:** Focused on the state and global governance. Historically, Mongolian girls were educated in "Queenly Wisdom" (Gunj-Uhaan), involving the "15 Virtues of a Queen," to protect the sovereignty of the nation.

4. Non-Traditional (Modern) Women’s Leadership

Modern leadership research has historically been male-centric. Non-traditional women’s leadership emerges as a critique of these hierarchical, competition-based models. It is often referred to as "Beta Leadership" or "Shared Leadership."

4.1 Classification of Styles

Based on the research of Joyce Fletcher and Ewha Womans University, we can classify modern women's leadership into three distinct paradigms:

Category	Philosophical Basis	Core Characteristics
Female Leadership	Biological	Studies the behavior of women in executive roles; focuses on "breaking the glass ceiling."
Feminine Leadership	Values-Based	Prioritizes empathy, horizontal communication, and care-based management (Servant style).
Feminist Leadership	Social/Political	Challenges traditional power structures to achieve gender equality and systemic reform.

4.2 Key Attributes of Non-Traditional Models

- **Collaboration over Competition:** Valuing the collective output over individual achievement.
- **Horizontal Structures:** Reducing the distance between the leader and the team.
- **Intuitive Problem Solving:** Integrating emotional intelligence with rational data.

5. Discussion: Leadership in the Information Age

The transition from an industrial economy to an information economy has changed the requirements for success. High-control, rigid leadership styles are becoming obsolete. The "Alternative" models described in this paper—particularly those that leverage "feminine" traits of flexibility and support—are better suited for modern knowledge-based organizations.

The Mongolian traditional model (Mother-Wife-Queen) aligns surprisingly well with modern "Transformational Leadership" because both prioritize the long-term development of followers and the preservation of the "life-force" of the organization or state.

6. Conclusion

Women’s leadership is an evolving field that bridges ancient wisdom with modern organizational needs. Whether through the lens of traditional Mongolian statehood or modern feminist theory, it is clear that the future of global leadership lies in a participatory, democratic, and human-centered approach. As this research shows, understanding the classification of these styles—Female, Feminine, and Feminist—is essential for any organization seeking to thrive in the complex environment of the 21st century.

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