

HSRC
Human Sciences
Research Council

TODAY

The Grass/Glass Ceiling:

African women and transformative leadership practices

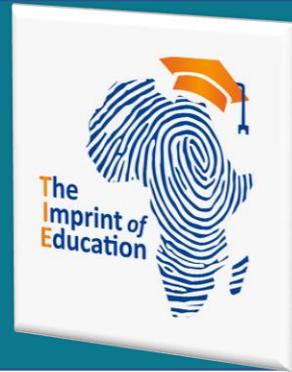
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Human Sciences Research Council

Discussion



1. Does it matter that Alumni straddle between transformational and transformative leadership practices?
2. What programmatic recommendation/s can be made to scholarship programmes and higher education institutions?
 - a. How can they nurture young women to become transformative leaders?
3. What are we missing?

CHAPTER OUTLINE AND ARGUMENT



1. Explores how female Alumni of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program participate and experience leadership
2. How participation and gender intersect through educational opportunities and the role of these in young women realising their aspirations
3. What factors, such as family expectations and social norms, education and economic need influence female Alumni's decision-making around exercising leadership?

Developing and enhancing women in leadership roles requires a systemic plan, strategy, and process that is driven by women.

METHODOLOGY



1. Empirical study
2. Interviews with Alumni of the Scholars Program
 - a. Alumni Tracer Study (wave 1)
 - b. Research-as-Intervention Qualitative Study (year 1)
3. Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and the Diaspora

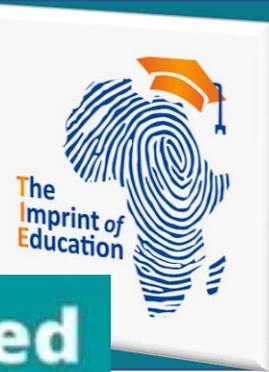
Data source	No. of female Alumni
Secondary Alumni (ATS)	938
Tertiary Alumni (ATS)	210
Individual in-depth interviews (RAIQS)	66

LITERATURE AND USE OF THEORY



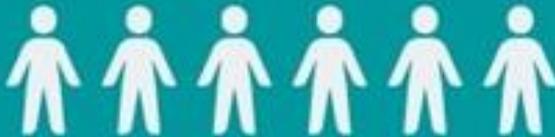
1. Underpinned by the intersectionality theory
2. Representation: participation and visibility of women in leadership is low (Statistics South Africa, 2005)
3. Resistance to women's participation tends to be underpinned by cultural and social norms (Mazibuko, 2006)
4. Leadership capacities (Faris & Outcult, 2001)
5. Navigational capacities (Swartz, 2021)
6. Inimba (Magoqwana, 2018)
7. Positionality (Brown et al, 2019; Magoqwana, 2019)

LITERATURE AND USE OF THEORY



How women in academia are sidelined

Of a gender headcount of university staff in SA, there are 86 678 women and 75788 males but...



South Africa has only six women in the vice-chancellor's position

5561

There are 5561 women with PHD's in comparison to 8022 with men

1500

There are about 1500 National Research Foundation-rated (NRF) female researchers VS more than 2600 male researchers

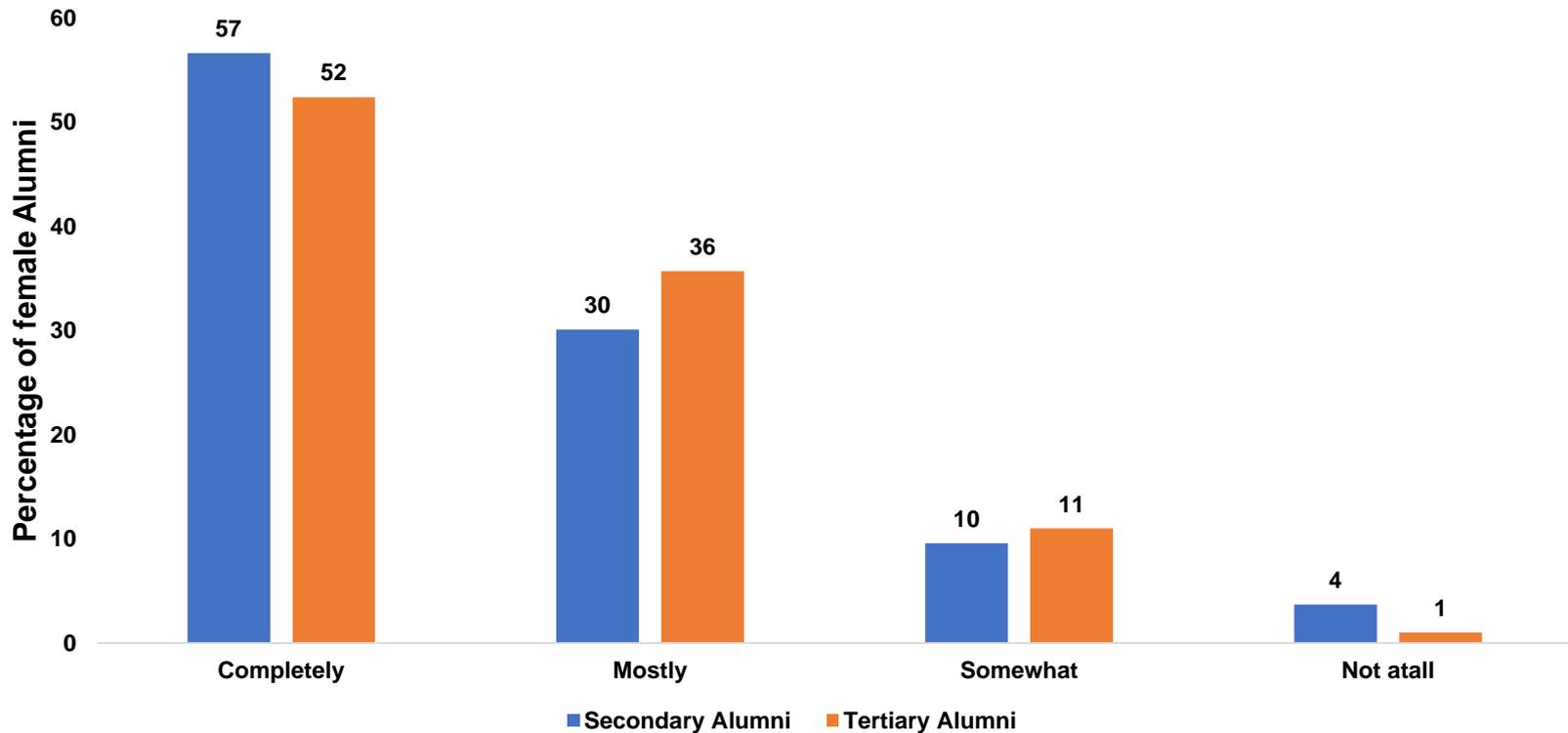
30%

Only 30% of professors are women

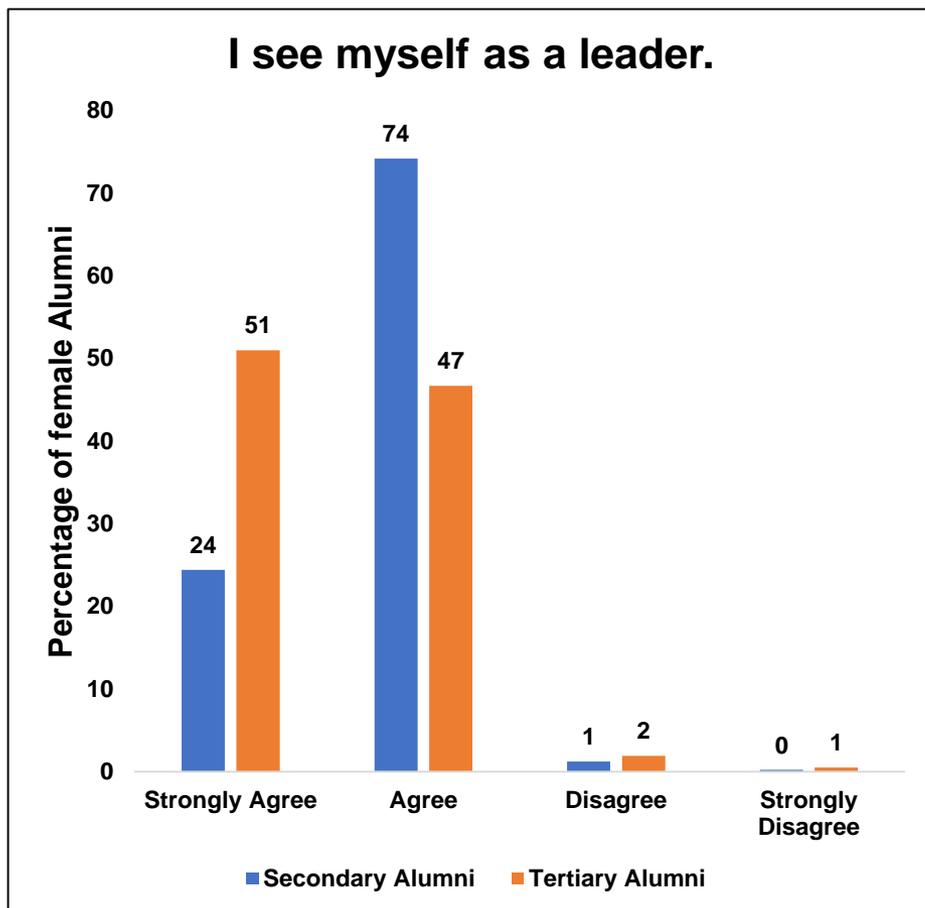
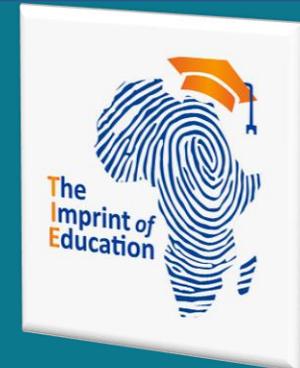
MAIN FINDINGS



The Mastercard Foundation definition represents my understanding of transformative leadership.



MAIN FINDINGS

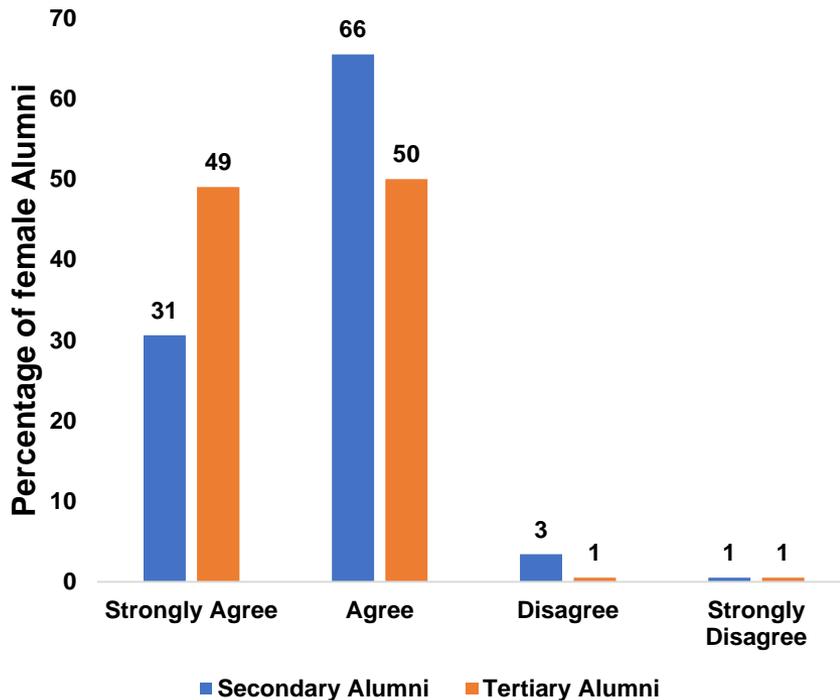


"...Before I understood the [Mastercard Foundation's definition of] transformative leadership ..., I thought leadership was political thing. Like I need to be a member of parliament to be a leader. I need to have a particular position to be a leader. But for now, I believe leadership happens even in the smallest areas. I do not need to be in a particular position to lead... " (Uganda, female, 25)

MAIN FINDINGS



I feel that it is important to do the right thing even if there are negative consequences.



"When I completed ... university, of course I went back to the village. But I did not sit down there. I tried volunteering with Cross-border Traders for women. I especially wanted to fight for the rights of women. They were being sexually abused by border officials. When I was at that border, I faced the challenge of course, the border officials would not support me, because I was somehow against them."
(Uganda, female, 25)

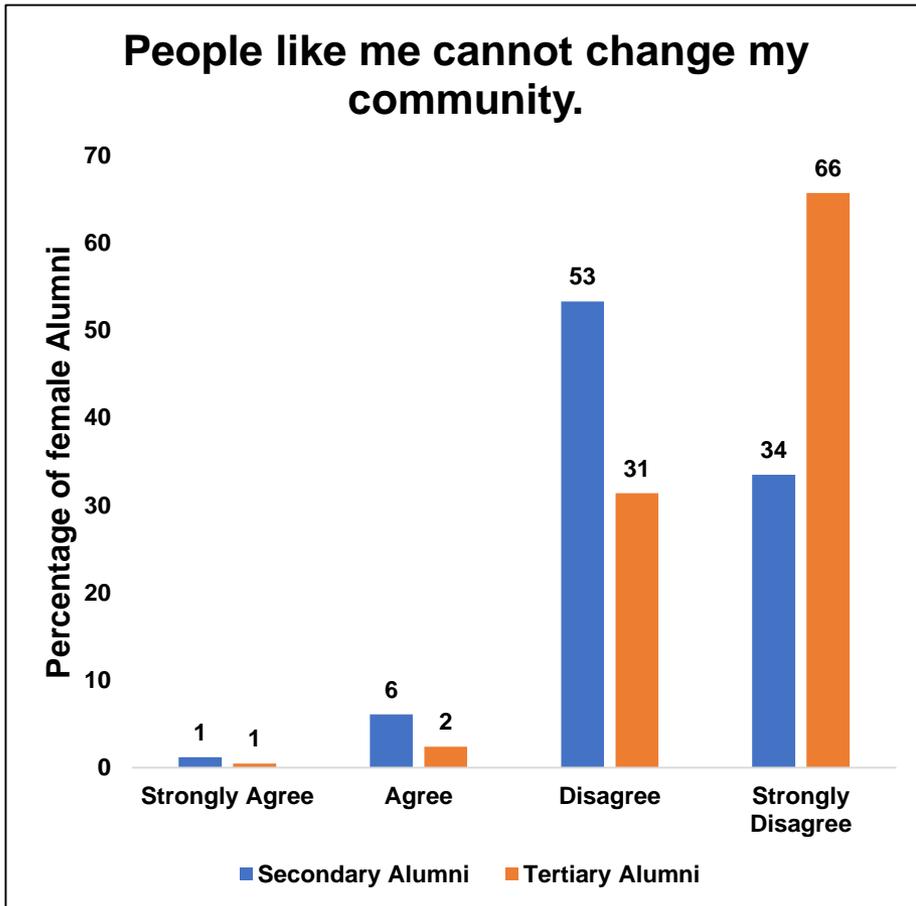
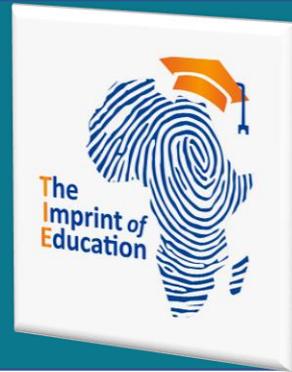
MAIN FINDINGS



Somali proverb, “Be a mountain or lean on one.”
Which statement is true for you at the moment?

Statement	% Secondary Alumni	% Tertiary Alumni
I am definitely a mountain that others lean on	17	16
I am mostly a mountain that others can lean on	16	17
I am becoming a mountain that others can lean on	50	56
Right now, I am mostly someone who leans on others	17	12

MAIN FINDINGS



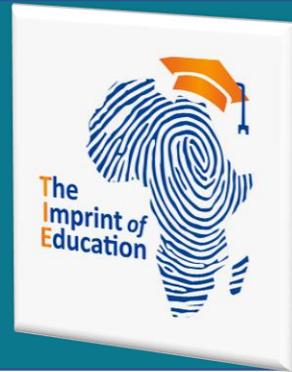
“And in my community too, regarding persons with disabilities, I started a project being the leader. I realised a problem in our community that most patients with disabilities, like they weren’t working and were begging for arms and all. So, I sat down with them we discussed the best way to help reduce that problem. We solicited their views and their help and they also helped us with community building, and started working from there.”
(Ghana, female, 27)

DISCUSSION



1. Alumni self-identify as leaders.
2. Find it easier to exercise leadership at the family, small community, and immediate social circle level.
3. Struggle to identify how they can influence change at higher institutional levels
4. Get a sense of powerlessness and disconnect
5. Straddle between transformational and transformative leadership practices.

IMPORTANCE



1. So they can see transformative leadership in action
 - a. To show how young African women are tapping into their capacities to realise their leadership aspirations
 - b. To show how young African women are practising and experiencing leadership
2. Ignite conversations on transformative leadership within institutions – integration leadership training
3. Institutional revitalisation by adopting transformative leadership

3 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



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