

2-2020

Gender Synergy: Inspiring Men to Champion Women Leaders to Increase Gender-Balanced Leadership

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

GENDER SYNERGY:
INSPIRING MEN TO CHAMPION WOMEN LEADERS
TO INCREASE GENDER-BALANCED LEADERSHIP

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF PORTLAND SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

JAKE DEAN-HILL

PORTLAND, OREGON

FEBRUARY 2020

Portland Seminary
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

DMin Dissertation

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

Jake Dean-Hill

has been approved by
the Dissertation Committee on February 17, 2020
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership and Global Perspectives

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DEDICATION

This dissertation and the countless hours that have gone into it is lovingly dedicated to my amazing wife, Jennifer, and my inspiring daughter, McKenna, the most important women in my life. I will fight for you to have equality in this world till my dying breath.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am first of all eternally grateful to the most incredible person and leader I have ever known, my beautiful wife Dr. Jennifer Dean-Hill. She has inspired great things in me, and this could have never been possible without her love, support, and constant encouragement. You are the one who introduced me to and are truly living gender synergy with me. I am blessed to do life with you and can't wait to launch our new venture...DrsJakeandJenn.com!

My amazing kids, McKenna and Dawson, have been some of my biggest fans. They are always quick to encourage and support me and it was fun being college students together. We had much empathy for each other as we would grind out our assignments. So proud of you both and can't wait to see where God takes each of you.

My parents, Dennis and Judy Hill, have always been there for me no matter where my journey has taken me. They have loved my wife and kids well and have modeled servant leadership their whole lives. Thank you for modeling Christ's love in front of me.

My amazing advisor, Dr. Mary Pandiani, walked with me every step of the way through this process and was always kind and encouraging. Her gentle, calming spirit helped balance my times of anxiety and stress, and she always had just the right quote or prayer to help get me through.

My fellow lambs under the care of our advisor/shepherdess Mary, Jean Ollis and Kyle Chalko, were a pleasure to travel this journey with. Their insights and encouragement were always timely, and I could often count on some good comic relief from them. I also couldn't imagine going through this process with a greater cohort; LGP8 has given me lifelong friends.

And finally, I can't imagine where I would be in this life without my Lord and Savior. The amazing example Jesus set in loving women well, even when it was counter-cultural, will always be inspiring to me. Thank you, Lord, for creating men and women with amazing uniqueness and designing them to have dominion together as equals.

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GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

gender-balanced leadership – In this and the following terms, the word “gender” is referring to the biological sex of male and female, even though the term gender can refer to what different cultures refer to as masculine and feminine roles. The word “balanced” refers to the equal representation of men and women, in the sense of 50% male and 50% female.

gender equality – Gender “equality” is not in reference to men and women being the same, but it is in reference to them having equal value and therefore accorded equal treatment.¹

gender intelligence – Gender “intelligence” is an understanding of and appreciation for the natural differences between men and women that goes beyond the biological and cultural to include variations in brain structure and chemistry that influence thoughts and actions.²

gender leadership gap - The word “gap” refers to the current discrepancy between the number of men in top leadership positions compared to women. The term “leadership” refers to actual “positional leadership”, meaning leaders who are in traditional roles or positions of power based on their title (i.e.: CEO, CFO, COO), as opposed to people who possess leadership qualities and exercise that leadership, or act as a leader wherever they are.³

gender parity - The word “parity” in reference to gender is a statistical measure that supplies a numerical value to the ratio of female-to-male or girl-to-boy.⁴ Gender parity is often used to measure gender balance, which can assist in achieving gender equality, but it is not the goal in and of itself.

gender synergy - The word “synergy” is the benefit that comes from two or more people working together to accomplish something either one couldn't have achieved on

¹ Cambridge Dictionary, s.v. “Gender Equality,” accessed July 18, 2019, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/gender-equality>.

² Barbara Annis and Keith Merron, *Gender Intelligence: Breakthrough Strategies for Increasing Diversity and Improving Your Bottom Line* (New York: Harper Business, 2014), 7, Kindle.

³ “Positional Leadership v Personal Leadership,” Leadership Management Australia, accessed April 20, 2018, <https://leadershipmanagement.com.au/positional-leadership-v-personal-leadership/#>.

⁴ Aisa Manlosa and Denise M. Matias, “From Gender Parity to Gender Equality: Changing Women’s Lived Realities,” German Development Institute, March 5, 2018, <https://www.die-gdi.de/en/the-current-column/article/from-gender-parity-to-gender-equality-changing-womens-lived-realities/>.

their own.⁵ Gender synergy is that unique benefit that comes when men and women appreciate each other's uniqueness and bring it together for a common goal.

⁵ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, s.v. "Synergy," accessed July 18, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/synergy>.

ABSTRACT

The lack of gender-balanced leadership has been a problem in the United States and around the world for centuries. Although women make up more than fifty percent of the U.S. population, and graduate with over sixty percent of all undergraduate and graduate degrees, they continue to be severely underrepresented in upper-level leadership in almost every company, organization, and church across America. Much has been done over the years to move toward equality for women in order to bring them to the powerful place of leadership men have held from the beginning of our country's founding. From Women's Suffrage to Affirmative Action, efforts have been made to close the long-standing gender leadership gap. Current efforts to create gender parity in the area of leadership have made extremely small gains in closing this gap. This dissertation addresses this national problem by highlighting some of the common barriers to gender-balanced leadership and proposing potential solutions to address these barriers. The primary solution presented is challenging influential men in positions of power to increase their overall value of and appreciation for what women leaders bring to the table, and inspiring them to sponsor women toward specific leadership roles. To this end, the accompanying artifact is a website called www.GenderSynergy.us that is designed to educate and inspire men to become champions for women leaders in order to increase gender-balanced leadership in their sphere of influence and permanently close the gender leadership gap across all sectors.

SECTION 1: THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Sally has worked as a donor account manager for a large non-profit in Seattle, Washington for ten years, but feels like she is not reaching her full potential and has a strong desire to use her leadership gifts alongside other strong men and women leaders. For years, she noticed discrepancies between herself and her male colleagues. Her male colleagues were paid more, had lower work expectations, and were provided the mentoring or training needed to professionally advance, all of which she was denied. She watched as her male colleagues were repeatedly promoted to upper management while she continued to be ignored for promotions. Leadership retreats or golf outings of the all-male management team would be recounted, and she wondered how she could ever break into the good ol' boys club. Her colleague, Bob, who was a five-year employee, was also desiring an upper management promotion and his day finally arrived. He came to Sally with the big news hoping to celebrate with her, but she could only smile and say a kind "congratulations," as her heart sank due to the obvious discrepancy of her tenure compared to Bob. The fact that Bob was her good friend gave her a glimmer of hope; with him as part of the leadership team, she hoped he would advocate for her to be promoted for the next available position. To her dismay, she watched two more men become promoted. When she approached Bob about the discrimination, he told her there was nothing he could do and changed the subject. This lack of fair treatment left Sally in a discouraged, desperate state.

Stories like this can be found in almost every sector of business, organizational, and religious arenas. The lack of gender-balanced leadership in America is a problem. Even though women make up 50.8 percent of the U.S. population,⁶ earn almost 60 percent of undergraduate degrees, and 60 percent of all master's degrees,⁷ they are still extremely underrepresented in leadership positions across all sectors of society. "While women are 44 percent of the overall S&P 500 labor force and 36 percent of first- or mid-level officials and managers in those companies, they are only 25 percent of executive- and senior-level officials and managers, hold only 20 percent of board seats, and are only 6 percent of CEOs."⁸ The sad reality is, even after many attempts to level the playing field, men and women have not figured out how to lead effectively together. This reality is tragic when the uniqueness that comes with each gender is not equally represented in churches, organizations, companies, and the government.

Today's leadership culture is currently reeling from extreme numbers of sexual assault allegations of senior leaders, from corporate America to Hollywood and the church. Women are feeling empowered to speak up regarding the abuse they have endured and are being supported by both men and women through the movements coined as #MeToo⁹ and #TimesUp.¹⁰ This epidemic is currently getting media coverage and

⁶ "Quick Facts: United States," United States Census Bureau, accessed April 20, 2018, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045216>.

⁷ "Table 318.30. Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctor's Degrees Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions, by Sex of Student and Discipline Division: 2014-15," National Center for Education Statistics, accessed April 20, 2018, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d16/tables/dt16_318.30.asp.

⁸ "Women in S&P 500 Companies," Catalyst: Workplaces that Work for Women, last modified February 2, 2018, <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-sp-500-companies>.

⁹ Tarana Burke, "me too," Me Too Movement, accessed April 20, 2018, <https://metoomvmt.org/>.

¹⁰ "Time's Up," Times Up Now, accessed April 20, 2018, <https://www.timesupnow.com>.

highlighting the struggle men and women are having working side by side. Men do not treat their female counterparts as equals and have not been held accountable or taught how to honor and appreciate what a woman brings to the leadership table. Interestingly, “companies with strong female leadership deliver a 36% higher return on equity, according to the index provider MSCI.”¹¹ This reality is not getting through to the men in the powerful positions who can make a difference. In fact, according to the World Economic Forum, at the pace we are going, it will take 118 years for the global gender pay gap to close.¹²

The National and Global Lack of Gender Parity

The issue of gender inequality and sex discrimination has been present since the founding of this country, and continues to be one of the most unresolved issues in the history of our country and the world. The efforts made over the centuries to remedy this problem have, unfortunately, made little progress. Feminist campaigns such as Women’s Suffrage, affirmative action, gender quotas, and various attempts made to close the gender gap within the past fifty years will be examined in section two, but before those are explored, it is important to get a clear picture of the state of gender inequality today. The Pew Research Center has compiled the following report of the percentage of women leaders in each sector as of 2018: In the Senate 23%, House of Representatives 19%,

¹¹ “It’s Official: Companies with Women on the Board Perform Better,” World Economic Forum, December 8, 2015, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/12/its-official-women-on-boards-boost-business>.

¹² Naomi Grimley, “Gender Pay Gap 'May Take 118 Years to Close' - World Economic Forum,” British Broadcasting Corporation, November 19, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34842471>.

Cabinet 26%, Governors 12%, State Legislators 25%, Fortune 500 CEOs 5%.¹³ The charts below show that some progress has been made in the last fifty years, but this is far too slow for one of the most powerful countries in the world. Sadly, the United States ranks 51st out of 149 countries according to the 2018 Global Gender Gap Report put out by the World Economic Forum.¹⁴

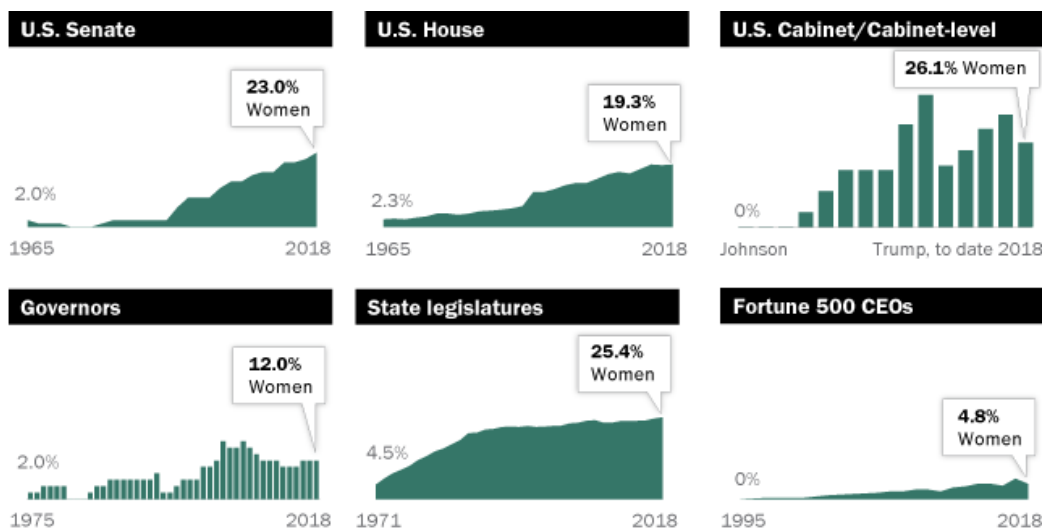


Figure 1—The Data on Women Leaders¹⁵

We have made more progress in efforts working to create equal pay for men and women, but equality in leadership has yet to be seen. It is difficult for companies to convince women they are valued as much as men when their paychecks do not reflect this. Our country has been built on the exchange of money for desired goods and

¹³ Kim Parker, Juliana Horowitz, and Ruth Igielnik, “Women and Leadership 2018,” Pew Research Center, September 20, 2018, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/09/20/women-and-leadership-2018/>.

¹⁴ “The Global Gender Gap Report 2018,” World Economic Forum, accessed May 21, 2019, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf.

¹⁵ “The Data on Women Leaders,” Fact Sheet, Pew Research Center, accessed December 5, 2018, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/fact-sheet/the-data-on-women-leaders/>.

services, evidenced by the American expression, “put your money where your mouth is.” Companies fail to show financial respect for women, especially if they are claiming to need their contribution as much as their male counterparts. According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau, shown below, white women are still paid 21% less than white men, although Asian women have managed to close the gap further.¹⁶

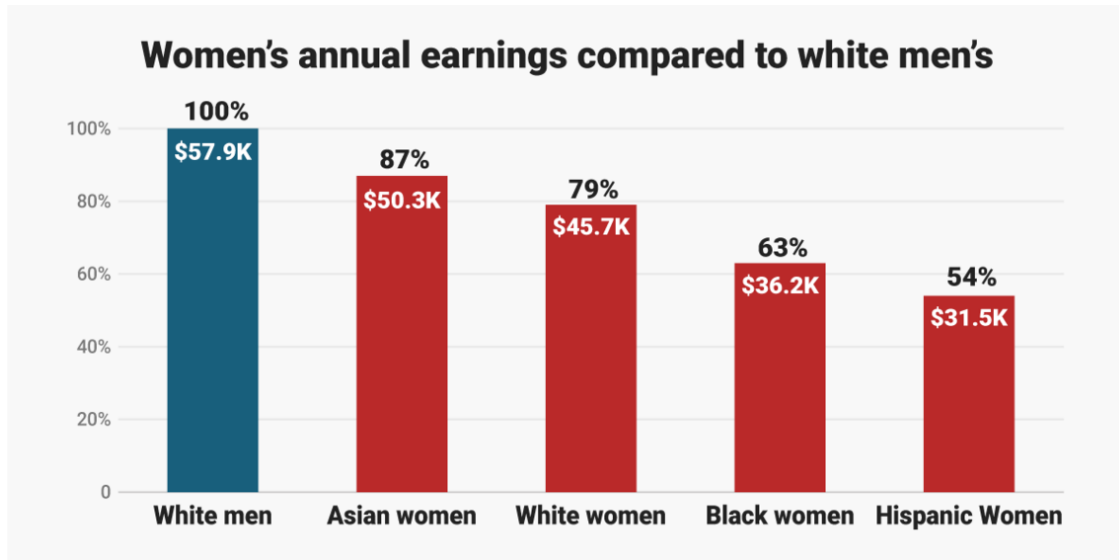


Figure 2—Women's Annual Earnings Compared to White Men's¹⁷

Almost all fifty states have laws against pay discrimination by employers based on gender; the exceptions are Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee. “While progress has been made towards pay parity between men and women, the Institute for Women's

¹⁶ “Gender Pay Inequality: Consequences For Women, Families And The Economy,” A Report By The Joint Economic Committee Democratic Staff United States Congress, April 2016, https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/0779dc2f-4a4e-4386-b847-9ae919735acc/gender-pay-inequality----us-congress-joint-economic-committee.pdf.

¹⁷ Sonam Sheth, Shayanne Gal, and Skye Gould, “6 Charts Show How Much More Men Make Than Women,” Business Insider, August 27, 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/gender-wage-pay-gap-charts-2017-3>.

Policy Research predicts that wages will not be equal until 2059.”¹⁸ Parity in pay appears almost within sight for women in America; unfortunately, it is even less favorable for women worldwide. According to the World Economic Forum’s 2017 report, “Women must also wait 217 years before they earn as much as men and win equal representation at work, revealing the widest gap in almost a decade.”¹⁹ The length of time projected for women to experience equality with men continues to perpetuate the extensive waiting women have been expected to endure for centuries.

In January of 2018, Catalyst, a global nonprofit committed to building workplaces that work for women, did a study of where women stand in the Standard and Poor’s index of the top 500 companies. As shown below, although women educate themselves more than men²⁰ and place themselves in the workforce at a level almost equal to men, they still only hold 4.8% of the top positions.²¹ There are only 24 female CEOs in this country, compared with 476 male CEOs, which is a far cry from equity. Women fill only around a quarter of the executive positions at these Fortune 500 companies. These low numbers further illustrate the need for change and efforts to be made to level the playing field so our companies and our country can fully benefit from all that women have to offer.

¹⁸ Leanna Garfield, Sonam Sheth, and Shayanne Gal, “One Map Shows How Much More Money Men Make Than Women in Every US State,” Business Insider, April 10, 2018, <https://www.businessinsider.com/equal-pay-day-gender-wage-gap-every-us-state-2018-4>.

¹⁹ Lin Taylor, “Investment to Help Women And Girls Has Surged,” World Economic Forum, November 2, 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/11/investors-are-providing-financial-support-for-female-entrepreneurs/>.

²⁰ “Table 318.10. Degrees Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions, by Level of Degree and Sex of Student: Selected Years, 1869-70 through 2024-25,” National Center for Education Statistics, accessed April 20, 2018, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_318.10.asp.

²¹ “Women In S&P 500 Companies,” Catalyst, last updated October 3, 2018, <https://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-sp-500-companies>.



Figure 3—Women in S & P 500 Companies²²

The Barriers Facing Women and Gender-Balanced Leadership

The problems we face in the area of gender-balanced leadership are four-fold. First of all, there are not enough opportunities for women to equally lead alongside their male counterparts. Secondly, women don't have enough support or mentoring to rise in the ranks of leadership. Thirdly, many women fear sexual harassment and men fear being accused of sexual harassment. And lastly, people hold onto limiting stereotypes that prohibit their ability to genuinely value women in leadership. This paper will address these problems and present possible solutions and insights to increase gender-balanced leadership in America and around the world. The United States ranks 51st in the world for how well we are leveraging our female resources²³ despite being ranked 28th in

²² "Pyramid: Women In S&P 500 Companies," Catalyst, last updated October 3, 2018, <https://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-sp-500-companies>

²³ "The Global Gender Gap Report 2018," World Economic Forum, accessed May 21, 2019, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf.

2015.²⁴ As one of the most influential countries in the world, the U.S. should be doing better, more intentional work in reducing the gender gap. Justin Trudeau of Canada²⁵ and Nicola Sturgeon of Scotland²⁶ are leading the way by deliberately appointing a 50/50 gender-balanced cabinet. Hopefully, the United States and others will be inspired to follow this example.

Lack of Opportunities and Quotas

Although there are more capable women available for upper leadership positions than ever before, women continue to be denied opportunities to lead. In fact, women in Generations X and Y tend to work through the parenting years that previous generations would take off to parent.²⁷ Also, the trend of more women graduating with masters degrees and doctorates than men has continued.²⁸ These statistics confirm that the pool of qualified, capable women continues to increase, and yet they are still not invited to have a seat at the leadership table. As long as women are not sitting at the leadership table with men, gender-balanced leadership will not be realized.

²⁴ “The Global Gender Gap Report 2015,” World Economic Forum, accessed April 20, 2018, <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/>.

²⁵ Andre Spicer, “Justin Trudeau is Right, and How About Quota for Women?” CNN, November 5, 2015, <https://www.cnn.com/2015/11/05/opinions/spicer-women-quota>.

²⁶ David Clegg, “Nicola Sturgeon's First Year in Charge of Scottish Government is a Triumph of Selfie Over Policy, Says Political Editor David Clegg,” Daily Record, November 19, 2015, <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/nicola-sturgeons-first-year-charge-6858988>.

²⁷ Ariane Hegewisch et al., “Looking Back, Looking Ahead: Chartbook on Women’s Progress, Figure 5.8,” AARP, November 2015, <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2015/Chartbook-On-Women's-Progress.pdf>.

²⁸ “Table 318.10. Degrees Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions, by Level of Degree and Sex of Student: Selected Years, 1869-70 through 2024-25,” National Center for Education Statistics, accessed April 20, 2018, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_318.10.asp.

There is also a lack of leadership opportunities that support many women's desire to participate in parenting. Without support, this delicate balancing of work and family can be extremely challenging for female aspiring leaders and often forces them to make a choice.²⁹ Women are more likely to work part-time³⁰ or take time off for the sake of the family than men,³¹ which puts them in a non-equal position to be considered for promotions. The gender imbalance regarding family responsibilities further increases the gender leadership gap and keeps women at a disadvantage. Even when employers offer family-oriented policies, employees (especially women) tend to be hesitant to utilize them for fear of their commitment or loyalty being challenged.³² Once again, women have to make a difficult decision: do they choose their family and potentially jeopardize their career advancement, or do they choose the job and violate their value for raising their family? "Leadership roles can be time-consuming and often require great responsibility, which can cause a great deal of stress and leave little room for other priorities. Just as the status quo is holding women back from leadership roles, it is holding men back from embracing caretaking and support roles."³³ These damaging

²⁹ Sheryl Sandberg and Nell Scovell, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 92, Kindle.

³⁰ "Household Data Annual Averages 8. Employed and Unemployed Full- and Part-time Workers by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity," United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 19, 2018, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat08.htm>.

³¹ "Women in the Labor Force: A Databook," United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 2015, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/womens-databook/archive/women-in-the-labor-force-a-databook-2015.pdf>

³² Jacob A Klerman, Kelly Daley, and Alyssa Pozniak, "Family and Medical Leave in 2012: Technical Report," United States Department of Labor, April 18, 2014, <https://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/fmla/FMLA-2012-TECHNICAL-REPORT.pdf>.

³³ Catherine Hill et al., "Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership," *American Association of University Women* (March 2016): 20, <https://www.aauw.org/research/barriers-and-bias>.

stereotypes are not just a problem for women; men are also missing out if more gender-balanced leadership opportunities are not created. Sheryl Sandberg relays a conversation with Judith Rodin, the first female Ivy League president, where she remarked to an audience of women, “My generation fought so hard to give all of you choices. We believe in choices. But choosing to leave the workforce was not the choice we thought so many of you would make.”³⁴ If more family-friendly opportunities are not created for women to serve in leadership roles, they will likely continue to leave and create a tragic void by their absence.

Lack of Mentoring / Sponsorship

Lack of leadership mentoring for women has and continues to be a significant reason gender-balanced leadership is lacking in America. Although mentoring is essential in the advancement of women, research shows that mentoring alone is insufficient in bringing women to the top leadership table. Women need a more influential and effective relationship with an executive leader, referred to as a sponsorship.³⁵ Studies also indicate that “social capital”³⁶ is often more important in advancement than job performance, and usually women have less of this valuable “capital.”³⁷ Since these influential relationships

³⁴ Sheryl Sandberg and Nell Scovell, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 14, Kindle.

³⁵ Heather Foust-Cummings and Sarah Dinolfo, “Sponsoring Women To Success,” Catalyst: Workplaces that Work for Women, August 17, 2011, <http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/sponsoring-women-success>.

³⁶ Most definitions of social capital agree that it refers to social relations that have productive benefits. “Definitions of Social Capital,” Social Capital Research & Training, accessed July 20, 2019, <https://www.socialcapitalresearch.com/literature/definition/>.

³⁷ Alice H. Eagly and Linda Lorene Carli, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*, Leadership for the Common Good (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007), chap. 9, Kindle.

and the networks that come with them are critical to moving up the leadership chain, when these are unavailable to women, gender-imbalanced leadership culture gets perpetuated.

Another problem that comes with mentoring is fear and uncomfortableness men and women have with establishing professional relationships with one another. One of the most commonly recognized risks of these relationships is the potential for some type of reciprocated or unwelcomed sexual involvement.³⁸ The anxiety that comes with this risk deters women because of the potential for sexual harassment, and men fear the potential for allegations. These specific issues will be discussed in more detail later. The other barrier with cross-sex mentor relationships is the perceived potential for uncomfortable rumors to circulate as a result of being seen in public together.³⁹ This fear of rumors creates an imagined barrier in the mentor relationship, where they fear spending time together outside the office, where the social capital often needed for career advancement is commonly created. These fears serve as excuses for men not to seek out potential female mentees and perpetuate the “good ol’ boys club,” further extending the gender leadership gap.⁴⁰ Also, according to Trisha Welstad, a female pastor interviewed, male mentors tend to demote female co-workers to the role of a “daughter” in order to not inappropriately sexualize the relationship.⁴¹ Much of the research continues to point to

³⁸ Regina M. O’Neill and Stacy D. Blake-Beard, “Gender Barriers to the Female Mentor – Male Protégé Relationship,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 37, no. 1 (2002): 54.

³⁹ O’Neill and Blake-Beard, “Gender Barriers to the Female Mentor,” 55.

⁴⁰ Bella Rose Ragins, “Barriers to Mentoring: The Female Manager’s Dilemma,” *Human Relations* 42, no. 1 (1989): 8-9.

⁴¹ Trisha Welstad, phone interview, February 7, 2018.

these barriers to effective professional relationships between men and women as a primary reason for the continued lack of gender-balanced leadership.

This fear ends up being a major barrier to women getting the effective mentoring they need from the influential male leaders who have the power to champion them up the leadership ladder. Even the small number of women who acquire top leadership positions fear being accused of showing favoritism toward women if they focus too much of their time on mentoring them.⁴² If top-level leaders refuse to fight through the fear, women lacking the mentoring or sponsorship to advance up the ranks will continue to perpetuate the gender leadership gap.

Sexual Discrimination and Harassment

Another barrier to closing the gender leadership gap is gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. Women are profoundly affected by gender discrimination in business, political, religious, and educational settings and experience inadequate representation to make a positive difference. Many people believe sexual harassment is not an issue due to the laws in place, but in reality, the lack of women in politics hinders efforts to enforce sexual harassment laws as well as normalizing enforcement in the media.⁴³ While, many Americans believe that job opportunities are equal for men and women, the statistics show a wide gap in this belief by gender. In a 2005 Gallup poll, “61 percent of men and 45 percent of women affirmed the idea that

⁴² Robin Ely and Deborah Rhode, “Women and Leadership: Defining the Challenges,” in *Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice: An HBS Centennial Colloquium on Advancing Leadership*, eds. Nitin Nohria and Rakesh Khurana (Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press, 2010), chap. 14, Kindle.

⁴³ Nicola Lacey, “4 Forces That Are Holding Women Back,” World Economic Forum, November 20, 2015, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/11/4-forces-that-are-holding-women-back>.

men and women have equal job opportunities.”⁴⁴ However, this belief is not supported by the facts and leadership statistics. According to the 2018 Gender Gap Report, the average percentage of legislators, senior officials, and managers in the U.S. were 60 percent men and 40 percent women.⁴⁵

As stated earlier, the #MeToo movement has raised the awareness of sexual harassment and assault around the country, and according to their website, 17,700,000 women have reported a sexual assault since 1998.⁴⁶ Although this is a staggering number, it is most likely far less than the actual number of women who have experienced this abuse, since many women feel too much shame or fear to report. Sexual harassment continues to block gender-balanced leadership within many organizations and institutions simply because of the lack of female representation and advocacy in senior leadership positions. According to John Keyser, founder and CEO of Common Sense Leadership, who has held a number of senior leadership positions with large companies and is a graduate of Georgetown University,

Women remain stymied by outdated policies and attitudes favoring men. Many companies talk the talk, but far too few effectively empower women, giving them leadership opportunities, teaching them how to succeed in a male-dominated system, giving them the authority to lead and enabling them to continue to contribute significantly while also fulfilling family and home care needs.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Alice H. Eagly and Linda Lorene Carli, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth About How Women Become Leaders*, Leadership for the Common Good (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007), chap. 5, Kindle.

⁴⁵ “Global Gender Gap Report 2018: United States,” World Economic Forum, accessed May 21, 2019, <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2018/data-explorer/#economy=USA>.

⁴⁶ Tarana Burke, “me too.,” Me Too Movement, accessed April 20, 2018, <https://metoomvmt.org/>.

⁴⁷ John P. Keyser, *Make Way for Women: Men and Women Leading Together Improve Culture and Profits* (Buffalo, NY: Librastreet, 2015), chap. 3, Kindle.

Women need to be sitting at the table when decisions regarding sexual harassment policies are made.

Gender discrimination happens in plain view without many people even noticing. As an example, a Canadian web design company posted a sexist ad for a content writer/SEO specialist with this note at the end: “Please note that the position requires filling in the responsibilities of a receptionist, so female candidates are preferred.”⁴⁸

Women have been boxed into these type of positions for years, which affects how others view them and their potential for upper management positions. Because the world women live in every day is incredibly more hostile than the world men experience, men in influential positions fail to notice the sexism and discrimination they inadvertently perpetuate. Another finding indicates that sex discrimination is less likely to occur for both men and women if they are part of the numerical majority.⁴⁹ Additional evidence supports the argument for creating more workplace environments where the composition of the group is gender balanced. If the boardroom and top executive offices remain unbalanced in their inclusion of men and women, discrimination and harassment will continue.

⁴⁸ Emily Crockett, “This Sexist Job Posting Asks Women to Apply Because They’ll Be Filling in as Receptionist,” Vox Media, November 24, 2015, <https://www.vox.com/2015/11/23/9786342/sexist-job-posting-receptionist>.

⁴⁹ Kevin Stainback, Thomas N. Ratliff, and Vincent J. Roscigno, “The Context of Workplace Sex Discrimination: Sex Composition, Workplace Culture and Relative Power,” *Social Forces* 89, no. 4 (2011): 1181.

Lack of Value and Limiting Stereotypes

In the midst of the efforts made to reduce the gender leadership gap, the overall value of women equally joining the leadership ranks is still low among management. Some men in upper management promote the idea of equal representation, but many of them still do not see it as necessary. According to research by Bain and Company, there are a couple of factors that could account for the lack of progress in the area of gender-balanced leadership:

First, there is a meaningful segment of the business community that is not yet convinced of the business case for change. Although 76 percent of the women in the study believe that gender parity can result in financial benefits for their organizations, only 55 percent of the men agree. That suggests the business case for diversity is still not well understood or accepted. Until that happens, achieving gender parity remains a moral imperative rather than a financial one.⁵⁰

As long as those in power do not see the benefit of having equal representation of women at the top, this issue will remain one that is only based on quotas and not on a value for the unique strengths each gender brings to the leadership table.

The stereotypes ascribed to both men and women are also a limiting factor in closing the gender leadership gap. For instance, Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, states,

Professional ambition is expected of men but is optional—or worse, sometimes even a negative—for women. “She is very ambitious” is not a compliment in our culture. Aggressive and hard-charging women violate unwritten rules about acceptable social conduct. Men are continually applauded for being ambitious and powerful and successful, but women who display these same traits often pay a social penalty. Female accomplishments come at a cost.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Melanie Sanders et al., “What Stops Women from Reaching the Top? Confronting the Tough Issues,” Bain and Company, November 14, 2011, <http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/what-stops-women-from-reaching-the-top.aspx>.

⁵¹ Sheryl Sandberg and Nell Scovell, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), 17, Kindle.

Women continue to be discouraged to show the same leadership qualities as their male counterparts, therefore preventing them from being viewed as strong candidates for top leadership positions. Even with women doing everything they can to close the gender leadership gap by gaining higher education, joining the professional workforce, and putting themselves in a position to succeed, the huge gap remains. Robin Ely and Deborah Rhode affirm this reality, saying, “A fundamental challenge to women’s leadership arises from the mismatch between the qualities traditionally associated with leaders and those traditionally associated with women.”⁵² Women tend to be locked into stereotypes and expectations that create a “damned if I do, damned if I don’t” double bind. They find themselves trying to act more masculine in order to be accepted by the “good ol’ boys,” only to be ridiculed or punished for being too aggressive and not feminine enough. Men also tend to inadvertently reward women for behaving in a traditional manner as a way to keep them in their place. Ely and Rhode refer to these dynamics by the terms “hostile sexism” and “benevolent sexism.”⁵³ According to Glick and Fiske, benevolent sexism is “a subjectively favorable, chivalrous ideology that offers protection and affection to women who embrace conventional roles,” and hostile sexism is “antipathy toward women who are viewed as usurping men's power.”⁵⁴

Even though men often do not appreciate or value a woman’s strength of nurturing, this quality can create a stereotype that encourages employers to place

⁵² Ely and Rhode, “Women and Leadership,” chap. 14.

⁵³ Ely and Rhode, “Women and Leadership,” chap. 14.

⁵⁴ Peter Glick and Susan Fiske, “An Ambivalent Alliance: Hostile and Benevolent Sexism as Complementary Justifications for Gender Inequality,” *The American Psychologist* 56, no. 2 (2001): 109.

caregiving responsibilities on women that are discriminatory.⁵⁵ A recent study also revealed that people tend to hold onto their stereotypical beliefs even when they personally experience evidence to the contrary.⁵⁶ These tendencies can block the advancement of women and further keep men and women from leading effectively together.

Gender stereotypes do not only negatively affect women. In one human resource study, men who did not display the stereotype of aggression ranked lower than men who did, which confirms the belief that nice guys really do finish last.⁵⁷ Stereotypes do not just affect how others see us; they also affect how we see ourselves. For example, there is a self-confidence gap between women and men.⁵⁸ “Whereas men are socialized to be confident, assertive, and self-promoting, cultural attitudes toward women as leaders continue to suggest to women that it is often inappropriate or undesirable to possess those characteristics.”⁵⁹ As long as men and women buy into these damaging stereotypes, they will continue to hurt themselves and further delay efforts to increase opportunities for men and women to lead together.

⁵⁵ Madeline E. Heilman, Michael C. Simon, David P. Repper, and Robert Guion, “Intentionally Favored, Unintentionally Harmed? Impact of Sex-Based Preferential Selection on Self-Perceptions and Self-Evaluations,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* 72, no. 1 (1987): 67.

⁵⁶ Stephanie N. Crites, Kevin E. Dickson, and Alicia Lorenz, “Nurturing Gender Stereotypes in the Face of Experience: A Study of Leader Gender, Leadership Style, and Satisfaction,” *Journal of Organizational Culture, Communications and Conflict* 19, no. 1 (2015): 21.

⁵⁷ Timothy A. Judge, Beth A. Livingston, Charlice Hurst, and Laura King, “Do Nice Guys—and Gals—Really Finish Last? The Joint Effects of Sex and Agreeableness on Income,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 102, no. 2 (2012): 404.

⁵⁸ Sebastian Schuh et al., “Gender Differences in Leadership Role Occupancy: The Mediating Role of Power Motivation,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 120, no. 3 (2014): 365.

⁵⁹ Catherine Hill et al., “Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership,” *American Association of University Women* (March 2016): 22, <https://www.aauw.org/research/barriers-and-bias>.

People who are progressive and consider themselves egalitarian when it comes to men and women in leadership sometimes make the mistake of saying they do not see gender, or they are gender blind. This mistake is similar to people saying they do not see color when it comes to racial relationships. Like with other races or cultures, differences and uniqueness abound when it comes to what men and women offer to the leadership table. If one does not see each gender as unique and different, they are in danger of missing the blessings and strengths men and women offer one another. Part of the reason women especially hesitate to highlight their unique qualities or strengths is that it can set them up for additional discrimination. For instance, many people view traditional leadership positions as male-oriented type jobs and therefore women's communal characteristics of kindness, helpfulness, and sympathy become a detriment to them being considered for these leadership positions.⁶⁰

Since most people naturally prescribe certain roles to each gender, "role congruity theory would suggest that women entering higher-level positions might encounter more prejudice because there is a larger mismatch in stereotypes between women and leadership. On the other hand, men should gain greater congruency between their gender role stereotype and leadership as they ascend the leadership ladder."⁶¹ Because of this, many women are pressured to incorporate more masculine leadership qualities in order to advance, and, as Avivah Wittenberg-Cox, 20-First's CEO, says,

⁶⁰ Alice H. Eagly and Sabine Sczesny, "Stereotypes About Women, Men, and Leaders: Have Times Changed?" in *The Glass Ceiling in the 21st Century: Understanding Barriers to Gender Equality*, ed. M. Barreto, M. K. Ryan, and M. T. Schmitt (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2009), 36, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/11863-002>.

⁶¹ Jillian McLellan, Paul Yost, Lynette Bikos, and Jay Steffensmeier, *Gender Stereotypes and Leadership Style: Discrimination against Men and Women?*, 2014, 9, ProQuest.

When these women move in a masculine direction, no one likes the result. These “adapted women” serve as anti-role models to the next generation of younger woman. They say, “if that’s what it takes to make it in this company, I’m leaving.” Then you have a retention problem.⁶²

Once again, when women are not appreciated for the uniqueness they bring and encouraged to function in their natural leadership gifts, their valuable contribution is lost.

Summary

In summary, the lack of gender-balanced leadership in America is a problem and a tragedy that has been present since this great nation was founded. Even though many efforts to advance women to an equal place alongside men have been made and many of them have been realized, there is a long way to go if the gender leadership gap is to be truly closed. It is a sad reality that one of the most powerful countries in the world ranks 64th among 145 countries when it comes to having women in the government’s top position.⁶³ In order for gender-balanced leadership to be experienced in our corporations, government, and churches, the barriers preventing this dream need to be removed.

One can no longer ignore the many problems that keep talented men and women from leading together in powerful ways. The problem of limited opportunities for women to lead in top positions alongside men needs to be addressed. Secondly, the issue of mentoring and sponsorship not being as available to women needs attention. Thirdly, the sexual discrimination and harassment that keep people living in fear must be eradicated.

⁶² D.G. McCullough, “When Will Women Achieve Gender Equality in Leadership at Work?” *The Guardian*, June 4, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/women-leadership-companies-equality-job>.

⁶³ “Global Gender Gap Report 2015: United States,” World Economic Forum, accessed April 21, 2018, <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=USA>.

Lastly, the problem of gender stereotypes and the overall lack of value for diverse skillsets in leadership requires careful attention. Although this is not an exhaustive list of barriers prohibiting a gender-balanced leadership culture, if these issues can be addressed, organizations will be that much closer to experiencing the amazing results of men and women leading effectively together.

SECTION 2: OTHER SOLUTIONS

Historical Solutions to the Problem

Women's Suffrage

Since very early in the history of the United States, women have fought for equality, beginning from staunch patriarchal roots and moving *extremely* slowly toward a more gender-balanced model of leadership. One of the first feminist movements in America was the coming together of women fighting for the right to vote, called Women's Suffrage (1848-1920). It took women 144 long, arduous years after the founding of this country for them to gain the basic right to vote. As revealed from the brief timeline below, black men gained the right to vote in 1870, 50 years before women gained that same right.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ "15th Amendment," History, last updated September 12, 2018, <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/fifteenth-amendment>.

Timeline of Women's Suffrage

1848	First Women's Rights Convention Seneca Falls, NY
1869	Stanton and Anthony form National Women's Suffrage Association
1869	Wyoming passes first women's suffrage law
1878	Susan B Anthony presents amendment for vote to Congress
1890	S. Anthony and E. Stanton form the National American Woman Suffrage Association
1893	Colorado is first state to adopt an amendment for vote for women
1896	Idaho also adopts a vote for women amendment
1916	Margaret Sanger opens first birth control clinic in U.S.
1919	The federal woman suffrage amendment passes the House & Senate
1920	19th Amendment granting right to vote to women is signed into law

Figure 4—Timeline of Women's Suffrage⁶⁵

The different women's groups campaigning for equality joined forces, and the National American Woman Suffrage Association was formed in 1890.⁶⁶ By this time, their approach had changed, and

instead of arguing that women deserved the same rights and responsibilities as men because women and men were "created equal," the new generation of activists argued that women deserved the vote because they were *different* from men. They could make their domesticity into a political virtue, using the franchise to create a purer, more moral "maternal commonwealth."⁶⁷

This tactic of women highlighting the fact that they are different from men will be a key element presented in the solution to this problem of gender discrimination. Women earning the right to vote in this country was the beginning of a national women's movement that has been working to advocate for women to be treated as equal human

⁶⁵ Jacob Gilbert, "On This Date in History," Slide Player, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://slideplayer.com/slide/6975>.

⁶⁶ "Women's Suffrage," History, last updated October 9, 2018, <https://www.history.com/topics/womens-history/the-fight-for-womens-suffrage>.

⁶⁷ "Women's Suffrage."

beings. It has already been 99 years since the Nineteenth Amendment was signed into law, and it could theoretically take more than 144 additional years⁶⁸ to reach gender balance in all areas of leadership in America.

Women’s suffrage has had a significant impact on the United States. Jonathan Bean, professor of history at Southern Illinois University, points out, “When Gallup polled Americans at the end of the 20th century, the pollster asked respondents to list ‘one of the most important events of the century,’ women getting the vote was ranked second only to World War II!”⁶⁹

Most Important Events Of The Century

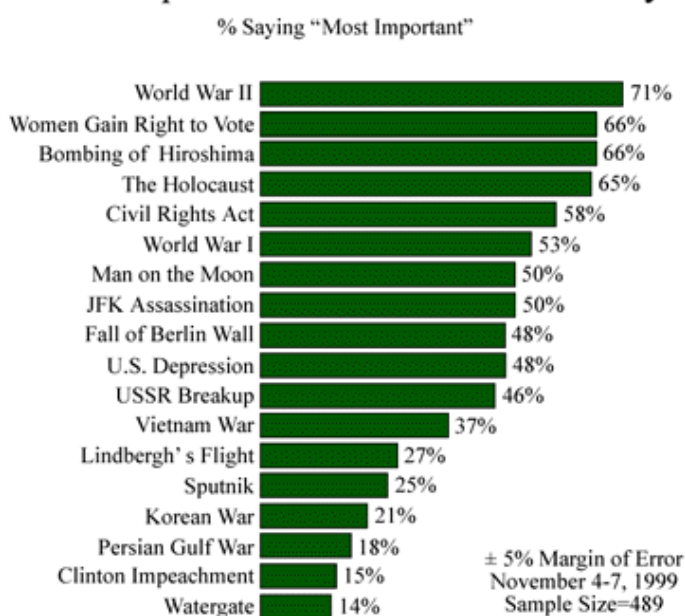


Figure 5—Most Important Events of the Century⁷⁰

⁶⁸ The number of years it took for women to gain the right to vote after the founding of America.

⁶⁹ Jonathan Bean, “Ask A Scholar: How Did Women’s Suffrage Impact The USA?” National Association of Scholars, May 29, 2013, https://www.nas.org/articles/ask_a_scholar_how_did_womens_suffrage_impact_the_usa.

⁷⁰ “World War II Rated Most Important Event of 20th Century,” Gallup News Service, November 17, 1999, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/3463/world-war-rated-most-important-event-20th-century.aspx>.

Although men may see the importance women's suffrage has played in this country, they would be hard-pressed to grasp the sacrifice made by desperate women to gain the right to vote. "And it can hardly be assumed that the demand for votes for women was appreciably more radical than a moral absolutism which encouraged women to invade bordellos, befriend harlots and publicly discuss rape, seduction and prostitution," says Carroll Rosenberg.⁷¹ Similar to this level of dedication and camaraderie, the modern #MeToo movement⁷² brings women together as a united force, willing to take whatever risk necessary to get their voices heard and address the extreme injustice. Women coming together in larger gatherings and movements seems to embolden them to advocate for themselves in ways they would rarely do on their own.

Affirmative Action

The next phase of efforts that increased equality for women was Affirmative Action, originally introduced by John F. Kennedy in 1961. The President's Executive Order originally required entities that receive federal funding to take tangible steps "to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin." In 1967, Lyndon Johnson added sex to that list.⁷³ When it came to affirmative action, women joined other minorities waiting in line to receive justice from the various outcomes of the Civil Rights

⁷¹ Carroll Smith Rosenberg, "Beauty, the Beast and the Militant Woman: A Case Study in Sex Roles and Social Stress in Jacksonian America," *American Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (1971): 584.

⁷² Tarana Burke, "me too.," Me Too Movement, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://metoomvmt.org>

⁷³ "Affirmative Action Overview," National Conference of State Legislatures, February 7, 2014, <http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/affirmative-action-overview.aspx>.

Movement. Research regarding affirmative action reveals, “historically, affirmative action for women is a by-product of affirmative action for African-Americans.”⁷⁴ It was a positive step in our country to finally focus on giving more equality to minorities, although limited progress was made. “Yet paradoxically, as early as 1982 the Washington Post had noted that women—especially white women—were ‘the biggest gainers’ from affirmative action policies, though the record of achievements was ‘a murky one.’”⁷⁵ Unfortunately, many have a negative attitude towards affirmative action efforts and see it as an unfair method to leveling the playing field. Although Affirmative Action helped open doors for women and minorities, the negative sentiment towards this approach continues to deter women from using it to their benefit.

Equal Pay Act

Following the Civil Rights Act, in 1963, the Equal Pay Act was passed. The law provided that:

No employer having employees subject to any provisions of this section shall discriminate, within any establishment in which such employees are employed, between employees on the basis of sex by paying wages to employees in such establishment at a rate less than the rate at which he pays wages to employees of the opposite sex in such establishment for equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Anne Peters, *Women, Quotas, and Constitutions: A Comparative Study of Affirmative Action for Women under American, German, EC, and International Law* (Boston: Kluwer Law International, 1999), 107.

⁷⁵ Sacha E. De Lange, “Toward Gender Equality: Affirmative Action, Comparable Worth, and the Women's Movement.” *New York University Review of Law & Social Change* 31, no. 2 (2007): 3.

⁷⁶ “The Equal Pay Act of 1963,” U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/epa.cfm>.

This law finally provided a legal backing behind women's desire to have equal pay for equal work. For years, they were performing equivalent tasks and being paid far less than their male counterparts. Sadly, only the companies that received federal funding, and thus were subject to federal affirmative action requirements, showed any significant gain for women. In 1983, The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) "reviewed more than seventy-seven thousand companies with over twenty million employees [and] found that female employment increased by 15.2% between 1974 and 1980 for federal contractors, while it rose by only 2.2% in non-federal contract settings."⁷⁷ Once again, the laws meant to equal the playing field ended up being limited by the actual number of companies that were forced to comply, thus limiting the overall impact and highlighting the need for a change in attitude.

Comparable Worth Movement

Due to the fact that many of men's jobs were positions women did not want, were not well-suited for, or were not culturally conditioned towards, the women's movement began to use a term called "comparable worth" in an attempt "to make dissimilar male- and female-dominated jobs of comparable worth equal in pay. Equity was to be accomplished through a system of job evaluations that would rate jobs within a particular firm on the basis of a number of factors."⁷⁸ This idea gained national attention, as it gave a new perspective on the issue and started making a more significant impact on the

⁷⁷ Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, *Affirmative Action to Open the Doors of Job Opportunity: A Policy of Fairness and Compassion That Has Worked* (Washington, D.C.: Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, 1984), 124-125.

⁷⁸ Sacha E. De Lange, "Toward Gender Equality: Affirmative Action, Comparable Worth, and the Women's Movement," *New York University Review of Law & Social Change* 31, no. 2 (2007): 341.

gender-based wage gap. The concept of “comparable worth” recognized that “women have been segregated into female occupations where wages have been discriminatorily depressed and found ways to treat women’s careers equal to their male counterparts.”⁷⁹

The Comparable Worth movement was a valiant attempt at helping people see the unique skills and worth of both men and women and placing value on their complementary nature.

Family and Medical Leave Act

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 helped women tremendously. The increased number of women in the workforce put pressure on politicians and employers to make provisions for their families’ needs.⁸⁰ Since women were the primary caregivers of children, they were instrumental in creating more family-friendly work environments, which ended up benefiting men as well. In fact, one of the primary goals of the FMLA was for gender neutrality when it came to family leave. This goal can be found in the language of the final text of the law, which reads:

It is the purpose of this Act to grant leave in a manner that, consistent with the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, minimizes the potential for employment discrimination on the basis of sex by ensuring generally that leave is available for eligible medical reasons—including maternity-related disability—and for compelling family reasons, on a gender neutral basis; and to promote the goal of equal employment opportunity for women and men, pursuant to such clause.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Rita Mae Kelly and Jane H. Bayes, *Comparable Worth, Pay Equity, and Public Policy*, Contributions in Labor Studies; Book No. 22, New York: Greenwood Press, 1988, 3-4.

⁸⁰ Amy Armenia, and Naomi Gerstel, “Family Leaves, the FMLA and Gender Neutrality: The Intersection of Race and Gender,” *Social Science Research* 35, no. 4 (2006): 872.

⁸¹ “Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993,” House Legislative Counsel, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://legcounsel.house.gov/Comps/Family%20And%20Medical%20Leave%20Act%20Of%201993.pdf>.

The FMLA became one more legal foothold that made it increasingly possible for women to compete with men for the same jobs without fear of jeopardizing their job to care for a child.

Gender Quotas

Although women have made significant advances in obtaining education and are starting to show more representation politically, “many countries have responded by introducing gender quotas in politics and increasingly, many have expressed an interest in requiring gender quotas for corporate boards.”⁸² Norway took the lead in 1975 by introducing a 40% minimum target for representation of both sexes on electoral lists; Denmark and Sweden soon followed this example.

Many Western European countries, as well as Australia and Canada, have also implemented voluntary party quotas. The acceptance of quotas in Eastern Europe is much lower, but some countries, such as the Czech Republic and Hungary, have voluntary party quotas. The United States is a notable exception among Western countries, as it does not apply any quotas.⁸³

The fact that the United States has not chosen to implement quotas in order to advance women in leadership is potentially a significant reason why the gender leadership gap has not been eliminated.

Norway also leads the way with the most widely known example of corporate board quotas.

⁸² Rohini Pande and Deanna Ford, “Gender Quotas and Female Leadership: A Review,” *IDEAS Working Paper Series from RePEc* (2014): 1.

⁸³ Julie Ballington, and Francesca Binda, eds., “The Implementation of Quotas: European Experiences,” International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2005, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/implementation-of-quotas-european-experiences.pdf>.

A 40% gender quota for public limited, state-owned and inter-municipality companies was introduced in December 2003 and gave companies a grace period until 2008 to reach the target. Female representation had increased only gradually before 2003, but then jumped from 15.9% in 2004, to 37.0% in 2007, and finally reached the 40% target in 2008.⁸⁴

Norway's law specifies as follows:

- For a board of directors with more than nine members, women should make up at least 40 percent.
- Boards with six to eight members should have at least three female members.
- Boards with four to five members should have at least two female members.⁸⁵

Norway's change beautifully illustrates what could happen if the United States were bold enough to implement a similar corporate board quota mandate, which is one of the reasons why the U.S. ranks only 51st in the world when it comes to progress made toward gender parity.⁸⁶

Interestingly, in 2018, California State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson sponsored California Senate Bill 826, which has become the first state-mandated gender quota in the U.S.⁸⁷ Signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown in September 2018, it requires the following provisions:

⁸⁴ Marit Hoel, "The Quota Story: Five Years of Change in Norway," in *Women on Corporate Boards of Directors: International Research and Practice*, ed. Susan Vinnicombe (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2008).

⁸⁵ Kenneth R. Ahern and Amy K. Dittmar, "The Changing of the Boards: The Impact on Firm Valuation of Mandated Female Board Representation," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127, no. 1 (2012): 144.

⁸⁶ "The Global Gender Gap Report 2018," World Economic Forum, accessed May 21, 2019, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf.

⁸⁷ "Senate Bill No. 826," California Legislative Information, accessed December 8, 2018, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB826.

- No later than the close of the 2019 calendar year, a publicly held domestic or foreign corporation whose principal executive offices, according to the corporation's SEC 10-K form, are located in California shall have a minimum of one female director on its board. A corporation may increase the number of directors on its board to comply with this section.
- No later than the close of the 2021 calendar year, a publicly held domestic or foreign corporation whose principal executive offices, according to the corporation's SEC 10-K form, are located in California shall comply with the following: (1) If its number of directors is six or more, the corporation shall have a minimum of three female directors. (2) If its number of directors is five, the corporation shall have a minimum of two female directors. (3) If its number of directors is four or fewer, the corporation shall have a minimum of one female director.⁸⁸

This new law is more evidence of progress in the area of corporate gender parity. It will be interesting to note if other states follow suit, and how long women will have to wait for it to reach the federal level. It will take bold actions from leaders like Senator Jackson to make significant progress in closing the gender leadership gap.

More Recent Efforts

Recent efforts to close the gender leadership gap are making some progress, but still fall short of the goal of equal male and female representation in the leadership of

⁸⁸ "Senate Bill No. 826," Today's Law as Amended, California Legislative Information, accessed December 8, 2018, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billCompareClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB826.

companies and organizations across America. This section will highlight a few of those efforts; however, further investments in efforts to bring women up the leadership ranks are needed to help close the gender gap. In 2016, McKinsey Global Institute released a study on the economic impact of gender equality.⁸⁹ “They found that if the United States made \$475 billion worth of public and private investments to eliminate pay disparities, make child care affordable, promote parity in high-growth sectors, and address other issues—we could add \$4.3 trillion to our annual GDP in 2025.”⁹⁰ This study confirms the impact that can be made in this country if concerted efforts toward gender parity continue to be pursued.

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker points to a couple of these initiatives: “Powershift,” which helps women negotiate better job offers, and an app called “Aware,” which enables businesses to identify pay disparities in their own ranks. Both of these were developed when, in honor of Equal Pay Day, they invited developers from across America to use MIDAAS (Making Income Data Available as a Service) to “Hack the Pay Gap.” Programs like these are already causing industry leaders to voluntarily take action; in fact, “28 top companies like Apple, PepsiCo, and Salesforce signed a White House pledge to assess their own pay gaps.”⁹¹ It will take this kind of creativity from the

⁸⁹ Kweilin Ellingrud et al., “The Power of Parity: Advancing Women’s Equality in the United States,” McKinsey Global Institute, April 2016, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/employment-and-growth/the-power-of-parity-advancing-womens-equality-in-the-united-states>.

⁹⁰ “U.S. Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker Delivers Keynote Address at 13th Annual Lockheed Martin Women’s Impact Network Leadership Forum,” States News Service, November 3, 2016, Academic OneFile.

⁹¹ “U.S. Secretary of Commerce.”

brightest minds in the country to continue to raise the awareness of those in positions of influence to make a difference.

Another champion for gender-balanced leadership is Kevin Maggiacomo, President and Chief Executive Officer of Sperry Van Ness International Corporation. His goal is to end the gender inequality found within corporate leadership, and to this end he has launched 50/50 by 2020, “a campaign that seeks to establish an equal number of women and men within leadership roles by the year 2020.”⁹² He seems to be working toward this goal by attempting to educate people and encouraging them to sign a pledge of support for the campaign. Unfortunately, his goal is unlikely to be met since the current percentage of female leadership in top positions is only 4.8%.⁹³ Catalyst has a similar initiative called Men Advocating Real Change (MARC), which is committed to achieving workplace gender equality through effective partnership with men. One of the statements on their website reads, “Gender inequality negatively impacts the success of organizations, men’s relationships with colleagues, the time men spend with their families, and even men’s personal health. This is why men must be part of the solution.”⁹⁴ These and other initiatives trying to mobilize men are capitalizing on the research showing that “when men are actively involved in gender diversity, 96% of companies report progress, and when they’re not, only 30% show progress.”⁹⁵ Many

⁹² “About,” 50/50 by 2020, accessed December 6, 2018, <http://5050x2020.org/about/>.

⁹³ “Women In S&P 500 Companies,” Catalyst, last updated October 3, 2018, <https://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-sp-500-companies>.

⁹⁴ “About MARC,” Men Advocating Real Change, accessed December 6, 2018, <http://onthemarc.org/about>.

⁹⁵ Matt Krentz et al., “Five Ways Men Can Improve Gender Diversity at Work,” Boston Consulting Group, October 10, 2017, <https://www.bcg.com/en-us/publications/2017/people-organization-behavior-culture-five-ways-men-improve-gender-diversity-work.aspx>.

others have discovered that men must be a huge part of the solution; the challenge is getting those men mobilized in order to create the critical mass needed for significant change.

The United Nations has a similar effort, called HeForShe, “a global solidarity movement inviting men and people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for gender equality.”⁹⁶ They believe this is a human rights issue, not just a women’s issue, which is why one of the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals is “to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”⁹⁷ The United Nations Population Fund confers by making the following powerful statement on their website:

Gender equality is a human right. Women are entitled to live with dignity and with freedom from want and from fear. Gender equality is also a precondition for advancing development and reducing poverty: Empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of whole families and communities, and they improve prospects for the next generation. Still, despite solid evidence demonstrating the centrality of women’s empowerment to realizing human rights, reducing poverty, promoting development and addressing the world’s most urgent challenges, gender equality remains an unfulfilled promise.⁹⁸

Even with the United Nations’ efforts at mobilizing men in order to achieve gender equality around the world, this dream has yet to be realized.

⁹⁶ “United Nations Global Solidarity Movement for Gender Equality,” HeForShe, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://www.heforshe.org/en/movement>.

⁹⁷ “Goal 5: Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls,” Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>.

⁹⁸ “Gender Equality,” United Nations Population Fund, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://www.unfpa.org/gender-equality>.

The Work Is Far from Finished

According to the 2018 results of the joint, multiyear survey by Sheryl Sandberg's LeanIn.org and McKinsey and Company, companies report that gender diversity is a high priority, but this stated priority is not translating into meaningful progress. Sandberg reports that "the proportion of women at every level in corporate America has hardly changed. Progress isn't just slow. It's stalled."⁹⁹ Even though women are doing their part to get educated, earning more degrees than men, generating longevity in the workforce, and negotiating salaries and promotions in line with men, significant progress is not being made to close the gender leadership gap.¹⁰⁰ This lack of progress highlights the need for continued efforts, movements, programs, and people to advocate for a more equal workplace for women.

In some ways, this country has come a long way from its beginnings: when women could not own property, vote, or get hired at a job and receive equal pay to men. The women who have risen up and the men who have stood beside them created the beginning of a revolution that is far from over. In 2017, Pew Research Center asked Americans if the country has made adequate progress in giving women equal rights with men. "Half of Americans say the country hasn't gone far enough, 39% say efforts on this front have been about right and 10% say the country has gone too far."¹⁰¹ Even with the

⁹⁹ LeanIn, "Women in the Workplace 2018," Joint Study by LeanIn and McKinsey and Company, accessed December 6, 2018, https://womenintheworkplace.com/?mod=article_inline.

¹⁰⁰ LeanIn, "Women in the Workplace 2018."

¹⁰¹ Juliana Horowitz, Kim Parker, and Rene Stepler, "Wide Partisan Gaps in U.S. Over How Far the Country Has Come on Gender Equality," Pew Research Center, October 18, 2017, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/10/18/wide-partisan-gaps-in-u-s-over-how-far-the-country-has-come-on-gender-equality/>.

history of progress and the efforts presented above, this study confirms that the majority of people feel more work needs to be done to close the gender gap.

SECTION 3: THE THESIS – GENDER SYNERGY

Introduction

Gender discrimination and the lack of gender parity has been around for centuries in the U.S. and around the world, perpetuating an extreme lack of gender-balanced leadership in almost every sector of society. Over the years, many attempts have been made to solve this problem, unfortunately to no avail. This time in U.S. history is poised for people to make a significant impact at closing this gender leadership gap so men and women can lead effectively together in every area. Success can happen by addressing the common barriers that prevent women from joining men at the executive leadership table. This section will offer proposed solutions to this problem and these barriers.

The solution starts with the people who have the greatest ability to make a significant impact on equaling the playing field for women—influential men in positions of power. According to a Boston Consulting Group article and survey:

Reforming this culture and creating true gender parity requires participation by both men and women, particularly given that the senior leadership team at many companies is predominantly male. The good news is that when men do become directly involved in gender diversity, both men and women believe that their company is making much greater progress in achieving gender parity. [See Figure 6 below] Worldwide, our data shows that among companies where men are actively involved in gender diversity, 96% report progress. Conversely, among companies where men are not involved, only 30% show progress.¹⁰²

This statistic confirms the significant role men in positions of power play in increasing gender balance in leadership by championing for gender parity.

¹⁰² Matt Krentz, Olivier Wierzba, Katie Abouzahr, Jennifer Garcia-Alonso, and Frances Brooks Taplett, “Five Ways Men Can Improve Gender Diversity at Work,” Boston Consulting Group, October 10, 2017, <https://www.bcg.com/en-us/publications/2017/people-organization-behavior-culture-five-ways-men-improve-gender-diversity-work.aspx>.

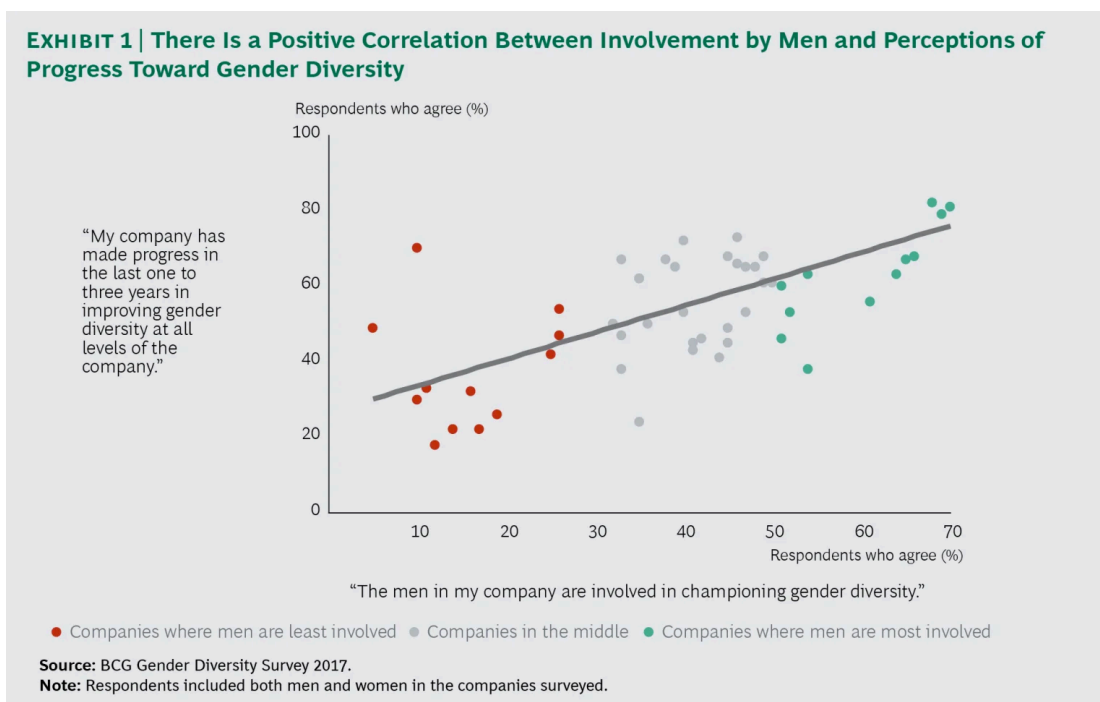


Figure 6—Correlation Between Involvement by Men and Perception of Progress¹⁰³

The research overwhelmingly indicates that men are needed if real and lasting change is going to take place. Women in leadership positions can also advocate for other women, but this does not happen as much as one would expect because of the hostile environment women leaders must navigate. According to Harvard Business School professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter, “Women who reach executive status simply feel obligated to distance themselves from other women.”¹⁰⁴ Females who worked so hard to get to the top are fearful to jeopardize their position by appearing to be a feminist and not committed to “the good ol’ boys club.” If they can overcome their fear, women can still make an impact by advocating for their peers, but they simply will never be able to help

¹⁰³ Krentz et al., “Five Ways Men Can Improve Gender Diversity at Work.”

¹⁰⁴ Carol Vallone Mitchell, “3 Reasons Why Women Don’t Help Other Women,” The Huffington Post, updated December 6, 2017, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/3-reasons-why-women-dont-help-other-women_b_9306330.

other women up to leadership's top levels until they make up at least fifty percent of those positions, which they currently only hold 26.5% of executive or senior level positions.¹⁰⁵

Repeatedly, the research indicates how vital it is for individuals in positions of power, typically men, to initiate efforts to bring the genders together. Simmons School of Management professor Dr. Spela Trefalt says,

Dealing most effectively with second-generation gender bias must come from people who have formal authority in the organizations, and who are themselves unencumbered by gender issues; they are the ones best positioned to change the situation. Our research indicates that alliances between women and men are essential for closing the women's leadership gap and that senior male managers need to be actively engaged in the change process.¹⁰⁶

To make a significant change in closing the gender leadership gap, men and women need to become allies in the change process.

One problem, according to research by Catalyst, is companies have exclusively focused their efforts on women rather than also engaging men, which has unintentionally negatively affected the success of their gender initiatives. "Without the avid support of men, who are arguably the most powerful stakeholder group in most large corporations, significant progress toward ending gender disparities is unlikely."¹⁰⁷ Because of this powerful truth, the solutions presented in this section will start with the foundational

¹⁰⁵ "Women In S&P 500 Companies," Catalyst, last updated October 3, 2018, <https://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/women-sp-500-companies>.

¹⁰⁶ "Alliances Between Men and Women Can Close Women's Leadership Gap in the Workplace, Simmons Study Says," *Women's Health Weekly*, 2011, 1, <http://www.newsrx.com.georgefox.idm.oclc.org/newsletters/Womens-Health-Weekly.html>.

¹⁰⁷ Jeanine Prime and Corinne Moss-Racusin, "Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives: What Change Agents Need to Know," Catalyst, accessed April 22, 2019, https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Engaging_Men_In_Gender_Initiatives_What_Change_Agents_Need_To_Know.pdf.

imperative that men will lead the way in each of these solutions in order to increase the likelihood of success.

Solutions to the Barriers Facing Women and Gender-Balanced Leadership

If influential men in positions of power are convinced they are the best candidates to make a positive impact and are compelled by the need for and benefit of gender diversity, they will look at practical solutions and influence other leaders around them. Solutions to the lack of gender parity for leadership scenarios around the globe that will be explored in detail are: encouraging men to increase opportunities for women by advocating for leadership gender quotas; inspiring men to sponsor female leaders; decreasing the fear of sexual assault in women and false accusations in men in order for sponsoring to take place; and encouraging men to have a positive attitude toward and appreciation for female leaders. These solutions will be described further in this section, but are also presented as an artifact in the form of a website called GenderSynergy.us, which will be discussed in sections four and five.

Men Increasing Opportunities for Women by Advocating for Female Leadership Quotas

Even with women getting educated and placing themselves in the workforce, the increase in percentage of women in C-Suite or board positions is not fast enough. According to the World Economic Forum's 2018 Global Gender Gap Report, at the current rate, 202 years will pass before gender equality is realized.¹⁰⁸ Something different needs to be done in order to more rapidly increase the number of women leading

¹⁰⁸ "The Global Gender Gap Report 2018," World Economic Forum, accessed April 23, 2019, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf.

alongside men. Instituting mandatory quotas that require more equal representation of men and women on boards and executive leadership teams is one of the solutions men in positions of influence can advocate for. Gender quotas have proven to make a difference; in fact, “several European countries have passed and enforce laws for more equal representation of women in boards of directors. Wherever these measures have been taken, there have been spectacular results.”¹⁰⁹ Again, according to the 2018 Corporate Women Directors International (CWDI) report of Fortune Global 200 companies, quotas are working. “Fortune Global 200 companies based in countries with quotas averaged 33% women’s representation on boards compared to 17.1% in countries without quotas, a difference of 15.9%.”¹¹⁰ To achieve faster gender parity, following the lead of countries that have already reached the 50/50 mark in leadership is imperative.

Another reason why quotas are a needed strategy to provide more opportunities for women is that many businesses have the misconception that adding one woman to their board is enough progress toward gender parity. A quota addresses this misconception, pushing companies to “add women until they reach true parity.”¹¹¹ In a recent analysis of S&P 1,500 companies, many more than would be a coincidence had a token two women on their board of directors, “which suggests that companies may stop

¹⁰⁹ Martine Liautaud, *Breaking Through: Stories and Best Practices from Companies That Help Women Succeed* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2016), 27, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119272106>.

¹¹⁰ “2018 CWDI Report: Women Board Directors of Fortune Global 200 Companies,” Globe Women Research & Education Institute, accessed April 25, 2019, <https://globewomen.org/CWDINet/index.php/2018-fortune-global-200-companies/>.

¹¹¹ LeanIn, “Women in the Workplace 2018.”

focusing on gender diversity once they reach a threshold of two women.”¹¹² Women do not want to be a token representation of their gender; they want to be invited as an equal to offer a gender-balanced perspective on important directives and decisions. As stated earlier, mandated gender quotas have been proven around the world to be the fastest way to reach gender leadership parity. One of the largest barriers to this strategy is the sentiment that quotas will encourage companies or countries to only comply to reach their token number of women needed to meet the quota and stop there. The reality is that once women reach a critical mass in leadership the trend tends to continue.¹¹³

Another area of opposition to quotas is that quotas will decrease the quality of the candidates and block healthy competition. The reality is that men and women tend to respond differently to competition, so when you add quotas, more women rise up to participate. One study found when a math test competition introduced affirmative action, where women would have equal representation among winners, the number of female participants increased from 29 to 64 percent. “This result is explained to a large extent by changes in beliefs on the chances of winning the competition and attitudes toward competition. Specifically, men are less overconfident and women less reluctant to compete in groups where their own gender is better represented.”¹¹⁴ This reality is why quotas tend to inspire women to come forward; they know they have a greater chance of

¹¹² Edward H. Chang, Katherine L. Milkman, Dolly Chugh, and Modupe Akinola, “Diversity Thresholds: How Social Norms, Visibility, and Scrutiny Relate to Group Composition,” *Academy of Management Journal* 62, no. 1 (2019): 145, <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2017.0440>.

¹¹³ Andre Spicer, “Justin Trudeau is Right, and How About Quota for Women?” Cable News Network, updated November 5, 2015, <https://www.cnn.com/2015/11/05/opinions/spicer-women-quota/>.

¹¹⁴ Muriel Niederle and Lise Vesterlund, “Explaining the Gender Gap in Math Test Scores: The Role of Competition (Report),” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 24, no. 2 (2010): 140, <https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.24.2.129>.

getting in when they have less fear of being discriminated against because of their gender. Importantly, in both scenarios of the competition, the best participant still won.

Most people who follow gender parity statistics think of the example of Nordic countries, but a very convincing argument for gender quotas comes from the unlikely country of Rwanda. Despite their common association with the genocide of 1994, Rwanda currently holds the top spot in the world for the highest percentage of women holding seats in parliamentary office.¹¹⁵ In the 2018 elections, 61% of the elected seats went to women.¹¹⁶ Why is this the case? Decidedly because in 2003 they passed legislation that required a 30 percent quota for women to hold elected positions.¹¹⁷ This statistic validates the fact that quotas rarely limit the number of women, but actually create a critical mass of female leadership that can continue to rise over time. If U.S. men in positions of power can overcome the American stigma against quotas and understand the appeal for this strategy comes from the “failure of more gradual efforts to change the masculine culture,” the gender gap would close.¹¹⁸ Increasing opportunities for women to join the ranks of top leadership positions can definitely come through gender quotas, but

¹¹⁵ Lisa Baldez, “The Pros and Cons of Gender Quota Laws: What Happens When You Kick Men Out and Let Women In?” *Politics & Gender* 2, no. 1 (2006): 102, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X06061010>.

¹¹⁶ “Women in National Parliaments,” Inter-Parliamentary Union, January 1, 2019, <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

¹¹⁷ “Revisiting Rwanda Five Years After Record-Breaking Parliamentary Elections,” United Nations Women, August 13, 2018, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2018/8/feature-rwanda-women-in-parliament>.

¹¹⁸ Lisa Baldez, “The Pros and Cons of Gender Quota Laws: What Happens When You Kick Men Out and Let Women In?” *Politics & Gender* 2, no. 1 (2006): 103, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X06061010>.

they can also come from men who use their position of influence to create spaces for women even if quotas do not exist.

Inspiring Men to Sponsor Women Leaders

Another solution to closing the gender leadership gap is men in positions of power and influence sponsoring potential women leaders. Most people are more familiar with the concept of mentoring and often confuse the idea of sponsorship with mentoring. According to one expert, the best way to explain the difference between having a mentor and having a sponsor, is, “in short, mentors advise you and sponsors advocate *for* you.”¹¹⁹ The chart below, created by the Diversity and Inclusion department of Stanford’s Linear Accelerator Center, further delineates the difference between the two:

Mentors	vs	Sponsors
Mentors have mentees	→	Sponsors have protégés.
A mentor could be anyone in a position with experience desired by a mentee who can offer advice and support.	→	A sponsor is a senior level staff member invested in a protégé’s career success.
Mentors support mentees through formal or informal discussions about how to build skills, qualities and confidence for career advancement	→	Sponsors promote protégés directly, using their influence and networks to connect them to high-profile assignments, people, pay increases and promotions.
Mentors help mentee craft a career vision	→	Sponsors help drive their protégé’s career vision
Mentors give mentees suggestions on how to expand their network	→	Sponsors give protégés their active network connections and make new connections for them
Mentors provide feedback to aid a mentee’s personal and professional development	→	Sponsors are personally vested in the upward movement of their protégé
Mentors offer insight on how a mentee can increase visibility through finding key projects and people	→	Sponsors champion their protégés visibility, often using their own platforms and reputation as a medium for exposure.
Mentors passively share the “unwritten” rules for advancement in their organization with mentees	→	Sponsors actively model behavior and involve protégés in experiences that enable advancement

Figure 7—Mentors vs Sponsors¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Maryann Baumgarten, “The Key Role of Sponsorship for Diverse Talent,” Stanford Linear Accelerator Center Diversity & Inclusion, accessed April 27, 2019, https://inclusion.slac.stanford.edu/sites/inclusion.slac.stanford.edu/files/The_Key_Role_of_a_Sponsorship_for_Diverse_Talent.pdf.

¹²⁰ Baumgarten, “The Key Role of Sponsorship.”

Women need an advocate in the form of a sponsor who can invest in and have an influence on their upward movement in leadership. The fact that women are not moving, or moving extremely slowly, into top positions as CEOs or members of boards of directors despite making progress in middle and senior management is why women will continue to be the focus of sponsorship programs and strategies.¹²¹ Another term that is sometimes used in place of “sponsor” is “champion,” which communicates the same type of advocating mentality. One author relays the following responses to those interviewed on the subject of women needing male champions within their organization or company: “An effective manager encourages females by asking, ‘Tell me how I can help you be successful in your role. What are the resources you need?’ As one executive director stated, “Male managers need to open the door [figuratively] and give women opportunities for growth.”¹²²

Increasing evidence points to the difference sponsorship makes over mentoring in advancing women, but the most convincing evidence comes from the now-recognizable women in this country who would still possibly be unknown if it was not for a male sponsor. What if Sarah Palin did not have John McCain? Elena Kagan did not have President Obama? Katie Couric did not have Les Moonves, president of CBS? “Behind every one of these highly visible women, you’ll find a powerful *male* backer, who so believes in his protégé that he’s put his own reputation on the line to promote her all the

¹²¹ Marilyn M. Helms, Deborah Elwell Arfken, and Stephanie Bellar, “The Importance of Mentoring and Sponsorship in Women’s Career Development,” *SAM Advanced Management Journal* 81, no. 3 (2016): 5, ProQuest.

¹²² Anna Marie M. Valerio, *Developing Women Leaders: A Guide for Men and Women in Organizations* (West Sussex, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 95, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444315967>.

way to the top.”¹²³ In order to make a significant impact on creating gender parity in the C-Suites and boardrooms across this country and around the world, men need to be bold enough to seek out protégées to lift up into positions of power.

Unfortunately, Kerrie Peraino, former Chief Diversity Officer of American Express Company, observed in seminar after seminar she led that

only one in five women will claim a sponsor; only one in eight lay claim to more than one. She finds the implication of this claim especially troubling for senior women. She feels if you wait until the senior or pre-senior level to figure out who’s backing you, it could be too late...at this level, sponsorship is absolutely critical to advancement.¹²⁴

Peraino was one of the first leaders to realize the power of “sponsorship” and “pioneered a program at American Express in 2008 that fosters powerful alliances across corporate ladder rungs.” Her vision was that every high-potential woman at the company would have two to three advocates pulling for them.¹²⁵ If more organizations and companies will catch a vision like hers and create dynamic sponsorship programs to advance women in leadership, gender parity and gender-balanced leadership can be in sight. Bill Dehn, Director and President of Regional Operations for CH2M HILL, is a man in a position of power who has caught this vision. Bill

uses his influence to make sure that women receive the critical experiences they need to advance. With the support and participation of *senior leaders* at CH2M HILL, the company made a conscious decision to develop high-potential women

¹²³ Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Kerrie Peraino, Laura Sherbin, and Karen Sumberg, “The Sponsor Effect: Breaking Through the Last Glass Ceiling,” Harvard Business Review, January 12, 2011, <https://hbr.org/product/the-sponsor-effect-breaking-through-the-last-glass-ceiling/10428-PDF-ENG>.

¹²⁴ Hewlett, Peraino, Sherbin, and Sumberg, “The Sponsor Effect.”

¹²⁵ Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Kerrie Peraino, Laura Sherbin, and Karen Sumberg, “The Sponsor Effect: Breaking Through the Last Glass Ceiling,” Harvard Business Review, January 12, 2011, <https://hbr.org/product/the-sponsor-effect-breaking-through-the-last-glass-ceiling/10428-PDF-ENG>.

more quickly by valuing potential over seniority in awarding critical assignments and job opportunities.¹²⁶

What an inspiring approach by a senior male leader in a large corporation to make significant progress toward gender parity in their leadership ranks.

Decreasing the Fear of Sexual Harassment in Women and False Accusations in Men

As stated earlier, the fear of sexual harassment in the workplace has been brought to the forefront through social and news media, which has also increased the attention on efforts to address this issue. Due to this increased attention and public spotlight, men are experiencing a level of fear of how they are perceived and if they may be accused of some type of inappropriate behavior toward another woman. If this fear, in both men and women, does not get addressed, gender-balanced leadership teams will have a difficult time thriving. According to the Catalyst report on sexual harassment in the workplace, the first step to eradicate sexual harassment, and therefore reduce the overall fear, is to make a zero-tolerance policy clearly known and visible.¹²⁷ Another expert confirms this truth, stating, “Sexual harassment and other behaviors that contribute to a hostile work environment often exist in gray areas; thus, they are not clear-cut. This instability, lack of naming, and lack of clarity give them power.”¹²⁸ Bringing the issue to light and having

¹²⁶ Heather Foust-Cummings, Sarah Dinolfo, and Jennifer Kohler, “Sponsoring Women to Success,” Catalyst, August 17, 2011, https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/sponsoring_women_to_success.pdf.

¹²⁷ Lauren P. Daley, Dnika J. Travis, and Emily S. Shaffer, “Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: How Companies Can Prepare, Prevent, Respond, and Transform Their Culture,” Catalyst, May 15, 2018, https://www.catalyst.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/sexual_harassment_in_the_workplace_report.pdf.

¹²⁸ Bernadette Marie Calafell, “‘Did It Happen Because of Your Race or Sex?’: University Sexual Harassment Policies and the Move Against Intersectionality,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 35, no. 3 (2014): 84.

respectful conversations about the topic will make a significant impact on lowering the fear level.

Conversations have the power to move from “power over” others to “power with” others, giving the exquisite ability to get on the same page with our fellow humans and experience the same reality by bridging the gaps between “how you see things and how I see things.”¹²⁹ When studying effective leadership, the concept of “power with” vs. “power over” has become an important idea. If leaders take the dictator approach to leadership, people usually respond with some type of fear and see the leader as a threat. A power-with approach provides a platform for joining with those you lead in order to build trust, which is especially important when it comes to men respectfully leading with women. Because women tend to be more comfortable in and naturally function with a power-with approach, this gives them an advantage over men, even though this has not seemed to lessen the gender gap. De Vries says,

There are many explanations given for the gender gap in business...A more controversial answer sometimes given is that many men, in their heart of hearts, are scared of women. Some are, certainly. I know quite a few men who feel comfortable only with other men; they can't be at ease in the company of women. Women, contrariwise, are more likely to feel comfortable with both men and women.¹³⁰

De Vries also speaks to this immense fear men have of being accused of sexual harassment or receiving adverse reactions from their wife, saying,

Clearly, then, there's an enormous amount of ambivalence about male-female interaction, and that ambivalence can lead to the subtle discrimination that undergirds the infamous glass ceiling. Discrimination is bad enough on its own, but from a purely economic point of view it's not in the best interests of the

¹²⁹ Judith E. Glaser, *Conversational Intelligence: How Great Leaders Build Trust and Get Extraordinary Results* (New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2014), xiii, Kindle.

¹³⁰ Manfred Kets De Vries, *The Leadership Mystique: Leading Behavior in the Human Enterprise*, 2nd ed. (New York: Prentice Hall/Financial Times, 2006), 259.

company either. Diversity, as I've indicated before, makes for richer decision making and more creative problem-solving.¹³¹

De Vries understands the fear involved when it comes to men and women leading together, and he also understands the benefits of working past the fear in order to experience gender synergy in leadership.

When it comes to the fear of false accusations, evidence should put their minds at ease. In 2017, the number of rapes or sexual assaults reported in the U.S. was almost 400,000.¹³² However, many more rapes or sexual assaults go unreported; some suggest that only eight to ten percent of women report their rapes to the police, which leaves at least ninety percent of rapes, a staggering 3,600,000 per year, unreported.¹³³ Even though an estimated two to eight percent of sexual assaults or rapes are falsely reported,¹³⁴ this number only affects the number of *reported* rapes; therefore, the amount of false reports in comparison to the total number of sexual assaults and rapes is likely closer to .002 to .008%.¹³⁵ That is, of a likely 4 million rapes or sexual assaults committed each year, only 8,000 to 32,000 are potentially falsely reported. According to Jackie Fielding, “Statistically, it is overwhelmingly more likely that a person alleging sexual assault or

¹³¹ De Vries, *The Leadership Mystique*, 259-260.

¹³² Rachel E. Morgan and Jennifer L Truman, “Criminal Victimization, 2017,” U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, December 2018, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv17.pdf>.

¹³³ Katie Heaney, “Almost No One is Falsely Accused of Rape,” *New York Magazine*, The Cut, October 5, 2018, <https://www.thecut.com/article/false-rape-accusations.html>.

¹³⁴ Kimberly A. Lonsway, Joanne Archambault, and David Lisak, “False Reports: Moving Beyond the Issue to Successfully Investigate and Prosecute Non-Stranger Sexual Assault,” National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2009, <https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018-10/Lisak-False-Reports-Moving-beyond.pdf>.

¹³⁵ Using the statistic that 2 – 8% of rapes are falsely reported, and only 10% are actually reported, then concluding the actual false allegation figure is 2 – 8% of 10%.

rape is telling the truth than making a false accusation.”¹³⁶ Men can use this information to help get over the fear of false accusations and stop using it as an excuse for not pursuing leadership opportunities with women that will close the gender gap.

Since fear is the common denominator with both men and women when talking about the issue of sexual assault, this often-paralyzing emotion must be addressed. According to Mary D. Moller, associate professor of Pacific Lutheran University School of Nursing, and director of Psychiatric Services, Northwest Center for Integrated Health, the potential effects of chronic and ongoing fear on overall, physical, emotional, environmental, and spiritual health can be devastating.¹³⁷ Some of these effects of fear Moller outlines are: autonomic nervous system alterations, dissociation from self, inability to have loving feelings, obsessive-compulsive thoughts, confusion and disgust with God or religion, loss of trust in God and/or clergy, and despair related to perceived loss of spirituality. Moller goes on to explain how fear also affects our ability to learn, which dramatically impacts people’s ability to learn new ways to respectfully relate in a manner that is sexually safe for both. She states,

The brain’s capacity to retrieve previous learning is dependent on specific chemical states, and chemical alterations can distort perception of sensory information thus distorting storage. When the brain is hyper aroused, storage may be incomplete and new information will be stored in nonverbal memory, which distorts the storage of sensory input and the retrieval of information will be affected.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Jackie Fielding, “Men Fear False Allegations. Women Fear Sexual Misconduct, Assault, and Rape,” *Minnesota Law Review*, November 25, 2018, <http://www.minnesotalawreview.org/2018/11/men-fear-false-allegations-women-fear-sexual-misconduct-assault-and-rape/>.

¹³⁷ Jamie Rosenberg, “The Effects of Chronic Fear on a Person’s Health,” *American Journal of Managed Care*, November 11, 2017, <https://www.ajmc.com/conferences/nei-2017/the-effects-of-chronic-fear-on-a-persons-health>.

¹³⁸ Rosenberg, “The Effects of Chronic Fear on a Person’s Health.”

If efforts are not made to reduce the fear, the ability for men and women to learn new ways of interacting and leading together will be hindered.

Many fears contribute to the reasons why employees may not speak up regarding sexual assault or other inappropriate behaviors in the workplace. They often fear negative consequences from their superiors; they fear hurting their relationships with co-workers; they fear being ostracized; and, ultimately, they fear their employment may be threatened.¹³⁹ A number of things can be done to dispel these fears so men and women can freely work and lead together. First, ensure all employees have a convenient avenue to anonymously report anything uncomfortable or considered harassment, and conduct random anonymous surveys to assess the overall comfort level of all employees.¹⁴⁰ Second, increase the level of psychological safety in the workplace. When employees do not feel safe, they will be more likely to remain silent and not speak up when necessary, which perpetuates the lack of reporting, and therefore the lack of needed changes to create safety.¹⁴¹ Third, deliberately engage in courageous conversations about sexual harassment, hearing and respecting each voice, so the topic can become more comfortable to address.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Frances J. Milliken, Elizabeth W. Morrison, and Patricia F. Hewlin, "An Exploratory Study of Employee Silence: Issues That Employees Don't Communicate Upward and Why," *Journal of Management Studies* 40, no. 6 (2003): 1462, <https://doi-org.georgefox.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00387>.

¹⁴⁰ "10 Ways Your Company Can Help Prevent Harassment in the Workplace," National Women's Law Center, January 2018, <https://nwlc-ciw49tixgw5lbab.stackpathdns.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/10-ways-your-company.pdf>.

¹⁴¹ Susan Ashford, Nancy Rothbard, Sandy Piderit, and Jane Dutton, "Out on a Limb: The Role of Context and Impression Management in Selling Gender-equity Issues," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (1998): 33. ProQuest.

¹⁴² Daley, Travis, and Shaffer, "Sexual Harassment in the Workplace."

Challenging Men to Increase Their Value for Women and Eliminating Damaging Stereotypes

Helping influential men understand the why behind the push toward gender-balanced leadership is vital to motivate them to advocate for change. One of the more significant benefits that is sure to get the attention of C-suite leaders is an increase to the bottom-line profits. A McKinsey Global Institute report finds that “\$12 trillion could be added to global GDP by 2025 by advancing women’s equality.”¹⁴³ Also, according to a study that analyzed the 1,643 companies covered by the Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI) World index, “companies with strong female leadership deliver a 36% higher return on equity.”¹⁴⁴ To further emphasize the benefit of having more women in director positions, the Credit Suisse Research Institute reviewed 2,360 global companies and found that “companies with women directors outperformed companies without women directors in return on equity, average growth, and price book value multiples. Bottom line? Companies with at least one woman director had better share price performance than those companies without women for the last six years.”¹⁴⁵ The research supporting the benefits to women leadership representation is compelling,

¹⁴³ Jonathan Woetzel, Anu Madgavkar, Kweilin Ellingrud, Eric Labaye, Sandrine Devillard, Eric Kutcher, James Manyika, Richard Dobbs, and Mekala Krishnan, “How Advancing Women’s Equality Can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth,” McKinsey Global Institute, September 2015, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/employment-and-growth/how-advancing-womens-equality-can-add-12-trillion-to-global-gro>.

¹⁴⁴ “It’s Official: Companies with Women on the Board Perform Better,” World Economic Forum, December 8, 2015, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/12/its-official-women-on-boards-boost-business>.

¹⁴⁵ “Credit Suisse Research Institute: Women in Leading Positions Report,” 20% by 2020 Women on Boards, accessed April 23, 2019, <https://www.2020wob.com/labels/credit-suisse>.

especially in the area where a majority of male executives are focused: the bottom-line profits.

Having more gender diversity in leadership not only increases the profits and performance of almost every company who implements it, but it also increases the overall group intelligence of the leadership teams. In a 2010 study, a group of professors from Carnegie Mellon University and the MIT Center for Collective Intelligence found “that a group’s gender mix is among the factors affecting shared aptitude: The more women a group has, the better it performs on tasks such as brainstorming, decision-making, and problem-solving.”¹⁴⁶ They realized, after analyzing a group’s ability to perform various tasks, “that it was not the intelligence of group members that affected performance but the correlation to the social sensitivity of the groups, and the proportion of females in the groups.”¹⁴⁷ When women are included on the leadership team, the overall performance of the team increases, which means the important decisions coming out of those meetings will show greater excellence and therefore propel the company or organization toward greater success.

Catalyst, the leading research and advisory organization working to advance women in business, conducted a study in 2004 of 353 Fortune 500 companies using two different measures to examine financial performance: Return on Equity (ROE) and Total Return to Shareholders (TRS).

The group of companies with the highest representation of women on their top management teams experienced better financial performance than the group of companies with the lowest women’s representation. This finding holds for both financial measures analyzed: ROE, which is 35.1 percent higher, and TRS, which

¹⁴⁶ Melissa Greenwell, “The Value of Gender-Balanced Leadership,” *Leadership Excellence Essentials* 34, no. 3 (2017): 11, ProQuest.

¹⁴⁷ Greenwell, “The Value of Gender-Balanced Leadership,” 11.

is 34.0 percent higher. Also, in four out of the five industries analyzed, the group of companies with the highest women's representation on their top management teams experienced a higher TRS than the group of companies with the lowest women's representation.¹⁴⁸

Business and Economic Review editor Jan Collins hopes this evidence of increased gender diversity increasing the bottom line will quicken the pace toward gender parity at the top of most companies in America. She finishes her article by saying, "After all, if it's true, as the old saying goes, that what's good for General Motors is good for America, then promoting women in business is doubly good for America."¹⁴⁹ Promoting women in America can also have an important influence on the rest of the world following suit, thus closing the global gender gap even faster.

Another reason increasing gender-balanced leadership is so valuable is because of the unique strengths, attributes, and physiological differences men and women bring to leadership. Interestingly, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania found that their brain connectivity imaging research confirmed common stereotypes of men and women. They discovered that "on average, men are more likely better at learning and performing a single task at hand, like cycling or navigating directions, whereas women have superior memory and social cognition skills, making them more equipped for multitasking and creating solutions that work for a group."¹⁵⁰ These differences in how our brains are

¹⁴⁸ "The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity," Catalyst, 2004, https://www.catalyst.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/01/The_Bottom_Line_Connecting_Corporate_Performance_and_Gender_Diversity.pdf.

¹⁴⁹ Jan Collins, "Women at the Top," *Business and Economic Review* 50, no. 4 (2004): 20-21, ProQuest.

¹⁵⁰ Madhura Ingahlalikar, Alex Smith, Drew Parker, Theodore D. Satterthwaite, Mark A. Elliott, Kosha Ruparel, Hakon Hakonarson, Raquel E. Gur, Ruben C. Gur, and Ragini Verma, "Sex Differences in the Structural Connectome of the Human Brain," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 111, no. 2 (2014): 823, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1316909110>.

wired confirm how much we need one another and can benefit from functioning on a leadership team together. In fact, Ruben Gur, one of the researchers in the study, commented that “it was quite striking how complementary the brains of women and men really are.”¹⁵¹ This research gives even more evidence to support the amazing gender synergy that can be created when men and women lead from their unique strengths.

Not only are male and female brains complementary, many other details of our physiology are as well. Louann Brizendine, Neuropsychiatrist and Professor of Psychiatry at The University of California at San Francisco Medical School and author of *The Female Brain* and *The Male Brain*, reveals the following discoveries about how men and women are built differently:

- In the brain centers for language and hearing, women have 11% more neurons than men; females not only hear better but can discern between a broader range of emotional tones in the human voice. Males will automatically block out certain sounds, which may be because, during male fetal brain development, testosterone impacts the formation of the auditory system, making it block out unwanted noise and repetitious acoustic stimuli.
- A study from Germany confirmed that females can verbally express their emotions better than males, and went on to conclude that both positive and negative emotions are processed differently in males and females post-puberty.
- Women use both sides of the brain to respond to emotional experiences while men use just one. This difference was validated by a study from Stanford University that found when a female was shown an emotional image, several different areas of her brain lit up, while only two lit up in the men.
- Females are slower at spatial tasks than males. When mentally rotating abstract three-dimensional shapes, females will get the right answer as often as males but will take them much longer.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Madhura Ingahalikar, Alex Smith, Drew Parker, Theodore D. Satterthwaite, Mark A. Elliott, Kosha Ruparel, and Hakon Hakonarson, “Brain Connectivity Study Reveals Striking Differences Between Men and Women: Penn Medicine Brain Imaging Study Helps Explain Different Cognitive Strengths in Men and Women,” University of Pennsylvania Medicine, December 2, 2013, <https://www.pennmedicine.org/news/news-releases/2013/december/brain-connectivity-study-revea>.

¹⁵² Louann Brizendine, *The Female Brain* (New York: Harmony Books, 2007), 5, 126-127; Louann Brizendine, *The Male Brain* (New York: Broadway Books, 2010), 27, 41.

The majority of people tend to think gender equality means eliminating the differences between men and women until we look, act, and are treated the same. Unfortunately, this approach eliminates the complementary traits we each bring to leadership as male and female. As Annis and Merron, authors of *Gender Intelligence*, question, “What if the solution isn’t eliminating the differences between men and women themselves, but instead learning how to recognize, value, and leverage those differences?”¹⁵³ Research is revealing, and leaders and their organizations are realizing, that just the advancement of women will not ultimately create more productive, gender-balanced environments, but understanding, showing value, and blending the contributions of men and women together will. These type of leaders and organizations are committed to increasing their overall Gender Intelligence.¹⁵⁴

After studying more than a million brains from more than thirty countries over twenty years, experts have confirmed this complementary nature of men and women in how physiological differences in the male and female brains influence memory, emotion, hearing, and spatial orientation, therefore changing the ways men and women lead.¹⁵⁵

Anthropologist Helen Fisher says it best:

Men and women were built to put their heads together, not only in their professional lives, but in their personal relations as well. As the sexes come together to understand their different strengths, each has the opportunity to gain priceless insight into the other’s world; both have the opportunity to achieve new empathy and rapport.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Barbara Annis and Keith Merron, *Gender Intelligence: Breakthrough Strategies for Increasing Diversity and Improving Your Bottom Line* (New York: Harper Business, 2014), 4, Kindle.

¹⁵⁴ Annis and Merron, *Gender Intelligence*, 6.

¹⁵⁵ Michael Gurian and Barbara Annis, *Leadership and the Sexes: Using Gender Science to Create Success in Business*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 7.

¹⁵⁶ Helen E. Fisher, *The First Sex: The Natural Talents of Women and How They Are Changing the World*, 1st ed. (New York: Random House, 1999), 284.

The more we look at the science behind our gender and not just social and cultural norms, the more empirical evidence documenting all the areas of the male and female brain that support the need for one another is found. Due to the limited space available to elaborate, “the seven main areas of the brain where gender-based differences are most readily observed and lead to notable and predictable patterns in behavior” are as follows: the corpus callosum, anterior cortex, insular cortex, hippocampus, amygdala, prefrontal cortex, and the cerebellum.¹⁵⁷ What a fascinating study into the intricacies of male and female brains and how God brilliantly designed them to synergistically work in tandem to produce amazing results.

Countless evidence of complementary traits in men and women can motivate men in positions of power to take whatever action necessary to increase the number of women leaders beside them. It is important to not just focus on bringing the most qualified leaders together, with no care for gender. There is a reason why God created human beings in His image as male and female, to have dominion over the created order together.¹⁵⁸ Experts in the field confirm this truth in saying,

The major reason our species has been so successful for millions of years is directly due to our gender differences—differences naturally designed to complement, not compete with, the opposite gender. Instead of driving us apart, those differences were made to help us work together—once in hunting and gathering and now in the boardroom.¹⁵⁹

This complementary nature of male and female was God’s divine design, and the research proves His design to be a brilliant one.

¹⁵⁷ Annis and Merron, *Gender Intelligence*, 20-26.

¹⁵⁸ Genesis 1:27-28.

¹⁵⁹ Annis and Merron, *Gender Intelligence*, 14.

In closing, it is also important to note that although this paper focuses on the complementary contributions unique to males and females, consideration has been given to the issues of gender fluidity and LGBTQ individuals. Due to the broad and complex nature of this issue, the need for specificity in the research, and the potential for an unnecessary distraction from the main thesis of men and women leading together, further discussion regarding the unique aspects of gender fluidity, gender transitioning, and LGBTQ issues has deliberately not been included in this paper. There is clear biological and psychological evidence that supports the qualities unique to males and females and each person will need to determine for themselves how they see themselves fitting into this puzzle to present gender synergy leadership. For further information on this topic please refer to the following footnote.¹⁶⁰

Theological Foundation for Gender Equality

It is important to note the theological foundation supporting gender equality presumed in this paper. This section will not give a theological argument for why women are biblically allowed to lead alongside men, but will provide a reference point that theologically undergirds the content of this paper. Overall, an egalitarian approach to scripture is presumed based on the creation account in Genesis 1:26, where the Triune God says, “Let Us make mankind in Our image, in Our likeness, so that they may

¹⁶⁰ “Understanding Gender,” Gender Spectrum, accessed March 7, 2020, <https://www.genderspectrum.org/quick-links/understanding-gender/>; Alison Cook, and Christy Glass, “Do Women Advance Equity? The Effect of Gender Leadership Composition on LGBT-Friendly Policies in American Firms,” *Human Relations* 69, no. 7 (July 2016): 1431–56, <http://doi.org/10.1177/0018726715611734>; García Johnson, Carolina Pía, and Kathleen Otto, “Better Together: A Model for Women and LGBTQ Equality in the Workplace,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 10, no. 272 (February 2019), <http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00272>.

rule...”¹⁶¹ The fact that the Creator created male and female to not only be the complete representation of His image, but also to rule together over His created order is significant.

Ruth Haley Barton summarizes this well:

The creation of humankind in two sexes was intended to reflect God's eternal existence in community—God the Creator, God the Word and God the Life-giving Spirit—functioning together in perfect mutuality and interdependence. Two individuals who were exactly the same could not adequately form the community that would show us who God is. It would take maleness and femaleness together to fully round out the image.¹⁶²

Gender synergy appeared to be God’s design from the very beginning, and when God took the human form of Jesus on the earth, He continued modeling this truth.

Jesus was counter-cultural in the way He treated women. When the religious leaders of the day set expectations for men not to speak to other women, especially foreign women, Jesus repeatedly broke this cultural barrier and engaged with women, as seen in Matthew 15:21-28. Jesus stopped to talk with a Canaanite woman even when His disciples urged Him to send her away. He also taught both men and women, even though this was not done anywhere else in society. In John 4:4-30, Jesus breaks cultural norms and affirms them to spread the gospel by choosing to talk with a Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus compassionately reveals He knows she is living in sin and shares the living water with her that compels her to evangelize her entire town.¹⁶³ Intentionally, Jesus

¹⁶¹ Genesis 1:26 (NIV).

¹⁶² Ruth Haley Barton, *Equal to the Task: Men and Women in Partnership* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), chap. 1, Kindle.

¹⁶³ John 4:39.

chose the Samaritan woman to be His evangelist, just as He chose to reveal His resurrection first to women, entrusting them to be first to share His greatest news of all.¹⁶⁴

Finally, scripture reflects the indiscriminate value of both genders in Galatians 3:28 (NIV): “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Although the debate regarding the validity of men and women leading together within and outside of the church has gone on for centuries, this cannot continue to be the excuse for treating the genders unequally. In the words of Carolyn Custis James, “This is a moment for believers to embody a gospel culture where *both* halves of the church are thriving because following Jesus produces a climate of honor, value, and love and we are serving God together as he intended from the beginning.”¹⁶⁵ God designed men and women to be His image-bearers and to rule this world together as co-leaders so the work of the Kingdom can be accomplished with utmost effectiveness for His glory.

Introducing the Artifact Solution

The solutions to the problem of the lack of gender-balanced leadership presented above will be expanded upon and implemented through a website called GenderSynergy.us. This website is dedicated to educating influential men on the value and uniqueness women bring to the leadership table, and to helping them make a significant impact on closing the gender leadership gap in their sphere of influence. It is

¹⁶⁴ Luke 24:1-12.

¹⁶⁵ Carolyn Custis James, *Half the Church: Recapturing God's Global Vision for Women* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010), 48, Kindle.

also a place where like-minded individuals can come to find resources, support, and encouragement so they do not feel alone in the fight for gender equality.

Addressing the barriers blocking gender-balanced leadership in a practical manner is extremely important in order to create change. Visitors to the Gender Synergy website will be able to gain practical tools and coaching in order to increase the gender balance in their own leadership teams. This will be done in an easy-to-access format and will ideally create camaraderie and positive peer pressure that will become contagious.

Summary

Men in positions of power and influence advocating for gender parity in their organizations is crucial if success is going to be achieved. It is also essential that these men develop a genuine value for what women offer in leadership and decide to advocate for gender balance. As these key male leaders evolve in their value for women, they will need to be instrumental in implementing female leadership quotas that provide a more rapid path toward gender parity. In order to bring more women to the leadership table, these influential men will need to seek out protégées to sponsor so they can open the door to the executive leadership boardroom for them. This will happen with more regularity when the fears of sexual harassment and accusation are decreased and eventually eliminated. According to the 2018 Women in the Workplace study, “Until leaders at all levels understand the problem, are trained to help solve it, and are held accountable for making progress—in other words, until companies require that leaders treat gender diversity like any other business imperative—it will be hard to achieve lasting

change.”¹⁶⁶ The lasting change in the area of gender-balanced leadership is within sight and can be accomplished if men will join forces with women and generate the powerful force that is gender synergy.

¹⁶⁶ LeanIn, “Women in the Workplace 2018.”

SECTION 4: ARTIFACT DESCRIPTION

Artifact Description

The artifact is a fully functioning website found at www.GenderSynergy.us. Its name highlights the purpose of the website, which is bringing men and women together in order to create a synergistic relationship for the best leadership to happen. It is located at the “.us” extension in order to further emphasize the idea of men and women coming together to create a powerful version of “us.” Although the website will be targeted to men in positions of influence and power, it will also contain information and resources helpful to women interested in gender-balanced leadership.

The Home Page of the website includes graphics and photos that will engage the target audience to explore the site further. It also includes a short description that makes the purpose of the website clear, and a place where visitors are invited to submit their email to join the Gender Synergy conversation. Links on the home page menu lead to other pages that include the following: About, Program, Resources, and Take Action.

The “About” link leads to the “Who We Are” page and the “Contact” page. The “Who We Are” page further explains what the Gender Synergy website is about and its mission. This page also introduces the Gender Synergy coaches who are available to help individuals and organizations become more gender balanced in their leadership. The “Contact” page gives people who are seeking help with creating Gender Synergy a place to fill out a contact form.

The “Program” page is where people can go to find tools and resources to help them understand how the uniqueness of men and women can synergistically be brought

together to create Gender Synergy in their place of influence. It clearly explains the Gender Synergy model and the steps to accomplish a more gender-balanced leadership environment. Each step in the Gender Synergy model has a “Learn More” button that takes visitors to additional pages that further expand on the topics of *valuing* women leaders, creating *balance* on leadership teams, and *sponsoring* women leaders. At the bottom of the page is a link for men to take the “Gender Synergy Test”, which is a link that takes them to a Google form. The form has a pre and post question that evaluates their comfort level working with women, several questions educating them on how to increase their comfort level with women, and demographic questions to better understand the population taking the test.

The “Resources” page is a clearinghouse of the many websites currently available on the topic of gender parity and gender-balanced leadership. It also includes websites advocating for women leaders. It is designed to be a one-stop shop for information about gender parity and gender-balanced leadership.

The “Take Action” page is dedicated to inspiring men to take action in a number of different ways in the area of gender equality and gender-balanced leadership. It also includes another place for men to enter their email address, and another link for them to take the “Gender Synergy Test.”

In summary, the Gender Synergy website is a place on the internet committed to championing the cause of gender-balanced leadership. It will educate and empower them to create Gender Synergy with the women they work and lead with and give them a feeling of not being alone in the fight. It will also be a place they can come to access

additional resources on the topic of gender parity and connect with other like-minded people.

Artifact Connection to Thesis

The thesis of this dissertation proposes one of the solutions to the lack of gender-balanced leadership found in companies, organizations, and churches is influential men advocating for and sponsoring female leaders. To this end, GenderSynergy.us seeks to be a place for these influential men to come in order to be inspired and empowered to make an impact on the overall leadership environment at the place where they lead. This website is a practical way for men advocating for female leaders to effect change, as it provides tools and strategies for creating Gender Synergy between leaders. It also provides a camaraderie among other like-minded men and organizations committed to this cause so they do not lose heart or feel alone.

Another connection the Gender Synergy website has with the proposed thesis is the personal support and coaching offered to men and organizations needing help to create a more gender-balanced environment. If influential men in positions of power are one of the keys to solving this lack of gender parity, they will need the support, training and encouragement offered at GenderSynergy.us to bring their place of employment toward more gender balance. The site also includes information and statistics about the benefits women bring to leadership so men can be inspired to adopt a new position on the need for gender-balanced leadership. This artifact not only offers tools and information to help, it also connects leaders with experts who can personally help bring about this proposed solution and make it a reality.

SECTION 5: ARTIFACT SPECIFICATIONS

Artifact Goals and Strategies

The main goals of the artifact are threefold: to inspire men in positions of power to advocate for women leaders in order to help close the gender leadership gap; to provide a simple program for men to follow in order to create gender synergy and increase gender-balanced leadership wherever they lead; to introduce other gender parity resources from around the world by providing a one-stop shop for them to access the many like-minded websites and organizations.

In order to test the Gender Synergy website's success and effectiveness, men in leadership will be personally invited to visit the site and experience each section and provide honest feedback. This feedback will be incorporated into future versions in order to increase the effectiveness and overall impact of the site. Once the website is complete, it will be marketed to multiple men in positions of power around the United States. The success of the site will be based on how many men are committed to furthering gender-balanced leadership by signing up to be a part of the Gender Synergy global movement, how many complete the Gender Synergy program, the Gender Synergy Test, and how many men report the number of women they have sponsored into positions of upper leadership. Like most websites, GenderSynergy.us will need to be periodically updated and maintained to assure its ongoing success and effectiveness.

Artifact Audience

The primary intended audience of the completed artifact is men in positions of power and influence in companies, organizations, and churches across the United States

and eventually around the world. Hopefully women in various leadership positions will also be positively impacted, but the primary target will men. After encountering the website, the hope is that these men will be educated as to the value of women leaders and adopt a new passion that propels them to advocate for women leaders around them in order to close the gender leadership gap and increase gender-balanced leadership.

The overall tasks to be accomplished through the GenderSynergy.us website are as follows:

- Increase the number of men advocating for and sponsoring women leaders
- Equip men with specific tools in order to create Gender Synergy in their place of influence
- Evaluate and increase men's comfort level working and leading alongside women
- Expose website visitors to many other resources and sites advocating for gender parity
- Create a worldwide movement of men who are inspired to be vocal and active in the fight for gender-balanced leadership in all sectors of life

Artifact Scope and Content

The artifact is presented as a website published through Squarespace. It has the web address www.GenderSynergy.us, and is built in standard HTML.

The content of the Gender Synergy website is as follows:

Home Page – This includes engaging graphics and inspirational wording to draw the visitor in to explore more content. It also invites men to join the conversation regarding Gender Synergy.

About Page – This provides a link to the *Who We Are* page and the *Contact* page. The *Who We Are* page further explains what the Gender Synergy website is about and its mission, and the *Contact* page provides a place for visitors to send requests for more help or information.

Program Page – This includes information and tools on how to create Gender Synergy in your sphere of influence and additional links to pages that expand on the three steps to creating Gender Synergy. It also includes a link to a Gender Synergy Test men can take.

Resources Page – This page lists the many websites currently available on the topic of gender parity and gender-balanced leadership. It also includes websites advocating for women leaders, since that is the natural path to increase the number of men and women leading together.

Take Action Page – This page provides a list of action steps men can take in order to make a difference in the area of gender parity and gender-balanced leadership. It also provides another opportunity to submit their email address and take the Gender Synergy Test.

Artifact Budget

In terms of budget for this project, the overall initial cost to develop the website and secure a hosting platform will be approximately \$1,000 to \$2,000, depending on the time required to develop the site. There will also be an ongoing cost of approximately \$140 to \$220 per year for the web hosting of the site through Squarespace, and approximately \$500 per year for web advertising and social media promotion. In terms of other ongoing costs, it will be assumed that maintenance and updating the website will be taken care of in-house, so there will be no ongoing expense for this. The hardware needed

to create and maintain the website will be an up-to-date computer with internet access. No additional software or equipment will be needed.

Artifact Promotion and Future Development

In order to create awareness of and interest in the Gender Synergy website, internet and social media advertisements will be planned. Also, promotional emails will be sent to key leaders in hopes to create a grassroots groundswell movement of influential men who start vocalizing the need for gender-balanced leadership. As the Gender Synergy program gets traction with key leaders, the hope is that word-of-mouth promotion will become natural and the number of leaders aware of and interested in Gender Synergy will increase exponentially.

In terms of future development of the artifact, it is the hope to continue to add articles and resources to the Gender Synergy website in order to further equip and train leaders to be successful in their quest to close the gender leadership gap and bring more women up the leadership ranks. In addition, the hope is to gather valuable information from the “Gender Synergy Test” Google form in order to further understand what men need to increase their comfort level with women leaders. It is also a goal that GenderSynergy.us will become a mainstream resource for leaders all over the world, which increases networking possibilities that help the United States learn from other countries that have a much higher gender parity score. As a result of this networking and

learning, the larger goal is for the United States to move up, rather than down, the list of countries on the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ "The Global Gender Gap Report 2018," World Economic Forum, accessed May 21, 2019, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2018.pdf.

SECTION 6: POSTSCRIPT

Summary of Execution

First of all, the process of deciding to attain a Doctor of Ministry from Portland Seminary and then deciding on a topic of research was a profoundly divine experience. In the course of study for my bachelor's degree in religion from Azusa Pacific University, I was required to have a ministry internship during my senior year. My internship ended up being a high school pastor position at a local church. Knowing I would have teenage girls in the ministry, I decided to seek out a woman to help me lead and specifically care for the girls. The leader I chose had a profound impact on me and my ministry, and later became my wife. In the process of leading side by side with her, I became overwhelmed with how much I truly needed her and was immensely impressed with the unique gifts and perspective she brought to the ministry. We led every aspect of the ministry together, from the planning to the presenting, which caused me early on to decide to give her half of the stipend the church paid me. This decision I made was surprising to her but made complete sense for me since the ministry could not happen without her. In less than a year, the high school ministry exploded, almost matching the size of the entire congregation, and I attributed this to the synergistic way in which my wife and I led together. I had done ministry with other men, but never experienced the incredible dynamic that came with our egalitarian approach to leadership.

Little did I know this experience would become the starting point of my passionate journey toward advocating for gender-balanced leadership. Unfortunately, I did not realize how much I would be among the minority who believed this way. Gender

equality became a cause I could not ignore. I would take every opportunity to promote the need for a male/female balance on the leadership teams I was a part of. Because of this value, I ended up being invited to be a part of a national task force addressing the issue of women in leadership conducted by the Church of God (Anderson, IN). On the way to the first meeting, I devoured a life-changing book by Ruth Haley Barton called *Equal to the Task*, which beautifully put words to what I was wanting to live out. I was able to experience a miraculous revival and reconciliation among the group of fifteen women and fifteen men on the task force as a result of the confession I initiated toward the women in the group for the oppression and lack of respect “us men” had inflicted on them. I ended up sharing a story about a conversation I had with my then-three-year-old daughter, McKenna, in one of the meetings. I had asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up, and after she rattled off “ballerina and a teacher,” I asked her, “What about being a pastor?” to which she replied, “I can’t be a pastor Daddy, I’m not a boy.” This broke my wife’s and my hearts and this story later made its way into the promotional video the task force produced. This powerful experience became another confirmation that I was called to make an impact on gender reconciliation and fight for gender-balanced leadership in every sector of society.

After counseling thousands of individuals and couples over the last twenty years in private practice, it was time to look at what God had for me in this next season. The idea of joining with my wife again to become national figures who championed women leaders and coached leaders and organizations on the principles of Gender Synergy became exciting. The Leadership and Global Perspectives program at Portland Seminary was the perfect fit for us to become equipped for this task. Gender-balanced leadership

became an obvious choice when it came to choosing a topic of research, but I had no idea what I would discover after diving in.

It was overwhelming at first when I came to realize how long the fight for gender equality had been going on with very little progress. I was encouraged when I found other people and organizations also working to help close the gender leadership gap. As I researched the topic of gender equality and gender-balanced leadership, I discovered the many barriers that are keeping women from breaking into upper leadership and began to see a theme. I then decided to focus on four of the top barriers preventing men and women from leading together and research how others have addressed these issues. In the process of uncovering the various approaches, the solution that rose to the surface was influential men being the key to advancing women to lead beside them. Although other solutions were explored and documented, the necessity for men who currently hold the positions of power to be the ones who champion this cause became evident. As I addressed the four barriers, I knew I needed to find a way to reach these men if I was going to have any chance of seeing my decades-long dream of gender equality become a reality. It was at this point that I came up with the idea of creating the GenderSynergy.us website as my artifact as the ultimate solution to inspiring, educating, and empowering these influential men to fight for gender-balanced leadership.

Analysis of the Approach

As I researched the topic of gender-balanced leadership and gender parity, I found many approaches to address the issue have been attempted all over the world. Many have thought the focus needed to be on making sure women are educated and empowered to

place themselves in a position to be considered for leadership roles. However, research shows that women have already educated themselves more than men and have placed themselves in the workforce, which convinced me that focusing on women alone was not the answer. I also noticed some would focus on changing policies that would open the door for more women to be considered for leadership, but the more I studied, I came to the realization that the ones making and changing policy are men.

Focusing on the men who are already in the positions of power became an obvious answer. What also rose to the surface in my research were prominent men around the country and the world who have decided to champion women leaders and advocate for gender-balanced leadership. These men were able to make significant changes quickly and with more ease than women or men in less influential positions. When men rise up and decide to bring women alongside them in leadership, they are able to do what women could not do on their own. If the goal is to get more women to the top, it makes sense to start at the top and convince men to reach down and offer a hand to their sisters. This strategy becomes even more significant when it appears on the outside to offer no benefit to the men already in leadership to make sacrifices and efforts to bring women alongside. Ironically, when men discover the statistics that prove the economic benefits of having a more gender-balanced leadership team, they delight in the amazing win-win!

Conclusion

The benefits I have gained from this process of researching the topic of gender-balanced leadership are immense. I first learned how much I did not know on the topic, and how much I was eager to learn so I could someday be considered an expert on the

topic. Through this process, I also realized how truly passionate I am about men and women leading together effectively, and how I want to devote the rest of my life to closing the gender leadership gap once and for all. I also became empowered and encouraged in the process when I gained a clearer understanding of the problem and a more effective focus on the solutions. This process has further emboldened me to be a champion for women leaders all over the globe and more committed to convincing other men to stand with me in the fight for gender parity. This egalitarian journey that started 27 years ago in college with the woman who became my wife has culminated with this dissertation research, which I hope makes an impact on the future culture of leadership in America so my amazing daughter can have even more opportunities to lead than her mother has.

I believe more research needs to be done into the psychology behind men changing their minds about women leaders. I also think more can be done to discover how to change attitudes about quotas in order to make faster changes that do not rely on the attitudes and beliefs of those in power. In light of the #MeToo movement and the impact it has had on increasing the awareness of the treatment of women, I think more can be done to explore avenues that would create a similar platform for like-minded men to show their support for female leaders (e.g., #HeForShe). This idea is potentially something I would like to incorporate into my Gender Synergy website, and my hope is for some type of grassroots movement to take the nation by storm.

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