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Summary

In the public and private sectors, women continue to address multiple hurdles despite diversity and equity initiatives. Women have made tremendous strides in the workforce but are still a minority in leadership positions worldwide in multiple sectors, including nonprofit, corporate, government, medicine, education, military, and religion. In the United States women represent 60% of bachelor's degrees earned at universities and outpace men in master's and doctoral programs. However, a significant body of research illustrates that women's upward mobility has been concentrated in middle management positions. Women hold 52% of all management and professional roles in the U.S. job market, including physicians and attorneys. Yet women fall behind in representation in senior level positions. In the legal profession, for example, women represent 45% of associates but only 22.7% are partners. In medicine, women represent 40% of all physicians and surgeons but only 16% are permanent medical school deans. In academia, women surpass men in doctorates but only 32% are full professors. Furthermore, only 5% of chief executive officers (CEOs) in Fortune 500 companies and 19% of the board members in companies included in Standard & Poor's (S&P) Composite 1500 Index are women. Progress is even more elusive for women of color despite making up 38.3% of the female civilian labor force. Only two women of color are Fortune 500 CEOs and only 4.7% of women are executive or senior level official managers in S&P 1500 companies.

There are more women in leadership positions in the public sector than in the private sector. In 2014, 43.5% of women between the ages of 23 and 34 were managers at public companies, compared to 26% in similar positions in the private sector. In 2018, 127 women were elected to the U.S. Congress and 47 of those serving in 2018 were women of color. In addition, the first Native American woman, first Muslim woman, and Congress's youngest woman were elected in that year. However, there is still progress to be made to close the gap, especially in senior-level positions. The significance of these statistics is staggering and confirms the need for attention. The percentage of women holding leadership positions in the public and private sectors, especially in business and education, has grown steadily in the past decade. However, subtle barriers like bias and stereotypes unfavorably encumber women's career progression and are often used to explain the lack of women in leadership positions.

Invisible Barriers and Women's Career Progression

The United States has made progress in areas relating to gender equity, including the legalization of same-sex marriage, the inclusion of the third gender option in New York City, and the prominent discussion of sexual harassment and discrimination in the public and private sectors thanks to movements such as #MeToo and Time's Up. Despite the work in dismantling overt discrimination, forming new movements, and organizational change efforts, however, the leadership gap crisis is stubbornly persistent (Trefalt, 2011). The country faces a persistent gender gap in leadership that is a concern for aspiring women and organizations that are seeking more diverse leadership.

For example, although women have outpaced men in attaining higher levels of education since 1988, less than 6% of Fortune 500 chief executive officers (CEOs) are women. In STEM professions, women hold less than a quarter (23%) of senior-level positions (Cann & Salyer, 2018). The lack of women in leadership has broad social equity implications, including the continuing gender pay gap (Mills & Newman, 2002). Most women who are achieving leadership success are also faced with a wage gap. The gender pay gap is the gap between what men and women are paid. It is commonly defined as the median annual pay of all women who work full time and year round, compared to the pay of a similar cohort of men (American Association of University Women [AAUW], 2019). In 2019, the Pew Research Center published its 2018 analysis of hourly earnings and revealed that women make 85% of what men earn (Graf, Brown, & Patten, 2019). According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report of 2018, the overall global gender gap will take 108 years to close across 106 countries (Cann & Salyer, 2018). Moreover, in North America, the gender pay gap is projected to last longer, closing in 165 years (Costigan, 2007).

The gender pay gap is real, persistent, and harmful to women's economic security and career growth (AAUW, 2019). Across almost every occupation and industry, women earn less than men. Due to more visibility on the issue, the pay gap is closing, but not fast enough (Hayes, 2019). Women in leadership or desiring growth to a leadership position face the challenge of equal pay. The leadership crisis is a result of many factors beyond the gender pay gap, including occupational segregation, bias against working mothers, and pay discrimination as well as racial bias, access to education, and age. Understanding the leadership challenges women face is critical to addressing this issue.

Scholars use a variety of metaphors to describe the most common leadership challenges for women: sticky floors, glass ceilings, glass cliffs, and the labyrinth, among others (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995; Ryan & Haslam, 2005; Sabharwal, 2015). "Glass ceiling," or "a transparent barrier that keeps women from rising above a certain level in corporations" (Morrison, Veslor, & White, 1994, p. 13) is a term adopted across various disciplines including public administration; however, the term is becoming an outdated standard. Instead, the metaphor "glass cliff," a phenomenon in which women seem more likely to be put in charge of an organization at a crisis point (Salam, 2015), magnifies the challenges

to women's success (Segal & Tsang, 2019). The concept of the glass cliff highlights the necessity of going beyond breaking the glass ceiling and illustrates the overt sexism that exists even in situations where women are in senior leadership positions. Women confronted with these situations are more likely to leave the position (Sabharwal, 2015). The labyrinth describes a woman's career as a puzzle with challenges and obstacles to overcome, but some may reach the center and find success (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Similarly, a "double-bind" is when women are disliked for being direct or decisive but are not seen as leaders when they are nice and nurturing (Salam, 2015, p. 2). In addition, the "motherhood penalty" is for the disadvantages—financial and otherwise—faced by mothers working outside the home. Nevertheless, the linguistics of gender and racial bias are evolving. For example, New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez prefers "break the table" or "build our own house," and Oprah has used the phrases "rock the boat" and "reinventing the game" (Salam, 2015, p. 2).

In short, the metaphors are evolving with women's success and new challenges, especially in a new political period. Furthermore, these metaphors are usually tied in when describing women and their management styles. In particular, women are found to have a more interactive leadership style (Schachter, 2017), while men adopt a more autocratic or directive style (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). However, even when women adopt a masculine management style they run the risk of being judged as insufficiently nice, and by contrast, men face less judgment (Eagly et al., 1995). Nevertheless, each of these metaphors illustrates how women are kept out of or are hurt in senior level spots. For example, even when women earn a leadership position, they find themselves on a glass cliff, with riskier and more precarious positions than men (Ryan & Haslam, 2005). Similarly, evidence suggests that women who attain these leadership roles are often under close scrutiny in their performance. Moreover, Guy (1993) indicates that the glass ceiling can partially be explained by tokenism and sex-role expectations. For example, women who earn top roles and respond directly to the expectations of a group they represent will lose credibility in the eyes of the dominant group, and if they ignore their own group they are accused of being tokens. This leaves women who find career advancement in a difficult position. In addition, these concepts illustrate how automatically women are excluded from opportunities for growth when they are only concentrated in lower positions and are denied promotion opportunities that may lead to management positions (Bishu & Alkadry, 2017). Obstacles and challenges for women in leadership positions do exist, and gender assumptions continue to restrict women's work despite efforts to address them that include mentoring programs, training, and education awareness. Camilla Stivers (2002a) emphasizes how metaphors used to describe women in leadership have created dilemmas between genders, especially in the public sector. Stivers argues that there is a gender presence in public administration and that refusing to recognize it leads to subtle discrimination on the basis of sex. Concluding, if social equity is to be achieved, changes in organizational structure and culture are a must. Stivers points out that fundamental bureaucratic institutions are altered and to continue efforts for women and women of color it will continue to be a relentless exercise (Riccucci, 2009). Moreover,

the structural nature of public administration masculine bias means that equal opportunity strategies for advancing women's careers in public service, important as they are is a matter of sheer justice, cannot be counted on in and of themselves to change public administration affairs.

(Stivers, 2002a, p. 12)

So, what is keeping women from top positions?

One answer is the invisible barriers present in gendered organizations that prevent women from achieving leadership positions. Many invisible barriers to women's career progression have been identified, including gender bias, gender stereotypes, implicit bias, and, specifically, second-generation gender bias. Significant barriers such as gender stereotypes are widely problematic as they tend to oversimplify reality by emphasizing the natural differences between men and women (Costigan, 2007). Perceptions from stereotypes inhibit women's advancement because they result in women being overlooked, underestimated, and underutilized in organizations (Eagly & Carli, 2007). This is especially true in organizations where men outnumber women and where stereotypes result in fast assumptions of characteristics of masculinity and femininity. Women are seen as having communal qualities, which convey compassion for others, such as caring and nurturing behaviors, while men are seen as having agentic qualities that convey assertion and control, such as aggressive and dominant behaviors. By the same token, the qualities attached to women are what hinder women in the gender pay gap crisis. Emotional labor is the missing link in the chain of events that produces lower wages for jobs held primarily by women (Guy & Newman, 2004). Emotional labor can also account for job segregation among men and women. Emotional labor is seen as the "softer" emotions that are connected with tasks for nurturing and caring behaviors. These emotions are viewed as essential in public sector professions (e.g., health and human services), education careers, and paraprofessional jobs, and among clerical staff, administrative assistants, receptionists, and secretaries.

The lack of women representation or representativeness in public service bureaucracies is an issue with a long history across American administrations (Bowling, Kelleher, Jones, & Wright, 2006). Scholars of representative bureaucracies argue that the demographic composition of the public sector is the nature and substance of governmental outputs (Dolan, 2004). Meanwhile, feminist scholars argue that bureaucracy is a male-dominated field that diminish gender-neutral bureaucratic roles and responsibilities. Moreover, women that advance in the public sector to managerial and higher-level positions often find themselves put in stereotypical feminine areas like education, health, and social services, and in less powerful positions than their male colleagues. Consequently, research finds that in bureaucratic policy making, decisions vary between distributive and redistributive agencies. For instance, distributive policies make a higher impact on decision and policy making, whereas redistributive policies are more subtle and contribute substantially less. Given these points, this widely affects women and puts them at a huge disadvantage as women are more likely to be hired in redistributive agencies and majority of men are employed in distributive agencies. Highlighting, once again, that in the public sector comparable positions do not lead to equal power especially when gender intervenes.

By comparison, second-generation bias is a powerful yet invisible threat to women's career progression. Workplace equity has entered a new state and cognitive bias; structures of decision making and patterns of interaction have replaced racism and sexism as the frontier of inequality (Strum, 2001). Thus, sex discrimination and discriminatory issues are found to depart from the "first generation" parts of bias. Second-generation bias is embedded in organizational practices and can be hard to detect (Ibarra, Ely, & Kolb, 2013). Yet findings suggest that making people aware of such bias brings possible opportunities for change. Decker (2019) maintains that the bias women face is more harmful and destructive than the blatant discrimination of earlier decades. This article focuses on bias, and specifically second-generation gender bias.

Women in Leadership: Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes and gender inequities are continued concerns found in areas of the workforce, education, economic participation, and empowerment. Gender stereotypes are generalizations about the attributes of men and women (Heilman, 2012). Complex issues like sex and gender representation prompt new needed policy and administrative responses within public agencies (D'Agostino & Elias, 2017). Furthermore, women face a unique challenge in tackleing leadership positions due to the fact that they are viewed negatively when adopting the perceived characteristics of leadership success (Heilman, 2012). Moreover, prejudice toward female leaders occurs because of inconsistencies that exist between characteristics associated with female gender stereotypes and those associated with typical leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Archer (2013) introduces the idea of performance effects related to negative stereotyping and introduces the term "stereotype threat," which is defined as "something that occurs when an individual is in a position to confirm negative stereotypes that disparages the performance ability of members of their own social group" (Archer, 2013, p. 362). An example of a stereotype threat would be an African American student's academic underperformance relative to a Caucasian student (Archer, 2013). Societal roles and congruity theory do not support women acting out of societal-defined characteristics and acting out results in gender stereotyping (Pafford, 2016; Schein, 1975). Ibarra and Petriglieri (2016) suggest that gender stereotyping expectations are more likely to elicit gender-linked behavior, which places women in a place filled with disadvantages. In addition, social stereotypes reflect perceivers' observations of what people do in life (Eagly, Steffen, & Manis, 1984). They reflect the distribution of groups into broader aspects of social structure, such as social class.

Gender roles are the social traits and behaviors that society may assign to men or women (Ellemers, 2018). Society has assigned and accepted specific roles for each gender and if the roles are discordant with societal gender roles there is a judgmental view or obvious prejudice toward an individual (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Alkadry and Tower (2015) argue that any difference between women and men is caused by society, and therefore women pay a higher cost than men for their careers due to society's gender roles, which assign the caring role to women. The danger of socialization into specific gender roles is that it can have harsh implications on physical behavior (Alkadry & Tower, 2015, pp. 16–17). The idea of assigned gender roles can be explained through the idea of descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes that are stereotypical assumptions of what men and women are like and are consistent through time (Heilman, 2012). Moreover, patriarchal notions of autonomy, authority, and brotherhood restrict the ability of women to be leaders in public administration

(Draimin, 1993). Specific roles assigned to and accepted for each gender indicate that women should be communal, which conveys a compassionate concern for others that includes caring and nurturing qualities, and men should have agentic qualities, which convey assertion, control, aggression and dominant behaviors (Eagly & Carli, 2007). These ideas are dangerous and reinforce perceptions rooted in gender stereotypes that are inherently wrong. These wrong perceptions that women lack the qualities that are commonly associated with an effective leader maintain the gender gap in leadership itself (Costigan, 2007).

In fact, researchers have found that women who violate gender norms and do not conform to prescribed role behaviors experience lower pay in the workforce and are less likely to be hired or promoted (Heilman, 2012). Guy argues that gender roles manifest themselves in the workplace and affect everything from jobs and career assignments to salary (Guy, 2004, as cited in D'Agostino & Elias, 2017). In addition, women are expected to behave "nicely" and if they do not, they receive the backlash effect and face workplace discrimination. Over time sanctions for female competence have been softened, but women are still not allowed to exhibit social dominance, which conflicts with prescriptive communal behaviors (Hacker, 1951). Furthermore, research reveals an argument that there is a dichotomy between rationale and emotive aspects of work (Guy & Newman, 2004). Equally, penalties for women who violate gender norms can take many forms, especially in the workforce. For instance, women who are considered cold and interpersonally hostile are disliked, and therefore they receive fewer recommendations for organizational rewards (Heilman, 2012). Women and men hold one another to different standards when it comes to the type of emotional expression that is considered normal (Guy & Newman, 2004). Women who do not fulfill gender stereotypical prescriptions can face decrements in performance evaluation outcomes (Heilman, 2012). In short, the central argument is that gender stereotypes give rise to bias judgments and lead to career-hindering perception and discriminatory decision making, which impedes women's advancement.

Finally, to some extent, differences between men and women are based on stereotypical images, which lead to disparity in the workforce, pay, and judgments based on sex (Heilman, 2012). In fact, there are many preconceived stereotypical beliefs about men and women. Eagly et al. (1984) suggest that women are expected to have lower salaries than men regardless of job title (Eagly et al., 1984). The association with these accepted roles for gender creates obstacles for women to rise in leadership, and therefore women find themselves walking a fine line between the two opposing sets of expectations (Andrews, 2019). Ultimately, there needs to be a shift in social and workplace culture to remove the stigma of assigned roles and therefore reduce the many implications of gender stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes are one of the key barriers to women's advancement in leadership roles, leaving women with limited, conflicting, and unfavorable options no matter how they choose to lead (Costigan, 2007). Public administration has slowly evolved in the past few decades to focus on gender differences and disparities found in social roles (Bishu & Alkadry, 2017). The think-manager-think-male framework is a concept originally put forward by Schein (1975). However, it is discussed in literature by Sabharwal (2015), who states that the traits associated with men are the same traits associated with leaders. Therefore, men seem to possess the qualities that make an effective leader, and this male bias does not allow others to see women's leadership potential. As noted previously, women's limitations are often illustrated through various metaphors: glass ceilings, sticky floors, glass walls, glass

escalators and more. However, these metaphors no longer capture the gendered dynamics in the workplace and have evolved because women's positions and challenges have evolved (Eagly & Carli, 2007). New metaphors, such as a glass cliff (Sabharwal, 2015), explain the challenges women face in leadership positions. Eagly and Carli (2007), introduce the labyrinth metaphor to describe that women's leadership aspirations are not simple or direct and require persistence and careful analysis.

The implications of gender stereotypes on women in leadership also include promotion, hiring, firing, and positive performance evaluations. Specifically, women are found to be rated lower in workplace performance evaluations, which play a crucial role in moving up the management ladder. Findings suggest that raters who hold traditional stereotypes of women will associate ineffectiveness to women and often attribute ineffective performance to women (Bauer & Baltes, 2002). Moreover, women are seen as less likely than men to be able to solve problems. The damaging effects of women's perceived problem-solving ineffectiveness debilitates women's advancement. By casting doubt on women's problem-solving competence, stereotypes limit their ability to build critical interpersonal power. In addition, a leader's problem-solving reputation is a key source of credibility with subordinates (Costigan, 2007). Thus, the negative stereotypes surrounding this skill for women make it difficult to lead, especially in masculine fields. Given these points, there is evidence supporting the notion that negative reactions to successful women are provoked by the perceptions that these women have violated gender stereotypes (Heilman, 2012). Gender stereotypes are a challenge women face in leadership, and so is implicit bias. Unlike gender stereotypes, there is very little literature on implicit bias as a barrier for women in public sector leadership, but research into this phenomenon is on the rise.

Women in Leadership: Gender and Implicit Bias

It is without a doubt that women are successfully moving forward in the job force. As discussed, they are educationally surpassing men. However, persistent gender inequity is still found in the public and private sectors and is what drives the substantial underrepresentation of women in senior level positions. So, what is happening in between the lower and upper rungs to leadership positions as women progress through the ranks? Despite the progress made by women in the workforce, they remain limited within the C-suite.

Women are found to meet more resistance and isolation as they move up the ranks and research in psychology has shown over and over that one key obstacle to women's leadership is unconscious or implicit bias (Akram, 2018). Implicit bias is the unconscious tendency to associate certain qualities with certain groups (Baer, Heiligtag, & Samandari, 2017). Biases affect how we process information, make decisions, and construct strategies. Implicit gender bias is present in all individuals, regardless of gender, due to exposure to stereotypes through common socialization experiences (Rogus-Pulia, Humbert, Kolehmainen, & Carnes, 2018). However, despite voluminous research indicating the impact of implicit bias on women leadership, its inclusion in the public administration scholarship is lacking. There is some public administration literature on stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination (Bishu & Alkadry, 2017; Guy & Newman, 2004; Sabharwal, 2015; Schachter, 2017; Stivers, 2002b), but it misses the mark on understanding barriers like second-generation gender bias and how it bleeds into workplace inequity, education, and women's advancement.

The concept of bias is relevant in the workplace; for instance, it contributes to biased expectations, which leads to biased evaluations, and then becomes the basis of organizational decision making (Heilman, 2012). Many studies in the field of organizational behavior have been replicated hundreds of times and have found that people can possess attitudes, stereotypes, and prejudice in the absence of intention, awareness, deliberation, or effort (Jost, Blair, Dasgupta, & Hardin, 2009). Implicit bias subconsciously shapes how people view the world and governs decision making. Studies have confirmed unconscious bias with regard to workplace practices, disability, age, skin color, obesity, and more (Sanchez-Hucles, Davis, & Anderson, 2010). Societal and cultural stereotypes about men and women lead to implicit gender bias, which widely affects women in the workforce and damages their changes for upward mobility (Rogus-Pulia et al., 2018).

In the past, women were kept out of the workplace by rules and policies; however, subtle or implicit discrimination remains (Akram, 2018). As a consequence, women are put in a bind, to "direct while not being directive" (Rudman & Glick, 2001, p. 9). They are forced to unimaginably use the prescription to be feminine while simultaneously fulfilling agentic requisites, which can be a social, economic, and psychological strain. Organizations' lack of awareness of implicit bias makes women vulnerable to the consequences of such bias. Organizations' failure to question and change common prevailing notions about what constitutes an appropriate leader is a crucial problem (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). Moreover, the failure of organizations to change workplace practices is due in part to the limited conception of gender traditionally used to define and address the problems of gender equity. To ensure women's progression and the removal of implicit gender bias in the workforce, organizations must recognize the existence of implicit gender bias and implement evidence-based strategies to minimize its potentially damaging effects on future workplace progression (Rogus-Pulia et al., 2018). Finally, workplace equity is an evolving concern that has become more elusive. For example, second-generation bias is a phenomenon that keeps women out of decision-making opportunities in top-level positions. It is subtle, covert, and at times unintentional; it is a phenomenon that blocks women's power and potential (Guy, 2014).

Women in Leadership: Second-Generation Gender Bias

The concept of second-generation gender bias has recently been proposed as a primary cause of gender leadership disparity at work (Ibarra et al., 2013). However, there is very little research that exclusively discusses the phenomenon of second-generation bias and women in leadership. Workplace equity is more than just the removal of gender bias and stereotypes. Racial and gender inequity in the workforce persist and the explanations and solutions have become more complex and elusive (Strum, 2001). Second-generation bias is more deliberate than first-generation bias (Ibarra et al., 2013). Second-generation bias is defined as "the powerful yet often invisible barriers to women's advancement that arise from cultural beliefs about gender, as well as workplace structures, practices and patterns of interaction that inadvertently favor men" (Ibarra et al., 2013, p. 2). Most women work hard to take gender out of the equation and want to be recognized for sheer skills and talent. However, all forms of bias are in existence, especially in workplace organizations. Many women are unaware of the variations of bias that are holding them back from progression (Ibarra & Petriglieri, 2016).

Moreover, second-generation bias does not produce direct immediate harm to individuals, rather it creates a certain context in which women fail to thrive or meet their full potential (Ibarra et al., 2013).

In public administration the prevalence of gender as a topic is limited. Schachter (2017) quotes Stivers's argument that "public administration is structurally male despite its gender neutrality." Schachter (2017, p. 2) also argues that the only way to unmask this structure is to include courses in Masters of Public Administration (MPA) programs that would confront second-generation bias. It emphasizes the importance of MPA courses in rebuilding public administration and educating future managers. D'Agostino, Levine, and Sabharwal (2019) state that introductory textbooks in public administration and leadership courses leave out material on second-generation gender bias and find that, unlike courses that focus on gender roles (66.7%) and gender stereotypes and negotiations (55.6%), courses that do cover second-generation bias do not explicitly cover them as part of the negotiating courses (D'Agostino et al., 2019). This lack of discussion is unfortunate and promotes the argument that more literature needs to be available for public administration textbooks. More information on second-generation bias for the field of public administration could promote future women leader roles in the workplace (D'Agostino et al., 2019; Schachter, 2017).

Organizations inadvertently undermine the issues of women that seek leadership roles by not addressing policies and practices that communicate the mismatch that women face and how people tend to associate the qualities and expectations of women (Ibarra et al., 2013). Research is also investigating established frameworks for various organizations. First, workplace patterns, salary, and promotion ladders have been traditionally constructed mainly by and for men, thus creating bias structures that are supportive of men's experience and life circumstances. Therefore, women are subject to inadvertent systematic discrimination (Opoku & Williams, 2018). Second, the traits that are expected of leaders may disadvantage women because they are not suited for women's life circumstances. For example, priorities and family responsibilities hinder women differently than men in maintaining leadership roles (Akram, 2018). Women are also more likely to be the primary caregiver or only parent and face the problem of unpaid leave after giving birth ("Barriers and Bias," 2016). In the public sector, only 12% of women have paid family leave through their employer. In addition, organizational culture still favors "presenteeism"; employees who are found to be in the office are seen as better performers. Also, organizations do not comprehend the complexities of balancing work-family demands due to inflexible working hours (Opoku & Williams, 2018). As a result, women are overlooked for promotions and new assignments and are often penalized for not conforming to prescribed role behaviors (Heilman, 2012). This shows how culture and structure can be viewed as working together and undermining a woman's efforts. More important, Bishu and Alkadry (2017) find that promotion at higher levels of organizational hierarchy is less persistent in the public sector than the private and multisectors.

Research reveals that second-generation gender bias hinders the career advancement and leadership identity of women and the persistent gender leadership gap is unlikely to change unless it is addressed (Opoku & Williams, 2018). The first-generation form of workplace regulation is inadequate to handle the complexities of second-generation gender bias (Strum, 2001). Accordingly, to begin to address the issue is to become aware of practices that will elevate the same outcome. For instance, men and women managers are responsible for deepening their understanding of second-generation bias and the differential impact on men's

and women's careers (Trefalt, 2011). Furthermore, male bosses and mentors need to make intentional time and effort to hire and promote women in their organizations. Women seeking out leadership positions need to be strategic in seeking out sponsors as well as mentors. Also, women seeking out leadership positions need to make themselves aware of second-generation bias issues and how they shape the paths to leadership. Finally, it may be that the most effective way to deal with second-generation bias must come from people who have formal authority in the organizations. Indeed, second-generation bias is embedded in societal norms and is hard to detect, but when people are made aware of it there are possibilities for change (Swartz & Amatucci, 2018).

It is important to acknowledge that there are countries that have made much more progress than the United States. Specifically, top countries where women have equal standing with men include Denmark, France, Belgium, Iceland, Sweden, and Canada. Measured indicators include access to jobs, protection on gender discrimination, and sexual harassment in the workplace (Broom, 2020). The 2020 edition of the report "Best Countries for Women" named Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Canada, and Sweden as the top five countries for women, with Denmark as number one ("Best Countries," 2020). The ranking is derived from equally weighted attributes in income equality, human rights, gender equality, progress, and safety.

Scandinavian countries are almost always found at the top, being praised for their public services and social inclusion. Explicitly, Denmark offers 52 weeks of paid parental leave. Sweden's parental leave legislation encourages men to use their statutory time off. Iceland is strengthened by an increase in female labor force participation and a decline in the female unemployment rate (Fleming, 2019). The World Bank's Women, Business and the Law Index clearly reveals that economic benefits occur from giving equal employment rights and increasing female participation in labor markets (Broom, 2020). These nations supersede other countries by their focus on equal inclusion and by closing the gender gap to achieve parity.

Discussion and Conclusion

The discussed literature profoundly supports the idea that women lag behind men in multiple ways. Conversely, the literature also supports the progress that women have made. Women are breaking ground on fundamental issues that for years have brought them down. They are surpassing men in higher levels of education. However, the obstacles are still present. The leadership gap has proven to be stubbornly persistent. The understanding of subtle invisible barriers in organizations such as implicit bias, gender bias, second-generation gender bias, and gender stereotypes need to be understood and addressed. Differences in compensation between males and females are still present in the gender pay gap. It is time to challenge the disparities women continue to face and focus on ways to break down structural barriers. Solutions to these disparities, through the narrow tightrope of stereotypes and second-generation gender bias include more public administration literature, communication, recognition of second-generation gender bias, and negotiation for more to be done in MPA programs. Despite the persistence of leadership gap, there are many steps individuals, employers, and policy makers can take to create significant change (Andrews, 2019).

First, more public administration research on second-generation gender bias is needed. Public administration literature lacks exclusive research on this phenomenon and how it affects women in the leadership gap crisis. A greater understanding of second-generation gender bias in the public sector would create a trigger for long-term cultural change.

Second is communication. Researchers from various fields have found that second-generation gender bias is subtle and is often exercised unconsciously or unintentionally. Therefore, women need to proactively and continuously communicate their desires for new positions and new assignments, putting to rest any assumptions made about them (Andrews, 2019). In fact, the power of communication is being recognized. Movements such as #MeToo and Time's Up are giving women a platform to use their voices and strength to speak up about the inequity and injustice they have faced for centuries.

Third, it is essential for men and women to be aware of and recognize these barriers and work together to minimize them. For example, leaders, human resource departments, and trainers need to develop leadership practice development strategies to educate individuals. This plays a big role in making individuals aware of the issue. Specifically, it can include application-based workshops and diversity training. In some cases programs can inadvertently reinforce gender and racial stereotypes and cause more harm than good. Nevertheless, there are programs that have been successful and have produced promising results ("Barriers and Bias," 2016).

Finally, gendered negotiation is a fundamental concept to be understood and utilized in the workplace. D'Agostino et al. (2019) state that studies show that men experience better negotiations than women not because of behavioral differences but because of stereotyping and bias. This leads to Negotiation Order Theory, a perspective indicating that negotiations in organizations favor masculine practices. To tackle the issue of the inequity of negotiation, D'Agostino et al. (2019) advocates for more to be done in MPA programs that would include gender negotiations and second-generation gender bias curricula.

These solutions will help eliminate barriers that encumber women's leadership advancement in the field of public administration. Future research is important to understand how merit, bias, and affirmative action interact in the public sector (Strum, 2001). Specifically, research suggests that educating public administrators for leadership is important to reorient the women's public sector is significant for the field (Schachter, 2017). The barriers to women's career progression must be understood for women to overcome the institutional and cultural barriers that limit advancement (Strum, 2001). To reduce these disparities, at publicizing gender issues and the ramifications for gender issues could aid public administration (Schachter, 2017). In conclusion, understanding stereotypes and second-generation gender bias will trigger long-term cultural change and help the public sector be a leader within these major issues. When crucial barriers are understood and removed is when women can really achieve increased advancement to senior leadership positions and to begin creating a blanalnced leadership across global organizations.

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