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Perceptions of Gender Discrimination in the Health Sciences Among Female Leaders at a US Research University

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2016

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the
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Abstract

Perceptions of Gender Discrimination in the Health Sciences Among Female Leaders at a US Research University

By Rashida Tsoka

The #MeToo movement was accompanied with growing media attention surrounding the rising number of public allegations of faculty-related misconduct in academia. This has prompted further attention into an existing norm of gender discrimination for many female faculty members and the sexual harassment and assault they endure within male dominated fields such as the health sciences. Fourteen key informant interviews were conducted among faculty from a private research university. Participants positions ranged from university-level leaders to executive-level leaders from the Schools of Nursing, Public Health, Medicine, and the College of Arts and Sciences. From their perspective, the study explores their perceptions of and experiences with institutional programs intended to address gender inequities experienced by female faculty working in academia. Participants described various barriers to leadership opportunities and professional advancement through the pervasive presence of "boys will be boys" attitudes within colleagues and administrators and the policies that are practiced nominally for compliance reasons or misused and further disadvantage women. However, participants also discussed the practices they employ informally to navigate patriarchic systems through mentorships and women-only spaces and using their leadership positions as platforms to help each other. The findings of this study may serve to inform academic institutions of ways they may minimize gender discrimination and lead progressive cultural change both inside and outside of higher education.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Context of the Study

There are few realms where gender parity has been reached (Schwab, et al., 2017). Employment within higher education is no exception. Women who work as faculty within colleges and universities have struggled to ascertain equity with their male counterparts (Guarino & Borden, 2017). Opinion pieces and commentaries have exposed the world of gender discrimination and the "old boys' clubs" that maintain these systems (Peterson, 2018). Additionally, some research has been conducted to understand the mechanisms that cause the leaky pipeline which prevents women from ascending to leadership and administration within academic settings (Bidwell, 2015). Through these studies, interventions aimed at improving the hiring processes and professional advancement for women have been incorporated within institutions (O'Donell, 2018).

Despite these endeavors to understand how the modern higher education institutional culture favors men to the detriment of women, there is not a comprehensive grasp of all the variables that contribute to this. Even efforts to make campuses an inclusive environment such as the establishment of hiring committees and mentorship programs for women, only skim the surface in addressing the issues that result in gender disparities. This leaves women who pursue these academic career paths still exposed to the factors that contribute to workplace discrimination. This especially true in historically male dominated fields such as the health sciences, where women continue to be a minority and treated as such throughout the entirety of their careers which can ultimately bar them from advancing in their fields (Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, 1994)

Problem Statement

The exclusion of women from professional development and leadership is not a new concept for universities, yet academia prides itself on being on the frontline of positive change as they teach the leaders of the future. Universities reveal to students both directly and indirectly their dedication to promoting equality by exemplifying the environment that demonstrates the diverse and inclusive setting among faculty. Yet if these efforts are not made effectively, students do not have role models to look up to or a template of how to uphold diversity, and the problem persists—setting up female students and young faculty to struggle with the same issues as their predecessors.

There is a need to congregate the existing body of work around female faculty and administration and conduct a deeper analysis of what the literature discloses on the various components of gender parity. The sources of data can offer an extensive inventory of information from an array of references to understand these components in their entirety.

Purpose Statement

This purpose of this study was to identify and understand the institutional policies programs that address gender inequities relevant to female faculty working in academia.

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Understand the history, processes for professorship and leadership, and employment patterns within the health disciplines in the university setting;
2. Examine the different types of disparities existing within higher education and the current policies to address them;
3. Identify the factors that create the current workplace culture in universities and investigate the practices that contribute to an inclusive or exclusive environment for female faculty using qualitative data from key informant interviews.

Significance Statement

This study will report a synthesis of the existing data and research that has been conducted to provide context for mechanisms that facilitate or impede gender parity within academic institutions. The literature review will explore the knowledge gaps in understanding women's positions within colleges and universities. Research documenting existing perceptions and actions regarding access to positions and the ability for institutions to retain female employees will provide essential information about their acceptance and accommodation within normative patriarchy. Additionally, study findings will be beneficial to higher education leadership within universities that can create programs and policies that will address the issues presented in the literature review.

Definition of Terms

Leaky Pipeline — Underrepresented groups, such as sexual, racial, and gender minorities, leaving institutions with disproportionate representation from white men due to discrimination and lack of interest (Bidwell, 2015)

Pipeline —The system describing the progression within academia from full-time faculty to leadership and administrative positions (Bidwell, 2015; Xu, 2008)

Old Boys Club –-The informal system of establishing relationships and networks or participating in serious business transactions, propositions, or conversations from which women and minorities are traditionally excluded (Lang, 2011).

Workplace Culture — The environment of an institution that is the combination of its values, policies, traditions, beliefs, interactions, behaviors, and attitudes— all of which are influenced by leadership, procedures, structure and hierarchy, and practices, and employees (ERC, 2018).

Chapter Two: Comprehensive Literature Review

The literature review is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the history of gender equity in academia, university structure, and US federal legislation enacted to reduce workplace discrimination. The next section expounds on employment trends and workload patterns between male and female faculty. Additionally, this segment examines the compensation disparities that include, salaries, awards, and recognition. The third segment elucidates the workplace culture which impacts work and family balance amongst employees as well as how well universities facilitate professional advancement and making an inclusive culture for women that discourages "old boys club" attitudes, sexual assault and harassment among faculty. The fourth and last section covers the importance of gender balance within academic community and why it matters within all facets of the university community and to academic scholarship and innovation.

Gender Parity in Academic Leadership

The world of academia has made great strides in the last 50 years to achieve gender parity in higher education. When examining gender balance in this realm, searches measure and determine equality by assessing the the gender balance amongst students attaining undergraduate and graduate degrees. The U.S. Department of Education indicates that women are now the majority with 56% of students being female (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Unfortunately, these advances are not reflected as successfully at the doctoral level or with the faculty and leadership positions. Women's increased access to higher education does not equate to increased access to career advancement opportunities within academia.

There are many types of positions within the realm of academia. They include visiting/adjunct professor, lecturer, and both tenure and non-tenure-track positions ranging from assistant to full professor. Visiting/Adjunct professors and lecturers are temporary but renewable

positions with the lectureship having a potentially longer fixed term (American Association of University Professors, 2001).

The coveted tenure position protects professors' academic freedom while also ensuring financial security with continuous, indefinite employment. Therefore, full-time faculty wanting a more long-term position pursue tenure-track, in which there exists a provisional period with academic freedom to demonstrate their success in scholarly endeavors in the form of published research, academic visibility, and the ability to secure grants to fund their projects awards (Rohde, 2015; Ortiz, Haviland, & Henriques, 2017). Additionally, scholars' portfolios document their professional conduct and educational activities and capabilities. Lastly, those in tenure-track demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the community with their contributions in the form of administrative, institutional, or citizenship service (Rohde, 2015) At the three-year review, a retention or reappointment decision takes place; while, the six-year review the compilation of a tenure dossier that includes a curriculum vitae, list of publications, teaching portfolio, information of their service and a comprehensive list of grants and awards (Rohde, 2015; Ortiz, Haviland, & Henriques, 2017). All of the work that the faculty member has done within this timeframe is evaluated and recommendations are assessed. Factors that can affect this timeline include service credit—time that was served in other positions and the products developed during this period, all of which counts and is applied to the faculty member's tenure, potentially reducing this time (Ortiz et. al., 2017). Additionally, family reasons, such as maternity or paternity leave, can stop the tenure clock temporarily.

For these tenure appointments, the program or school deans confer with the President, who proceeds to make a recommendation of endorsement or declination to the Board of Trustees or its Executive Committee. They give the deciding approval to promote the candidate (Emory

University Board of Trustees, 2017). A similar process is followed by non-tenure track faculty, or those with limited appointments, however their approval ends with the dean and tenured-status is not applicable (Emory University Board of Trustees, 2017).

The tenure process outlined above can vary from university to university. However, throughout the academic system, tenure offers professors an indefinite academic appointment with the intention of offering them the ability to have freedom to teach and conduct research while they maintain job security (American Association of University Professors, 1969). For public institutions, salaries for tenured professors are state funded, while salary support for those working in private colleges and universities most often comes in the form of grants (Flaherty, 2018; Gallup & Svare, 2016). Therefore, the ability for tenured and non-tenured professors in the private university sector to bring in grants from private foundations and government agencies has become increasingly prioritized for those pursuing career advancement tenure (Gallup & Svare, 2016). With the pressure to bring in grants, faculty members spend an exorbitant amount of time submitting and revising grants, which can limit the amount of time and ability to focus on creative or risk-taking projects that may or may not produce new discoveries (Gallup & Svare, 2016). Additionally, due to the leaky pipeline and gender discrimination, fewer women are tenured, and hold the majority of the part time and non-tenured faculty positions (Flaherty, 2018).

Historically, professorship and administrative positions were given to men (Parker, 2015). Legally, this was changed with the introduction of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Eighty-eighth Congress of the United States of America, 1964). This title prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, national origin, and religion in the workplace including education programs or institutions that receive federal funding. Within these settings, discrimination is prohibited in all facets of employment which includes compensation, assignment, classification of

employees, transfers, promotions, layoffs, recruitment, pay, retirement, plans, training and apprenticeship programs, and other terms and conditions of employment (Eighty-eighth Congress of the United States of America, 1964). This protects against gender discrimination and sexual harassment which disproportionately effects female staff and faculty (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.).

Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is also relevant, though while most understand it to be directed towards reducing discrimination against students. Under this statute, discrimination is applied to include stalking, violence, bullying, and sexual violence (Lewis, Schuster, Sokolow, & Swinton, 2013). In this way, Title IX complements and supplements Title VII to emphasize the importance of diminishing of sex and gender discrimination in the workplace.

Employment Trends

Despite these legislative updates, gender discrimination is rampant and there is significant evidence of gender disparity in the realm of higher education (Fredrickson, 2017). This is revealed in the employment patterns from professorships to administration. From the studies that have been conducted, women and men are hired around the same rates, yet men have a 12% margin over women in teaching positions in college and universities and an 8% margin when it comes to administrative and executive positions (Monroe, Ozyurt, Wrigley, & Alexander, 2008). Again, this is paralleled in the number of full-time faculty in higher education institutions who are women (38%), versus those who are tenured (15%) (Monroe et. al, 2008).

The gender imbalance within academic leadership, is indicative of larger inequalities in terms of hiring rates revealing the significant disparities in the number of women in faculty positions within academic institutions. When it comes to climbing the faculty career ladder,

attaining a full-time position is necessary to be qualified for tenure. Despite the fact that the number full-time positions have declined in the last thirty years, women hold more part-time positions and more non-tenured positions than men, yet they make up only 34% of full-time faculty in institutions with doctoral programs (Curtis & West, 2006). This same study revealed that there is a slightly improved gender balance for women holding tenure-track positions in programs awarding doctorates (48%). However, the disparities start to show more dramatic disproportions within these same programs and universities, with 25% of tenured faculty being women, making men twice as likely to have tenure than women. Similarly, only 24% of full professors positions are filled by women (Curtis & West, 2006). For women seeking positions in leadership, the gender gap widens. Women are significantly under-represented in management positions which is mimicked on the administrative level at academic institutions. Only 26% of leaders in this context are women (Cook, 2012). This exposes the unambiguous absence of gender diversity that plagues employment patterns in administration.

The gendered statistics in employment patterns are linked to salary disparities. The gender pay gap perseveres in academia despite the ongoing fight to equal pay. When compared to men, women in leadership positions make 80 cents on the dollar in higher education, which is consistent with the disparity seen at the national level for full-time workers (Seltzer, 2017). This is similar for those in executive positions in universities as well. These positions pay women 90 cents on the dollar compared to men in these same positions, according to the same study. Women earned less than man on average in twelve of fifteen executive positions (Seltzer, 2017).

Gender discrimination also poses as an issue for women during the peer review process for research grants. As grant applications are assessed, peer reviewers serve as experts in the field who award funds based on the qualifications of the applicant and their project (Rapaport, 2018).

However, women are not only underrepresented on these peer review panels they are less likely to receive grant funding than men. A study conducted by Witterman, Hendricks, Straus, and Tannenbaum found that when reviews only assess the science, male and female principle investigators had the same success rates in regard to funding. However major gender gaps of review outcomes, rooted in less favorable assessments of female applicants, occurred when they primarily assessed the principle investigator as a scientist (2017). Similar studies have reported that women are disadvantaged during the grant funding process which can contribute to their ability to receive tenure. “When this occurs, lines of research go unstudied, careers are damaged, and funding agencies are unable to deliver the best value for money…small differences compound into cumulative disadvantage” (Witterman, Hendricks, Straus, & Tannenbaum, 2017). The manifestation of gender discrimination within academic institutions can have serious consequences for both scientists and their research contributions.

The lack of recognition for joint work is another issue that can effect women going up the leadership pipeline. Bias from implicit gender stereotypes in the realm of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) systematically hinder women from being recognized for their achievements. People generally associate men with careers and science and women with nurturing and humanities (Popejoy & Leboy, 2011). As a result, they are less likely to be acknowledged and credited for work compared to their professional male counterparts (Association for Women in Science, 2015). According to one study conducted by Sarsons, women were less likely to receive tenure the more they coauthor; this only varied when women coauthored with other women (2017). Further investigation of authorship trends found not only are women underrepresented as authors of single-authored papers but when they do coauthor, it is men who predominantly receive the coveted first and last author positions (West, Jacquet, King, Correll, &

Bergstrom, 2013). Despite the fact that women are more likely to be the ones actually performing the research, they are still more likely to be in the middle author position (West et. al, 2013). Moreover, a study found peer-reviewers were more likely to give male authors higher ratings than their female counterparts (Fine & Shen, 2018).

This same recognition is tied to qualifications for scholarly awards. The lack of fairness and equity in the selection process for scholarly recognition perpetuates the disproportionate number of women award winners compared to the eligible pool of female researchers in scientific disciplines (Popejoy & Leboy, 2011). Awards can hinder advancement for women since they serve as indicators of success and play a critical role in recruitment, hiring, and promotion. Women are put at a severe disadvantage since men are eight times more likely to win awards. The accolades for which women are more likely to be recognized extends to the work they do in teaching and service which uncoincidentally aligns with the gender stereotypes, expectations, and things which are less valued generally (Association for Women in Science, 2015). Without female role models and mentors, women may also be less likely to be nominated for awards; similarly, without female representation on award selection committees, women's award nominations may be less positively received by judging panels as in the case of grant reviews (Association for Women in Science, 2015).

Despite the dismal recognition and awards that women are receiving in academic institutions, they outperform men when it comes to professional workload around service. One study found that women perform 1.4 more service activities per year than men (Flaherty, 2017). This same analysis found women are more likely to "take care of the academic family" since they invest in more internal service—which includes service in university, campus, or department level work, than men who are involved in the external services—local, national, and international

communities (Guarino & Borden, 2017). The disparity can impact the ability for faculty to be productive in other scholar activities such as research and writing which can impact wage discrepancies and professional advancement (Flaherty, 2017). Furthermore, women who work overtime to perform services that promote academic institutional advancement are seldom recognized, revealing the unequal value compared to the traditional male external service routes. Such service activities are often undervalued relative to research activities.

Workplace Culture

Workplace procedures and practices impact the gender parity that ensues in institutions of higher academia. Hiring practices, faculty career management, professional development, teaching and research preferences and opportunities, mentorship, family-friendly policies, and enforcement of these policies and procedures play a significant role in recruiting, retaining, and supporting women in leadership within academic institutions. Unfortunately, many of the systems in place do not accommodate diversifying the positions.

Hiring practices exemplify one system that sustains gender biases contributes toward the leaky pipeline present in academia. Search and hiring committees play gatekeepers to the selection process and studies have shown implicit bias plays a significant role in discriminating against women. Qualitative research conducted by Rivera, found committees actively consider women's relationship status, specifically when their male partners held academic or prestigious jobs (2017).This was an indication that those jobs were not "movable", thus women were not given these positions when there are other possible men or single women applicants. None of this was applicable when committees considered male applicants (Rivera, 2017). This is one example of the bias at play during the hiring process. Majority-male hiring committees, inherent bias, inappropriate considerations on family structure, and lack of diversity in selection pool all create a

hostile environment to promoting an inclusive, heterogeneous institution. In any position, support mechanisms are in place to guide and provide the tools necessary to succeed and grow within that role. The pathways that systematically cater to men seeking these positions still directly facilitate men progressing up the ladder. Therefore, it is essential to have career management and professional development programs in place to ensure women are equipped with the means to cultivate their leadership skills to apply in senior positions (Mandleco, 2010). Many colleges and universities have their own programs for this purpose, and there are a plethora of leadership committees and communities women can join that focus on networking, mentoring, and encouraging women leaders in STEM and health sciences fields (Mandleco, 2010). However, for institutions that do not have strong programs in this area, this can be a deterrent for women. Inadequate mentorship programs and role models for women considering continuing or sustaining interest in the field poses as an additional disincentive to staying within these fields (Edmunds, Ovseiko, Shepper, Greenhalgh, Frith, Roberts, Pololi, & Buchan, 2016).

Workplace culture is also impacted by how the environment facilitates a work life balance that accommodates women in the workforce. Historically, the academic system facilitated every aspect of professorship to traditional full-time male academics. With women fulfilling these roles the same amount of work is expected in the same way. Some colleges and universities have implemented policies to make up for the “baby penalty”, which is the consequence for having a child during a woman’s academic career (Flaherty, 2013). These family-friendly policies come in the form of stopping the tenure clock for a specific amount of time to account for maternity leave and to give caretakers time to adjust to the new family dynamic or special leave that allows faculty caretakers to care for other immediate family members who need them.

Despite these strategies, women's careers still take a hit when it comes to fertility decisions in their prime reproductive age in a way that men's careers do not. For example, men with small children are 35% more likely to procure tenure-track positions than women with young children; and women who do not have any children are 33% more likely to obtain tenure-track positions than those with children (Waxman & Ispa-Landa, 2016). This might play into the fact that women have a disproportionate share of household labor including childcare and housework, making employers view women as not committed to their careers and more high maintenance to accommodate in their departments. Furthermore, women have relatively less free time when compared to male counterparts (Cooke & Laine, 2014). Even after making it into those positions, women who are mothers can struggle to find parenting resources that are available from academic institutions. Child care options may not be available at some institutions. Alternatively, conferences, networking events, and faculty meetings can take place outside of work hours which impede on family time and professional development. Women have to choose in a way that men do not, but only because the institutions in place do not let them have both without making tremendous sacrifices. These sacrifices reveal themselves in the form of higher divorce rates, lower marriage rates, and lower fertility rates for female academics when compared to their male colleagues (Mason, 2013). Institutional policies leave a lot to be desired with the inflexible tenure and career timetable originally made for men that is not compatible with women's biological clock without consideration for how to compensate for it.

Another area where the academic workplace matches the rest of society is the issue of sexual harassment and assault. With the various stories that accompanied the #MeToo Movement, the world of higher education was not left out with its own high-profile men in power who were reported for sexual misconduct (Gluckman, Read, Mangan, & Quilantan, 2017). Both students and

faculty colleagues have brought forth accounts of their own experiences of sexual harassment and assault by the hands of respected tenured professors in hopes of shedding light on their own experiences as well as uncovering the prevalence of this problem on campuses in the US (Gluckman, Read, Mangan, & Quilantan, 2017).

The STEM and health science cultures can be more hostile environments to women facing these issues since they are generally male dominated disciplines, with men holding the power and positions to advance an individual's career (Fredrickson, 2017). One study found that 64% of scientists in fieldwork had experienced sexual harassment and 20% had faced sexual assault (Vijayaraghavan, 2017). Furthermore, women have forfeited career opportunities because they felt unsafe attending events where they were likely to be harassed by colleagues (Vijayaraghavan, 2017). Despite the laws, policies, and procedures put in place to prevent them from occurring, this demonstrates the pervasive behavior that women endure within these professions. Only recently are these statistics surrounding gender-based discrimination and harassment coming to public attention, meaning female victims were not empowered enough to come forward and not face retaliation or they did not believe that the protocols in place for such issues would be enforced in a way that would protect them and end similar future behavior. Both are indicators of the failure on the end of institutions to prioritize the safety and security of female faculty instead of their potentially prestigious harassers. In reality, academic institutions have a history of filing away these misconduct complaints in an effort to sweep issues under the rug (Vijayaraghavan, 2017).

The legacy of discrimination that facilitates and protects men is tied to the "old boys' club" mentality which persists in STEM and health science settings. Inappropriate and sexists jokes at conferences, post work meetings that overlap with childcare pick up times, concealment of misconduct, interrupting women in meetings, all maintain systems that contribute to the leaky

pipeline and actively work against diversifying the academic, administrative, and research spheres (Petterson, 2018). Ultimately such hostile environments cause women to struggle to decide whether to persist or depart academic career paths.

Importance of Diversity in Academia

Because of obstacles women face climbing the academic ladder, many efforts have been made to improve gender parity in the workplace. Equity is paramount to creating an inclusive campus environment in addition to contributing to academic innovations, improving the student experience, and diversifying the academic environment. According to research conducted by Nielsen et. al, lack of gender diversity limits the viewpoints, questions, and topics addressed by researchers (2017). They found that with the unique perspectives that naturally accompany diversity, women can expand the general scope of what has been studied and what will be researched as they are more likely to consider different variables than their male counterparts (Nielse et. al, 2017). One example revealed that when women participated in medical science, there were higher levels of research directed toward gender-and-sex-related research to understand physiological and behavioral differences in diagnosis and treatment of health issues.

Gender diversity not only benefits scholarly contributions to an institution, but the student experience as well. Negative diversity in the form of prejudice or discrimination can adversely impact students' cognitive outcome and critical thinking skills (Roska, Kilgo, Trolian, Pascarella, Blaich, & Wise, 2017). Similarly, positive diversity can result in representation and in turn role models. In fact, studies show a positive association between the proportion of female faculty in the institution and the probability that female college students would go on to graduate with a higher degree, increasing the likelihood of further diversity within graduate education (Rothstein, 1995).

Both positive temporary and long-term effects benefit underrepresented students through diversity among faculty and administration.

Diversity among employees and leadership provides a plethora of benefits for the business, legal, and academic community. Within the business realm, research conducted by Hunt, Yee, Prince, & Dixon-Fyle studied more than 1,000 companies spanning 12 countries. This research was analyzed to examine the proportion of women and mixed ethnic and cultural composition in leadership to gauge their financial outperformance (2018). Their report confirmed a link between diversity and the company's profitability which generally held true across regions. Furthermore, they attributed diversity as the driving force behind attracting top talent, employee satisfaction, and decision making, as well as improving customer orientation(Hunt et. al, 2018). Similar benefits as a result of diversity are occurring within the law field. According to a global legal market survey by the consulting firm Acritas, gender and racial diversity produce higher performance levels and increased share spending along with the fact that they are more likely to be recommended to their clients' peers (Acritas Sharper Insight, 2016). These contributions and more demonstrate how advantageous diversity is for organizational goals and academic excellence.

Despite the major advantages, these benefits should not be the sole reason for which gender parity is advocated within universities. Institutions have an ethical obligation to provide women with equal opportunity to obtain the same opportunities as their male counterparts. Diversity and inclusion should be intentionally pursued because qualified individuals from underrepresented groups are systemically excluded from these positions and institutions. Furthermore, due to their innovative and instructional capacities, universities have the unique opportunity to spearhead social efforts to increase gender parity. Academia can lead and model inclusive environments in historically male dominated careers in a way that can be a model for the larger society.

The following research will discuss key informant's perspectives on their experiences as faculty and leaders within a private academic institution. Their familiarity with tenure, perceptions of sexual harassment and assault, gender discrimination in the form of biased search and hiring practices and microaggressions directed toward themselves or fellow female faculty gives them the unique viewpoint to provide their opinions and recommendations to address potential changes needed. Alternatively, their positions also allow them to be privy to any positive advances that the university has makes positive strides to facilitating diversity. Therefore, these perceptions can be explored and the variables that make up the factors contributing to workplace culture and processes can be identified in order to understand how academic climate can be improved for gender diversity.

Chapter Three: Manuscript

Perceptions of Gender Discrimination in the Health Sciences Among Female Leaders at a US Research University

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Contribution of Student

I have contributed to the data analysis and written portion of this thesis project. In collaboration with Dr. Dabney P. Evans, I performed a secondary analysis of a qualitative research that she collected and initially analyzed. I then performed a comprehensive review of the literature before I transcribed the audio recorded interviews. Additionally, I was responsible for all data management and analysis related to my thesis. I wrote all parts of this thesis with the help of Dr. Evans who consistently provided verbal and written feedback throughout this project.

Abstract

The #MeToo movement was accompanied with growing media attention surrounding the rising number of public allegations of faculty-related misconduct in academia. This has prompted further attention into an existing norm of gender discrimination for many female faculty members and the sexual harassment and assault they endure within male dominated fields such as the health sciences. Fourteen key informant interviews were conducted among faculty from a private research university. Participants positions ranged from university-level leaders to executive-level leaders from the Schools of Nursing, Public Health, Medicine, and the College of Arts and Sciences. From their perspective, the study explores their perceptions of and experiences with institutional programs intended to address gender inequities experienced by female faculty working in academia. Participants described various barriers to leadership opportunities and professional advancement through the pervasive presence of "boys will be boys" attitudes within colleagues and administrators and the policies that are practiced nominally for compliance reasons or misused and further disadvantage women. However, participants also discussed the practices they employ informally to navigate patriarchic systems through mentorships and women-only spaces and using their leadership positions as platforms to help each other. The findings of this study may serve to inform academic institutions of ways they may minimize gender discrimination and lead progressive cultural change both inside and outside of higher education.

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Introduction

The rise of the #MeToo movement, originally founded by Tarana Burke, has put a spotlight on the national climate surrounding sexual harassment and assault, initiating a dialogue on gender dynamics within the workplace and beyond (Garcia, 2017; Jones, 2018). The grass roots movement triggered a series of allegations directed toward men in power who had engaged in sexual misconduct and the systems that protected them (Jones, 2018). The charges exposed the culture of gender discrimination and abuse through the scandals that erupted everywhere from Hollywood to the Supreme Court (Jones, 2018). Academia was not left out, as many female faculty stepped forward to speak out on their own experiences prompting a closer examination at university culture especially within administration and the more male-dominated fields, such as the health sciences (Kaufman & Simko-Bednarski, 2018).

From reports of sexual harassment to the lack of gender parity among female faculty and leadership in higher education, gender discrimination is endemic within academic institutions despite the policies put in place to prevent it (Cooke & Laine, 2014; Gluckman, Nell, Read, Brock, Mangan, 2017). On a national level, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 incorporates Title VII and IX to prohibit discrimination in all facets of employment—compensation, transfers, promotions, pay, training programs, etc. — on the basis of sex, race, national origin, and religion in the workplace (Eighty-eighth Congress of the United States of America, 1964). Additionally, both laws address sexual harassment and assault in order to reduce sex or gender discrimination in the workplace which disproportionately effects female staff and faculty (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.).

In the academy, policies to even the playing field and adapt for the life experiences of women include these that stop the tenure clock to accommodate child birth and acting as primary

caretaker for dependents in the family (Flaherty, 2013). Hiring processes on implicit bias and inclusive searches to account for such bias is another tactic employed (Bilimoria & Buch, 2010) . However, the issues stemming from majority-male hiring committees, inherent bias, and lack of gender diversity in selection pool all persist within universities, creating a hostile context to promote inclusive, heterogeneous institutions (Rivera, 2017). This results in a gender balance that enables men to be twice as likely to have tenure than women and for them to claim 74% of management positions at administrative levels in higher education (Curtis & West, 2006; Cook, 2012).

While studies have been produced to understand what the gender disparity statistics are and the factors behind these numbers, more in-depth research is needed in the area of assessing faculty perceptions of academic culture and how it impacts their work and professional development within universities. Academic institutions with research at the forefront of their mission are on the frontline in innovations in technology and medicine— and play a vital role in understanding the social spheres around them and how they shape systems and cultures. As the issues of gender discrimination come to light within the ivory tower, universities have the responsibility to understand, address, and resolve problems that exist within their own institutions. Using a qualitative data set of key informant interviews conducted at a private research university, we explore perceptions of the existing policies, processes, programs, and practices that facilitate or impede gender equity and advancement within the health sciences in academic institutions.

This study sought to identify and understand the perceptions of and experiences with institutional programs intended to address gender inequities experienced by female faculty working in the health sciences at one research university.

Methods

Participants

Starting in January of 2018, research participants were purposively recruited based on their experience as faculty members in the health sciences or their existing leadership role and the relationship to the topics that were studied. In order to attain a wide variety of positions within the health science fields, participants' positions ranged from university-level leaders to executive-level leaders from the Schools of Nursing, Public Health, and Medicine as well as the College of Arts and Sciences which boasts a range of health-related science departments (i.e. chemistry, biology, sociology, etc.). While seventeen individuals were originally invited to participate based on their eligibility as school or university leaders, only fourteen key informants were available to conduct interviews.

Instrument

A semi-structured Key Informant (KI) interview guide was created based on the research question, review of literature, and other relevant information. The guide was composed of open-ended questions in order to garner rich information in the form of perspectives and experiences from the participant. Due to the sensitivity of the subject matter as well as the private and personal information revealed in the experiences of participants, consideration and security measures were taken to ensure confidentiality in the management and analysis of the data. Before the interviews were conducted, the interviewer received verbal informed consent from all participants, who were also notified that the information shared in the interviews would be kept confidential. Additionally, it was reaffirmed at the commencement of the study that the interviews were completely voluntary, and participants could withdraw their involvement at any time.

Interviews ranged from thirty minutes to an hour. All of the key informant interviews were audio recorded and kept on a password-protected device. They were then transcribed verbatim and saved under pseudonyms to protect participants' identity. Box, an enterprise-grade security storage mechanism that saves files securely in the cloud, was employed to store all audio and textual data and information used for this research; in this way all researchers were able to access interviews and transcripts using a platform that prioritizes data protection (Box for the Digital Workplace, 2019).

Ethical Consideration

The research protocol was reviewed by Emory Institutional Review Board (IRB). They determined that the in-depth interviews were exempt from review since the information garnered from the research was not generalizable since it focused specifically on one university context.

Data Analysis

During the data analysis process, the transcribed data were coded using MAXQDA, a software package that facilitates qualitative analysis and coding process of textual data; we were able to organize, analyze and visualize the data with this program (What is MAXQDA, 2019). These verbatim transcripts were coded using inductive, deductive, and in vivo codes. Analysis was performed using the principles from Grounded Theory since this methodology allows the theories and concepts from the study to be built and substantiated by the data (Hennink & Hutter, 2011). Additionally, this theory places emphasis on the knowledge collected from individuals to analyze their interpretations of reality for the purpose of social research which makes this the most appropriate methodology for this study (Pulla, 2016). Consequently, through repeated readings

themes and subthemes were generated from the codes which helped in the formulation of concepts and theories from the dataset.

Results

Qualitative data used for this secondary analysis consisted of fourteen key informant interviews (KIIs). By interviewing key informant, we were able to examine perceptions of policies, programs, processes, and practices within the health science units of the university, and their impacts on sexual harassment, assault, and other forms of gender discrimination. All fourteen participants identified as women, with three being women of color. On average, the length of time ranged from seven to thirty-eight years, with an average length of service to the institution being 18.8 years.

Leadership & Gender Discrimination

The overarching context of the study was the combined concept of leadership in academia and experiences of gender discrimination (See Figure 1: Thematic Framework). Multiple participants talked about discrimination based on attempts at advancement and/or occupying a leadership position within the university. Because the average length of employment was significant, the participants were able to offer a wealth of knowledge about their experience moving up the pipeline and the difficulties they and/or colleagues faced. Three core themes emerged: the pervasive presence of a “boys will be boys” attitudes and how to navigate in and around it, the policies practiced nominally or are misused and further disadvantage women, and the positions female faculty use as platforms to help each other. The perceived formal and informal mechanisms that facilitate or impede leadership opportunities and professional advancement in

addition to the recommendations that participants thought would reduce the barriers they face are reflected below. A summary of findings that expands on themes is shown in Table 1.

Gender discrimination is pervasive and tolerated

Facilitating "Boys will be Boys"

Almost all of the participants discussed a predominant culture of discrimination that facilitated a "Boys will be boys" mentality. This attitude was described as an awareness of negative behavior or gender discrimination perpetrated by male faculty members or those within leadership that was considered permissible. Alternatively, if these actions were pointed out they were then minimized due to pervasive thinking that this behavior was standard. One participant acknowledged the normalized impropriety directed at female colleagues that is rampant in the sciences, "*I think there are masculine cultures of even behaving: um, of shouting at people you disagree with, of, um casually dismissing concerns that make women not even want to be in the same room*" (P#6) .

Regarding the lack of consequences for inappropriate behavior, participants mentioned an existing mentality of patiently waiting for the perpetrators of discrimination to retire or leave. Therefore, when instances of misconduct occur, there was a tendency to dismiss the situation by sweeping issues under the rug. This is a practice that happened both historically for the participants who have been employed within the university for over 20 years and those who brought up more recent cases. More than half of the participants expressed that these issues and were worse in the sciences and had witnessed firsthand, or were aware of its prevalence during their time at the university. One participant articulated her perception of this phenomenon,

> *"… my strongly held impression is that there has been an attitude that 'boys will be boys', 'so-and-so is behaving like so-and-so', and that there is a big generational divide… even though I think the perception is like this is an old guys' problem, and there are gonna be a number of retirements. And certain problematic figures will work their way out of the [university] system. And we should just be patient and kind of quarantine people. I think I also have witnessed a kind of reproduction of some of these behaviors and attitudes in the next generation."*(P#9)

Upholding this trend, is the pervasive "old boys' club", which represents the informal structures and relationships that encourage practices that exclude women from networking opportunities key for advancement. This system results in a gendered sponsorship, leaving women out of mentorship opportunities or prospects that could encourage professional advancement. Participants spoke of gendered power dynamics that prevented them from receiving the same support, advice, and encouragement that male peers obtain from their male department chairs and deans.

Female Faculty Support Mechanisms

Despite the sometimes-hostile work environment that results from the gender discrimination, female participants spoke of the support mechanisms they informally practiced. To compensate for a system and culture that worked against them, they created female-only spaces where women can talk, collaborate, network, train, mentor, or vent with each other in an effort to connect. One participant captured a sentiment felt by eight other participants, "*[we] started having little informal sessions... But there is definitely a sense of sisterhood, if you will, um, among women, hoping to make sure that the we continue to have, make progress*" (P#14). Participants explained how these practices enable women to engage with each other, provide support, and bond in a way that allows them to voice the difficulties they face at work, legitimizing concerns, while providing ideas on how they can navigate a context that doesn't always facilitate their growth and find comfort in the similar experiences of their colleagues. An example of this was described by one participant when speaking of experiences of these informal sessions within her department:

> *"So, we put together, uh, in our division, we had a little Sunday afternoon, women get together where people just sort of share stories and concerns and frustrations and worries about, you know, how—how do you get your kids from daycare on time without paying all the penalties because you can't get out. And just, um, sort of, uh, supportive kind of thing…"* (P#14)

Other practices that contributed to the support mechanisms female faculty developed for themselves included attempts to employ amplification of women's voices and ideas during meetings, and actively nominating and recommending women for positions on committees, leadership opportunities, and awards.

Policies are nominal and sometimes abused

Policies are Compliance-driven

Another theme that emerged from the data reflected the ways the policies were viewed as compliance driven or sometimes had unintended consequences. This theme focused on formal university policies developed to create an inclusive and diverse environment. Policies that were frequently mentioned by participants included Title VII, Title IX, along with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). When it came to Title IX coordinators and mandatory trainings to enforce these guidelines, variance existed among participants. Where some viewed the changes towards compliance as an improvement, at least two participants strongly voiced their issues around policies being followed for the sake of fulfilling requirements as opposed to moving the dial on gender discrimination in the workplace. Participants acknowledged the "big push around compliance", however, they attributed any recent changes in creating a culture against gender discrimination to other factors, such as the #Me-Too movement. Similarly, the implicit bias training required for faculty search committees, while seen as good in theory, was criticized for being ineffective for yielding a diverse candidate pool. Thus, not all participants found the mandatory training to be conducive to behavioral change regarding unconscious bias. One

participant recalled her disdain upon not seeing any female contenders for a dean position, *"I think it was very, extremely discouraging to [unit name] faculty that there were no female candidates on the short list for the dean position, extremely discouraging… 'appalled' actually was the phrase that was used*" (P#9). Alternatively, participants discussed being asked to join search committees to serve as the token woman for compliance reasons, which further exacerbated the impressions that diversity was only nominally desired.

Policies are Abused

Another policy, the Family and Medical Leave Act was occasionally referred to as generally progressive policies that can help extend the tenure clock by a year since it allows parents to take time off after a new birth or adoption. However, many participants noted the unintended consequences that came from inexplicit language and latitude around the interpretation of FMLA that facilitates men using the leave as a sabbatical. One participant mentioned, "*we have department chairs that actively encourage their male faculty to avail themselves of a parental leave in order to enhance their research dossier for tenure"* (P#1). While the university has made strides to accommodate parents, some misuse these privileges, contributing to the gender discrimination that can be detrimental to those who are using their leave for what it is meant for—acting as a primary caretaker. Multiple participants reported that this works against women, who may seem less productive when compared to male peers who make use of time away from work as opposed to parenting.

> *" I have heard conversations that basically say 'well, this person had an extra year, so they really should have done more than this' you know, rather than recognizing the true intent of the leave… they see it as someone having more time and therefore, they should have gotten more done."* (P#5)

Positions as Platforms for Change

Feelings of Powerlessness

Many participants noted feelings of disempowerment early on in their careers. Due to their age and junior status, they shied away from voicing issues with gender discrimination or sexual misconduct lest they face negative consequences restricting further career advancement. There were multiple mentions of feelings of fear or timidity when reporting incidences of harassment or assault as a result of the potential for negative consequences. This is combined with the lack of consequences for perpetrators after reporting making it "*really tough to get women to agree to come forward"* (P#9). One participant described a situation where the faculty member did report and how it impacted her perception of what she could do about discrimination: *"I had to take one case of harassment to the dean and I did that. And it ended up in a certain sense— this was several deans ago—nothing was done about it. And so, in a way, it reinforced the sense of powerlessness"* (P#1). Other strong sentiments after dealing with inequality included a participant expressing, *"[I] felt demoralized and stymied and chastened. And I think—and I don't think of myself as a shrinking violet. But I felt powerless to do anymore"* (P#1).

Feelings of powerlessness were echoed by another participant who discussed not even bothering to ask for maternity leave since it simply just was not done. She recalled teaching up until the day her child was born and returning to work after three weeks. This was one of many stories of women sacrificing work-life balance because it was not only the status-quo, but they did not want to ruffle feathers of male colleagues and superiors who considered their biological clock a burden. However, one participant described a unique perspective that it was not just men within their departments and schools who maintained discriminatory practices.

> *"I've had incredible female mentors. I've also had incredible mentors. And I have had—I have experienced being the most hostile, unfeeling, and aggressive (female) gatekeepers of the career. And it stands to reason they were—they came of age and became professionals in a very male dominated environment. And they enacted some of the worst elements of masculine power. So much so that, uh, they made some of the most disparaging remarks about my motherhood and, um, prevented taking leave when I wanted external grants. I mean, actively stood in the way of my career development. As did a couple of men"* (P#1)

Formal Action and Informal Support

Instead of perpetuating and contributing to the hostile environment like some of their predecessors this participant mentioned, most participants discussed their own ways they challenged these systems in their position. With their leadership platforms, they explained how they consistently endeavor to challenge a patriarchic system for themselves and more junior female colleagues As opposed to when they were lower in academic rank, their status as current leaders allows them the autonomy to initiate workshops for diversity and inclusion, create processes improving the leaky pipeline for other women, and develop formal programs for women within their departments and schools, and lobby for comprehensive policies that benefit all faculty equally. Multiple participants discussed their ability to make the changes that combat norms that disproportionally disadvantage women. One participant brought up her work to help hold perpetrators of sexual misconduct accountable:

> *"I have had a couple of serious sexual harassment issues in this department that I have, uh, dealt with swiftly. And those people are no longer part of our department. Let me just put it that way. And I have aggressively worked with, um, university attorney's general counsel office…with full on investigation…they're not here anymore."* (P#9)

Participants used their authority to address the changes they would like on a larger scale. While they worked within their spheres to encourage accountability and transparency in various processes, such as hiring and promotion, they brought up recommendations that they wanted to see at larger scales within the university. Participants expressed a desire for accountability through a more thorough system among university, school, and department leadership to ensure gender

parity and fair consequences for practices not in keeping with policies. Multiple participants brought up the idea that clear approaches, expectations, and metrics needed to be established and everyone needed to be held responsible for maintaining and reporting them for long term cultural changes.

"…we have some good guidelines for you know, how to create a—a diverse pool, including gender. I'm not sure we do as good a job as we should at making sure that that actually happens and that, um, there is accountability and there are consequences to departments or to deans whoever, who is not really making sure that that's reality" (P#5)

This idea combined with transparency was a common refrain among participants who believed in the necessity visible strides toward reducing systems and structures in place around sexual harassment, assault, and other forms of gender discrimination. One participant critiqued the disjointed nature of the work she does and the ability for it to be incorporated into the larger university culture, "*…we are scholars. We are social scientists. We are humanists… they are systems of power. And we already produce a lot of this knowledge we just don't apply always in our own environment*" (P#1). Participants stated that the collection and sharing of data should further conversations and dialogues around gender parity and discrimination, and administration should facilitate the necessary changes to reach gender equity goals. This top down approach would be better suited to spearhead the changes on promotion and retention, faculty development, searches and hiring, and addressing the harmful informal practices in order to move the dial.

While promoting formal programs and processes to support female faculty members, participants still maintain informal leadership practices that allow them to look out for colleagues and women who at the beginning of their careers in academia. In reference to her work with other women junior faculty, one participant stated,

> *"it's doing a lot of, um, calming, supportive…um, cultivation of trust and advice and support for, um, for women faculty who are having either a hard time or—or not. Um, to help identify—or to—you know, to praise people when they're doing a good job or to recognize that they have leadership capacities that they may not even be aware of…"* (P#1)

Participants frequently mentioned their concern for junior faculty dealing with unaccommodating environments similar to those they experienced earlier in their careers. They explained how they offer one-on-one support and informal mentoring to other women by discussing issues that affect them and facilitate dialogues to empower and encourage younger female faculty.

Discussion

The themes from the key informant interviews highlighted the prevalence of gender discrimination within higher education. The lengthy employment of participants (18.8 years on average), allowed the participants to provide a wealth of information on their experiences both historical and contemporary-of moving up the pipeline and difficulties faced. An interesting reoccurring concept that emerged was the idea of the informal development of a women's support system to combat the systemic disadvantages they face. The necessity with which the participants discussed this phenomenon, suggests that an integrated network is not the only way to further equality aims.

While participants discussed their own ways of tackling these issues, they proposed several suggestions on how to promote cultural change within the university space. Of all the recommendations put forward, three main ideas emerged from the data that would encourage change in social norms within the institution that would benefit them and junior professors. Participants desired more accountability and transparency from university, school, and departmental leadership. There was a concern that the conversation began and ended during

specific incidences, however participants wanted there to be openness in topics surrounding the variables that contribute to gender parity in academia.

Additionally, participants looked toward university administration to filter down priorities of gender equity and necessary changes to faculty of all ranks/across the university. With the plethora of intellectual experts provided within the academic system, administration is in a unique position to utilize this wealth of resources. This along with the output of data that is being produced within institutions can be applied towards achieving university goals around gender equality and equity in higher education.

The findings from this study contribute to the growing body of evidence and awareness around the consequences around lack of gender parity among faculty in higher education institutions. The prevalent first- and second-hand experiences of gender discrimination within the workplace or the regularity of sexual misconduct reports being swept under the rug were consistent with other studies that focused on sexism in the workplace or within STEM departments in universities CITE. Furthermore, participants noted key ideas that were mentioned in other studies about how the social norms within university campuses effects not only their ability to advance professionally, contributing to the leaky pipeline, but also sets a precedent for how female students can and will be treated in similar contexts.

Limitations

The results of this research contribute to evidence of a need for policies and programs that prevent gender discrimination in academia; and while not generalizable outside of this institution, the findings may be transferable to other comparable university contexts.

Figure 1: Thematic Map

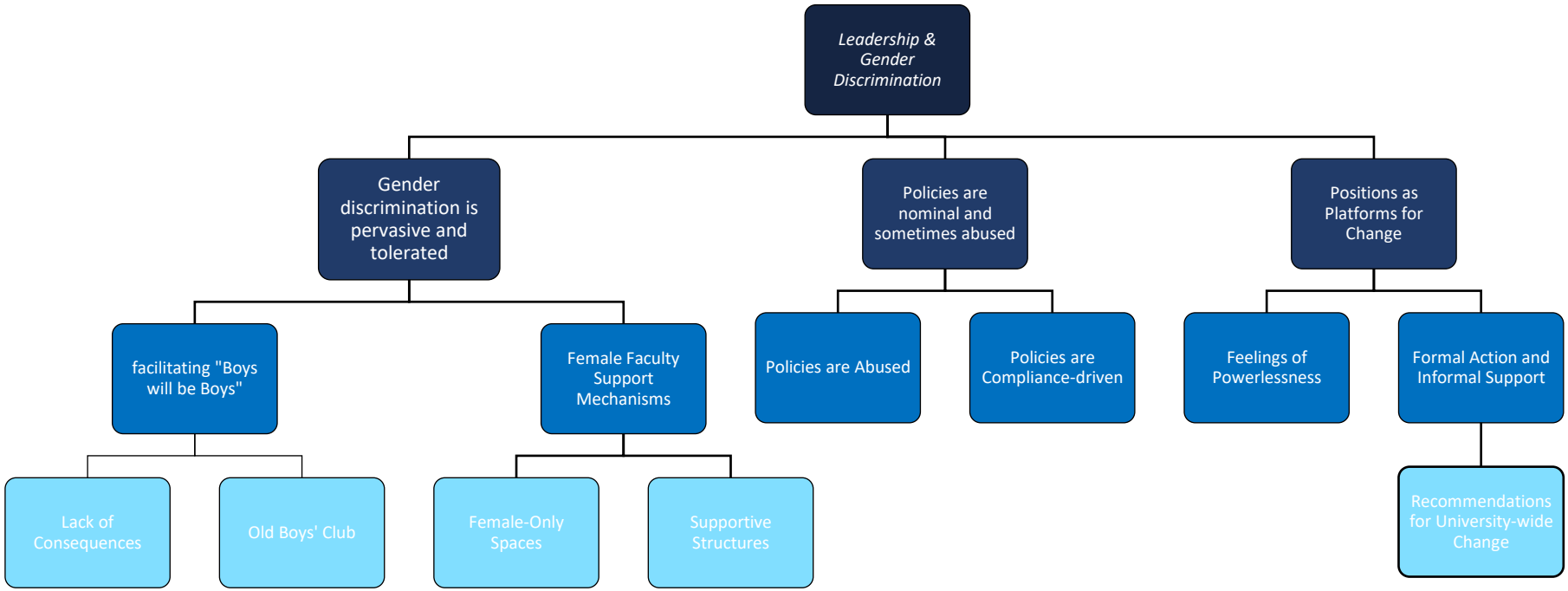

Table 1: Summary of Findings

Theme	Definition	Examples in Data
Leadership & Gender Discrimination		"…in my prior life as a member of the faculty I have been witness to—and frankly a recipient of unwanted and inappropriate gender-based harassment and inequitable treatment… How have those things been handled? I think there has in the passed—well, historically I would say in my first fifteen years in the institution…again my knowledge was that of a faculty member. And my sense of the ways in which these things have been handled has been largely to sweep them under the carpet." (P#1) "Um, a, you know—we're all in awe about how in entertainment industry, every week it's somebody new. I bet if we really had more openness in academia, every week it would be somebody new too. Um, and so, I just think its good to keep the conversation going. I think we're all struggling." (P#4)
Gender discrimination is pervasive and tolerated Subthemes		
Facilitating "Boys will be boys"	A prevalent attitude that neutral to poor behavior and misconduct is typical of men and should not cause surprise when it occurs	"… my strongly held impression is that there has been an attitude that 'boys will be boys', 'so-and-so is behaving like so-and-so', and that there is a big generational divide… even though I think the perception is like this is an old guys' problem, and there are gonna be a number of retirements. And certain problematic figures will work their way out of the Emory system. And we should just be patient and kind of quarantine people. I think I also have witnessed a kind of reproduction of some of these behaviors and attitudes in the next generation."(P#9) "I think laboratory environments are very intense and problematic. Um, and that that is a place where a lot of negative things can happen, uh, for women. And then, I think, uh, medicine is often filled with cowboys who just don't have a lot of respect for women." (P#3)

Lack of Consequences	When instances of misconduct occur against female students or faculty, and the occurrence or situation is swept issues under the rug.	"I think, you know, there are instances of sexual harassment and demeaning behavior and inappropriate behavior and I think we have work to do to address that much more aggressively. I think I know of cases that we've swept into the files and, uh, are waiting for people to retire…" (P#1)
"Old Boys' Club"	Informal relationships among men that encouraged practices that left women out of networking systems or consideration for promotion opportunities	"that very structure also embodies systems of patronage and favor and power dynamics that can be very gendered, very negatively gendered, and negatively experienced by women… one of the ways in which the power of gender operates is that historically department chairs and deans were all men. And junior faculty, mid-career faculty, as they worked their way through the trajectory of their careers the junctures of tenure review and promotion to full professor—that their senior male colleagues were supportive of them with very clear systems of expected difference and in exchange patronage." (P#1) "…which names get put forward for awards and recognition… It's often the case that—just like the kind of business schmoosing that happens on a golf course, or in a men's club—that it's the after work conversations, it's who you have lunch with, it's the post lab beer evening on a Wednesday or a Friday—I don't know, whatever people do (interviewer laughs). But they do things. And when you like have young kids at home, and you're rushing home, and you're left out of that." (P#1)
Female Faculty Support Mechanisms	Self-created ways women engage and bond with each other to navigate personal and workplace difficulties	"I mean, I do think sort of culturally there is just sort of an underlying support structure … [we] started having little informal sessions... But there is definitely a sense of uh, um, sisterhood, if you will. Um, among women, hoping to make sure that the we continue to have, make progress. (P#14)

Female-only Spaces	Environments that faculty members make exclusively for women where they can talk, collaborate, network, train, mentor, and vent with each other	"So, we put together, uh, in our division, we had a little Sunday afternoon, women get together where people just sort of share stories and concerns and frustrations and worries about, you know, how—how do you get your kids from daycare on time without paying all the penalties because you can't get out. And just, um, sort of, uh, supportive kind of thing…" (P#14) "one of the things that I do, is meet with a, uh, colleague, who is a woman in the administration. And we meet once a month or so, just to touch base. And often it's t touch base about work related things. but it has also become a place to, um…talk in solidarity about some issues and think about how we can advance women at [the University]" (P#6)
Supportive Structures	formal or informal systems, people, or practices that female faculty use for support or assistance	"But what's striking is how many of the kind of career support services that [formal faculty program] offers which are not geared toward women, are in fact embraced by women. Like our writing groups… writing groups even though not actually meant to be for women, tend to be for women… book club meetings that bring women together. I have observed, also become a place where women share feelings of being under appreciated. Not being encouraged to be leaders. So, that forums where women get quite often turned to feelings of discussions about feelings and about being insufficiently recognized…"(P#6) "was really, um, privileged to have a fantastic woman mentor early on when I was an assistant professor. She was instrumental in me actually getting hired. We worked very closely together for years. And um, and the message she gave me is 'you have to be twice as good and work twice as hard'" (P#8)

Policies are nominal and sometimes Abused Subthemes		
Policies are Compliance-driven	The prioritization of policies followed for compliance reasons as opposed to the values behind them.	"And then the university seemed to move toward a focus on compliance…um, and so there's been this real big push around compliance. But I honestly feel like over—just over the last couple of months, in large part due to the Me-Too Movement, there's an increasing interest in supporting, um, a culture that seeks to prevent sexual violence. And so, um, I think that might be a natural trajectory for institutions." (P#4) "I think good work on compliance in some respects. And that has been an improvement. Um, the challenge is always in the weeds and… uh, items from my point of view, I do not see deans or department chairs doing what they have to do when they know that someone is violating the policies." (P#6)
Policies are Abused	A policy that allows new parents to take paid time off to care for new births or adoptions or care for unwell parents/dependents	"What's less progressive is the inadvertent effect of—and I'm sorry to say—but its fathers taking a parental leave who are not the primary caregiver. They advance their scholarship . they get an extra year on the tenure clock. And not surprisingly, they outpace the research productivity of their female counterparts who do take a parental leave in order to give birth and nurse a child or just be home. So, I'm—I'm actually really concerned about it." (P#1) "so [the University] actually has uh, a relatively generous parental leave policy... the policy tends to be kind of abused if you will, that uh, when women are, um, dealing with the aftermath of childbirth or—and or—taking time at home to be with their baby, male colleagues are sometimes taking advantage of the same tenure clock stop which while being full time in their research endeavors." (P#5) "the policies about parental leave, um, which we know increasingly from research actually helps—it helps men write their second book or get their promotion. And women, it helps them look after their babies." (P#6)

Positions as Platforms for Change		
Feelings of Powerlessness	Feelings of fear or powerlessness that women have surrounding instances of harassment, assault, or discrimination due to retribution	"And I have been the recipient of, you know—I have inhabited, um, you know a department, a field that is famous for producing the most important work on gender and power. And yet, I have also been told by some of the very authors of this work "there's no power at work in this department" I mean quite literally I have had a full professor shake her hand in my face when I was an assistant professor and asking about whether we could have balloted voting because it felt uncomfortable" (P#1) "There's a lot of fear obviously, for women to come forward when there is a real power differential in the relationship. And so, you know, um, there have been incidence of that power differential with leaders in the organization and women who have felt harassed or assaulted. and physicians… it's really tough to get women to agree to come forward." (P#9) "there were moments where I did—I had to take one case of harassment to the dean and I did that. And, um, it ended up in a certain sense— this was several deans ago—nothing was done about it. And so, in a way, it reinforced the sense of powerlessness." (P#1)
Formal Action and Informal Support	The formal actions participants take within their role to help colleagues and junior faculty, and the informal practices they employ to support other women	"I also expanded his network with the, um, the—the female faculty I'm always sensitive to making sure that they're not going by the wayside. So, for instance. the next person I'm putting forward for the [Leadership Program] is a woman who's kind of probably more junior than typical but I just think she's got really great potential. Um, so, I think that um, helping people find leadership roles, encouraging them, you know, within their professional societies or, um, you know, putting them forward for— you know, when people come to me and asking if I'll be on a review panel or an advisory board saying no and suggesting people in the department and, you know, being careful about, um, demographic diversity on that." (P#3)

Recommendations for University-wide Change	Suggestions that the participants made for the best course of action tp improve gender parity in higher education	"Um, I frankly think that we need a much, um, more transparent process for doing searches and for authorizing searches and that puts some real teeth into our expectation that pools will be diverse. And if they're not diverse, searches won't go forward. So, I think that there are things that we can do that will implement our own expectations and our own policies around hiring that would—would help. Um, to get more women in leadership or more women in science or more women wherever." (P#5) "I think the higher leadership from the president and the provost have to make gender equity—well, gender and race equity an absolute priority. And hold school leadership directly accountable for developing very explicit processes to advance women, including minority women and LGTB—you know, minority in both through the faculty ranks and in positions of leadership. And there should be accountability if those things don't happen." (P#6) "I think that there should be a lot more transparency with respect to data-sharing. On issues, cases, related to, you know, um complaints or issues of sexual harassment or gender—gender prejudice. I think we should be, um, more transparent around salary data, with respect to diversity. Um, and I think these are conversations that should be held at the level of the council of chairs. I think that it would be nice to see the university take a big step forward with respect to Me Too… I think it would be great to know what the president knows and to share what the president knows and to put it out there. And put out the data. And say, "we are going to be a safe community" (P#9)

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Chapter Four: Public Health Implications

Implications for Practice

Due to the unique breeding ground universities create for groundbreaking technology and progressive thinking, they have an opportunity and responsibility to lead progressive cultural change both inside and outside their academic institution instead of maintaining systems of inequality for minorities. Implementing some of the recommendations by holding individuals accountable and being transparent with how the university is advancing toward diversity and inclusion goals can help improve faculty and student experiences drastically. Similarly, further data collection around the prevalence and risk factors for gender discrimination within academic institutions will further encourage universities to look introspectively at how they can further promote a healthier, more inclusive culture for minorities.

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