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Gender Norms Influence on Student's Career Goals and Outcomes

Meagan Trudeau
mtrudeau@sandiego.edu

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Gender Norms Influence on Student's Career Goals and Outcomes

Action Research project submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Arts in Higher Education Leadership

By

Meagan Trudeau

University of San Diego

School of Leadership and Education Sciences

Christopher B. Newman, Ph.D., Chair

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine women's understanding of gender norms in relationship to their studies and career aspirations at the University of San Diego (USD). This research provided students with a better understanding of the social constructs that exist in the classroom and workforce, specifically in business related industries. Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycles is the method I used to analyze my professional development as a career counselor and educational development as a researcher. Achieving this required the six participants to share stories in regards to their academic and professional experiences in a one-on-one interview. Participants also created a vision board that represented where they see themselves in five to ten years which was used in a group discussion about the creative tension between their visions and realities during a focus group. Lastly, students were asked to complete a survey about their experience as participants and to provide feedback for the researcher. This research provided insights into how women in the School of Business make sense of their current identity as a student, internships experiences, and future as professionals. Value, self-doubt, competition, gender norms, and work/family life were all themes that emerged from the various cycles. This data will be utilized in my professional career as I continue to work with women to obtain their career goals regardless of the social constraints they encounter.

Introduction

Gender is an aspect of my identity that became more salient for me during my journey in the School of Educational Sciences and Leadership Studies (SOLES) as a graduate student in the higher education leadership program. In my own upbringing gender was confusing. Whether I was out casted as the only girl in a group of boys or labeled the "tomboy" in a group of girls; I never felt fully accepted into either binary gender categories. I remember being reprimanded for wrestling with the boys and commended for playing nice with the girls. This distinct difference in the dynamics of being a man or woman caused me to resent my femininity, because of the expectations associated with being female. For example, some common traits attributed to women are emotional, passive, weak, and caring whereas men are considered aggressive, independent, competitive, strong, and rebellious (Walsh, 2006). As a female who holds many masculine traits, finding belonging in a gender group is a constant challenge. Learning that I tend to avoid, even resent, the feminine parts of myself sparked an interest in inquiring about the norms projected on individuals based on gender. By exploring this under-developed part of who I am, I have established a more cohesive and less-biased advising technique to help my students with their career development needs. Along with my own gender awareness this research helped my students analyze their experiences based on these assumed roles, specifically regarding their decision to pursue business as a female.

Reflecting on my own decision to become an educator has given me insight that individuals ultimately make this choice, but lack the critical knowledge of how organizations and systems influence their decision making. According to Donald Super's Theory of Career Development (2012), which is composed of four major areas that scaffold students' career development, knowing yourself is one of the first steps where students are asked to determine

their values, strengths, traits and ambitions (See Figure 1). While easily stated, "knowing yourself" is not always simple especially given the social constructs that have contributed to how we see ourselves based on who we should be to society. My decision to become an educator derived from being nurturing, reflective, and empathetic, traits that would fall under feminine qualities thus leading me to a female-dominated career. Although I possessed many masculine traits as well, such as independent, competitive, and rational these qualities were never reinforced by family, friends, and other educators. I allowed these people and undeniable feminine characteristics influence my choice, a choice I might not have made if these norms of femininity and masculinity did not exist.

My main concern is the way our culture divides individuals onto social categories and the labels placed on these identity groups. Leading students to gravitate towards certain areas of study and ultimately professions. These patterns in higher education are hard to avoid. Observing the overwhelming differences in the representation of gender in fields such as social services, engineering, teaching, and business illustrate the power of gender norms. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that women hold 66% of all social services jobs as well as 73% of the positions in education, yet only represent 40% of business related roles and 16% of engineering industries (United States Department of Labor Statistics, 2017). These barriers have created stigmas with being a male in a female dominated profession or a female in a male dominated profession. One stigma in particular is questioning one's sexual orientation by suggesting that all male teachers are gay or female engineers are lesbian. I want to eliminate these barriers, labels, and assumptions by joining in the effort to make gender fluidity more acceptable to students in higher education. The fluidity of gender is still a new, but powerful idea that being categorized as a male or female is not simply binary, but is a spectrum with differing levels of femininity and

masculinity that individuals can move freely between depending on their life in that moment. This is a culture that should be understood by society at large to allow later generations to establish their own gender identity rather than it being assigned by others.

In October as my research was in the beginning stages, Harvey Weinstien was in the media crossfire for reports that surfaced from over fifty women accusing him of rape and sexual assault (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2017). This powerful, popular Hollywood producer was using his notoriety to pressure younger women at the start of their acting careers to perform sexual tasks as a bargaining tool for a role in a movie or show. This story caused an uproar of sexual harassment survivors coming forward to name powerful men who used their power to take advantage of women. Kevin Spacey, Louis C.K, Russel Simmons, and Matt Lauer are just some among these high-profile cases. These headlines resulted in a social media movement ignited by the hashtag Me Too for women around the world to share their sexual assault stories. Me Too was directly correlated with my research of women's experience in a workplace dominated by males (Garcia, 2017). I found myself asking, "is workplace safety a concern for students entering internships?" and "have female business students experienced sexual misconduct in their internships without even knowing it?". Moving forward in this research I decided to narrow the scope of my topic to focusing solely on women entering the business industry.

Figure 1. Holistic career development model incorporating similar stages in alignment with Donald Super's Theory of Career Development produced by the Career Development Center at the University of San Diego

Research Questions

1. How can I, as a career counseling professional, use my understanding of gender to better

   advise my students in making career decisions?

   - How does my *gender bias* influence my advising techniques?

2. What influences do "*feminine*" (e.g., emotional, passive, weak, and caring) qualities have

   on female career choices for USD undergraduate business students?

Construct Definitions

1. *Advise:* the guidance given to students by trained higher education professionals

2. *Gender biases*: the expectations associated with being a man or woman and the different

   ways individuals are treated based on this identity

3. *Feminine:* the qualities that are traditionally associated with being a woman (e.g.,

   emotional, passive, weak, and caring)

Background

Drawing from personal experience and observations in education, I am aware that gender norms exist both inside and outside of the classroom. Walking into my current academic classes as an aspiring education professional the female majority is undeniable in comparison to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) related fields. Women are at a huge disadvantage in this world that is rapidly increasing industries related to science, technology, engineering, and math. Business is the backbone to many of these tech and engineering companies to ensure they have clear business development plans, procedures, and policies.

Understanding the history behind the development of women as career driven individuals is crucial to grasping many of these gender constructs that traditionally label certain qualities, tasks, and outcomes as masculine or feminine. Betty Friedan's, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) is known as the catalyst of "second-wave feminism" and speaks to mainstream society's expectation that a woman's complete fulfillment should derive from being wife and mother. Her work gave women a platform to question the assumptions imposed onto them and opened a door to allow women to be both, mothers and careerists (Parry, 2013). As women progressed into the workforce, their role as mother continued to overpower other attributes with taking on caregiving careers like nurses, teachers and housekeepers.

This historical context sets the tone for understanding the basis of how social constructs regarding gender formed and the progress that has been made to develop a more inclusive environment for working women. Based on current research, there is a lot of work to be done to break down the barriers that still exist in certain professions. According to Becky Wai-Ling Packard (2015), women make up less than 15% of students majoring in STEM fields. This evidence supports the stereotype made about women being less intelligent in math and science.

This assumption has circulated the American culture for centuries and was even reinforced by creators of Barbie Doll in 1992 with a talking doll that says, "math class is hard" therefore perpetuating this stigma. Feminist movements are known to be critical of the Barbie brand and this specific doll infuriated women across the country. Barbie defended the doll by insisting the phrase was not targeting women specifically, but generally commenting on the difficulty of math as a subject matter (Chapman, 2013). I agree this could have been a coincidence, but disagree with the message this doll is portraying to young girls that math is "hard" because it has the potential of encouraging them to believe this even if math is a strength. Math and technology are essential skills for several areas in business and these assumptions are placing women at a significant disadvantage to obtain careers in data heavy industries such as accounting, finance, and economics.

Although women have shown huge progression in obtaining more affluent positions there are still huge discrepancies in comparison to men. According to the Harvard Business Review, "more than 40% of all managerial positions in the United states" are occupied by women (Eagly & Carli, 2007). A number that looks promising for women in the workplace, but when reporting on the highest paid executives, women hold less than 6% (See Figure 2) of these elite titles such as chairman, president, chief executive officer and chief operating officer (Seltzer, 2017). Immense amounts of research exist to uncover the reasoning and potential solutions of gender discrimination as it pertains to career driven women. Some include, family responsibilities, male-dominated culture, and trait driven leadership. Trait theory suggests that it takes certain qualities to make a leader. Qualities such as assertive, strong, and non-emotional these traits are typically associated with men. Although trait theory is not considered the most effective leadership theory,

it does continue to inform hiring processes masking these personal attributes as "skills".

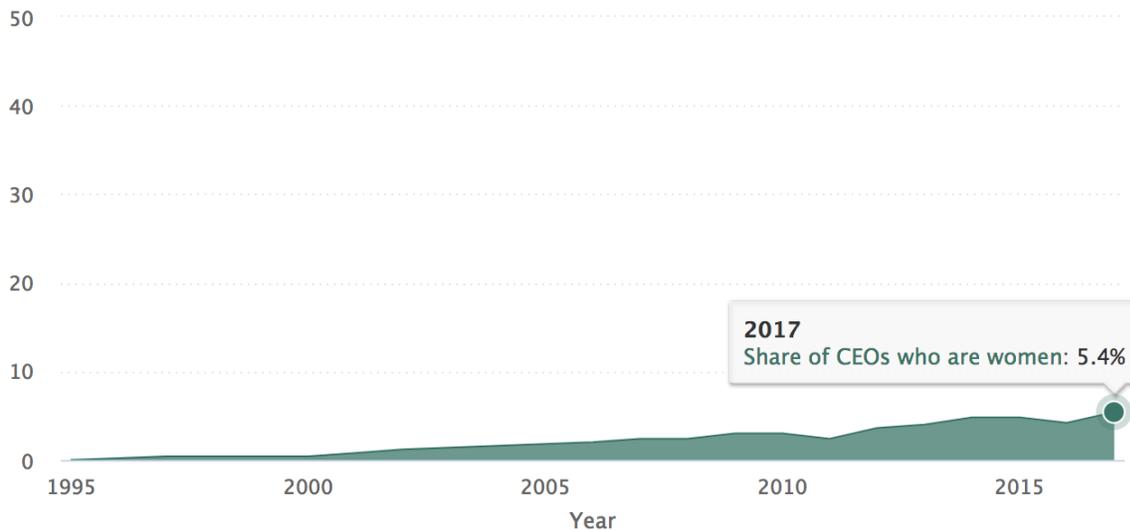*Percentage of Fortune 500 CEOs who are women*

Figure 2. Reproduced from Pew Research Center graph of women's progress from 1995-2017 to hold high executive ranked positions in Fortune 500 companies

The wage gap between men and women continues to be a concern in all careers. Women working full-time earned eighty cents for every dollar earned by men confirming the inequalities that continue to exist between these binary gender label (Seltzer, 2017). The largest discrepancy is the differences in public pension benefits leaving many working women in their positions for a longer time periods. Instead of having the financial security and being able to leverage their work experience to obtain a higher pay rate. The Family and Medical Leave Act is an additional oppressive constraint for women expanding their families because the government does not mandate the appropriate amount of time women can be out of work with full pay and benefits. This legislation provides "certain employees with 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year" (United States Department of Labor, 2017). Maternity leave regulations are worrisome because women are expected to raise newborns with little to no income, return to work during a very venerable time (post-pregnancy), and babies are losing significant bonding time with parents.

Twelve weeks is not enough time for women to bounce back after pregnancy causing high stress because they are experiencing residual effects of giving birth such as high hormones levels, postpartum depression, and separation anxiety. These factors in addition to the average stressors of the workplace lead many women to forgo their career to stay at home which continues to perpetuate gender norms.

This research also includes some insight on intersectionality's that exist when exploring different gender norms presented to students across different cultural backgrounds and if there are any patterns with certain ethnic groups with male/female roles. If women in general are experiencing these barriers in the workplace the level of oppression must vary in regards to their racial identity as well. In Figure 3 this discrepancy is illustrated by the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics where women are categorized by occupation, race, and ethnicity. This chart shows that White and Asian women are more likely to hold management and professional careers than Black and Hispanic women. Therefore, women from marginalized racial groups are even less likely to hold leadership positions within in already small percentage of women in these roles. Instead, women who identify as Black or Hispanic are more likely to be in service oriented jobs (helping roles) than White and Asian women. These jobs are typically under paid and over worked which continues the cycle of systemic oppression these women of color face (Crenshaw, 2013).
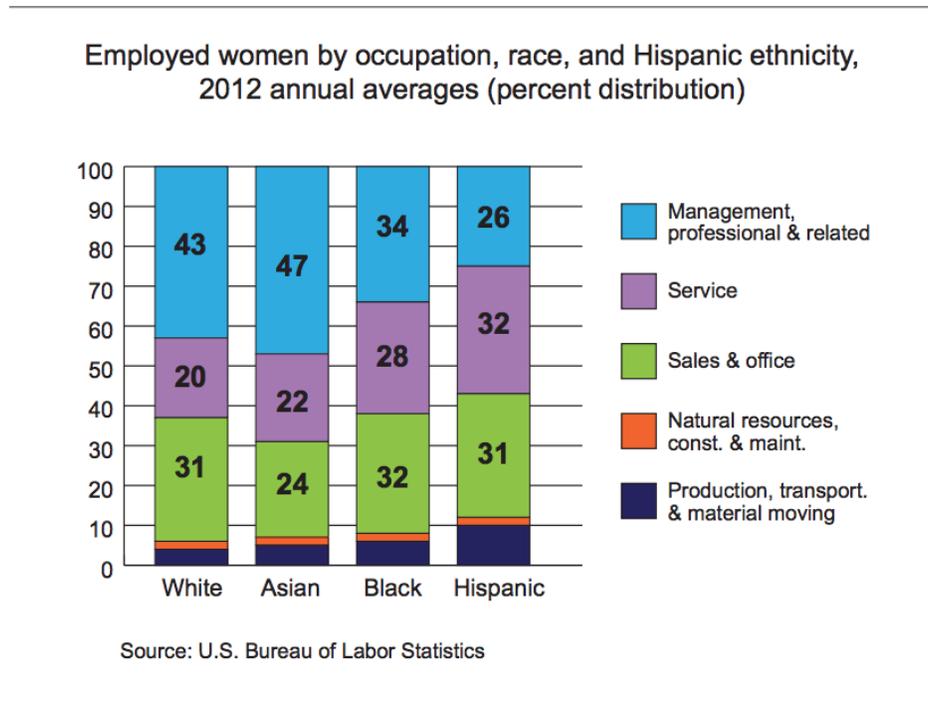
Employed women by occupation, race, and Hispanic ethnicity, 2012 annual averages (percent distribution)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 3. Reproduced from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, representing the separate of women by race in specific industries.

Exploring gender influences within my own career in higher education is essential to my professional development during the action research process. Although there has been an increase in the amount of women faculty at colleges and universities around the country, women are still outnumbered by men in all ranks at all four-year institutions (De Welde & Stepnick, 2015). The discrepancy is outrageous that even if "only women are hired and attrition rates are equal, the faculty would reach numerical equality in 11 years" (De Welde & Stepnick, 2015, p. 8). Being aware that higher education is a field dominated by men is an important awareness as a female entering the profession. The segregation of gender in undergraduate majors is also prevalent in regards to faculty. Education, health fields, and humanities hold most female faculty in comparison to natural sciences or engineering that are male dominated (De Welde & Stepnick, 2015). Discrepancies in salaries also exist within these different teaching subjects. For example,

a "newly hired assistant professor in computer science earned just over $74,500" and "education earned just over 55,600" (De Welde & Stepnick, 2015).

Context

This work is not only meaningful to me, but relevant to my role as a graduate assistant in the Career Development Center at the University of San Diego (USD). The university is a mid-sized private, catholic institution with a predominantly white, wealthy student population in Southern California. With the prestige and privilege of attending USD, the career development center is underutilized by the student body because of the lack of need (Russo, 2015). USD has 5,700 undergraduate students and career services conducted 2,800 individual counseling sessions last year (Careers, 2017). These numbers leave a deficit with more than half of the student body unaccounted for. Also, keeping in mind that the 2,800 does not reflect each individual student using the resources therefore one might assume if repeated students were not included, the number could be much lower.

The office is in Manchester Hall on the first floor and is the first office presented directly in the front of the building. Accessing career services is easily attainable to students with the ability to schedule an appointment from the website, in person, or through the phone. The career development center's mission is to "support and guide students to develop and achieve career goals that lead to meaningful lives" (Careers, 2017). This mission allows students to determine their own definitions of goals in relationship to what they consider a meaningful life. The main resources provided by career services counselors include assisting with resumes, cover letters, internship searching, interviewing techniques, networking as well as other career planning initiatives.

I function similarly to a full-time Career Counselor with my primary responsibility being meeting with students in appointments. I help guide students in reaching their post-graduation dreams and aspirations. An important tool that our office uses when helping freshman and sophomore students choose a major is the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MTBI) assessment (See Figure 3). The purpose is to assess students' personality based on a series of questions then matches them with careers and interests. Understanding this process and reviewing the assessment was a crucial tool in my research to determine how personality in relationship with gender influences career paths. Through this role, I acquired five undergraduate participants and one graduate participant to then gather data utilizing a mixed methods approach with one-on-one interviews, a focus group, and survey responses.
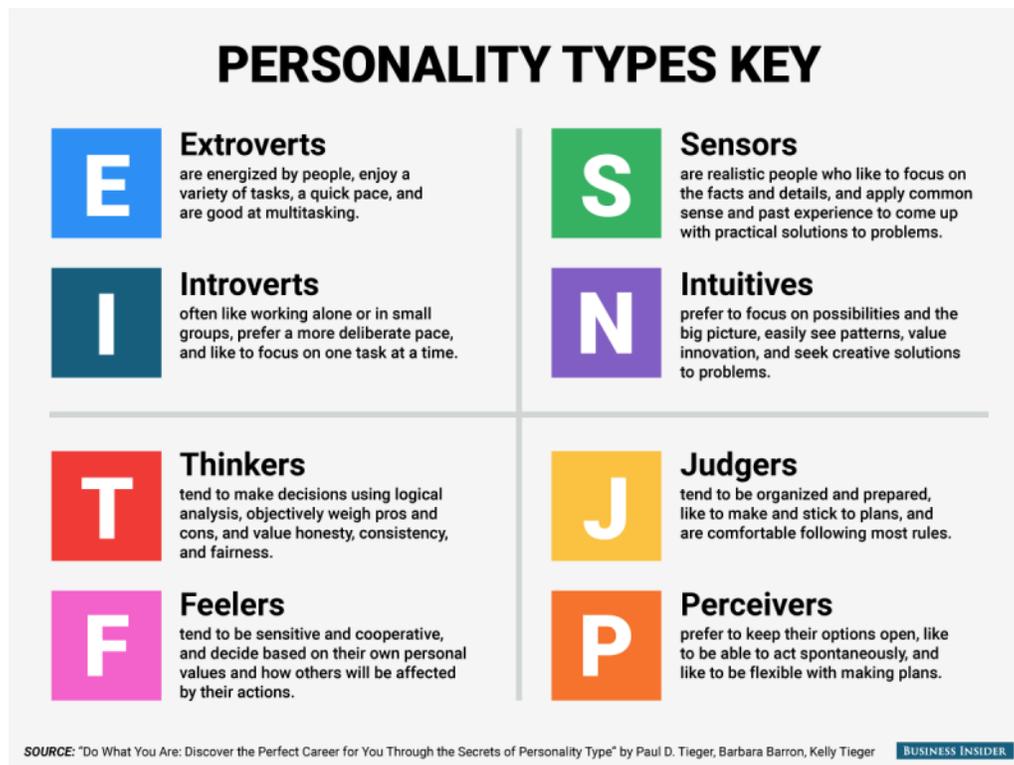

PERSONALITY TYPES KEY

E **Extroverts** are energized by people, enjoy a variety of tasks, a quick pace, and are good at multitasking.

S **Sensors** are realistic people who like to focus on the facts and details, and apply common sense and past experience to come up with practical solutions to problems.

I **Introverts** often like working alone or in small groups, prefer a more deliberate pace, and like to focus on one task at a time.

N **Intuitives** prefer to focus on possibilities and the big picture, easily see patterns, value innovation, and seek creative solutions to problems.

T **Thinkers** tend to make decisions using logical analysis, objectively weigh pros and cons, and value honesty, consistency, and fairness.

J **Judgers** tend to be organized and prepared, like to make and stick to plans, and are comfortable following most rules.

F **Feelers** tend to be sensitive and cooperative, and decide based on their own personal values and how others will be affected by their actions.

P **Perceivers** prefer to keep their options open, like to be able to act spontaneously, and like to be flexible with making plans.

SOURCE: "Do What You Are: Discover the Perfect Career for You Through the Secrets of Personality Type" by Paul D. Tieger, Barbara Barron, Kelly Tieger   BUSINESS INSIDER

Figure 3: Reproduced from "Do What You Are" diagram based on Myer's Briggs Personality type organized in four categories with two binary extremes

Methodology

The approach that I chose to guide my action research is Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycles (2015). The model includes: 1) having a concrete experience, 2) making observations and reflections, 3) formulating abstract concepts/generalizations, and 4) testing implications of concepts in new situations (Kolb, 2015). This method was compelling because it goes beyond reflection and leaves room for more interpretations of what is happening through the third step, formulating abstract concepts/generalizations. I want to go deeper into what the data is implying on a general level as it relates to larger systems outside of this specific sample of participants at the University of San Diego. This step functions like a second reflection process which was beneficial for further analysis of the data as well as provided more insights for my professional development.

I hold a few epistemological assumptions that were addressed to ensure my research holds high validity and low personal bias. Education is an important value and I believe knowledge is the greatest tool for individuals because with this understanding comes development and growth. I have caught myself trying to teach students by explaining my knowledge and wisdom based on my experiences instead of simply providing them with tools to navigate their own learning. I recognized this by reflecting on my previous role as an elementary school teacher because younger students needed more support whereas undergraduate students have a higher mental capacity to take more control of their development. I was hyper aware of this during my research because I did not want my experiences to cloud the participant's responses. This was particularly present during the focus group because I was asked why I did not partake in the vision board craft from a student. I made the conscious decision to not create

and share a vision board because I was concerned students might alter their boards based on mine since I was the authority in this scenario.

Another assumption I hold that greatly impacts my research is that socialization and social constructs are barriers for individuals to access their human capitol. My focus on gender norms has brought up a lot of emotions involving my own understanding of gender based on my social surroundings and I constantly wish these norms/roles would fade from society. Knowing this change is not going to happen based on the outcomes of my research, I need to accept the reality that these norms are shaped historically and try to impact the small systems I might be able to influence. The survey showed that some students do not see gender norms play out in their daily lives proving that I should not assume that individuals even believe these constructs exist or have as strong of an awareness of them.

Needs Assessment

Collaboration with career counselors and faculty in the school of business was critical in gaining participants for my research. A referral from my colleague and collaborator the Associate Director of the Career Development Center, Abigail Racelis, to meet with an Associate Professor that teaches a course on Women in Management (MGMT 306) provided me with a great starting point. After meeting with Dr. Tara Salinas she invited me to attend a lesson in her class where I was exposed to a pool of 22 female students studying business. From making an announcement (Appendix E) at the end of the class period and handing out business cards I had five students sign to be participants. My final participant is a friend in SOLES that agreed to be a part of my research as a woman who worked in business for 8 years before pursing higher education. Another collaborator from the career development center, Kelly Morton, referred me to read "Lean In" by Sheryl Sandberg which is about her journey as a top executive for Facebook

and a new mother. The buy in I received early on from women staff and faulty in the school of business significantly impacted the direction of my research from underrepresentation in multiple major to focusing on women in business.

The critical friends group I was assigned in Action Research Methods class (LEAD 547) were significant collaborators to help envision and plan my research, but insignificant during the implementation and writing process. The only member I would consider a collaborator was Kalena Michalec who gave me helpful insights on the ways to interpret and organize data as well as emotional support when needed. Another important peer for my research was Aubrie Cook because of the commonalities of our research topics on gender, women, and feminism. She gave me useful literature suggestions, resources from the Women's Center, and ideas for recommendations.

I utilized qualitative and quantitative methods in my data collection process through interviews, focus groups, surveys, personal journaling, and assessments. Within these forms of measurement, I used techniques such as storytelling, dialogue, art, and media. First, I conducted an interview with each participant to get some personal demographics and experiences associated with being a student studying business vs. an employee of a business organization. Then I facilitate a focus group to uncover these women's current realities and future visions. Lastly, I compiled a survey to gauge impact and receive feedback. All cycles will be expressed through experiential learning cycles displayed as concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

Implementation

Pre-Cycle: Meeting with Dr. Tara Salinas & Women in Management course

Concrete Experience

As I began discussing my research with colleagues in the Career Development Center, Abigail Racelis told me about a course dedicated to discussing topics involving women in business instructed by Dr. Tara Salinas. I reached out to Dr. Salinas through email to set up a meeting to get some more information about her women in management (MGMT 306) class as a baseline for my action research project. Our initial meeting on September 18th was extremely helpful to access new resources and receive insight on potential approaches. Dr. Salinas gave me access to her calendar website which encompasses the weekly topics, readings, and assignments. She also invited me to attend any classes that I saw related to my research which added great value to my research.

Reflective Observation

There are 22 female students in this course, the largest and only all-female classroom Dr. Salinas has taught. About a month after our meeting, I attended a class about sexual harassment in the workplace and led by guest speaker Dr. Johannah Hunsaker, the Chair of Management, Law and Ethics. Her research has primarily been on women in management positions, but is also deemed as an expert witness in court cases regarding sexual harassment and workplace discrimination. Dr. Hunsaker's expertise in ethics and interest in women's experiences in business has provided her the opportunity to be called upon to advocate for survivors in court. She did an impeccable job of incorporating these cases in a way that exposed students to the realities that exist in organizations run my powerful men.

Abstract Conceptualization

The timing of this presentation was perfectly aligned with the current movement, "Me Too" which struck up a great dialogue among the students. I was in complete awe on how the women conceptualize these stories and related them to experiences closer to home with personal

examples of friends, family and even themselves having situations with male supervisors that were inappropriate and uncomfortable. I believe this learning would not have been as impactful if these stories of well-known women in entertainment and sports were not in the headlines of every news platform. The "Me Too" movement made these women empowered to share stories they suppressed because of the lack of awareness about the boundaries organizations are responsible to uphold to protect new professional women from seasoned professional men.

Active Experimentation

The women in management class completely changed the direction of my research and I decided that women in business would be my population for this research because I could not ignore the vulnerability and strength I witnessed during that hour discussion as well as in media at large. I wanted to learn more about the experiences of young women entering the business industry through their involvement in internships, participation in the classroom, and potential implications for their future careers. This experience provided me with five undergraduate students in business related majors that were willing to be participants in my research. As I continue this research, I continued to attend Dr. Salinas' class to access more resources and topics that I could explore further, such as sexual misconduct in the workplace.

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Cycle One: One-on- One interviews

</div>

Concrete Experience

Interviews with the six participants were scheduled during the week of November 6th to November 10th individually with each student. The intention of this cycle was to get a general understanding of these women's experiences in the classroom in comparison to industry related work or internships. I thought it was important to distinguish the ways women are handled in

academia verses industry to establish a sense of how the student/employee transition unfolds in

the hopes this will give context for when their student identity concludes.

I wanted to focus on my ability to facilitate the interview in a way that made the

participants comfortable sharing sensitive information so each interview took place in an

interview room in the Career Development Center that is extremely private. Another technique I

wanted to experiment with was using a touching stone during the session, a tool I learned in a

foundations of executive coaching course to see if this would provide a calming energy for the

student.

Cycle One consisted of ten set questions with additional follow up questions as seen fit

by the researcher (Appendix A). I allocated thirty minutes for each interview to minimize the

overall time commitment the research would require from each participant, but as the interview

transpired I noticed thirty minutes was not enough time. All the questions were left open-ended

which allowed for the women to share as much as they were willing. I intentionally wanted my

questions to be as open as possible, but did not consider time parameters accordingly. Five

questions were addressing their experiences as a business student to gage the gender dynamics,

relationships with peers and professors, and level of support. The remaining five questions were

similar, but addressed in their internship or work experience.

Reflective Observation

Demographics of participants:

	Pseudonyms	**Age/Standing**	**Gender**	**Race/Ethnicity**	**Major(s)**	**MBTI**
1	Jade	21/Senior	Female	White	Marketing	ESFJ
2	Gail	20/Junior	Female	Hispanic	Economics	ESTJ

3	Josie	34/Graduate Student	Female	Black	Hospitality/Higher Education	INFP
4	Betsey	21/Senior	Female	White	Accounting	ESTJ
5	Violet	27/Senior	Female	Hispanic	Economics	ENFP
6	Cinnamon	21/Senior	Female	White	Marketing	ESFJ

Figure 4. A table with each participant's demographics related to the research; pseudonyms, age/standing, gender, race/ethnicity, major, and Myers Briggs Type Indicator code.

There were three major themes that emerged from the interview value (n= 6), competition (n=6), and gender norms (n=6). Every participant mentioned these ideas during the interview providing me with very consistent variables and potential implications for all women in the school of business.

Based on the number of mentions throughout the interview, gender norms were the most prevalent theme present in both academics and professional environments. Jade as a Marketing major described gender norms playing out in the school of business among certain concentrations:

I definitely see how gender norms and social norms divide choosing a major. Seeing places like finance and accounting are more male heavy because of the math skills required whereas marketing is relatively creative and I feel like growing up, especially in my hometown girls were encouraged to be more creative and boys had to be in sports.

Cinnamon, a marketing major as well agreed with Jade's statement in saying:

There are a lot more women in marketing its more creative and fluffy it looks to be more advertising and pretty art stuff. Finance, economics, and accounting are more of a man's world like my lower division accounting classes there were a lot more males in the classes, actually in any courses that are more technical or math based really.

Gail is studying economics and identifies the underrepresentation of women in her major stating, "I definitely am in the minority when referring to gender and I do feel that it is a more male driven major only because it is kind of a math-y, data and tech-y driven subject." Another economics student, Violet, makes a distinction between specific economics classes and gender through "still seeing a hint of male/female classes such as behavioral economics there are more women and money/banking is more men." Betsy, an accounting major, reflected on her classes gender representation and confirmed, "being in classes that are more heavy in accounting are overwhelmingly consumed by men." Similarly, professors that teach these subjects tend to have the same gender identity as the norms would presume. For example, Cinnamon recognized that "all of the professors in marketing are female as well except for a handful." Whereas Betsy noticed a potential action for change from the school of business in her comment, "a lot of the younger professors tend to be females whereas older professors tend to be males. I think they've made an effort over the years to hire more females as accounting professors."

Outside of the classroom these patterns still exist, but are less extreme in the student's perception. Betsy reminisced on her summer internship with a large accounting firm stating:

> Accounting is a much more male dominated track, but when it comes to working in my internship last summer there was a pretty equal representation of males to females. I think with the firms being such big companies under the public eye had to make an effort to be more inclusive.

Betsy makes a great point regarding companies actively seeking to employ more women for a gender balance in their workplace, but a few participants mention the microagressions they experience in these working environments. Violet describes her experience as a working parent in comparison to a male colleague:

> There are other people in the office that have kids and the other day specifically, one of
>
> the guys were saying, "Oh I have to go home and help my wife with the kids". It was just
>
> a weird way for him to phrase it as if it is solely his wife responsibility. I was like what
>
> do you mean you're going to "help" with the kids. Whereas for me if I said that it
>
> wouldn't be taken the same, it would make me look incompetent as a mother for me to
>
> just help and not be the primary caregiver.

Josie works in a male-dominate organization and recalls an example of being devalued based on her gender. She remembered when "we were moving office furniture. Well, they (the men) were moving furniture and they couldn't figure out how to fit a desk into a small space that we had so I gave them a suggestion and the response I got was "we're men we got it."

Competition is imbedded into business to promote innovation, but perpetuates the idea that business is a "man's world" because competition is associated as a male norm. Several participants mentioned how competitive they are expected to be in the school of business with getting the best grades and internships. Violet expressed that "the business school becomes really competitive for some weird reason. As if there is one goal that we're all trying to obtain. In terms of when I take other classes outside of my major it's not as competitive." She continues to add, "I don't like it (competition) for me it gives me anxiety. I feel like I then begin to fall within that competitiveness so I see that somebody else is doing that and then it just catches on and I feel like I need to catch up or get to their level." Jade agrees with Violet and says, "I hate competing. I'm not going to compete to answer a question." This dislike for competition is causing several participants to change career paths. When asked about her ideal work environment Gail describes it as "not something that is very, very competitive, I don't mind competition I think it's good

because it helps spur innovation, but not something that's as competitive as like Amazon." Violet is choosing to pursue higher education and claims:

> Being an econ major and working in the business setting isn't how I would picture myself. If you want to be successful (in business) it's really cut throat and I don't want to do that. For me I value giving back more and actually applying my thoughts to helping other people to succeed.

One participant, Betsy, enjoys the competitive aspect of business saying that she has a competitive nature and loved that she could apply that to business because she played sports growing up, but she liked that this was an academic competition. According to Cinnamon this extreme level of competition is encouraged by some professors in the school of business stating, "there is an extra level of competition that squashes collaboration because only the top four students can get an 'A' based on the professors grading on a curve."

Each participant refers to a lack of value in comparison to their male counterparts in the workplace more so than in the classroom. Josie called it out by saying, "I definitely feel like my opinions, thoughts and experiences are not as valued even when I know that I work just as hard if not harder than everyone else." Violet agreed and recalled feeling ostracized because she is one of two female veterans. She explained:

> I was only one out of two women veterans so for me to speak on behalf of women it wasn't seen as a valid statement because it was just me and my experience. Not women in general so it was hard to take my word as seriously in regards to needing new resources. At least not taken as seriously as 10-15 men as veterans. I had to say "no I am worthy for value. Most of the time, with most women, you can say one thing and it's not even taken serious, but then a male will say it and it'll be heard.

Jade stated that her summer internship "was hard because I worked for a company that didn't care about me, but I did learn a lot." These examples of people not valuing these women's work and contributions shows up in the way these women see their own worth. This came out as the participants were explaining how they use their voice in their courses and experiencing self-doubt. Gail strongly referenced this feeling in saying, "if I doubt that I know it, but I do know it, but I'm doubting myself I usually reserve saying the answer aloud in class." Doubt is expressed as fear according to Betsey because she "still has that fear of answering the questions wrong." Jade also only participates in classes that she is confident that she "knows the answer and is structured more like a dialogue." Cinnamon compares her level of participation to the men in class. She stated:

> I am never the first person to start off the discussion. There are guys in most of my classes who lead the conversation, like in my management class there are two men who always start off asking questions. I will usually gage the room and if my thinking is on track with theirs then I'll start participating.

Gail made a similar connection with her comment that "the males in that class feel more dominate over the females as in what they feel is more right."

Abstract Conceptualization

Facilitating these interviews was beneficial for my development as a career counselor because it showed me how effective questioning can bring out useful information that can provide insight on best way to serve that specific student. I noticed in my counseling, coaching, and advising technique that the questions I chose to ask tended to be too abstract for undergraduate students to comprehend. For example, a question I asked was "how often do you use your voice in class?" where I was looking for data on their level of verbal participation.

Instead my question led participants into discussing group presentations or public speaking examples therefore I had to rethink the way I frame questioning. I wanted to avoid asking how often they participate in class because I believe participation does not necessarily mean verbal contribution. I think "voice" was a confusing term for the students. Another aspect of my questioning I feel could be improved is recognizing the appropriate times to ask follow up questions to enhance their thinking around the subject as well as for me to get a better understanding of what they are trying to say. I believe time was a factor here because there were many interviews that I felt were rushed because of time boundaries.

After analyzing the data gathered from Cycle One I learned three important factors that contribute to these women's experiences as students in the school of business and experiential learning opportunities; gender norms are perpetuated in both school and work, the school of business is an extremely competitive environment, and women feel under valued at work and experience self-doubt in class. Along with these three themes, I noted that my participants had a desire to "get it right" even throughout the interview process. There were five participants who would ask "did I answer that right?" after most questions and I got a sense that a few were trying to provide me with specific answers as it related to my research topic. This made me question the validity of my research because the participants knew the type of information I was seeking and answered accordingly. I confided in my critical friend, Kalena Michalec, who gave me the advice to ask questions without using the word "gender" because five out of the ten questions used gender related terms which gave my participants a limited scope.

Active Experimentation

As I move towards Cycle Two, I am seeking to gather data regarding how these women envision their future and use this data of the student's current reality to facilitate a dialogue about

the creative tension that may exist as they chase their dreams. I want to use these themes to provide students with the realities they named and ask how these could potentially get in the way of their future endeavors in the business world. Per Kalena's advice, this focus group will not be primarily focused on gender and none of my questions will have leading words. I want to see how the students will make these connections independently.

<p style="text-align:center">Cycle Two: Focus Group</p>

Concrete Experience

A focus group was conducted in Cycle Two to gain a better understanding of these women's future ambitions and goals to compliment the data regarding their current reality. This information initiated a conversation about creative tension which is defined as the gap between your current reality and your vision. The gap signifies the factors that are holding you back from obtaining your vision and to identify this creative tension participants must establish a vision or dream they desire. The focus group was in February and students were informed through email of the time, location, and compensation. We met in a classroom on campus during the evening for an hour where dinner was served complements of the researcher. The participants were asked to craft a vision board using a small poster board, markers, scissors, glue, and magazines. The room was set prior to them arriving with the chairs/desks arranged in a circle, all materials available on a table in the middle, and food on a table in the perimeter. Five out of the six participants (83%) were present with a separate meeting scheduled for the participant with a time conflict therefore we rescheduled an individual debrief of her board. The participants were asked to use the time and resources to create two visions; one of where they see themselves in five years and the second of where they see themselves in ten years. This was important because I wanted to see the differences between short and long term ambitions and goals. Specifically, it

was important to know if these women were interested in starting families and giving them a longer timespan would allow for this possibility more.

Reflective Observation

The focus group started slowly because of the introductions, greetings, and eating. One participant showed up fifteen minutes late which also caused another time set back due to the disruption it caused among the group. I allocated for thirty minutes to complete to vision boards and thirty minutes for discussion, but due to these factors I noticed that students needed more time to create their boards than I anticipated. I gave them an additional fifteen minutes and made sure they stayed on track by giving them time updates. The time boundary was detrimental to the discussion because we had less time to talk about their boards. I had four questions prepared; What story are you telling in your board?; What are your career goals in the future?; What are your personal goals for your future?; What are some major differences/similarities between your five-year vision and ten-year vision?. These questions surfaced three major themes among the participants; education (n= 4), family (n=6), and work/life balance (n=5).

Four out of the six participants (67%) are planning to pursue work in education after graduation. Jade said:

> My entire life I want to work with kids so like working with kids it's front and center on both sides of my board because I don't think I could be truly happy with what I do if I am not doing it for kids. I want to work at a children's hospital or school right after graduation and eventually get my Master's degree to be a child's counselor or a school principle. Just to get closer to working in education administration like a school. My parents were school teachers so that's really important to me or going towards children's counseling.

Working in education is also a passion for Cinnamon when she expressed, "I love working with students because it gives me purpose. Long-term I would want to be the head of a department like be a Director. I think it would so cool to be a woman in a leadership role as the head of a department because you still don't see that very often." Violet is already on track to becoming a higher education professional with an acceptance into a doctoral program that will begin Fall 2018. She shared:

> Five years from now, I will be complete with my Doctorate program in higher education. I really like the student affairs aspect, so I hope to be like a Cynthia Avery that type of figure. Not just position wise, but someone that students can trust and confide in. I look up to her so I strive to be like that type of person to give back to the students.

Lastly, Josie is pursing the same field and said, "I am interested in higher education specifically, academic advising, admissions counseling, and career counseling, but in five years I definitely see myself in academic advising."

> Family is a major value that each participant mentions to some extent during the focus group whether it was related to their current family or future family. Gail responded, "family and friends is really big to me because I really can't be without my family because they are my support system. When I am with them it is when I am the happiest and I feel the most joy. As for my own family. I am still open to it, but I'm not trying to push that on myself." Cinnamon expressed she was hesitant on having her own family at first and said:

> I was totally not open to having kids a couple years ago. I did not want to have marriage and kids that whole thing. I worked at a daycare, so I work with a lot of kids and I just fell in love with it so I'm more open to it now.

Josie simply expressed, "I want to settle down and have some kids." There was no hesitation from Jade to share her plans for starting a family when she stated, "it is very important to me to have kids of my own. I really hope someday I could have one, two, three... ten thousand children. I just really love kids." Betsy also sees being a mother in the future, but more so in her ten-year plan. She shared, "I think that's why I see kids way in the future because maybe I would take a few years off, but I want to really grow within my career before I make such major decisions so I can give the best to my kids."

These conversations about career and family planning in the future was the opportunity to discuss creative tension that could exist with balancing these two roles of mother and employee. Within this conversation students began to talk about establishing a work/life balance and what they anticipate it looking like in the future. Betsy is fully expecting to balance both roles in her future, but is realistic about the potential inner conflict. She expressed:

> I've always felt empowered to be a working mom because my mom was, so I wouldn't want to be judgmental of them (stay at home mothers) because that's their choice. I feel like that's something I see as a challenge because family is very important to me, but also setting an example for my children forward so I think that would cause some inner conflicts for me. Do I put my family first and take time off work or try to advance my career more? I think it's important to see women who can do both.

Gail has similar uncertainties due to her career path and shared her thoughts of:

> If I have a kid and I am in a corporate law setting that I might not be able to give them the best life. Like the one I had with my mom being able to stay at home. I'm unsure if I could give them that life because I might be working more hours than necessary. I don't want to have to ask my significant other to give up what they're doing to stay at home

with the child. I want us both to be happy with what we're doing so it really comes down

to what my situation is and to determine based on that if having a child is right for my

future.

As for Josie, with her full-time job and student status she already feels the burden of trying to

balance it all. She explained:

My work life balance right now is non-existent. On the life side, I have no personal life.

In five years, I am definitely looking to be more settled career wise, so that I can focus

more on family because to me family is more important than work and/or anything else.

So I am looking to get into that more settled down phase.

Jade's primary focus will be her family and is willing to sacrifice her career if necessary. She

said:

It would be important to me to have a job where I could either go part-time or just work

4/ 10hr shifts a week. I have been talking to my supervisor a lot who just came back to

work from maternity leave and seeing how hard it is on her to come to work every day

and not be at home with her baby. I know I would go through that same issue. And I grew

up with school teachers as parents and they came home at 3PM, summers off and the

same breaks so to adjust from that lifestyle to working in business would be really hard

for me. Because in the business world there aren't as flexible work schedules. When I

decide that I want to have a family then that's going to greatly impact where I go for my

career path because my kids would be most important to me over my job. I know my

future husband will have a good steady job so for me to be able to follow my own path

and raise my kids would be most important.

Violet is currently a full-time student and mother of a young daughter so her work/life balance is

her current reality. She explained her current situation as:

> For me balancing school and family life right now is probably the most extreme it will be
>
> considering I have classes, homework, and the age of my daughter (4-years old). So I
>
> actually think for me five years from now she will be in fifth grade. It'll be a little more
>
> manageable and easier for me in terms of not having school work at home. The time
>
> factor definitely plays a factor for my five year. The management works out for me
>
> because of prioritizing by creating a schedule even to eat and sticking to that. I also need
>
> to know my limits and make time for myself so then I can give my full self to my family.
>
> My husband is also a big support so finding a good partner is really important to the
>
> balance.

Having Violet's perspective as a current full-time student and mother was extremely valuable to

my research for the other participants to recognize the realities they may face. Violet provided a

great example of a women who is successfully balancing multiple roles and responsibilities.

Abstract Conceptualization

Initially I noticed this focus group did not solicit the words "women or gender" as much

as my initial interview which I believe is directly correlated with not including these terms in my

questioning. It was great to see some participants make the connection between their future

careers and families by providing images on their boards related to both because it flowed

effortlessly into our discussion regarding work/life balance. Leaving the questions open-ended

and general left room for the participants to interpret what was being asked however they saw fit

which provided authentic responses.

The focus group uncovered great conversation and data confirming that women are concerned with what motherhood will mean for their careers. Many of the participants discussed their desire to have their own families while maintaining their careers, but the uncertainty of their career paths causes concern with the flexibility needed to have both/and. Jade and Gail both expressed this battle and potential need to sacrifice in different ways. Jade strongly expressed her need to have a family and willingness to change careers if necessary, whereas Gail feels that if her career does not provide the flexibility then she will sacrifice having her own family. I noticed both Jade and Gail are "sensing" and "judgement" meaning they need detailed plans before making decisions which showed up in their responses and boards.

Their own assumptions on gender roles was concerning to me because they both assumed their partners will be working men and not take on household/child duties. Jade indicates this when she says, "I know my future husband will have a good steady job so for me to be able to follow my own path and raise my kids would be most important." Similarly, Gail states "I don't want to have to ask my significant other to give up what they're doing to stay at home with the child". These women do not recognize the disparity they are expressing by eliminating the man from the childcare efforts. Assuming that a woman needs to "ask" a man to help with their own children is a huge part of the problem because the work/home balance is a responsibility of both parents. This completely changed my assumption that men are solely responsible for perpetuating these norms and brought out questions like, how are women enabling men to be absent from household duties? How can we educate women to take a stand and demand an equal partnership? Violet gave me hope when she shared, "My husband is also a big support so finding a good partner is really important to the balance".

Another pattern I noticed from the participants was four out of the six women (67%) are pursuing fields outside of business; most are interested in education as a career field. Based on my preliminary research on women in STEM fields, this fact is congruent with trends that have been seen in male dominated industries for years. Women are finding themselves in academia where they teach these topics to students, a more female accepted role. I thought it was interesting that Violet, Jade, Cinnamon, and Josie are all moving into the education field and according to MBTI they are "feelers" opposed to "thinkers" meaning they want to make a difference in other people's lives and tend to be more sensitive. Sensitivity is considered a female gender norm which explains why teaching is a female dominated career. This made me curious about Gail and Betsey being "thinkers" and potential aspects of their background that made them more logical and objective.

Active Experimentation

Cycle Two was extremely useful to expose my participants to their future realities and the complications that could show up as they acquire more prominent roles in their personal and professional lives. Seeing how gender biases showed up in my participant's responses to this discussion had me interested in exploring these further. In my survey for Cycle Three, I will formulate a question that should probe a deeper reflection regarding gender bias we hold as women against women.

Cycle Three: Exit Survey

Concrete Experience

A SurveyMonkey link was emailed to participants on March 26th and was composed of seven questions. The intention of this cycle was to close our groups work by focusing on gender norms specifically gender assumptions they made, gender norms they recognized, how gender

norms will impact their career, and how often they challenge gender norms. This survey is to

gage the learning these students gained and provided the researcher with feedback on the success

of the research overall. Five participants (83%) responded to the survey anonymously between

March 27-April 11.

Reflective Observation

The first question asked was, "What does being female mean to you?" and responses

included: "Being strong, confident, powerful, caring, intelligent. It also means being able to

bring life into this world." As well as, "being female means that I am different from half of the

population. I have different way in which I view and act within the world and that is amazing. I

have so much to bring to the table and so much to learn about how to best engage with the male

population." Another participant shared, "being female means nothing different to me in my

family than being male. My parents treated my brother and I equally since we were children and

we played with both dolls and Legos. I was never told I couldn't do something because I was a

female." A participant felt "being female means I was given a unique opportunity to challenge

gender norms and excel in my career." Lastly someone stated, "being born with lady body parts

and being treated in society differently than men." The responses are representative of how they

make sense of their femininity as it related to society.

When asked "What gender norms do you see in your daily life?" participants responded

with a variety of answers. One addressed that "men expecting women to do certain types of jobs

like administrative work. Men not going to women my workplace for new ideas. Men not

allowing women to do manual labor." Another shared that "the typical stereotype that females

are supposed to be nice, docile, overly emotional kind and support those around us while not

taking on too much leadership. Whereas, males are supposed to be aggressive, tough,

emotionless, and provide for their families or be the head of company/organization." In addition someone reflected that "I have not been very perceptive in my daily life because I cannot think of any gender norms I see on a daily basis." An observation that was made that "people, generally of an older generation, are often surprised that I chose to go into business and that I would like to seek higher education one day." Finally, a student claimed, "women raise the children while men work or do "manly" chores/responsibilities and women in business are the more creative and compassionate fields (such as marketing or non-profits) while men are in more financial fields." The varying degrees of recognition regarding gender norms from participants was very telling on the level social awareness they exhibit.

"How do you see gender impacting your future career?" initiated responses such as "being female, I don't really see gender impacting my future career as the type of work I want to do is generally dominated by females (education)." As well as "being female and understanding how I am viewed within society has given me so many strengths and advantages to learn about and play on. Being female will only improve my future career." This participant expressed that "other than making about 80 cents to every dollar a man makes, I think in this day and age I have been given every opportunity to make something of myself and I do not foresee gender negatively impacting my future career, as long as I put in the time and work hard." Someone also shared, "I am happy with the way genders are treated in my industry and am excited to work with female and male counterparts in business." Lastly a respondent said, "I don't think gender will impact my future careers unless I make less than my future male co-workers." These answers are exemplifying the distinction between the women who are choosing to pursue education as well as those continuing through the business track.

The survey question, "how often do you perpetuate gender norms?" gave participants a range of potential answers including, always, usually, sometimes, rarely, and never. Forty percent indicated that they "sometimes" perpetuate gender norms and 60% answered "rarely". When asked (See Figure 5), "how often do you challenge gender norms" the distribution was 40% said "usually", 40% expressed "sometimes", and 20% answered "rarely. Most participants (80%) thought the research was "somewhat" helpful to prepare them to enter the workforce as women while 20% said "yes" it was helpful. Lastly, when asked to give feedback to the researcher only one participants answered stating they think it would have been more impactful to include another industry to compare to business.
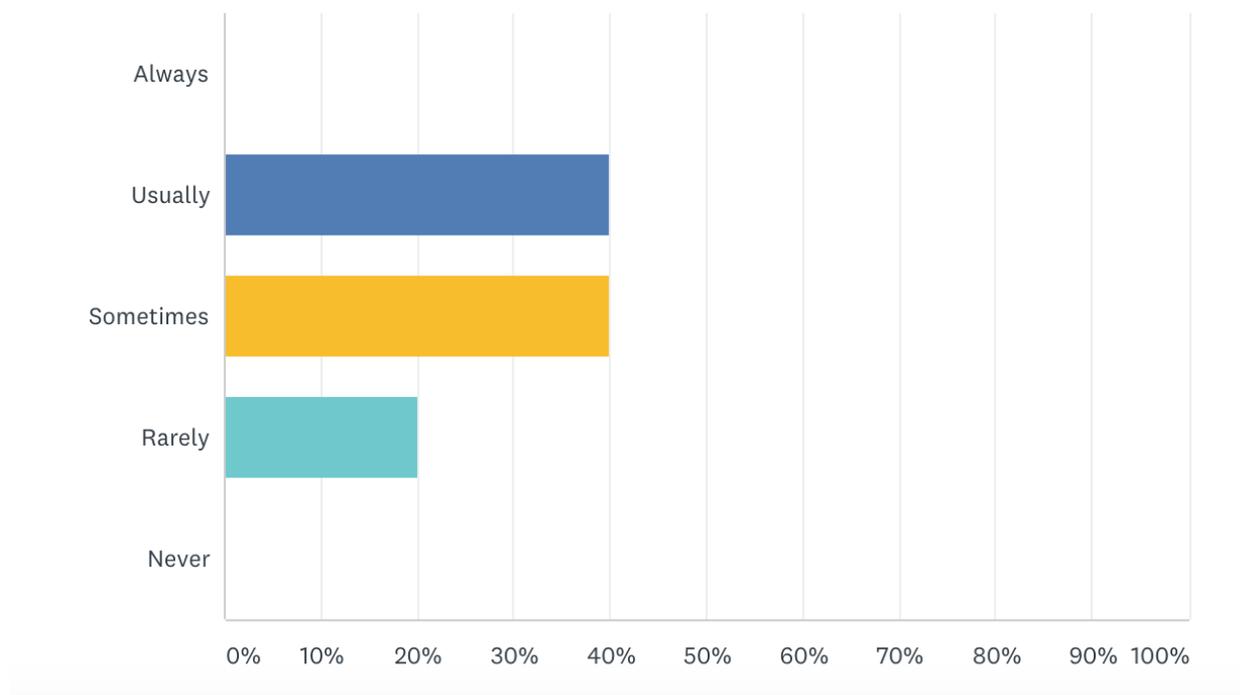

Figure 5. Survey responses from five participants about challenging gender norms

Abstract Conceptualization

      Recognizing from the focus group that some of these students are participating in the assumptions that exist based on gender norms made me particularly interested in the questions, "how often do you perpetuate gender norms" and "how often do you challenge gender norms". The results showed that these women are not necessarily adding to these constructs nor challenging them. I sensed some contentment in these answers because they are aware these norms exist, but are not taking steps to influence change. This left me wondering why? Based on the findings of my research, I wonder if self-doubt was involved because challenging gender norms would require a potential aggressive tone or voice. Since aggression is seen as a male trait perhaps these women are uncomfortable with the conflict that challenging individuals could create.

      The feedback from my participants was also an aspect of the survey that I wanted to focus on for my own reflective process throughout this research. I was disappointed that only one participant found my project useful for their entry into the workforce. Although the remainder of the responses were "somewhat" helpful, I still was expecting more positive experiences. In thinking about potential reasons as to why these students felt like it was only slightly helpful brought out some personal reflections about my approach. Most of the time spent with my participants were them providing me with information so I could use it for my research instead of providing them with tools that could help them face these situations/conversations in their future. I believe if I gave them some of the readings that already exist regarding these issues and ways women are currently navigating these environments could have given them a sense of empowerment to see this advocacy work being done.

Active Experimentation

Although this final cycle concludes my research, based on the survey responses I decided to provide my participants with an additional resource to hopefully give them some useful advice. I emailed an article named, "Women and Success: 26 Things Every Women Should Know" which is a fun reading about how women can put them in the best position for success. This Huffington Post article touches upon many themes that emerged based on the three cycles and was sent to give these women an extra level of motivation to be their own advocate.

Limitations

At the beginning of my research I was also newly transitioning into my role in the Career Development Center which limited the scope of my research topic. During action research methods in Spring 2017, I was expected to create a proposal for this research based on my personal values and the needs of my workplace. Since I had not begun my job at this point I had to choose a topic more connected to my values then the actual needs of CDev. If I had this knowledge before choosing my topic I would have used my research to help international students looking to secure jobs in the U.S because of the struggles they face due to immigration laws changing via the Trump administration. In my career counseling role, I have met with numerous international students struggling to find organizations that are willing to sponsor them. Hiring these students comes at a cost for companies making it more difficult to obtain jobs. As a new employee, I was focusing a lot on developing my counseling craft and getting acclimated into CDev that my research was not as much of a priority in the beginning stages. My small participant size also limits my research because generalizations could be made based on only six women's voices which is not representative of all women in business related majors. Having

more participant would have brought in more perspectives that could have been different and changed the results.

Recommendations

Due to the current exposure of sexual harassment in the workplace over the last year, I believe incorporating educational opportunities for students to learn about what professionalism should look like at work. A collaboration with the Title IX office in human resources as well as a Care Advocate would be an appropriate incorporation to the internship orientation that we required students attend before starting their internships. Providing education for students to understand the policies that protect them from sexual advances from supervisors and colleagues is important knowledge especially for students who have never had working experiences in the past. Some organizations even have rules regarding fraternization in the workplace that banned employees from having personal relationships. The role of this training would be to inform student about these boundaries and provide them with resources if they feel harassed in their internships.

In collaboration with Dr. Tara Salinas and Abigail Racelis, we created a panel of women working in multiple different industries to speak on their experiences as it relates to their careers. There were women representing finance bankers, human resources, marketing/public relations, accounting, and sales. We initially called the event, "Women in the Workplace Panel", but were then told by the school of business leadership that the name was not inclusive to men therefore it changed to "Diversity in the Workplace Panel". This feedback from the men that run the school of business is exemplary of how women's experiences are minimized. All panelists were women, so regardless of the name we knew the panel would show the intention, but having to accommodate the male population is frustrating when the same courtesy is not usually

reciprocated. I recommend this panel continue to exist and revert to the original name because the female students in the school of business should feel empowered to have intentional programming for their needs.

The Women's Center has a women's salary negotiation workshop that I attended during my research to get a sense of how this resource is utilized by students. There were about ten women in attendance and we went through a workshop created by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) that reviewed how to negotiate with a chance to practice this skill with peers. I thought it could have been useful for student to get some coaching on how to know their worth and be confident in their skills to articulate salary expectations to employers. I believe this workshop could be improved by collaborating with CDev to potentially incorporate actual alumni or employers to attend the session to have mock negotiation conversations with students to provide realistic feedback regarding their confidence, delivery, and presence. This would provide these women with a first-hand experience in having these difficult conversations with professionals instead of peers.

Conclusions

This research has helped me to understand the needs of the women I advise during such a venerable time. I will show up to my counseling appointments with students to empower them to make confident career choices for themselves by being an advocate for them. As I enter my own job search I am also able to empathize with the emotions they are feeling and the rejection that frequently occurs during this process. Based on my research self-doubt is already imbedded in these women's thoughts therefore this feeling can be exacerbated. As a counselor, I want to promote the use of appreciative inquiry through recognizing the hard work these women are

putting in. In my own job search, I have started using positive self-talk to help for my own self-esteem as job denials are received.

Exploring gender norms has provided me with more confidence in my own femininity because this research showed me that women are powerful and strong through their perseverance in their multiple roles. I used to think that I would have to choose one or the other, family or career, but I see know that I can have a balanced life as long as I stay true to my feminist beliefs. It is important for me to find a partner that will share the household duties so both of us can pursue our personal and professional dreams with the greatest likelihood for success. Violet was a great model for me to look at as a woman who expressed her gratitude to her husband for being a great support system and partner. I am now confident in my ability to balance being a mother, wife, and higher education professional in my future.

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Appendices

Appendix A- *Personal Experiences around Gender Identity Personal Video Interview*

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured interview

1. What is your major?

2. What factors contributed to this choice of study?

    - Was being a man or women a contributing factor?

3. What is your definition of gender?

4. In terms of gender, are you underrepresented in your courses?

    - Does this impact your studies?

5. Generally, how often do you participate in your classes? (Always, Sometimes, Never)

    - Explain.

6. Do you feel supported by peers, professors and counselors at USD to be successful in your courses?

    - How can you feel more supported? What resources would you need?

7. Have you had an internship or any other professional experiences outside of USD?

    - Explain your role or experience

8. Did you feel supported by colleagues, mentors or supervisors in this role?

    - How can you feel more supported?

9. Overall, did you feel welcomed to contribute your thoughts?

    - Did you feel comfortable discussing your development with your supervisor?

10. Do you think your gender identity influenced your experience?

Appendix B- *Focus Group about Gender Bias and Career Decisions*

Hello! I would like to welcome and thank you all for being here today. The purpose this focus group and exercise is for me to collect data the way gender informs students career decisions. There are consent forms in front of you, please take a moment to review them. Please let me know if you have any questions. We will be taking an online implicit bias assessment and participating in some group activities. As I said earlier, the purpose of this exercise is to help me learn more about the decision-making process that students go through while choosing their desired majors. This meeting will take no longer than 90 minutes, and during this time I would like to ask you not to use your cellphones. In front of you is a piece of paper and crayons please fold the piece of paper in half horizontally. In a few moments, I will say an occupation, after I say this word please draw what comes to mind on the right side of the paper. You will have 5 minutes to complete your drawing, please do this in silence.

(Once students complete with their first drawing)
Now I will now say another occupation and you will have another 5 minutes to draw what comes to mind.
(This process will be repeated two additional times)

Now partner up with someone to share with each other the drawing you have created that depicts these occupations. You will have 10 minutes, so 5 minutes each to discuss.
(once everyone has shared their creation)

Let's reflect a little about our drawings. Feel free to ask each other questions regarding what someone has drawn. I will ask specific questions as well.
Questions:
1. What is your drawing of (a teacher, scientist, nurse, doctor, engineer, police officer etc.) Do they have a gender? Why did you depict them this way?
2. Did the topic of this research influence you to draw these people a different way?
3. Are there any final questions or comments before we move on?

Next we will complete the Harvard Implicit Bias Test at:
https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

Be sure to click on the "Gender and Career" test option. The directions are given before you being the assessment. Please take this assessment twice and then we will have an open dialogue about the results.

Appendix C- *Learning and Understanding of Gender Dynamics Exit Survey*

1. What does being female mean to you?

2. What gender norms do you see in your daily life?

3. How do you see gender impacting your future career?

4. How often do you perpetuate gender norms?

5. How often do you challenge gender norms?

6. Did this research help prepare you to enter the workforce as a woman?

7. General feedback for researcher.

Appendix D- *Recruitment Announcement in Dr. Tara Salinas' Women in Management course*

Hello Everyone,

I am beginning my action research on Gender Norms/Roles Influence on Student's Career Goals and Outcomes and need between 6-10 participants. I am looking for female students who are in business majors and have some internship/work experience in business. I am looking for this population to get insights on their decision-making process as well as their experiences in their courses and work. If you would like to be a participant in this research please email me at: mtrudeau@sandiego.edu .

Thank you!

Appendix E- *Email to Participants*

Hello Students, my name is Meagan Trudeau and I am the Graduate Assistant at the Center for Career Development. I would like to thank you for showing interest in my action research, *Gender Norms/Roles Influence on Student's Career Goals and Outcomes*. As a participant, you will be asked to:

- Participate in an introductory interview (30 min)
- Attend a workshop (1 hour)
- Complete an exit interview (30 min)

Please respond to this email if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Meagan Trudeau

Appendix F- *Consent*   **University of San Diego**
                                                Institutional Review Board

                                    Research Participant Consent Form

                                    For the research study entitled:
                                    Gender Norms and Career Goals

I. Purpose of the research study

Meagan Trudeau is a student in the MA in Higher Education Leadership through SOLES at the University of San Diego. You are invited to participate in a research study she is conducting. The purpose of this research study is to explore gender norms impact on career decisions.

II. What you will be asked to do

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to:
1. Complete an online survey about your demographics and general knowledge related to gender
2. Attend an introduction interview with researcher about gender specific experiences
   - You will be videotaped during the interview
3. Participate in a focus group to discuss gender related issues
   - You will be audiotaped during the focus group
   - I will also be using information from the previous activities
4. Express new learning about gender through an exit interview with researcher
   - You will be videotaped during the interview

*Your participation in this study will take a total of **3 hours**.*

III. Foreseeable risks or discomforts

Sometimes when people are asked to think about their feelings, they feel sad or anxious. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings at any time, you can call toll-free, 24 hours a day:
San Diego Mental Health Hotline at 1-800-479-3339

Counseling Center info? Phone number? Location?

IV. Benefits

While there may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study, the indirect benefit of participating will be knowing that you helped researchers better understand gender roles as it pertains to career paths.

V. Confidentiality

Any information provided and/or identifying records will remain confidential and kept in a locked file and/or password-protected computer file in the researcher's office for a minimum of five years. All data collected from you will be coded with a number or pseudonym (fake name). Your real name will not be used. The results of this research project may be made public and

information quoted in professional journals and meetings, but information from this study will only be reported as a group, and not individually.

VI. Compensation

If you participate in the study, the researcher will give you free lunch during the focus group. You will receive this compensation as long as you participate in the focus group.

VII. Voluntary Nature of this Research
Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to do this, and you can refuse to answer any question or quit at any time. Deciding not to participate or not answering any of the questions will have no effect on any benefits you're entitled to, like your health care, or your employment or grades. **You can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.**

VIII. Contact Information
If you have any questions about this research, you may contact either:

1) **Meagan Trudeau**
   Email: mtrudeau@sandiego.edu
   Phone: 401-996-6174

2) **Dr. Christopher Newman**
   Email: cnewman@sandiego.edu
   Phone:

I have read and understand this form, and consent to the research it describes to me. I have received a copy of this consent form for my records.

Signature of Participant   Date

Name of Participant (**Printed**)

Signature of Investigator   Date