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TODAY'S GLASS CEILING: EXECUTIVE WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES
AND PERCEPTIONS REGARDING CAREER ADVANCEMENT INTO
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN TRANSPORTATION

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

Today's Glass Ceiling: Executive Women's Experiences and Perceptions Regarding
Career Advancement Into Executive Leadership Positions in Transportation

By Irma L. Licea, DPA

Purpose. The purpose of this study was to examine the progression and perception of the glass ceiling today, against the backdrop of decades of changing social developments, including changing demographics, economies, and technological advancements; legislative mandates; organizational structures with a more humanistic approach to human capital; a shift toward collaborative intra- and interagency organizational management; and an unprecedented active citizenry.

Theoretical Framework. The theoretical framework was based on three foundational theories: organizational theory, feminist theory, and collaborative management theory.

Methodology. This study included 12 participants, all executive-level women at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) from the deputy executive officer level and above. A semistructured interview approach was utilized to best capture each participant's perceptions in relation to career advancement since each participant's experience was different and due to the highly political climate associated with executive-level positions.

Findings. The glass ceiling is still pervasive, and all participants indicated being personally impacted by it. Comparable pay is still an issue, occupational segregation is still commonplace, children and marriage are still barriers to advancement, and despite in many cases women surpassing men in educational attainment, disparity at the top continues. Diversity has created unprecedented opportunity, even if by default. Work–life balance continues to be an issue. Technological advances and shifts to knowledge-based work are expected to increase career advancement. Feminine traits such as nurturing and consensus building that were once seen as negatives are now viewed as positive traits in collaborative structures.

Conclusions and Recommendations. The results of this study support the overall literature review and the researcher's position that emerging changes in social and organizational structures, especially a shift to more humanistic and collaborative organizational structures, will create career advancement opportunities for women. However, since this a rapidly evolving structure, management/organizational reporting structures need to evolve as well. Women must educate themselves in nontraditional female fields like engineering and the sciences. Joining professional organizations, networking, and mentoring need to be practiced. Lastly, women must be committed to growth and know that they will have to work harder than men, have more education and credentials, and continue to push on the ceiling until it shatters.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The undertaking of such a scholastic endeavor, though it may often seem like a lone journey, is most certainly not. There are those we love who often get neglected. There are those who help us get through the years of earning the doctorate. There are those who helped shape us in our lives, thereby contributing to our desire and decision to be scholarly. So many people helped make this possible—both past and present.

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I want to thank my dear friends Angela Campbell, Kenny Weisbart, and Lenore Medina for always being so supportive. A special thanks to my kindred spirit, Melinda Perrier, for helping me get through it all and never wavering in positivity. Thank you to

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to women both past and present who help shatter barriers, who work to end discrimination, who fight for the marginalized, who struggle for justice and equality, who work tirelessly to make ends meet, who put themselves through school, and who take care of those who can't take care of themselves. Women who have influenced my life, like Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Alice Paul, Gloria Steinem, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Dolores Huerta, Gloria Molina, Gloria Anzaldua, Sandra Cisneros, the fictional icon Wonder Woman, and salt-of-the-earth women like my mother, Maria Elena, and Tias Luz, Ramona, Salud, and Esperanza. I dedicate this work to women who dare to dream.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Public administration is steadily adapting to the institutional changes brought
about by a combination and convergence of social, economic, and technical forces that
have necessitated change at fundamental levels. It is predicted that the future of the
workforce will be affected by shifting demographic patterns, the pace of technological
change, and the path of economic globalization that will continue to evolve. Slower labor
force growth will encourage employers to adopt approaches to facilitate greater labor
force participation among women. Greater emphasis will be placed on retraining and
lifelong learning as the United States tries to stay competitive in the global marketplace
and respond to technological changes. Further technological advances are expected to
continue to increase demand for a highly skilled workforce, support higher productivity
growth, and change the organization of business and the nature of employment
relationships (Karoly & Panis, 2004).

The changing roles of women in response to social progression have reshaped
women's patterns in marriage and divorce, childbearing, living arrangements, and
aspirations for education and career development. These trends both affect and are
affected by economic growth and technological change. Though women have entered the
workforce and are represented in various occupations and at various levels, they are still

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underrepresented at the highest levels of management. Like most institutions, public organizations have primarily been White, male-dominated environments, especially in top management positions and leadership roles (Cox, 1991). Women have systematically been overlooked for these positions. Researchers and investigators have commonly referred to this pervasive vertical and horizontal job segregation as the glass ceiling (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986).

It appears that once women reach a certain level, despite experience, education, or achievements, their career advancement opportunities are stunted. This phenomenon is referred to as the glass ceiling. The glass ceiling is a widely recognized metaphor that first appeared in a 1986 *Wall Street Journal* article, which described the barriers that restrict or block the access of women into high-level management and executive positions within their agency (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986). However, the metaphor has been legitimized as a true phenomenon and an unfortunate reality for women in the workplace, especially for women who strive to climb the corporate ladder and pursue higher level management and executive positions. This research examined the existence of the glass ceiling through various studies and reports, including official government statistics and findings.

Women have had various adverse conditions to overcome. Feminism, known generally for the platform of gender equality in all areas, has played a prominent role in women's social, educational, and career development. Feminism is directly related to the women's suffrage movement, which spearheaded getting women the right to vote. Feminists have been instrumental in fighting for equality at all levels, for the right to own

property, to decide reproductive outcomes, and to be paid equitably on par with men for equal work. Women have made incredible gains and have undeniably entered the public realm en force. Economic and social circumstances such as the Industrial Revolution, the unsustainability of a single-income home, and divorce and single parenting have changed the fabric of society, placing women in the workforce and therefore in the public realm. The entry of women into the workforce has been as much a function of social and economic necessity as it has been a mark of progression in relation to gender equality. As it is with most things, the impetus for women entering the workforce was necessity. Years ago, they mostly worked in positions lacking any authority, such as domestic employment or clerical work (Bullock, 1994). However, women today work across all occupations and are challenging the long-standing stereotypes and notions associated with a lesser/weaker sex. Though women have made amazing strides in all areas, there is still much to be done to achieve gender equality.

Though classical bureaucracy may be considered elementary in present day as a mode of management and theoretical approach, it is nonetheless the foundation from which most public administration theories developed and were expounded. However, the commonality between all, despite variations in theory or approach, is the continuance of a traditional bureaucratic hierarchy of management and decision making as the normative structure. Following the U.S. societal structure, public organizations, like most institutions, have been historically patriarchal. The democratic system of government was essentially formed as such. To date, the United States has yet to see a female President.

Currently, public administration is reinventing itself in response to society's changing landscape. What was once a traditional bureaucratic organizational structure, able to operate mostly independently and primarily governed by White males, is evolving into a discipline struggling to keep up with organizational and cultural changes, such as a diverse workforce, the emergence of the information age, daunting economic challenges, and governance that is increasingly influenced by citizen participation. In today's society, it is impossible for a public institution to operate independently. A strict, dominant, hierarchical power structure does not fit in an environment where the survival of a public agency and the successful provision of the services rendered to the populace require interagency coordination and often collaboration to accomplish the business of government. The traditional top-down hierarchy is changing as public institutions respond to the varying challenges they face by morphing into agencies that look outside themselves and increasingly rely on other agencies and a progressively knowledge-based workforce to accomplish their own respective missions.

A shift from traditional bureaucratic management practices toward the need for collaborative relationships with other agencies involves change at fundamental levels. These changes impact the historically hierarchical and independent nature of public institutions. Traditional jurisdictional and organizational boundaries are quickly becoming a thing of the past. As an example, in Los Angeles County, the effective operation of public transportation services requires relationships and coordination with the federal government, state government, cities, municipalities, and law enforcement, as well as private companies for other services rendered, such as contracted services or the

purchase of specialized goods and materials. Collaboration creates circular relationships that offer greater visibility and leadership opportunities for women in traditional hierarchies both within organizations and between organizations that are required to collaborate and coordinate for the purposes of accomplishing goals, objectives, and mandates.

As the landscape of public administration changes, it seems natural that the nature of its workforce, including the role women play in it, will change as well. Organizational changes that include shifts from the traditional hierarchical structure to more collaborative management, technological advancements, laws and protections, a diverse workforce, and so forth may create more opportunities for advancement since these changes help remove barriers that were previously prohibitive and made a woman choose between a family or a career. In the past decade, most large public-sector organizations have adopted a philosophy of valuing diversity in the workplace. It is no surprise that the research shows that women and people of color are underrepresented in top policymaking positions (Riccucci & Saidel, 1997). Naff (1995) argued that perceptions of discrimination can be just as harmful to women and their organizations as the existence of objective barriers to advancement. Diversity is not only aimed at increasing sensitivity to cultural differences or recognizing, valuing, and accepting diversity; it attempts to minimize patterns of inequality experienced by women and minorities (Soni, 2000). The introduction of valuing diversity in the workplace is a start to recognizing the differences that affect discriminatory practices. The role women play in the evolving public administration landscape was of interest in this research since a changing landscape may

offer new advancement opportunities for women, particularly in top management and executive leadership positions, which are positions of power, decision making, and influence. Though more women have entered the upper echelons, the disparity continues.

This research examined the impacts and contributing factors of the organizational shifts in public administration in relation to women's career advancement opportunities into top management and leadership positions in the past and now. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) was the primary source for data collection. The LACMTA was a good institution to examine since it has many elements of cooperative and collaborative relationships. This also allowed access to other women involved in transportation, such as those in professional organizations or governing boards.

Problem Statement

Women in the public sector have historically been underrepresented in top management and leadership positions due to traditional institutional and social structures that have created obstacles in career advancement for women.

Background of the Problem

Historically, women have had fewer legal rights and career opportunities than men. Being a wife and mother was regarded as a woman's most significant contribution to society. Women were expected to handle the domestic and child-rearing duties so that men would have the time for public pursuits (Okin, 1989). However, in the 20th century, women in the United States, through the efforts of the women's suffrage movement, won

the right to vote. This milestone was significant toward equality since it helped usher women's entrance into the public realm, thereby increasing their educational, career, and political opportunities, and accomplished a reevaluation of traditional views of their role in society (Women's International Center, 2003). To date, women still carry the burden of balancing domestic responsibilities and paid work. This is no easy task. Studies on state government bureaucracies show that, historically, successful women are more likely to be unmarried than men, and children tend to be barriers to a woman's advancement. Women who have chosen to have children during their careers have been disadvantaged in their career paths (Naff, 1994). With the social and institutional changes that have taken place, such as the laws instituted and the organizational changes such as flexible work schedules, on-site childcare, and so forth, women's opportunities for advancement may increase.

Feminism, known generally for the platform of gender equality in all areas, has played a prominent role in women's social, educational, and career development. Feminists have fought for issues of equality for women that have included the right to vote, to own property, to decide reproductive outcomes, and to be paid equitably on par with men for equal work. Furthermore, as Beckwith (1986) stated, "Feminism, both as a political movement and as an ideology, addresses issues of unique importance to women, and the aim of the feminist movement has been to mobilize women for political action" (p. 109). This is important and directly related to women's advancement because a general assumption is that as more females attain political offices, they will represent the

interests of women as related to women's issues more adequately than men have (Carroll, 2000; Carroll, Dodson, & Mandel, 1991).

The glass ceiling is a widely recognized problem that describes the barriers that restrict or block the access of women to high-level administrative positions within their agency. With the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, Title II created the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (GCC) with the U.S. Secretary of Labor as its chair (GCC, 1995a). The establishment of the GCC and its subsequent report widely legitimized the glass-ceiling metaphor. The commission's role was to study and make recommendations relating to the compensation of women and people of color and their advancement to management positions in U.S. organizations. When the GCC issued its recommendations in its 1995 report, *A Solid Investment: Making Full Use of the Nation's Human Capital*, the chair put forth,

> The glass ceiling is not only an egregious denial of social justice that affects two-thirds of the population, but a serious economic problem that takes a huge financial toll on American business. Equity demands that we destroy the glass ceiling. Smart business demands it as well. (GCC, 1995c, p. 4)

The government recognized that in order to compete in the global market, fundamental change was necessary. The nation's changing demographics could no longer be ignored.

One of the arguments/explanations for the glass ceiling is occupational segregation. Occupational segregation refers to the occurrence in which men and women tend to be employed in different occupations in the workplace and is associated with salary inequities (Miller, Kerr, & Reid, 1999). Occupational segregation in the public sector can be broken down further into two categories: distributive and redistributive

functions. Many proponents of pay equity believe the pay gap exists because women have been channeled into certain jobs. For instance, women have typically worked in secretarial, clerical, factory, retail sales, and other types of service-oriented jobs. These are known as redistributive functions. Distributive functions are careers with more decision-making opportunities, such as professional jobs as executives, lawyers, doctors, and scientists (Rossi, 1982).

Distributive functions performed by state governments include police, corrections, and fire functions; maintenance and construction of streets, highways, and bridges; planning and zoning; maintenance of water, sewer, airport, and electric functions; and development, operation, and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities (Miller et al., 1999). Due to the nature of the specialty functions, specialty professionals such as engineers, biologists, and scientists are employed by the distributive agencies. Men have heavily dominated these professions.

Redistributive functions performed by government agencies include administration of public welfare programs, public health services, mental health programs, education, vocational programs, and programs for the aging. Historically, these professions tend to be heavily represented by women. Additionally, salaries in distributive agencies are on average higher than in redistributive agencies (Miller et al., 1999). Therefore, it can be argued that occupational segregation is associated with salary inequities.

The division between occupations in the public sector demonstrates that the glass wall or glass ceiling for women continues to be an impediment to their success;

distributive functions are on average the highest paying jobs and carry more power due to their decision-making nature. The research suggests that only by opening up traditionally male job fields can glass walls/ceilings be permeated (Kerr, Miller, & Reid, 2002). Furthermore, it is hypothesized that if glass walls are shattered at the level of professional workforces through the inclusion of increased female representation at the top, more women can break glass ceilings at the administrative level. Bell, McLaughlin, and Sequeira (2002) argued that many of the factors precluding women from occupying top positions also foster sexual harassment and discrimination. Bell et al. contended that an increase of women in top positions will in fact reduce harassment and discrimination.

Gender is an important factor in a woman's role and success in career advancement. Not only has a woman's gender been a barrier to advancement but to pay equity as well. Unfortunately, even though 5 decades have passed since the Equal Pay Act, enacted in 1963, women still make less than their male counterparts. In fact, the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation published a report, *Behind the Pay Gap* (Dey & Hill, 2007), which found that 1 year out of college, women working full time make only 80% as much as their male counterparts. Ten years after college, the pay gap increases, with women making only 69% compared to men (Dey & Hill, 2007).

Gender affects the distribution of resources. This being true, women bear a lopsided share of the burden for domestic functions. This is important because as Stivers (2002) stated,

> Justifications of public administration take place in a space that a) depends for its coherence on the subordination of women through their assignment to a set of duties that, no matter how necessary, are generally regarded as less significant and b) limits both women's opportunities to participate in public life and the time and energy they have to devote to it. (p. 4)

A woman's contributions tend to be minimized and devalued because they are considered feminine. This places a woman in an awkward situation because she is struggling with being feminine and being a leader, qualities that are in conflict with one another. Leaders are expected to be bold, decisive, strategic, and most often male. By contrast, women are expected to be passive, intuitive, and nurturing (Stivers, 1991). A woman leader has an uphill battle and a precarious balancing act. She is either labeled as too masculine or too soft, a stereotype associated with women. The expectation of researchers, such as Stivers, is that as women enter top positions with leadership roles and demonstrate they can be tough, bold, strategic, and so forth, leadership will gradually lose its association with masculinity.

It has been suggested that women have different approaches to leadership. Fox and Schuhman (1999) studied women and men city managers and found that women city managers are more likely than their male counterparts to include citizen input, facilitate communication, and encourage citizen involvement in their decision-making process. In another study, Fox and Schuhman (2000) examined gender and the role of the city manager and similarly concluded that women managers were more likely than their male peers to focus on community relations and to include citizen input in decision-making practices. Rosener (1990) suggested that women in government will govern differently than their male counterparts based on an intrinsic nurturing capacity and a more

interpersonal approach, making them more responsive to the needs of the citizenry. This is significant to the study because many of the attributes and stereotypes historically associated with women have been seen as impediments to effective leadership in the traditional hierarchical structure. However, in a collaborative management structure, these stereotypes and attributes may become positives, thereby opening doors to further advancement.

Just as the industrial age brought about the traditional bureaucratic organization, the information age now brings forth structural and organizational changes in the public sector that progressively require some form of collaborative public management. Collaborative management is an emerging form of governance in which one governmental entity must work with other entities, both public and private, to accomplish the purpose, goals, and mandates of that entity. The emergence of collaborative management is believed to have materialized by society's need to keep up with rapid social change widely brought on by the information age (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003).

The information age has not only made it possible but necessary for government to operate differently. This has resulted in agencies that are more permeable and transparent and more reliant on human capital. The emergence of collaborative public management also highlights the growing prominence of knowledge-based work, with employees known as knowledge workers, as opposed to routine production. This is a positive factor for women who are now on par with men in education and surpass men in graduate degrees, facilitating participation in a knowledge-based workforce (U.S. Government Accountability Office [GAO], 2010b). Knowledge workers are expected to

exercise independent thinking, problem solving, and strategic brokering, which elevates the role of human capital in the workplace. To be successful, workers must synthesize and integrate multiple truths into common tasks, which is highly dependent on the ability to form alliances with other groups and agencies (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003). These relationships provide women with exposure that they would not otherwise have in the traditional top-down hierarchy. This exposure opens doors to networking and mentoring opportunities that women can use to further their careers. A lack of mentors for women has been cited as a cause or contributor to the glass-ceiling phenomenon; therefore, the study of women's mentoring becomes worthwhile (Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1994).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the progression and perception of the glass ceiling at present, against the backdrop of decades of changing social developments, including changing demographics, economies, and technological advancements; legislative mandates; organizational structures with a more humanistic approach to human capital; a shift toward collaborative intra- and interagency organizational management; and an unprecedented active citizenry. The goal was to examine and assess the current environment for women in the workforce, what has worked, and what more is needed, and to develop strategies to continue to break through the glass ceiling through secondary data and the experiences, perceptions, and recommendations of executive-level women at the LACMTA. The GCC (1995b) explained, "Emphasis is placed on

perceptions, because perceptions, true or not, perpetuate the perception of the glass-ceiling barrier. Perceptions are what people believe and people translate their beliefs into behaviors, attitudes and bias" (p. 6).

Institutions are evolving from impermeable, traditional, standalone monoliths to organizations relying heavily on interagency coordination, collaborative relationships with other agencies, and an increasingly knowledge-based workforce to fulfill the respective agency's mission. These unprecedented changes in organizational structure create new opportunities for women to gain exposure, build relationships, network, find mentors, and form alliances, all of which may assist them in breaking through the glass ceiling. Scholarly research indicates that mentoring in the workforce for women, by women can help solidify advancement and in turn create more opportunities for other women through networking and mentoring (Szymborski, 1996).

The Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) was founded in 1977 and is an international organization dedicated to the professional advancement of women in transportation. It has roughly 4,500 members. According to the organization's website, "WTS is helping women find opportunity and recognition in the transportation industry. Through its professional activities, networking opportunities, and unparalleled access to industry and government leaders, WTS is [helping turn] the glass ceiling into a career portal" (WTS, n.d., para. 1). Its mission is "advancing both the transportation industry and the professional women who are a growing part of it" (WTS, n.d., para. 2). The Los Angeles Women's Transportation Coalition (LAWTC) is a nonprofit, multiethnic association established in 1993 (WTS-LA, n.d.). LAWTC's goal is to improve the

visibility and influence of Southern California-area women's transportation-related businesses and women in the transportation industry through coalition building and legislative advocacy activities. LAWTC is a strong voice advocating on behalf of women in the transportation industry. In addition, LAWTC sponsors lunches and events featuring leaders and decision makers who are either directly involved in or influence the transportation industry (WTS-LA, n.d.). These two professional organizations are examples of how women are not only participating in professional organizations but are creating their own.

By examining historical data and conducting interviews with women executives at LACMTA, this study explored the changing social, economic, and institutional landscapes that are shaping organizational structures and how those changes are affecting women's career advancement. For instance, some of the institutional changes that have occurred in the workplace include several legislative efforts that have been introduced in an effort to reduce inequities and offer protections to women, such as the Equal Pay Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and the Family and Medical Leave Act (National Women's History Project, n.d.). Other changes include the significant advancements the information age has brought and their impact on how individuals work and communicate. Additionally, many organizations offer flexible work schedules, telecommuting opportunities, and on-site childcare. All the factors mentioned might well be contributors to greater advancement opportunities for women because they offer protections and tools

that may aid women in attaining promotional opportunities. This is significant because advances such as these make it easier for women to balance family and career.

Subject of the Study

LACMTA was particularly suited for this research because of its capacity as a public institution with a regional responsibility. LACMTA is the agency responsible for overall public transportation for Los Angeles County, and as such, it has various relationships with federal and state government, cities, agencies, and public officials. This is useful because LACMTA must, in its regular course of business, coordinate and collaborate with other agencies. Transit agencies are engaging in collaborative processes because they need to in order to be successful. The impetus may often be the need for resolution to a regional problem, a mandate, or funding and resource limitations (Berman, Smith, & Seplow, 2004). The LACMTA Board of Directors, comprising elected officials, governs LACMTA (also known as Metro), so the interview sample ranged from women transportation deputies to elected officials. According to the organization's website,

> Metro is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors comprised of:
> - The five Los Angeles County Supervisors;
> - The Mayor of Los Angeles;
> - Three Los Angeles mayor-appointed members;
> - Four city council members representing the other 87 cities in Los Angeles County; and
> - . . . one non-voting member [appointed by the governor]. (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority [LACMTA], 2009, para. 1)

The LACMTA (2009) profile continued,

[LACMTA] is unique among the nation's transportation agencies. It serves as transportation planner and coordinator, designer, builder and operator for one of the country's largest, most populous counties. More than 9 million people—one-third of California's residents—live, work, and play within its 1,433-square-mile service area.

Besides operating over 2,000 peak-hour buses on an average weekday, Metro also designed, built and now operates 73.1 miles of Metro Rail service. . . .

In addition to operating its own service, Metro funds 16 municipal bus operators and funds a wide array of transportation projects including bikeways and pedestrian facilities, local roads and highway improvements, goods movement, Metrolink, and the popular Freeway Service Patrol and Call Boxes. (para. 2-4)

Research Questions

The following questions were addressed in this study:

1. Is the glass ceiling still considered a significant barrier to women's advancement into top management/executive positions?

2. Have cultural shifts and organizational changes contributed toward increased opportunities that promote career advancement for women?

3. Does increased intra- and interagency collaboration in transportation improve a woman's career advancement opportunities?

4. Do emerging changes/shifts in society and governance offer increased career advancement opportunities, and what strategies are best to promote and maximize parity?

Significance for Public Administration

The issue of the glass ceiling is a long-standing phenomenon that has been examined and discussed in various forums, studies, and scholarly journals. The existence

of a glass ceiling is not in question since it is well documented in government documents, statistics, and other scholarly studies. To date, the research conducted has been rooted and examined against the traditional bureaucratic hierarchy, which is expected because the traditional model has been in place since the identification and establishment of public administration. It was not the intent of this research to reaffirm the existence of the glass ceiling but rather to examine the perceptions of women executives in relation to the glass ceiling against the current backdrop: institutions implementing organizational changes brought about by laws and regulations, changing economies and technological advancements, the development of interagency collaborative relationships, and a workforce that is more knowledge based. These changes provide a different backdrop from which to approach the topic. If public administration is evolving from a traditional hierarchical model and the nature of the workforce has changed, then it is worthwhile to reexamine the glass ceiling from this new perspective. Previously identified barriers may have shifted along with the institutional changes, and it is important to reevaluate and recognize this emergence so that key identifiable factors relating to the advancement of women can be established. Women seeking to advance in their careers and institutions seeking to foster development and increase diversity can then utilize these factors.

Limitations of the Study

Gaining access to women executives was moderately challenging due to accessibility or participation issues. Obtaining secondary data from LACMTA regarding

executive leadership composition for women in top positions was limited for historical data but not for current composition.

Additional limitations to consider include the fact that no men were included in the study, so only a woman's perspective was obtained. Also, the population of women was limited to those involved in transportation, particularly in the Los Angeles region, so women outside of the transportation industry and Southern California may have different experiences. Since the research examined women's career advancement as a whole and did not break out minority women, the researcher did not separate the data collected for perceptions of minority women's career advancement compared to White women's career advancement. While conducting the interviews, it is possible that the researcher unintentionally displayed a biased position, evoking a biased response, or that the questions had different meanings to different women. Additionally, since the researcher is employed at LACMTA, there is a possibility that participants felt a level of discomfort or distrust. However, it was expected that those with such reservations would simply decline participation.

By limiting the study to women in transportation leadership in Los Angeles County, the researcher's intent was to maximize on the homogeneous population and minimize the invasion of different value sets that may have emerged from including an overall population of women in the public sector. This will allow others to replicate the study in a similar fashion but using a different leadership population in the public sector.

Summary

Public administration is steadily adapting to the institutional changes brought about by a combination and convergence of social and economic forces that necessitated change at fundamental levels. These changes are affecting the traditional hierarchical structures that have been the bureaucratic foundation of public institutions. Throughout history, workers have made gains in general based on society's advancements. However, because of women's status and place within society, they have not been equal partners in those gains. There have been additional obstacles, hurdles, and barriers with which women have had to contend. Though women have made significant strides in the workforce, rising above the glass ceiling has proved difficult in a traditional organizational structure.

However, the shifts occurring in today's public administration in response to the technology/information age, daunting economic challenges, and more employee-focused institutions are forcing changes to the traditional structure. It is no longer business as usual. Public institutions are evolving into more adaptive, collaborative working structures instead of traditional hierarchies. Collaboration and coordination may be about organizations and their increased efficiency, value, and effectiveness, but it is important to remember that individuals are what drive and lead those collaborative efforts. Today's organizations and workforce are more knowledge based and technologically advanced. By examining the glass-ceiling phenomenon against these new organizational shifts, it was expected that opportunities for women's career advancement into top positions may not be as prohibitive.

Definitions of Terms

Glass ceiling. The glass ceiling is a term referring to the marginalization of women in the workforce. It denotes a clear underrepresentation of women in managerial and executive leadership positions, despite accounting for similar factors such as education and years of experience. It is a metaphor indicating women's inability to reach the highest positions, despite their equal, or often superior, qualifications.

Knowledge-based worker. Workers have evolved along with the dawn of the information age. Knowledge-based workers are employees who have a background in education and experience in their field and are considered people who must utilize independent thought in the performance of their work. In many ways, it denotes brains or brawn.

Patriarchy. Patriarchy refers to a society rooted in the practice of placing males at the center of domestic, social, and political life. Women are second-class citizens in this structure.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Women in Society

The demographic landscape of the United States has changed significantly in recent decades. The changing roles of women have reshaped patterns in marriage and divorce, childbearing, living arrangements, and aspirations for education and career development. These trends both affect and are affected by economic growth and technological change.

The role American women have played in society was largely solidified with the failure of the U.S. Constitution to explicitly declare women and men equal. In so doing, women were viewed as, and essentially became, the lesser sex, their purpose and place in society defined by their gender. They were relegated and bound to a domestic existence, essentially confined to a life of servitude to husband, home, and family; their circumstance, both social and financial, was completely dependent on their husbands. Men, who were largely favored in the Constitution, held a certain power over women directly linked to the matrimonial bond and its social and legal definitions and ramifications. The matrimonial bond itself required that women vow obedience to their husbands. A woman's place was in the home, the private realm, while men dominated the public realm, so much so that women were not allowed to vote, denying them a voice

and participation in matters outside the private realm. History has shown that women have not been on equal footing with their male counterparts. Various theories claim to explain this inequity. The theories range from fields such as theology, anthropology, biology, and sociology to political science and economics (Sapiro, 1994). In exploring these theories, Sapiro (1994) found that the physical and intellectual differences between men and women were not statistically significant, but the reigning patriarchy of most cultures still labeled women as the weaker sex. Society aptly ascribed to the notion.

Women have had various adverse conditions to overcome. Feminism, known generally for the platform of gender equality in all areas, has played a prominent role in women's social, educational, and career development. It is directly related to the women's suffrage movement, which worked tirelessly to get women the right to vote, and feminists have been instrumental in fighting for equality at all levels, for the right to own property, to decide reproductive outcomes, and to be paid equitably on par with men for equal work. Women have made incredible gains, but though the birth of this nation is centuries old, as recently as 1974, the state of Georgia's legislature instituted a statute that defined the husband as "head of the family" with the "wife . . . subject to him, her legal existence . . . merged in the husband, except so far as the law recognizes her separately either for her own protection, or for her benefit, or for the preservation of public order" (Hoff, 1991, p. 281). Hoff (1991) went on to cite a 1970 ruling by the Ohio Supreme Court, which defined a wife as "at most chattel with no personality, no property, and no legally recognized feelings or rights" (p. 281). It is startling to see that such archaic notions survived into the 20th century and permeated the language of legal texts;

these archaic notions perpetuate the view of women being lesser than men, in need of special treatment, and not suitable for equal participation in the public realm. But the reality today is that women have entered the public realm.

Financial and social circumstances such as war, the Industrial Revolution, the unsustainability of a single-income home, and divorce and single parenting have changed the fabric of society, placing women in the workforce and therefore in the public realm. The entry of women into the workforce has been as much a function of social and economic necessity as it has been a mark of progression in relation to gender equality. Years ago, they mostly worked in positions lacking any authority, such as domestic employment or clerical work (Bullock, 1994). However, women today work across all occupations and are challenging the long-standing stereotypes and notions associated with a lesser/weaker sex. Though women have made amazing strides in all areas, there is still much to be done to achieve gender equality.

Gender

It is a matter of innate human dignity and self-respect that individuals should be able to pursue a meaningful life no matter their gender. Throughout history, men have been the dominant sex; they have ruled the social order, both in the public sphere and the domestic (private) sphere. Women have been second-class citizens, subjugated by men. Because of the power and supreme control held by men in society, it is a well-established fact in history that bearing sons has been favored over daughters—societies placed a higher value on men over women. Unfortunately, for nearly as long as civilization has

existed, patriarchy, enforced through the rights of the first-born son, has been the organizing principle of most societies (Rosin, 2010). A sign of social progression is that now the centuries-old preference for sons is eroding, if not reversing. For the first time in human history, that is changing. Even some of the most rigid patriarchal countries, such as China and South Korea—countries that valued sons over daughters so much so that they would punish women if they failed to bear daughters in varying degrees and unofficially condoned the killing of babies born female—have made significant strides in the past 4 decades. For instance, as recently as 1985, a South Korean national survey reported that approximately 50% of women felt that "they must have a son" (Rosin, 2010 p. 58). A follow-up survey in 2003 surprisingly showed a plummet to only 15% of women feeling that sons were preferred over daughters (Rosin, 2010). The main cause for this shift was the country's Industrial Revolution, which began in the 1970s and not only embraced but also encouraged women to enter the labor force. This is significant to point out because it illustrates that cultural and economic changes continuously fortify each other. The global economy is evolving in a way that is eroding the preference for male children worldwide and shifting the traditional patriarchal order.

Similarly, the United States—though the patriarchal order has not been as extreme in its treatment of women as other countries and the strides made by women in civil rights gains began a century ago—has shared similar experiences in that its Industrial Revolution was also the impetus for women entering the labor force (Stivers, 2002). Additionally, back in the 1970s when the first scientifically proven method for choosing the sex of a child was introduced in the United States, prevalence toward choosing to

have boys over girls existed. In recent polls, the shift toward choosing to bear daughters over sons is almost two to one (Rosin, 2010). American parents are beginning to choose to have girls over boys. Based on societal progression, greater economic freedom for women, greater participation in the workforce, changes in family structures, and so forth, it is not surprising that this pattern of choosing boys over girls has shifted. The significance is that women hold more value in U.S. society today than ever before and that an erosion of the traditional patriarchal order is undeniably in motion.

Evolutionary psychologists believe and have claimed that humans are imprinted with adaptive imperatives from a distant past: men are faster and stronger and are hardwired to fight for scarce resources (Trivers, 1972). In contrast, they claim that women are naturally programmed to find good providers and to care for their offspring, with these instincts manifesting themselves in a more nurturing and more flexible behavior, ordaining them to domesticity (Trivers, 1972). It is this type of thinking that has framed society's sense of the natural order and helped perpetuate the dominant stereotypes of women as the weaker sex, both physically and intellectually, thus justifying the subjugation of women in the public and private spheres. However, today it is not viable to continue to use a biological argument for justification of women's role in society. Thinking and communicating have come to overshadow physical strength and stamina as the keys to economic success.

The United States is evolving into a knowledge-based workforce. The postindustrial economy is indifferent to men's size and strength. Clearly traditional social roles have advanced, in part due to driving social and economic forces that have

pushed women into the labor force and thus into the public sphere. However, what is critical to recognize, and of importance to this research, is not just that the aforementioned have contributed to women making strides in the public realm and in the workforce, but most significantly, that feminine attributes once seen as negative in the workforce are increasingly being recognized as qualities that may be better suited for many management roles. Gender issues are expected to remain highly significant aspects into the future of both the theory and the practice of public administration (Guy, 1992a; Hale & Kelly, 1989).

Women and the New Social Order

The demographics are undeniable. There is fundamental change taking place. The U.S. Census Bureau, in its 2005 report *We the People: Women and Men in the United States* (Spraggins, 2005), reflected the growing trend toward women choosing to remain single rather than marry. Since 1970, dramatic increases in the proportions of never-married women have occurred. In 1970, 36% of women age 20-24 and 12% of women age 25-29 had not married. In contrast, by 2000, the proportions rose to 69% and 38%, respectively. The percentage of women age 30-34 who were never married approximately tripled between 1970 and 2000, reaching 22%. When examining the data on men and women living alone, more women than men lived alone, with that number continuously rising since 1970. Similarly, in comparing male and female heads of households with no spouse present, the report found that in 2000, 12% of women ran

their own household compared to 4% of men (Spraggins, 2005). Women outnumbered

men in this area threefold (see Figure 1).

The Office of Management and Budget and the Economics and Statistics

Administration within the U.S. Department of Commerce worked together to create the

March 2011 report *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*.

The report found,

> Fewer women are married than in the past. The percentage of adults who are
> married declined between 1970 and 2009, from 72 percent to 62 percent for
> women and from 84 percent to 66 percent for men. In 2009, 15 percent of women
> and 20 percent of men had never married, compared to 7 percent and 9 percent,
> respectively, in 1970 [see Figure 2]. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics
> and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of
> Management and Budget, 2011, p. 9)

The report continued,

> More women than in the past have never had a child. . . . There has been a steep
> rise in the share of women age 25-29 (early in their childbearing years) who have
> not had a child, rising from 31 percent in 1976 to about 46 percent in 2008. . . . In
> 2008, about 18 percent of women age 40-44 (the latter part of peak childbearing
> years) have never had a child, almost double that in 1976 [see Figure 3]. (U.S.
> Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive
> Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011, p. 10)

The report further found,

> Women are giving birth to their first child at older ages. The share of women in
> their thirties among those giving birth for the first time has risen from 4 percent in
> 1970 to 22 percent in 2007; however, women in their twenties continue to account
> for the majority of first-time mothers. . . . While more women in their forties are
> giving birth for the first time, they account for only one percent of first-time
> mothers [see Figure 4]. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics
> Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and
> Budget, 2011, p. 11)

Marital Status: 1970 to 2000

(Percent distributions of women and men 15 and older. Data based on sample. For
information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and
definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*)

	1970
	1980
	1990
	2000

Women

Never married
22.6
22.9
23.1
24.1

Married[1]
61.2
57.8
55.6
54.6

Widowed
12.3
12.3
12.0
10.5

Divorced
3.9
7.1
9.4
10.8

Men

Never married
28.6
29.7
30.1
30.3

Married[1]
65.7
62.5
60.2
58.6

Widowed
3.0
2.5
2.5
2.5

Divorced
2.7
5.3
7.2
8.7

[1] Includes separated.
Note: Data for 1970 refer to the population 14 and older.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census of population, 1970 to 2000.

Figure 1. Marital status: 1970-2000. Adapted from *We the People: Women and Men in the United States* (Census 2000 Special Report), by R. E. Spraggins, January 2005, p. 6, retrieved from http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-20.pdf.

Marital Status

(Percent Distribution of the Population Age 25 and Older, 1970, 1990, and 2009)
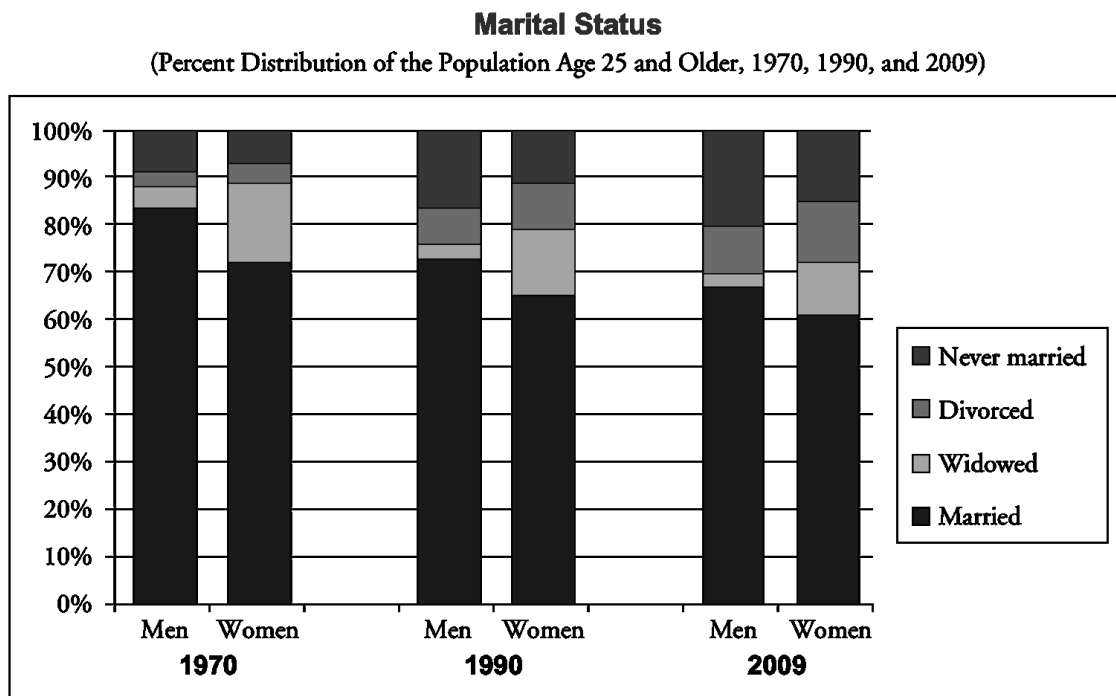
Source: Census Bureau

Figure 2. Decline in marital rate. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 9, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/ Women_in_America.pdf.

Additional findings of the report included,

> Women are having fewer children. Across all age groups, women currently have fewer children than they did in 1976. . . . Larger declines in the number of children per mother have occurred among older women than younger women. Mothers age 40-44 had given birth to 3.4 children on average in 1976, compared to only 2.3 children in 2008 [see Figure 5]. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011, p. 12)

Women Who Have Never Had a Child

(Percent of Selected Age Groups, 1976–2008)
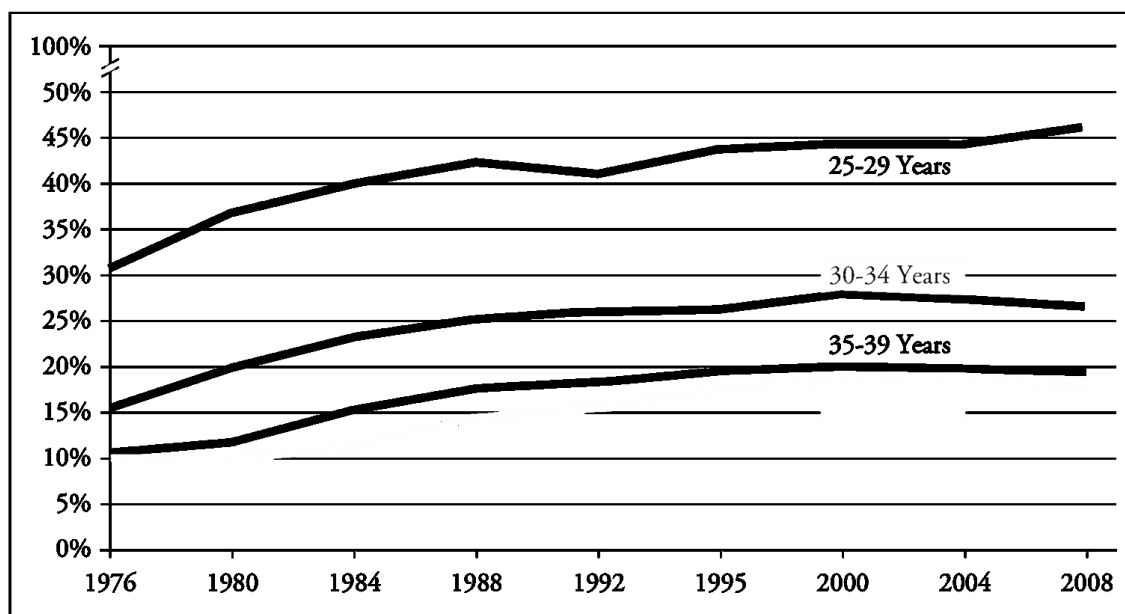
Source: Census Bureau

Figure 3. Decline in childbearing. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 10, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf.

The findings are not surprising since the trends in delaying marriage and childbirth coincide with an increase in education and increased labor force participation by women. These shifts provide women with independence and choices, highlighting that women are no longer relegated to the private sphere but have entered the public sphere en mass. The findings illustrate the demographic changes in women's choices. Whether it be because women are choosing not to marry or are running their own households without a spouse, one thing is clear: men are increasingly absent from the

Age of Mother at First Birth

(Percent Distribution of Women Having their First Birth by Year and Age, 1970–2007)
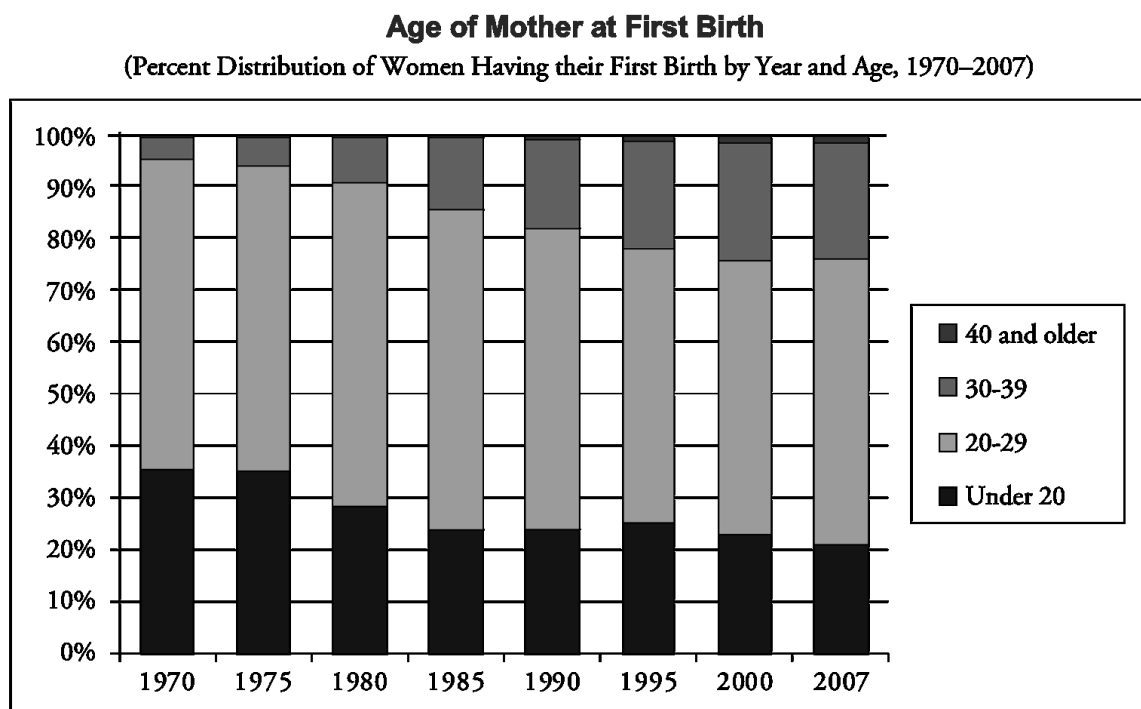
Source: National Center for Health Statistics

Figure 4. Increase in age of first-time mothers. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 11, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_ America.pdf.

home, becoming less essential. Rosin (2010) argued that changes such as these are altering society's long-defined notions of masculinity, which are grounded in patriarchy, and are slowly shifting U.S. society into a matriarchy, leaving women as decision makers. These changes are highly significant since they demonstrate women's participation in the public realm. Women have come a long way since having minimal choices of socially acceptable jobs, such as secretaries, nurses, or teachers, and have entered into every imaginable field, but progress does not equality make. Though

Average Number of Children per Mother
(Births Per Mother for Selected Age Groups, 1976–2008)
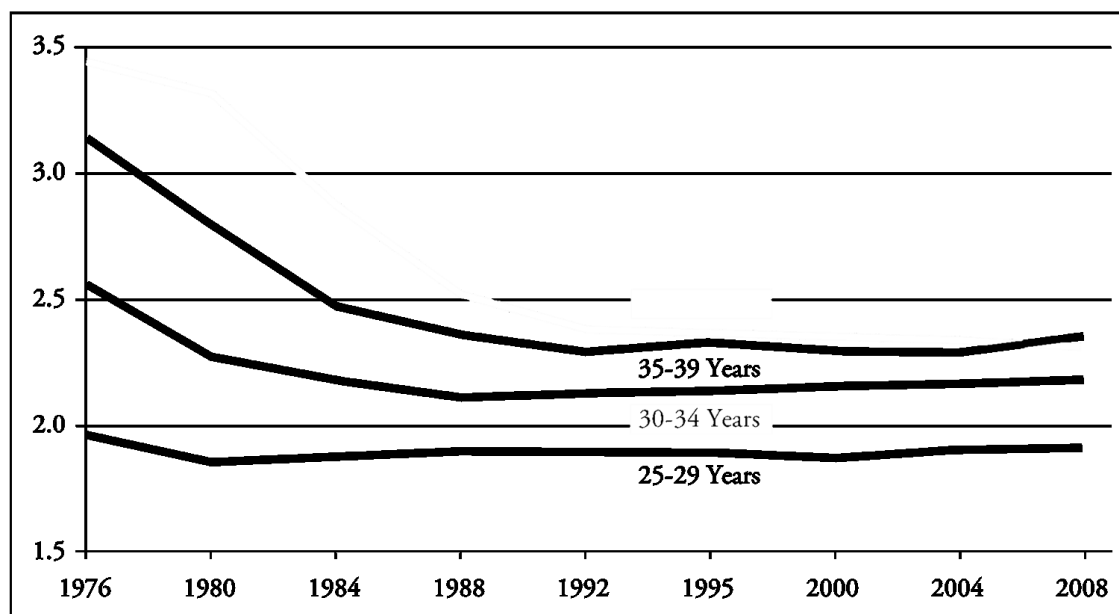
Source: Census Bureau

Figure 5. Decline in number of children. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being,* by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 12, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_ America.pdf.

women's economic situation has improved over the past several decades, the dual burden of family responsibility and paid work for which society still holds women responsible often interferes with employers' and even women's own perceptions of their capabilities and productivity. The potential is there for women to achieve equal footing with men, but conquering social mores, lingering stereotypes, and biases continues to prove challenging, and these often manifest themselves in the workplace, specifically in relation to career advancement.

The Glass Ceiling

Though women have entered the workforce and are represented in various occupations and at various levels, they are still underrepresented at the highest levels of management. It appears that once they reach a certain level, despite experience, education, or achievements, their career advancement opportunities are stunted. The glass ceiling describes the barriers that restrict or block the access of women to high-level management and executive positions within their agency (Baker et al., 2001). The metaphor has been legitimized as a true phenomenon and an unfortunate reality for women in the workplace, especially for women who strive to climb the corporate ladder and pursue higher level management and executive positions. The glass-ceiling metaphor was widely studied by various scholars, providing statistical corroboration about its existence. But nothing legitimized the existence of the glass ceiling more than the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 with Title II, which created the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (GCC) with the U.S. Secretary of Labor as its chair (GCC, 1995a). The commission's role was to study and make recommendations relating to the compensation of women and people of color and their advancement to management positions in U.S. organizations.

When the GCC issued its report in 1995, *A Solid Investment*, the report described the glass ceiling as artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational biases that prevent qualified individuals from advancing into management-level positions; the barriers are normally based on some form of discrimination, most often sexism (GCC, 1995c). The GCC (1995c) study noted that not only did these barriers apply to women

but to minorities as well. It confirmed that women and minorities continued to be consistently underrepresented and underutilized at the highest levels of government and corporate America—97% of senior managers in Fortune 500 companies were male and White. The GCC recognized that every member of society, regardless of gender, race, or ethnic background, should have the opportunity for upward mobility and to strive for and attain positions of leadership and responsibility. The GCC made it clear that the glass ceiling was also a business issue. However, it aptly noted that business reflects the attitudes and conditions of society as a whole, and other segments of society must also contribute to ending the glass ceiling. To this end, the GCC's recommendations offered ways in which government could most effectively play a part in breaking the glass ceiling for two thirds of its citizens.

The GCC (1995c) report's recommendations for government were as follows: (a) lead by example, (b) strengthen enforcement of antidiscrimination laws, (c) improve data collection, and (d) increase disclosure of diversity data. It also put forth specific recommendations for all businesses, including government, to follow: (a) demonstrate CEO commitment; (b) include diversity in strategic business plans with clear accountability; (c) use affirmative action; (d) select, promote, and retain qualified individuals; (e) prepare minorities and women for senior positions; (f) educate the corporate ranks; (g) initiate work–life balance and family-friendly policies; and (h) adopt high-performance workplace practices (GCC, 1995c).

The GCC (1995c) report recognized the important role society plays in perpetuating glass ceilings. After all, attitudinal changes cannot be legislated, mandated,

or dictated. Prejudice, stereotypes, bias, and a lack of equality and access to education

are all contributors. Therefore, the GCC's recommendations also called for social

initiatives to facilitate behavioral change. First and foremost, recognizing the power and

influence the media has on society is crucial. After all, the media does not solely reflect

America; it shapes America. The media must examine its diversity demographics,

correct for distortions, diversify, change its portrayal of women and minorities to include

positive portrayals, and in short engage in a profound self-examination to promulgate a

determined balance in reporting and entertainment programming. Society must also

actively engage in rewarding change agents and promoting programs such as Take Our

Daughters to Work Day. The GCC recommended a public education campaign,

continued research, monitoring, and longitudinal analysis. Most importantly,

implementation of the recommendations with accountability for all was key. The GCC

report made key observations, highlighted important issues, and offered

recommendations—the operative word being *recommendations*. Though the intent was

noble, once the report was issued, U.S. organizations, both in the public sector and

private sector, were free to do with the information what they wanted (GCC, 1995c).

Twenty years later, recognizing the important role of women and girls, in 2009

President Obama signed an executive order creating the White House Council on Women

and Girls. The council's mission is to provide a coordinated federal response to the

challenges confronted by women and girls and to ensure that all Cabinet and Cabinet-

level agencies consider how their policies and programs impact women and families

(Council on Women and Girls, n.d.). The council also serves as a resource for each

agency and the White House so that there is a comprehensive approach to the federal government's policy on women and girls. In support of the Council on Women and Girls, the Office of Management and Budget and the Economics and Statistics Administration within the U.S. Department of Commerce worked together to create the March 2011 report *Women in America*. The report was significant because it pulled together statistical information across federal agencies to compile baseline information on how women are faring in the United States today and how these trends have changed over time (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011). It provided a quantitative snapshot of the well-being of American women based on federal data, enhancing the understanding of how far American women have come and the areas where there is still work to be done. It was significant to the current research since it directly provided information and data related to glass-ceiling trends and organizational/ societal shifts. The findings are presented throughout this chapter in corresponding sections. This report is as close as one can get to an unofficial and unrelated follow-up report to the GCC's (1995c) recommendations. Not only was it valuable in that it provided an overall status of where women are today, but it served as a gauge to the progress made in the past 20 years. The March 2011 report did indicate growth, but the data also showed that the glass ceiling still exists (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011).

Despite decades of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity policies, women continue to encounter cultural and structural barriers that render the advancement and employment of female managers more difficult compared to their male counterparts. Guy (1993) came to supporting empirical conclusions in her examination of 2 decades of public service affirmative action. She found the number of women in decision-making positions to be disproportionately low compared to their percentage of the public workforce. Additionally, pay disparities resulting from such barriers further cement the economic disadvantages experienced by many women (Dey & Hill, 2007; Kerr et al., 2002). Affirmative action programs and the establishment of the GCC are all reminders that the reliance on purely legal or legislative means to ensure greater representativeness in public-sector jobs achieves only limited success.

The glass ceiling is one of the most controversial and emotive aspects of employment in organizations. Though data show it exists, because it varies widely across organizations, many discount its relevance in their own organizations. In some senses it becomes almost innocuous. Some of the features frequently thought to characterize the glass-ceiling problem include a lower number of female employees in higher positions, women working harder than men to obtain equivalent jobs, women being paid less than men when promoted, and some organizations being more female friendly than others. Many empirical studies have been conducted regarding the distribution of women and men in public-sector employment and the integration of women into the administrative ranks, providing evidence that women face glass ceilings and glass walls at all levels of government (Kerr et al., 2002; Naff, 1994). Hale and Kelly (1989) conducted a review of

the employment literature on public-sector women and identified three types of

workplace impediments: (a) internal/personal barriers such as biases, socialization

patterns, or an individual's self-concept; (b) structural barriers such as sex-segregated

jobs, lack of remedies for addressing sexual harassment, lack of promotional

opportunities, pay inequities or lack of employer commitment to greater participation of

women in upper-management positions, or lack of workplace policies that deal with

women's specific domestic obligations; and (c) organizational culture barriers such as

lack of mentors, role models, and access to formal and informal support networks;

selected offerings of promotional opportunities to men and women; or lack of resources

devoted to training and education. Research studies continue in an effort to identify the

factors that contribute to the glass ceiling.

One such contributor to the glass ceiling is partially explained by the combined

effects of sex-role expectations and tokenism. Women in the workforce, especially in top

positions, have often been seen as tokens. The dilemma for tokens is that if they respond

too quickly or directly to the expectations of the group they represent, they lose

credibility with the dominant group. If they ignore the expectations of their own group,

then they also lose credibility within that group and are seen as mere tokens (Guy, 1993).

So even if women get into top positions, they often hold little power, making it difficult

for them to promote other women and women's respective issues. Similarly, in regard to

sex-role expectations, if women are too assertive, they are criticized as being too

aggressive and unfeminine, making them unworthy representatives of their gender. If

they are too conciliatory or cooperative, then they are considered too weak to be effective

representatives of their gender (Yoder, 1991). Women are caught in a catch-22 type of situation. It can be a vicious cycle that helps to perpetuate the glass-ceiling effect. There has been tremendous pressure on American women to conform to male ideals of what it means to be female. Women who have effectively broken through the glass ceiling by achieving leadership positions have often been forced to espouse these ideals in order to achieve professional success and financial independence (Guy, 1993; Stivers, 2002).

Another explanation was put forth by Kanter (1977), who hypothesized that opportunity, power, and numbers are three significant structural determinants of behavior in organizations that differentiate women and men in the workplace. The consequences of high or low opportunity, high or low power, and high or low numerical representation affect public administration and are factors that help reveal and explain women's status in public administration. According to Kanter, opportunity, power, and numbers combine to produce self-perpetuating cycles. The confluence of the three, then, produces upward cycles of advantage or downward cycles of disadvantage. The cycle of opportunity, power, and numbers makes it difficult for women to break into the managerial workforce because women are on the low end of all three.

In 1993, Bullard and Wright found that women had made inroads in securing top executive administrative posts in state governments, especially in certain types of agencies, such as social services including libraries, and in newly created agencies in the arts, community affairs, and so forth. However, what is significant is that they found that circumventing or avoiding rather than "breaking" the glass ceiling had accomplished much of the women's progress. These new agencies provided women with a chance to

circumvent the glass ceiling that has been present in the older, more traditional state agencies. This is referred to as the ceiling-circumvention strategy because women need not work their way up the ladder and through the ceiling of an established agency's power structure to attain the top leadership post. The three alternative avenues to the top that Bullard and Wright (1993) identified for women executives in state government were (a) access to new agencies, (b) appointment by the governor, and (c) interagency mobility. However, for women, these routes resulted in shorter periods of service in state government and in the agency they headed. And more importantly, the avenues identified are clearly often improbable avenues, especially direct appointment by the governor.

Commonalities in glass-ceiling research have demonstrated that women with children are promoted significantly less often than women without children, even when controlling for education, experience, leaves of absence of more than 6 weeks, and relocations (Naff, 1994). An underlying issue may be that it is often assumed that women are less committed to their careers than men. Assumptions are often made that the most committed employee is the most deserving of a promotion. The number of hours worked, the amount of time off taken, and the flexibility to relocate are often factors attributed with promotability. Perhaps the March 2011 report's findings explored earlier, on women's trends to remain single, not have children, have children later in life, or have fewer children, were in response to the glass ceiling (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011).

The glass ceiling is more than a perception. It is elusive, for no one factor or clear set of factors is responsible for or can explain it. This is what makes it a phenomenon. A close examination of workforce and organizational changes can provide a view into what works, what does not, what is needed, and why. Examining the current perceptions and experiences of top women executives at LACMTA provided key insights to progress and barriers as related to the glass ceiling.

Women in the Workforce

Shifting demographic patterns, the pace of technological change, and the path of economic globalization are expected to continue to evolve over the next 10-15 years. Slower labor force growth will encourage employers to adopt approaches to facilitate greater labor force participation among women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Greater emphasis will be placed on retraining and lifelong learning as the United States tries to stay competitive in the global marketplace and respond to technological changes. Further technological advances are expected to continue to increase demand for a highly skilled workforce, support higher productivity growth, and change the organization of business and the nature of employment relationships (Karoly & Panis, 2004).

Over the past several decades, women have dramatically reshaped their role in the nation's workforce. They compose a significant part of the workforce, are employed in more varied occupations than ever before, and have attained higher levels of education. Along with these increases in workforce participation and educational achievement, women's earnings have increased over time and women are increasingly contributing to

the family income (often being the sole wage earners), but the earnings gap between men

and women remains. With more women entering the workforce, the issue of work–life

balance also becomes increasingly important.

The March 2011 report *Women in America* found that in relation to employment,

> After decades of significant increases, the labor force participation rate for women has held steady in recent years. The labor force participation rate for women (age 20 and older) nearly *doubled* [emphasis added] between 1948 (32 percent) and 1997 (61 percent). Since 1997, it has held steady (61 percent in 2009). The labor force participation rate for men (age 20 and older) has fallen from about 89 percent in 1948 to 75 percent in 2009. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011, p. 29)

Essentially, steadily increasing female labor force participation rates, combined with

declining male rates, have brought the labor force closer to gender balance (see Figure 6).

The report by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics

Administration and Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget

(2011) also found,

> Female-headed families have the lowest family earnings among all family types. [This was true in] 1998 and 2008, despite increasing by 27 percent over this timeframe. . . . A family is [defined as] a group of two or more people living together and related by birth, marriage, or adoption. In 2008, female-headed families with children earned 30 percent less than their counterparts without children [see Figure 7]. (p. 34)

The 2005 U.S. Census Bureau report, *We the People* (Spraggins, 2005), found

that in the year 2000 nearly half of the employed civilian labor force was made up of

women. Between 1970 and 2000, women's representation increased in multiple

occupational groups, such as service and sales (Spraggins, 2005), but of importance to

this research were the findings in the managerial and professional categories.

Labor Force Participation

(Percent of Persons Age 20 and Older, 1948–2009)
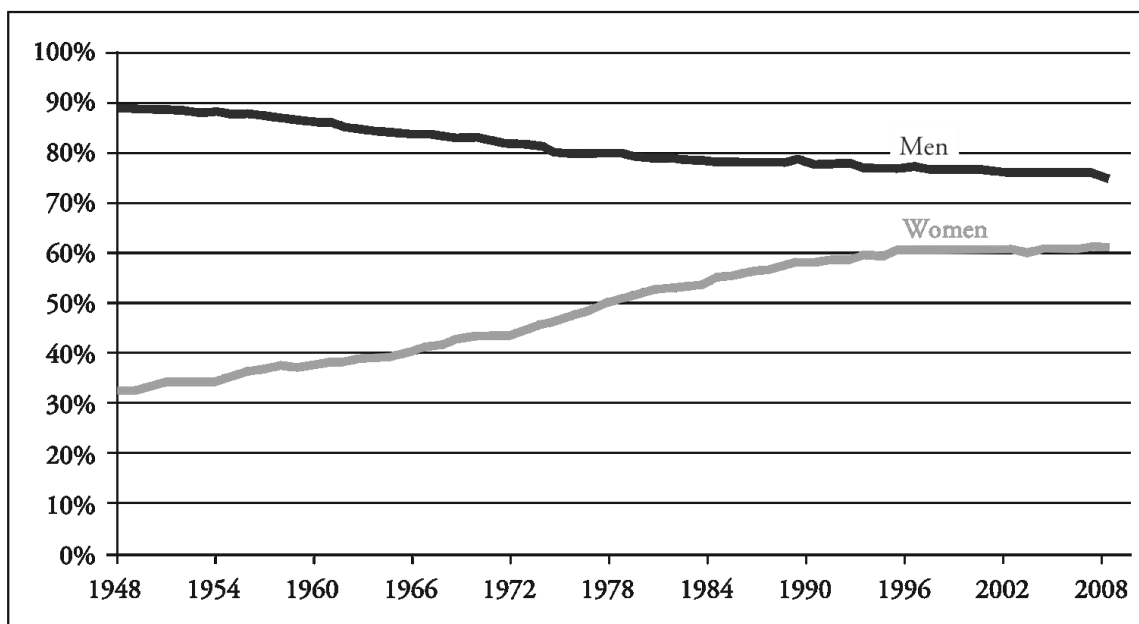
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 6. Gender balance in the labor force. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 29, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf.

In the professional category, women represented 40% of that workforce in 1970, and by 2000 they represented 56%, a 16% growth (Spraggins, 2005). In contrast, men in that same professional category held 60% of the jobs in 1970 and dropped to 45% in 2000, a 15% decrease. What is significant about these findings, besides the data illustrating an upward trend in professional jobs for women, is that for the first time in history women outnumbered men in the professional category—by 12% (Spraggins, 2005).

Family Income by Family Type

(Family Heads Under Age 65, in 2008 Dollars, 1988 and 2008)
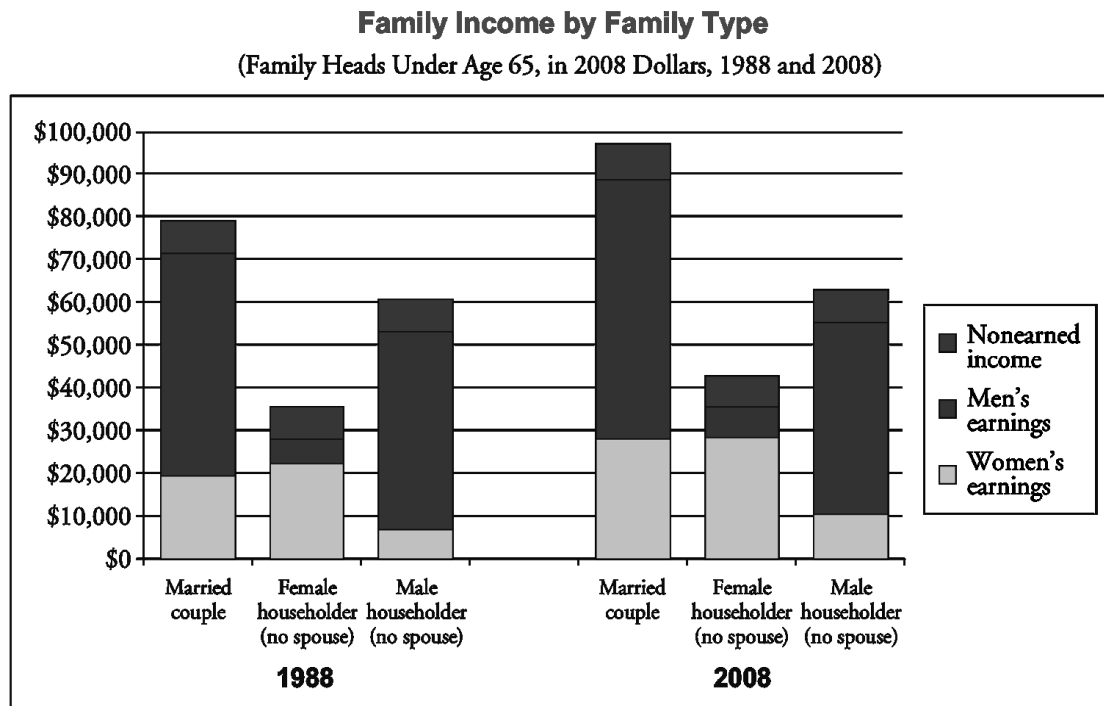
Source: Census Bureau

Figure 7. Female heads of households earn less. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 34, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_ America.pdf.

In the management category, women represented only 17% of management jobs in 1970, but by 2000 they represented 42%, an increase of 25% (Spraggins, 2005). Conversely, in that same 30-year period, there was a 25% decrease in the number of men in the management category. Though 30 years later men still outnumbered women in the managerial realm, the gap narrowed considerably. In 1970 there was a 67% gap between males and females in management, compared to a 16% gap in 2000 (Spraggins, 2005). This 51% growth for women in a 30-year span undoubtedly shows that women have

infiltrated the managerial ranks with force, but despite the gain, they continue to be

underrepresented (see Figure 8).

Occupation: 1970 and 2000

(Percent distribution of employed civilian population 16 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*)

Women ▪   Men ▪

1970

	Women	Men
All workers	37.8	62.2
Managers and administrators, except farm	16.6	83.4
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	40.1	59.9
Sales workers	39.3	60.7
Clerical and kindred workers	73.5	26.5
Private household workers	96.7	3.3
Service workers, except private household	55.5	44.5
Farmers and farm managers	5.0	95.0
Farm laborers and farm foremen	16.2	83.8
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	4.9	95.1
Operatives, except transport	38.2	61.8
Transport equipment operatives	4.5	95.5
Laborers, except farm	8.3	91.7

2000

	Women	Men
All workers	46.7	53.3
Management, business, and financial operations	41.9	58.1
Professional and related	55.8	44.2
Service	56.7	43.3
Sales and office	64.4	35.6
Farming, fishing, and forestry	21.1	78.9
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	3.7	96.3
Production, transportation, and material moving	25.5	74.5

Note: Due to changes with the classification of occupations, most of the major occupation groups are not comparable between the 1970 census and Census 2000. For more information on these changes, see *www.census.gov/hhes/www/ioindex.html*
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census of population, 1970 and 2000.

Figure 8. Occupations by gender. Adapted from *We the People: Women and Men in the United States* (Census 2000 Special Report), by R. E. Spraggins, January 2005, p. 11, retrieved from http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-20.pdf.

The U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009) report,

Women in the Labor Force: A Databook, showed that women, compared to men,

continue to overwhelmingly hold jobs in the administrative realm, teaching, social work, nursing, and domestic jobs such as childcare workers, maids, and so forth. However, what is significant to note is that women accounted for 50.8% of all workers in the high-paying management, professional, and related occupations. In fact, the largest percentage of employed women, 39.5%, worked in management, professional, and related occupations; 33.1% worked in sales and office occupations; 20.6% in service occupations; 5.9% in production, transportation, and material moving occupations; and 0.9% in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009).

All data illustrate women's significant presence in the workforce, and it is evident that the number of women continues to rise in the professional and management fields, but despite the notable climb, the data confirm that women continue to be underrepresented in the management ranks. The pace of women's entry into top leadership positions is a slow climb. The workplace continues to be marked by vertical sex segregation. Though the number of women in professional and management positions has improved, representation is still far from proportionate. In 1984, Dometrius projected that if progress toward integrating women into top management continued at the rate set after the first 6 years following the passage of the Equal Employment Act of 1972, it would take until the year 2040 for women to gain equal representation among career agency leaders. It is disheartening that nearly 30 years later this projection is still not far-fetched.

Female Representation and Pay Equity in Public Administration

In October 2001, the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) prepared a report on *Women in Management* using 1995 and 2000 data from the Current Population Survey and found women were less represented in management than in the overall workforce in four of the 10 industries reviewed. The report also found a pay inequity between male and female managers—women made on average 79 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts (GAO, 2001). In September 2010, the GAO updated the 2001 report up to 2007.

The updated report, titled *Women in Management: Analysis of Female Managers' Representation, Characteristics, and Pay* (GAO, 2010a), found that looking across all industries combined from 2000 to 2007, female managers' representation and differences between female and male managers' characteristics remained largely similar. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO, 2010a) noted that "in 2007 women comprised an estimated 40 percent of managers and 49 percent of nonmanagers on average for the [13] industry sectors . . . analyzed . . . compared to 39 percent of managers and 49 percent of nonmanagers in 2000" (p. 2). A 1% increase for women in management in 7 years is essentially insignificant. The report also noted, "In all but three industry sectors women were less than proportionately represented in management positions than in nonmanagement positions" in 2007 (GAO, 2010a, p. 2). Women were again found to be "more than proportionately represented in . . . public administration," construction, and the utilities sector (GAO, 2010a, p. 2). Additionally,

> The estimated difference in pay between female managers working full time and male managers working full time narrowed slightly between 2000 and 2007 . . . female managers earned 81 cents for every dollar earned by male managers in 2007, compared to 79 cents in 2000. (GAO, 2010a, pp. 2-3)

An increase of 2 cents in a 7-year period is hardly considered a significant stride in the issue of pay equity and comparable worth.

Additionally, the GAO (2010a) report found that on average for the 13 industry sectors studied, an estimated 14% of female managers in 2007 were mothers with their own children under age 18 living in the household, and female managers were less likely to be married or have children than male managers. These findings were generally similar to findings for 2000 (GAO, 2010a). This illustrates that the trend regarding women choosing career over family in order to attain career advancement into management positions is still highly prevalent—essentially, according to the findings, on average 86% of women managers were unmarried and had no children (GAO, 2010a).

Though the report's findings included generalities for all 13 industries examined, it also provided specific details for each industry. Considering that public administration and transportation and utilities were two of the three industries found to have more than proportionate female representation in management, and these two industries overlap in the subject-matter research as it relates to career advancement for women in public administration, particularly in the public transportation realm, it is worthwhile to examine the specific characteristics and findings in these two areas. The two industries were examined independently in the GAO (2010a) report, but it is interesting that LACMTA, the focus of this current study, falls into both industries and both are in the top three.

The characteristics specific to the public administration industry showed that female management representation in 2007 increased to 45% compared to 41% in 2000 (GAO, 2010a). It is important to note that the original GAO report issued in 2001 also identified public administration as an industry where female managers were more than proportionately represented, so the trend of more females entering management in public administration continues to climb, even if they are small percentage gains. In relation to median salaries for full-time public administration managers, in 2000 female managers earned an average of $51,000 compared to $60,000 in 2007, representing approximately an 18% increase over the 7-year period (GAO, 2010a). In contrast, the median salary for full-time male managers in 2000 was $64,000 compared to the $74,000 average in 2007, representing approximately a 16% increase. Though it appears that women had a 2% increase advantage in pay in that 7-year span, women still make significantly less than men. Comparing 2007 median salary data in public administration, men made $14,000 more on average than their female counterparts, representing a 23% pay differential (GAO, 2010a). Again, this is hardly equitable, especially considering that one would expect the public sector to have more comparable pay equity than private industry. And again, this industry was only one of three in which women were proportionately represented (see Figure 9).

The data specific to the transportation and utilities industry showed that female management representation in 2007 remained the same as in 2000 at 26% (GAO, 2010a). The original GAO report issued in 2001 also identified the transportation and utilities industry as an industry where female managers were proportionately represented.

Percentage of public administration employees among all industries

2000

2007

6%

5%

Source: GAO analysis of American Community Survey data.

Industry Characteristics

Management positions in the public administration sector included, for example, city and tribal council members, county supervisors, and tax commissioners.

Total workers
2000: 7.9 million
2007: 7.8 million

Total management positions
2000: 700,000
2007: 700,000

Estimated female representation
2000
Managers: 41 percent
Nonmanagers: 42 percent
2007
Managers: 45 percent
Nonmanagers: 42 percent

Median salaries for full-time managers (2007 dollars)
2000
Female managers: $51,000
Male managers: $64,000
2007
Female managers: $60,000
Male managers: $74,000

Percent working part-time
2000
Female managers: 24 percent
Male managers: 17 percent
2007
Female managers: 20 percent
Male managers: 16 percent

Source: GAO analysis of American Community Survey data.

Estimates for Characteristics of Managers by Gender, 2007

Age of managers

Average age
Women 47.3 years
Men 48.8

under 40 ◄ ► 40 or older
24% Women 76%
21% Men 79%

Education and managers

Bachelor's degree (or higher)
Women 57%
Men 67%

Master's degree (or higher)
23% (Women)
32% (Men)

Marriage and managers

Percent who are married
Women 60%
Men 77%

Share of household wages
Wives 58% of household wages
Husbands 74%

Children and managers

Number of children in the household[a]

Women
None 67%
One 16
Two 13
3+ 4

Men
None 64%
One 15
Two 15
3+ 7

Source: GAO analysis of American Community Survey data.

Estimated Pay Differences for Full-Time Managers, 2000-2007

Full-time manager pay (in dollars)

Male managers' pay

1.00
89¢
Difference in pay
87¢

0.75 81¢
Female managers' pay unadjusted
81¢

Female managers' pay adjusted

0.50

0.0

2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007
Year

Source: GAO analysis of American Community Survey data.

Figure 9. Public administration characteristics by gender. Adapted from *Women in Management: Analysis of Female Managers' Representation, Characteristics, and Pay* (Report No. GAO-10-892R), by GAO, 2010a, p. 18, retrieved from http://www.gao.gov/assets/100/97082.pdf.

In relation to median salaries for full-time transportation and utilities managers, in 2000 female managers earned an average of $48,000 compared to $52,000 in 2007, representing approximately an 8% increase over the 7-year period (GAO, 2010a). In contrast, the median salary for full-time male managers in 2000 was $66,000 compared to the $70,000 average in 2007, representing approximately a 6% increase. Though it appears that women had a 2% increase in salary gains over their male counterparts in that 7-year span, women still make significantly less than men. Comparing 2007 median salary data in transportation and utilities, men made $18,000 more on average than their female counterparts, representing a 35% pay differential (GAO, 2010a). It is important to note that the transportation and utilities industry was, according to the report, one of the three in which women were proportionately represented (GAO, 2010a; see Figure 10). However, when examining the 35% pay inequity, the gap is so large that even though women are considered proportionate in management positions in this industry, the pay equity is hardly comparable.

It is clear that parity in compensation continues to be elusive. Recognizing this, President Obama created the National Equal Pay Enforcement Task Force and increased resources for the agencies enforcing existing equal pay laws (U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, n.d.). President Obama also called on Congress to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would stop retaliation against employees who share or seek wage information and would close a loophole that some employers use to avoid paying women equal wages. The Senate, in February of 2010, did not pass the act, despite the fact that the House approved the Paycheck Fairness Act almost 2 years prior. The bill was

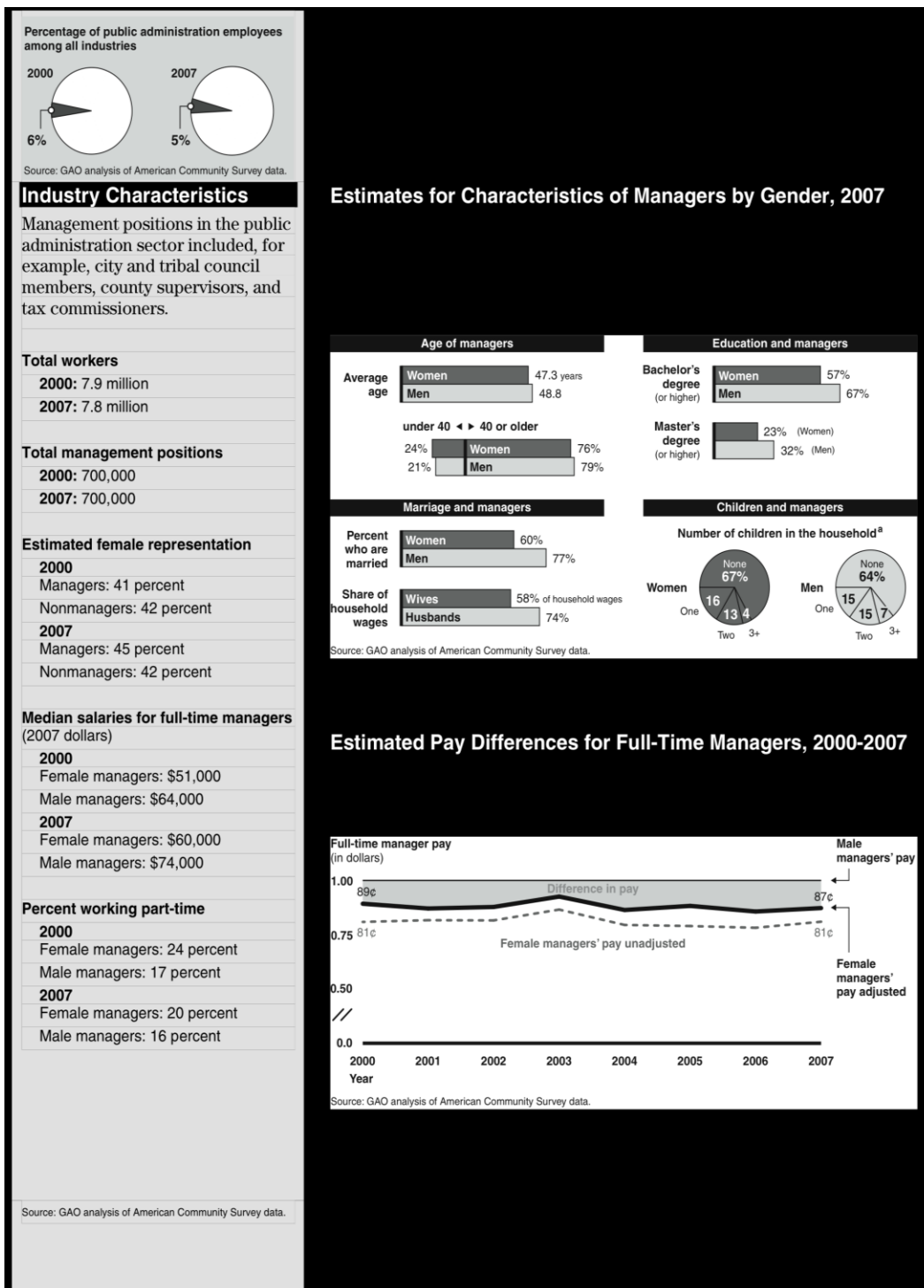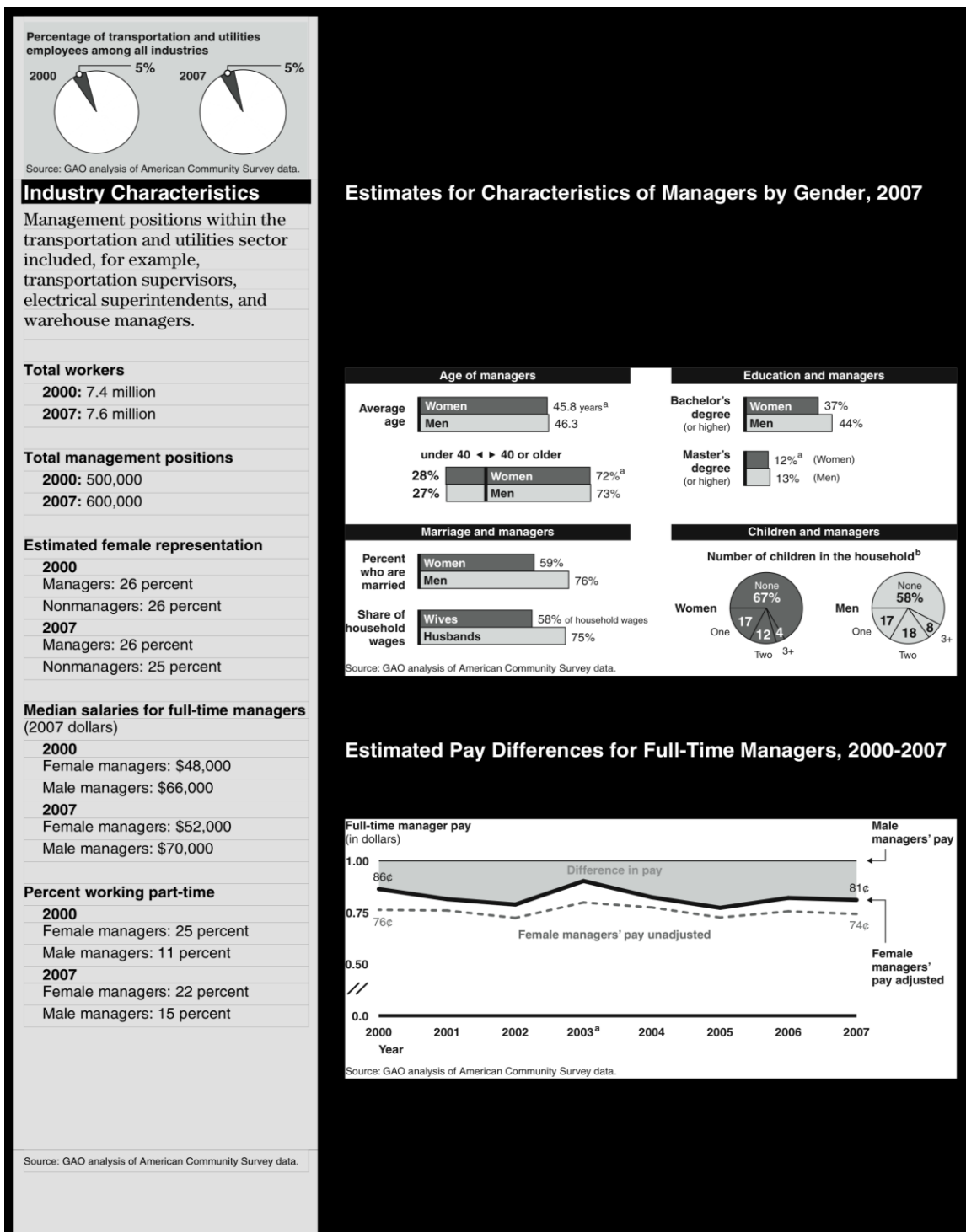*Figure 10.* Transportation and utilities characteristics by gender. Adapted from *Women in Management: Analysis of Female Managers' Representation, Characteristics, and Pay* (Report No. GAO-10-892R), by GAO, 2010a, p. 20, retrieved from http://www.gao.gov/assets/100/97082.pdf.

reintroduced in both houses of Congress in April 2011, but once again it did not pass

(Dodge & McFetridge, 2011). Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis (2010) issued a press

release in response to the U.S. Senate's failure to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. An

excerpt follows:

> Since the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963, the issue of women's pay has grown even more serious. Today, women are the sole or co-wage earner in two-thirds of American households. And, for a growing number of families, equal pay for women is not just a matter of principle. It is a matter of survival.
>
> Most people are surprised to learn that, despite decades of efforts since 1963, the wage gap has narrowed from 59 cents for each dollar a man makes to a still unbelievably paltry 77 cents in 2010. It is equally shocking that the gap has closed only 5 cents in the past 20 years. At that pace, it will take almost 100 more years for women to achieve pay equity. The situation is even worse for women of color. In fact, today, African-American women make 69 cents for every dollar made by a man. Latinas make just 60 cents. (Solis, 2010, para. 4-5)

Though the bill did not pass, it is critical that these types of initiatives continue to be

sought to help rectify a blatant injustice and to continue to bring awareness so that

progress is made.

Women—the Recession and Unemployment

In March 2011, the National Women's Law Center (NWLC) issued a report, titled

Modest Recovery Largely Leaves Women Behind, which illustrated the impact on women

of the deep recession that began in December 2007 and cost workers nearly 7.5 million

jobs by June 2009. Overall job growth during the recovery has been weak; the economy

added only 322,000 jobs between July 2009 and February 2011. However, women's

unemployment rose during the course of the recovery while men's declined. Between

July 2009 and February 2011, "women's overall unemployment rate increased from 7.7

percent to 8.0 percent while men's [overall unemployment rate] dropped from 9.8 percent

to 8.7 percent" (NWLC, 2011, p. 1). According to the NWLC (2011), "Although

unemployment remains high and job growth [painfully] slow for both men and women, it

is striking that women" lost jobs over the course of the recovery while men made modest

gains (p. 1). Figure 11 illustrates that between July 2009 and February 2011, "women

lost 300,000 jobs, while men gained 622,000, a [difference] of 922,000 jobs" (NWLC,

2011, p. 1). In addition, "Of the 1.234 million jobs added to the economy between

January 2010 and February 2011, only 113,000—just 9.2 percent—went to women"

(NWLC, 2011, p. 1). Regrettably, despite women losing "nearly three in every ten jobs

cut over the course of the recession (December 2007–June 2009), they have filled fewer

than one in every ten since job growth picked up in 2010" (NWLC, 2011, p. 1).
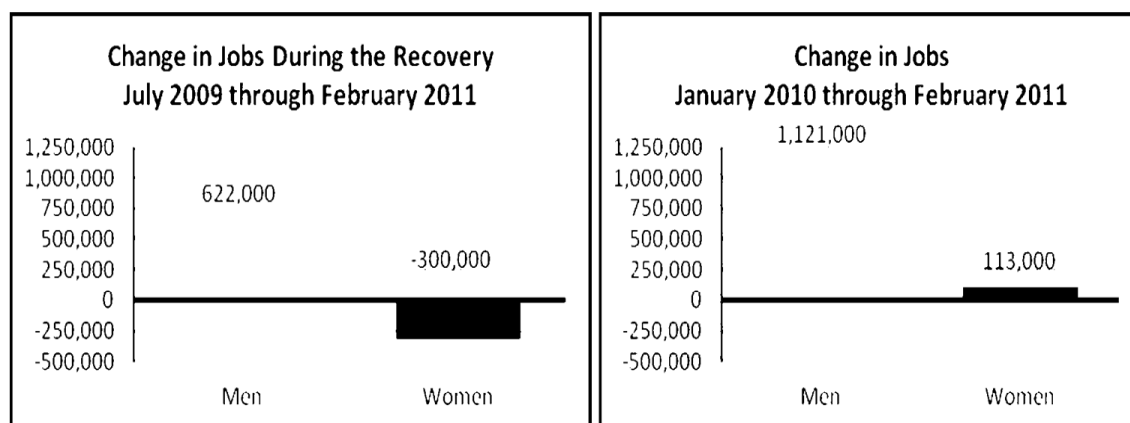
Source: U.S. Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey

Figure 11. Women hit hard during recession. Adapted from *Modest Recovery Largely Leaves Women Behind*, by NWLC, March 2011, p. 1, retrieved from http://www.blackradionetwork .com/images/userfiles/WomensSlowRecovery.pdf.

According to the NWLC (2011) report,

Heavy job losses in public sector employment have disproportionately affected women and contributed to the dismal employment picture for women throughout the recovery. While women represented just over half (57.0 percent) of the public workforce at the end of the recession, they lost the vast majority (78.9 percent) of the 327,000 jobs cut in this sector between July 2009 and February 2011. . . .

Long-term unemployment worsened for women during the recovery.

Between July 2009 and February 2011 the percentage of jobless workers out of work and seeking employment for 27 weeks or more increased from 32.3 percent to 44.8 percent for women (12.5 percentage points), more than twice as much as the increase for men (5.5 percentage points from 36.9 percent to 42.4 percent). (p. 2)

The relevance of these data is that despite women making up almost half of the workforce, having attained more education, and being single heads of households more often, the data illustrate a continued discrimination in hiring practices. This is a snapshot of what happens when push comes to shove. Men continue to hold the high-level positions with decision-making power, and it is reflected in hiring practices.

Undoubtedly, the United States still has a wage gap, one that can be convincingly explained, at least in part, by discrimination. Women still carry the lion's share of household responsibilities, despite working outside the home. And clearly the upper reaches of society are still dominated by men, but given the powerful forces pushing economic and social transformation, this seems like a final frontier of a dying age when it was generally accepted that this is a "man's world."

Occupational Segregation

Occupational segregation is an important issue in public administration. Occupation determines pay and benefits, and when women have greater access to quality

jobs, especially in the public sector, this promotes their economic, social, and political advancement. Just as the glass ceiling is a metaphor for barriers that restrict or block women from high-level management positions, the glass wall is a metaphor that applies to occupational segregation attributed to barriers that restrict the access of women to certain types of jobs or agencies or that trap them within certain types of jobs or agencies.

The workplace in the United States has changed dramatically in the past quarter century. The economy has moved from an emphasis on manufacturing to a service-oriented economy with greater needs and opportunities for highly educated workers. The workforce has changed to meet those demands. In order to remain competitive, U.S. businesses have had to find the best qualified people to move them into the 21st century, and in many cases that has meant hiring women. One significant outcome has been the dramatic increase in female labor force participation. As the various U.S. Census and federal reports show, women make up more than half of the U.S. workforce. A disproportionate number of these women are clustered into a narrow range of occupations that offer low wages, little room for advancement, and less job satisfaction. This situation is occupational segregation by gender, and it seems to persist. In the context of the public sector, the equitable distribution of employment opportunities and resources is of special significance because the public sector is expected to represent the interests of all its citizens equally. Since women are not generally in decision-making positions, this is prohibitive. Organizational culture and structure both present barriers that often result in occupational segregation for women in the public sector. By segregating women into feminized jobs, men are free to compete among themselves for higher paying jobs that

offer better career opportunities (Cockburn, 1991). The combination of higher

percentages of men employed in higher income occupations while women are

disproportionately employed in the lower income categories of occupations serves to

perpetuate pay differentials. These pay differentials reflect the tendency to view

women's work as less worthwhile and important than that of men, even when men and

women perform the same or a comparable job (Kelly & Newman, 2001).

A chapter in *The Shriver Report* (Mason, 2009) showed,

Despite reaching college in greater numbers, women still cluster largely in traditional female majors when they choose their course of study. They receive 86 percent of the bachelor's degrees in the health professions, which includes nursing, 79 percent in education, and 78 percent in psychology. These professions, often called the "helping professions" or "women's professions," have always attracted women and were once the only professions open to them. . . .

Women with degrees remain segregated in lower-paying occupations. Nearly all registered nurses (91.7 percent), elementary and middle school teachers (81.6 percent), and preschool and kindergarten teachers (97.8 percent) are women, but women comprise smaller percentages of the highest-paying occupations, such as lawyers and judges (36.5 percent), physicians and surgeons (31.8 percent), dentists (25.4 percent), civil engineers (11.8 percent), electrical and electronics engineers (7.8 percent), aircraft pilots and flight engineers (3.4 percent). . . .

Education [may raise] women's pay, but the gender gap remains at all educational levels. . . . Women who make significant investments in college educations earn more than they would otherwise, but they don't earn as much as men, often because they remain in lower-paying female-dominated occupations. (p. 163)

Occupational segregation in the public sector can be broken down further into two

categories: distributive and redistributive functions. Many proponents of pay equity

believe the pay gap exists because women have been channeled into certain jobs. For

instance, women have typically worked in service-oriented positions, education, the

social sciences, nursing, and library science jobs. These are known as redistributive

functions. Distributive functions are professional jobs with decision-making roles, such

as lawyers, doctors, and scientists. Distributive functions have been overwhelmingly

held by men (Rossi, 1982). Findings have historically confirmed that women are

underrepresented in regulatory and distributive agencies, especially at the higher levels,

and overrepresented in redistributive agencies (Kerr et al., 2002).

Another common characterization of occupational segregation is either horizontal

or vertical. Horizontal segregation is where a workforce is made up mostly of one

gender, race, or other ascribed characteristic. Vertical segregation is similar to the glass

ceiling, where opportunities for career advancement for a particular gender, race, or other

ascribed characteristic are narrowed (Weeden, 2007). Horizontal segregation is the

concentration of women in lower paid occupations or occupations having perceived

lower skill levels and lesser responsibilities. Vertical segregation is segregation within

professions where the glass ceiling and other barriers are operational, since most women

are still found mainly in middle management and not top management positions (Bullock,

1994).

The March 2011 report *Women in America* (U.S. Department of Commerce,

Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of

Management and Budget, 2011) confirmed that occupational segregation is still in effect:

> Women and men continue to work in different occupations. While women are
> three times more likely to work in administrative support jobs than men, relatively
> few women have construction, production, or transportation jobs. . . . While
> women are more likely than men to work in professional and related occupations,
> they are more highly represented in the lower-paying jobs within this category
> [such as health care and education; see Figure 12]. (p. 33)

Employment by Occupation

(Percent of Employed Persons Age 16 and Older in Major Occupation Groups, 2009)
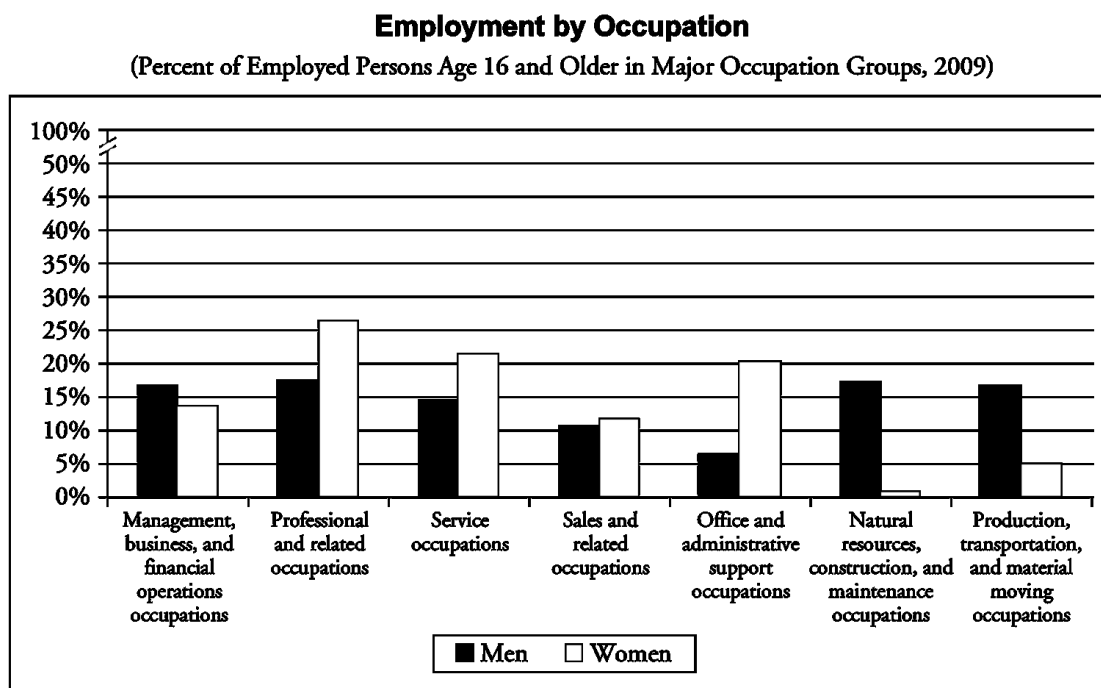
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 12. Occupational segregation by occupation. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 33, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf.

Education

American society has changed dramatically over the past half century. Today, women make up nearly one half of the labor force. Personal and familial obligations along with other changes have caused many workers to face conflicts between their work and personal lives. The increasing demand for analytical and interactive skills—those largely obtained through postsecondary education—means it is all the more important and common for individuals to pursue additional education while also working. These changes also inspire the need and desire on the part of workers for more flexibility in the

workplace. Flexibility can be in terms of when one works, where one works, or how much one works. *Workplace flexibility* generally refers to arrangements, such as job sharing, phased retirement of older workers, flexible hours, and provision of computers to facilitate telecommuting, that allow workers to continue making productive contributions to the workforce while also attending to family and other responsibilities.

The U.S. Census Bureau, in its 2005 report *We the People* (Spraggins, 2005), found that the educational attainment of women continued to rise and the college education gap with men narrowed. Between 1970 and 2000, the number of men doubled in the category of those earning a bachelor's degree or higher, while women nearly tripled their educational advancement in the same 30-year period (see Figure 13). What is important to note is that during that time period, women narrowed the college education gap. In 2000, 23% of women and 26% of men had graduated from college, representing a gap of 3%. In 1970, the gap was higher at about 5% (Spraggins, 2005).

The GAO prepared a follow-up report on *Women in Management* in 2010. It found,

> While both male and female managers experienced increases in attainment of bachelor's degrees or higher, women's gains surpassed men's. [Estimates predict] male managers with a bachelor's degree or higher increased [three percentage points] from 53 percent in 2000 to 56 percent in 2007, while female managers with a bachelor's degree or higher increased 6 percentage points from 45 percent in 2000 to 51 percent in 2007. Similarly, while the share of male managers with a master's degree or higher went up less than 1 percentage point from 2000 to 2007, the share of female managers with a master's degree or higher rose nearly 4 percentage points. (GAO, 2010a, p. 7)

Educational Attainment: 1970 to 2000

(Percent of population 25 and older. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see *www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf3.pdf*)

1970
1980
1990
2000

Women

High school graduate or more
52.8
65.8
74.8
80.7

Bachelor's degree or more
8.1
12.8
17.6
22.8

Men

High school graduate or more
51.9
67.3
75.7
80.1

Bachelor's degree or more
13.5
20.1
23.3
26.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census of population, 1970 to 2000.

Figure 13. Educational attainment by gender: 1979-2000. Adapted from *We the People: Women and Men in the United States* (Census 2000 Special Report), by R. E. Spraggins, January 2005, p. 9, retrieved from http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-20.pdf.

The recognition that women are no longer lacking in education is difficult to refute. The argument that was often used to justify the glass ceiling by citing women's lack of comparable education is no longer a legitimate factor. In 2010, women dominated America's colleges and professional schools. For every two men who received a bachelor's degree that year, three women did the same (Rosin, 2010).

The report *Women in America* (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and

Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and

Budget, 2011) showed that women's gains in educational attainment have significantly

outpaced those of men over the last 40 years:

> Higher percentages of women than men age 25-34 have earned a college degree.
> Women age 25-34 are now more likely than men of that age group to have
> attained a college degree, reversing the norm of 40 years ago. . . . The percentage
> of women age 25-34 with at least a college degree has more than tripled since
> 1968, while the share of men with a college degree increased by one-half. . . .
> Women earned about 57 percent of all college degrees conferred in 2007-2008.
> Women also constituted 57 percent of total undergraduate enrollment [see Figure
> 14]. (p. 21)

Percent of Adults Age 25–34 with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher
(1968–2009)
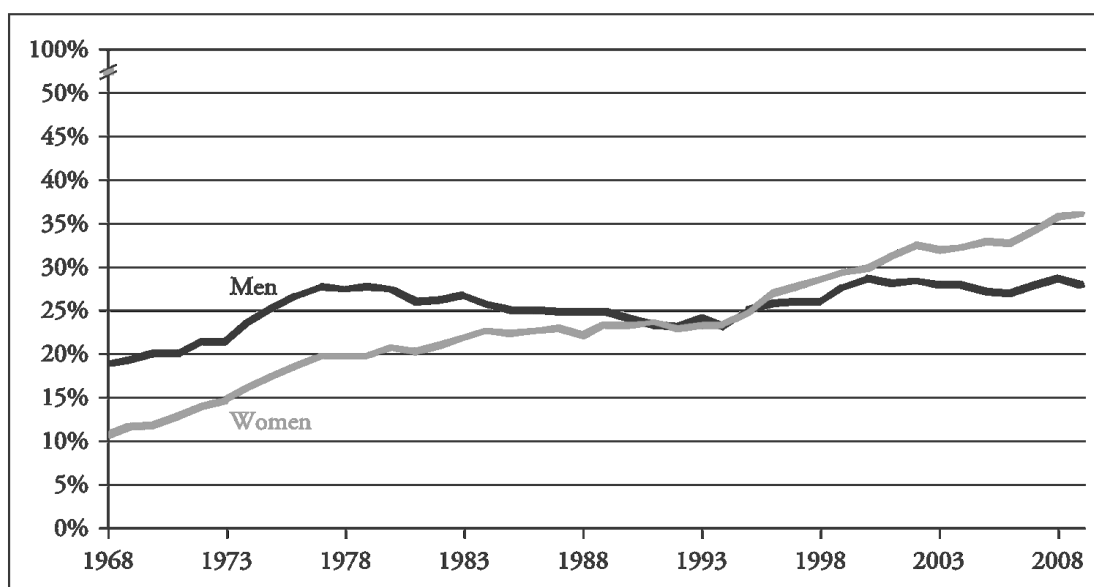
Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Figure 14. Gains in bachelor's degrees by gender: 1968-2009. Adapted from *Women in America:
Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics
and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and
Budget, March 2011, p. 21, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/
rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf.

The report added,

> More women than men have received a graduate education. The percentage of women age 25-34 with two or more years of graduate school has increased dramatically since the late 1970s to about 11 percent in 2009, while the percentage of men age 25-34 with two or more years of graduate school has remained at or below 8 percent. . . . In 1998, more doctoral degrees were conferred to men than to women. A decade later, more doctoral degrees were conferred to women than men. In 2008, women accounted for 59 percent of graduate school enrollment [see Figure 15]. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011, p. 22)

Percent of Adults Age 25–34 with Two or More Years of Graduate Study
(1968–2009)
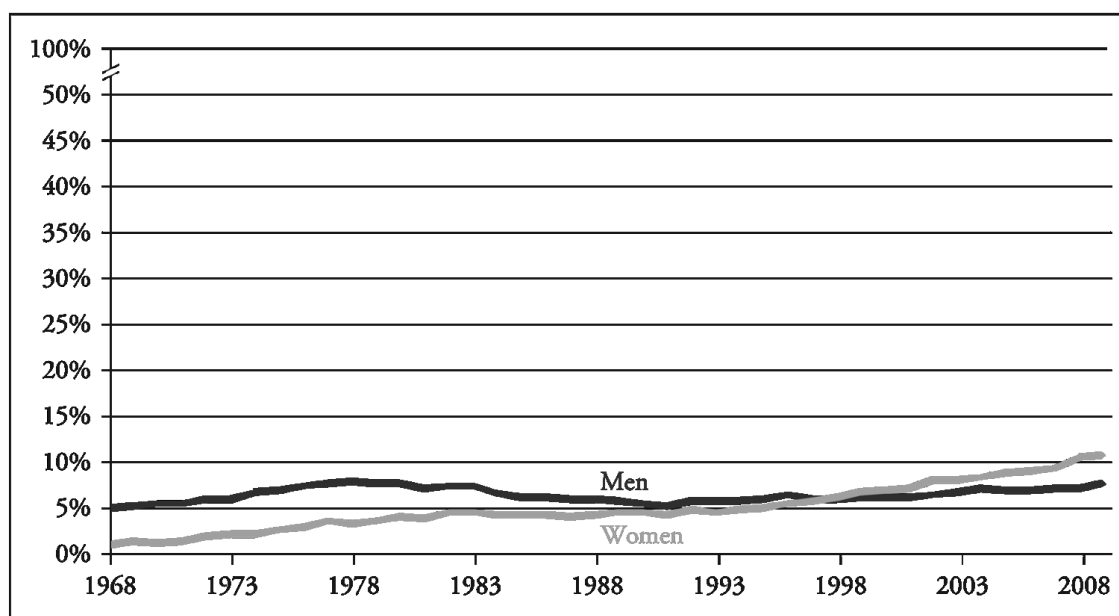
Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Figure 15. Gains in graduate degrees by gender: 1968-2009. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 22, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/ rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf.

Furthermore, the report found,

> Women earn the majority of conferred degrees overall but earn fewer degrees than men in science and technology. The number of bachelor's degrees conferred to women increased or remained stable in almost every field of study between 1998 and 2008. . . . [Also, women continue to dominate] in health and education fields [see Figure 16]. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011, p. 23)

Number of Bachelor's Degrees Conferred by Field of Study
(1998 and 2008)
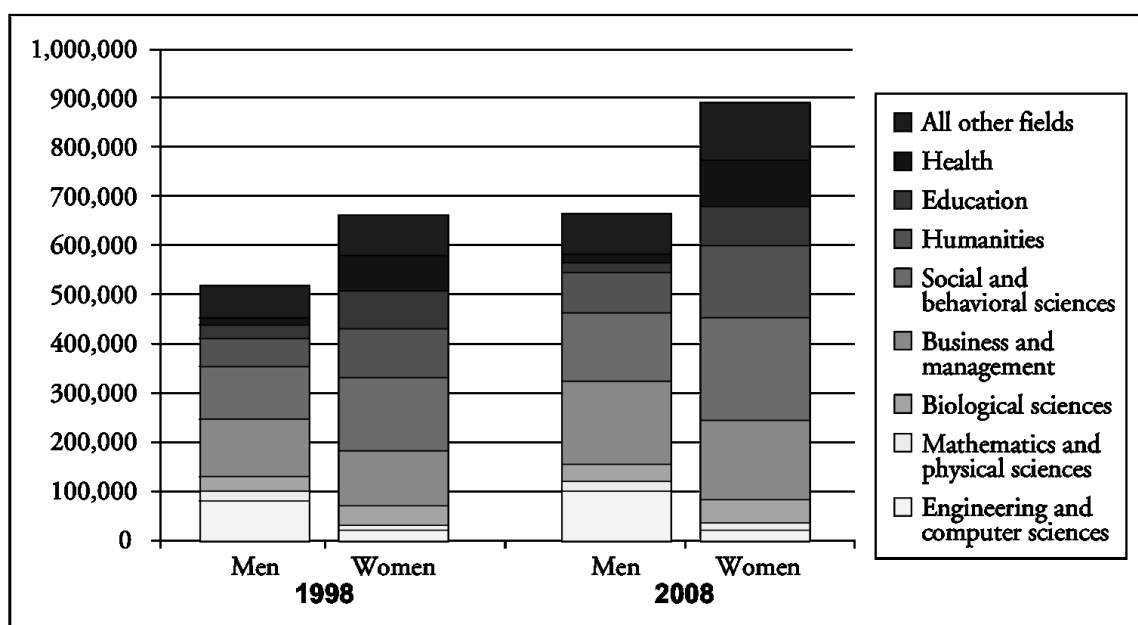
Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Figure 16. Bachelor's degree by field of study: 1998 and 2008. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 23, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf.

The report also noted,

> Education pays for both women and men, but the pay gap persists. Earnings for both women and men typically increase with higher levels of education. However, the male-female pay gap persists at all levels of education for full-time workers (35 or more hours per week). . . . At all levels of education, women earned about 75 percent as much as their male counterparts in 2009 [see Figure 17]. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011, p. 32)

Earnings by Educational Attainment
(Median Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Workers Age 25 and Older, Annual Averages, 2009)
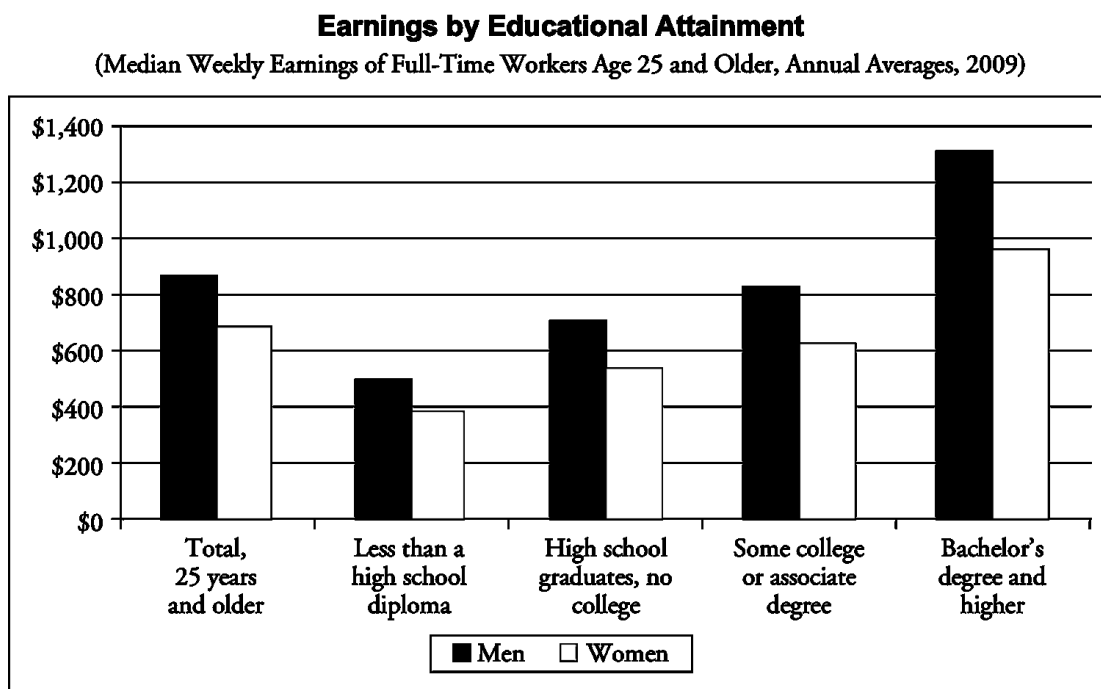
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 17. Earnings by gender and educational attainment. Adapted from *Women in America: Indicators of Social and Economic Well-Being*, by U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, March 2011, p. 32, retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/Women_in_America.pdf.

It is widely known that women do not receive equal pay for equal work, but what is disheartening is that education fails to provide gender equality. Even with the increased numbers of women in higher education and in the workforce, the wage and power gaps remain at all educational levels. While women have made significant progress in gaining access to all levels of education in the past 30 years, women are still highly concentrated in the low-paying "helping" professions of health and education and are not encouraged to enter the high-paying fields of the future, including mathematics, engineering, and computer science. When women do receive degrees in fields that could lead to high-paying professions, such as academia, law, or business, they often face inflexible workplaces that do not allow them to combine work with family responsibilities, contributing to many highly educated women leaving the career track for which they trained. Those who stay most often earn less than their male counterparts. One report found that just 1 year out of college, women already earn less than their male colleagues (Dey & Hill, 2007). Perhaps a factor in women not being encouraged or even choosing not to enter male-dominated educational fields and occupations is that once they enter the workforce, they find inflexible workplace policies that can exacerbate gender inequalities. Knowing this, graduates may choose jobs they perceive to be more family friendly.

What is more, women with the same degrees still lag behind men in pay and almost never catch up. Women who make significant investments in college educations earn more than they would otherwise, but they do not earn as much as men, often because they remain in lower paying female-dominated occupations. While the gap has narrowed

in recent decades, there is still a long way to go to achieve earnings parity. The research shows that education fails to provide gender equality. Even with the increased numbers of women in higher education and in the workforce, the wage and power gaps remain large and stagnant at all educational levels. Women who are breadwinners simply cannot bring home a family income equal to that of a man with the same educational background. In short, simply opening the door to higher education does not necessarily allow women to achieve true equality in the workforce.

Workplace Protections: Legislative Mandates

Several legislative mandates have been introduced in an effort to reduce inequities and offer protections to women, such as the Equal Pay Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (National Women's History Project, n.d.). These mandates have helped to reduce overt discrimination toward women, and certainly women would not have made the gains to date without them.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 is a U.S. federal law amending the Fair Labor Standards Act, aimed at abolishing wage disparity based on sex (National Women's History Project, n.d.). Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 added sex as a protected civil rights category. Title IX was passed in 1972, and it protected against discrimination or exclusion from participation in any educational program or activity receiving federal funds on the basis of sex. The purpose was to ensure that overt gender discrimination or limitation of access to educational opportunities did not continue (National Women's

History Project, n.d.). Though data show that women have made substantial gains in educational attainment, gender bias is pervasive, and it shows in areas such as occupational segregation.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, which modified Title VII, required employers to treat pregnant women the same as all other employees and enabled women to take 4 months of pregnancy leave, even if they were new employees and even if they did not work full time (National Women's History Project, n.d.). The Civil Rights Act of 1991 amended the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and added provisions to Title VII; protections included expanding the rights of women to sue and collect compensatory and punitive damages for sexual discrimination or harassment. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 included Title II, which created the GCC to focus attention on and complete a study relating to the existence of artificial barriers to the advancement of women and minorities in the workplace and to make recommendations for overcoming such barriers (National Women's History Project, n.d.).

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)

entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take job-protected, unpaid leave for specified family and medical reasons. Eligible employees are entitled to:
- Twelve workweeks of leave in any 12-month period for:
  - Birth and care of the employee's child, within one year of birth [including adoption] . . .
  - Care of an immediate family member (spouse, child, parent) who has a serious health condition
  - For the employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job . . . [and]
  - [When an] employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in the U.S. National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation. (U.S.

Department of Labor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, 2009, "Basic Provisions/Requirements," para. 1-2)

FMLA has been extremely valuable in the workplace for women because it provides legal protection from employers who otherwise would exclude women from obtaining and advancing into professional positions due to discrimination because of domestic obligations, such as childbearing and caring for immediate family members who fall ill. Prior to this law, a woman's role as wife, mother, and overall caretaker was often used as the underlying basis for denying women advancement opportunities. Though some of this thinking still exists, it happens covertly and carefully due to the legalities organizations subject themselves to if they violate the act. FMLA is also valuable because it provides a means for employees to balance their work and family responsibilities by taking unpaid leave for covered reasons. These protections are invaluable to women in the workforce. Without them, undoubtedly, the notion that a woman is not promotable due to her domestic responsibilities would continue to be openly perpetuated.

New Workplace Challenges: Work–Life Balance

The legislative mandates to date have been invaluable in helping women achieve so much thus far in the workforce. Nonetheless, women in the workforce now face new challenges that they must conquer for success. O'Leary and Kornbluh (2009) stated,

> Too many of our government policies—from our basic labor standards to our social insurance system—are still rooted in the fundamental assumption that families typically rely on a single breadwinner and that there is someone available to care for the young, the aged, and the infirm while the breadwinner is at work. (p. 76)

However, "traditional families" are no longer the norm, and women make up almost half of the U.S. workforce, so it is necessary to "reevaluate the values and assumptions underlying our nation's workplace policies" (O'Leary & Kornbluh, 2009, p. 77). Years ago, in response to the Industrial Revolution and as the government recognized that families would become impoverished if family wage earners lost their ability to work, a series of programs, such as workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, and old age and survivors' insurance, was developed. But little has been done to address the effect of more and more women joining the labor force (Heymann, 2000). O'Leary and Kornbluh (2009) noted,

> Up until now, government policymakers focused on supporting women's entry into a male-oriented workforce on par with men—a workplace where policies on hours, pay, benefits, and leave time were designed around male breadwinners with presumably little to no family caregiving responsibilities. (p. 77)

Simply allowing women to play by the same rules as the single male breadwinners of yesteryear is not enough.

Despite the clear change in the workforce and social demographics, limited action at the federal level to update workplace policies or create new policies to help working parents and their varied families has taken place. The FMLA is an exception, "but even it only allows 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected family or medical leave to approximately half of all workers in the United States" (O'Leary & Kornbluh, 2009, p. 79). The FMLA is a very important workplace benefit for families and is a step toward making the work–life balance easier. However, it is of limited value to workers who cannot afford to go without a paycheck, especially for those who are the sole providers for their families.

These workers will either take the shortest possible leave or will simply attempt to work through the family crisis to keep the money coming in. Additionally, the FMLA is intended to respond to episodic circumstances of parenting and illness, and does not help with the daily challenge of integrating work with life. According to O'Leary and Kornbluh (2009),

> Our federal government does not require employers to offer a minimum number of paid days off. Nor does it require or even incentivize employers to provide flexible work arrangements. Our child care assistance is mostly aimed at the poor and even that assistance [is lacking]. (p. 79)

There are little to no provisions for eldercare. It is time to address these social and workforce realities and to recognize that there is no one home all day running the household, raising the children, caring for parents, and so forth for free. It is essential to this nation's success that the government takes steps to rectify these inadequacies. Society, as well as the economy, cannot survive without women in the workforce, but with both genders almost on par in labor force participation, the issue of balancing work and life must be addressed.

Steps the government can take "to address this new economic and social reality" include reforming existing laws by doing the following:

- Updating our basic labor standards to include family-friendly employee benefits
- Reforming our anti-discrimination laws so that employers cannot discriminate against or disproportionately exclude women when offering workplace benefits
- Updating our social insurance system to the reality of varied families and new family responsibilities, including the need for paid family leave and social security retirement benefits that take into account time spent out of the workforce caring for children and other relatives

- Increasing support to families for child care, early education, and elder care to help working parents cope with their dual responsibilities. (O'Leary & Kornbluh, 2009, p. 79)

Organizational Incentives

The increasing work commitment of American families is putting pressure on employers and policymakers to address the problem of work–life balance. Women's employment patterns are becoming more like men's, but public policies and employers have not filled in the gap between the time and care that families need and the time workers have available to meet those needs. Women continue to bear the brunt of household and familial obligations. The March 2011 report *Women in America* (U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration & Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, 2011) found that "in families where both husband and wife are employed, employed wives spend more time in household activities than do employed husbands," confirming that women still bear the majority of household duties (p. 35). Balancing work with personal and family concerns is a major stressor for many working women. For too many women, being sick or having an ill family member presents an untenable choice: stay at work when they should not, or lose pay and risk their job security and/or potential for growth and career advancement.

In order to be successful, organizations must adapt to a changing workforce. Many organizations, including LACMTA, offer their employees programs/incentives like on-site childcare, flexible work schedules, telecommuting, compensatory time off in lieu of overtime (mostly for salaried employees due to labor laws regarding overtime), and

compressed workweeks. The benefits of adopting these programs are vast. They include more time spent away from the office, thereby helping with work–life balance; savings on commuting costs; and reduction in wear and tear. Additionally, they also serve a broader purpose: they reduce traffic, thereby reducing congestion and improving air quality. Organizations should encourage these alternatives as appropriate, and transportation agencies such as LACMTA should lead the way. The problem is that many organizations, including LACMTA, often leave the administration/approval of the use of the incentives (excluding on-site childcare) to the discretion of the supervisor, often defeating the purpose of the incentives altogether. The foundation in many ways is set. The next steps involve the actual application of these incentives/programs. Setting clear policies and changing the perception that somehow less is accomplished with alternative schedules is paramount. Not only are these incentives needed for the work–life balance, but they can also facilitate women's career advancement opportunities. Research has shown that the incorporation of flextime, telecommuting, job-sharing opportunities, the facilitation of childcare and parental leave, technology, and so forth expand opportunities for women to continue working and gaining experience, despite family obligations that would otherwise interfere with their promotion potential (Rogier & Padgett, 2004). Making reasonable accommodations to the workplace so that women who are qualified for promotions are not penalized for being female is essential to breaking the glass ceiling (Larwood & Gutek, 1987).

Employers that have adopted flexible workplace practices cite many economic benefits, such as reduced worker absenteeism and turnover, improvements in their ability

to attract and retain workers, and other positive changes that translate into increased worker productivity (A Better Balance, 2008; Corporate Voices for Working Families, 2004). Employees place high value on flexibility. A study of more than 1,500 U.S. workers reported that nearly a third considered work–life balance and flexibility to be the most important factors in considering job offers (Hudson Highland Group, Inc., 2008). In another survey of 200 human resource managers, two thirds cited family-supportive policies and flexible hours as the most important factors in attracting and retaining employees (Williams, 2001).

The U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005), in a 2004 survey of the use of flexible schedules between men and women, interestingly found that men used flexible work schedules more than their female counterparts in all areas except one: the *never married* category. In this category, women had a 4% gain, with 28.9% using flexible schedules, versus men who were at 24.9%. The reasons for the difference are unclear, but it is not related to women having children at home since, surprisingly, men with children under the age of 18 used roughly 4% more flexible work schedules than their female counterparts. Men used 3% more flexible work schedules in the *married* category as well, and women and men were tied at 27.1% in the *no kids* category (U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). What is significant about these data is that the assumption that women would use more or "abuse" flexible work schedules because of their familial obligations, including marriage and children, is not supported by the data. Therefore, the argument that women who are married and

have children will be less committed and/or available to their employment is also diminished.

Organizational Development and Culture

Public administration began with the traditional/rational view of management and organizational function, which focused on Taylorism and Weberian models of organizational practices that are hierarchical and autocratic in nature (Stivers, 2000). This approach removes individuality from the workplace and reduces employees to mere laborers who are not required or expected to have independent thought. A significant shift occurred in public administration when organizations became more humanistic, often referred to as humanism. An impetus for this was the Hawthorne Experiments, which were groundbreaking studies in human relations, conducted between 1924 and 1932 (Graham, 2003). The Hawthorne Experiments demonstrated that employees were more productive when they perceived that what they did and thought mattered. Employees became individuals who could contribute to the success of the organization if taken into consideration and given an opportunity to participate (Graham, 2003). Humanism takes, as it implies, a more "humanistic" approach to decision making. It is generally thought that employees will be more cooperative and productive if they are part of the decision-making process. Thus, this model does not rely on a hierarchical approach since it encourages employee participation. Humanism respects the needs of an individual and builds on the need to be responsive to individuals on multiple levels. Humanism tends to redirect the attention back from the organization to the individual.

Humanistic organizational development principles are evident in the public sector. There is an emphasis on the importance of human capital and the mutual benefit to organizations and employees when participatory management is exercised. Components of humanism are visible in today's government environment. An example is sensitivity toward diversity, training and development components, alternate work schedules, and so forth. LACMTA is one such organization that values organizational development. A dedicated organizational development department focuses on training employees on various levels, from internal organizational basics such as policies and procedures to training on writing skills, computer software programs, and business skills such as problem solving, effective communication, negotiating skills, conflict resolution, and so forth. It also offers a valued educational assistance/reimbursement program to all employees. The goal is to value the individual and his or her contributions all in an effort to improve the way companies do business and the service they provide. In organizational development, the focus is on the individual, with recognition that individuals are unique and therefore not motivated by the same thing but equally important in that they have something to offer.

Denhardt (1981) searched for a philosophy that combines the individual with the organization without any loss to the inherent essence of the individual. He argued that the structures of social institutions reinforce how individuals think and are models of how they learn. He redirected the reader's attention back from the organization to the individual in order that he might then establish a clearer sense of individual autonomy and responsibility in an age of organization (Denhardt, 1981). This approach is more

inclusive and a world away from the organizations that viewed employees as "cogs in the machine." Edlund (1992) asserted that when the workplace is humanized, organizations are more effective and satisfying. Furthermore, a feminine leadership style, by nature, is more humanistic, which can soften the work environment and strengthen personal power. The effect of this approach is freedom—allowing people to be themselves. Women and men do not have to repress the feminine to be successful, nor do men and women have to rely solely on masculine traits to be successful.

The societal, technical, legal, and economic changes examined thus far have all had an impact on organizational culture. Organizations have responded to the changing work demographics at varying levels. Rapid technological change and increased international competition spotlight the need for the workforce to be able to adapt to changing technologies and shifting product demand. Shifts in the nature of business organizations and the growing importance of knowledge-based work also favor strong nonroutine cognitive skills, such as abstract reasoning, problem solving, communication, and collaboration. In this context, education and training becomes a continuous process throughout the life course, involving training and retraining that continue well past initial entry into the labor market (Karoly & Panis, 2004). Savage (1995) described a knowledge-focused organization as the third wave of human socioeconomic development. The first wave was the agricultural age, with wealth defined as ownership of land. In the second wave, the industrial age, wealth was based on ownership of capital (i.e., factories). In the knowledge age, wealth is based on the ownership of knowledge and the ability to use that knowledge to create or improve goods and services.

Predictions for the future of the workforce include that an increase in women in the U.S. workforce will change the policies, power, and positioning of organizations. Women will alter the strategies of boardrooms, industries, and markets. A diversity-savvy workforce will be required to understand and align with the diversity in the global marketplace. Diversity will be a critical competency for leaders and employees (Canton, 2006). Finding, training, and retaining high-tech skilled employees will be the greatest challenge for every organization. An organization that is committed to employee development, continual education, and training will see a return of new skills and new competencies (Canton, 2006).

Firms are moving from vertically integrated organizations to more specialized and collaborative ones that outsource noncore functions and rely on more decentralized forms of internal organization. There will be a shift away from more permanent, lifetime jobs toward less permanent, even nonstandard employment relationships (e.g., self-employment) and work arrangements (e.g., distance work). These arrangements may be particularly attractive to workers trying to balance work and family obligations or to the disabled and older people who would benefit from alternative arrangements (Karoly & Panis, 2004).

Some critics argue that the greatest barrier to workforce representation for women is not the lack of qualified women but rather the organizational culture. For instance, Kanter (1977) pointed out that an organization's willingness to commit both formally and informally to changes in its power structure and organizational culture is critical to altering gender stereotypes that hinder women's advancement within the organization.

Unfortunately, few organizations will acknowledge having exclusive or excluding cultures. Most public managers are more likely to see their organization's culture and practices as reasonable and a proper reflection of the organization's values for its mission at hand. This view is one that is widely held, but it is at the fundamental core of the barriers that perpetuate glass ceilings. If an organization does not believe or accept that it inherently is primed for exclusion, there can be no accountability; thus, there is a need for belief that changes in power structure and organizational culture are required. This is why it is crucial that fundamental changes take place at the ground floor of any organization's structure, development, value sets, and so forth. Without these changes, glass ceilings will continue.

Women and Leadership

Many studies examining the managerial styles of women and men have been conducted. Guy (1993) observed that integrating the strengths that diverse forces and interests bring to governing is critical to women's integration into managerial positions. She argued that the differences attributed to men and women have been utilized to justify the exclusion of women from top positions (Guy, 1993). However, in contemporary public administration, those differences attributed to women, such as mediating, consensus building, and facilitating, are strengths too powerful to ignore. A woman's ability to consider the human dimension is a useful skill in decision-making roles. Women have skills that can facilitate building bridges, which in today's increasingly collaborative workforce and economy are valuable commodities.

Some authors have suggested that female managers tend to favor transformational leadership styles, styles that are conducive to change, encourage participation, and in turn encourage employees to look beyond their own self-interest (Bass & Avolio, 1994). However, if organizations are to benefit from the transformational assets women offer, organizations must first engage in strategic decisions that prioritize the hiring, nurturing, and promotion of women (Kerr et al., 2002). According to Judy B. Rosener (1990), in "Ways Women Lead," successful female leaders have a natural leadership style or approach that is fundamentally different from the style of most male leaders. Rosener characterized female leadership as "interactive" and male leadership as "command-and-control." She further suggested that an interactive (female) leadership style is more effective as the pace of organizational change accelerates. The term *command-and-control* refers to leaders who rely heavily on exchanging rewards for services performed or punishment for poor performance. Power that comes from organizational position and formal authority often is used to get things accomplished. However, Rosener maintained that interactive leaders are fundamentally different from command-and-control leaders in that they encourage participation and continuously try to make employees feel like they are part of an organization in a variety of ways. They share power and information willingly without worrying about diminishing their own power, and they explain their reasoning behind decisions. In this way, they make themselves vulnerable to those they lead. Additionally, interactive leaders enhance the self-worth of others by encouraging participation and sharing information to help make employees feel important. Interactive leaders also give others credit and recognition and avoid asserting their superiority over

subordinates. Rosener went on to hypothesize that socialization and chosen career paths

are the primary reasons why an interactive leadership style comes naturally to women. In

other words, traditional female roles and job opportunities largely have determined the

kind of leaders that women have become.

A white-collar economy values raw intellectual competence, which women and

men have in equal amounts. It also requires communication skills and social intelligence,

areas in which women, according to a few studies, have an edge (Rosin, 2010). Public

opinion polling shows women to be more supportive of social policies, more supportive

of healthcare initiatives, and so forth. In this context, some feminist authors, such as

Grogan (2000), have argued that women can and may play a critical role in transforming

public-sector leadership roles in the direction of greater social commitment.

The view of women as the lesser sex, skilled only for domesticity in the private

realm, is a dying vestige of an unfortunate discrimination. Today, the recognition of the

value of women and a positive trend toward the "feminine" can only serve to facilitate

women's advancement into the executive realm.

Mentoring and Networking

As far back as 1977, Kanter found in her research that *sponsorship*, an early term

for mentoring, is a crucial mechanism in an organization's opportunity structure and

maintained that sponsorship tends to be homosocial; in other words, people tend to

establish sponsorship ties with people like themselves in terms of social background.

Thus, since management positions have been overwhelmingly held by men, men

sponsored other men, leaving little opportunity for women to advance. Kanter's (1977) theory of homosocial reproduction suggests that men get ahead through a sponsorship model, while women get ahead through a "contest" model. This implies that women must advance based on their merits, whereas men often promote through the efforts of their personal sponsors.

As more women have entered the managerial and executive ranks, mentoring and networking among women has developed. Whereas mentorship by women for women was essentially nonexistent decades ago, today these relationships are notable, as are networking structures for women often in the form of professional organizations. Though mentorship is often informal, networking is a more visible contributor to advancement. This is important because a lack of networking opportunities with influential colleagues is a dominant barrier to workplace/career advancement (Catalyst, 2002).

The literature maintains that having a mentor is a strong predictor of career advancement. A mentor may act as a teacher to enhance an individual's skills and intellectual development, serve as a sponsor to influence a protégé's advancement, and provide counsel and moral support in times of stress (Levinson, 1978). Mentoring objectives include guidance, development of skills, and advancement. Finding mentors proves challenging for women since there are few women who hold management positions and senior mentors are hard to find. Even though women may benefit from male mentors, it is essential that they have mentors who have successfully forded the

barriers that women face since men may not be sensitive to those obstacles and barriers

(Guy, 1992b; Kelly et al., 1991).

Mentoring and networking are gaining momentum among women as important

tools for career advancement. A notable success in this arena is WOMEN Unlimited

Inc., a New York City-based career development company for women focusing on

mentoring and growth. Jean Otte, founder and CEO, offered a new approach to

mentoring, where women mentoring women have redrafted the old rules, written and

practiced largely by men mentoring men (as cited in Dahle, 1998). Otte called it "'wo-

mentoring'—a new approach that's more about commitment and learning than about

chemistry and power" (as cited in Dahle, 1998, n.p.). Women have

> found they aren't welcome in the old boys' club of mentoring. They can't rely on
> men to pick female protégés [nor can they] depend on being able to socialize in
> the old style—on the golf course or over a cigar—to form personal bonds. So
> women have changed the rules. They've invented formal practices where none
> existed before, making mentoring more organized and focused. (Dahle, 1998,
> para. 6)

The wo-mentoring fundamentals are as follows:

- Old Rule: Mentors and protégés should have a lot in common.
  New Rule: The best matches are mismatches. . . .
- Old Rule: Look for your mentor higher-up on the food chain.
  New Rule: A good mentor is anyone you can learn from. . . .
- Old Rule: Mentoring is one-on-one.
  New Rule: Mentoring works best when you mix and match. . . .
- Old Rule: Mentors pick their protégés.
  New Rule: Protégés pick their mentors. . . .
- Old Rule: You're a mentor or a mentee.
  New Rule: Everyone needs mentors. (Dahle, 1998, para. 9, 14, 20, 26, 32)

At LACMTA there is no formal or informal mentoring. However, there is a

strong professional network outside of the organization available for those women

choosing to participate. There are a number of professional organizations, such as the

Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) and the Los Angeles Women's Transportation

Coalition (LAWTC). WTS was founded in 1977 and is an international organization

dedicated to the professional advancement of women in transportation. It has roughly

4,500 members. According to the organization's website, "WTS is helping women find

opportunity and recognition in the transportation industry. Through its professional

activities, networking opportunities, and unparalleled access to industry and government

leaders, WTS is [helping turn] the glass ceiling into a career portal" (WTS, n.d., para. 1).

Its mission is "advancing both the transportation industry and the professional women

who are a growing part of it" (WTS, n.d., para. 2). LAWTC is a nonprofit, multiethnic

association that was established in 1993 (WTS-LA, n.d.). LAWTC's goal is to improve

the visibility and influence of Southern California-area women's transportation-related

businesses and women in the transportation industry through coalition building and

legislative advocacy activities. LAWTC is a strong voice advocating on behalf of women

in the transportation industry. In addition, LAWTC sponsors lunches and events

featuring leaders and decision makers who are either directly involved in or influence the

transportation industry (WTS-LA, n.d.).

These two professional organizations are examples of how women are not only

participating in professional organizations but are creating their own. Additionally, other

large professional organizations, such the American Public Transportation Association

(APTA), have chapters designated for women's issues and concerns. Having women

participate in networking opportunities and mentoring can only be a positive step toward

women's advancement. Women must take action to put themselves at the decision-making table and make their voices heard. History has shown that the gains women have achieved were brought about directly by the actions and momentum of women themselves.

Representative Bureaucracy

Gender infuses organizational processes and shapes individuals' interpretations of behaviors and events (Kelly et al., 1991). As such, it is important to remember that policy implementation is conducted by gendered instruments: women and men. The structure of the workplace militates against women having opportunities equal to those of men. However, these structures are not immutable, therefore making it possible to accommodate the needs of the changing workforce and to revisit the ideals of a representative bureaucracy. Representative bureaucracy suggests that government agencies serving a diverse community increase their sense of legitimacy when the workforce is a demographic reflection of their constituency at large. Stated simply, one might argue that representative bureaucracies are those that share preferences with the public and take actions to translate these preferences into policy decisions. When women are underrepresented across occupational categories in the public sector, representative bureaucracy is diminished (Sneed, 2007).

In the representative bureaucracy literature, scholars sought to determine whether passive representation—the idea that officials serving in government agencies demographically represent society at large—translates into active representation—the

notion that bureaucrats make decisions or adopt policies that specifically benefit their counterparts within the agency's clientele group (Keiser, Wilkins, Meier, & Holland, 2002). Mosher (1968) made a distinction between passive and active representation. Passive representation occurs when the bureaucracy possesses the same demographic characteristics as the people it serves. Active representation occurs when bureaucrats with certain characteristics implement policies and programs and make decisions that benefit specific demographic groups with the same characteristics (Mosher, 1968).

Using data from an educational context, evidence confirms that passive representation in the public workforce leads to active representation in policy results, implying that as gender equality becomes more prevalent in public service, one may expect different policy outcomes (Keiser et al., 2002). The research empirically linking gender representation to policy output also supported the long-standing call by feminist policy scholars such as Hawkesworth (1994), who defined the purpose of feminist scholarship to be to reshape dominant paradigms to give greater priority to women's needs and concerns. The structure of an organization directly influences how management reproduces itself.

Kanter (1977) introduced the concept of homosocial reproduction to explain how management reproduces itself with the same population of existing management. She maintained that the higher a position is in the hierarchy, the less prescribed and defined the role. There is no set standard for the position, thus much of the decision making is left to the discretion of the manager. In such an uncertain atmosphere, the issue of trust is critical. Decision makers hold more trust and confidence in those who share similar

social characteristics, so these are the people promoted to the highest levels of the

hierarchy (Kanter, 1977; Padavic & Reskin, 2002). The belief is that those people

sharing similar social characteristics will make the same decisions and promote the same

agenda. Kanter (1977) further pointed to ease of communication as another facet of

homosocial reproduction. It seems that decision makers believe that communication at

such a critical level is less troublesome when dealing primarily with members sharing

similar social characteristics (Kanter, 1977; Padavic & Reskin, 2002). In this scenario,

White males dominate management since they are historically at the top of the

organizational structure. Thus, it is precisely this population that continues reproducing

itself, thereby directly influencing workplace mobility for women within the

organization. In order to change this cycle, women must be represented at the highest

levels of the organization.

According to some organizational theorists, the structure and behavior of

organizations are determined to a substantial extent by the characteristics of the policies

they administer. Lowi (1964) argued that public agencies differ greatly in their core

characteristics since they exist to serve a wide range of constituencies and often seek to

enhance the well-being and/or status of the groups they serve. Later, Lowi (1985)

developed a typology of public agencies grouped by policy type. Lowi's framework rests

on the assumption that organizational consequences flow from the peculiarities of the

organization, its mission, and the clients served. Lowi based his framework and typology

of agencies on four primary categories of agencies: regulatory, distributive, redistributive,

and constituent. Kelly and Newman (2001) utilized Lowi's typology to examine whether

policy/agency type affects the relationship between passive representation and active representation in an effort to advance understanding of the dynamics of social change toward a more diverse workforce in the public service of state governments. They found that individuals interact with existing structures to either promote or impede social change and that agency type does lead to differences in the potential for female employees to be substantive representatives of other women in the population. "Critical mass," along with a supportive ideological structure of beliefs among the men in the agency, appears to contribute to women's greater penetration into an agency. For women administrators working in agencies where the greatest discrimination remains, namely distributive and regulatory agencies, there exists a higher level of support for inclusive policies and practices (Kelly & Newman, 2001). As examined in the Occupational Segregation section, distributive and redistributive agencies can be viewed as gendered bureaucracies. To the extent that different agency clienteles are gendered, distributive agencies will perpetuate existing genderized patronage. Women are still underrepresented in distributive occupations and highly represented in redistributive occupations, although it is important to note that underrepresentation of women in high-level positions continues in both.

Positions that enable a more direct impact on policy are at the upper levels of bureaucracy, so proponents of representative bureaucracy favor a more integrated workforce. The makeup of the governmental workforce is indicative of equal access and opportunity (Riccucci & Saidel, 1997). Without occupational integration of women, the benefits of representative bureaucracy cannot be achieved. Concern for the

representation and advancement of women should direct the design and implementation

of programs toward increasing the number of women into more desirable and better

paying jobs (Sneed, 2007). This is of fundamental importance toward career

advancement opportunities into executive-level positions. Considering that men and

women have differential effects on the internal operations of bureaucracies, the presence

of women is likely to shape the impact of the agency on the constituency it serves.

Previous research suggests that women in high-level administrative positions may change

the direction of policy outputs (Beck, 1991; Thomas, 1994; Tolleson-Rinehart, 1991).

For instance, Beck (1991) found that women have different attitudes toward childcare

and zoning. They are also more likely than men to specialize in the area of social

concerns and to place a high priority on healthcare issues (Carroll et al., 1991).

Many scholars maintain that if workforce representation is to achieve the broader

goal of policy representation, demographic changes in an organization's workforce

should then lead to changes in organizational missions and outputs (Naff, 1995; Selden,

1997). The latter statement is the connection of the representative bureaucracy

component to the argument regarding the requirement of fundamental changes to an

organization's structure and mission for eradication of glass-ceiling barriers.

Organizational researchers have noted that changes in power structures, organizational

structures, and preferred decisional processes are likely to be reflected in an

organization's mission and policies (Kelly & Duerst-Lahti, 1995). Therefore, change in

traditional bureaucratic structures is required for organizational change.

Collaboration

A significant change is taking place in administration. Traditional organizational structures, which are hierarchical in nature and have been historically dominated by men, are being challenged in response to the multitude of societal changes that are making collaborative management an integral part of organizational development and an institution's success. Collaborative management is a concept that describes the process of facilitating and operating in multiorganizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot be solved by single organizations. Collaboration is a purposive relationship designed to solve a problem by creating or discovering a solution within a given set of constraints (Schrage, 1995). Collaborative management can involve developing policy, planning and carrying out projects, or managing finances.

With the globalization of the economy and its requirement for multiskilled professionals, the demand for a knowledge workforce is increasing. The presence and the acquisition of a knowledge workforce in any organization is a critical factor for its success. Another important parameter that will determine the success of an organization is the use of computer-based tools supporting collaborative work environments. The computer-supported collaborative work environments are in response to the growing interest in the design, implementation, and use of technical systems (including computing as well as information and communication technologies [ICTs]) that support people working cooperatively (Park & Kim, 2009). Acknowledging the undeniable reality of collaborative work environments is a necessary step in preparing for efficient organizational success and management in this new workplace environment.

In *Collaborative Public Management: New Strategies for Local Governments*, Agranoff and McGuire (2003) examined the issue of collaboration in public management by focusing on local economic development efforts. They did not argue that collaboration is more efficient or more effective than other forms of public management but rather that it is becoming the dominant activity of public management. They utilized empirical data and case study information to help support and explain their propositions (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003). These kinds of frameworks and definitions are also important because they begin to establish a language and a structure by which the range of activities that encompass collaboration can begin to be categorized and examined. Collaboration to a certain extent operates outside of and offers a certain level of independence from strict hierarchical structures that can bury managers under layers of chain-of-command structures that reduce visibility, thereby contributing to barriers that limit women's opportunities for recognition and potential advancement. Additionally, these collaborative relationships often require specific skill sets, such as excellent interpersonal skills, negotiating skills, consensus building, coordinative project leadership, and the like, which some have argued are skill sets best suited for women (Rosener, 1990; Rosin, 2010).

Collaboration creates more circular relationships that offer greater visibility and leadership opportunities for women in traditional hierarchies both within organizations and between organizations that are required to collaborate and coordinate for the purposes of accomplishing goals, objectives, and mandates. Using Agranoff and McGuire's (2003) model, in transportation agencies, vertical relationships involve federal

and state agencies, and horizontal relationships deal with regional and local collaborative efforts. Such examples include ad hoc committees, special boards, citizen participation groups, task forces, community liaisons, and public–private partnerships. These collaborative relationships are important since they often place the employee in a position where decision-making opportunities are greater since the employee is the official departmental or organizational representative. These relationships may increase a woman's value to the organization because in essence she is the subject-matter expert with a specific knowledge-based skill set; they provide more opportunities for women to be visible both within and outside of the organization. This augmented visibility helps promote networking opportunities and helps establish connections with others that may increase women's career advancement opportunities.

Transportation systems have historically been developed independently from one another. This is true at the federal, state, regional, and local levels. Goals and objectives have tended to remain separate, and little attention has been given to the now common collaboration and coordination operational necessities among agencies. The need for fundamental change has been largely driven by factors that have impacted society, such as the arrival of the information age, threats to national security (which have catapulted emergency management coordination and collaboration), increased congestion, a general decrease in available resources, and an increase in public demands through citizen participation for responsiveness, improvement, and accountability. A great deal of the current efforts for coordination and collaboration among transportation entities arose from the problems associated with the urgency to satisfy changing societal needs and to

increase the relevance of transit services. Other motivating factors include citizen demands, increased public value, increased ridership, increased resources, and legislative mandates. These factors, among others, have become driving forces of a shift toward greater coordination and collaboration among transit operators (Ugboro, Obeng, & Talley, 2000).

In the provision of transportation services, intergovernmental collaboration among federal, state, regional, and local entities is needed with the common goal of serving the traveling public. The traveling public, the customer of separate transit agencies, is the ultimate link that brings transit agencies and various levels of government together in a collaborative effort to improve existing transportation systems. The safe, reliable, and secure operation of transportation services across the nation depends on collaboration and coordination across traditional jurisdictional and organizational boundaries. After the events of September 11, 2001, and due to the nation's changing societal and economic factors, coordination and collaboration among transportation agencies and their cohorts is more important and relevant than ever. A shift is occurring in public administration as a result of changing society and needs. Collaboration is not just a passing trend or an alternative theory for organizational structure; it is impossible to ignore that the traditional hierarchical structure of institutions can no longer function as a monolith to the status quo.

Collaboration efforts are most apparent in metropolitan regions where numerous jurisdictions, agencies, and service providers are responsible for safely and efficiently operating the various components of the transportation system, as is the case with the

LACMTA and its formal and informal partners. Many of these operations activities in metropolitan regions must cross agency and jurisdictional boundaries in order to be effective. Some examples include the application of local, regional, state, and federal mandates; traveler information services; municipal bus operations; emergency management; the building of rail systems; and so forth. All of the aforementioned activities depend on collaboration, coordination, and integration to be successful and ultimately benefit those who use or depend on the regional transportation system.

A significant motivator for collaborative efforts among transit properties is increased ridership. Although recently transit ridership has increased marginally in some regions because of population growth, the growth apportioned to single-occupancy vehicle trips far exceeds that of transit passenger trips (Miller & Lam, 2003). Increased ridership not only provides additional revenue but also aids the alleviation of congestion on roads and highways. Cost savings are also an important motivator for collaboration. With increasingly limited financial and human resources due to factors such as limited funding or downsizing, collaboration allows transit properties to pool their resources for maximized benefit (Ugboro et al., 2000). Citizen demands for better service, accountability, and responsibility have been a contributing factor in collaborative efforts in transportation. The current fragmented condition of transit operations often confuses the public, who lack a complete understanding of the organizational structure and division of responsibilities among different agencies. This fragmentation may lead to the perception that these agencies are limited in responsiveness and accountability to the changing needs of the public (Miller & Lam, 2003).

In transportation, the strongest motivation for collaboration and coordination is the requirement to comply with enacted legislation and mandates. Complying with legislative mandates has its challenges. Restrictive funding mechanisms that dictate the allocation of federal, state, or local funds often impede the ability of transit agencies to coordinate among each other. For instance, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) historically do not have any direct authority over how federal funds are allocated for transportation investments since the federal government directly apportions the funds to local transit agencies or municipalities that operate transportation services in their regions (Goldman & Deakin, 2000). Collaboration and coordination among transportation entities are often hindered by various institutional barriers that are deeply rooted in existing individual organizational frameworks of transit agencies that govern the interaction among them. Some of the barriers include resistance to change, lack of common vision among interdependent agencies, political and power issues related to restructuring, funding restrictions, and the lack of planning and technical skills of agencies. This is compounded by what Kanter (1989) called "alliance vulnerabilities." These vulnerabilities include strategic shifts that occur when there are changes in the strategic thrust or priority of member organizations because of a change in either top-level leadership or core business interest, uneven levels of resource commitment and a resulting power imbalance, imbalance of benefits, and conflicting loyalties.

Resistance to fundamental change may also come from attitudes of both employees and management personnel who are satisfied with the status quo format of transit operations. To overcome this barrier, the key element to increase coordination

among transit operators is the role of leadership from both local-level operators and regional-level MPOs (Ugboro et al., 2000). Due to the largely uncoordinated nature of transportation operations and the complex political arena that comprises transit operators, government agencies, and policymaking and regulatory agencies, services and responsibility for funding, operating, regulating, and the like are often overlapping and fragmented. This complex fragmentation creates a critical barrier against coordination and public responsiveness (Miller & Lam, 2003). Contradictory goals, agendas, policies, and regulations can limit an agency's ability to reduce costs and increase revenue while improving service from the perspective of the transit rider. The politics of power and institutionalism cannot be underestimated. Redistribution of power, authority, and control over resources among transit operators and other transportation authorities can be delicate to say the least. The issues of who benefits more, who has more decision-making power, and who bears most of the costs could easily lead to the dissolution of any efforts to coordinate. Given the historical background of the U.S. political system, each local agency has retained much of its autonomy and has become more resistant to top-down decisions that interfere with its local decision-making power. Therefore, it is generally more politically feasible to have an organizational structure that supports local autonomy than one that allows a leader organization to dictate to local agencies (Miller & Lam, 2003).

In the first of its kind, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT, 2002) published a primer related to regional transportation and collaboration for transit professionals at all levels of government responsible for day-to-day management and

operations within a metropolitan region. This primer provides a framework and associated steps for successfully moving from theory to practice. The framework consists of five elements: structure, process, products, resources, and performance. The regional *structure* that supports collaboration and coordination is the set of relationships, institutions, and policy arrangements that shape the activity. The *processes* are the formal and informal activities conducted in accordance with written or unwritten but collaboratively developed and accepted regional policies. The *products* are the results of these processes. *Resources* govern what is available within the region and include staff, equipment, and dollars. *Performance* comprises how performance will be measured, as well as individual and collective responsibilities for monitoring and improving regional transportation performance. Together, these elements help a region begin and/or evolve toward continuous collaboration and cooperation region-wide (DOT, 2002).

Potential coordinating frameworks and categories involving collaboration can be grouped by formal and informal collaboration (Miller & Lam, 2003). Formal collaboration can involve legal arrangements or agreements such as memorandums of understanding (MOUs), dedicated resources, the creation of new organizations, or mandated legislative requirements such as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and its successor, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Informal collaborative efforts often involve ad hoc and networking arrangements. According to Miller and Lam (2003), informal collaboration may better serve the interests of the parties involved since it sidesteps many of the barriers that formal structures may yield, such as technical or political impediments. However, since

there are no guidelines or rules prohibiting the use of both formal and informal

mechanisms, it is safe to argue that many regions operate on a continuum of both. A

study conducted by Ugboro et al. (2000), in conjunction with the North Carolina A&T

State University, identified three types of collaboration in urban transit systems:

consolidation/merger, alliance, and contracting. Consolidation is an arrangement

whereby agencies combine under one management, and the merging agencies lose their

individual identities. Alliance, on the other hand, is an agreement that combines services

while the individual firms retain their identities; alliance is a hybrid of formal and

informal structures. Finally, contracting involves a firm hiring another firm to provide

services along a route or to perform such tasks as equipment and facility maintenance

(Ugboro et al., 2000). The survey results confirmed that collaboration and coordination

are being practiced in transit systems.

Though collaborative and cooperative management is necessary, the application

of collaborative management is disjointed due to various factors such as fragmentation,

funding restrictions, institutional incompatibilities, lack of leadership, and lack of

direction or knowledge on how to begin or set up a collaborative process (Miller & Lam,

2003). Due to these factors, the collaboration that takes place in transportation is

different at every level and in every region across the country. Transit agencies are

engaging in collaborative processes because they must in order to be successful. The

impetus may often be the need for resolution to a regional problem, a mandate, or

funding and resource limitations (Berman et al., 2004). However, with the advent of

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), collaboration among agencies is becoming

increasingly commonplace. The aforementioned begins to form a framework for others to follow. ITS provides seamless information services and communication networks for transportation services and emergency services. This enables better operations and improves system performance (Figueiredo, Jesus, Machado, Ferreira, & Martins de Carvalho, 2001). ITS can also help in eliminating institutional barriers because it can be seen as a medium through which transit agencies can coordinate with other agencies to reap the benefits of implementing ITS on a regional basis (Miller & Lam, 2003).

Another example is the collaboration that takes place among transit agencies to deliver and operate Smart Card technology. Smart Card technology is often referred to as a universal fare system (UFS). The Smart Card, containing a microchip or an embedded integrated circuit, can be used on different modes of public transportation and also within the same mode, such as buses operated by different agencies in a region. Through this collaborative effort, greater efficiency and effectiveness of the network is achieved for both the transit agency and the transit rider. The LACMTA is committed to the implementation of the technology across the Los Angeles region. This is significant because Los Angeles County is one of the most populous counties in the nation, with more than 9 million people living in 88 cities. There are 18 municipal bus operators in the region, and 16 of them are funded by the LACMTA. In February 2002, the LACMTA Board awarded an $84 million contract to manufacture and implement automated fare collection equipment for a UFS across all transit operators in the county. With this Smart Card, passengers will be able to access all transit systems, including the Metrolink commuter rail (LACMTA, 2002). Another timely illustration of a local

undertaking that requires collaboration and coordination for the betterment of the

transportation infrastructure and the citizenry in Los Angeles is Measure R, a recent

initiative passed in November 2008. Measure R was approved by a two-thirds majority

of the voting public, "committing a projected $40 billion to traffic relief and

transportation upgrades throughout the county over the next 30 years" (LACMTA, 2013,

para. 2).

Collaborative efforts among transportation agencies will inevitably increase

public value (Moore, 1995). Not only are resources maximized, but development and

implementation of programs to improve transit lead to tangible improvements for both

the agency and the rider. Collaboration among transportation and government agencies is

evolving. It is clear that agencies' involvement in collaborative activities varies across

agencies and is influenced by various factors. The literature on the subject suggests that

in order for collaborative efforts to be successful, it is important that collaborating

agencies share a vision, mission, and strategic objectives. Otherwise, conflicting

organizational priorities will thwart the process (Miller & Lam, 2003; Ugboro et al.,

2000; DOT, 2002). Additionally, collaborative arrangements need to equally benefit all

parties involved so that each agency has a personal stake in the arrangement. This will

engage the organization and serve as a motivating factor to make the collaborative effort

a success.

A shift from traditional management practices to collaborative and cooperative

management involves change at fundamental levels. These changes impact the

historically hierarchical and independent nature of institutions, including transportation

entities. A shift from a hierarchical structure to a more collaborative structure relies

much more on the workforce and the representation it provides on behalf of the agency.

This change allows and requires interaction at all levels and across agency lines, which

offers exposure for women, who have been historically buried within the hierarchical

structure. Change in any form can be perceived as a threat, so communication among

agencies, their leaders, administrators, and employees is extremely important.

Collaboration and coordination may be about organizations and their increased

efficiency, value, and effectiveness, but it is important to remember that individuals are

what drive and lead those collaborative efforts. Attention to human capital is a necessary

component to the success of an agency's collaboration and coordination efforts.

Citizen Participation

Citizen participation is another substantial motivator for collaboration in

transportation since today's citizens mobilize and are a force that contributes to the

outcome of policy. An example is the LACMTA's Citizens Advisory Council (CAC).

According to the LACMTA (2010),

> On May 19, 1992 the governor signed AB 152 (Katz) into law. This act merged the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission and the Southern California Rapid Transit District and created the [LACMTA].
> As part of AB 152, the [LACMTA] was to establish a Citizens' Advisory Council whose "membership shall reflect a broad spectrum of interest and all geographic areas of the County." (para. 1-2)

The purpose of the CAC is to "consult, obtain and collect public input on matters of

interest and concern to the community and [to] communicate the CAC's

recommendations with respect to such issues to [LACMTA]" (LACMTA, 2010, para. 3).

The CAC was designed to "reflect a broad spectrum of interest [including] all geographic

areas of the County" (LACMTA, 2010, para. 2). It is made up of members of the public

who are interested in improving transit. The LACMTA Board of Directors makes

appointments to the CAC. The Transportation Business Advisory Council (TBAC) is

another example of a group made up of members of the small business community

actively involved in all aspects of LACMTA's contracting opportunities as they relate to

disadvantaged and small business enterprises.

A striking illustration of how citizen participation shapes and contributes to the

outcomes of regional transportation planning and operations is the Bus Riders Union

(BRU), a formidable grassroots effort led by members of the transit riding/transit

dependent population of Los Angeles County. According to the Labor/Community

Strategy Center (n.d.),

> Recognized nationally for its historic civil rights Consent Decree and signature
> creative tactics, the [BRU] is a multiracial [force] of 200 active members, 3,000
> dues-paying members, and 50,000 supporters on the buses of L.A. The BRU . . .
> [is] the country's largest grassroots mass transit advocacy organization . . . [and it]
> carries out a wide, multi-issue progressive agenda based in comprehensive
> principles of unity and strong membership agreement. . . .
>
> The BRU . . . was initiated in 1992 as the [Labor/Community] Strategy
> Center's Transportation Policy Group and soon began organizing bus riders in the
> "Billions for Buses" campaign to [challenge what they saw as] transit racism
> reflected in the policies of the [LACMTA]. In 1994, the BRU led popular
> protests against a massive fare hike and obtained a temporary restraining order to
> stop the MTA in its tracks. The BRU then sued the MTA for violating the civil
> rights of transit dependent bus riders. . . .
>
> When the MTA signed the civil rights Consent Decree in late 1996, the
> BRU took up a formidable obligation—to represent the civil rights of 400,000
> daily bus riders in Los Angeles County—88% of whom are people of color, more
> than 50% of whom have annual family incomes under $12,000 and 57% of whom
> are women. (para. 1, 3, 5)

Women represent the highest percentage of the transit-dependent public (Labor/Community Strategy Center, n.d.). By fighting for the rights of all minorities, the BRU has been a successful advocate in ensuring that mobility, which is critical to progress and employment, is available to all. Among the BRU success stories was ensuring that "$2.5 billion [was] redistributed to bus riders through Federal Civil Rights Consent Decree, 1996-2006"; stopping a "fare increase for 9 years"; saving the "Monthly Bus Pass from elimination"; increasing annual bus service hours to 1 million, which helped raise bus ridership by 12%; and eliminating the student pass application process, which increased its use by a remarkable 64% (Labor/Community Strategy Center, n.d., Quick Facts section). Though the BRU is a strong example of how citizen participation can impact change, it is also relevant to the research that part of the transit-dependent population includes female students utilizing public transit to arrive at institutions of higher learning. If women are to enter the professional realm, education is a necessary component in advancement.

Summary

All of the societal and organizational changes discussed are positive steps toward eventual but clearly gradual achievement of parity in the workplace on all levels. With the continued progression of organizations in response to a changing workforce and workplace, it is expected that facilitation of women's career advancement opportunities at the executive level will improve. Research has shown that public administrators in high-level positions are policy setters, make policy decisions, set standards to guide the actions

of subordinates, and interact with numerous external institutions, officials, and groups

(Elling, 1992). These positions are highly visible. Women must be in these positions to

effectuate change. The tides of change have settled in public administration, and this is

an opportunity that must be seized by women. If the traditional organizational structures

have been fundamental barriers to women's advancement into leadership positions,

positions of power and decision making, then the shifts occurring in public administration

today are new opportunities. Public administration's traditional structure and lingering

gender stereotypes appear to be the last frontier to conquer.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Women in the public sector have historically been underrepresented in top management and leadership positions due to traditional institutional and social structures that have created obstacles in career advancement for women. Currently, public institutions are quickly evolving into organizations relying heavily on interagency coordination, collaborative relationships with other agencies, and an increasingly knowledge-based workforce to fulfill the respective agency's mission. These unprecedented changes in organizational structure create new opportunities for women to gain exposure, build relationships, network, find mentors, and form alliances, all of which may assist in breaking through the glass ceiling.

The purpose of this study was to examine the progression and perception of the glass ceiling at present, against the backdrop of decades of changing social developments, including changing demographics, economies, and technological advancements; legislative mandates; organizational structures with a more humanistic approach to human capital; a shift toward collaborative intra- and interagency organizational management; and an unprecedented active citizenry. All the factors mentioned might well be contributors to greater advancement opportunities for women because they offer protections and tools that may aid women in attaining promotional opportunities.

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Since the study explored the changing social, economic, and institutional landscapes that are shaping U.S. organizational structures and how those changes are affecting women's career advancement, three theories were utilized in support of the study: organizational humanistic theory, feminist theory, and collaborative theory. These theories were relevant to the research questions, and the researcher proposes that a combination of the aforementioned theories forms a new theoretical perspective, the Licea feminist collaborative theory, which moves toward a best practices theoretical approach that, in the current state of public administration, may be most conducive and beneficial for women's career advancement into executive leadership positions.

The changes in organizational structure and approach include a flattening of hierarchy and chain-of-command structures, decentralization, participatory decision-making structures, and the diffusion of authority throughout the organization. These changes have led to the development of a circular method of organization that is collaborative in contrast to the traditional pyramid structure. Moreover, in a collaborative organization, networks develop rather than chains of command. The following figures depict the change from a traditional pyramid structure to an inverted pyramid, shifting the focus to employees (Figure 18); the more circular collaborative structure in practice today, involving multiple players with the agency in the center (Figure 19); and the representation illustrating how employees keep the cycle moving (Figure 20).
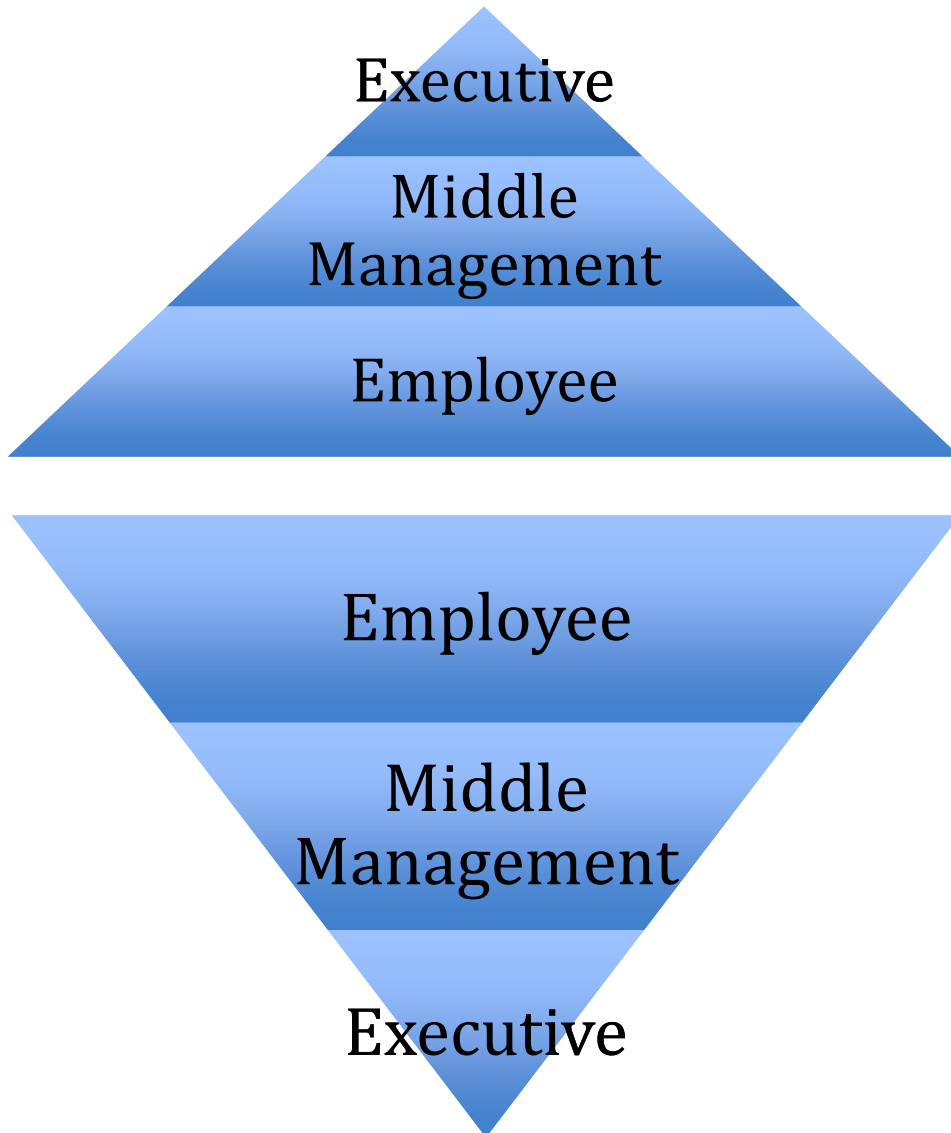
Figure 18. Shift of hierarchical structure.

Organizational Theory

Organizational theory attempts to explain the workings of organizations to produce an understanding and appreciation of organizations. Organizational theory draws from various bodies of knowledge and disciplines. Some types of organizational
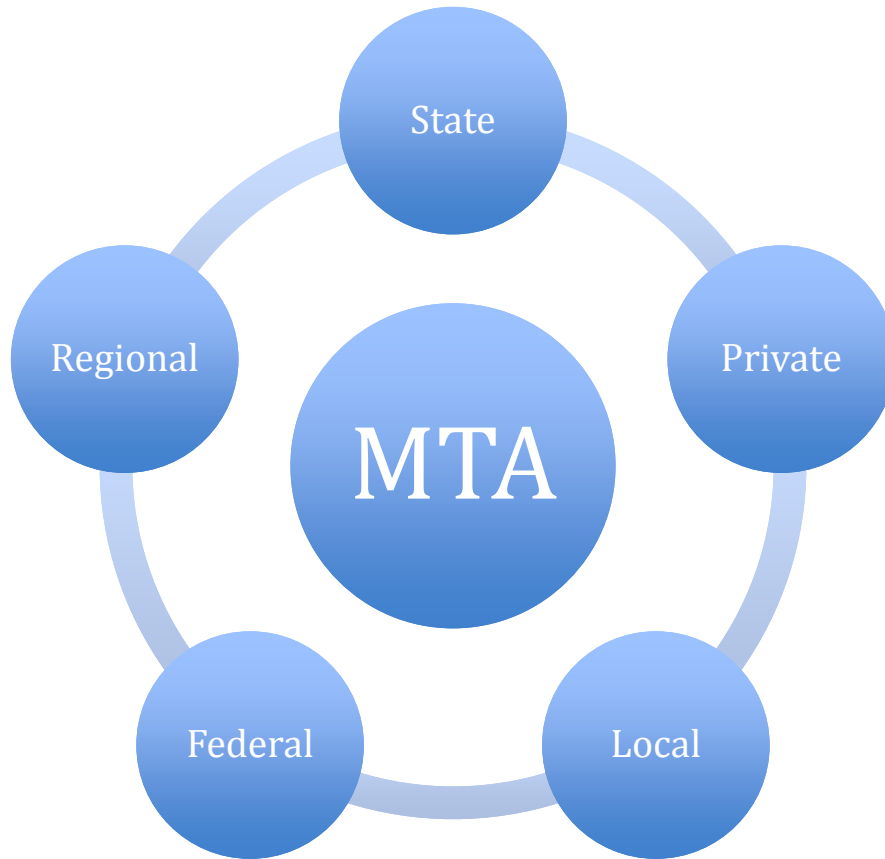
Figure 19. Circular partners.

theories include classical, neoclassical, contingency, systems, and organizational

structure. These variations on organizational theory draw from multiple perspectives,

including modern and postmodern views. Neoclassical organizational theory seemed

most appropriate to the study since it is a reaction to the authoritarian structure of

classical theory, and the neoclassical approach emphasizes the human needs of

employees to be happy in the workplace. This allows creativity, individual growth, and

motivation, which increases productivity and profits. Managers utilizing the neoclassical

approach manipulate the work environment to produce positive results (Ott, 1989).
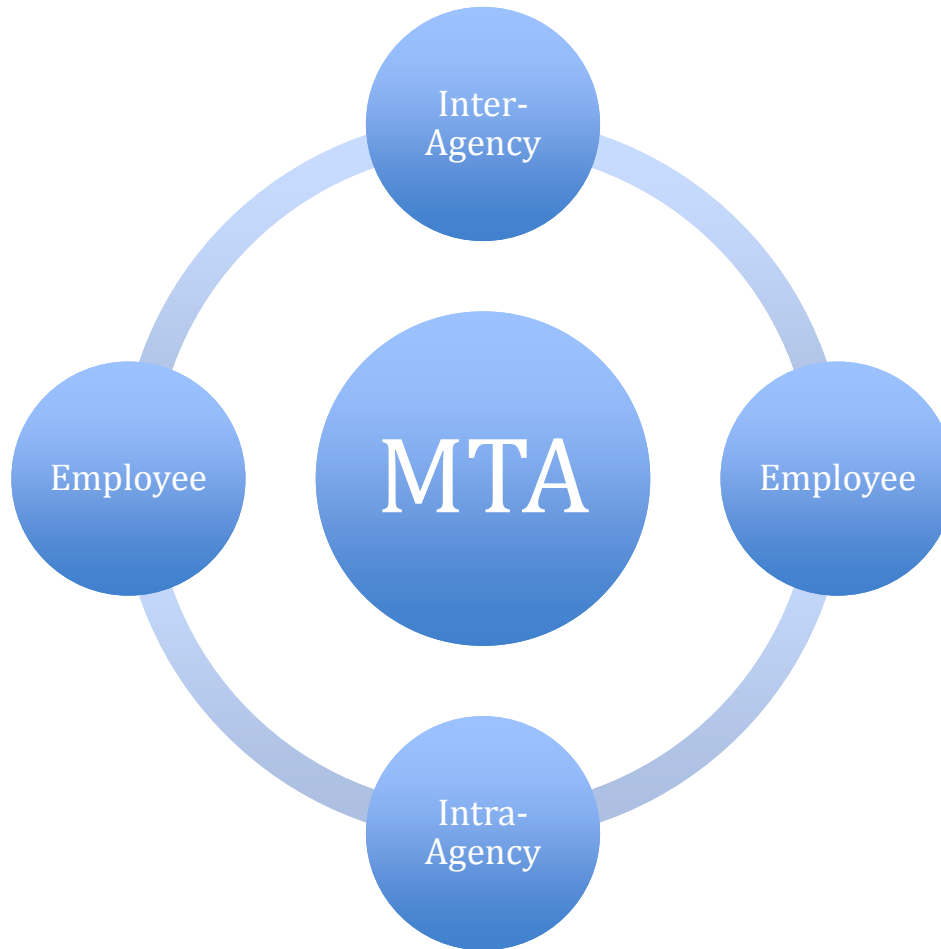
Figure 20. Employees power the cycle.

Many scholars are important to neoclassical organizational theory. Though their respective connections with and relevance to organizational theory vary, theorists such as Follett, Maslow, Denhardt, Argyris, Mayo, and Golembiewski are among the most prominent humanists (Aktouf, 1992). Humanism was especially suited for this study since humanists embrace a dynamic concept of employee and management techniques. This requires a theoretical shift away from the classical idea that an employee is a cog in the industrial machine. Instead, employees are unique individuals with goals, needs,

desires, and so forth. For example, Abraham Maslow theorized that there is a hierarchy

of human needs, each level of which must be fulfilled before an individual can effectively

ascend to the next level (as cited in Maslow, Frager, & Fadiman, 1970). The five

categories of needs are, in hierarchical order, physiological needs, safety needs, love and

belonging needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Robert Golembiewski

(1988), in *Men Management and Morality*, argued for what has come to be known as

moral management, or a *moral sensitivity* associated with satisfactory work output and

employee satisfaction. Mary Parker Follett claimed that conflict is neither good nor bad;

it is simply inevitable (as cited in Fry, 1989). Elton Mayo (2003) taught that humans are

social beings whose individualism is defined in part by participation in the group. Chris

Argyris (1957) argued that organizational structures and traditional management

practices that are formal tend to be at odds with certain basic trends toward an

individual's growth and development. Argyris contended that executives must fuse basic

human tendencies for growth and development with the demands of the organization's

tasks.

Traditional theories have favored control rather than humanistic organizational

structures. However, today's public administration is interconnected and interdependent,

making it necessary to develop a new leadership style. The assumption has been that in

order to be successful in bureaucratic organizations, women have had to adopt the

masculine leadership style, which is dysfunctional in the interconnected world of today

(Edlund, 1992). Edlund (1992) argued that in today's interconnected institutions, a

feminine leadership style, which incorporates traits usually attributed to women, is better

suited for management and problem solving. Feminine leadership does not replace the traditional model but coexists with it. It advances the understanding of reality because it questions rather than just describes traditional public administration theory. Edlund postulated that as more women enter leadership roles, feminine traits will be legitimized. Integrating those traits into managerial behavior is important because those qualities recognize human differences while retaining similarities. Edlund argued that incorporating humanistic values into organizational structures benefits all and, in the end, will lead to a more human, healthy, and satisfying work environment. When the workplace is humanized, organizations are more effective and satisfying. Furthermore, a feminine leadership style is arguably by nature more humanistic, which can soften the work environment and strengthen personal power. The effect of this approach is freedom—allowing people to be themselves. Women and men do not have to repress the feminine to be successful, nor do men and women have to rely solely on masculine traits to be successful.

Feminist Theory

Feminism in general is essentially an organized movement that promotes equality for men and women in political, economic, and social spheres. Feminists believe that women are oppressed simply due to their sex, based on the dominant ideology of patriarchy, and that by ridding society of patriarchy the result will lead to liberation for women. Feminist ideology can take many different forms. In the 1970s, women started developing a theory that helped to explain their oppression (Donovan, 2006). Pockets of

resistance began to organize and challenge patriarchy. By the 1980s, however, feminists

started disagreeing on particular issues linked to feminism. What was once one theory

began to branch out into many theories that focused on different feminist issues.

Feminist theory is devoted to the description and explanation of gender inequality in

society, as well as to recommendations for its elimination. It examines the concepts

central to the social construction of femininity and masculinity and analyzes the

dimensions of inequality that have shaped women historically and in diverse societies. In

addition, it examines the causes of women's subordination and the factors that contribute

to its perpetuation. This movement has encompassed many different and even

contradictory political viewpoints and interpretations of feminism, but the belief that

women should be equal to men is central to all. Although feminist theorists share similar

concerns, they do not necessarily share a common theoretical framework or epistemology

(Donovan, 2006).

Feminist scholars have long asserted that a feminist perspective is largely missing

from the discipline of public administration. They argue that a feminist perspective can

be applied not only to the discipline of public administration but also to the process of an

evolving government (Stivers, 2002). Feminist theory challenges the bureaucratic

method of organization as the one-way reality of administrative life and suggests that

administrative structures, principles, routines, standards, and ideals are neither permanent

nor irrevocable. Besides suggesting concrete changes in organizations, feminist theory

and values have been used as a means to critique public organizations and key concepts

in public administration. For example, Denhardt and Perkins (1976) predicted the demise

of "administrative man" and urged the adoption of an alternative model of organization based on the organizational values of the women's movement. They noted that until recently, contemporary theories of organization have been male centered and dominant (Denhardt & Perkins, 1976).

Feminist scholars have challenged the traditional bureaucratic government, but unfortunately, recognizing the feminist perspective in government is uncommon. Camilla Stivers (2002) asserted that feminist theory offers new theories of power, of virtue, of the nature of organization, and of leadership and professionalism, yet she noted that few, if any, of these ideas have infiltrated conversations in public administration. Women's issues, contributions, scholarship, and experiences have remained largely on the periphery, with discussion limited mainly to topics such as equal opportunity, affirmative action, comparable worth, and representation in public bureaucracies. These are important topics, especially since women are underrepresented in executive roles at all levels of government, receive lower pay, and experience less upward mobility in general.

Feminist theory asserts that women's influence in the workforce will result in significant changes in the workplace. Namely, organizational hierarchies will become less rigid; organizational climates will become more cooperative, less competitive, and less aggressive; and values of trust, openness, and acceptance will ultimately replace the quest for individual power (Guy, 1992a). Furthermore, as Beckwith (1986) stated, "Feminism, both as a political movement and as an ideology, addresses issues of unique importance to women, and the aim of the feminist movement has been to mobilize

women for political action" (p. 109). This is important and directly related to women's advancement because a general assumption is that as more females attain political offices, they will represent the interests of women as related to women's issues more adequately than men have (Carroll, 2000).

Some researchers have linked gender representation to policy output (Keiser et al., 2002) using data from an educational context to provide evidence that passive representation in the public workforce leads to active representation in policy results. This implies that as gender equality becomes more prevalent in public service, one may expect different policy outcomes. Research empirically linking gender representation to policy output also supported the long-standing call by feminist policy scholars such as Hawkesworth (1994), who defined the purpose of feminist scholarship to be to reshape dominant paradigms to give greater priority to women's needs and concerns, as well as to research methodologies that are neither gender biased nor gender blind. Feminist theory in essence puts forth the expectation that women in management and leadership positions will be instrumental in effectuating change by advocating and practicing management styles that place a high priority on participatory, nonhierarchical interactions between managers and employees.

There are various approaches/perspectives to feminist theory. In relation to this research, liberal feminism is the feminist theory that was utilized. The main view of liberal feminists, also known as enlightenment liberal feminism, is that all people are created equal by God and deserve equal rights (Donovan, 2006). These types of feminists believe that oppression exists because of the way in which men and women are

socialized, which supports patriarchy and keeps men in power positions. Liberal feminists believe that women have the same mental capacity as their male counterparts and should be given the same opportunities in political, economic, and social spheres. Women should have the right to choose, not have their life chosen for them because of their sex. Liberal feminists create and support acts of legislation that remove the barriers for women. These acts of legislation demand equal opportunities and rights for women, including equal access to jobs and equal pay. Liberal feminists believe that removing these barriers directly challenges the ideologies of patriarchy and liberates women. Essentially, women must be equal to men in all respects (Donovan, 2006).

Liberal feminist theory denies or dismisses the importance of sex-based differences (Donovan, 2006). Perceived sex differences, whether biological or social in origin, provide no valid ground for denying women the rights and privileges accorded to men. In making its case for gender equality, this approach relies on the liberal concepts of procedural justice, rights, and equality. It seeks to expose gender biases, challenge traditional sex roles, and implement institutional and legal reforms until women become fully equal to men. This approach is represented in public administration through discussions of affirmative action, comparable worth, women's representation in the bureaucracy, and barriers to promotion (Donovan, 2006).

Collaboration Theory

A significant change is taking place in administration. Traditional/classical organizational structures, which are hierarchical in nature and have been historically

dominated by men, are being challenged in response to the multitude of societal changes that are making collaborative management an integral part of organizational development and an institution's success. The fact that administrators must regularly operate across organizations as well as within hierarchies is becoming increasingly accepted as a component of contemporary management theory. Through partnerships, networks, alliances, committees, contractual relationships, councils, coalitions, consortia, and so forth, government institutions are connecting with other institutions, both public and private, to develop strategies and produce goods and services on behalf of their organizations.

This type of cross-boundary collaborative management is becoming commonplace since interdependence and the salience of information in the 21st century have resulted in an environment where organizational and sectoral boundaries are more conceptual than actual, and collaborative managerial responses are required to compliment, if not displace, bureaucratic processes (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Ansell & Gash, 2007). Today, governments and their public administrators operate in a complex intergovernmental and interorganizational environment. The classical, mainly intraorganizational hierarchical management approach that has guided public administration for more than a century is outdated for the cross-boundary intergovernmental/interorganizational challenges governments face today. Considering that the existence, if not requirement, of collaboration within government is indisputable and that collaborative management is in need of a knowledge-based equivalent to the organizational paradigm of traditional bureaucratic management, women have the

opportunity to participate in the development of a knowledge base for what is quickly becoming the future of public administration: collaborative management. Collaborative management is also recognized as collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash, 2007).

Collaborative management is a concept that describes the process of facilitating and operating in multiorganizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot be solved by single organizations. Collaboration is a purposive relationship designed to solve a problem by creating or discovering a solution within a given set of constraints (Schrage, 1995). Collaborative management can involve developing policy, planning and carrying out projects, or managing finances. It can be voluntary or mandated by city, state, or federal government. Collaboration can come in various forms, but it is inescapable in government. Public institutions would be ineffective in carrying out their missions and mandates without collaboration. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) is a prime example. In order to meet the transportation needs of the region, involvement, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration in general with other agencies are required. This includes the federal government, the state, local municipalities, law enforcement, private and nonprofit agencies, the citizenry, and so forth.

Collaborative management is a core function for today's public administrator. It is a natural consequence of the shift in the nature of work from labor-intense to knowledge-based production, with its emphasis on human capital. Public administrators must interact with multiple agencies, both public and private, on a regular basis. And, as is the case with LACMTA, this is often compounded by multiple differentiated efforts to

promote local interests. Kettl (2002) argued that the most important change in administrative functioning this past century is the increased interdependence between public organizations that has radically changed the jobs of public administrators, requiring them to not only manage the functions within their own institutions but to build critical linkages with other institutions as well. Agranoff and McGuire (2003) offered that collaboration is not something in addition to the job but has in many ways become a key element of the job itself. The complexity of the public administrator's job is clear when one considers the technicalities of public work (laws, planning, politics, budgets, etc.) along with the myriad of government and nongovernment organizations, instruments and programs, and cross-cutting concerns such as economic development that public administrators must tackle. Administrators must collaborate with multiple actors in many fields of government to build relationships and alliances and to lead regimes to do what the government alone cannot do. Like other forms of collaboration, regimes are informal, nonhierarchical, and not guided by a single authority. Agranoff and McGuire posited that the requirement for collaboration will only increase as the substantive policy areas within which administrators work become more interdependent and complex.

In describing collaborative management, Agranoff and McGuire (2003) suggested that it takes place within two contexts that overlap: vertical and horizontal collaboration. Vertical collaboration focuses on levels of government within the U.S. federal system, while horizontal collaboration deals more with interlocal resources held by area local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and private agencies. In this context, a public administrator may be involved in managing across governmental boundaries

(vertical collaboration) within the context of one project or program, while simultaneously managing across sectoral and organizational boundaries (horizontal collaboration) within the context of another project or program. The aforementioned further illustrates the new environment and complexities in which public administrators must function and succeed.

Collaborative public management is on the front lines of the transformation from the classical/traditional management concept of bureaucracy, with its emphasis on a pyramid of hierarchy and control, strict chains of command, and management that takes place within the confines of each institutional entity, to a postbureaucratic collaborative paradigm with an emphasis on decentralized structures more conducive to the cross-boundary requirements of today's governance. Through collaboration, each player brings and keeps his or her respective authority while jointly managing with others. The need to collaborate emerges from the interdependence among players, brought about by each player possessing different types and levels of resources and technologies needed to fulfill a task. Interdependence generates an increase in the frequency and intensity of communication among organizations, which then causes decisions to be made jointly and actions to be carried out collectively at varying levels. The greater the interdependency between players, both vertical and horizontal, the greater the need for collaboration and coordination (Alter & Hage, 1993). Another reason for an emphasis on collaboration is the growing prominence of knowledge as a factor in social and economic production, while land, labor, and capital are becoming secondary factors. Knowledge-related work is increasingly specialized, requiring workers to be multifaceted. In this new structure,

workers are required to identify the problems, find solutions, make decisions along the way, participate in strategic brokering, coordinate and negotiate, communicate effectively, and more.

Summary

Just as the bureaucratic organization was the prominent structure during the industrial age, the emerging information/knowledge age gives rise to less rigid, more permeable structures, where individuals are able to link across internal functions, organizational boundaries, and geographic boundaries. This major shift provides an unprecedented opportunity for women to participate in the public realm like never before, not just as participants but as contributors and decision makers toward the evolving collaborative nature of public administration. Organizational reform from a feminist perspective inclusive of women in decision making will support more humanistic collaborative organizational structures. The combination of a humanist, feminist, and collaborative theory, the Licea feminist collaborative theory (Figure 21) focuses on the best practices for women's career advancement into executive-level positions.
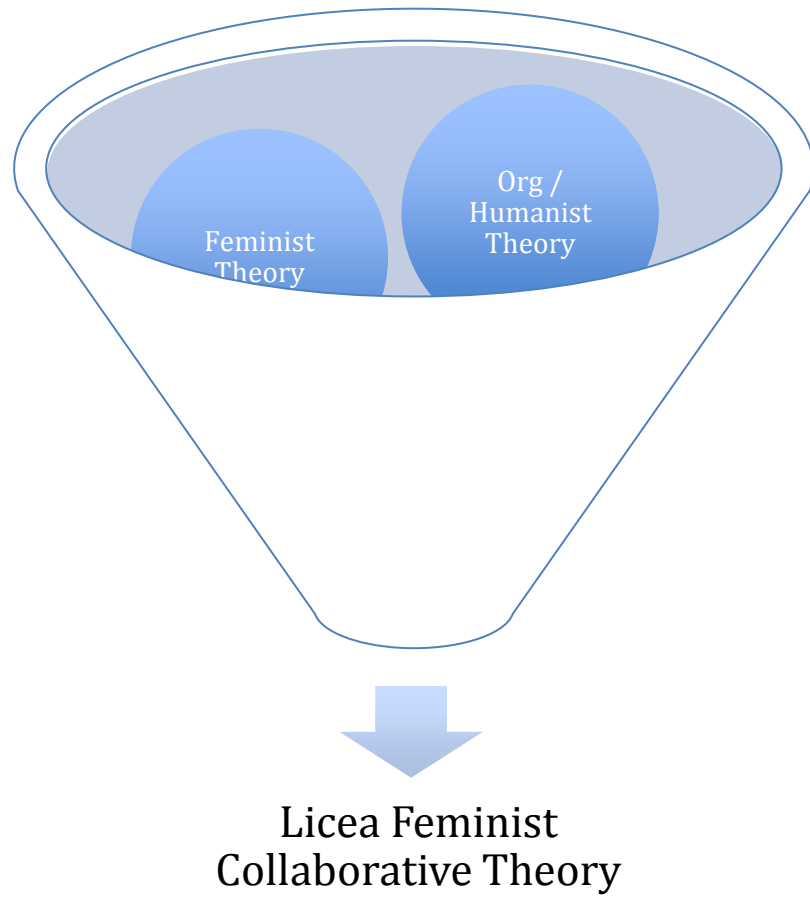
Figure 21. Licea feminist collaborative theory.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the progression and perception of the glass ceiling at present, against the backdrop of decades of changing social developments, including changing demographics, economies, and technological advancements; legislative mandates; organizational structures with a more humanistic approach to human capital; a shift toward collaborative intra- and interagency organizational management; and an unprecedented active citizenry. This study sought to understand if social and institutional changes have facilitated and made a positive difference for women in attaining higher level management and executive positions. The findings ascertained the current state and perceptions of women executives in relation to their respective experiences toward career advancement and identified potential solutions and strategies to facilitate career advancement. Examining perceptions was important "because perceptions, true or not, perpetuate the perception of the glass-ceiling barrier. Perceptions are what people believe and people translate their beliefs into behaviors, attitudes and bias" (GCC, 1995b, p. 6).

The relevant literature confirmed that women remain underrepresented in executive-level positions, and disparate worth and pay continues; however, in education, women are not only on par with their male counterparts, but as is the case with graduate

degrees, women have surpassed men (Spraggins, 2005; GAO, 2010b). The literature

suggests that institutions are evolving from traditional hierarchical structures to

organizations relying heavily on interagency coordination, collaborative relationships

with other agencies, and an increasingly knowledge-based workforce to fulfill the

respective agency's mission. These unprecedented changes in organizational structure

may create new opportunities for women to gain exposure, build relationships, network,

find mentors, and form alliances, all of which may assist in shattering the glass ceiling.

Scholarly research indicates that mentoring in the workforce for women, by women can

help solidify advancement and in turn create more opportunities for other women through

networking and mentoring (Dahle, 1998; Szymborski, 1996).

Structure and Participants

This dissertation research utilized semistructured interviews and included 12

participants, all executive-level women at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan

Transportation Authority (LACMTA) from deputy executive officer (DEO) level and

above. Participants for this study were contacted by the researcher via phone and some in

person to request participation. Participants signed a letter of consent to participate in the

study and be interviewed. This study utilized a semistructured interview approach, which

is commonly used in qualitative research. The researcher designed a semistructured

interview consisting of 27 questions, including questions on perceptions and experiences

relating to the glass ceiling, organizational changes, and career advancement. Other

questions explored the role of collaboration in the workplace and strategies for career

advancement. A semistructured approach was decided on to best capture each participant's perceptions in relation to career advancement since each participant's experience was different and due to the highly political climate associated with executive-level positions. Individual interviews allowed the participants to share experiences, perceptions, barriers, and so forth in a structure that was sensitive to confidentiality (Bryman, 2004).

Prior to each interview, participants were provided with a Consent to Participate in Research Form, which explained the purpose of the study, discussed confidentiality, explained that the interview would be recorded, and disclosed the possibility of identification due to small sampling, though the risk is minimal since names, titles, and any other identifying markers were kept confidential. Additionally, the researcher explained that participation would involve answering 27 preapproved questions with an expected interview duration time of 1 to 1.5 hours. All interviews were conducted at LACMTA in private offices. The criteria for participation were executive-level women working at LACMTA at the DEO level and above. The criteria for participation ensured qualified participants and a homogeneous population, adding validity to the study. Content analysis was utilized to identify the results of this study.

Rationale

The participants chosen were women who were in top management executive-level positions at LACMTA and were considered experts in their respective fields within transportation. Since each participant's experiences in relation to career advancement

were different, and due to the highly political climate associated with executive-level positions, the researcher utilized individual semistructured interviews. Individual interviews allowed the participants to share experiences, perceptions, barriers, and so forth in a structure that was sensitive to confidentiality (Bryman, 2004). Thus, the study examined the glass ceiling in the past and now as experienced/perceived by the participants, taking into consideration organizational changes and collaborative structures to identify barriers and strategies to facilitate career advancement for women and ultimately shatter the glass ceiling.

Thesis of the Study

The thesis of the study was that social and cultural changes have had a direct impact on organizations and how they function. Various factors contribute to the changes, such as federal laws, changing demographics, the dawn of the information age, limited financial resources, and so forth, which contribute to the progressive dissolve of structural hierarchies and increased intra- and interagency collaboration. With these changes come new opportunities, which can facilitate career advancement for women.

Research Questions

To address the thesis of this study, the research examined social, cultural, and institutional changes and their impact on the glass ceiling. The research questions ascertained the current state and perceptions of women executives in relation to their respective experiences toward career advancement and identified continued barriers and potential solutions and strategies to facilitate career advancement. The research questions

were open ended and focused on the glass ceiling and the issues that surround the current state of the phenomenon. The four research questions follow:

1. Is the glass ceiling still considered a significant barrier to women's advancement into top management/executive positions?

2. Have cultural shifts and organizational changes contributed toward increased opportunities that promote career advancement for women?

3. Does increased intra- and interagency collaboration in transportation improve a woman's career advancement opportunities?

4. Do emerging changes/shifts in society and governance offer increased career advancement opportunities, and what strategies are best to promote and maximize parity?

Research Method

A qualitative research design focusing on the phenomenological approach, utilizing semistructured interviews with open-ended questions, served as the research methodology for this study. Phenomenological methods are particularly effective at bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives and therefore at challenging structural or normative assumptions (Lester, 1999). This structure allowed the participants to openly discuss their perceptions and experiences relating to their respective career paths, continued challenges/barriers toward advancement, and strategies to facilitate career advancement. The use of open-ended questions and the interviewer's ability to follow relevant topics that strayed from the

interview guide provided the opportunity for identifying new ways of seeing and understanding the topic at hand. Minimum structure and maximum depth help to strike a balance between keeping a focus on the research issues and avoiding undue influence by the researcher (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

The qualitative phenomenological method allows for consideration of alternative views relating to semistructured open-ended interviews. For instance, many humanist and feminist researchers challenge the possibility of starting research without preconceptions or bias, and they emphasize the importance of making clear how interpretations and meanings have been placed on findings, as well as making the researcher visible in the "frame" of the research as an interested and subjective actor rather than a detached and impartial observer (Lester, 1999).

Semistructured interviews were an appropriate method for this study for many reasons. To start, Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2000) referred to four characteristics of semistructured interviews. All four of the characteristics that follow applied and were relevant to this research since semistructured interviews (a) take place with respondents known to have been involved in a particular experience, (b) refer to situations that have been analyzed prior to the interview, (c) proceed on the basis of an interview guide specifying topics related to the research hypotheses, and (d) focus on the subjects' experiences regarding the situations under study.

Additionally, semistructured interviews are an apt methodology since they are conducted with a fairly open framework, which allows for focused, conversational, two-way communication. They can be used both to give and receive information. The

majority of questions are created during the interview, allowing both the interviewer and

the person being interviewed the flexibility to probe for details or discuss issues.

Semistructured interviewing is guided only in the sense that some form of interview

guide provides a framework for the interview. The interviewer follows a guideline but is

able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from the guide when

it seems appropriate (Karoly & Panis, 2004). Laforest (2009) added, "In addition, since

[semistructured interviews] provide access to perceptions and opinions, they are effective

for gaining insight into problems that are not immediately perceptible but that

nonetheless cause concern in certain areas or in certain segments of the population"

(p. 1).

Table 1 presents the four research questions along with the interview questions

associated with each respective research question. Each participant was asked the same

questions.

An advantage to this interview approach for this research study was that the

semistructured interview has become a prominent method of data collection within a

feminist research framework because it allows for a high level of rapport between the

interviewer and interviewee, there is a high degree of reciprocity on the part of the

interviewer, it is not a hierarchical relationship, and it allows for the perspective of the

woman being interviewed (Bryman, 2004). Some disadvantages that were considered

with this methodology included limited access to key participants since executives are in

high demand and therefore not always available, interviewing skills are required, there is

Table 1

Research Questions With Associated Interview Questions

Research question	General question	Probe
1. Is the glass ceiling still considered a significant barrier to women's advancement into top management/executive positions?	1. The glass ceiling is a proven phenomenon for women in the workplace. What has been your experience with the glass-ceiling effect? 2. Studies show that women are on par with men on educational achievements. How do you view education as it relates to career advancement for women? 3. Studies show that a pay gap between genders continues in the workforce. What are your thoughts and experiences as they relate to comparable pay? 4. Studies have shown that women and men have historically been channeled into different occupations. This is often referred to as occupational segregation. Do you believe this is still prevalent today, and if so why? 5. Historically, women who are married and/or have children have experienced barriers to advancement. In your experience do you believe a woman's marital or parental status is still a barrier to advancement?	
2. Have cultural shifts and organizational changes contributed toward increased opportunities that promote career advancement for women?	1. In the past 20 years organizations have experienced many changes. Organizations have become more diverse. In your experience, how has diversity affected women in the workplace? 2. Organizations have become more humanistic, or employee focused. Examples are training, development, and educational assistance programs (EAP). What impact if any has this had on a woman's career advancement? 3. Work–life balance is increasingly important as our society and workforce change. Organizations, such as LACMTA, often offer flexible work schedules and telecommuting. Do you believe these alternatives are viable for women, and if so do you believe that utilizing/requesting these alternatives affects a woman's career advancement?	

Table 1 (*continued*)

Research question	General question	Probe
2. Have cultural shifts and organizational changes contributed toward increased opportunities that promote career advancement for women? (cont'd)	4. The information age has created unprecedented ease of communication. The Internet, computer networks, portable devices, etc., no longer tie an employee to a desk. Do you believe these technological advances will play a role in women's career advancement opportunities? 5. In your experience, how have mandated policies, such as FMLA, affected women's career advancement? 6. Human capital has become more knowledge-based. In other words, more specialized. How do you think this will affect women's career advancement?	
3. Does increased intra- and interagency collaboration in transportation improve a woman's career advancement opportunities?	1. Organizations are no longer strictly hierarchical entities. Social issues/impacts require collaboration. How do think this will impact women in the workplace? 2. What is your experience with collaboration in the workplace? 3. Is collaboration required to accomplish the mandates of your position? 4. With the continued erosion of traditional hierarchical structures, do you believe chain-of-command reporting relationships are effective? 5. How do you think increased collaboration will affect the organizational culture as it relates to women? 6. The rules/guidelines to effective collaboration are essentially unwritten. What strategies do you believe will be useful in successful collaboration? 7. What impact do you feel collaboration will have on women's career advancement?	
4. Do emerging changes/shifts in society and governance offer increased career advancement opportunities, and what strategies are best to promote and maximize parity?	1. Citizen participation in government is more prevalent than ever. Do you believe this will improve women's career advancement? If so, how? 2. With more women than ever in elected and executive positions, do you believe that will increase career advancement opportunities for women?	

Table 1 (*continued*)

Research question	General question	Probe
4. Do emerging changes/shifts in society and governance offer increased career advancement opportunities, and what strategies are best to promote and maximize parity? (cont'd)	3. Do you believe that women in positions of power are inclined to help other woman advance?	
	4. Differentiation between male and female leadership styles has been a common theme. Do you believe men and women lead differently? If so, how.	
	5. Historically, stereotypical feminine traits (such as being nurturers) have been viewed as negatives and a hindrance to leadership. What is your opinion regarding leadership styles and their role in women's advancement?	
	6. Do you feel that professional organizations increase women's career advancement? If so, why?	
	7. Do you believe mentoring among women is a valuable tool toward career advancement? If so, do you practice mentoring?	
	8. How would a formal mentoring program increase a woman's career advancement opportunities?	
	9. Are there any strategies that you feel women should adopt/practice to promote career advancement and parity?	

a risk of inadvertently making the questions prescriptive or leading, there is a risk of the researcher construing too much, interviews are time consuming and resource intensive, and obtaining information from the participants may be challenging due to concerns with confidentiality.

Data Collection

This study utilized a semistructured approach with face-to-face interviews. Purposive sampling was conducted in an attempt to establish a good correspondence

between sampling and research questions. The researcher sampled on the basis of wanting to interview people who were relevant to the research questions (Bryman, 2004). The criteria for the study required that participants be executive women employed by the LACMTA at the DEO level or higher. The criteria for participation ensured qualified participants and brought validity to the study. Twelve participants were interviewed, and each was at a DEO-level position or higher. All of the participants were selected by classification and capacity. Each participant interviewed was personally contacted by the researcher either in person, via e-mail, or via telephone to solicit participation and schedule interviews. All interviews were conducted at LACMTA headquarters in each respective participant's office location. The researcher is employed by LACMTA in a management capacity, which facilitated accessibility to participants.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed with the participants' consent, and notes were taken during the interviews by the researcher as well. It is common for researchers to record and transcribe interviews. This is important for the detailed analysis required in qualitative research and to ensure interviewees' answers are captured accurately and in their own terms (Bryman, 2004). Also, since semistructured interviews often contain open-ended questions and discussions may diverge from the interview guide, it is generally best to tape-record interviews and later transcript these tapes for analysis (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

Participants were afforded the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the structure of the interview or process prior to the beginning of each interview. The researcher chose not to provide a letter outlining the objective of the study to attempt to

minimize as much researcher bias as possible. To maintain confidentiality, each interviewee was assigned a code for data analysis and presentation of results. General classifications may be referenced, such as executive officer, but the specific function was not referenced to maintain anonymity. In other words, the researcher may present the opinion of an executive officer without identifying that the executive officer was responsible for operational functions.

Institutional Review Board Policies

University of La Verne Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies were followed in regard to ethical research for this project. All standards and protocols involved in protecting human subjects in a humanistic study were followed according to the IRB process. Special care was taken to ensure that participants were not put at risk. Participants were notified of the purpose, the procedures, and the benefits of the study and how the information obtained from this research would be used through presentation of the approved IRB packet prior to the interview and with the consent form. Consent forms were signed by participants prior to participation since they had the option to not participate in this research activity. The researcher was aware of the need to be honest with the participants about every aspect of the research project and the need to respect the privacy of participants. Therefore, they were informed about confidentiality and every aspect of the study prior to obtaining consent. Every regard should be taken to provide protection against human rights violations (Creswell, 2003). The confidentiality of participants was reinforced. Participants were all informed that they were being

recorded, they consented to the recording, and they were reminded at the start of the interview that they could end the interview at any point if they were uncomfortable in any way. The anonymity of the participants was considered during the coding process as their names were not needed to analyze data. All written and recorded information from interviews conducted was protected for privacy and security. All interviews were conducted in a professional and courteous manner.

Data Analysis

Once all interviews were conducted and transcribed, the researcher utilized content analysis to analyze the data collected. It is important to note that no probing or variant questions were asked. First, an auditory analysis was executed, followed by a textual analysis to strengthen claims or themes and to develop new ones (Creswell, 2003). The researcher identified trends and themes when analyzing the data and developed categories by which to establish a method for measuring and presenting the findings. The findings are presented in narrative form with the interpretation of the data presented in tables, since this is standard with qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2003).

Limitations of the Study

Gaining access to women executives was moderately challenging due to accessibility or participation issues. Obtaining secondary data from LACMTA regarding executive leadership composition for women in top positions was limited for historical data but not for current composition. Additional limitations to consider include the fact that no men were included in the study, so only a woman's perspective was obtained.

Also, the population of women was limited to those involved in transportation, particularly in the Los Angeles region, so women outside of the transportation industry and Southern California may have different experiences.

Since the research examined women's career advancement as a whole and did not break out minority women, the researcher did not separate data collected for perceptions of minority women's career advancement compared to White women's career advancement. While conducting the interviews, it is possible that the researcher unintentionally displayed a biased position, evoking a biased response, or that the questions had different meanings to different women. Additionally, since the researcher is employed at LACMTA, there is a possibility that participants felt a level of discomfort or distrust. However, it was expected that those with such reservations would simply decline participation.

By limiting the study to women in transportation leadership in Los Angeles County, the researcher's intent was to maximize on the homogeneous population and minimize the invasion of different value sets that may have emerged from including an overall population of women in the public sector. This will allow others to replicate the study in a similar fashion but using a different leadership population in the public sector.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Process

As part of the literature review, primary and secondary sources were used to obtain information on women and the glass-ceiling syndrome. Federal government agency studies and reports, books by recognized authorities in the field, well-recognized journal articles, publications, and information gathered from government and professional organization websites were reviewed to gather data and information regarding this study.

First, prior research on the glass ceiling was examined, and second, research on women in the workplace was examined, both with an emphasis on the public sector. Third, literature on organizational changes and collaborative structures was examined. Next, interviews with executive-level women were conducted where topics concerning perceptions and experiences regarding the glass ceiling and career advancement were discussed. These individuals answered questions designed by the researcher. Lastly, the researcher analyzed the participants' data and performed the proper analysis that is presented in this chapter.

The actual interviews averaged 1.5 hours in duration. Each participant was scheduled for 2 hours. Three participants took the full 2 hours. All interviews were at

least 1 hour in duration. Scheduling was challenging due to the executives' tight schedules and limited availability. All interviews conducted were finished in one sitting. All women interviewed were willing to participate as evidenced by their consent. Of all the executive women contacted, only two were unwilling to participate. One declined outright, stating she did not feel secure enough in her position to participate. Another accepted the interview, but when the researcher arrived, she changed her mind. She was in a male-dominated department and, despite assurances of confidentiality, declined. Besides the aforementioned, there were no other significant issues with participation.

Representativeness of the Sample

The data represent a current accounting of all Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) executives from the time the research collection began in October 2012 to its culmination in March 2013. During this time, there were a total of 86 executives, 26 of them female, representing 30.2% of LACMTA's executive team. Of the 26 female executives, 12 were participants in this study, representing a sampling of 46% of the available population. Women from all of LACMTA's major organizational branches, including Planning, Administration, Operations, Communications, and Construction, were included as participants. The breakdown of participants by job class follows (see Table 2). It is important to note that within each job class there are various titles, but for confidentiality and ease of categorization, the most common generic job classification title is used.

Table 2

Breakdown of Participants by Job Classification

	Job class	Total # of female executives in job class	Breakdown of participants by job class
FF	CEO	0	
DD	Deputy CEO	0	
CC	Executive directors	2	2
BB	Chiefs	2	2
AA	Executive officers	5	1
T	Deputy exec officers	7	4
S	Deputy exec officers	10	3
Total		26	12

Note. The letters in the first column denote the classification grade.

A more detailed analysis of the executive composition at LACMTA follows (see Table 3). It provides a breakdown of female and male executives by job classification and a breakdown of median salary and years of experience by gender. Even at a glance, the disparity in composition is apparent. Female executives only represent 30.2% of the executive team. They make less money than their male counterparts in each job class, and a comparison of median salaries shows women make an average of $18,143 less than their male counterparts—about 12% less. The top two positions, CEO and deputy CEO, are filled by men and always have been. The majority of female executives (53%) are clustered in the bottom two job classes—17 of the 26 female executives are in job classes S and T. Though men have 4.1 more years of experience on average, this is tempered by the higher volume of male executives, especially at the top levels, and the fact that transportation is a historically male-dominated industry suggests many of the male executives have risen from the ranks.

Table 3

Breakdown of Female and Male Executives by Job Classification, Median Salary, and Years of Experience

LACMTA executives	Females			Males		
	FTE #	Med. salary	Med. yrs.	FTE #	Med. salary	Med. yrs.
Job class						
FF	0	-	-	1	$310,001.12	41.0
DD	0	-	-	1	$271,448.32	37.0
CC	2	$227,503.12	27.5	4	$244,102.56	36.3
BB	2	$187,308.16	31.0	11	$186,900.10	35.6
AA	5	$163,660.22	31.6	14	$169,789.81	30.7
T	7	$146,717.26	24.4	17	$155,710.88	29.4
S	10	$129,198.16	27.3	12	$133,761.33	30.4
Total	26	**$152,574.08**	27.7	60	**$152,574.08**	31.8
% of executives	**30.2%**			**69.8%**		

Note. FTE = full time equivalent. Data current from October 2012 to March 2013. Data from LACMTA Human Resources, personal communication, April 19, 2013.

Table 4 illustrates the numbers without the two highest salary grades, the CEO and deputy CEO, both filled by men. As expected, an analysis of the data still shows men making more than women—a $14,005 difference, or about 9%. Men have 3.87 more years of experience in this scenario, an insignificant difference compared to 4.1. Essentially, even with removing the top two salary grades, the disparity is just as evident. The data do not include educational levels, which is a disservice since during the interviews many participants noted that, often, years of experience are substituted for lack of education among men who have risen through the ranks in transportation.

Table 4

Breakdown of Female and Male Executives by Job Classification, Median Salary, and Years of Experience, Excluding CEO and Deputy CEO

	Females			Males		
LACMTA executives	FTE #	Med. salary	Med. yrs.	FTE #	Med. salary	Med. yrs.
Job class						
CC	2	$227,503.12	27.5	4	$244,102.56	36.3
BB	2	$187,308.16	31.0	11	$186,900.10	35.6
AA	5	$163,660.22	31.6	14	$169,789.81	30.7
T	7	$146,717.26	24.4	17	$155,710.88	29.4
S	10	$129,198.16	27.3	12	$133,761.33	30.4
Total	26	**$152,574.08**	27.7	58	**$166,579.13**	31.6
% of executives	**30.2%**			**69.0%**		

Note. FTE = full time equivalent. Data current from October 2012 to March 2013. Data from LACMTA Human Resources, personal communication, April 19, 2013.

Findings for Research Question 1

Is the glass ceiling still considered a significant barrier to women's advancement into top management/executive positions?

Interview Question 1.1

All participants felt that they had been affected/impacted throughout their careers by the glass-ceiling phenomenon, and all agreed it still exists. Ten of the 12 participants, or 83.3%, felt very strongly affected, and notably the two, or 16.7%, who felt moderately affected were in technical fields (see Table 5). A total of 41.6% of the participants noted that transportation was particularly difficult for women because it is historically a male-dominated field.

Table 5

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 1.1

Interview Question 1.1: The glass ceiling is a proven phenomenon for women in the workplace. What has been your experience with the glass-ceiling effect?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly affected	10	83.3%	The terms *evident*, *definitely exists*, *very much alive* were used multiple times.
			5 mentioned that transportation was a male-dominated field.
Moderately affected	2	16.7%	Both participants in this category were in the technical field.
Not affected	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 5.

Strongly affected. Participants who felt strongly affected by the glass ceiling explained,

> Very evident in this male-dominated field, especially in Operations. The men at the agency have transitioned into the leaders. Men tend to hire men, which perpetuates the problem. In my career I've been overlooked because of my gender.

> I've been affected by it all my career. Transportation and Maintenance had no women in management for years. I was passed over for promotions because I was a woman. I have been in difficult reporting relationships. I have survived, but once I stopped working in male-dominated areas is when I became most successful.

> Promotability is still an issue because the "good old boy" network still exists. Men tend to promote men. They present equal opportunity but don't present equal outcome.

> Definitely still exists. A double standard is in place. Men still have their own perception of a "woman's place." Women are perceived negatively.

I have been impacted directly throughout my 30-year career. I have consistently been the first woman manager in most of my jobs, often selected by default because there was no one else to do the job. When I moved into transportation, similar story. And notably, in transportation, my promotions have all come from women supervisors.

Very much alive, particularly in transportation. Advancement is often relationship based. You need someone to advocate for you. Institutionally, things haven't changed much. The people who control the organizations—CEOs and boards—are still male dominated.

Moderately affected. Those participants who felt only moderately affected

stated,

I am fairly lucky in that I am at the top level of my career. But with that said, I know of only one other woman in the nation in my same position.

Not a significant issue for me at Metro. My skills are transferrable. I've been lucky in that I've been at the right place at the right time. In most cases my promotions were timely because I was the only one that could do the job at the time.

Interview Question 1.2

All 12 participants felt education was key. Eleven, or 91.7%, of the 12 found

education to be strongly significant (see Table 6). Most agreed that without it they would

not be where they are today. A theme that women have to work harder, bring more to the

table, and so forth than men was apparent. Eight out of the 11 participants with a degree,

or 72.7%, had advanced degrees and noted that without the advanced degrees they would

most likely not be in their current positions. The one participant who found education

significant was the only one without a degree.

Table 6

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 1.2

Interview Question 1.2: Studies show that women are on par with men on educational achievements. How do you view education as it relates to career advancement for women?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly significant	11	91.7%	All women in this category have college degrees.
			Keywords: critical (5xs), incredibly important, extremely important, super important, most important, key
Significant	1	8.3%	Only participant of the 12 without a degree.
Not significant	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 6.

Strongly significant. The following quotes support the belief that education is

strongly significant:

> Extremely important, especially since more is expected of women than men. It is not a level playing field. I wouldn't be in this position if it wasn't for my level of education and professional certifications.

> Critical. Without it you won't even be considered for advancement, whereas I see plenty of examples of male executives with no degrees.

> Critical to career development. Drive and initiative are critical too because it has been an accepted norm that women have to work twice as hard as men to compete.

> Absolutely critical. You can't move up without it. I was once selected for a job because I had an MBA and was the only candidate with a degree competing against all male candidates. Without it, I would have never been selected.

> Incredibly important because women are judged by educational credentials. A female needs to substantiate academic training and credentials, whereas it's not

the same for men. They will justify lack of education with, "He has X amount of years of equivalent experience."

Education is the most important factor to advancement. Without it, you might as well forget it. Education opens the doors. Getting an MPA was one of the best things I did.

Advanced degrees are needed to bring us forward and be ready to compete and promote. Practical experience is critical as well. A hybrid of both is required.

Critical. Having a master's degree has helped me get interviews.

Significant. The one participant who believed education was significant noted simply, "Education is important."

Interview Question 1.3

All participants agreed that a pay gap between genders exists. Ten participants, or 83.3%, felt personally very strongly impacted (see Table 7). The other two participants agreed that a pay gap exists but felt personally less affected. Notably, they both came in from the outside, and one was in a technical field. A theme emerged as a number of participants noted that the problem perpetuates itself throughout a woman's career because she starts low and never catches up.

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 7.

Strongly agree. The participants who strongly agreed that a pay gap exists between men and women noted,

Definitely exists throughout the agency, regardless of department. Women don't even start at an equitable salary. The mentality of many men is that we should be grateful.

Table 7

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 1.3

Interview Question 1.3: Studies show that a pay gap between genders continues in the workforce. What are your thoughts and experiences as they relate to comparable pay?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	10	83.3%	Key phrases included *definitely exists*, *definite disparity*, *absolutely true*, *consistently underpaid*.
Somewhat agree	2	16.7%	The two participants in this category both came in from the outside. One is in a technical field.
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

Women are consistently underpaid at Metro, at all levels. The problem perpetuates itself because women often start in lower paying jobs and are paid less than their male counterparts. We don't start from a fair base.

Women are disadvantaged, and the problem perpetuates itself because they start at a lower pay rate, which continues throughout their promotions since promotions are based on your previous salary.

Absolutely true. Women always start towards the bottom of the range, so even when you're promoted, you're still towards the bottom and continue to make less than the men.

Yes, I agree. I make less than many of my male colleagues in similar positions. Most of the time, the employee at the bottom of the pay grade is a woman.

Definitely a disparity in pay. This happens because the top person is usually a male, and they often believe women aren't equal to men. A woman at the helm is needed to create the sensitivity needed for equal pay for equal work.

I've had men reporting to me that have made more than me. The solution was not to pay me equitably but to remove them from reporting to me.

A significant pay gap exists. Even when men and women are identical on paper, a man will always get paid more.

I have never received equal pay for equal work. Metro does not practice salary parity.

Somewhat agree. The participants who only somewhat agreed stated,

It was a problem earlier in my career. Not as much for me, but I came in from the outside.

The disparity may not be as great at the executive level, but it is at middle management because pay grades and other factors make it harder for parity.

Interview Question 1.4

Ten of the 12 participants strongly agreed that occupational segregation is still prevalent today (see Table 8). The two main themes that emerged were that occupational segregation continues because transportation is a male-dominated field and because of social/cultural predispositions toward gender role expectations. Of the two participants in the *somewhat agree* category, one was in the technical field.

Table 8

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 1.4

Interview Question 1.4: Studies have shown that women and men have historically been channeled into different occupations. This is often referred to as occupational segregation. Do you believe this is still prevalent today, and if so why?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	10	83.3%	Key phrases: Definitely, absolutely, male-dominated (5xs), cultural/societal disposition (5xs)
Somewhat agree	2	16.7%	Key phrases: Changed a lot, not as much as it did
			One participant is in the technical field.
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 8.

Strongly agree. Responses from participants who strongly agreed that occupational segregation still exists included,

> Absolutely. You can see it in Operations clearly. It is primarily male dominated, from bus drivers, mechanics, engineers, on up.

> Cultural biases still exist. Transportation is a male-dominated field. Stereotypes still dominate.

> Absolutely. I am in a male-dominated environment. I am regularly the only woman at the table. Generally, executive women at Metro are all in "support" type of functions.

> Yes, definitely. It has to do with how we raise our kids. Studies show that moms use different words with sons and daughters—for example, they are more numeric with sons.

> Yes I do. I also think women often gravitate towards what we are comfortable with. Even as an executive, I've always been involved in some form of administration. I ask myself, did I follow my skills or did I do the work I was most comfortable with?

> Yes I do. What genders do is "institutionalized" in our society and in our workforce. A woman has to do twice as much and work twice as hard to show that there is some equity between them.

> Yes, I believe it is still prevalent. Women are still socially conditioned to move into social sciences and the like.

Somewhat agree. One of the participants who somewhat agreed explained, "I think it has changed a lot. When I was in school, men didn't want us there. But in my field, there is definite improvement, and my field is technical."

Interview Question 1.5

All 12 participants strongly agreed that a woman's marital or parental status is still a barrier to advancement (see Table 9). Three participants were single with no children. Two themes that emerged were that all other participants either started their executive careers when their children were older or had children later in life when their careers were more established.

Table 9

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 1.5

Interview Question 1.5: Historically, women who are married and/or have children have experienced barriers to advancement. In your experience do you believe a woman's marital or parental status is still a barrier to advancement?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	12	100.0%	3 participants are single with no children. All others either started their executive careers when their children were older or had children later in life when their careers were more established.
Somewhat agree	0	0.0%	
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 9.

Strongly agree. Comments that supported the assertion that marital or parental status is a barrier to a woman's advancement were as follows:

> Yes. I'm single and don't have children. I don't think I'd be where I'm at if I did. The perception is that you become unreliable and not career focused.

Yes I do. I am not married and don't have kids. Concessions have to be made for the level of the job. I have always had to make sacrifices in my personal life. Perception is reality.

Yes, because as an executive there is limited flexibility. A woman is forced into a position of making a choice between career and family. My career didn't grow until my children left home.

Yes. That is why I didn't have a child until I was 40. That allowed me to climb the ladder. And I had a boss that was understanding, or I wouldn't be here today. But I see that women without children or not married are more prone to advance.

Yes I do. I got married late in life because it was a barrier for me. And men still think women are the caretakers.

Yes, but it's based on the woman's choice. I organized my career so that it became increasingly more demanding as my children needed me less.

Yes, because women are the primary caretakers, so they carry the burden. They are bypassed by those without those obligations. It is not the status that is the barrier, it is the obligation that affects the job. It becomes a choice—my job or my child; therefore, career advancement is slowed.

Definitely hinders a woman's growth. Men feel raising children is women's work.

Yes. It may not be an organizational policy, but the selection process in any institution is dependent on the hiring authority. The person making the selection is often male, and they have biases about women prioritizing family over work.

Findings for Research Question 2

Have cultural shifts and organizational changes contributed toward increased opportunities that promote career advancement for women?

Interview Question 2.1

All 12 participants felt strongly that diversity had a very positive effect on women in the workplace as related to career advancement (see Table 10). Participants noted that

inclusion, whether by choice or because it was forced due to mandates, has helped

women tremendously.

Table 10

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 2.1

Interview Question 2.1: In the past 20 years, organizations have experienced many changes. Organizations have become more diverse. In your experience, how has diversity affected women in the workplace?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Very positive	12	100.0%	Key terms: Extremely beneficial, significantly, positively, advantageous, inclusion (3xs)
Somewhat positive	0	0.0%	
Negative	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 10.

Very positive. The following quotes provide support for the assertion that

diversity has had a very positive effect on women's career development:

Advantageously. Diversity has made it easier for women to compete and has helped to make the good old boys network less blatant.

Extremely beneficial. When execs are picking their leadership teams, they are aware that they need to examine their composition. I've heard these discussions in the back rooms. So it's extremely beneficial to women, whether by choice or by law—it's helped men choose and include women in top positions.

Significantly positive. Inclusion was the first step. Diversity opened the door— we became part of the landscape. Becoming the *norm* is a big step towards *a new world*.

It's been advantageous. As the decision makers, who are mostly men, are made more aware of the need for diversity, they will pick more women. If our gender gives us an edge, great. I know gender was a factor in my selection.

Positive. Diversity has created the opportunity to start being recognized and included.

Diversity has provided for more sensitivity and has opened more doors for women because inclusion is mandated.

Diversity has built consciousness of the workforce population. Regulations have forced a cognizant effort of inclusion.

Diversity has been good because it has forced organizations to take a progressive view and let go of some of those blatant discriminatory practices.

It has helped by default. Institutions are very critically judged for lack of diversity. It is a different age. Some companies won't do business with companies that lack diversity. When you look at a company's executive team and board, what it looks like often represents what the company values—and their level of commitment to diversity.

Interview Question 2.2

Of the 12 participants, 75.0% felt that more humanistic organizational structures were advantageous in career advancement. On-site childcare was referenced multiple times as a game changer. The other 25.0% were not sure that there was a significant impact or correlation to advancement; they felt it helped more with keeping a job than with actual advancement (see Table 11).

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 11.

Strong impact. Those participants who believed that more humanistic organizational structures helped women in career advancement stated,

Table 11

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 2.2

Interview Question 2.2: Organizations have become more humanistic, or employee focused. Examples are training, development, and educational assistance programs (EAP). What impact if any has this had on a woman's career advancement?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strong impact	9	75.0%	Keywords: Amazing, tremendous, positive (5xs), measurable impact, huge
Some/minimal impact	3	25.0%	Keywords: helpful, depends
No impact	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

Positive. Generally speaking, it has helped women's ability to promote by helping them stay abreast of things and help with managing their lives. I've had Metro pay for training opportunities outside of the agency, and they helped my career.

Measurable impact. It has allowed women to prepare for growth and to interface with others.

Very positive in that it allows women to be on par with men. You have access to the same opportunities.

Tremendous. All programs that bring more opportunities or exposure are positive.

Positive impact for women because they can avail themselves of the opportunities available to others at no expense—or little expense.

Huge. It has provided more resources to help women deal with the competing pressures of work and life. Having on-site childcare made a huge difference for me. Had Metro not offered on-site childcare, I would not be where I am today.

It's been amazing because it has provided women more flexibility and with accommodations to stay employed. Childcare in the workplace is huge.

Some/minimal impact. Quotes supporting some impact or a minimal impact included,

> It depends. If women take advantage of them, it may help them compete and may help level the playing field.

> Not sure it's impacted advancement. But because they are typical women roles, women run those programs.

Interview Question 2.3

There was no middle ground in the responses to Interview Question 2.3. Participants either strongly agreed about the negative impact to a woman's career advancement if utilizing alternatives to the traditional work schedule, or they disagreed and felt there was no negative impact. A total of 66.7% strongly agreed that it was a negative, and 33.3% felt it had no negative impact (see Table 12). The overall theme for detractors was that the perception of not being in the office would have damaging effects to advancement.

Table 12

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 2.3

Interview Question 2.3: Work–life balance is increasingly important as our society and workforce change. Organizations, such as LACMTA, often offer flexible work schedules and telecommuting. Do you believe these alternatives are viable for women, and if so do you believe that utilizing/requesting these alternatives affects a woman's career advancement?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	8	66.7%	Keywords: negative, prohibitive, perception,
Somewhat agree	0	0.0%	
Disagree	4	33.3%	Keywords: not a negative, more of an accommodation, no adverse impact
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 12.

Strongly agree. Participants who strongly agreed about the negative impact of alternatives explained,

> Women who elect to utilize these alternatives will not be promoted. It's seen as a negative. The idea is that *you want a cushy job* and [are] not serious about your career. Definitely a negative at the executive level. Most execs are older males, and they just can't relate.

> It does, negatively. I know of no women execs that utilize these alternatives. Advancement for women doesn't come unless you put in an extraordinary effort. Women execs often put in excessive hours. There is a double standard.

> I wouldn't be where I am today if I utilized those options. Taking these options would be prohibitive to advancement. You can have it all, just not at the same time.

> Definitely. As an executive you need to be present. You have to be available 24/7. I've been offered flex schedules before and haven't utilized them because I knew it would negatively affect my career advancement.

> Yes negatively, because there is an inherent bias that you want someone that is committed to the job. And even though I am a woman, I would have to be honest and say that it would impact my selection of a candidate if they utilized these options.

Disagree. Participants who disagreed about the negative impact of using alternatives noted,

> I believe they are viable, and as long as the employee is available whenever I need them, I don't believe it will affect advancement—at least not in my department.

> It does benefit women. I don't think it would be a negative because men are asking for it too.

> These are more accommodations and not game changers. In the end, they are not very useful because you rarely get to take the time off as an executive.

I don't think it has an adverse impact. But it depends on where you work and who your boss is. As a boss, I haven't thought of it as a negative in career advancement.

Interview Question 2.4

All but one of the 12 participants agreed that technological advances will play a positive role in career advancement. Of those 11 participants, 75.0% strongly agreed, and 16.7% somewhat agreed (see Table 13). The one participant who disagreed was in a technical field. The fact that technology makes employees available 24/7 came up a number of times. A theme that emerged was that it is a double-edged sword in that executives never get any down time or sense of being off the clock because an expectation of their availability develops. Another important advantage that was raised is that gender cannot be used as an excuse when technically women executives are available 24/7.

Table 13

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 2.4

Interview Question 2.4: The information age has created unprecedented ease of communication. The Internet, computer networks, portable devices, etc., no longer tie an employee to a desk. Do you believe these technological advances will play a role in women's career advancement opportunities?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	9	75.0%	Availability (4xs)
Somewhat agree	2	16.7%	Minimally, perhaps
Disagree	1	8.3%	The participant is in the technical field
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 13.

Strongly agree. The following quotes were provided by participants who strongly agreed that technological advancements will help women's career advancement:

Yes, but as much as it is a blessing, it's a curse. They are called electronic leashes for a reason. There is an expectation that you will immediately respond, regardless of time of day. The agency expects you to be available 24/7.

Yes, because we are available at any time. There are no gender issues when you can be reached 24/7.

Yes, definitely. The ability to receive and deliver information is critical. An e-mail doesn't always have to have a face to get the job done. It's about what is being said, not who said it. It reduces the judgment of gender identification.

Yes, because it makes you available. However, you will never have any down time because you will always have to be responsive and maintain that level of responsiveness.

Yes, because it makes communication easier and creates more flexibility in getting things done.

Yes, but these choices have to be organizationally adopted and embraced. In Transit, we are slow to adopt these options because performance metrics are different in a public agency from a private one.

Somewhat agree. Participants who only somewhat agreed stated,

Minimally. It helps with the perception of being on the job 24/7, but it doesn't replace being present on the job.

Perhaps. I don't know that it favors a woman in terms of advancement. It can help facilitate a woman's issues by helping balance work and home, but it also never allows you to unplug. You are expected to always be accessible.

Disagree. The one participant who disagreed about technological advancements being positive for women's career advancement noted,

Not a role in advancement, but tools for more flexibility in being successful in balancing work and life. It removes some of the physical barriers of space and time, but the technology itself isn't going to get you promoted.

Interview Question 2.5

Eight of the 12 participants agreed that mandated policies such as the Family

Medical Leave Act (FMLA) have had a positive impact on advancement. Of those

participants, 50.0% believed there has been a strong impact, and 16.7% believed there

has been some impact (see Table 14). Four participants did not believe these policies

have had any impact on advancement. The main theme that emerged across the board

from this question was a strong belief that more so than directly helping with career

advancement, these mandated policies have been a much-needed protection for women,

thereby perhaps indirectly helping with advancement.

Table 14

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 2.5

Interview Question 2.5: In your experience, how have mandated policies, such as FMLA, affected women's career advancement?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strong impact	6	50.0%	Positive (3xs), protection (3xs)
Some impact	2	16.7%	"May not hurt," protection (1x)
No impact	4	33.3%	Protection (3xs), not significant (2xs)
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 14.

Strong impact. Participants' responses in support of mandated policies having a strong impact on women's career development were as follows:

Positively. Enables you to keep your job. I probably wouldn't be where I am today without them.

The policies have been positive in helping women be protected. A lot has to do with organizational culture, and Metro seems fairly understanding.

Definite positive effect. Absolutely necessary to ensure women are given reasonable accommodation, just like a male.

They have helped a lot. Work rules were based on men's careers, so enormous changes on the legislative front have made an incredible difference.

It's been great in that it helps level the playing field, because just by nature women are expected to fulfill caretaking roles, and they shouldn't be penalized for it as well.

Very positive. It's protected women, which has enabled them to keep their jobs, paving the way for potential career advancement.

Some impact. Responses supporting some impact were as follows:

It's definitely been a protection. If the woman is productive, it may not hurt career advancement. It depends on how it's used.

Having an institutional protection has been critical in employment. But utilizing them may ultimately hold you back from advancement. It depends because of the perception regarding commitment.

No impact. Participants who perceived no impact responded,

No significant improvement in advancement, but they have provided protections for women that they would otherwise not have.

Not significantly because there are so many other avenues to utilize for protections.

At the executive level you don't really utilize these options. As a manager I used FCML [family care/medical leave], but it didn't help me advance. It's seen as a

black mark if utilized. It may help as a protection, and you may not get fired if you utilize it, but it doesn't help with advancement.

Interview Question 2.6

Ten, or 83.3%, of the participants believed that as human capital becomes more knowledge based, this will have a very positive effect on career advancement for women (see Table 15). The theme/idea emerged that competing on an intellectual level, rather than on a physical level, will help level the playing field. One participant felt it may go either way, and one believed it may have a negative impact because it may limit advancement.

Table 15

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 2.6

Interview Question 2.6: Human capital has become more knowledge based. In other words, more specialized. How do you think this will affect women's career advancement?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Very positive	10	83.3%	Positively (5xs), advantageous, favorable
Somewhat positive	1	8.3%	I don't know
Negative	1	8.3%	May limit you
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 15.

Very positive. Participants who believed that there will be a positive effect on women's career advancement as human capital becomes more knowledge based noted,

It's an advantage for women. In the olden days, muscle mass was the advantage. Knowledge-based work allows the people with the best brain to promote.

Positively in that education allows women to enter into specialized fields. They can compete on a mental level.

Positive because it goes back to education. When it comes to just knowledge, then women can compete equally. The argument of brawn or brain is a nonissue.

Positively because the more specialized you are, the better your chance of breaking through the glass ceiling.

Positively, but it will be a slow progression due to barriers. Organizations still have outdated notions of what a man should do and what a woman should do.

It will help women because as they jump into specialty areas like engineering, they won't always be competing amongst other women in typical female niches.

Somewhat positive. The participant who perceived only a somewhat positive impact stated, "I don't know. It can go either way. It may help you advance, it may limit you."

Negative. The participant who believed knowledge-based work would have a negative impact explained, "It may hinder it because you are limited in one direction."

Findings for Research Question 3

Does increased intra- and interagency collaboration in transportation improve a woman's career advancement opportunities?

Interview Question 3.1

Eleven of the 12 participants, or 91.7%, strongly agreed that increased collaboration in organizations would have a very positive effect on career advancement for women (see Table 16). One participant was not certain it would have much of an

impact. Two important themes emerged from this question. First, at least five participants discussed a woman's natural predisposition to collaboration based on intrinsic and social values. Second, at least six participants discussed that the visibility/ exposure and ability to network that a collaborative environment allows is a major contributor to advancement.

Table 16

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 3.1

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Interview Question 3.1: Organizations are no longer strictly hierarchical entities. Social issues/impacts require collaboration. How do you think this will impact women in the workplace?			
Very positive	11	91.7%	Positively (5xs), advantageous, key, paramount, beneficial. Visibility (4xs), network (2xs), exposure.
Somewhat positive	1	8.3%	
Negative	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 16.

Very positive. The following quotes support a very positive impact on women's career advancement from increased collaboration in the workplace:

Positively, because women tend to be more flexible and adaptable to varying situations. We are consensus builders and multitaskers by nature.

Positively. Women are inclined by nature to come up with solutions other than "form an empire." Women are wired for interactions requiring consensus building and collaboration.

I think it will be a benefit to women because women are better socially. It's a leg up.

It'll definitely help because you build networks which help your exposure and promotability. Plus, women in general seem to be better at collaboration than men.

The fact that women are more social—it's been their role historically—means that they are more likely to [work] better collaboratively because it has been a role women have played in society. Men operate on a command-and-control mentality. Women are natural collaborators.

Positively. The more opportunities we have to network and show our skill sets to others will more likely lead to more visibility and opportunities for advancement. The more well-known you are, the more likely you'll be tapped for advancement.

Collaboration is advantageous because it allows women visibility and the ability to interact and network—especially interagency involvement. That may open doors even outside of Metro.

Positively. I once got a job because of the exposure I received on a collaborative effort I had engaged in earlier with a female exec.

I think it's key. It's paramount. Collaboration brings visibility. Your reputation has to speak for itself, so knowing how to build connections is critical to success.

Positively. Collaboration offers more visibility and promotability because you also have exposure outside of the agency.

Somewhat positive. The participant who predicted a somewhat positive impact of collaboration stated, "I'm not sure if it will have much of an impact because without equality, disparate treatment will exist with or without collaboration."

Interview Question 3.2

Of the 12 participants, 83.3% agreed that their experience with collaboration in the workplace was strongly significant. The other 16.7% felt it was somewhat significant (see Table 17). The theme of exposure and visibility continued. Notably, four

participants mentioned that they had received promotions as a direct result of the

exposure and visibility received due to their previous involvement in collaborative

efforts.

Table 17

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 3.2

Interview Question 3.2: What is your experience with collaboration in the workplace?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly significant	10	83.3%	Visibility (3xs), exposure (1x), constant (2xs)
Somewhat significant	2	16.7%	Overlooked, stymied
Not significant	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 17.

Strongly significant. Those participants who perceived their experience with

collaboration in the workplace as strongly significant responded,

> Collaboration led to my career advancement. As a result of my participation on a taskforce, I received exposure and was later tapped for promotion. The taskforce wasn't even in my area, but it opened up opportunities.

> Collaboration has opened doors for me. I've climbed the ladder because of the visibility I received. A woman remembered my participation and offered me a position.

> I've worked on a lot of teams. It's helped me with advancement because I've gained visibility and people know I'm a team player. Collaboration brings about better solutions because more people are looking at the problem.

> I've collaborated with other transit properties, state agencies, and it has broadened my horizons in the workplace. It has given me visibility via broad name and face recognition, which has led to promotability.

> It's a constant, both internally and externally. It's at the core of our work.

> Most things in my area are collaborative. To accomplish a project, consensus amongst multiple players is required.

> I pursue it doggedly. I enjoy that at this agency everything is accomplished through collaboration, both internally and externally. I look for *win-win* situations.

> Collaboration is constant. I have to bring people to the table—I continuously engage in relationship building, negotiating, etc.

> **Somewhat significant.** The participants who perceived their collaboration

experience as somewhat significant noted,

> My area is a specialized area, and it's viewed as a support area—men don't realize it's just as technical and valuable. I am often overlooked in processes, so in my case I don't get much into collaboration until after the fact, when something becomes an issue.

> Collaboration is still stymied by old practices. Metro has to do better at collaborating because though Operations is critical, other departments are equally valuable.

Interview Question 3.3

All 12, or 100%, of the participants strongly agreed that collaboration is required

to accomplish the mandates of their respective positions (see Table 18). The theme that

participants recognized that without collaboration they could not be successful was

prevalent.

Table 18

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 3.3

Interview Question 3.3: Is collaboration required to accomplish the mandates of your position?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	12	100.0%	Absolutely, definitely, yes.
Somewhat agree	0	0.0%	
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 18.

Strongly agree. Regarding collaboration being required to accomplish mandates

of participants' positions, responses indicating strong agreement were as follows:

Yes. I couldn't do my job without it.

Yes, absolutely, because even though I can issue mandates based on law, it does me no favors in not building relationships.

Absolutely. I couldn't do it without it. It's part of my value to my boss. He knows *I play nice in the sandbox* and can make it happen.

Yes. Most of what I do requires massive collaborative efforts between departments. I've had situations where male execs don't want to meet with me because I'm a woman, and I've accomplished the goal by working with their subordinate if necessary. One way or another, collaboration is necessary for buy-off.

Yes, absolutely, with all elements of this agency.

Absolutely. I couldn't be successful otherwise.

Yes, definitely. You look at people's strengths and weaknesses, and you pull the team you need and the resources to get it done. It allows you to tap into people with special skills and utilizations.

Absolutely. My work requires regional integration. It's a requirement of my job.

Interview Question 3.4

Of the 12 participants, 41.7% strongly agreed that chain-of-command reporting

relationships are not only effective but are required in rank-and-file type of structures

such as in LACMTA's Operations Unit. Additionally, two participants within this

category believed that until performance metrics are altered, there is no alternative to

chain-of-command reporting relationships. The other 58.3% of participants somewhat

agreed that these relationships are effective (see Table 19). They recognized the need in

rank-and-file units like Operations, but they felt that they are in essence outdated and that

more matrixed, flatter reporting structures are required in collaborative structures.

Table 19

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 3.4

Interview Question 3.4: With the continued erosion of traditional hierarchical structures, do you believe chain-of-command reporting relationships are effective?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	5	41.7%	Rank and file (1xs), performance metrics (2xs)
Somewhat agree	7	58.3%	Rank and file (3xs), flatter structures, hybrid, flexibility
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 19.

Strongly agree. Participants who strongly agreed that chain-of-command reporting relationships are effective noted,

> Yes, because our performance evaluations are structured that way.

> Yes, until another form of metrics for performance is developed, because every employee needs to know who their boss is; otherwise self-monitoring may not yield the same results.

> Yes I do. But it has to work both ways—top-down and bottom-up—meaning it has to involve inclusion.

> Yes, for process purposes.

> In a rank-and-file organization where huge dollars are at stake, it is essential for delivery and accountability.

Somewhat agree. Participants who only somewhat agreed explained,

> Yes, because we are a bureaucratic agency. In Operations, chain of command is necessary or there would be a breakdown in structure. But in Planning, a matrixed structure is more appropriate.

> Yes, they are effective for rank-and-file structures such as in Operations. But amongst professionals, no, because we don't operate that way. We have to be flexible to who's the best fit and who can be most successful in getting the job done. We have to collaborate.

> Yes, in rank-and-file units because accountability is needed. Operations and Construction are examples. But in other areas, no. There needs to be some collapse of hierarchy for effectiveness.

> Partially. Transportation is a postmilitary structure; therefore, chain of command is prevalent. But as the baby boomers retire, this will erode. A hybrid version of chain of command needs to evolve.

> Not entirely. There always needs to be some recognized authority, but the rigidity of command and control will disappear. It has to in a collaborative environment because employees need to make decisions in various capacities to move things forward.

Yes, for the most part. But there must be some flexibility or collaboration won't work.

Interview Question 3.5

All 12 participants felt that increased collaboration would have a positive effect on organizational culture as it relates to women. Of the 12, 91.7% felt it would have a very positive effect. The other 8.3%, or one participant, felt it would have a somewhat positive effect (see Table 20). Trends that emerged were that words such as *visibility* and *exposure* continued to appear as keywords and that women, due to their roles in society, have a natural inclination to collaboration and the skill sets it requires, such as consensus building.

Table 20

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 3.5

Interview Question 3.5: How do you think increased collaboration will affect the organizational culture as it relates to women?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Very positive	11	91.7%	Visibility (2xs), exposure (2xs), integration, perspective, inclusion
Somewhat positive	1	8.3%	Commitment
Negative	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 20.

Very positive. The following responses supported the assertion that increased collaboration will have a very positive effect on organizational culture as it relates to women:

> It'll be very positive. Increased collaboration will break down silos. Breaking down silos allows more visibility and crosses lines into other silos, which allows for infiltration in a sense.

> Positively. It will help women promote because the more exposure the better—women can promote easier because of the visibility.

> It will be positive because more women will be integrated into all levels of the organization. It can only make women more relevant in leadership positions.

> A definite positive because women are good at collaboration, so it plays to women's strengths, which gives them an edge.

> It will create an advantage by providing greater exposure, thereby creating more opportunities.

> It will have a positive impact because women are relationship oriented. It will promote more positive working relationships. Women historically are consensus builders and collaborators by nature. It has been our role in society.

> Definitely favorably because women are more skilled socially.

> **Somewhat positive.** The participant who believed the effect would be somewhat

positive stated,

> First the culture has to change for it to help. To change the culture will require creativity, an open mind, and a neutral party to help guide the change. It has to be a top-down commitment across the agency or it will never permeate the current culture as it stands, which is very parochial.

Interview Question 3.6

The nature of Interview Question 3.6 did not lend itself to a positive versus negative, agree versus disagree, impact versus no impact type of a grouping because it

asked the participants for their recommendations/opinions on strategies for effective

communication. Therefore, the data were analyzed by identifying trends and grouping

them as such since there was overlap in many responses.

Seven of the 12 participants' responses, or 58.3%, were related to team building.

Five of the 12 participants, or 41.7%, mentioned that support from the top was

paramount. Additionally, five of the 12 participants, or 41.7%, believed that relationship

building was very important (see Table 21).

Table 21

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 3.6

Interview Question 3.6: The rules/guidelines to effective collaboration are essentially unwritten. What strategies do you believe will be useful in successful collaboration?

Trend	#	%
Team building	7	58.3%
Support from the top	5	41.7%
Relationship building	5	41.7%

Note. The top three trends were chosen. These data still use the 12 participants as the measure, but due to the repetition of some strategies, the total percentage will exceed 100%.

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 21.

Trend 1: Team building. In support of the theme of team building, participants

listed the following strategies:

Laying the groundwork, fostering a collaborative environment, matrixing relationships, changing performance evaluation structures, rewarding collaboration.

Identify stakeholders, focus on organization and planning, create an environment where collaboration is enhanced and enabled, pick knowledgeable participants.

Teambuilding, training, regular meetings and executive retreats to check on progress of the organization's mission and goals.

Building a team and agreeing on objectives, defining people's roles and responsibilities. The organizational environment must be supportive.

Team building, joint action plan development, regular meetings, support from the top, retreats focused on multidisciplinary strategic planning.

Developing a rapport, building relationships, volunteering for tasks, being a team player. Commit and prevail, add value.

Strong-soft skill sets, familiarity with teambuilding concepts, effective networking skills, which, by the way, are all strong female traits.

Trend 2: Support from the top. The following strategies identified by

participants related to support from the top:

Laying the groundwork, fostering a collaborative environment, matrixing relationships, changing performance evaluation structures, rewarding collaboration.

Team building, joint action plan development, regular meetings, support from the top, retreats focused on multidisciplinary strategic planning.

Building a team and agreeing on objectives, defining people's roles and responsibilities. The organizational environment must be supportive.

Identify stakeholders, focus on organization and planning, create an environment where collaboration is enhanced and enabled, pick knowledgeable participants.

Team building, joint action plan development, regular meetings, support from the top, retreats focused on multidisciplinary strategic planning.

Trend 3: Relationship building. The theme of relationship building emerged

from the following strategies listed by participants:

Developing a rapport, building relationships, volunteering for tasks, being a team player. Commit and prevail, add value.

Relationship building, agreeing on a strategic path, setting a results-oriented agenda.

Get buy in. The more you convince people that they are vested, that it is their issue too, the more successful the outcome. Establishing relationships is key.

Practice basic human values: honesty, trust, commitment to the goal. Be willing to share information. Establish positive relationships.

Everything you need to know, you learned in kindergarten. Respect others, play nicely, don't always try and be right.

Interview Question 3.7

All 12, or 100%, of participants agreed that collaboration would have a very positive impact on career advancement (see Table 22). Once again, the words *exposure* and *visibility* were prominent as positive outcomes. Additionally, the theme that women are naturally prone to collaboration presented itself again, with five participants, or 41.6%, making mention of it.

Table 22

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 3.7

Interview Question 3.7: What impact do you feel collaboration will have on women's career advancement?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Very positive	12	100.0%	Exposure (5xs), visibility (1x), beneficial, tremendous impact
Somewhat positive	0	0.0%	
Negative	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 22.

Very positive. The participants who felt that collaboration will have a very positive impact on women's career advancement stated,

> It will create opportunities for women because women are natural problem solvers and collaborators.

> Definitely positive because our social skills are better.

> Major impact because *perception is others' reality*. If you can't collaborate, you can't be successful. And women are great collaborators.

> Positive because women are natural collaborators.

> A better understanding that a woman can do a great job—better than men. Women are better planners, more methodical, more inclusive, more collaborative.

> It will be positive because taskforces usually include senior and executive-level people. With the exposure, you catch their eye, and career advancement is facilitated.

> Beneficial because it gives women exposure. It improves and expands skill sets by offering fresh perspectives that can help promotability.

> Increased opportunities will arise because collaboration will be measured, noted, and pursued.

> A strong impact because visibility and exposure will help advancement.

> It will provide greater exposure, thereby creating more opportunities.

> It will have a positive impact. If a female manager is viewed as a good collaborator, the exposure will engender a lot of positive attention from the top brass, potentially accelerating recognition and promotion.

Findings for Research Question 4

Do emerging changes/shifts in society and governance offer increased career advancement opportunities, and what strategies are best to promote and maximize parity?

Interview Question 4.1

Nine out of the 12 participants, or 75.0%, believed that citizen participation in government will have a strong impact in improving women's career advancement opportunities. Two of the 12, or 16.7%, believed it may have some impact, and one participant believed it will have no impact (see Table 23). The one participant who did not feel it will have an impact was in a technical field. Again, the words *visibility* and *exposure* continued to be prominent. Five participants discussed how visibility/exposure would ultimately lead to advancement because of recognition and rapport. Additionally, four participants talked about how diversity in the citizenry would help with advancement because women want to see themselves in those who assist them. And finally, two participants discussed how women tend to often be in community relations type of roles and are predisposed to building relationships and establishing rapport with members of the community.

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 23.

Table 23

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.1

Interview Question 4.1: Citizen participation in government is more prevalent than ever. Do you believe this will improve women's career advancement? If so, how?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strong impact	9	75.0%	Visibility (4xs), exposure (1x), diversity (4xs)
Some/minimal impact	2	16.7%	It can, it may
No impact	1	8.3%	Participant is in the technical field
Total	12	100.0%	

Strong impact. Participants who believed that citizen participation in government will have a strong impact in improving women's career advancement opportunities responded,

> Yes, because citizens are diverse; therefore, there will be more women contributing and more voices to consider.

> Yes, because the majority speaks, and increased diversity is holding management accountable.

> Yes, because of the occupational segregation component, women have often established themselves in working with communities on issues. They are visible to the community. They establish relationships and are inclusive, leading to consensus building.

> Yes, because women tend to be in certain roles like public affairs, which already helps establish relationships and helps with visibility, which can help leverage their advancement.

> Yes, because if you can make your constituents happy, they will want to work with you. Visibility helps your career if you're responsive and respected.

> Yes, because women participate in these diverse groups and it allows them a forum to discuss their support or voice concerns over issues that require change.

Yes, because as a result of citizen participation, decisions are made not as much in a vacuum. It gives women more exposure opportunities for leadership.

Yes, because people are more aware—citizens affect the process. Citizens are vocal, and they are themselves diverse.

Yes it will because it provides another platform for visibility, especially if a woman is articulate and capable in public areas.

Some impact. Participants who felt there will be some impact stated,

It can, if the woman has the right skill sets. You are thrown into the limelight very quickly.

It may help by bringing awareness to the issue. But for many, women's career advancement is still seen as a personal struggle.

No impact. The participant who predicted that there will be no impact explained,

"I don't see them really tied together. I don't see it being different for men or for

women."

Interview Question 4.2

All 12 participants agreed that with more women than ever in elected and

executive positions, career advancement opportunities for women would increase. Ten of

the 12, or 83.3%, agreed strongly. The other 16.7% somewhat agreed (see Table 24).

There were two themes that emerged. The first was that at least seven participants

(58.3%) felt that once women were in these positions, they would in essence serve as

advocates for women and women's issues, thereby increasing career advancement

opportunities by default. The second was that four participants (33.3%) believed that by

virtue of women attaining these positions, it makes it easier for other women because it

becomes less of an anomaly; women are empowered by seeing other women in power

and by what other women have achieved, making it seem more attainable and in essence helping to create a domino effect.

Table 24

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.2

Interview Question 4.2: With more women than ever in elected and executive positions, do you believe that will increase career advancement opportunities for women?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	10	83.3%	Advocate (6xs), empowered, domino effect
Somewhat agree	2	16.7%	Advocate (1x)
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 24.

Strongly agree. The following quotes reflect participants' strong agreement that with more women than ever in elected and executive positions, career advancement opportunities for women would increase:

> Yes, because they will be looking out for political frameworks/programs that will foster advancement for women. They are advocates of the highest order.

> Yes, because once it becomes more visible, it is less of an anomaly that women are in high positions.

> Yes, because once one woman achieves something, it becomes easier for another to achieve. Also, women in these positions can be advocates for change.

> Yes, because women will become more commonplace, and society will start to evolve around it as a new norm. And as women see these female elected officials in power, it can make women feel empowered in their own jobs.

Yes. This will have a *domino effect* in that it will create ladders for advancement.

Yes, I think it has. Women are looking out for other women. Organizations exist specifically to advocate a woman's issues and agenda.

Yes. They can help advocate for women.

Yes, absolutely. With women at the helm, it is expected that women will bring awareness and will help advocate to increase upward mobility.

Yes, because now you have an advocate, someone who knows what it's like to be a woman—especially a career woman.

Yes, because there is more sensitivity to women's issues and an understanding of a woman's situation.

Somewhat agree. The participants who only somewhat agreed said,

Possibly, due to more shared experience and recognition of the contribution.

Possibly, because women may help advance and advocate a woman's platform and women's issues.

Interview Question 4.3

Three participants (25.0%) strongly agreed that women in positions of power are inclined to help other women advance. Six participants (50.0%) somewhat agreed, and three participants (25.0%) disagreed and did not believe that women are inclined to help other women advance (see Table 25). Three participants felt that women tend to be harder on other women, and two mentioned that some women might feel threatened by other women.

Interestingly, in response to Interview Question 4.2, all participants agreed that with more women in elected and executive positions, career advancement would improve because women would be compelled to help and advocate for other women. However,

when Interview Question 4.3 was posed, a mixed response was received. Perhaps this is

because this question required a more intrinsic response.

Table 25

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.3

Interview Question 4.3: Do you believe that women in positions of power are inclined to help other women advance?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	3	25.0%	Yes because I do (2xs), absolutely
Somewhat agree	6	50.0%	Threat (1), women tend to be harder on each other (1xs);
Disagree	3	25.0%	Women tend to be harder on each other (2xs), may feel threatened (1)
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 25.

Strongly agree. The following comments were made by participants who

strongly agreed that women in positions of power are inclined to help other women

advance:

Yes, absolutely.

Yes. But I am always fair. I look for merit and quality in both sexes.

Yes, I think so, because I am.

Somewhat agree. Responses from those participants who only somewhat agreed

were as follows:

Probably, but it depends on the woman.

Collectively, yes. But there are always exceptions.

Yes and no. It depends on the woman. We expect more out of them. We tend to be harder on them.

I want to believe that they are. I think most women do, but as execs, looking at who's best for the job can't be overlooked. If it were a woman, I would be inclined to help.

Depends on the female. Some female executives may see other women as a threat.

Disagree. The participants who did not agree that women in positions of power are inclined to help other women advance noted,

Not necessarily, because women are still the minorities in executive positions. They may be harder on other women so one does not misconstrue an unfair camaraderie.

It depends on the woman. Women tend to be harder on each other. In my experience, women don't help other women advance.

Not necessarily, because some women may be threatened, which will create a barrier. Not all women are willing to reach back.

Interview Question 4.4

Nine out of the 12 participants (75.0%) strongly agreed that women and men lead differently. Three out of the 12 participants (25.0%) disagreed (see Table 26). The theme that women are natural collaborators due to their role in society throughout history continued. Six participants (50.0%) made that correlation. Women are seen as consensus builders, relationship builders, inclusive, and sensitive to human dynamics. Seven participants, or 58.3%, believed that men have a command-and-control style of leadership; they are more linear, aggressive, and tend to lead with their ego.

Table 26

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.4

Interview Question 4.4: Differentiation between male and female leadership styles has been a common theme. Do you believe men and women lead differently? If so, how?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	9	75.0%	Women are natural collaborators (6xs), men have a command-and-control style (3xs)
Somewhat agree	0	0.0%	
Disagree	3	25.0%	Based on the individual
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 26.

Strongly agree. Participants who strongly agreed that women and men lead differently explained,

> Yes I do. Men are more linear and have expectations of how it needs to be done. Women have less of a value judgment on how it should be done—as long as it's done.

> Yes, I believe they do. I believe a lot of it is our nature. Men are generally more aggressive, and this is acceptable because they are expected to be that way. Not so much for women. Women who are aggressive are viewed as *bitchy*.

> Yes. Males have been raised in a command-and-control style. Women are more collaborative.

> Yes they do. Men operate on a command-and-control mentality. They engender confidence and charisma. Females cultivate trust, they are relationship builders. We don't have to be emotionless to be equally effective in leading.

> Yes I do. Men have a command-and-control style. Women are more holistic. They are collaborative and consensus builders by nature.

Absolutely I do. Women are more apt to recognize talent that is not being utilized. They look for ways to make people successful instead of getting rid of them.

Yes. Men lead more with their ego. I build the strength of my team—it's not about me, it's about us. Women are more inclusive.

Yes. Men ask less questions. They are less sensitive. They want what they want. They just see the facts and don't consider the whole picture. Women take all things into consideration.

Yes. I've noticed women are more into collaboration. Men are not.

Disagree. Those participants who disagreed stated,

No I don't. I think it's more based on the individual because not everyone is qualified to be a leader.

No, they don't lead differently. There may be a difference in sensitivity, but a good leader follows their principles in doing their job.

No I don't. I believe there are different styles of leadership, and people gravitate to what they're comfortable with. Men are often dominant and charismatic. Women have those same characteristics at those same high executive levels. Whatever your skill sets are, that's where you will tend to go. It all ties back to how we were conditioned.

Interview Question 4.5

Nine out of the 12 participants (75.0%) found that women's leadership styles are very positive and advantageous to advancement. Two participants (16.7%) found them somewhat positive, and one participant (8.3%) found the stereotype to be more of a negative (see Table 27). The theme that women have a predisposition to collaboration due to their historical role in society and culture continued, with seven, or 58.3%, of the participants making note of that. Another theme that emerged was that six, or 50.0%, of the participants viewed stereotypical feminine traits such as nurturing, consensus

building, and so forth as positive attributes that fit best with a collaborative organizational

structure, thereby giving women an edge.

Table 27

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.5

Interview Question 4.5: Historically, stereotypical feminine traits (such as being nurturers) have been viewed as negatives and a hindrance to leadership. What is your opinion regarding leadership styles and their role in women's advancement?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Very positive	9	75.0%	Humanistic (2xs), women are natural collaborators (7xs), feminine traits advantageous
Somewhat positive	2	16.7%	Risk taker, results oriented, balance is needed
Negative	1	8.3%	Success should be the marker, not gender
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 27.

Very positive. Participants who believed that women's leadership styles are very

positive stated,

> Women's traits are a positive. Nurturing is a positive. A leader is responsible for their employees, so praise, recognition, being humanistic, etc. are positive traits.

> Women as leaders are becoming more prevalent. I believe a woman's leadership style will help advancement because her traits are predefined in some ways to fit into collaborative leadership styles.

> Your style will pre-stage your outcome. A nurturing leadership style will probably yield better results because our environments are becoming more depersonalized, and at the end of the day, human beings are all about relationships.

Women have an advantage because women are more collaborative. We multitask in all facets of our lives. I think feminine traits are positive, like consensus building. Command-and-control leadership styles have been male—this is outdated. Us versus them, win or lose, black and white mentality is outdated in this environment.

I think being nurturing is positive. It's important to me that my staff knows I care and will do right by them. Women's traits only enhance their advancement to leadership.

I agree that women are nurturers. It is inherent in many ways. But I don't see it as a negative. It just reinforces that we are sensitive to the needs of our staff. I think men see this as a weakness if it comes from them.

Women are consensus builders. They don't just shove things down your throat. This is a positive in today's collaborative structures.

Definitely not a negative. Each individual brings something to the table. Women bring balance and provide a broader picture of the problem.

Nurturers, consensus builders, people gatherers are all positive attributes. They can be an advantage. It is not a weakness, nor does it affect knowledge or ability to lead.

Somewhat positive. Participants who believed that women's leadership styles are

somewhat positive noted,

Yes, women tend to be more humanistic in their leadership approach. But that's not how I lead, nor do I feel it is my skill set. I am a risk taker, and I'm results oriented. I don't think I'd be here in this position if I wasn't dominant.

A balance is needed. I have to fight the tendency to be *mothering* to my employees. My boss has told me I need to be more aggressive. I think men don't have to worry about their styles. They are just accepted and seen as leaders—not the same for women.

Negative. The participant who perceived women's leadership styles as negative

explained,

A leader walks the walk and talks the talk. The changing dynamics in our society would lead one to be more in tune with the workforce. I detest that there are

stereotypes that some women feed, like crying. I want to take the gender aspect out and bring it back to success.

Interview Question 4.6

Eleven of the 12 participants, or 91.7%, strongly agreed that participation in professional organizations would help increase women's career advancement. One participant somewhat agreed (see Table 28). The main theme was that the visibility and exposure gained through networking would increase career advancement for women and could open up more opportunities outside of the agency as well.

Table 28

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.6

Interview Question 4.6: Do you feel that professional organizations increase women's career advancement? If so, why?

Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	11	91.7%	Networking (8xs), visibility (4xs), exposure (1x)
Somewhat agree	1	8.3%	Not sure
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 28.

Strongly agree. The following are responses from participants who strongly agreed that professional organizations increase women's career advancement:

Yes, because it's a positive way to share stories, network, and interact.

Yes, even if indirectly. It may open up opportunities outside the agency that may lead to advancement.

Yes, absolutely, because they help you network, allow you visibility and another way to showcase your talent.

Yes, because they provide networking opportunities. Not just locally but nationwide as well, so you can make yourself marketable.

Yes I do, because it helps them network with others in their industry and to show their skills.

Yes I do. They allow you to meet fellow professionals and network without the stress or parameter limitations of work colleagues. Your job is not on the line.

Yes, because they help get you out of the box you are in. Others see your talents and they increase your visibility.

Yes, because it is about networks. You can find role models. You get exposure to knowledge. They allow you to take leadership roles within those organizations and get practice that you can then use for career advancement.

Yes I do. Women need that exposure. Networking is key for advancement. That's how people know who you are in the industry.

Yes, because you meet more people. The more people know you, the more opportunities to grow. Visibility is key.

Yes, it increases opportunities because of the visibility. It's an additional platform for social networking and name and face recognition.

Somewhat agree. The participant who somewhat agreed stated, "I don't know. I haven't utilized them. It may help those that do."

Interview Question 4.7

All 12, or 100%, of the participants strongly agreed that mentoring is a valuable tool toward career advancement (see Table 29). All but one participant practiced mentoring. That participant indicated that there were currently no women in her area to

mentor. She was in a highly male-dominated field. Two participants mentioned their

participation in formal mentoring programs.

Table 29

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.7

Interview Question 4.7: Do you believe mentoring among women is a valuable tool toward career advancement? If so, do you practice mentoring?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	12	100.0%	1 currently doesn't practice mentoring because there are no women in her area to mentor—male-dominated area.
Somewhat agree	0	0.0%	
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 29.

Strongly agree. The following quotes reflect the responses from participants

supporting their strong agreement that mentoring among women is a valuable tool toward

career advancement:

Yes. I do practice informal mentoring.

Yes, I believe it's very valuable. I do practice formal mentoring through the WTS program and also mentor informally. But it is a huge time commitment for both parties. The lessons I've learned the hard way, I like being able to pass it on.

Yes I do. I practice mentoring off and on. I wish I would have had a mentor in my career development.

Yes, and I believe I practice mentoring, and if I'm not a good mentor, then I think I've brought in women that are good mentors. That's important.

Yes I do, and yes I practice mentoring. Mentoring has been valuable to me in my career, so I mentor regularly. I offer advice and help women see their worth if they need to hear it.

Yes I do, and I practice it daily. It's more than just telling them what to do but explaining the reasons behind it.

Yes and yes. Women should also be mentored by men. There were no women in my career, so I was only mentored by men.

Yes, it is valuable. We have blinders, and mentors help. I do mentor. In fact, I helped found a mentor group outside of Metro years ago.

Yes I do, and I do practice mentoring. I've been mentored, and I believe in paying it forward.

Yes, it is important. I do mentor. I don't do it enough, but I think it's very important to help other women.

Yes, it is vital because you have to have some kind of role model. Mentoring is a two-way street. I mentor anyone that is interested in growing.

Yes I do. Unfortunately, there are currently no women in my area that I can mentor.

Interview Question 4.8

Eleven of the 12 participants, or 91.7%, strongly agreed that a formal mentoring program for women would be beneficial and would increase career advancement opportunities (see Table 30). One participant somewhat agreed in that she did not advocate for a formal mentoring program for women alone because it could reinforce that women are underdogs. Still, she acknowledged that women would probably be the ones to utilize the program if it existed. Three themes emerged. First, five participants (41.6%) felt that the visibility and exposure a formal mentoring program would bring could only help with advancement. Second, four, or 33.3%, of the participants noted that

an advantage of having a formal program would be to help women maneuver through the political nuances and pitfalls that exist. Third, 25.0% of participants felt that an advantage to a formal mentoring program would be that it would establish a career path early on, thereby speeding up advancement.

Table 30

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.8

Interview Question 4.8: How would a formal mentoring program increase a woman's career advancement opportunities?			
Response	#	%	Findings/Keywords/Comments
Strongly agree	11	91.7%	Visibility (2xs), exposure (3xs), political nuances (4xs)
Somewhat agree	1	8.3%	May reinforce that women are underdogs
Disagree	0	0.0%	
Total	12	100.0%	

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in Table 30.

Strongly agree. Participants who strongly agreed that a formal mentoring program would increase a woman's career advancement opportunities responded,

It would help establish a career path early, thereby advancing quicker.

Mentoring would help by focusing on soft skills and political sensitivities, on how to be perceived as a leader. But it must be part of the culture or it will not work, regardless of time and effort.

A woman would get personal coaching and would have an advocate. A mentor can help with visibility and is someone that can help you avoid political pitfalls. Having that formalized structure can help you navigate political situations, avoid minefields, and help better manage your own advancement.

It would help with promotability because by matching women with similar interests, it can be focused on career development. Plus, it also would help the mentor because, for instance, it helps me reflect and grow as well.

It would help by exposing them to the agency's culture and offering them an insight that others don't have. It provides a *leg up*.

It would help by exposing her to different people in her industry, by being able to compare herself amongst others and learn and adjust her skills accordingly.

It would line everyone up by skill sets and areas of interest, making the program applicable and based on common interests and goals.

It would help build a natural progression of upward mobility. It would provide visibility and exposure.

It would provide exposure.

It would offer bilateral accountability between mentor and mentee. Over time, a metric for success can be developed based on the program results.

Somewhat agree. The participant who only somewhat agreed that a formal mentoring program would be beneficial stated, "I don't advocate a formal program for women alone because it reinforces that we are underdogs, and we are just as capable. But I think women would participate more than men, helping them to promote."

Interview Question 4.9

The nature of Interview Question 4.9 did not lend itself to a positive versus negative, agree versus disagree, impact versus no impact type of a grouping because it asked the participants for their recommendations/opinions on strategies to promote career advancement and parity. Therefore, the data were analyzed by identifying trends and grouping them as such since there was overlap in many responses.

Six of the 12 participants' responses, or 50.0%, were related to networking. Five

of the 12 participants, or 41.7%, mentioned that advocating for parity was paramount.

Three of the 12 participants, or 25.0%, believed that education was critical—advanced

education in particular. And lastly, two of the 12, or 16.7% of participants, felt that

taking risks was very important (see Table 31).

Table 31

Breakdown of Participant Responses to Interview Question 4.9

Interview Question 4.9: Are there any strategies that you feel women should adopt/practice to promote career advancement and parity?

Trend	#	%
Network	6	50.0%
Advocate	5	41.7%
Education	3	25.0%
Take risks	2	16.7%

Note. The top four trends were chosen. The data still use the 12 participants as the measure, but due to the repetition of some strategies, the total percentage will exceed 100%.

The following are substantiating quotes from the interviews related to the data in

Table 31.

Trend 1: Networking. Responses supporting the theme of networking were as

follows:

Always include diverse team members. Be sure to network. Informal networking is the best strategy for advancement.

A woman must be well-equipped all around. She needs to be informed, well versed, in the know, involved, astute, etc. She must also make connections and always bring her *A* game.

Always be on top of the game. Fight for yourself. Build your network, including those above you that can promote you.

Education—get an advanced degree. Establish contacts and build relationships. Network, even informally.

Education is the base foundation. Networking, professional organizations, self-promotion, speaking out about inequities. We need to be each other's mentors.

Develop a women's executive group. Develop a mentorship program with a female executive sponsor.

Trend 2: Advocating. The following responses pertain to the theme of

advocating:

Women have to consistently advocate for parity. It cannot be left unattended. I have been consistently inspired by other women.

Keep talking about it. Keep making it clear and pointing out the differences. Awareness is important.

Always be on top of the game. Fight for yourself. Build your network, including those above you that can promote you.

Education is the base foundation. Networking, professional organizations, self-promotion, speaking out about inequities. We need to be each other's mentors.

Develop a women's executive group. Develop a mentorship program with a female executive sponsor.

Trend 3: Education. Responses supporting education included,

Education is key. Then be on point, be on time, be accurate. Be a team player. Be better 'cause you have to be.

Education is the base foundation. Networking, professional organizations, self-promotion, speaking out about inequities. We need to be each other's mentors.

Education—get an advanced degree. Establish contacts and build relationships. Network, even informally.

Trend 4: Take risks. Participants who supported risk taking stated,

Get out of your comfort zones. Take calculated risks. Be clear in communications with your bosses so that expectations are clear and goals can be met. Do some of what the boys do as well.

Be willing to take risks to move forward. Be open enough to see where the opportunities are. Remember what is important to you, and let that guide your career moves.

Summary of Key Findings

The findings support the Licea feminist collaborative theory model in that they illustrate a more humanistic organizational structure, highlight and confirm the changing nature of organizational structures to more collaborative frameworks for which women are often best suited due to intrinsic and social factors, and illustrate that these positive changes and shifts cannot be achieved without women themselves leading the charge, thereby legitimizing the feminist perspective. The combination of a humanist, feminist, and collaborative theory, the Licea feminist collaborative theory focuses on the best practices for women's career advancement into executive-level positions. Table 32 lists the key findings from the study as they pertain to each research question.

Table 32

Key Findings

Research question	Key findings
1. Is the glass ceiling still considered a significant barrier to women's advancement into top management/executive positions?	The results of this study support the overall literature review. The participants all agreed that the glass ceiling is still pervasive and that they had all been personally affected/impacted by it. They agreed that comparable pay is still an issue, occupational segregation is still commonplace, children and marriage are still barriers to advancement, and despite women in many cases having surpassed males in educational attainment, disparity at the top continues.
2. Have cultural shifts and organizational changes contributed toward increased opportunities that promote career advancement for women?	The results of the study indicate that these shifts and changes have increased opportunities for advancement. Namely, diversity has created unprecedented opportunity, even if by default. Organizations are more humanistic, with mandated policies offering protections, opportunities like training and development, and on-site childcare; the playing field is more level. Work–life balance continues to be an issue in that 66.7% of participants agreed that utilizing alternative work schedules was a barrier to advancement, even if offered. Technological advances and shifts to knowledge-based work are expected to increase career advancement. Men and women can compete equally intellectually, without the excuse of physical advantage. Technology allows work to be done not solely tied to a desk.
3. Does increased intra- and interagency collaboration in transportation improve a woman's career advancement opportunities?	The findings overwhelmingly suggest that a shift to collaborative organizational structures is expected to play a highly positive role in women's advancement. It is seen as a game changer of sorts. Two important themes emerged from this research question. First, participants noted a woman's natural predisposition to collaboration based on intrinsic and social values. Second, participants discussed that the visibility/exposure that a collaborative environment allows is expected to be a major contributor to advancement. The structure of reporting relationships is an area for continued examination. Participants noted that chain-of-command reporting is still needed in rank-and-file structures, but alternative reporting relationship models need to be developed for emerging collaborative structures.
4. Do emerging changes/shifts in society and governance offer increased career advancement opportunities for women, and what strategies are best to promote and maximize parity?	The results suggest that emerging changes/shifts in society and governance will offer increased career advancement opportunities for women. The theme that women have a predisposition to collaboration due to their historical role in society and culture continued, as well as the theme that visibility and exposure were key. This was supported with overwhelming support for networking and mentoring among women. Another theme that emerged when asked about leadership styles was that 11, or 91.6%, of the participants viewed stereotypical feminine traits such as nurturing, consensus building, and so forth as positive attributes that fit best with a collaborative organizational structure, thereby giving women an edge. The awareness and visibility that citizen participation and female representation bring are also seen as positive contributors.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Women in the public sector have historically been underrepresented in top
management and leadership positions due to traditional institutional and social structures
that have created obstacles in career advancement for women. The purpose of this study
was to examine the progression and perception of the glass ceiling at present, against the
backdrop of decades of changing social developments, including changing demographics,
economies, and technological advancements; legislative mandates; organizational
structures with a more humanistic approach to human capital; a shift toward collaborative
intra- and interagency organizational management; and an unprecedented active citizenry.
The goal was to examine and assess the current environment for women in the workforce,
what has worked, and what more is needed, and to develop strategies to continue to break
through the glass ceiling through an examination of the literature and secondary data and
by conducting semistructured interviews with executive-level women at the Los Angeles
County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA). Recent social changes
provide a different backdrop from which to approach the topic. If public administration
is in fact evolving from a traditional hierarchical model and the nature of the workforce
has changed, then reexamining the glass ceiling from this new perspective is timely.

This chapter further reviews the research findings provided in Chapter V. An overall discussion, summary of the findings, and summary table of responses is presented for each of the four research questions. Ultimately, recommendations are offered and conclusions made. To begin the review and discussion, it is important to restate the representativeness of the sample. LACMTA has a total of 86 executives, 26 of them female, representing 30.2% of LACMTA's executive team. Of the 26 female executives, 12 were participants in this study, representing a sampling of 46% of the available population. Women from all of LACMTA's major organizational branches, including Planning, Administration, Operations, Communications, and Construction, were included as participants. The data showed that female executives make less money than their male counterparts in each executive job class examined, and a comparison of median salaries showed that women make an average of $18,143 less than their male counterparts—about 12% less. The top two positions, CEO and deputy CEO, are filled by men and always have been. The majority of female executives (53%) are clustered in the bottom two job classes. Though men have 4.1 more years of experience on average, the higher volume of male executives, especially at the top levels, along with transportation being a historically male-dominated field, tempers this.

Findings by Research Question

Research Question 1

Is the glass ceiling still considered a significant barrier to women's advancement into top management/executive positions?

Discussion. This research question had five interview questions associated with it. Table 33 provides a summary of the interview questions and findings for the research question. The participants all agreed that the glass ceiling is still pervasive and that they had all been personally affected/impacted by it. They agreed that comparable pay is still an issue, occupational segregation is still commonplace, children and marriage are still barriers to advancement, and despite women in many cases surpassing their male counterparts in educational attainment, disparity at the top continues.

Summary of findings. All participants felt that they had been affected/impacted throughout their careers by the glass-ceiling phenomenon, and all agreed it still exists. Of the 12 participants, 83.3% felt very strongly affected, and notably the 16.7% who felt moderately affected were in technical fields. In addition, 41.6% of the participants noted that transportation was particularly difficult for women because it is historically a male-dominated field and still run by the "good old boy" network. One participant noted that the good old boy network is "very much alive, particularly in transportation. Advancement is often relationship based. You need someone to advocate for you. Institutionally, things haven't changed much. The people who control the organizations—CEOs and boards—are still male dominated."

Regarding education, all participants found it significant for career advancement. Of the 12 participants, 91.7% found education to be strongly significant. Most agreed that without it they would not be where they are today. A theme that women have to work harder, bring more to the table, and so forth than men was apparent. Further, 72.7%

Table 33

Interview Questions and Findings Related to Research Question 1

Interview question	Strongly affected	Moderately affected	Not affected	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Strongly significant	Somewhat significant	Not significant
1.1. The glass ceiling is a proven phenomenon for women in the workplace. What has been your experience with the glass-ceiling effect?	83.3%	16.7%							
1.2. Studies show that women are on par with men on educational achievements. How do you view education as it relates to career advancement for women?							91.7%	8.3%	
1.3. Studies show that a pay gap between genders continues in the workforce. What are your thoughts and experiences as they relate to comparable pay?				83.3%	16.7%				
1.4. Studies have shown that women and men have historically been channeled into different occupations. This is often referred to as occupational segregation. Do you believe this is still prevalent today, and if so why?				83.3%	16.7%				
1.5. Historically, women who are married and/or have children have experienced barriers to advancement. In your experience do you believe a woman's marital or parental status is still a barrier to advancement?				100.0%					

of participants with a degree had advanced degrees and noted that without the advanced degrees they would most likely not be in their current positions. Participants noted a double standard and disparity in this area. One participant described it as such: "Women are judged by educational credentials. A female needs to substantiate academic training and credentials, whereas it's not the same for men. They will justify lack of education with, 'He has X amount of years of equivalent experience.'"

All participants agreed that a pay gap between genders definitely exists. Ten participants, or 83.3%, felt personally very strongly impacted. The other two participants agreed that a pay gap exists but felt personally less affected. Notably, they both came in from the outside, and one was in a technical field. A theme emerged as a number of participants noted that the problem perpetuates itself throughout a woman's career because she starts low and never catches up. One participant offered an example of an issue she faced: "I've had men reporting to me that have made more than me. The solution was not to pay me equitably but to remove them from reporting to me."

Additionally, 83.3% of participants strongly agreed that occupational segregation still exists. The two main themes that emerged were that occupational segregation continues because transportation is a male-dominated field and because of social/cultural predispositions toward gender role expectations. Women are still in essence channeled into these fields because society's expectations of women's roles, particularly as caretakers, are still part of the U.S. culture.

In regard to women's marital or parental status still being a barrier to advancement, 100% of the 12 participants agreed that this is still a barrier. Two themes

that emerged were that all participants who had children either started their executive careers when their children were older or had children later in life when their careers were more established.

Research Question 2

Have cultural shifts and organizational changes contributed toward increased opportunities that promote career advancement for women?

Discussion. This research question had six interview questions associated with it. Table 34 provides a summary of the interview questions and findings for the research question. The results of the study indicate that cultural shifts and organizational changes have increased opportunities for advancement. Namely, diversity has created unprecedented opportunity, even if by default. Organizations are more humanistic, with mandated policies offering protections, and opportunities like training and development and on-site childcare help to level the playing field. Work–life balance continues to be an issue in that 66.7% of participants agreed that utilizing alternative work schedules was a barrier to advancement, even if offered. The overall theme for detractors of using alternative work schedules was that the perception of not being in the office would have damaging effects to advancement. Technological advances and shifts to knowledge-based work are expected to increase career advancement. Men and women can compete equally intellectually, without the excuse of physical advantage. Technology allows work to be done not solely tied to a desk.

Table 34

Interview Questions and Findings Related to Research Question 2

Interview question	Strong impact	Some impact	No impact	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Negative
2.1. In the past 20 years organizations have experienced many changes. Organizations have become more diverse. In your experience, how has diversity affected women in the workplace?							100.0%		
2.2. Organizations have become more humanistic, or employee focused. Examples are training, development, and educational assistance programs (EAP). What impact if any has this had on a woman's career advancement?	75.0%	25.0%							
2.3. Work–life balance is increasingly important as our society and workforce change. Organizations, such as LACMTA, often offer flexible work schedules and telecommuting. Do you believe these alternatives are viable for women, and if so do you believe that utilizing/ requesting these alternatives affects a woman's career advancement?				66.7%		33.3%			
2.4. The information age has created unprecedented ease of communication. The Internet, computer networks, portable devices, etc., no longer tie an employee to a desk. Do you believe these technological advances will play a role in women's career advancement opportunities?				75.0%	16.7%	8.3%			
2.5. In your experience, how have mandated policies, such as FMLA, affected women's career advancement?	50.0%	16.7%	33.3%						
2.6. Human capital has become more knowledge based. In other words, more specialized. How do you think this will affect women's career advancement?							83.3%	8.3%	8.3%

Summary of findings. Of the 12 participants, 100% felt strongly that diversity had a very positive effect on women in the workplace as related to career advancement. Participants noted that inclusion, whether by choice or forced due to mandates, has helped women tremendously. A notable quote was,

> It has helped by default. Institutions are very critically judged for lack of diversity. It is a different age. Some companies won't do business with companies that lack diversity. When you look at a company's executive team and board, what it looks like often represents what the company values—and their level of commitment to diversity.

Further, 75.0% of the participants agreed that more humanistic organizational structures were advantageous in career advancement. On-site childcare at LACMTA was referenced multiple times as a game changer. Regarding flexible work schedules, participants either strongly agreed about the negative impact to a woman's career advancement caused by utilizing these alternatives, or they disagreed and felt there was no negative impact. Of the 12 participants, 66.7% strongly agreed that it was a negative to career advancement, and 33.3% felt it had no negative impact. Two notable quotes follow:

> I wouldn't be where I am today if I utilized those options. Taking these options would be prohibitive to advancement. You can have it all, just not at the same time.

> There is an inherent bias that you want someone that is committed to the job. And even though I am a woman, I would have to be honest and say that it would [negatively] impact my selection of a candidate if they utilized these options.

Despite the importance of work–life balance, the availability of these options, and studies showing the many benefits, the negative perception associated with utilizing these options is prohibitive if career advancement is desired.

All but one of the 12 participants agreed that technological advances will play a

positive role in career advancement. Of those 11 participants, 75.0% strongly agreed and

16.7% somewhat agreed. The one participant who disagreed was in a technical field.

The fact that technology makes employees available 24/7 came up a number of times. A

theme that emerged was that it is a double-edged sword, in that executives never get any

down time or sense of being off the clock because an expectation of their availability

develops. Another important advantage that was raised is that gender cannot be used as

an excuse when technically women executives are available 24/7.

In addition, 66.7% of participants agreed that mandated policies such as the

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) have had a positive impact on advancement. The

main theme that emerged across the board on this topic was a strong belief that more so

than directly helping with career advancement, these mandated policies have been a

much-needed protection for women, thereby perhaps indirectly helping with

advancement. One participant noted,

> At the executive level you don't really utilize these options. As a manager I used
> FCML [family care/medical leave], but it didn't help me advance. It's seen as a
> *black mark* if utilized. It may help as a protection, and you may not get fired if
> you utilize it, but it doesn't help with advancement.

Another 83.3% of the participants believed that as human capital becomes more

knowledge based, this will have a very positive effect on career advancement for women.

The theme/idea emerged that competing on an intellectual level, rather than on a physical

level, will help level the playing field. One participant noted, "It's an advantage for

women. In the olden days, muscle mass was the advantage. Knowledge-based work

allows the people with the best brain to promote."

Research Question 3

Does increased intra- and interagency collaboration in transportation improve a

woman's career advancement opportunities?

Discussion. This research question had seven interview questions associated with

it. Table 35 provides a summary of the interview questions and findings for the research

question. The findings overwhelmingly suggest that a shift to collaborative

organizational structures exists, is in process, and is expected to play a highly positive

role in women's advancement. It is seen as a game changer. Two important themes

emerged from this research question. First, participants noted a woman's natural

predisposition to collaboration based on intrinsic and social values. Second, participants

discussed that the visibility/exposure that a collaborative environment allows is expected

to be a major contributor to advancement. An area for further research is the need to

develop new structures of reporting relationships and performance metrics since chain-of-

command reporting relationships are outdated in collaborative work environments.

Summary of findings. Of the 12 participants, 91.7% strongly agreed that

increased collaboration in organizations would have a very positive effect on career

advancement for women. Two important themes emerged from this question. First,

41.6% of participants discussed women's natural predisposition to collaboration based on

intrinsic and social values. Supporting this, one participant said,

Table 35

Interview Questions and Findings Related to Research Question 3

Interview question	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Highly significant	Somewhat significant	Not significant	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Negative	Trend 1: Team building	Trend 2: Support from the top	Trend 3: Relationship building
3.1. Organizations are no longer strictly hierarchical entities. Social issues/ impacts require collaboration. How do you think this will impact women in the workplace?							91.7%	8.3%				
3.2. What is your experience with collaboration in the workplace?				83.3%	16.7%							
3.3. Is collaboration required to accomplish the mandates of your position?	100.0%											
3.4. With the continued erosion of traditional hierarchical structures, do you believe chain-of-command reporting relationships are effective?	41.7%	58.3%										
3.5. How do you think increased collaboration will affect the organizational culture as it relates to women?							91.7%	8.3%				
3.6. The rules/guidelines to effective collaboration are essentially unwritten. What strategies do you believe will be useful in successful collaboration?										58.3%	41.7%	41.7%
3.7. What impact do you feel collaboration will have on women's career advancement?							100.0%					

> The fact that women are more social—it's been their role historically—means that they are more likely to [work] better collaboratively because it has been a role women have played in society. Men operate on a command-and-control mentality. Women are natural collaborators.

Second, 50% of participants discussed that the visibility, exposure, and opportunity to network that a collaborative environment allows is a major contributor to advancement. One participant explained, "It'll definitely help because you build networks which help your exposure and promotability. Plus, women in general seem to be better at collaboration than men."

Furthermore, 83.3% of the participants agreed that their experience with collaboration in the workplace was strongly significant, while 16.7% felt it was somewhat significant. Notably, four participants mentioned that they had received promotions as a direct result of the exposure and visibility received due to their previous involvement in collaborative efforts. One response supporting this was, "I've collaborated with other transit properties, state agencies, and it has broadened my horizons in the workplace. It has given me visibility via broad name and face recognition, which has led to promotability." All 12 participants, 100%, strongly agreed that collaboration is required to accomplish the mandates of their respective positions.

Additionally, 58.3% of participants somewhat agreed that chain-of-command reporting structures are effective. They recognized the need in rank-and-file units like Operations, but they felt that they are in essence outdated and that more matrixed, flatter reporting structures are required in collaborative structures. Two notable quotes follow:

> Yes, in rank-and-file units because accountability is needed. Operations and Construction are examples. But in other areas, no. There needs to be some collapse of hierarchy for effectiveness.

> Partially. Transportation is a postmilitary structure; therefore, chain of command is prevalent. But as the baby boomers retire, this will erode. A hybrid version of chain of command needs to evolve.

The other 41.7% of participants strongly agreed that chain-of-command reporting relationships not only are effective but are required in rank-and-file type of structures such as in LACMTA's Operations Unit. Additionally, two participants within this category believed that until performance metrics are altered, there is no alternative to chain-of-command reporting relationships.

All 12 participants felt that increased collaboration would have a positive effect on organizational culture as it relates to women. Of the 12, 91.7% felt it would have a very positive effect, and 8.3%, or one participant, felt it would have a somewhat positive effect. Keywords such as visibility and exposure continued to appear, as did the theme that women, due to their roles in society, have a natural inclination to collaboration and the skill sets it requires, such as consensus building. As one participant noted, "It will have a positive impact because women are relationship oriented. It will promote more positive working relationships. Women historically are consensus builders and collaborators by nature. It has been our role in society."

The participants were asked what strategies they felt would be useful to collaboration. Three strategies for successful collaboration emerged. Over half, or 58.3%, of responses were related to team building. Also, 41.7% mentioned that support from the top was paramount. Another 41.7% believed that relationship building was very

important. Team building and relationship building are strategies that lend themselves to what have emerged as positive and natural female traits/skills. Ultimately, 100% of participants agreed that collaboration would have a very positive impact on career advancement.

Research Question 4

Do emerging changes/shifts in society and governance offer increased career advancement opportunities, and what strategies are best to promote and maximize parity?

Discussion. This research question had nine interview questions associated with it. Table 36 provides a summary of the interview questions and findings for the research question. The results suggest that emerging changes/shifts in society and governance will offer increased career advancement opportunities for women. The theme that women have a predisposition to collaboration due to their historical role in society and culture carried over from Research Question 3, as did the theme that visibility and exposure are key to success. In this case, the visibility and exposure were directly related to the visibility brought about by increased citizen participation and networking in professional organizations, whereas in Research Question 3, it was directly related to the visibility and exposure brought about by collaboration in the workplace. Another theme that emerged when participants were asked about leadership styles was that 50% of participants viewed stereotypical feminine traits such as nurturing, consensus building, and so forth as

Table 36

Interview Questions and Findings Related to Research Question 4

Interview question	Strong impact	Some impact	No impact	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Negative	Trend 1: Network	Trend 2: Advocate	Trend 3: Education	Trend 4: Take risks
4.1. Citizen participation in government is more prevalent than ever. Do you believe this will improve women's career advancement? If so, how?	75.0%	16.7%	8.3%										
4.2. With more women than ever in elected and executive positions, do you believe that will increase career advancement opportunities for women?				83.3%	16.7%								
4.3. Do you believe that women in positions of power are inclined to help other woman advance?				25.0%	50.0%	25.0%							
4.4. Differentiation between male and female leadership styles has been a common theme. Do you believe men and women lead differently? If so, how?				75.0%		25.0%							
4.5. Historically, stereotypical feminine traits (such as being nurturers) have been viewed as negatives and a hindrance to leadership. What is your opinion regarding leadership styles and their role in women's advancement?							75.0%	16.7%	8.3%				

Table 36 (*continued*)

Interview question	Strong impact	Some impact	No impact	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Disagree	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Negative	Trend 1: Network	Trend 2: Advocate	Trend 3: Education	Trend 4: Take risks
4.6. Do you feel that professional organizations increase women's career advancement? If so, why?				91.7%	8.3%								
4.7. Do you believe mentoring among women is a valuable tool toward career advancement? If so, do you practice mentoring?				100.0%									
4.8. How would a formal mentoring program increase a woman's career advancement opportunities?				91.7%	8.3%								
4.9. Are there any strategies that you feel women should adopt/practice to promote career advancement and parity?										50.0%	41.7%	25.0%	16.7%

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positive attributes that fit best with a collaborative organizational structure, thereby giving women an edge.

Summary of findings. Of the 12 participants, 75% believed that citizen participation in government will have a strong impact in improving women's career advancement opportunities. Again, the words *visibility* and *exposure* continued to be prominent. Five participants discussed how visibility/exposure would ultimately lead to advancement because of recognition and rapport. Additionally, four participants talked about how diversity in the citizenry would help with advancement because women want to see themselves in those who assist them. And finally, two participants discussed how women tend to often be in community relations type of roles and are predisposed to building relationships and establishing rapport with members of the community.

All 12 participants agreed that with more women than ever in elected and executive positions, career advancement opportunities for women would increase. Of the 12, 83.3% strongly agreed. Two themes emerged. First, 58.3% of participants felt that once women were in these positions, they would in essence serve as advocates for women and women's issues, thereby increasing career advancement opportunities by default. Second, 33.3% of participants believed that by virtue of women attaining these positions, it makes it easier for other women because it becomes less of an anomaly, empowering women by making it seem more attainable and in essence helping to create a domino effect.

When participants were asked if they agreed that women in positions of power are inclined to help other women advance, the responses were varied. Of the 12 participants,

25% strongly agreed, 50% somewhat agreed, and 25% disagreed. This is interesting since in Interview Question 4.2 all participants agreed that with more women in elected and executive positions, career advancement would improve because women would be compelled to help and advocate for other women. Perhaps this is because this question required a more intrinsic response. Three participants felt that women tend to be harder on other women, and two mentioned that some women might feel threatened by other women.

Further, 75% of participants strongly agreed that women and men lead differently; 25% disagreed. The theme that women are natural collaborators due to their role in society throughout history continued. Six participants (50%) made that correlation. Women are seen as consensus builders, relationship builders, inclusive, and sensitive to human dynamics. Seven participants, or 58.3%, referenced that men have a command-and-control style of leadership; they are more linear, aggressive, and tend to lead with their ego.

When asked about women's leadership style, 75% of participants responded that women's leadership styles are very positive and advantageous to advancement. Another 16.7% found them somewhat positive, and one participant (8.3%) found the stereotype to be more of a negative. Her view was,

> A leader walks the walk and talks the talk. The changing dynamics in our society would lead one to be more in tune with the workforce. I detest that there are stereotypes that some women feed, like crying. I want to take the gender aspect out and bring it back to success.

The theme that women have a predisposition to collaboration due to their historical role in society and culture continued, with seven, or 58.3%, of the participants making note of that. Another theme that emerged was that six, or 50%, of the participants viewed stereotypical feminine traits such as nurturing, consensus building, and so forth as positive attributes that fit best with a collaborative organizational structure, thereby giving women an edge. One participant stated, "Women as leaders are becoming more prevalent. I believe a woman's leadership style will help advancement because her traits are predefined in some ways to fit into collaborative leadership styles."

In addition, 91.7% of participants strongly agreed that participation in professional organizations would help increase women's career advancement. One participant somewhat agreed. The main theme was that the visibility and exposure gained through networking would increase career advancement for women and could open up more opportunities outside of the agency as well.

All 12, or 100%, of the participants strongly agreed that mentoring is a valuable tool toward career advancement. All but one participant practiced mentoring. That participant indicated that there were currently no women in her area to mentor. She was in a highly male-dominated field. When asked about a formal mentoring program, 91.7% of participants strongly agreed that a formal mentoring program for women would increase career advancement opportunities. One participant somewhat agreed in that she did not advocate for a formal mentoring program for women alone because it could reinforce that women are underdogs. Still, she acknowledged that women would probably be the ones to utilize the program if it existed. Three benefits to a formal

program emerged. First, 41.6% of participants felt that the visibility and exposure a formal mentoring program would bring could only help with advancement. Second, 33.3% of participants noted that an advantage of having a formal program would be to help women maneuver through the political nuances and pitfalls that exist. Third, 25% of participants felt that an advantage to a formal mentoring program would be that it would establish a career path early on, thereby speeding up advancement. As one participant stated,

> A woman would get personal coaching and would have an advocate. A mentor can help with visibility and is someone that can help you avoid political pitfalls. Having that formalized structure can help you navigate political situations, avoid minefields, and help better manage your own advancement.

Finally, when asked what strategies women should adopt/practice to promote career advancement and parity, four strategies emerged. Six of the 12 participants' responses, or 50%, were related to networking. Five of the 12 participants, or 41.7%, mentioned that advocating for parity was paramount. Three of the 12 participants, or 25%, believed that education was critical—advanced education in particular. And lastly, two of the 12, or 16.7% of participants, felt that taking risks was very important.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following are recommendations for future research:

1. This study only focused on a small homogeneous group of female executives in transportation in Los Angeles, California. It could be applied on a larger scale in a number of ways. One would be to expand it to other transportation agencies nationwide and see if the trends continue. Another would be to expand the study to

other government agencies in Southern California or the state and see if anything is unique to transportation or similar in government in general. Also, this study only included executive females, so the study can be expanded to include male executives. Lastly, the study can be applied at the middle-management level to get the perspective of those still climbing the ladder.

2. The study showed that though collaboration is in full force in organizations, organizational structures such as reporting structures remain traditional in hierarchy. Work on different reporting structures needs to be done, such as matrixed reporting relationships, performance metrics for evaluations, and so forth.

3. The theme that women lead differently than men and their leadership styles are more suited for collaborative organizational structures needs more exploration. This is an emerging theme that can be maximized with more research and application.

4. Work–life balance is an area that needs great improvement. Research has shown that the incorporation of flextime, telecommuting, the facilitation of childcare and parental leave, technology, and so forth expand opportunities for women to continue working and gaining experience, despite family obligations that would otherwise interfere with their promotion potential. However, this study showed that utilizing these alternatives was a barrier to advancement. Since women are still the primary caretakers, reasonable accommodations should be available so that women who are qualified for promotions are not penalized for being female. Perhaps more research and awareness on this topic can shift perceptions.

Conclusions

The results of this study support the overall literature review and the researcher's position that emerging changes in social and organizational structures, especially a shift to more humanistic and collaborative organizational structures, will create career advancement opportunities for women. The study found that the glass ceiling continues; despite women having achieved equal, if not more, education and credentials as men, occupational segregation continues, marriage and children are still perceived as barriers to advancement, and equal pay for equal work is still an issue.

Organizational changes based on more humanistic organizational policies and legal mandates have had a positive impact on women in the workplace. But more so than having advanced women's careers, they have helped level the playing field, setting the stage for increased advancement, such as with technological advances and training and development. They have also offered protections in employment, such as with FMLA, which have been critical since women continue to be primary caretakers. These changes, along with the proliferation of diversity in the workplace, evolving society, and changes in organizational structure and management, are expected to advance women's careers. Despite the importance of work–life balance and studies showing the many benefits of flexible/alternate work schedules, the negative perception associated with utilizing these options is prohibitive if career advancement is desired. This is ironic, since one of LACMTA's objectives is to reduce congestion.

The shift from traditional hierarchical structures to collaborative structures will have an enormous impact on women in the workplace and will provide unprecedented

career advancement opportunities. The study found that this is expected due to the visibility and exposure that is required of this new collaborative structure and because women believe they have an edge in this new structure due to a natural predisposition to a skill set more suited to collaboration based on women's historical role in society. However, since this a rapidly evolving structure, management/organizational reporting structures need to evolve as well.

The study showed that emerging changes in society and governance will be contributors to women's career advancement. The increase in citizen participation in governance is positive since citizens want to see themselves in those who represent them, and women have a history of working in areas like public/community relations and know how to build relationships. The increase in female elected officials provides advocacy and empowerment. Women's participation in professional organizations, and the networking and visibility it provides, can only open doors to advancement. Mentoring is a tool that all women believe in and practice or have practiced, and it needs to be formalized for further facilitation in career growth. Just as professional women's organizations exist for those who want to utilize them, formal mentoring programs have the potential to facilitate growth. The study showed that women do believe they lead differently than men. What once were seen as negative traits to leadership are now positive and a better fit in collaborative management structures. Women are generally more humanistic, nurturing, consensus builders, relationship builders, multitaskers, and so forth. Participants felt these traits gave women an edge and were a better fit than a traditional command-and-control male approach to leadership. Finally, when asked what

strategies women should adopt/practice to promote career advancement and parity, four strategies emerged that, if practiced, can only lead to advancement: networking, advocating, education, and taking risks.

Though the glass ceiling still exists, women are undeniably on the rise. The shifts in society and the workplace are irrefutable, and as time marches on, so does progress. Not all women want to be executives and not all women are suited for it, but for those who do and are, the future looks promising. But there is work still to be done. Work–life balance has to be looked at, especially since women are still the primary caretakers and should not be penalized for it. Women need to look out for each other, advocate for each other, and take risks by way of getting out of their comfort zones. Occupational segregation will continue unless women enter these fields. Women must educate themselves in nontraditional female fields like engineering and the sciences. Joining professional organizations, networking, and mentoring are key to visibility and advancement. Lastly, women must be committed to growth and must know that they will have to work harder than men, have more education and credentials, and continue to push on the glass ceiling until it shatters. One thing is clear: The playing field is by no means equal or fair, but women are now in the game.

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

University of La Verne
Institutional Review Board

TO: Irma Licea, Doctor of Public Administration Program

FROM: University of La Verne, Institutional Review Board

RE: **2012-CBPM-28-Licea- Today's Glass Ceiling: Executive Women's Experiences and Perceptions Regarding Career Advancement into Executive Leadership Positions in Transportation**

The research project, cited above, was reviewed by the College of Business and Public Management IRB Committee. It was determined that the research activity has minimal risk to human participants, and the application received an Expedited review. The application was approved with one additional condition:

- **Please include a summary of the follow-up "probing" questions in the notice of completion to be submitted to the IRB at the conclusion of the research.**

A copy of this approval letter is required to be included as an appendix to your completed dissertation. The project may proceed to completion, or until the **date of expiration of IRB approval, October 1, 2013.** Please note the following conditions applied to all IRB submissions:

No new participants may be enrolled beyond the expiration date without IRB approval of an extension.

The IRB expects to receive notification of the completion of this project, or a request for extension within two weeks of the approval expiration date, whichever date comes earlier.

The IRB expects to receive prompt notice of any proposed changes to the protocol, informed consent forms, or participant recruitment materials. No additional participants may be enrolled in the research without approval of the amended items.

The IRB expects to receive prompt notice of any adverse event involving human participants in this research.

There are no further conditions placed on this approval.

The IRB wishes to extend to you its best wishes for a successful research endeavor. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Marcia Godwin	Marcia Godwin, Ph.D.	October 1, 2012
Approval Signature	IRB Director/Chair	Date

For the Protection of Human Participants in Research
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