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This chapter includes an overview of existing and emerging literature on gender and student development and key opportunities for leadership educators' practice to broaden our understanding of gender and student leadership.

Gender and Student Leadership: A Critical Examination

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The act of leadership is a personal endeavor that involves bringing ourselves to our leadership experiences, development, and learning. Among the identities, characteristics, and experiences that shape individuals' lives, gender usually plays a salient role. Within this chapter, we focus on gender rather than sex, and we do this to reinforce the fact that gender and sex are not synonymous. Sex is typically determined at birth and based upon biological criteria, such as one's genitalia or chromosomes (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Gender is a socially constructed concept that encompasses "the range of mental or behavioral characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between and across, masculinity and femininity" (West & Zimmerman, p. 126). Scholars such as Judith Butler (1993) argue that gender is, in essence, performance. Butler highlights that "performativity is thus not a singular 'act,' for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms" (p. 12). As a result, this performativity of gender is something that each of us does, following (knowingly or not) gender norms in a systemic way that creates and reinforces privileged hierarchies to those who meet those gender role expectations most often. This plays a role in leadership as well. After all, if we are all gendered beings, whether we are conscious of it or not, our life experiences—and thus our leadership experiences—are shaped by our identities, particularly our gender.

We focus this chapter on student leadership and gender. Research on children and young adults suggests the importance of gender in one's lived experiences and development (Patton, Renn, Guido, & Quaye, 2016; Ruble, Martin, & Berenbaum, 2006). Because there is an increased understanding of how gender mediates one's development, leadership development programs can play a critical role in helping students understand the role gender

plays in their leadership journeys. In this chapter, we provide an overview of the topic of gender and leadership with a focus on students (precollege and college). Additionally, we critically examine the current knowledge base on gender and leadership and identify opportunities to expand the research base and conversation in order to advance the leadership development of students. In this chapter, and the volume as a whole, we build upon the suppositions of leadership and gender presented in the Editors' Notes. Readers are encouraged to look back to these notes as they navigate the volume.

Gendered Conceptions of Leadership

Historically, leadership was an inherently masculine concept, defined by those who held the positional roles of leaders—predominantly White, privileged men (Northouse, 2016). People from underrepresented groups, including women and people of color, were often not associated with leadership and were regularly left out of the leadership conversation and research (Komives & Dugan, 2010). Further, gender identities beyond the strict gender binary of men and women were not included in the conversation or the research on leadership. Industrial views of leadership came to be defined as hierarchical and transactional, denoted by position; thus, concepts of power and privilege were tied with leadership. Accordingly, people from underrepresented groups did not identify with, and even resisted, the label of leader and concept of leadership; the portrayal, assumptions, and historical hegemonic connotations of leadership did not reflect their experiences (Komives & Dugan, 2010).

Eventual societal shifts led to movement in leadership toward more postindustrial and democratic perspectives, which began to take shape in the leadership literature in the 1970s (Rost, 1991). Postindustrial perspectives of leadership acknowledged the important role of *others* in the leadership process and shifted the concept of leadership to emphasize reciprocal relationships, collaboration, and process-oriented models (Komives & Dugan, 2010). Further progression of leadership theory acknowledges concepts of social constructivism, feminist theory, postmodernism, and critical theory. These paradigms "[gave] voice to historically marginalized populations…and revealed and validated the leadership perspectives long held by many women and those from collectivist cultures who have historically valued collaboration, interdependent relationships, community responsibility, and systemic views" (Komives & Dugan, p. 112). Contemporary perspectives on leadership make the concept more accessible for people of all genders and allow for a broader and more inclusive range of acceptable and valued behaviors and styles of leadership beyond narrow and predominately masculine approaches. In fact, many of the leadership behaviors and styles desirable in contemporary organizations reflect more relational, democratic, and process-oriented approaches to leadership, what many have referred to as *feminine* leadership qualities (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Although the scholarly conversation on leadership has shifted to be more inclusive and inviting, traditional industrial notions of leadership still permeate Western society and influence how people conceptualize leadership and how they view themselves and others in terms of leadership. Research points to marginalized populations of students, including women students (Haber, 2011); students of color (Arminio et al., 2000); and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students (Porter, 1998; Renn & Bilodeau, 2005a, 2005b), disassociating with the term *leader* and resisting the historical and societal connotations of who a leader is or should be.

With an aim of developing leadership in *all* students, it is important to challenge these traditional notions of leadership and promote inclusive, contemporary approaches to leadership. As leadership educators, it should be our goal to teach students at an early age that leadership does not favor one gender over others and that we all have the capacity for leadership. To do so, it is critical for leadership educators to consider leadership through the lens of gender in order to promote transformative leadership learning and development for young people. It is from this stance that we frame this chapter and the volume as a whole.

Overview and Critique of Gender and Student Leadership

Although the literature and research base on gender and leadership is growing, it remains limited and has many gaps that warrant attention. Much of the focus on *gender* in society has been fairly lopsided, and we see this play out when looking at leadership and gender. We identify three main ways in which the focus on gender and leadership is uneven: (a) historically, and even today, the work on gender and leadership is often focused either solely or heavily on women rather than people of all genders, (b) traditional conceptions and studies of leadership assume an inherent and unexamined masculine referent; and (c) research often narrows in on differences between men and women, which limits the opportunity for understanding identity groups in more depth and leaves out individuals who do not identify as men/boys or women/girls.

Bannon and Correia's (2006) book, *The Other Half of Gender*, highlighted the long-time connection between the term gender and women, whereby the terms are often treated as synonyms; this association is understandable due to the historical (and still existing) marginalization of women in society—why would one need to focus on men? Well, we challenge this, as do other scholars. For example, Harper and Harris (2010) argue, "The one-sided mishandling of gender occurs in most social spaces, including college and university campuses . . . student activities, resources, and courses offered on 'gender' are almost always about rape and sexual assault, empowering and protecting the rights of women" (p. 5). This pattern exists when examining gender and leadership as well, and we

challenge this assumption that gender is synonymous with women. We believe a focus on individuals of all genders is necessary in leadership education.

Much of the research on gender and student leadership compares girls/women and boys/men in terms of leadership outcomes, such as leadership styles, beliefs, behaviors, experiences, and efficacy (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Dugan, Komives, & Segar, 2008; Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Komives, 1992). The research points to women as having more collaborative, transformational, or democratic styles and behaviors, often labeled as *feminine*, and men having more hierarchical, transactional, or authoritative styles and behaviors, often labeled as *masculine* (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Although these studies tend to show differences in leadership behaviors and outcomes based on gender, the effect sizes in these differences are often small (see, e.g., Dugan et al., 2008), meaning that although differences do exist, the magnitude of the difference is small and should be examined critically. Thus, we caution readers not to make blanket assumptions and generalizations about student leadership and gender. Once educators dig deeper into understanding the leadership experiences of these groups, much more is revealed that we believe is not only more interesting but also more practically useful for leadership development.

A few studies focus on girls/women or boys/men more specifically and provide insight into understanding students as an identity group in more depth. For instance, a recent study from Harvard University explored the gender socialization of girls and women and found that girls often had lower self-efficacy in their ability for leadership and reinforced this type of behavior among one another (Weissbourd & Making Caring Common, 2015). There has been an increasing amount of attention paid to women's leadership, particularly for young women in high school or college (Girl Scout Research Institute, 2008; Haber, 2011; Haber-Curran, 2013; Komives, 1994; Salmond & Fleshman, 2010). Although this attention is important, Haber-Curran and Sulpizio, in Chapter 3, argue that much of the research perpetuates the same ideas and perspectives that reinforce outdated beliefs that women are supposed to lead in certain ways and men are supposed to lead in other ways. In their review of the literature on young men and leadership, in Chapter 4, Beatty and Tillapaugh outline the significance of the emerging research on masculinity on college men's lives, but often this work does not explore men's leadership practices. In fact, there is a dearth of literature on the experiences of boys and young men in leadership (Tillapaugh & Haber-Curran, 2016). Likewise, there is a substantial void in the literature and research examining trans* and gender-variant students. Recent emerging research attempts to address this gap in the literature to illuminate trans* and gender-nonconforming students and their leadership (Dugan, Kusel, & Simounet, 2012; Jourian, 2014, 2016). In Chapter 5, Jourian and Simmons call for the need to trouble leadership because the ways in which leadership educators often frame leadership may tend

to reinforce privilege and oppression, further marginalizing trans* and gender-nonconforming students in their leadership.

There are many ways in which the discussion, research, and practice of gender and student leadership can be advanced. We provide opportunities for this advancement in the next section.

Opportunities to Grow the Conversation

There is a need to move past the deficits that currently exist within the current research and scholarship on gender and leadership in order to strengthen the research base and enhance practice. We feel strongly that leadership educators may better serve their students when contemplating ways to integrate the following concepts within their practice.

Using Intersectionality as a Lens for Leadership.   Over the past decade, intersectionality has become an emergent concept within education. Kimberlé Crenshaw first coined the term "intersectionality" in 1989. As a critical legal scholar, Crenshaw (1989, 1991) viewed intersectionality as a theoretical and conceptual framework to understand the interlocking systems of power, privilege, and oppression and how those systems influence individuals' lives through their multiple social identities. Arguably, one of the most important aspects of intersectionality is its focus on how systemic power is granted (or not granted) to individuals based upon aspects of their social identities (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Jones & Abes, 2013; Mitchell, Simmons, & Greyerbiehl, 2014; Tillapaugh & Nicolazzo, 2014). This is connected to the topic of leadership, given the role that power and authority often have within one's leadership practice. Many contemporary leadership theories and models aimed at students stress leadership that advocates self-understanding and congruence of one's values, which are often socialized through our multiple social identities (Higher Education Research Institute, 1996; Komives, Lucas, & McMahon, 2013); this provides an avenue for leadership educators to help students examine how their multiple social identities influence the ways that they view and practice leadership. We have an imperative to help our students through their leadership development to examine issues of power, privilege, and oppression to move toward a more socially just world. We challenge leadership educators to consider the ways they can help students make meaning of the intersections between identity and leadership for themselves and others.

Focusing on Gender and Leadership Rather Than Difference Between Genders.   As we discussed in our critique of the current literature on gender and leadership, much focus has been placed on the differences between men and women as leaders. In addition to the detrimental issue of erasing those who identify beyond the labels of women and men, in general we see this focus as problematic. Very little of the current research has sought to understand how individuals view or practice leadership using their gender as a lens, particularly in concern with student leadership. However, there are a

few notable studies that have sought to view student leadership through the lens of gender (see Haber, 2011; Haber-Curran, 2013; Oronato & Musoba, 2015; Romano, 1996; Tillapaugh & Haber-Curran, 2016). Given the expanding discourse on gender as well as leadership in our society, educators need to have a better understanding of women, men, and transgender or gender-nonconforming individuals and how they understand and practice their leadership rather than just examining leadership differences between genders.

Emphasizing Leadership Development, Identity, and Growth. There are numerous narratives on the evolution of leadership approaches. A common Western narrative holds that the earliest understandings and theories of leadership emphasized the "great man/men" and the leadership traits of men in powerful positions (Northouse, 2016). As a result, there has continued to be a great deal of connection between leadership and those having power and authority through positional leadership roles, which historically have been White men. Yet, we argue, in conjunction with other postindustrial leadership scholars, that we must broaden our focus away from positional leaders toward leadership development that provides a space for everyone to have the potential to practice leadership. Research focused on leadership identity (e.g., Day, Harrison, & Halpin, 2008; Komives et al., 2009; Lord & Hall, 2005) provides insights for leadership educators in understanding how leadership identity is developed over one's lifespan. We encourage leadership educators to consider the ways that they can create developmental interventions through the frame of intersectionality that help their students continue to grow and stretch their understandings of leadership through their practice and through critical self-reflection and praxis. By extending the focus beyond positional leadership, we can make inroads to helping more students, such as women, trans* individuals, and others from historically underrepresented populations in leadership, see themselves as leaders and encourage direct engagement. When reviewing your campus leadership programs, how many of the programs, workshops, or curricular elements are focused on positional leadership roles? How can we create marketing efforts that capture students' interest beyond those who are already involved in our leadership development programs? In what ways we can promote leadership in conjunction with personal growth and development? These are just a few questions we encourage leadership educators to contemplate as they make their work more gender expansive.

Embedding Theory and Practice Within Leadership Curriculum. As leadership educators, we know that we often turn to leadership theories and models to inform our work. However, we find that sometimes within this work, we do not always adequately consider the ways that these theories and models can be embedded into curriculum and cocurricular programming to further student learning. For instance, many of the popular textbooks used for college student leadership provide only a cursory discussion about gender and leadership; others may talk only about gender

and leadership centered solely on women with little attention paid to men or trans* individuals. This missed opportunity by scholars is unfortunate given the heightened period of gender identity development and leadership development by young people during their high school and/or college years (Komives et al., 2009; Patton et al., 2016). Often we also see programs designed to address an issue or hot topic on campus without considering the ways that we can be thoughtful and developmental in crafting learning opportunities for students, particularly as they connect to gender and leadership. We encourage leadership educators to access the great amount of resources and scholarship that exist to increase our efforts on our campuses. Additionally, we urge educators to be good critical consumers of the leadership work out there. When reviewing research on gender and leadership, how inclusive are the scholars? Who is left out and missing in the research? Do the research or practice pieces that you're reading uphold the gender binary as men and women or talk about leadership as only masculine and feminine? Are you accessing works grounded in empirical research, or are you finding pieces written by "armchair theorists" who have some general thinking about concepts related to leadership? We are not saying that works not grounded in research are not helpful or useful, but it is important to realize that leadership theory and practice cannot be a one-size-fits-all product. Integrating theories that have been empirically tested and researched lends credibility to practice that can assist our students' learning.

Challenging Limiting Constructs of Gender as They Relate to Leadership

As noted previously, much of the current literature on gender and leadership emphasizes the differences of leadership by gender, setting up a dichotomous, yet often false, adversarial relationship. We believe that we are living in a time when we should be moving toward empowering everyone, regardless of gender, to engage in leadership while also challenging the limiting constructs of gender as they relate to leadership. What do we mean by this? We see traditional gender roles and expectations reinforcing the gender binary of men and women, which is problematic given that the concept of gender goes well beyond just men or women. Issues of hegemony continue to perpetuate the belief that men should be assertive as leaders and should be more engaged in executive decision making, whereas women leaders should be collaborative, supportive, and less assertive (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Many students find this type of thinking problematic because they do not subscribe strictly to "masculine" or "feminine" leadership approaches but instead find themselves drawn to leadership styles that pull from both masculine and feminine approaches, as well as more androgynous leadership styles and behaviors (Haber, 2011; Tillapaugh & Haber-Curran, 2016). Making certain leadership behaviors and styles gendered is problematic, as there are many desirable outcomes that should be embraced by all leaders.

Leadership educators can play a vital role in helping students recognize how their own views of leadership are shaped by their gender role expectations of themselves; further, leadership educators can help students recognize how their gender role expectations may affect how they view others as leaders. By understanding how our biases and stereotypes play a role in how we perform and practice leadership and how we make sense of how others perform and practice leadership, we can embrace gender-expansive approaches to leadership.

In order to challenge the limited constructs of gender present in society and in leadership expectations, leadership educators must engage in self-work to critically unlearn the ways that gender has been socialized in their lives. Expanding the ways that we conceptualize gendered styles of leadership also means rejecting the gender binary of woman/man and allowing for people of all genders to find leadership practices that work for them without labeling a leadership practice as "masculine" or "feminine."

Acknowledging Systemic Genderism and Sexism and Their Impact on Leadership

Connected to the previous section, we must acknowledge the ways systemic genderism and sexism play a role in how we view leadership within our society. For our purposes, we use Wilchins's (2002) definition of genderism, or how the two-gender binary is systemically privileged within our society. Additionally, we use hooks' (2000) conceptualization of sexism, defined as exploitation and oppression based on biological sex. Both genderism and sexism play a role in reinforcing dominant views on gender and sex roles and expectations. These roles and expectations then have a bearing on dominant views of leadership, yet most of these views and beliefs are reinforced in our consciousness as status quo.

We believe leadership educators have a responsibility to help their students understand and unpack the ways in which status quo thinking can become problematic and dangerous. For example, if we interrogate dominant views on leadership from a gendered lens, we can see the places where sexism and genderism uphold an inherent bias toward men as leaders and more "masculine" approaches to leadership as being valued more within society. Yet, these ideas have been handed down generation to generation with the socialization of gender and no longer represent the realities of our world. Therefore, we must critique the systems in which we are a part, particularly those informed by sexism and genderism, to help provide a more equitable society for all individuals and consider the ways that their gender affects their leadership development.

Shifting Our Mental Models of What Leadership Can Look Like

Connecting our previous conversations on moving away from focusing on a positional leadership paradigm and intersectional views of leadership,

we argue that merging discussions of leadership and social justice can serve as an opportunity for transformative learning about self, others, systems, and leadership (see Guthrie, Bertrand Jones, & Osteen, 2016). In this time of burgeoning social movements, particularly those around identity-based politics in educational institutions, we have ripe and rich examples of leadership in action. Students are working to make positive social change within their communities to interrogate power structures that have served to maintain dominant discourse and subordinate marginalized groups and individuals. These movements are largely led by student organizations with flattened hierarchies and grassroots methods, which serve as an important counterpoint to the traditional notions of leadership and management, bound in hierarchy and task orientation (see Gismondi & Osteen, 2017). We applaud the notion of integrating lessons learned from these movements within leadership education to help all students consider how everyone can find their voice and engage in meaningful change within their communities, regardless of gender or positional title. Shifting our mental models of what leadership looks like, at the earliest possibility, can help turn the tide on outdated beliefs of leadership, particularly from a gendered perspective, that no longer serve our society adequately.

Conclusion

As educators and scholars interested in the connections between gender and leadership, we believe that leadership educators have the potential to offer transformative educational experiences to their students. Messages about gender are deeply embedded in our society, so much so that often these messages are replicated and upheld as status quo. Leadership theories and models often reinforce these messages to our students. It is important that leadership educators reflect on how the socialization of gender roles may influence their views and expectations of students based on their gender. Engaging in this self-work can help leadership educators challenge their own assumptions, expectations, and mental models of gender and leadership. Through this, leadership educators can better serve their students, encouraging and empowering them to take up leadership behaviors that are not restricted by gendered expectations and to challenge them to not hold similar gendered expectations of others. We encourage leadership educators to be bold and innovative in their work and to help students become critical consumers of what they are learning about leadership through a critical, gendered lens. Our world needs leaders who are collaborative, inclusive, and change makers. It is our hope that leadership educators might explore the subsequent chapters in this sourcebook to contemplate the ways in which students can connect around discussions on gender and how leadership can be used as a vehicle for student learning and development. Our students are living in a world that requires new ways of thinking about

identity, particularly gender, and leadership; our leadership programs should be a reflection of that world.

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