Spring 2012

The effects of feminism and gender on the organization

Alyssa Shiree Richardson
James Madison University

The Effects of Feminism and Gender on the Organization

_____

A Project Presented to

the Faculty of the Undergraduate

College of Business

James Madison University

_____

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Bachelor of Business Administration

_____

by Alyssa Shiree Richardson

May 2012

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Management, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Business Administration.

FACULTY COMMITTEE: HONORS PROGRAM APPROVAL:

Project Advisor: Eric Stark, Ph.D.,   Barry Falk, Ph.D.,
Associate Professor, Management   Director, Honors Program

Reader: Brian Charette, Ph.D.,
Part-Time Faculty, Management

Reader: Marshall Pattie, Ph.D.,
Assistant Professor, Management

Table of Contents

Implications for Organization

List of Figures

Tables

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank several people for their help during this thesis process. First, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Stark, who always offered encouragement and support throughout the entire process. I would like to thank my reader and professor, Dr. Charette, for his many recommendations and reliable feedback. I would also like to thank my professor, Dr. Pattie, for agreeing to read and support this thesis. I am thankful for the JMU Honors Program for providing me with the opportunity to expand my knowledge on this subject. I am thankful to the many public and private scholarships I have received in support of my continued education. Most importantly, I am thankful to my mother, Tammara, for encouraging my academic diligence, love of reading, and always challenged me to do my best.

Introduction

The interest for this research stemmed from the modern debate on the role of gender differences highlighted by our American culture's increasing emphasis on political correctness. Media attention promotes feminists calling for equal treatment of women in the workplace, claiming that there are no differences between women and men. As a female business student, I was curious how diminishing the differences between men and women affects the workplace. Is the feminist version of equality beneficial or harmful to women in the workplace? Is it possible to ignore the recognized gender differences in biology, communication, and leadership for the sake of equality? The purpose of this research is to explore these questions while bringing attention to gender differences with regard to implications for the organization. Women's role in the U.S. workforce has expanded over time, specifically in the post World-War II era. The expectations of nondiscrimination in the workplace and push for absolute equality (by feminism rejecting differences between the sexes) push women to work just like men. This study begins with the controversial debate about gender differences, provides some history into women's role in the workplace (specifically post World War II), analyzes women's roles in management, and concludes with practical implications for how organizations can benefit by incorporating women into their organization.

My research has revealed that changes to "absolute equality" between men and women in the workplace actually negatively affects women. If gender differences are ignored, women are then expected to act against their natural character in order to maintain the image of the "male leader." If organizations first recognize the natural gender differences between men and women, and then use those differences to their advantage, they will be more successful competitively.

Context: The Modern Debate on Gender Differences

The definition of gender is "distinguishing between male and female" (Bennett-Alexander & Pincus, 2001). Our culture is in a great debate about the role of gender differences in our society. Political correctness is "being overly concerned with social change, esp. in the avoidance of giving offense" (Pickett, 2007). America has become a culture consumed with political correctness and advocates want to reduce the value on natural differences between men and women so not to offend those who feel they don't conform to their natural gender. Our media is so concerned with not offending those who do not agree with the natural laws of human nature that truth is denied. The conservative worldview recognizes that there exist inherent gender differences between men and women. Whether resulting from a creator, simple biology, or evolutionary roles of gender based on the need for survival, they all agree that the differences between men and women are undeniable. The more politically correct and increasing worldview is that any differences seen between the genders are the result of unequal socialization. This more radical view is supported by feminists who believe it is the patriarchal society which oppresses women by expecting them to conform to motherhood and household responsibilities. They advocate that women are on equal terms with men and should be treated identically

Current feminist activists are fighting for the cause of "feminism" in a gender war that few women support or understand. Egalitarian feminists are progressives, also labeled as radicals, who want to be equal to men in all aspects. They believe that men and women are identical in their essential natures and differences are the result of socialization. Historically, egalitarian feminists appeal to the concepts of social justice and universal rights to liberate women from the home into the workplace (Sommers, 2010). In contrast, social feminists have a traditional and healthy focus on the family. Rather than seeing the family unit as a prisoning

environment that is the creation of a male patriarchy, social feminists believe that empowered femininity could bring a change for the social good (Sommers, 2010). Although this paper does not examine the detailed history of American feminism, the heated debate of feminist philosophy confused the majority of Americans by the 20th century. "Very few Americans want to see women forced into rigid gender roles, but neither do they wish to see gender differences abolished" Sommers, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, states (2010). A healthier view of feminism is equity feminism. Equity feminism supports equality of opportunity but not equality of results. Congresswoman and Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce eloquently stated:

> "It is time to leave the question of the role of women in society up to Mother Nature-a difficult lady to fool. You have only to give women the same opportunities as men, and you will soon find out what is or is not in their nature. What is in women's nature to do they will do, and you won't be able to stop them. But you will also find, and so will they, that what is not in their nature, even if they are given the opportunity, they will not do, and you won't be able to make them do it." (Sommers, 2010).

Equity feminism combines the best of both egalitarian and social feminism. In summary, the conditions of freedom and opportunity bring out a woman's true nature. However, just because there is equal opportunity, does not mean that women will be interchangeable with men (Sommers, 2010). This has many practical implications for organizations and the workplace.

Biological Differences

Over the past few decades, it has been politically correct and accepted practice to conclude that behavioral differences between men and women are minimal, resulting from variations in experiences and background during childhood development and socialization. Jacquelyn White's compilation, *Taking Sides, Clashing Views of Gender,* reflects the contrasting opinions on subjects related to the roles of gender in society (2007). Do genetics or environment determine gender? Anne Campbell in her publication "X and Y; It's a Jungle Out There," attributes the X and Y chromosome to the gene level operations that are responsible for the differences between male and female (2001). In contrast, Richard Wilson argues that the genetic code fails to explain gendered behavior and that environmental and social factors shape gendered behavior rather than the genetic code (2001).

Recent studies have provided evidence that suggests the effects of sex hormones on brain organization occur so early during development that the outside environment is influencing children's brains that are pre-wired differently between boys and girls (Kimura, 2007). These biological effects make studying the role of environment and societal factors impossible to separate from physiological predispositions. Increasing amounts of behavioral, neurological, and endocrinological studies have provided more understanding about the biological bases of sex differences in the brain and behavioral effects (Kimura, 2007). Dr. Roger Gorski of UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine has pioneered brain research that confirms the biological differences between men and women ("Roger gorski," 2012). Dr. Gorski has worked to establish the concept of "hormone-dependent sexual differentiation of the structure and function of the brain" with many academic publications on the sexual differentiation of the brain ("Roger gorski," 2012). This area of research will continue to expand and new evidence continues to

support the biological differences between men and women as natural explanations for gender

differences.

Childhood Socialization

Beyond the biological differences between females and males, children are provided with continuous socialization messages about how they should behave in various situations during their formative years. The socialization messages that begin at birth shape each individual's personality and behaviors, which lead to increased differences between men and women in the workplace (Hahn & Litwin, 1995). Gender divisions are evident even when looking down the aisle of a toy store. There are clear cues of which toys advertise to be appropriate for girls and which are appropriate for boys (Zhang, Schmader & Forbes, 2009). The gender division not only enhances different styles of play, but communicates to children what types of jobs they should be interested in pursuing when they grow up to be adults. Despite Mattel's Barbie's popular slogan, "Be who you want to be!," Mattel and other companies marketing to girls receive criticism that they are encouraging girls to be entertainers, fashion models, ballerinas, food servers, etc…, stereotypical female jobs that receive less pay than male entrepreneurs and business professionals (Zhang, Schmader & Forbes, 2009).

From an early age, girls grow up with social cues to suppress giving directions to others or they will be labeled as "bossy." Girls seen as bossy are not liked nor included among girls' young social circles (Tannen, 1994). Instead, girls are socially reinforced to phrase ideas as suggestions for the better welfare of the group rather than stating authoritative commands. This socialization is positive in the sense that it makes young girls and women more considerate of other's desires and thus more likeable. However, translated into the future workplace, women are seen as less competent and self assured if they are not willing to give authoritative directions to the group. Women's communication style that has been reinforced since childhood does not contribute to hiring or promotion within the organization (Tannen, 1994).

In contrast, boys are given much different social rules than young girls. "Boys learn to state their opinions in the strongest possible terms" in order to see if they will be challenged by others (Tannen, 1994). Boys conclude that if their ideas are not challenged, then they are obviously not wrong and this acceptance drastically increases his young self confidence. Young boys naturally operate in a more hierarchal structure with clear distinctions between those with 'high' and 'low' status. It is accepted that the high status boys will be in charge of giving orders to the low status (Tannen, 1994). These reinforced social cues since childhood have positive outcomes for men when transferred into the future workplace. Men's reinforced communication style to provide directions to others is positively correlated with management and other high business positions. Men who are willing to step up and take control of the situation are viewed as true leaders, with self-confidence and assurance to go far in the organization.

Eccle's Expectancy Value Model proposes that "children's expectations for doing well in a particular domain and the value they place on that domain predict their choices to pursue activities in that arena" (Zhang, Schmader & Forbes, 2009). For example, if young girls associate teaching with the high percentage of female teachers and see that role as valuable and attainable, they are more likely to decide to pursue that career goal in their future. Likewise, if a young boy sees his father's work in construction and feels he could work well in that trade, similar to his father, he is more likely to pursue a related field as a future career. Eagley's Social Role Theory proposes that "stereotypes about women's and men's different competencies are the result of the mere fact that men and women are distributed unevenly in different social roles" (Zhang, Schmader & Forbes, 2009). Children are naturally inquisitive and learn about society through their every day observations. Children learn what occupations are supposedly best suited for their particular gender based on observing different jobs as filled by males or females. The exposure

to gender distributions in different jobs creates associations between the specific job and one gender or the other from early ages (Zhang, Schmader & Forbes, 2009).

Relevant to wages, Farell claims that women are socialized to choose care-giving professions and men are socialized to choose higher paying jobs as they are socially responsible for providing for their families. He also states that women value security and often chose safe occupations that have less financial risk, and thus less financial rewards (Crampton, Nodge, Mishra, 1997). Many studies have shown that gender socialization leads girls to devalue mathematical and scientific fields more than boys (Zhang, Schmader & Forbes, 2009). These preferences for future education have long-term implications for career options and salary as the more technical fields have higher monetary compensation.

Communication

Expanding on the communication patterns learned from childhood, "for whatever reason, and with cultural influences accepted, women and men generally communicate differently from each other" (Charette, 2012). From a practical business standpoint, it is important not to get lost in the debate for why or how gender differences in communication exist. Whether or not you agree, businesses can observe in their employees that men and women, on a whole, have different methods of communication. Instead of arguing about the source, it is essential for individuals and organizations to recognize that there are differences in communication between men and women (Charette, 2012). After this recognition, the organization can move forward and ask the important question: "how can we use our knowledge of these differences to make more productive conversations in and outside of the workplace?" Deborah Tannen, communication and language expert, attributes the physiological differences in brain structure and function as a partial explanation for communication between men and women being akin to cross-cultural communication (1999). Table 1 provides a summary of the sex differences evident in research, with influence to communication, between the genders.

Table 1: Gender Differences in Communication

Sex Differences Evident in Research Charette's "Gender Differences in Communication" (Kimura, 2007; Tannen, 1999; Hopkins, 2009)	
Male	**Female**
More likely to interrupt	Cooperative communication
Identify objects in space	Greater verbal dexterity/access to words
Navigating through a given route	Identification of visual landmarks
Three-dimensional problem solving	Linear precision manual tasks
Quick decision making	Long and short-term memory
Speaking (in the workplace)	Listening (in the workplace)

Research shows that in general, women use communication to build relationships as they express feelings, empathize, and make personal connections with others. Women tend to be more indirect and even apologetic when they speak. Biological research reveals that women have easier access to the verbal centers of their brains and therefore use and value words more so than men. This is particularly revealed in the workplace as women use more words when they are speaking and value words as they are listening. With these characteristics women value the *process* of communication (Charette, 2012). The observation of physical body language

provides insight into communication values. Women tend to sit more closely together, face each other head on, and use greater eye contact during communication (Tannen, 1994).

In contrast, men use communication as a method to assert their status and create action. They use more direct and succinct language to get their point across. Men view communication more competitively. Rather than valuing words as they hear them, men generally interrupt more and listen less. These characteristics show that men value the *bottom line* of communication rather than the process (Charette, 2012). Male body language during communication is less likely to be "aligned" with another male, creating greater distance between the communicators and involving less eye contact (Tannen, 1994).

Workplace communication is essential to the success of business functions. It has been found that female managers are rated higher than their male equivalents in "workplace communication, approachability, conducting performance evaluations, being a team player, and empowering others" (DeJanasz, 2006). Despite these positive characteristics, women are perceived to be unclear when giving instructions and routinely defer credit for important work accomplishments. Males perceive this tendency as uncharacteristic of a proper leader (Charette, 2012). Men give orders that are less ambiguous and subtle than their female equivalents and thus experience less problems related to task instructions. However, some employees might keep the impression that their male manager is competitive, unsympathetic, or unapproachable (Charette, 2012).

Social Norms

"Organizations have historically been constructed and developed according to expectations that men were the breadwinners and that a bureaucratic career was equivalent to a male career"(Witz and Savage, 1992). The stereotypical man that established the social norm for a manager and employee in an organization was career focused with a supportive wife at home. This balance of responsibilities allowed the man to spend more time on the job, reinforcing the expectation that men are responsible as breadwinners for the family. Over time, this norm has been less dominant since many women are working outside of the home to be the breadwinner for their own family, or families are relying on two incomes in this rough economy (Due Billing, 2011). Despite this evolution in family structure, many organizations favor males when determining their "ideal worker." Often competitive business goals define the ideal qualified employee for a managerial position as having a willingness to travel frequently and availability to work longer than a normal week. This set of qualifications disparately impacts women because a larger percentage of women would not meet these terms if they have home and family responsibilities. The greater amount of males in an organization results in an obviously masculine culture. This masculine culture determines the traits expected in management position (those associated with males) and makes it more difficult for women to assimilate into the workplace (Due Billing, 2011).

Job descriptions and roles are not static, but can change to be associated with one gender or the other. Feminization of an industry describes when more women enter a job role or industry that was previously considered male dominant (Due Billing, 2011). Some jobs that were believed to be archetypically women's jobs a century ago have now changed gender (for example, clerks or secretaries). Other jobs now have more of a balanced gender representation (such as

physicians). It is important to note that cultural influences also take a dominant role in shaping these social norms. In 2007, 71% of doctors in the United States were male compared to Russia in which 75% of doctors were female (Sweet and Meiksins, 2008).

History of Women in Workplace

Women have held various roles in the workplace throughout United States history. In 1932, the Federal Economic Act prohibited wives of federal employees from working in government positions and made provisions that women with employed husbands would be first on lists for firing. In 1935, the National Recovery Act required women in government jobs to earn 25% less pay than men in the same jobs (National Committee on Pay Equity, 2011). During World War II, women took more jobs outside of the home to fill the empty positions left from men who were fighting and working in war production industries. The percentage of women who received pay for working outside the home increased from 25 to 36% (Johnson Lewis, 2011). In response, the National War Labor Board requested for employers to voluntarily pay women the same job rate as men in 1942. However, the war ended before the rule could be enforced and employers didn't make accommodations for this "voluntary" order. Women were then pushed out of their new jobs to allow returning veterans to have employment (Brunner, 2007).

Equal Pay Act

Through the early 1960s, newspapers published their job listings according to sex with higher level jobs listed under "Help Wanted-Male." Some ads ran identical jobs under male and female listings, but the female position had a lower pay scale (Brunner, 2007). In the 1950s, equal pay bills were introduced by Democratic and Republican representatives to Congress with no results. On June 10, 1963, the Equal Pay Act was finally signed into law by President John F. Kennedy. The Equal Pay Act was an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act and the first to require that women's pay be equal to men when their jobs are equal (Crampton, Nodge, Mishra, 1997).

There were mixed reactions of support for the Equal Pay Act. Some labor union activists, including women, worried that the new legislation would destroy the protective labor laws fought for by previous generations of women. One example of a protective labor law limited the number of hours women were allowed to work. In contrast, feminist union leaders who desired a "gender-blind workplace" greatly supported the Equal Pay Act. One such champion was Caroline Davis, activist for the National Organization for Women (NOW), who argued that protective labor laws were in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Napikoski, 2011).

The Equal Pay Act was gradually expanded over the next decade to include a larger segment of the workforce, and between June 1964 and January 1971, back wages totaling more than $26 million were paid to 71,000 women. Two influential cases that helped to further define the Equal Pay Act are *Schultz v. Wheaton Glass Co.* (1970), and *Corning Glass Works v. Brennan* (1974). Schultz ruled that jobs do not need to be identical, but only "substantially

equal" to be protected under the Equal Pay Act. Corning Glass ruled that employers cannot pay women lower wages claiming that is appropriate for the "going market rate" (Brunner, 2007).

Although not perfect, we today can recognize the positive changes in the workplace that have resulted from the Equal Pay Act. In 1963, women who worked full-time made an average of 59 cents for every dollar men earned. In 2010, women earned an average of 77 cents for every dollar men earned. The wage gap has narrowed by less than half a cent per year revealing there is still a great disparity (National Committee on Pay Equity, 2011). Congress is now considering bills like the Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act to remedy these inequities (Giapponi, 2005). Others believe that as women become more like men in their extent and nature of their participation in the paid work force, the gender wage gap will decrease and no further government intervention by legislation will be required (Levine & Dale, 2003). It is important to recognize the advancements that women have received in the workplace in response to legislation such as the Equal Pay Act, while still acknowledging the disparities that Human Resource departments need to work to alleviate in present day.

Debate on Gender Wage Gap

There are two dominant schools of thought revolving around the source of the gender-wage gap: the human capital explanation and the discrimination model. The human capital explanation analyzes the personal characteristics of working men and women and the voluntary choices made in the scope of their employment (Levine & Dale, 2003). Of course, this analysis refers to each specific gender in the majority and does not account for all individual choices. In general, women anticipate future family responsibilities which influence the kind of education they pursue, the amount of time invested in higher level education, projected time to be spent in the labor force, and work training in which to participate. Women anticipating family responsibilities will have a smaller investment in human capital through education and work training opportunities and thus have lower earnings relative to men. Again this assumes that men are able to have a higher human capital investment based on less distraction (Levine & Dale, 2003).

Women also spend a discontinuous amount of time in the workforce compared to men. If women choose to re-enter the labor force after taking time to invest in a family, their wages will be lower due to skills being out of date (Levine & Dale, 2003). These re-entering women also choose jobs that have lower rates of skill deprecation over time (not highly technical professions such as engineering or medical) which pay less. Additionally, household responsibilities influence women to choose less-demanding jobs outside of the home which require less investment of time and result in lower wages. There is an additional portion of the gender wage gap that could be a result of the difficulty in measuring productivity between genders (Levine & Dale, 2003).

In contrast, the discrimination model attributes the gender wage gap to restrictions forced on women. Proponents of this model see occupations segregated based on gender. In 1995, only 4% of women worked in traditionally male-dominated occupations while 58% worked in gender neutral and 38% worked in female-dominated jobs (Levine & Dale, 2003).

In March 2001, 34% of women between the ages of 25 and 44 with children under the age of six (prime time of career development), were out of the workforce compared to only 16% with no children (O'Neil, 2003). It is interesting to note that with men, the presence of children is associated with an *increase* in work involvement. This is assumed because men want to be a secure financial provider for their family. In March of 2001, only 4% of men with children under the age of six were out of the labor force (O'Neil, 2003). This small percentage is associated with the minority of circumstances in which the wife has a higher paying job and the dad stays home with the children. The gender wage gap is "unlikely to radically change in the near future unless the roles of men and women in the home become more nearly identical" (O'Neil, 2003). Discrimination is not to be discredited as an influence on pay differences between genders; however, the nondiscriminatory factors described above in relation to women's focus on family responsibilities are significant explanations to the gender wage gap (O'Neil, 2003).

Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII includes gender/sex as a protected class characteristic.

> "It shall be unlawful employment practice for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, **sex**, or national origin…"(Bennett-Alexander & Pincus, 2001).

This piece of legislation was a significant milestone for the previous decades of women's rights activists. The sex portion was almost not even included. As the bill was being debated on the House floor in February, 1964, Howard Smith (a strong opponent of all civil rights, especially for black Americans) proposed adding "sex" to Title VII's umbrella of employment discrimination (Freedman, 2004). Although proposed as a humorous attempt at eliminating the passing of the bill, the amendment still passed, 168 to 133 votes. Before 1964, Hawaii and Wisconsin were the only two states that had laws which prohibited sex discrimination in employment. Within 10 years, the majority of states prohibited sex discrimination in their fair employment practices law (Women's Bureau, 1975). One-third of the complaints filed in the first year of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's, EEOC, existence related to discrimination based on sex (Freeman, 2004). The inclusion of sex in this amendment was clearly important for the advancement of women's fair treatment in employment. Both women and men deserve equal opportunity in every appropriate business context.

As a result of Title VII, sex discrimination became an "economic liability" for businesses. In order to reduce disparate treatment, women would *have* to be moved into corporate America and even managerial roles (Loden, 1985). In the late 1960s through the 1970s, there was an "influx of women" into managerial roles. This previously "untapped pool of feminine talent" brought a different perspective into the business environment (Loden, 1985).

Gender-Based Perceptions in Workplace

Sociologists, psychologists, and business consultants observe and record the different work styles between men and women. The debate of why these differences exist (results of nature versus nurture) is not beneficial to the organization. Instead, the organization needs to focus on how to recognize and incorporate these differences into their corporate culture (for practical implications refer to Section 3). In the traditional organization's structure, masculine behavior is valued more highly (Hahn & Litwin, 1995).

Managerial jobs are conventionally constructed as masculine. The 'norm' has concluded that there are correlations between masculine traits and managerial tasks (Due Billing, 2011). . Table 2 provides a visual summary of feminine versus masculine perceptions within the workplace. Whereas men benefit from acting in a masculine way in their jobs, women do not benefit from acting in a feminine way in managerial roles. Women are expected to balance masculine expectations of managerial roles with their natural feminine characteristics. This is not a fair expectation to be placed upon women within organizations because men do not have these conflicting dual expectations that immediately affect their work productivity. It is concluded that women who act with more masculine traits receive more success in the organization (Due Billing, 2011). Organizations that do not place a double standard of expectations on women will maintain a more diverse and balanced workforce. These organizations which recognize feminine characteristics as productive and essential to the organization have achieved great success as a result (example on page 40).

Table 2 Gender Based Perceptions in the Workplace (Hahn & Litwin, 1995).

	Feminine	*Masculine*
Organizational structure	**participative** (see colleagues as complementary)	**hierarchical** (see colleagues as potential competition)
Focus of interpersonal attention	**process** (care about how people treat each other in carrying out work)	**outcome** (care about "where they stand" in relation to others)
Operating style	**interactional** (interact to connect, arrive at understandings)	**transactional** (interact to pass information and give directions)
Problem-solving style	**intuitive** (trust instincts; will provide proof/explanation as necessary)	**linear** (based on methodical thinking; will not trust intuition until proof is presented)
Individual work style	**collaborative** (see work as part of a whole; discuss and review with colleagues)	**independent** (see work as a separate piece; complete work without the "help" of others)
Management style	**supportive** (seek to aid, support, facilitate, and provide comfort, meaning, and rewards)	**directive** (seek to test, direct, organize, and provide challenges, goals, and incentives)
View of work-related conflict	**disruptive** (seek to create harmony; view negative comments as unproductive)	**normal** (accept a level of conflict as inevitable; view negative comments as normal part of work)

Glass Ceiling

The "glass ceiling" is a term coined in the United States. The word *ceiling* refers to the upper restriction on how high women can climb in the organization hierarchy. The word *glass* refers to the transparency and difficulty in detecting this barrier because it is not overtly apparent to the outside observer (Barreto, Ryan, & Schmitt, 2009). The first documented use of the phrase "glass ceiling" was by magazine editor Gay Bryant in the following excerpt that adequately summarizes the continuing struggle of women:

> "Women have reached a certain point—I call it the glass ceiling. They're in the top of middle management and they're stopping and getting stuck. There isn't enough room for all those women at the top. Some are going into business for themselves. Others are going out and raising families" (Barreto, Ryan, & Schmitt, 2009)

The U.S. Department of Labor acknowledged the existence of a glass ceiling in 1991 in which it defined the phrase as "artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions" (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991, p. 1). The U.S. Department of Labor established the Glass Ceiling Commission in an effort to address such barriers as part of the Civil Rights Acts of 1991 (Tannen, 1994). In the Fortune 500 companies of the United States, women account for only 16% of corporate officers and 15% of members of boards of directors (Catalyst, 2006). A survey of 705 women at the vice president level and above in Fortune 1000 corporations found that 72% agreed or strongly agreed that "stereotypes about women's roles and abilities" are a barrier to women's advancement to the highest levels (Wellington, Kropf, & Gerkovich, 2003).

Conversational and management style differences contribute to the glass ceiling. The qualities sought for promotion and management are level of competence, decisiveness, and ability to lead. Men making these decisions, who are uninformed regarding women's diversity, often misinterpret women's conversational style as evidence of indecisiveness, inability to assume authority, or even incompetence (Tannen, 1994). This does not have to be the case as women are in the difficult position of balancing their natural feminine characteristics with male management expectations. The difficulty of women in authority is that everything she does to enhance her assertiveness risks undercutting her femininity and everything she does in accordance to feminine natural traits risks lessening her impression of competence (Tannen, 1994). Organizations can use the knowledge of this difficult balance for women in order to retain the talented workforce of women while reducing risks of lawsuits based on gender discrimination.

Feminine Leadership

From a business perspective, it is interesting to compare the differences between masculine and feminine leadership. The fact that feminine leadership is a generalization and may not apply to each individual in "no way makes it less valid, relevant or meaningful" (Loden, 1985). It is important for management to take into account the "entire spectrum of human talents" and the diversity of having women in management and higher executive positions increases the ability of the organization to relate to more consumers (Loden, 1985). After Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, more women were entering the business environment. Betty Friedan first coined the term "masculinism" in the early 1980s to describe the ambiance of the "male-centered culture." Women were expected to change and adapt to the way business was run (according to men) or not advance in the business hierarchy. Loden presents a model of masculine leadership in her analysis:

Table 3 Masculine Leadership Model (Loden, 1985)

Operating Style:	Competitive
Organizational Structure:	Hierarchy
Basic Objective:	Winning
Problem-solving style:	Rational
Key characteristics:	high control, strategic, aggressive, unemotional, analytical

This masculine model of leadership stereotypically defines the business environment. However, it only takes into account the leadership style of half of the population. An organization that is able to incorporate feminine leadership into their business culture will gain a competitive advantage and more diverse workforce. Loden also presents a model of feminine leadership in her analysis:

Table 4 Feminine Leadership Model (Loden, 1985)

Operating Style:	Cooperative
Organizational Structure:	Team
Basic Objective:	Quality output
Problem-solving style:	Intuitive/rational
Key characteristics:	lower control, empathetic, collaborative, high performance standards

Loden highlights that by treating feminine leadership as a legitimate complement to the traditional and masculine management style, an organization can see how the different styles and perspectives offered by women can enhance managerial effectiveness and contribute to the health and growth of the organization (1985).

Influence of Family

Expanding upon social norms, the areas of family and employment are strongly gendered contexts. Psychological and sociological studies, as well as life observation, reveal that women are more responsible for housework and childcare than men (Sabattini & Crosby, 2009). Despite employment status or the financial contributions to the household, women are consistently greater associated with family care tasks. Men in the United States have recently increased their contribution to family related tasks and contributions in the recent decades. This increase does contribute to more women continuing to work after having children. However, mothers are more likely than fathers to reduce their work hours, make changes to their work schedule, and be distracted by child-care concerns on the job (Sabattini & Crosby, 2009).

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 amended Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

> The terms 'because of sex' or 'on the basis of sex' include, but are not limited to, because of or on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; and women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions shall be treated the same for all employment-related purposes, including receipt of benefits under fringe benefit programs, as other persons not so affected but similar in their ability or inability to work, and nothing in section 703(h) of this title shall be interpreted to permit otherwise. This subsection shall not require an employer to pay for health insurance benefits for abortion, except where the life of the mother would be endangered if the fetus were carried to term, or except where medical complications have arisen from an abortion: Provided, That nothing herein shall preclude an employer from providing abortion benefits or otherwise affect bargaining agreements in regard to abortion." (EEOC, 1978)

In summary, employers must treat women who are pregnant or affected by pregnancy-related conditions in the same manner as any other applicants with similar abilities or limitations. This also means that employers must hold open a job for a pregnancy-related leave from work as long

as they would for other employees on sick or disability leave (EEOC, 2008). This is a significant

advancement for allowing women to continue in employment after child birth, if they so choose.

Some theories of organizational leadership propose that motherhood actually provides

women with a developmental process that prepares them for top business positions. While

motherhood can "toughen soft women, and soften tough ones," the real benefit is that it helps

women achieve a balance between these two qualities (Grzelakowski, 2005). Working mothers

are unlikely to be viewed as a pushover because they have learned the critical times of when to

put their foot down. Motherhood has also reinforced women's natural value of nurture. Such

results form a skilled situational leader who knows when to apply toughness and when to interact

with softness (Grzelakowski, 2005). Motherhood specifically influences women's leadership

style. Maternal leaders often develop superior negotiating skills, the result of bargaining with

their children. Mothers are more likely to see the benefits of using compromise and tradeoffs to

achieve a goal, instead of only conforming to one mode of decision-making (Grzelakowski,

2005).

Implications for Organizations

Lessen the Gender Wage Gap

A common Human Resource (HR) practice is to base pay of new hires upon their salary history. This focus away from individual responsibility and experience in favor of employment history perpetuates the wage gap (Crampton, Nodge, Mishra, 1997). A woman could be equally qualified with a male applicant, but if her previous job paid her a lower wage, she then is offered a lower salary in the new organization. When increases in salary for promotions are determined by current salary, women also have trouble keeping up with male colleagues in equivalent positions. The National Committee on Pay Equity states that stereotyping continues through a woman's work experience and she is thus offered lower wages because her salary is viewed as a "supplemental income" (Crampton, Nodge, Mishra, 1997).

Human Resource Professionals have recognized that the largest barrier to change in attempting to resolve the gender-based pay gap is gaining management support. The problem is evident in that top management refuses to acknowledge the existence of a gender-wage gap. In an attempt to alleviate the pay disparities, HR can identify the unjustified gap in between genders and can implement a series of pay increases to correct the problem. In violation of their own enlightened self interest, top management often views equitable pay initiatives as too expensive (Crampton, Nodge, Mishra, 1997). In fact, ignoring cases of gender wage disparity is actually more costly to organizations in the long run based on potential law suits, turnover, lack of employee loyalty, etc.

In order to change business practices and implement true change, the ethical dimensions of equal pay must be included in an organization's culture and values (Crampton, Nodge,

Mishra, 1997). An analysis recognizing the importance of ethical duties could benefit organizations to ensure that their compensation systems are not only legal, but also ethical for how they treat pay across genders. Ethical duties to keep in mind when creating the fair and legal compensation system are as follows.

Table 5: Ethical Duties (Kolodinsky, 2011).

Enlightened Self Interest:	making responsible decisions in the present to avoid negative consequences in the future.
Personal virtue:	making business decisions that reflect good personal character of honesty, integrity, and respect
Government regulation:	analyzes whether your business practices abide according to legal requirements, examples are Title VII and Equal Pay Act
Universal duties and rules:	examines if the business treats people with dignity and respect, does not use anyone as a means to its selfish ends, considers how they would feel if roles were reversed
Distributive justice:	analyzes business practices according to fairness and if they treat everyone fairly (doesn't have to be equal)

Embrace Diversity

It is essential that managers recognize and use the diversity of their workforce for productive ends. It is the role of a successful manager to "create a productive work environment that brings out the best in each member of their staff, whatever her or his universal, group, or individual characteristics may be" (Hahn & Litwin, 1995). Indicative of a productive work environment are the principles of mutual respect and understanding. Numerous programs exist to aide mangers in establishing a productive culture. One such program offers a six step system for education and awareness of gender differences (Hahn & Litwin, 1995):

1) Educate

2) Assess

3) Ask questions

4) Discuss

5) Listen

6) Initiate change

Managers must also be high in emotional intelligence so they can successfully and considerately recognize the equal accomplishment of all employees, including the female staff. If managers show favoritism or preference for males in the organization it will contribute to higher turnover of talented women, assets that a firm needs to work to keep (Hahn & Litwin, 1995). These facts highlight the importance of a well-trained Human Resources department in addition to well-trained managers.

Improve Communication

Essential to improving workplace communication is first recognizing and then working to understand how gender differences contribute to different communication styles. The organization should train employees to ask the important question "How can people who are different (men and women) work at understanding each other so that they can communicate more effectively?" (Charette, 2012). Men can learn from women's communication style by valuing relationships in the work environment. Women can learn from men's communication style to be more direct, especially when task instructions are being given. The following tables provide some recommendations for each gender to recognize and embrace in their daily workplace interactions. The reoccurring themes are for each gender to not deny their natural tendencies, but to be aware of how their communication style is perceived by the opposite gender. The increased awareness allows both genders to control their communication style for a more productive and healthy work environment for all parties.

Table 6 Workplace Recommendations for Women (Charette, 2012).

Women
"Maintain the strong "relationship" focus that women are known for. In today's team-based environment, the ability to relate to and work effectively with others is critical."
"Be more direct and assertive, less hesitant. Don't ask, "Can you complete this by Friday?" when what you mean is "I must have this report by Friday for my meeting with the client. Can I count on you?"
"Don't be afraid to speak up, especially in groups or meetings. Don't wait to be asked to speak."
"Come prepared with data or other information and share it confidently. If others interrupt you, politely request to finish."
"Humor is fine but avoid self-deprecating humor; others may take the humor literally and reduce their faith in your abilities."
"Explain without apologizing. Men may interpret "I'm sorry" as an apology or acceptance of fault when women are communicating empathy, as in "I'm sorry that happened to you."
"Avoid using vague terms and disclaimers, such as "You're welcome to disagree with me, but ... "or "I'm not an expert, however, ... " Express your views confidently; others will respect this quality."
"Avoid situations with coworkers that could be construed as intimate."

Table 7 Workplace Recommendations for Men (Charette, 2012).

Men
"Maintain the direct, concise way of communicating that men are known for, especially in business situations. This increases the odds that others clearly understand your expectations and wishes."
"Add a relationship focus to your interactions with others at work. This is especially important in today's team-based, empowered environment."
"Encourage others to speak before you share your point of view. Others will listen more carefully to you if you first model this behavior".
"Humor is fine but avoid stereotyping humor that is insensitive to members of certain groups."
"Avoid using the "fix-it" approach when others approach you about problems they are facing."
"Resist the urge to jump to a quick solution. Use active listening techniques to fully understand the problem and then ask if others want your advice or assistance."
"Be willing to make and admit mistakes; it helps humanize you in the eyes of subordinates and coworkers."
"Avoid situations with coworkers that could be construed as intimate."

A Successful Business Model

Mary Kay Ash not only climbed the corporate ladder of success, she also brought thousands of women with her. Born in 1918, Mary Kay Ash experienced the glass ceiling and gender wage gap first hand in her sales career. She had been over looked for promotions and salary increases that were then given to men. Employers would put down her ideas saying, "Oh, Mary Kay, you're thinking just like a woman again!" (Ash, 1994). In the mid 1900's in America, this phrase "thinking like a woman" implied that something was wrong with your thinking because it was not following the accepted organizational norms that favored masculine characteristics. In truth, women do think differently from men. However, Mary Kay said that such differences are "in no way inferior or incompatible with the way a man thinks" (Ash, 1994). Mary Kay also stated that "thinking like a woman can be a tremendous advantage " (Ash, 1994). Mary Kay's business model in turn capitalizes on the inherent strengths of women. "My interest in starting Mary Kay, Inc. was to offer women opportunities that didn't exist anywhere else." (Ash, 1994)

Three core building blocks of the Mary Kay philosophy are the Golden Rule, "Right Priorities," and "Beautiful Potential." First, the Mary Kay corporate culture is centered on the Golden Rule. Not only do Mary Kay employees treat their co-workers how they would like to be treated, but they also share their time and experience with others without expecting any returns. This captures Mary Kay's "go-give spirit" (Ash, 1994). Secondly, the "Right Priorities" of the company are "God first, family second, and career third." Even if employees are not religious, Mary Kay believed that people could not do a professional job if his or her personal life was in conflict (Ash, 1994). This company strategy greatly caters to incorporating women in to the workplace because it allows women to maintain responsibility for their family, in addition to

their careers. Third, the Mary Kay culture believes in the "Beautiful Potential" of every employee. Catered to a more feminine leadership model, this strategy focuses on praise and encouragement to increase the self-confidence, and thus success, of employees (Ash, 1994).

The unique Mary Kay culture and management style allowed women to have flexible hours, career portability, encouragement, a sense of value, and a family-life balance. Mary Kay also believed in clearly spelling out what employees must do in order to advance in their career for, according to Mary Kay, "if someone *knew* what she had to do to be successful-she would do it" (Ash, 1994). Mary Kay attributed the large success of her company because "[we] were able to meet a career woman's needs in ways that were not being attempted by any other company. We let a woman learn and grow to her fullest capacity…" (Ash, 1994). For comparison with the masculine and feminine leadership models previously presented, below is a compiled leadership model based on the Mary Kay culture:

Table 8 Mary Kay Leadership Model (Ash, 1994).

Operating Style:	Supportive
Organizational Structure:	Vertical/pyramid
Basic Objective:	Competition with self (not peers)
Problem-solving style:	Intuitive/emotional
Key characteristics:	Individual control, supportive, family –life balance

Summary

In review, this thesis highlights factors of the debate about gender differences, provides a brief history into women's role in the workplace (specifically post World War II), and analyzes the effects of legislation to protect women in the workplace. This paper also presents models of feminine leadership and offers practical implications for organizations to benefit by incorporating women. Furthermore, the importance of equal opportunity given to both men and women in every appropriate business context is supported. Organizations that treat the genders as if they are identical actually render a disservice to women, men, and to the potential success of the organization. The conditions of freedom and opportunity bring out a woman's true nature. However, just because there is equal opportunity, does not mean that women will be interchangeable with men. If organizations first recognize the natural gender differences between men and women, and then use those differences to their advantage, they will gain a stronger competitive advantage as well as a more diverse workforce.

Bibliography

Ash, Mary Kay. (1994). Miracles Happen: The Life and Timeless Principles of the Founder of Mary Kay Inc. New York: HarperPerennial

Barreto, Manuela (Ed); Ryan, Michelle K. (Ed); Schmitt, Michael T. (Ed), (2009). The glass ceiling in the 21st century: Understanding barriers to gender equality, Psychology of women book series (pp. 21-47). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association, xvii, 334 pp.

Bennett-Alexander, Dawn, and Laura Pincus. Hartman. *Employment Law for Business*. Boston, MA: Irwin/McGraw-Hill, 2001. Print.

Brunner, Borgna. (2007). The Wage Gap, A History of Pay Inequity and the Equal Pay Act. Retrieved from http://www.infoplease.com/spot/equalpayact1.html

Campbell, A. (2001). X and y: It's a jungle out there. In J. White (Ed.), *Taking Sides, Clashing Views in Gender* McGraw Hill.

Charette , B. (2012). Gender differences & communication.*COB 202: interpersonal skills*,

Crampton, S. M., Nodge, J. H., and Mishra, J. M. (1997). The Equal Pay Act: The First 30 Years. Public Personnel Management, 26, pp. 335-345. Retrieved from http://ehis.ebscohost.com

Due Billing, Y. (2011). Are women in management victims of the phantom of the male norm. *"Gender, Work and Organization"*, *18*(3), Retrieved from 4.http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-0432.2010.00546.x/pdf

EEOC. (1978, October 31). The pregnancy discrimination act of 1978. Retrieved from

      http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/pregnancy.cfm

EEOC. (2008, September 8). Facts about pregnancy discrimination. Retrieved from

      http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/fs-preg.html

Freedman, J. (2004). How "sex" got into title vii: persistent opportunism as a maker of public

      policy. *We Will Be Heard:Women's Struggles for Political Power in the United States*,

      Retrieved from http://www.jofreeman.com/lawandpolicy/titlevii.htm

Giapponi, C., and McEvoy, S. (2005). The Legal, Ethical, and Strategic Implications of Gender

      Discrimination in Compensation: Can the Fair Pay Act Succeed Where the Equal Pay Act

      Has Failed? Journal of Individual Employment Rights, 12, pp. 137-150. Retrieved from

      http://ehis.ebscohost.com

Grzelakowski, M. (2005). mother leads best: 50 women who are changing the way organizations

      define leadership . Retrieved from

      http://site.ebrary.com/lib/jmulibrary/docDetail.action?docID=10075668

Hahn, S., & Litwin, A. (1995). Women and men .*Managing in the Age of Change: Essential

      Skills to Manage Toda'ys Workforce*, Retrieved from

      http://www.annelitwin.com/publications/genderatwork.html

Johnson Lewis, Jone. (2011). Women and World War II-Women at Work. Retrieved from

      http://womenshistory.about.com/od/warwwii/a/women_work.htm

Kimura, D. (April, 2007). *Sex differences in the brain*. Scientific American.

Kolodinsky, R. (2011, September). *Ethical duties*. Class Lecture Business ethics, Harrisonburg, VA.

Levine, L., & Dale, C. (2003). The Male-Female Wage Gap, Background and Analysis. New York: Novinka.

Loden, M. (1985). Feminine Leadership or How to Succeed in Business Without Being One of the Boys. New York: Times.

Napikoski, Linda. (2011). Caroline Davis, Union Leader and Founding NOW Officer. Retrieved from http://womenshistory.about.com/od/feminists/a/caroline-davis.htm

National Committee on Pay Equity. (2011, Sept 19). History of the Struggle for Fair Pay. Retrieved from http://www.pay-equity.org/index.html

O'Neil, J. (2003). The gender gap in wages. In J. White (Ed.),*Taking Sides, Clashing Views in Gender*

Pickett, J., & , (2007). *The american heritage college dictionary*. (4th ed., p. 1078). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Roger gorski, ph.d.. (2012). Retrieved from http://people.healthsciences.ucla.edu/institution/personnel?personnel_id=45954

Sabattini, L., & Crosby, F. (2009). Ceilings and walls: Work-life and "family-friendly" policies. Psychology of Women book series, Retrieved from http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fa=browsePB.chapters&pbid=11863 Sommers, C. (2010). Take back feminism. Clare Booth Luce Policy Institute: Policy Express, 10(1)

Tannen, D. (1994). *Talking from 9 to 5, women and men in the workplace: Language, sex and power* . New York, NY: HarperCollins.

White, J. (2007). Taking sides, clashing views in gender. (3 ed.). McGraw Hill.

Wilson, R. (2001). Puncturing the genome myth: Why the genetic code fails to explains gendered behavior. In J. White (Ed.), *Taking Sides, Clashing Views in Gender* McGraw Hill.

Women's Bureau, (1975). U.S. Dept. of Labor, *Action for Equal Pay,* Wash. D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Zhang, S., Schmader, T., & Forbes, C. (2009). The effects of gender stereotypes on women's career choice:opening the glass door. *Psychology of Women book series*, Retrieved from http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fa=browsePB.chapters&pbid=11863