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Gender Disparity in Professional City Management: Making the Case for Enhancing Leadership Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

Professionally trained administrators are critical to the operation and management of governmental agencies. That is particularly true with respect to local government, where city managers are situated at the top of the organizational hierarchy. However, these senior management positions remain largely the domain of males; female represent just 12% of the positions. This disparity, for reasons still unclear, comes to the fore at a time when the field of public administration faces a new set of global challenges, and many in the field have expressed concern about a looming leadership gap. As the world of public administration changes, so must the teaching of the subject, driven by specific areas of inquiry, including why more women do not attain senior executive positions. Using national postsecondary enrollment data, this article demonstrates that the underrepresentation of females among city managers cannot be explained by a shortage of women with professional training. The central conclusion of this research is that professional training programs can better prepare women for the new world of public administration by making gender more visible within the leadership curriculum.

> Masters of public administration degree programs do a great job of training in technical skills, advanced analysis, public law, theory, and human resource regulations. But the end result too often is a highly skilled individual who does not know how to inspire, lead or manage people (Hines, *PA Times*, 2010).

The field of public administration has long promoted the professional training of administrators to improve the operation of government agencies, "with the utmost possible efficiency and at the least possible cost either of money or of energy" (Wilson, 1887, p. 197). It was due in no small part to Woodrow Wilson's seminal call to the professional development of public managers in the early 20th century that university training in public administration blossomed in the United States. Not surprisingly, early efforts were traditionally focused on men: "Each [administrative] unit must be run on a businesslike basis with qualified *men* holding the key positions" (Wingo, 1937, p. 85).

A great deal of progress has occurred in the thinking of the administrative state since "bureau men" worked to make administrative methods more efficient, and "settlement women" labored to improve the lives of the poor (Stivers, 2000). Women have made great strides in moving beyond the gender stereotypes associated with the Progressive Era to assume more prominent roles in government. And yet, the number of women in the most senior levels of government management has, over time, remained considerably low (Davies-Netzley, 1998; Guy, 1993; Kelly, Hale, & Burgess, 1991). This trend is especially reflected in professional city management, where women comprise just 12% of the total city management population (Aguado & Frederickson, 2004; Szymborski, 1996).

Scholars have offered a number of explanations for why women have failed to break through the glass ceiling in professional city management, including self-selection, gender stereotypes, agency structure, and lack of professional training. But the findings have been largely circumstantial, and the reasons remain unclear. However, given the concerns raised by practitioners such as Hines (2010) that MPA programs may not be doing a good enough job training students to lead and inspire, taken together with a looming leadership gap as baby boomers retire, professional graduate programs should not overlook the importance of challenging students to analyze traditional thinking about the leadership styles of women and men. Certainly, the fact that women are not better represented in the upper ranks of local government management is disconcerting given that based on what we do know, female city managers bring to the table different priorities, voice different policy preferences, and are perceived to be more responsive to their constituents than are male city managers (Fox & Schuhmann, 2001; Guy & Newman 2004; Stillman, 1974).

A guiding principle of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), the accrediting body for professional public affairs programs, is that graduate programs should demonstrate both insight and foresight to respond to changing needs. Academics and practitioners point to the critical need for developing strong leaders who can navigate the challenges of the 21st century, particularly at the local government level (Hines, 2010; Miller & Svara, 2009). Gender disparity in local government, which has been recognized previously but largely ignored, comes to the fore again in today's new world of public administration, where the new realities of a multicultural, multisectoral, and multinational world will demand new skill sets, including a new definition of leadership (Schultz, 2010, p. ii).

This article, which examines more than two decades of MPA degree completion data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education System (IPEDS), reveals that, consistent with overall trends in higher education, females are earning MPA degrees at a higher rate than are their male counterparts. However, despite these educational trends, greater female representation among the ranks of professional city management has not yet been realized. Based on the study findings, that the underrepresentation of females among city managers cannot be explained by a shortage of women with professional training, this article makes the case that the field of public administration requires a new model of leadership, one that includes enhancing gender visibility within the leadership curriculum. It concludes by offering a number of preliminary recommendations for enhancing the curricular aspects of leadership training to better prepare women for the new world of public administration. The second phase of the research, to develop a second article that specifically addresses leadership theory and practice in the MPA curriculum, will propose a new model for addressing cultural diversity and leadership in the 21st century.

Importantly, the authors wish to emphasize that it is not the objective of this article to answer *why* women do not become city managers, although we provide an overview of this sensitive topic to supply background and context. Nor is it our intent to suggest that MPA programs are somehow to blame for actual or perceived discrimination based on sex or other factors highlighted by the literature on gender disparity. Rather, the paper's primary purpose is to demonstrate that (a) gender disparity continues to persist in the upper levels of government management; (b) enrollment trends in MPA programs have changed dramatically since the development of public administration as a training ground for future leaders; and (c) the curricular notions of leadership training should be studied and modified if we hope to advance the ideal of a more representative bureaucracy that can respond to the changing face of the workforce, which is increasingly female and global.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A History of Gender Disparity

Women have long been the target of discrimination in the United States (Bergmann, 1986; Blau & Ferber, 2002; Holzer & Neumark, 2000a, 2000b; Leonard, 1986, 1989; O'Melveny, 1996; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2006). For much of the country's history, the U.S. federal government has tried to shape the conditions encountered by women in the labor market (Blau & Ferber, 1986). At the heart of most of the early laws was protectionism, or the notion that women must be sheltered from life's harsh realities (O'Melveny, 1996; Blau & Ferber, 1986). Progressive Era reformers passed a number of statutes designed to ameliorate the worst aspects of industrialization, such as factory safety laws, workmen's compensation, and minimum wage and maximum hour legislation. For example, in *Lochner v. New York* (198 U.S. 45,

1905) the U.S. Supreme Court rejected an attempt to limit the number of hours that bakers could work. However, in *Muller v. Oregon* (208 U.S. 412, 1908), the Court later ruled that there was a compelling state interest in protecting women from harsh working conditions, noting that there were important differences between men and women due to child-bearing physiology and the social role of women. Regardless of the intent behind this collective framework of laws, policies and jurisprudence, the legacy of equal opportunity for women in the United States has evolved from one of disadvantage and discrimination to one of affirmative action and advancement in the workplace.

Affirmative Action and the Female Workforce

The emergence of affirmative action policies, enacted through a series of executive orders beginning with those signed by President Kennedy in 1961, is commonly cited as the chief cause of the increasing presence of women in the workforce at all levels of government (Holzer & Neumark, 2000a; Leonard, 1989; O'Melveny, 1996). The intent of affirmative action policies—a descendant of the civil rights movement for blacks—has been to redress the effects of past discrimination and to encourage public institutions at all levels to be more representative of the population. As noted by Leonard (1986, p. 360), "to the extent that minorities and females share the qualifications and interests of white males, an effective affirmative action program should improve their chances of sharing the same occupations." This is because affirmative action programs urge employers to "cast a wider net than they otherwise would" in order to recruit qualified women and minorities through an array of activities, including changes in screening and hiring practices, pay, promotions, or special assistance programs (Holzer & Neumark, 2000a, pp. 241–246).

Affirmative action policies and programs have been widely hailed as being successful in increasing the presence of women in the workplace, more than doubling their representation in traditionally male-dominated occupations (Davies-Netzley, 1998). Yet, despite an abundance of evidence linking affirmative action programs to these advances by women in the workforce, net gains were often mitigated by the economic and social costs of this controversial legislation (Holzer & Neumark 2000a, 2000b; Leonard, 1986, 1989). Moreover, women did not experience an appreciable narrowing of the gender wage gap until the early 1980s, a delay that both anecdotal and empirical data suggest is attributable to an increase in women's work experience and education (Blau & Kahn, 1994; O'Neill & Polacheck, 1993).

Critics of affirmative action point out that the net effect of casting the net more widely has been significantly higher recruitment costs. More pointedly, affirmative action recruitment efforts are often stigmatized by charges of reverse discrimination, preferential hiring, and the notion that less qualified women and minority candidates are being accepted for the sake of organizational diversity. Criticism of affirmative action hiring has been particularly sharp in traditional council-manager cities that, as noted by Aguado and Frederickson (2004, p. 5), are "uniquely a product of the Progressive Era," an era that was built around the values of efficiency and merit hire.

Why Are There So Few Female City Managers?

City managers, who generally serve without tenure and at the pleasure of elected boards, are responsible for the daily administrative affairs in council-manager cities. City management, as a profession, requires highly skilled individuals who possess training in areas such as projection analysis, public law, and human resource regulation (Hines, 2010). But the profession of city management continues to be male dominated, despite the growing number of females in receipt of a master's degree in public administration, normally considered the gateway to senior management positions. According to Fox and Schuhmann, as a percentage of all U.S. city managers, females accounted for roughly 1% of the total population in 1974; that figure grew to 11% by 1987 (2001). Since the late 1980s, the percentage of female city managers has remained largely stagnant. The most recent estimates suggest the total population is approximately 12% (Aguado & Frederickson, 2004; Dometrius & Sigelman, 1997; ICMA, 2006).

Why are there so few female city managers? Academics have generally responded to this question by pointing to a need for more affirmative action programs and goals designed to attract a greater number of females to government service. This remedy has gone largely unfulfilled, as local governments, particularly those operating under the traditional council-manager form of government, have remained steadfast in their resistance to government interference in hiring policies (Slack, 1987; Slack & Sigelman, 1987). However, a number of additional explanations have been advanced regarding why women have failed to break through the glass ceiling in professional city management. These include self-selection, gender stereotypes, agency structure, and lack of professional training.

One commonly cited factor explaining why more women do not pursue senior executive positions is attributed a woman's family situation (Aguado & Frederickson, 2004; Saltzstein, 1986). City management is traditionally considered to be a highly demanding profession, subject to long workdays and the exacting scrutiny of city councils. For many women, the desire to become a city manager may be trumped by more personal choices concerning family and child rearing (Aguado & Frederickson, 2004; Hale & Kelly, 1989). Echoing Stivers (2002), this rationale suggests that protectionism is persistent, and that women are still struggling to manage their gender images by balancing the competing demands of work and family.

Other scholars have attributed blame to a broader combination of external factors, including discrimination by employers, stereotypes about the role of women in society, and exclusion from male networks (Andruskiw & Howes, 1980; Burns, 1980; Davies-Netzley, 1998; Fox & Schuhmann, 1999; Saltzstein, 1986). According to Valian (1998), for example, the fact that women are not paid as well, occupy less powerful positions, and are not as respected as their male counterparts can be explained by the different expectations surrounding

men and women—a hypothesis that she terms "gender schemas." In other words, subconscious beliefs about the differences between males and females and the traits associated with different professions translate into the ways in which individuals are perceived and treated. The resulting advantages and disadvantages to one's career may be small, claims Valian, but they accrue over time to create large gaps in advancement.

According to Stivers, despite the progress females have made in obtaining positions in the upper reaches of federal, state and local government, "public administration continues to rely on images that conform to widely accepted notions of masculinity" (2002, p. 72). Gender stereotypes remain persistent, supported by a body of research indicating that both males and females perceive men to be more assertive, daring, and competitive whereas they perceive women to be gentler, kinder, and more supportive (Stivers, 2002). If a female is overly aggressive, she risks being seen as overly masculine. But if a female is not assertive enough, then she risks being labeled indecisive and ineffective. Stivers concludes that not only is our template for public sector leadership restricted to traits associated with white professional males, but it also creates a material disadvantage for anyone who departs from those norms.

It should also be pointed out that city management is unique among public sector management positions, because elected city council members appoint managers. Although most city council members are male, females represent approximately 20 to 25% of all council members (Bledsoe, 1993). However, adds Bledsoe, it is not known whether female city council members are more likely to appoint female city managers. While we speculate that gender matters in the hiring decision, just how important this factor is in perpetuating glass ceiling barriers—and thus suppressing women's leadership aspirations—is not well known. As other, more traditional factors such as government intervention, experience, and professional training continue to be explored, future research should also examine the role that city councils play in the appointment process as it relates to gender.

Lastly, some scholars attribute the relative absence of women from professional city management to a numbers game. They say there is simply an insufficient number of women in the management labor pool, or a scarcity of women with adequate training or educational qualifications (Andruskiw & Howes, 1980; Burns, 1980). Given that the field of public administration has historically and actively promoted the professional training of administrators, it stands to reason that the current continuation of this male-dominated field might be related to an undersupply of females with the requisite professional degree. Our present study examines the validity of this argument. However, such explanations conflict with recent educational trends in higher education, where 60% of all new college-educated hires are female (NCES, 2005; Sorensen, 2009).

RESEARCH DESIGN AND FINDINGS

Using Education to Overcome Glass Ceiling Barriers

In addition to the influence of affirmative action policies, the growth of the female workforce, nationwide, is attributable to a dramatic shift in college enrollment patterns.[1] In 1972, for example, males accounted for 56% of all associate's and bachelor's degrees awarded. Today, females earn the majority of both undergraduate and graduate degrees awarded.[2] This increase of women graduates raises the question of whether completion rates for public administration and public affairs graduate degrees mirror the cumulative trend of graduate programs nationwide.

To address this question, we conducted a comparative analysis to demonstrate a shift in male versus female MPA degree completion rates for all NASPAA-accredited institutions during 2008–09 (N = 156). Using the Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS), we then compiled a list of MPA completion rates broken down by gender, 1984–2006. IPEDS is a database system maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics designed to collect and analyze data from all postsecondary institutions.[3]

Consistent with overall trends in higher education, the analysis revealed that females are completing MPA degrees at higher rates than males.

Figure 1.
MPA Degrees by Gender: 1984–2006
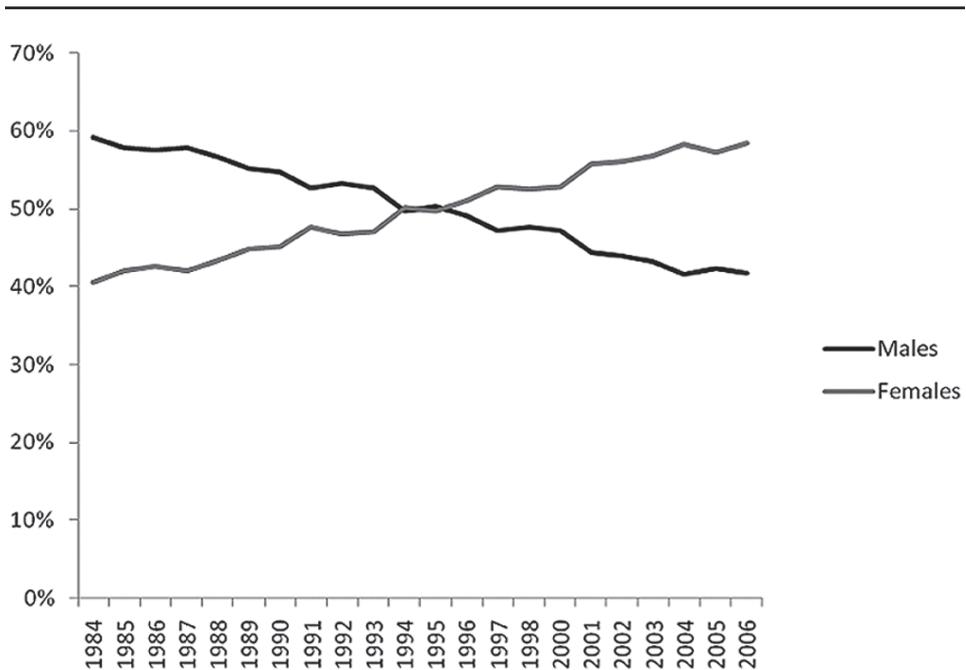
Source. Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS).

As indicated by Figure 1, the yearly percentage of male and female MPA degree completions underwent a dramatic shift from 1984 to 2006. In 1984, males were awarded 59.2% of MPA degrees, while females earned 40.8% of degrees awarded. The percentage of MPA degrees obtained by females grew incrementally throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, eclipsing the 50% threshold for the first time in 1994. More than half of all MPA degrees have been received by females every year since the mid-1990s, reaching a high-water mark (58.5%) in 2006.

Yet, this steady increase in the supply of females with graduate degrees in public administration has not translated into a noticeably larger percentage of female city managers. To the contrary, that figure appears to have stagnated at roughly 12%. Although this paradox between growing supply and lagging demand might be explained by cities hiring more experienced professionals who have worked their way up through city management, our data shows a 20-year trend of at least an adequate supply of female MPAs, turning to a clear majority now for over a decade.

The population of NASPAA-accredited programs was also analyzed by region. This analysis was done to identify the region or regions where degree completion rates by males or females might be more pronounced, suggesting a demographic influence. Using the International City Management Association's designations, the programs were divided into one of the following regions: West Coast, Mountain Plains, Midwest, Southeast, or Northeast.

Table 1.
Female MPA Degrees Awarded by Region, 1984–2006

	ICMA Region				
Year	West Coast	Mountain Plains	Midwest	Southeast	Northeast
1984	39.9%	41.7%	38.3%	42.0%	39.9%
2006	61.6%	57.7%	60.4%	59.5%	55.6%
Mean % (1985–2006)	51.7%	46.7%	51.9%	51.3%	49.4%
Difference (Mean % −1984)	+11.8%	+5.0%	+13.6%	+9.3%	+9.5%

Notes. Number of higher education institutions represented by each region is as follows: West Coast ($N = 22$); Mountain Plains ($N = 26$); Midwest ($N = 31$); Southeast ($N = 47$); and Northeast ($N = 30$).

As demonstrated in Table 1, controlling for degree completion rates by region indicates that females have made positive gains, earning at least 50% of all MPA degrees, in all five regions. In other words, no particular geographic region is disproportionately driving the increased frequency with which MPA degrees

are being awarded to females as a whole. To the contrary, there appears to be substantial uniformity in this trend irrespective of geographic considerations.

Finally, we examined the *U.S. News & World Report* 2006 ranking index to analyze degree completion rates specific to the following program specialties: City Management and Urban Policy, Nonprofit Management, Public Finance and Budgeting, and Public Policy Analysis. Table 2 provides a breakdown of female degree completion rates for the top 10 ranked programs from each specialty in 2004.

Table 2.
Female MPA Degrees Awarded by Specialty, 2004

Degree Specialty	Percentage
City Management and Urban Policy	55.8
Nonprofit Management	55.9
Public Finance and Budgeting	53.4
Public Policy Analysis	58.1

Notes. Based on the *U.S. News & World Report* reputation index representing 253 graduate degree programs.

Top 10 ranked institutions in each specialty included in average. Results based on overall degree completion percentage.

Once again, we found no discernible patterns in female degree completion rates based on program specialty. More important, this data suggests that women are not self-selecting out of city management career tracks and opting for more traditionally female-dominated fields such as nonprofit management.

Overall, these findings suggest that female MPA degree completion rates are consistent with the broader degree attainment patterns that have evolved over the past three decades. Thus, there does not appear to be a correlation between degree attainment and the laggard growth in the number of female city managers. Admittedly, there are a number of possible explanations for the persistent underrepresentation of females among the ranks of local government leadership. And, while our findings appear to rule out educational attainment as a viable explanation, issues such as experience, organizational characteristics, and even discrimination remain important considerations. One other potential factor of note entails the degree to which MPA programs are emphasizing a leadership curriculum.

MPA Leadership Curriculum
Using the identical 2008–09 universe of NASPAA-accredited MPA programs, the leadership curriculum for each program was examined. Each program's website and

degree requirement page was reviewed to determine how many programs offer a course in leadership either as an elective or as a core requirement for graduation.[4] Individual phone calls were made to those institutions where the leadership offerings or requirements were not readily discernible. As demonstrated in Figure 2, nearly half of MPA programs do not offer leadership as either an elective course or a core requirement for graduation.

Figure 2.
Leadership Courses by MPA Program (*N* = 156)
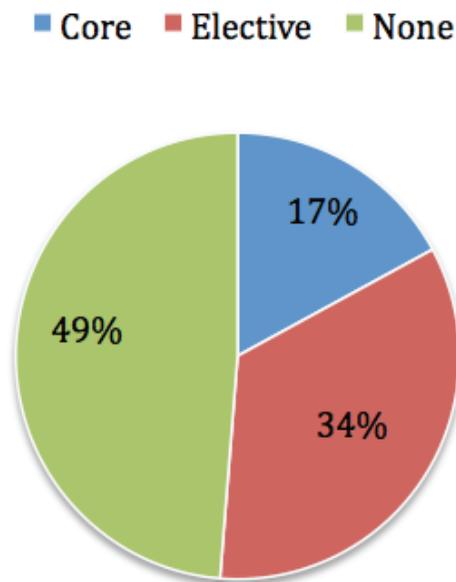
Overall, only 17% of MPA programs require a course in leadership as part of the core curriculum. However, an additional 34% of programs do offer leadership as an elective course. Of the programs offering either a required or elective course in leadership, fewer than 10% specifically incorporate the gender dimension of leadership within the course catalog description. Finally, a cursory review of more than a dozen leadership syllabi revealed that very limited emphasis is being placed on the attributes associated with gender as a whole. These findings indicate that a significant percentage of MPA programs are not emphasizing leadership within the curriculum; moreover, even among the programs that are, most do not appear to be focusing on female styles of leadership or the gender dimension as a whole.

The case for moving beyond the traditional era of administrative training is clear. MPA programs must begin responding to this new mix of students, the circumstantial evidence that suggests the gender dimension of existing leadership courses is not being emphasized, and the literature that suggests women do lead differently (see, e.g., Duerst-Lahti & Johnson, 1990; Kelly et al., 1991). Imparting those differences in the minds of future or current public sector leaders is imperative, and designing a leadership curriculum that better addresses the leadership styles of women and men would, at a minimum, help facilitate the empowerment of students and practitioners alike to overcome the barriers that have kept women from senior leadership positions.

Further research on defining the notion of leadership for the 21st-century student, including a well-designed and detailed leadership curriculum, will be needed. However, given that the development of the MPA curriculum is almost entirely in the hands of the faculty, in the next section we include a brief discussion of three areas—classroom resources, student learning outcomes, and mentoring experiences—by which graduate public administration programs can begin immediately implementing a leadership model of instruction that sufficiently exposes students to a variety of leadership models, values, and practices that reflect the experiences of both genders.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Designing Leadership Curriculum

In our proposed leadership curriculum model, we would begin by encouraging faculty to address the topic of gender leadership boldly—alongside other multi-cultural topics. According to Burnier (2005), integrating gender throughout the curriculum increases the likelihood that students will take the issue more seriously. In fact, Burnier argues that gender, particularly scholarship about women, should not appear on a course syllabus as simply an "add-on," but rather should be "integrated as fully as possible into an entire course, including multiple topics on the syllabus, lectures, reading assignments, and within class discussions" (2005, p. 188).

One of the first stages of designing a leadership curriculum would involve determining what is currently being taught in leadership courses. A text commonly used for many leadership courses, for example, is Peter G. Northouse's *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (6th ed., 2012). Northouse defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. He applies a variety of theoretical approaches to leadership, using case studies to assist students in applying the practical aspects of the approach to real-world organizations. A number of other gender-based leadership texts would make strong contributions to the MPA core curriculum, either broadly as a part of core classes or as an addition to more traditional leadership texts. Camilla Stivers's seminal books, *Bureau Men, Settlement Women: Constructing*

Public Administration in the Progressive Era (2000) and *Gender Images in Public Administration: Legitimacy and the Administrative State* (2002), would go a long way toward addressing Stivers's concern that very little knowledge about the ways in which women have shaped society and politics has permeated the conversations of public administration. D'Agostino and Levine's *Women in Public Administration* (2011) would also be a valuable resource for a leadership course or a stand-alone "women in public administration" elective course. Their edited volume, which includes the writings of Stivers, Guy, and other female voices within the field, explores in great detail how gender informs theory and practice in public administration.

Next, a sound leadership curriculum should develop, in conjunction with NASPAA universal competencies and MPA program outcomes, specific student learning outcomes that would give graduate students the ability to

- Examine contemporary definitions of leadership styles and theories;
- Discuss how male and female leaders are alike and different;
- Communicate the importance of addressing gender and other cultural issues in diverse public management settings;
- Develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for each other's work styles and approaches;
- Analyze leadership strategies in light of public sector management trends; and
- Develop and apply their own leadership styles to practical and real-life work situations.

In addition to a seminar focused on the principles of public sector leadership, these student learning outcomes could be integrated into the broader MPA curriculum, such as human resource management or public finance, where leadership skills are critical to gaining consensus among competing stakeholders.

Finally, our research indicates that mentoring has historically played an important part in the professionalization of the public administrator. Cheryl and Scott Wright (1987) conducted some of the earliest studies on the effects of mentoring relationships, which they concluded to be overwhelmingly beneficial to both mentors and protégés (1987). Mentoring was found to help students define goals, enhance career advancement, and improve self-image. However, the research also indicates that mentoring experiences for females has been more problematic than for males, in part due to the small pool of female supervisors and lack of education for women (Fox & Schuhmann, 2001). In Fox and Schuhmann's examination of the mentoring experiences of women city managers, they found (a) that male managers were more likely to cite educational mentors than were women, and (b) that both males and females are more reliant on same-sex mentors. Their findings suggest not only that male mentors and

female protégés are less likely to form lasting relationships, but that mentoring obstacles may pose yet another explanation for the lack of women in the city management profession. It is our opinion that placing more emphasis on finding and cultivating female-female mentoring opportunities through internships or practicum experiences would be highly beneficial for female MPA students.

The literature touches on other approaches for preparing women for leadership roles, such as forming their own informal networks, or attending workshops on conflict management and assertiveness training (Szymborski, 1996). However, further investigation needs to be conducted to determine whether these strategies are beneficial in fostering advancement for female students, or whether they exacerbate existing gender stereotypes.

Conclusion

Education has traditionally been lauded as a freedom-granting exercise for women around the world. Women have made indisputable gains in the workforce, largely as a result of increased opportunities in higher education. And yet, the statistics indicate that women continue to cluster near the bottom of organizational hierarchies, experiencing lower earnings, authority, and advancement opportunities than their male counterparts. The field of professional city management is no exception, where females are severely underrepresented at the "top" of the local government hierarchy.

Our analysis reveals that, consistent with overall trends in higher education, females are earning MPA degrees at a higher rate than are their male counterparts. However, despite these educational trends, greater female representation in the ranks of professional city management has not yet been realized. We make the case that professional graduate programs can respond to this lack of diversity by emphasizing gender-based leadership models in addition to other leadership models in order to better position female MPA graduates to confront the lingering barriers of the glass ceiling. Public affairs graduate programs nationwide should take steps to update their curriculum to include a focus on leadership training. This action would not only reflect the shift in enrollment trends but also provide a valuable service to the students of these institutions. Government units would also likely benefit from a larger and more empowered applicant pool.

Finally, we recognize that this study inevitably raises many additional questions that warrant attention. Future lines of inquiry should examine factors such as the influence of internship and mentoring programs, gender schemas in hiring decisions, and individual circumstances that, taken together, respond to the next obvious line of inquiry: "What will enhance the growth in the numbers of women in city management if education will not?"

FOOTNOTES

1   In a 2005 Associated Press article, Kleinfeld (citing a New York–based Academy for Educational Development study) noted that females are more likely to complete high school, graduate with honors, and go on to college. Males are more likely to drop out of high school or be placed in special education programs.

2   According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2005), females currently earn 60% of all associate degrees, 58% of all bachelor degrees, and 59% of all graduate degrees.

3   All institutions having authority to participate in federal student financial aid programs must complete and submit yearly surveys to IPEDS. The period of observation, beginning with 1984, was chosen to mirror U.S. Department of Education statistics indicating that, since 1984, the number of women in all graduate schools has exceeded the number of men (see Anderson, 2000, p. 1). Additionally, to normalize student numbers between predominantly full-time and part-time programs, we chose to use degree completions, as opposed to student enrollments, as the unit of analysis.

4   We began by examining each program's curriculum to determine whether a specific course or courses in leadership were offered. In an effort to capture the integration of leadership throughout the curriculum, we then combed the program's course catalog descriptions to determine whether leadership was being significantly addressed in other cognate courses such as organizational behavior and human resources management.

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